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British romanticism and composition theory: The traditions and value of Romantic rhetoric

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**British romanticism and composition theory: The traditions and
value of Romantic rhetoric**

Gradin, Sherrie L., Ph.D.

University of New Hampshire, 1990

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**BRITISH ROMANTICISM AND COMPOSITION THEORY:
THE TRADITIONS AND VALUE OF ROMANTIC RHETORIC**

BY

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DISSERTATION

**Submitted to the University of New Hampshire
in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of**

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in
English**

September, 1990

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For the women of my family, from whom I continue to gain strength: my grandmother, Agnes Wiker; my aunt, Nina Wiker; my sisters Cindy Gradin and Susan Gradin Hickle; and with great love and respect, my mother, Sara Wiker.

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ABSTRACT

BRITISH ROMANTICISM AND COMPOSITION THEORY:
THE TRADITIONS AND VALUE OF ROMANTIC RHETORIC

by

Sherrie L. Gradin

University of New Hampshire, September, 1990

My study examines, through the philosophies and writings of the British Romantic poets, particularly those of Wordsworth and Coleridge, their beliefs about education, their theories on composing, and their interaction with the political and social climate as they relate to current expressivist rhetorical theories and pedagogies. I explore the ways in which Romantic assumptions surface in subsequent philosophers, educators, and rhetoricians such as Matthew Arnold, John Stuart Mill, and John Dewey, and more recently, Ann Berthoff, Donald Murray, and Peter Elbow. I argue that like the Romantics, current expressivists are interested in cultivating an imaginative intellect in their writing students.

The dissertation makes a case for expressivist rhetoric, arguing that it is valuable and should not be ignored or forgotten in light of new social theories of rhetoric. Recently, Romantic rhetorical theories have come

under sharp attack for, among other things, perpetuating the myth of the "inspired writer, and for ignoring the fact that individuals are socially constructed and that the writing situation involves the dialectical interaction among writer, community, and social, political, and economic conditions. Although some of these attacks are valid, I argue that the problems critics have identified lie not with the theories themselves, but with the short-sighted application of these rich and complex Romantic theories. I look back, for instance, to the Romantic poets' philosophies of the self in order to show expressivists that the tradition from which they evolved recognized that the individual was not isolated from its culture. I also argue, however, that the recent denigration of the expressivist theories of composition is often based on misconceptions of Romantic theory and practice as well as an incomplete knowledge of the tradition from which they arise.

I argue that expressivist rhetorical theories are also valuable because they align themselves with feminist theory and pedagogy and offer a way of teaching writing that is especially useful for women. Finally, I examine the usefulness of expressivist theories for the cross-cultural classroom, and point out ways in which these theories are valuable and ways in which they are problematic for ethnic minority students.

INTRODUCTION

Composition theorists acknowledge that there is more than one rhetorical theory underlying our pedagogical practice. Currently there are at least three dominant categories into which rhetorical theory falls: cognitive, social-constructivist, and Romantic or expressivist theories. My interest lies in the theory, or set of theories, that have arisen from the traditions of Romanticism, specifically British Romanticism--the rhetoric that Richard Young has called "new romanticism," James Berlin "expressionistic," and Lester Faigley "expressivist." Recently, these Romantic theories of rhetoric have come under sharp attack. Although some of these attacks are valid, I believe that the problems critics have identified lie not with the theory itself, but with the short-sighted application of this very rich and complex theory. I also believe, however, that the recent denigration of the Romantic theories of composition is often based on misconceptions of Romantic theory and practice as well as incomplete knowledge of the tradition from which they arise.

In 1978, Richard Young, while discussing the "current-traditionalist" paradigm that was firmly entrenched through the early 1980's, suggests that as new research in the discipline began to change the complexion of that paradigm

two ultimately incompatible theories emerged from within it ("Paradigms and Problems: Needed Research in Rhetorical Invention"). He claims that our discipline was in crisis because the incongruity cannot be resolved: one theory emphasizes the composed product, and the other focuses on the composing process. The theoretical stance stressing the product also privileges "the analysis of discourse into words, sentences, and paragraphs; the classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument; the strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation) and with style (economy, clarity, emphasis); the preoccupation with the informal essay and the research paper; and so on" ("Paradigms" 31). Young calls the opposing stance the "vitalist." Its assumptions are "inherited from the Romantics"; it recognizes the composing process as important, and stresses the "natural powers of the mind and the uniqueness of the creative act" (31). By 1980 Young is arguing that these positions are completely incompatible, and to underscore their theoretical differences, he labels one the "new classicism" and the other the "new romanticism" ("Arts, Crafts, Gifts and Knacks").

Since the early 1980's, others have identified what they believe to be various theoretical postures within the field of rhetoric, relabeling and redefining them to fit

their own understanding of these views. James Berlin, for example, identifies three current theories of rhetoric at work: "objective," "subjective," and "transactional" (*Rhetoric and Reality*). The objective theories are those which posit that reality is located in an empirically determined material world, and the writer's object is to relay that world as accurately as possible. Within this category Berlin includes current-traditional rhetorics, as well as behaviorist, semanticist, and linguistic rhetorics (x). Subjective theories, according to Berlin, find truth within the individual or within a context that is available only through the individual's internal perspective--"reality is a personal and private construct" (143). He suggests that the roots of subjective theories, at least in America, are found in Platonic idealism as modified by Emerson and Thoreau and that these various rhetorics are commonly called "expressionistic." His final category, that of transactional theories, is based on an epistemology that "sees truth as arising out of the interaction of the elements of the rhetorical situation: an interaction of subject and object or of subject and audience or even of all the elements--subject, object, audience, and language--operating simultaneously" (15).

In "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class," Berlin updates the ideas he expressed in *Rhetoric and Reality*. He

identifies three major theories of current rhetoric: cognitive rhetoric, expressionistic rhetoric, and social-epistemic rhetoric. He cites Linda Flower and John Hayes as the best-known proponents of cognitive rhetoric. He summarizes their stance as one in which "the most important features of composing are those which can be analyzed into discrete units and expressed in linear, hierarchical terms, however unpredictably recursive these terms may be. The mind is regarded as a set of structures that performs in a rational manner, adjusting and reordering functions in the service of the goals of the individual" (482).

According to Berlin, expressionistic rhetoric developed during the first two decades of the twentieth century; it is a "descendant of Rousseau on the one hand and of the romantic recoil from the urban horrors created by nineteenth-century capitalism on the other" (484). He finds it closely tied to theories of psychology that argue for the inherent goodness of the individual. In fact, the existence of this rhetoric is "located within the individual subject [Writing] is an art, a creative act in which the process--the discovery of the true self--is as important as the product--the self discovered and expressed" (484). The names that Berlin associates with expressionistic rhetoric are Ken Macrorie, Walker Gibson, William Coles, Donald Murray, and Peter Elbow.

The third rhetoric, social-epistemic, and the one that Berlin favors, is distinguished by a belief that the "real is located in a relationship that involves the dialectical interaction of the observer, the discourse community (social group) in which the observer is functioning, and the material conditions of existence" (486). He argues that the individual is not a private self, as the expressionists might say, but that the self is a "social construct." "There is no universal, eternal, and authentic self that beneath all appearances is at one with all other selves. The self is always a creation of a particular historical and cultural moment" (487). The greatest advantage that Berlin sees in social-epistemic rhetoric is that it views knowledge as an "arena of ideological conflict: there are no arguments from transcendent truth since all arguments arise in ideology. It thus inevitably supports economic, social, political, and cultural democracy" (487). Rhetoricians that Berlin cites as advocates of the social-epistemic or social constructivist rhetoric include Richard Ohmann, Kenneth Bruffee, Lester Faigley, David Bartholomae, Patricia Bizzell, and Karen Burke LeFevre.

Lester Faigley, narrowing his discussion to that part of the rhetorical triad which focuses on composing, suggests that "current-traditional" rhetorics are out of favor and that the two major competitive perspectives on composing

come from within the process movement of rhetoric. Relying on Berlin's discussions of the present rhetorical scene, Faigley similarly identifies these two outlooks on composing as a "cognitive view" and an "expressive view" ("Competing Theories of Process"). He also acknowledges the emergence of a social view which is akin to Berlin's definition of a social-epistemic rhetoric.

Faigley traces cognitive theory to the American movement in cognitive psychology. He places cognitive compositionist theories, like those of Flower and Hayes, within a cognitive research tradition which has helped "promote a 'science consciousness' among writing teachers" (534). The expressivist theory he sets within the tradition of British Romanticism, since it views good writing as having "integrity, spontaneity and originality--the same qualities M.H. Abrams uses to define 'expressive' poetry in *The Mirror and the Lamp*" (529). He terms the rhetoricians in this camp--such well known names as D. Gordon Rohman, Albert Wlecke, Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, and Donald Stewart--as "authentic voice" proponents. Finally, Faigley suggests that the third view of rhetoric, the social view, is less codified than the cognitive and expressive because it does not arise from a single tradition. Rather, he says, "it arises from several disciplinary traditions. Because of this diversity a comprehensive social view cannot be

extrapolated from a collection of positions in the same way I have described the expressive and cognitive views of composing" (534-35). He presents an understanding of a social rhetoric much like that of Berlin's. Faigley describes the social view as resting on one central assumption: "human language (including writing) can be understood only from the perspective of a society rather than a single individual" (535). In a nutshell, the social view of rhetoric rejects the idea that writing is an activity that springs from an individual, private construct. Instead, it posits that the "individual is a constituent of a culture" (535).

As I have stated, my interest in these discussions of current rhetorical theory and pedagogy lies in those rhetorical theories that have arisen from the traditions of Romanticism. I will offer a rereading of Romanticism for composition scholars, thereby correcting some of the inaccurate myths that surround Romantic ideas and which play a part in the reaction against expressivist rhetorics. Moreover, I wish to enrich expressivist theories and pedagogies and open them up to new possibilities by offering a fuller understanding of the Romantic heritage from which they evolve. Finally, I wish to caution teachers and scholars against squelching or neglecting the many valuable aspects of these rhetorics as we enter a new phase of

research and pedagogical theory based on social constructivism.

Perhaps an analogy will help to justify my concern for their neglect: as the classical theories of rhetoric were challenged by expressive theories, the former were abruptly dismissed by hasty critics as wrong-headed. When several brave souls attempted to make a case for the usefulness of classical theory for current-day pedagogy, they were vehemently discounted. However, through the continuing efforts of scholars such as C. Jan Swearingin, Edward P.J. Corbett, Robert J. Connors, S. Michael Halloran, and Andrea Lunsford, we have begun to reacknowledge the usefulness of classical rhetoric.

With the new and promising move toward social theories of rhetoric, the discipline is once again shifting its theoretical view, and history appears to be repeating itself: this time it is the contributions of the Romantic rhetoric that are being neglected or too quickly dismissed. The classical approach to rhetorical theory and pedagogy, for instance, considers the Romantic view unsuitable for composition pedagogy because it is premised on the Romantic assumption that successful writing is a mysterious process or act of genius. Classical critics believe that proponents of Romantic pedagogies assume that students improve their writing through subjective means--through "inspiration" or

"self-discovery." This inner and individual focus, they claim, comes at the expense of intellectual rigor. Along similar lines, theorists of various persuasions have accused Romantic rhetorics of anti-intellectualism, and of thus making a poor theory on which to build a pedagogy. The social constructivists find Romantic approaches to the teaching of writing deficient because they seem to focus on the individual as opposed to the relationships among the writer, the community, and the social, political and economic conditions of existence. The result, they charge, may be an individual "empowered" but unaware of economic, political, and social issues (Berlin). A Romantic rhetoric and pedagogy, they believe, results in isolated, fragmented, politically ineffectual students and citizens.

Some of these criticisms have merit, but others are based on incomplete definitions and faulty conceptions of Romantic theories of rhetoric and the tradition from which they arise. It is important, I believe, to recover a more accurate understanding of expressivism's roots in British Romanticism, not only to better understand the value of Romantic rhetoric and to correct the misconceptions surrounding it, but to adjust expressivist pedagogies when they fall short. Thus, I will examine, through the philosophies and writings of the British Romantic poets, particularly those of Wordsworth and Coleridge, their

beliefs about education, their theories on composing, and their interaction with the political and social climate as they relate to a theory of rhetoric; and, I will explore the rich and varied influence of their work on subsequent educators and rhetoricians such as Matthew Arnold, J.S. Mill, and John Dewey, and more recently, Berthoff, Murray, and Elbow.

CHAPTER I

REFLECTING ON EDUCATION: THE VIEWS OF WORDSWORTH AND COLERIDGE

Modernists have often asserted that Romanticism died over a century ago, or that it is an unworthy subject, or both. The term has become equated with anti-rationalism, emotionalism, liberalism, and naive idealism. Yet, to the field of composition and to others interested in rhetorical and pedagogical theory, Romanticism is not a thing of the past. We can open books or periodicals and quickly realize that Romanticism and its rhetorical counterpart, expressivism, is considered a liability, a mistake, or occasionally, as I ultimately argue, something to be honored and kept alive.¹ Composition and educational philosophers like Mark Waldo, James Kinneavy, and John M. Willinsky, for instance, have recently discussed the importance of Romanticism to theories of rhetoric, discourse, and educational curricula. Waldo's 1982 dissertation has gone a long way toward placing Wordsworth and Coleridge, and their influence on current composition theories, in perspective.² And Willinsky, in an article on

current curricula, has suggested that Romanticism, and especially the work of Wordsworth and Coleridge, initiated a much needed revolution in educational thought--one that is still felt today.³ Kinneavy, in his important book on theories of discourse, notes that Wordsworth and Coleridge's theories on education and composing arise as a "reassertion of the importance of the individual, of subjectivity, of personal value in an academic, cultural, and social environment which tended to ignore the personal and the subjective" (*A Theory of Discourse* 396). These scholars, then, have begun to identify what is revolutionary in the Romantics' thoughts on education: their reaction to a system that suppressed the individual's emotions, experience, and imagination.

During the late eighteenth century and through the nineteenth, most educators continued to uphold a longstanding belief that knowledge is best gained through the analytical study of books, mechanical exercises, and rote memorization. The educational policies they followed made learning a chore, something to dread. As James Fotheringham explains in his book on Wordsworth's *The Prelude* as a study of education, "the older educationists had made everything, or most things, hard, distasteful. They even seemed to act on the principle that the educational value of things in a course of training turned

on their hardness, their unpleasantness" (35). There was simply no tolerance for those facets of education that Wordsworth and Coleridge spent much of their lifetime arguing for. Instead, the curriculum in English schools was strictly based on classical literature and languages and consisted of memorizing passages of literature. A student in the fifth or sixth form, for instance, would spend a great deal of time memorizing passages from Homer, Virgil, and Horace. What time was not spent on memorizing and reciting was spent at writing Latin verses and composing "themes" in Latin.⁴ The theory underlying the instructional practices of reading and recitation garnered further support from the psychological theory of associationism put forth by Locke and Hartley. This view saw the mind as a kind of machine "in which were associated atomic particles of meaning" (Wardle 82), and worked on the assumption that if the simplest possible "elements" were stored in the mind, the teacher could impart his subject material in such a way that elements were associated together in useful connections. If one element were recalled, the others would be "drawn from the mind after the manner of a string of sausages" (Wardle 82).

This approach to pedagogy was not completely without value. It relied on thorough preparation, and the material given was carefully analyzed. It also took into account the

importance of experience and a developmental approach to learning. On the negative side, however, it represented much that Wordsworth and Coleridge found at fault in educational practices. Pupils, for example, became passive recipients of material given by the teachers. Most student participation was merely recapitulation and the student did not participate in any active search for meaning or knowledge.

Because of such practices, the early nineteenth century heard much discussion of education; "treatises on the subject were a fashion, and many new and plausible schemes of human culture were being zealously advocated as a part of the passion of the time for human improvement" (Fotheringham 14). The educational philosophies of Jean Jacques Rousseau were being tested in various forms. Perhaps Rousseau's greatest contribution led to the first wide-spread consideration that human growth and education occur in developmental stages; he demanded that the child be valued as a child, not as a diminutive adult. Also, he disagreed strongly with the prevailing assumption that, because of Original Sin, children were predisposed toward evil--if left to their own, children would simply fall the way of crime (Coveny 42). It had been the part of education to redeem these children, usually through strict discipline; thus, the well-practiced adage: "spare the rod and spoil the child."

Rousseau viewed the child not as a passive receptor of external experience, but as an active soul, virtuous from birth. This active soul and virtuous self, according to Rousseau, needed to be carefully developed and nurtured slowly "towards the necessities of social existence" (Coveny 42).⁵

While Coleridge's thoughts on education are scattered throughout his notebooks, lectures, letters, and marginalia, Wordsworth's are nicely drawn together in *The Prelude*. An account of the development of the poet's own philosophical and poetic mind, *The Prelude* is, among other things, a treatise on education. In fact, in its original design it was conceived as a work explicitly about education (Chandler 95) and we can find in it Wordsworth's statement of a plan for national education of the masses that "marks him as a pioneer poet among those men of letters who appreciated the need of universal education" (Babenroth 360).

The Prelude follows the course of the poet's life, selecting the events and experiences which had significant influence in shaping his mind, personality, moral beliefs, and intellectual powers. In its completed form, the poem stands as an examination and condemnation of what Wordsworth felt was a misguided schooling. *The Prelude* includes not only a denunciation of the state's negligent and inept educational practices, but also of the many home education

systems that had arisen in attempts to replace the formal systems both Wordsworth and Coleridge found so offensive (Babenroth 217).

Although Wordsworth was not specifically a follower of Rousseau, and there is little evidence that he seriously studied Rousseau's theories (Fotheringham 53), it is difficult to read *The Prelude* as a treatise on education without recognizing that Rousseau had helped set the stage for those educational philosophies that Willinsky has identified as revolutionary. Like Rousseau, Wordsworth spoke out against forcing children into premature adulthood; he believed the child should experience childhood and a slow and natural growth into the adult world. He also denounced the belief that children were evil, believing instead in their natural goodness and innocence. Like Rousseau, he recognized the importance of childhood, and respected it as necessary for proper psychological and educational growth.

Against this background, then, Wordsworth proposed his own educational theories in opposition to those that kept children from reaching what the Romantics believed to be the most encompassing intellect. To reach this higher form of intellect, according to Wordsworth and Coleridge, children must not be denied their childhood; they must exercise the imaginative and creative imagination in *conjunction* with a more traditional approach of mechanical exercise, memorization, and analytical reasoning.

In much of his poetry Wordsworth proclaims, in what might seem an extremely radical stance to his readers, that the child will benefit from the wisdom and education fostered outside the schoolroom walls. In "The Tables Turned," for instance, Wordsworth counsels leaving study and books to come into the woods where the real learning will take place:

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it. . .

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

This extreme stance is more easily understood, however, when set against much of what was passing as education inside the school walls--systems based solely on recitation and memorization of facts. Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*, though written much later in the century, serves to help illuminate the kind of schooling Wordsworth and Coleridge were reacting against. Although *Hard Times* paints a satirical and fictional portrait of that "hard and distasteful" education, it is nonetheless based in reality:

"Now what I want is Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else . . .". The speaker, and the schoolmaster, and the third grown person present, all backed a little, and swept with their eyes the inclined plane of little vessels then and

there arranged in order. . .Mr. Gradgrind.
 . . seemed a galvanizing apparatus; . . .
 charged with a grim, mechanical substitute
 for the tender young imaginations that were
 to be stormed away (47-48)

Dickens' language, "inclined plane," "vessels," "galvanizing apparatus," underscores the mechanical and lifeless, noncreative, passive and non-imaginative education that takes place in Mr. Gradgrind's school. This educational system "storms" the imagination away, so that when Gradgrind demands of young Bitzer, "Your definition of a horse," the young student's answer is cold, calculated fact. He sees the horse in its parts, but not as a whole:

Quadruped. Graminivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisive. Sheds coat in the spring; in marshy countries sheds hoofs, too. Hoofs hard, but requiring to be shod with iron. Age known by marks in mouth." Thus (and much more) Bitzer.
 (50)

Dickens' fictional account of these miseducated students is similar to that of real students that Wordsworth portrays in *The Prelude*. The result of the commonplace schooling is a child "Full early trained to worship seemliness." Like Bitzer in *Hard Times*, this student mimics the attitudes and inclinations of adults, thereby becoming the "diminutive adult" which Rousseau condemned as inappropriate and harmful. Wordsworth's wrongly educated student of *The Prelude* is lacking anything emotive, is purely rational and can "read" his way through all the subjects:

he can read
 The insides of the earth, and spell the stars;
 He knows the policies of foreign lands;
 Can string you names of districts, cities, towns,
 the whole world over, tight as beads of dew
 Upon a gossamer thread; he sifts, he weighs;
 All things are put to question[.] (*The Prelude* V
 317-23).⁶

The problem for students trained in this manner, according to a Wordsworthian educational scheme, is that their intellectual abilities rely *solely* on memorization, analysis, and recapitulation (Waldo *RWC* 52). In other words, if the child is not allowed to know what "Nature teaches" and is kept confined to a curriculum that excludes creative and imaginative life experiences, including those beyond the schoolroom walls, then school becomes a prison and the student a prisoner assigned to death row. As Wordsworth writes in *The Prelude*:

In lieu of wandering, as we did, through vales
 Rich with indigenous produce, open ground
 Of fancy, happy pastures ranged at will,
 We had been followed, hourly watched, and noosed,
 Each in his several melancholy walk
 Stringed like a poor man's heifer at its feed,
 Led through the lanes in forlorn servitude;
 Or rather like a stalled ox debarred
 From touch of growing grass, that may not taste
 A flower till it have yielded up its sweets
 A prelibation to the mower's scythe. (V 235-45)

In these lines, Wordsworth accuses the educational philosophy of his day of having made students passive, ineffective, and unable to reach their potential as philosophical beings. In Wordsworthian educational theory the potential for the intellect, or philosophical mind, will

remain unfulfilled if the student only learns through books and rote exercises, and if the imagination is not nurtured through experience, perception, and interaction with nature. The student of the passage above is deficient. He may know geography, politics, and science, but because he has merely absorbed information, he lacks imagination, the essential element for a fully developed intellect; like Dickens' Bitzer he can analyze that information but not synthesize it since synthesis takes an active imagination. The closing books (XII and XIII) of *The Prelude* strongly emphasize that the method in knowledge and education should be constructive and synthetic, not analytic (see Fotheringham). In James Fotheringham's summary of Wordsworth's thoughts,

the real apprehension of a thing is a creative and not a mechanical process. Taking things to bits, and regarding them singly, we never know them. Taking them coldly and through a medium of logical process only, we never grasp them, and cannot give them to other minds. We must grasp them as living facts, in a whole that itself lives for us. (37)

Wordsworth and Coleridge both warn that without a curriculum that nurtures the creative mind and imagination, students are "manufactured" full of factual knowledge but empty of any thoughts or ideas of their own; they are apt to have merely passive minds. The poets felt schools denied students the possibility for growth of the imagination and thus the faculty of mind necessary for synthesis.

Wordsworth sees the imagination as a power that shapes and creates, not only by dissolving and separating unity into number, but also by "consolidating numbers into unity" (1815 Preface 754). The fully operational mind is one that embraces both the passive principles of analysis and the active principles of the creative imagination. It perceives in "wise passiveness" while at the same time imprints itself on the world. Coleridge speaks of two interlocking forms of the imagination, the primary imagination and the secondary imagination. The primary imagination is "all of perception" and is accessible to everyone. The secondary imagination is creative, and has the power to reconcile opposites: "it dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create . . . to idealize and to unify" (*Biographia Literaria* 304). It is cultivated and put into action by conscious will, and works upon material received by the primary imagination. Again, what is important to this immediate discussion is the conjoining of two different operative principles: the passive and active. In his desire to reconcile these opposites, Coleridge adopts the figure of the androgyne as a controlling image throughout his prose writings. He uses this image because it allows him to underscore metaphorically the importance of fusion between disparate faculties. A great mind reconciles the active and the passive, and thus is androgynous in Coleridge's scheme:

I have known *strong* minds with imposing, undoubting, Cobbett-like manners, but I have never met a *great* mind of this sort. And of the former, they are at least as often wrong as right. The truth is, a great mind, must be androgynous. (*Table Talk* September 1, 1832).

This "androgynous" or imaginative and synthetic mind is similar to the mind that Paul Armstrong describes as inventing "new ways of fitting things together by recognizing and even creating new analogies, new patterns of similarity and difference" (31). The result of recognizing and creating these new patterns of similarity and difference is an ability to create new concepts--to form a point of view. In other words, the imagination is essential, along with reasoning and analytical powers, to the growth of a full intellect, a creative, synthesizing intellect.

A passage from the *Biographia Literaria* is helpful in illuminating Coleridge's desire to have both passive and active processes become an element in the educative mission of fostering encompassing intellects. Using the water spider as an example, Coleridge describes the imagination in terms of its two parts:

Most of my readers will have observed a small water-insect on the surface of rivulets, which throws a cinque-spotted shadow fringed with prismatic colours on the sunny bottom of the brook; and will have noticed, how the little animal *wins* its way up against the stream, by alternate pulses of active and passive motion, now resisting the current, and now yielding to it in order to gather strength and a momentary

fulcrum for further propulsion. This is no unapt emblem of the mind's self-experience in the act of thinking. There are evidently two powers at work, which relatively to each other are active and passive; and this is not possible without an intermediate faculty, which is at once both active and passive. (In philosophical language, we must denominate this intermediate faculty in all its degrees and determinations, the IMAGINATION. . .).
(BL 124)

Both Wordsworth and Coleridge, then, felt that if schools neglect one of these powers, and traditionally the "active" has been disregarded, then the imaginative mind will not come to fruition.

Wordsworth's stance on education is one which calls for "quitting" books and wandering about in nature. We cannot escape, however, the irony of Wordsworth's counseling to stop reading while at the same time he is communicating his theories to us through the written word. This, of course, seems to negate his dictum that we should give up books as an educational pursuit. What we must remember, however, is that Wordsworth's relentless and apparently one-sided demand for an education of nature is in some ways a rhetorical ploy. In other words, in poems like "Tables Turned," "Expostulation and Reply," and parts of *The Prelude* as well, Wordsworth is carefully choosing and selecting those experiences which made his education different from the traditional one. He employs a rhetorical strategy that allows him to emphasize what he saw as the detrimental lack

of imaginative schooling commonly practiced by most schools of his day. And as we shall see, Wordsworth did not unconditionally condemn books and reading as a cursory study of his works might suggest, but only in so far as they were misused for educational purposes both in formal school systems and in amateur systems at home.

In light of Wordsworth's supposed stance against books, it is especially interesting to note that while at Hawkshead he was considered rather bookish. In 1885, the son of Hawkshead Headmaster Thomas Bowman recalled things his father had said about Wordsworth and reading:

My father used to say that he believed that he did more for William Wordsworth by lending him books than by his teaching, though Wordsworth, mind you, did well enough under him at both Classics and Mathematics, so I understood. But it was books he wanted, all sorts of books; Tours and Travel, which my father was partial to, and Histories and Biographies, which were also favorites with him; and Poetry--that goes without saying. . . A story he used to tell about William Wordsworth is that he left him in his study once for what he thought would only be a minute or two, telling him to be looking for another book in place of one he brought back. . . he was kept half an hour or moreWhen he got back, there was W. poring over a book, so absorbed in it he did not notice my father's returnAnd "what do you think it was" my father would say It was Newton's "Optics". (As qtd. in T.W. Thompson's *Wordsworth's Hawkshead* 343-44)

What, then, prompts Wordsworth to suggest that the reading required by schools is damaging to the intellect? In large

part it was that the study of books was forced indiscriminately on children. Wordsworth read because he was excited and yearned for knowledge. Hawkshead made books available to all of its students, not only through the library proper, but through the Boy's Book Club which Wordsworth promptly joined, and the Headmaster's personal library. In his earliest years of school, Wordsworth read "all Fielding's works, *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, and any part of Swift that I liked; *Gulliver's Travels*, and *Tale of a Tub*, being much to my taste"(Gill 28). What is strikingly different for Wordsworth than for most school children of his day, is that he was able to pursue his own interests as well as those expected by the school. "The importance of any school," however, as Stephen Gill notes in his biography of Wordsworth, "lies not so much in the formal curriculum or even in the quality of the teaching as in the encouragement it offers to a pupil's own interests and the possibilities it opens up" (28).

Wordsworth's duration at Hawkshead also gave him the time he believed necessary for children to spend at play, released from directed study. He was able to develop the emotional and experiential components of his mind as well as the intellectual by wandering in the countryside and seeing firsthand the beauties of nature. The custom of students living in the villagers' homes rather than at the school

gave Wordsworth freedoms that other grammar students did not enjoy (Waldo *RWC* 50). Not only was he granted time for play, but he was able to escape the problems of other grammar schools where overcrowded conditions resulted in boys sleeping two and three to a bed, a problem that disrupted studies and health, thereby putting a damper on any extracurricular activities, which Wordsworth believed fostered "affections and human sympathies, and placed in the context of the whole being the use of the intellect" (Waldo *RWC* 50).⁷ From the time Wordsworth entered Hawkshead at age nine, he lived with Dame Ann Tyson in her home, the most consistent adult figure in his life from childhood through young manhood (see Thompson).⁸ Wordsworth loved and cherished her. She captivated his imagination with tales and real-life experiences from her days as a servant in Scotland. In fact, some of his narrative verses are a poetic retelling of her tales (Thompson 65-69).

I do not intend to suggest that Wordsworth's education at Hawkshead was all play and no work. That would be misleading and inaccurate. The Hawkshead curriculum was strenuous; the school was considered one of the best in England. Every year several Hawkshead boys were sent to Cambridge, many of whom became prize-winning Fellows. Wordsworth was not only given a solid background in mathematics and natural philosophy, but he was given a firm

grounding in the Classics as well. This foundation, however, was not built through tiresome exercises in verse compositions in Greek and Latin and rote learning as it was at most schools (Gill 27). As Stephen Gill suggests, Hawkshead's approach to learning must have worked with Wordsworth, for he had a passionate love of Virgil, Ovid, and Homer, all of which he read at school; he was affected deeply by the beauty of Classical literature (27). Gill writes:

that he was able to delight in the poetry as something more than an academic chore, to feel in the 1790's the contemporaneity of Juvenal, and to profit from the ideas of Cicero and Seneca must be attributed to early teaching of rare quality. (27)

The reading and study required of Wordsworth became a pleasurable activity rather than a chore because he was granted time for play as well as work. His imagination was stimulated by jaunts through the countryside, through the stories of Dame Tyson, and the readings of his own choice. He was allowed the pursuit of experience, emotion, and active education. He was not merely crammed full of facts--not educated into a miniature adult.

So it was Wordsworth's academic studies and the imaginative pursuits animated by what Wordsworth calls "vital feeling" or the "vital soul" (Fotheringham 31) as well that led him to promote so strongly the educational philosophy that it is the emotive and imaginative faculties

in conjunction with the intellectual and analytical that make for a mature and encompassing intellect.⁹ The "vital soul" is crucial to Wordsworth. It is the self that perceives, creates, and feels. It is "the ground of all real education, and the free expansion of the 'vital soul' is the true end of education . . . There is no real and right growth for the human mind without depth and cordiality of feeling" (Fotheringham 31-33). In fact, an inability to develop the vital soul spells certain death for the encompassing intellect.

Wordsworth's "Lucy" poems, though very complex and not amenable to a single interpretation, might be read as eulogies for the death of the vital soul. In "A Slumber did My Spirit Seal," for instance, if we understand Lucy to be emblematic of the soul, the slumber that closes Lucy off from the "touch of earthly years" also seals her off from the "vital feelings of delight" ("Three Years She Grew"):

A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

In the passive state of slumber, the vital soul is unable to perceive, to feel, to create; thus, the mind is without one-half of the equation needed to make it the all powerful faculty of Wordsworth's philosophic mind.

The vital soul is a natural element for children, and unless it is educated out of them, it grants children passionate feelings such as hate and love. According to Wordsworth, the vital soul and all the passionate feelings that are a part of it are necessary for a full education. And with these come

Simplicity in habit, truth in speech,
 Be these the daily strengtheners of their minds;
 May books and Nature be their early joy!
 And knowledge, rightly honored with that name--
 Knowledge not purchased by the loss of power!
(*The Prelude* V 421-25)

Passions, books, and Nature are what shape these "real children" who can grow physically, emotionally, and intellectually (Waldo *RWC* 51). It was Wordsworth's desire in much of his poetry and prose to show how most educators had gone astray, even damaged the intellect of their students by barring them from emotion, experience, and imagination. If the analytical mind is severed from the passions and the imaginative intellect, knowledge comes at great cost--lost is the higher intellect, the powerful intellect that melds both reason and imagination, what I have been calling the "encompassing intellect."

The growth of the philosophic mind does not end in childhood, but continues, forever in progression, until death. It is not surprising, then, that Wordsworth's interest in the instruction of pupils does not end with grammar school. Wordsworth's years at Cambridge served to

reinforce what his Hawkshead schooling had taught him about learning and the fostering of a complete intellect (see Schneider). His tenure at Cambridge spurred him to articulate what he found wrong with the university system and to continue arguing for his own ideal vision of the university where the fertilization of the encompassing intellect proceeded.¹⁰ Once again, it is *The Prelude* that lends most insight into Wordsworth's thoughts on higher education and the growth of the mental faculties.

Although Wordsworth certainly did not find his time at Cambridge a total loss, there was much he found lacking. In Book V of *The Prelude* he "condemned" (Schneider 39)

The guides and wardens of our faculties,
Sages who in their prescience would control
All accidents, and to the very road
Which they have fashioned would confine us down
Like engines[.] (354-58)

Cambridge was such a place for Wordsworth. The system was too controlling. He comments directly on this:

I did not love,
Judging not ill perhaps, the timid course
Of our scholastic studies; could have wished
To see the river flow with ampler range
And freer pace[.] (III 496-500)

The result of this too tightly controlled educational system was to leave Wordsworth divorced from his scholarly activities: "many books / Were skimmed, devoured, or studiously perused, / But with no settled plan. I was detached / Internally from academic cares" (VI 23-26).

Schneider suggests that Wordsworth found Cambridge at fault because it placed knowledge at risk: this system initiated and honored competitive strife while actively discouraging within students a true desire to learn. "Prizes, like carrots in front of donkeys noses, were set before the undergraduates at strategic places all over the educative landscape" (Schneider 25). The students came to value these prizes more than the "knowledge obtained in gaining them" (Schneider 25). Perhaps the most atrocious outcome of this competitive system, in Wordsworth's view, was its effect on the quality of teaching. Under a routine of competition for prizes, students were not obliged to study unless they desired a prize, and thus tutors were not obliged to teach them (Schneider 25). Since the pursuits of students were for prizes and not knowledge, professors ceased to function as teachers. Believing that the prizes themselves were enough to stimulate learning, they "contented themselves with putting the proper material before them [students] in lectures, which were usually dull" (Schneider 27). The teaching was poor, the students inappropriately inspired to prizes, not knowledge, not learning for learning's sake.

Wordsworth would have none of this. He did not compete for prizes and consequently he took no honors at Cambridge. Wordsworth cut his own educational path and continued to

through interaction with nature. Rather, Coleridge was schooled at Christ's Hospital, a far more traditional school, where he was tightly governed by the hand of the Reverend James Boyer. Yet despite the differences in their upbringing, both men grew to hold many similar ideas and philosophies, not only about politics, poetry, and theories of the imagination, but about education as well. One might argue that Coleridge came to kindred conclusions with Wordsworth about the part creative activity, reading, self-reflection, self-knowledge, emotion, perception, and the imagination play in the growth of a full intellect, not only through his own limited but memorable imaginative childhood play, but through a vicarious sharing of the childhood of his friend William Wordsworth--a man Coleridge considered to have a truly great mind.

By the time Coleridge is raising and educating his own children, he has come to hope for a more Wordsworthian education for them than he had for himself (Waldo *RWC* 105). In "Frost at Midnight" he gives thanks that his son Hartley will not suffer the "cloisters dim":

My Babe so beautiful! it thrills my heart
 With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
 And think that thou shalt learn far other lore,
 And in far other scenes! For I was reared
 In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
 And saw not lovely but the sky and stars.
 But *thou* my babe! shalt wander like a breeze
 By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the clouds,
 Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
 And mountain crags:

Read literally, Coleridge was certainly blessing Hartley's opportunities to frolic amongst the pleasures of the natural world. He sees in his son's interactions with nature a chance to foster the "natural child," the passionate and experiential component of learning that Wordsworth claims such power for in his chronicle of the growth of the philosophical mind. It is no accident that these lines about learning appear in a poem so directly about the imagination: Coleridge means to draw attention to the importance of the imagination in the education of children. I would suggest that the "cloisters dim," which shut Coleridge off from the world of nature, are more than city dwellings. Coleridge was not merely "pent" physically, but mentally and imaginatively as well, and this Coleridge sees as detrimental to education and learning.

Consider, for instance, that Coleridge's father disallowed the reading of anything fanciful. Before his father put a stop to it, Coleridge, as a young boy, read fairy tales and stories of adventure (Waldo *RWC* 98). He remembers these readings fondly, and as an adult makes an argument for them in the shaping of the encompassing intellect:

From my early reading of fairy tales and genii, etc., etc., my mind had been habituated to the Vast, and I never regarded *my senses* in any way as the criteria of my belief. I regulated all my creeds by my conceptions, not by my *sight*, even at that age. Should children be permitted to read

romances, and relations of giants and magicians and genii? I know all that has been said against it; but I have formed my faith in the affirmative. I know of no other way of giving the mind a love of the Great and the Whole. (*Letters* Vol. I 16)

Like most children when left to their own imaginative pursuits, Coleridge entered into the world of play and fantasy where he would act out exciting adventures. Coleridge's father was tyrannical in some ways, however, and when he observed his son acting out the readings in imaginative play, he burned the books (Waldo *RWC* 99). This was harsh discipline for the young Coleridge, and it resulted in a dimming of imaginative light that is metaphorically parallel to being "pent 'mid cloisters dim" in the "great city."¹¹

As Waldo suggests, the "stern preceptor" remembered by Coleridge in "Frost at Midnight," while recalling his father, probably refers more directly to James Boyer, Coleridge's teacher at Christ's Hospital (*RWC* 105). In the *Biographia Literaria*, Coleridge writes ambivalently of Boyer and his educative techniques. Boyer followed the tradition of the time in that his instruction consisted mostly of memorization and drills. Student prose compositions were important only as grammatically correct products destined to fit a pre-determined form. They were to contain none of the subjectivity, emotion, or imaginative pursuit that later became a major tenet of Romantic theories on literature. In

fact, Boyer took great pains to keep the imagination of his students in check.¹² Coleridge recollects:

In our own English compositions (at least for the last three years of our school education) he showed no mercy to phrase, metaphor, or image, unsupported by sound sense, or where the same sense might have been conveyed with equal force and dignity in plainer words. Lute, harp, and lyre, muse, muses and inspirations . . . were all an abomination to him. In fancy I can almost hear him now, exclaiming "Harp? Harp? Lyre? Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, Muse? your Nurses's daughter, you mean! Pierian spring? Oh! aye! The cloister-pump, I suppose!" (BL I 9-10)

Coleridge, then, did not share with Wordsworth an education that nurtured the imagination. But as drastically different from Wordsworth's as his education was, Coleridge came to hold a similar educational philosophy, according to which analytical practice and imaginative pursuits should be yoked together in order to obtain optimum mental powers, and he agreed with Wordsworth on how this educative goal can be reached. Coleridge joined ranks with Rousseau and Wordsworth in his belief that children should not be educated as though they were miniature adults. Therefore, Coleridge also agreed with Wordsworth that the pursuit of knowledge takes place in progression, and that it is a great error to cram young minds with facts that pass as knowledge. Since the child is capable of appreciating only a few simple relations, education should attempt to refine the sense of relation and connections because, according to Coleridge,

"the comparing power, the judgment, is not at that age active, and ought not to be forcibly excited as is too frequently and mistakenly done in modern systems of education . . ." (Walsh 19). To force academic pursuits and exercise, rote memorization, and factual information upon young children is a grave mistake. In a powerful analogy Coleridge wrote, "Touch a door a little ajar or half open, and it will yield to the push of your finger. Fire a cannon-ball at it, and the door stirs not much: you make a hole thro' it, the door is spoilt for ever, but not *moved* " (*Inquiring Spirit* 81).

Coleridge would connect, I believe, the school system's tendency to rely on rote memorization to "*memoria technica*," a process which he decries as "*artificial memory*" in the *Biographia Literaria*. *Memoria technica* is an ancient technique of impressing places and images on the memory. The problem that Coleridge had with this is that, because it was solely passive, it neglected the role the will plays in memory:

But the will itself by confining and intensifying the attention may arbitrarily give vividness and distinctness to any object whatsoever; and from hence we may deduce the uselessness if not the absurdity of certain recent schemes which promise an *artificial memory*, but which in reality can only produce a confusion and debasement of the *fancy*. (*BL* 127)

It is the active participation of the will, as it relates to the act of remembering, that rote memorization fails to stimulate.

It is clear, then, that by education Coleridge meant more than gaining expertise or memorizing little-known facts; and he meant even more than the imaginative pursuits afforded by readings of the fantastic. Education also includes moral growth--preparation of the mind to make the best judgments for the good of society. It takes both aspects of education, moral and intellectual, to be truly educated, which in Coleridge's terms meant having the ability to see all things in fullness and relation to each other. As he wrote in the *Biographia Literaria*, "the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those *connections* of things, or those relative *bearings* of fact to fact . . ." (53):

the intercourse of uneducated men, is distinguished from the diction of their superiors in knowledge and power by the greater *disjunction* and *separation* in the component parts of that, whatever it be, which they wish to communicate. There is a want to that prospectiveness of mind, that *surview*, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to one point; and by this means so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organised whole. (BL II 58)

Ultimately this is Coleridge's definition of the encompassing intellect. As with Wordsworth, the mind is

fully mature when it is synthetic and unified. According to Coleridge, the ability to nurture the young mind into the unified intellect must include reflection, self-knowledge, and consciousness, all which lead to the melding of reasoning and imaginative powers necessary to the completely educated mind.¹³ "Our intellectual life," he argued in a lecture on Shakespeare, passes "not so much in acquiring new facts, as in acquiring a *distinct consciousness*" (Coburn *The Self-Conscious Imagination* 25). Without a consciousness of self the moral intellect is stunted, damaging not only the individual, but society as well. He felt the lack of it can be harmful to others and often spoke to this issue. Speaking of the conflicts in human societies Coleridge asked, "Why is difference linked with hatred?" His answer was, from lack of consciousness of self (*Self-Conscious Imagination* 32).

This consciousness is in turn linked to reflection and self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is the ability to commune with the "very and permanent" self and it is a prerequisite for any knowledge that is not cursory. All knowledge, Coleridge argues, is "not merely mechanical and like a carpenter's rule, having its whole value in the immediate outward use to which it is applied . . . all knowledge . . . that enlightens and liberalises, is a form and means of self-knowledge, whether it be grammar, logical or classical"

(Letter to Gillman qtd. in Walsh 60). Coleridge's self-knowledge is much like Wordsworth's vital soul, and may be attained through a method of thinking, feeling, experiencing, imagining, and cultivating sensitivity. It comes from a combination of inner and outer awareness. Outer awareness is observation, and he calls inner awareness the art of reflection. Reflection is a mode of personal experience; it is concrete and individual. As William Walsh points out, it is not to be confused with reverie, "a lackadaisical, bemused sauntering in the company of a mere sequence of notions and images" (58). Rather, it is a very difficult and active process calling on "energy and thought" (Walsh 58). According to Coleridge, "It requires no ordinary skill and address to fix the attention of men on the world within them, to induce them to study the processes and superintend the works which they are themselves carrying on in their own minds" (*Aids to Reflection* Introductory Aphorisms).¹⁴ The educational philosophies with which both Coleridge and Wordsworth disagree err by ignoring the cultivation of a reflective self-knowledge. Rather than "educing" it from within, they try, says Coleridge, to "shape convictions and deduce knowledge from without by an exclusive observation of outward and sensible things" (Walsh 58). This results in a mind able to distinguish between aggregate parts but not a vitally whole mind capable of

making connections.

Learning the art of reflection includes reflective self-knowledge--examining one's own thoughts and actions--but since we are shaped by language and the written word, it also includes learning to actively analyze language and question what we read:

Reflect on your thoughts, actions, circumstances and--which will be of especial aid to you in forming a *habit* of reflection--accustom yourself to reflect on the words you use, hear or read, their truth, derivation and history. For if words are not things, they are living powers, by which things of most importance to mankind are activated, combined and humanised. (*Aids to Reflection* Preface)¹⁵

"The first question," alleges Coleridge, "we should put to ourselves when we have to read a passage that perplexes us in a work of authority is: What does the writer *mean* by all this? And the second question should be, What does he intend by all this?" (Walsh 61). Coleridge suggests that as readers we should consider each part of the text in relation to the whole, what the author has written in relation to ourselves, and the intention of the author. Further, he suggests that reflection, whether of ourselves or of a text, can help lead to a refined sense of "distinction." For Coleridge, making distinctions, but seeing those distinctions reunified within the whole, is the sign of the truly educated mind. A "distinct consciousness" leads to an encompassing intellect.

Through his own learning experiences, his vast reading on the nature of knowledge, and his deep friendship with William Wordsworth, Coleridge came to believe that a child's intellect must be strengthened through excitement, imagination, nourishing support, reflection, a consciousness of self, and time. Education is an active process. If we approach education as "educing . . . the blossom . . . from the bud" in a natural progression that begins with respecting the capabilities of the young mind and the need for creative activity, as opposed to the memorization and regurgitation of factual information, the imaginative power will come alive. And as Walsh argues, it is the imagination that leads to great intellectual deeds and the growth of a society:

. . .In the imagination of man exist the seeds of all moral and scientific improvement; chemistry was first alchemy, and out of astrology sprang astronomy. In the childhood of those sciences the imagination opened a way, and furnished materials, on which the ratiocinative powers in a maturer stage operated with success. The progressive being; and I repeat that it ought to be carefully guided and strengthened as the indispensable means and instrument of continued amelioration and refinement. (23)

With an education that truly educes the "vital soul," as Wordsworth calls it, "vital excellencies" in Coleridge's terms, of imagination, passion, and reason, a deep-feeling and moral intellect can be cultivated. As a passage in a

letter of 1801 from Coleridge to Poole underscores, "deep thinking is attainable only by . . . deep feeling." 16

Coleridge, like Wordsworth, firmly believed that a mechanized approach to education that did not take into account the natural development of a child's mind and moral being, or the importance of the vital excellencies, was gravely damaging. Echoing passages of Wordsworth's from *The Prelude*, Coleridge condemns those educators who deny the young mind its natural growth toward intellectual and moral power. Teachers are, he says,

instructed how to metamorphose children into prodigies; . . . prodigies of self-conceit, shallowness, arrogance, and infidelity. Instead of storing the memory, during the period when the memory is the predominant faculty, with facts for the after exercise of the judgment, and instead of awakening by the noblest models the fond and unmixed love and admiration, which is the natural and graceful temper of early youth, these nurslings of improved pedagogy are taught to dispute and deride, to suspect all but their own and their lecturer's wisdom, and to hold nothing sacred from their contempt but their own contemptible arrogance[;] (BL I 13)

Although Wordsworth believes cramming young minds with intellectual miscellany when the faculty for memory is not yet grown leads to a weakened intellectual capability, Coleridge, at least in this passage, suggests that a certain amount of memorization at an early age is fruitful. Where this "storing" of memory fails, though, is when facts are passively received or when young students are taught to

argue or dispute on the facts they have memorized, not through their own ability to discriminate, but simply by virtue of what they have been told. The educational philosophies practiced during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, often treated students as passive receivers of knowledge, and learning as an inactive, non-imaginative process. And further, according to Coleridge, under the traditional system of schooling, students of a young age have not cultivated the judgment necessary to make any productive use of the "storing of memory." Forcing youth to "dispute" and "deride" rather than "love" and "admire" short-circuits the natural development of mind. Consequently, as the passage above suggests, when an education based on memorization is misapplied students become mirrors of their instructors, able to recapitulate what they have heard and read, but unable to form a point of view of their own. Although Wordsworth and Coleridge might disagree on when memorization should be employed, or even on how useful it is, both poets envisioned a curriculum which allowed children to feel and experience a full range of emotion and imaginative activity. Learning was not to be forced through fear, humiliation, and punishment, but educed through love. Schooling should excite the imagination through reading and life experience, not the passive exercise of memorization and recapitulation.

Students should learn to reflect, to question, and to feel deeply in order to think deeply.

Through their poetry, letters, and lectures, Wordsworth and Coleridge offered educational alternatives which they believed fostered the growth of a moral, unified, synthetic, and encompassing intellect. They have had immense influence in the years following the publication of their poetic works and statements on politics and philosophy. We often forget that both Wordsworth and Coleridge had much of value to say about education as well as the theory of poetics. But if we reexamine their works in this light, it becomes clear that the legacy they left has had a profound impact on educators of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Endnotes

¹ As Arthur O. Lovejoy has made clear (see "On the Discrimination of Romanticisms"), it is a mistake to assume that Romanticism is one unified concept. Rather, there are many different ideas and several distinct strains that are to be found under the rubric of Romanticism. For my purposes, I am using the term "Romanticism" in a general sense as a descriptor of the major tenets of thought that arose with the English Romantic poets, i.e., Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and Shelley.

² I am greatly indebted to Mark Waldo's dissertation, *The Rhetoric of Wordsworth and Coleridge: Its Place in Current Composition Theory*. I have taken an approach similar to his and worked with many of the same materials. Although my first chapter covers much of the same ground Waldo does, it will be used as background information which will serve to launch me in directions not taken by him.

³ Willinsky points out, among other things, that what he calls the "New Literacy" is grounded in organic metaphors, the questioning of authority, and an acceptance of the "personal" voice in student work.

⁴ Occasionally, a school would have allowed other subjects to creep into the curriculum, and geography and algebra might be taught.

⁵ Two popular educational systems of concern to Wordsworth and Coleridge that arose during this time are attributed to Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster. Although they were great rivals, their systems were quite similar and the establishment of their respective systems spoke to problems that had arisen within the schools by the end of the eighteenth century. Fundamental to both of them was the reliance on a monitorial system, because the schools were so over crowded that a teacher could not handle all of the students. They instituted two of the first monitorial systems in which certain number of older pupils were selected as tutors and much of the instruction was undertaken by them.

Despite many similarities, Bell and Lancaster differed greatly in their approaches to punishment. While Bell's system left punishment up to the judgment of a student's peers, except in extreme cases, and

preferred to focus on positive reinforcement through praise, Lancaster's, to the contrary, focused on severe punishments. These included hanging six-pound logs about the necks of offenders; shackling their legs with pieces of wood; tying frequent offenders together by pieces of wood fastened around their necks; forcing them to walk backwards; and hanging pupils in a sack suspended from the roof for the amusement of other students. It was the issue of punishment that most drew Wordsworth's and Coleridge's ardent support of Bell, and Coleridge's continual rebuttals to Lancaster. Coleridge was publicly verbal in his aspersions against Lancaster and his praise for Bell. In his *Lecture on the New System of Education* at Bristol in 1813, he condemned Lancaster for mishandling discipline. Coleridge dealt with other aspects of education in the lecture, but emphasized, in contrast to Lancaster, the need to teach children through love rather than fear and humiliation.

Coleridge was also drawn to Bell's system because the practice of the monitorial system was "a dynamic principle" which would arouse the "whole individual" into activity (*BL II 60*).

⁶ All citations from *The Prelude* will be the 1850 edition unless otherwise noted.

⁷ Stephen Gill in *Wordsworth: A Life*, and Mary Moorman in *William Wordsworth: A Biography: The Early Years*, as well as Waldo, offer useful accounts of Wordsworth's education at Hawkshead. Moorman also notes that Wordsworth was not the only poet to proffer praises of the Hawkshead education. Charles Farish, a fellow student of Wordsworth's published a poem exalting the outdoor adventures of the Hawkshead students entitled *The Minstrels of Winandermere* (26).

⁸ Ann Tyson granted Wordsworth enormous freedom. Although she was a church-goer she never forced young William to attend or study the doctrines of the church. She allowed him to be himself and do as he pleased. He took full advantage of the freedom he was granted, and as early as age nine, when he first arrived in Hawkshead, he wandered about the hills and fields until long after nightfall.

⁹ Mark Waldo's dissertation also points out that the crucial aspect of the educational philosophy Wordsworth is promoting is based on the conjunction of

the imaginative and analytical.

10 Ben Ross Schneider Jr.'s book, *Wordsworth's Cambridge Education*, presents a clear study of Wordsworth's attitudes, and actions during his time at Cambridge.

11 Scholars have speculated that the burning of his cherished books caused psychological damage to Coleridge which in turn manifested itself in an inability to write without great mental anguish.

12 Waldo offers a useful discussion of Boyer's effect on Coleridge.

13 Walsh and Waldo also note the importance of reflection to Coleridge's theories.

14 See also Walsh page 59.

15 See also Walsh page 61.

16 Elsewhere Coleridge has said that the powerful intellect is one that discovers: "to invent was different from to discover--a watch maker invented a time-piece, but a profound thinker only could discover" (*Collected Works of STC* vol. V 583).

CHAPTER II

VITAL LINKS: ROMANTIC THEMES IN THE EDUCATIONAL THEORIES OF ARNOLD, MILL, AND DEWEY

In an article collected in *The Web of Meaning*, Janet Emig speaks of the "tacit tradition" from which our work in composition research arises, the implicit knowledge and language shared by scholars and thinkers within our discipline. She notes that "certain kinds of knowing and doing, summed, qualify as emblems of membership and participation" ("The Tacit Tradition: The Inevitability of a Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Writing Research 147). In the case of expressivist rhetorics, "certain kinds of knowing and doing" have been passed down to us, not only through the writings of the Romantics, but by subsequent educators and thinkers, not usually considered Romantics, who have nonetheless shared some of the "root metaphors and governing paradigms" of Romantic thought on education and learning. As I will argue here, for example, Matthew Arnold, John Stuart Mill, and John Dewey can be seen as representative philosophers of educational thought and practice who have perpetuated Romantic teaching philosophies.

It is useful here to define "Romantic" for the purposes of this project. This was not the poets own self-descriptor; the label was applied to them in later years by English literary historians.

As a result, despite the many attempts to define Romanticism in a coherent manner by such scholars as Irving Babbitt, Cleanth Brooks, M.H. Abrams, Morse Peckman, Arthur Lovejoy, and Rene Wellek, there is still not one agreed upon definition for "Romantic." Indeed, Arthur O. Lovejoy argues in "On the Discriminations of Romanticisms," that Romanticism is not one unified concept. Rather, he sees several distinct strains of Romanticism, which he identifies by nationality--German, French, English. Other scholars have countered Lovejoy's argument. Rene Wellek, for instance, believes that the "major romantic movements form a unity of theories, philosophies, and style, and that these, in turn, form a coherent group of ideas each of which implicates the other" (The Concept of Romanticism in Literary History" 182). The debates surrounding the defining of Romanticism have shown that it is unfortunately quite easy either to define Romanticism so broadly that everything falls under its purview, or so narrowly as to reduce it to an uninteresting technical matter.

I am using the terms "Romantic" and "Romanticism" as a general descriptor of the major tenets of thought and action

that arose with the English Romantic poets, especially Wordsworth and Coleridge, including a reaction against the rising urbanization and commercialization which eventually led to the industrialization of England; in the name of liberty, a reaction against a government and political system which was oppressive to the majority of English people while allowing the newly evolving industrialists to prosper; a belief in the importance and almost holiness of the natural world; a belief in the importance of the individual self; a belief in the superiority of the imagination over the merely analytical reason; and a theory of poetics which stemmed from the belief that poetry should take an organic form and that poetry is a reflection of the poet's mind in action. Thus, the process the poet undergoes during composition and the poet's capacities of feeling, creativity, spontaneity, and the imagination are given prominence. Finally, I am including in this definition the poets' reaction against traditional schooling which I discuss in the first chapter.

My task here is not to claim that Mill, Arnold, and Dewey were Romantics in every aspect of the definition I have set forth, which they certainly were not, nor is it to do a full-scale study of Arnold, Mill, and Dewey and their literary and educational theories. Rather, my interest lies in showing how these post-Romantics, to use Emig's

terminology, share tacit Romantic assumptions, and how they have carried forward certain aspects of Romantic educational thought which form the shared language and knowledge of current expressivist rhetoricians. I am not necessarily constructing a chronological history of ideas but am attempting to show how the broad and pervasive influence of Romanticism has extended into educational philosophies and the teaching of writing in the twentieth century, and how Romanticism arises in the most unlikely of places. These three men are cases in point.

My choice of Arnold, Mill, and Dewey for this study is, of course, somewhat arbitrary, but there is a rationale. In part this choice is a result of the fact that there are many similarities between the Romantics and these three thinkers despite the differences among the three, and that they all three read the Romantics and have written about them. Also, in addition to bearing the influence of Romanticism, Mill, Arnold, and Dewey are widely published on issues concerning education and they are three of the best-known literati, philosophers, and educators of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Matthew Arnold is important to this study in that he is a central transitional figure linking, as critics like Leon Gottfried have argued, his era to our own, and his era to the preceding Romantic era, which was in the last decade of

its bloom when Arnold was born in 1822. Arnold is also perhaps the most influential man of letters during the Victorian period.

J.S. Mill might seem a less logical choice, as the great exponent of utilitarianism, which all the Romantics despised. His own estimation of the influence Coleridge and Wordsworth held on his thought, and his recognition that it was Wordsworth who finally enabled him to become "fully educated," might alone be reason enough to include him. But of further interest is the fact that Arnold and Mill, though contemporaries, are generally seen as representatives of antithetical schools of thought. Arnold is generally held up as a more conservative and elitist spokesman for "culture" as a means of bridging the classes, and Mill as a liberal reformist with socialist tendencies. Yet, as critics like G.L Nesbitt and Walter Houghton suggest, in spite of these differences their views on education are very similar. And, as I argue in this chapter, those educational views are distinctly Romantic in flavor.

John Dewey seems indispensable to the connections I am attempting to illuminate here. He is a pivotal figure spanning the late nineteenth century, where Mill and Arnold leave off, as far into the twentieth as the early 1950's. He is probably the most influential American philosopher and educator of our century, but since, as Thomas Newkirk

suggests, discussions surrounding writing process theory have been primarily ahistorical, Dewey has rarely been invoked (*More than Stories* 178). Yet because his own theories on progressive education and learning incorporate much that is Romantic in thought, and since Dewey's progressive education experienced a resurgence in the 1960's during the advent of expressivist pedagogies as proposed by teachers such as Rohman, Murray, and Elbow, we might see Dewey as a connecting figure between earlier Romantic educational thought and current expressivist rhetorics.¹

Also, I have chosen Mill, Arnold, and Dewey because some of their respective philosophies appear to have arisen in reaction to social circumstances similar to those which spurred the Romantic poets toward the reactions and general tenets I have pointed to. What I am noting as "Romantic" in the thought of Mill, Arnold, and Dewey might well be a result of similar historical circumstances. For instance, although different in many respects from the Romantics, Victorians like Mill and Arnold were still responding to, and in some cases reacting against an establishment characterized by, unenlightened schools, a bureaucratic government, churches that seemed aloof from many concerns of common life, and an industrial system that exploited its workers--including women and children--and that imposed a drab materialism on daily life. As the nineteenth century

wore on, in fact, those concerns that set Romantic philosophies in motion reached an even higher pitch. There was little or no change in national schooling, the government was slow to act even though social changes demanded quick political reform, and industrialization reached its peak.

Both Mill and Arnold were deeply concerned with the state of the government, the problems that arose with industrialization, and the educational system. Mill, of course, bears the stamp of utilitarianism, which aimed to test the usefulness of institutions in light of reason and common sense. Yet he learned from his nervous breakdown and from Wordsworth and Coleridge that reason is not the be all and end all. And Matthew Arnold, like the Romantics who preceded him, questioned how full and enjoyable life could actually be in a modern industrial society. This is a recurrent topic in his poetry and prose, and he is often attempting to find possible solutions to the problems he finds with the established schools, governments, and churches.

John Dewey was facing historical circumstances in America that were counterparts of those the Romantics and Mill, and Arnold faced earlier in the century in England. Between the years of 1865 and 1918, America developed from a primarily agricultural country to a modern industrialized

nation. This rapid expansion of industrialization resulted in many of the same atrocities that drew the attention of outspoken poets, historians, and philosophers like Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Mill, and Arnold. Like workers earlier in England, American employees were helpless against their employers. Americans suffered the same exploitation and abuse which characterized the industrial policies of nineteenth-century England.

By the time Dewey was formulating his philosophies for education, America had become fully capitalistic and a world power. The rapid change in America, as in England, was not without its consequences for education. Schools often reflected the ideology of American capitalism by pushing for an education of efficiency, production, and discipline in order to produce a work force that could continue to fuel America's prospering industry. A systematic coverage of various subjects and a mastery of facts, concepts, and principles acquired through drill had become the established and institutionalized norm. As Dewey's philosophical stance grew to include ideas from pragmatism, progressive education, empirical and objective psychology, and democracy, he offered an alternative to the established system of schooling. As I will show, some of the directions Dewey's philosophy took share general characteristics with the thought of Wordsworth and Coleridge, thought that we

have come to call "Romantic."

We can surmise, then, that there is at least a two-fold source for the Romantic ideas in the philosophies of Mill, Arnold, and Dewey. Not only were they inspired by the Romantics' poetry, theoretical, and educational views, but historical circumstances similar to those faced by the Romantic poets elicited responses from them which we have come to identify as "Romantic."

Moreover, I have chosen Mill, Arnold, and Dewey to discuss as descendants of particular Romantic educational thought and as predecessors to current expressivist theories and practice over specialists in the discipline of rhetoric proper--Wendell, Genung, and Scott, for instance--because writing teachers are generally more familiar with Mill, Arnold, and Dewey than with Wendell, Genung, or Scott. Until the recent growth of graduate programs in rhetoric, composition teachers had not systematically been trained in the history of rhetoric. Rather, writing instructors have come through the ranks in English or Education departments where they have not, for the most part, received educations in rhetoric but in literary studies and the history and philosophy of education. Since Mill and Arnold are generally required reading for literature students and often for education students as well, and Dewey is the major contemporary influence on American education, I would argue

that expressivist writing teachers have probably been exposed to, and thus more generally influenced by Mill, Arnold, and Dewey.

It is with these three threads, then, Matthew Arnold, John Stuart Mill, and John Dewey, that I begin stitching together one of the histories from which current Romantic rhetorics and educational theories arise.

John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)

In *The Mirror and the Lamp*, M. H. Abrams points out that Mill's essays on poetry define the poet and poetry in terms almost identical to those of Wordsworth and Coleridge. Others have recognized that one of Mill's major aims was the same as that of the Romantics: "the improvement of society through . . . the internal culture of the individual" (Stillinger viii). Mill was a voracious reader; he read Wordsworth, as he tells us in a celebrated passage of his *Autobiography*, and he was intimate with Coleridge's works, including the *Biographia Literaria*. In a letter to John Pringle Nichol dated April 15, 1834, Mill wrote that "Few persons have exercised more influence over my thoughts and character than Coleridge has . . ." (*Literary Essays* 304). Although John Stuart Mill probably did not read Wordsworth's *The Prelude* when it was finally published in 1850 (Stillinger ix), he did read Wordsworth's other poems and

the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, which are also about education, at least in the broad sense of the cultivation of the imaginative mind. I would suggest, then, that Wordsworth's contribution to Mill's theories is pedagogical as well as poetic, even though it is unclear whether he read Wordsworth's largest and most sustained argument on education.

Mill had several specific connections with Wordsworth. He first acquainted himself with Wordsworth's poetry in 1828 while in the throes of a severe mental depression and breakdown. According to Mill, it was Wordsworth's poetry that first alerted him to the fact that the educational path his father, James Mill, had led him down had neglected the feelings. Later, in 1829, Mill defended Wordsworth's worth as a poet in a debate, and in 1833 he wrote a literary essay on him lauding not only Wordsworth's poems, but the poet's ability to cultivate emotion and feeling in his readers. In 1831 Mill met Wordsworth, and considered this meeting one of the highlights of his life.

There are striking resemblances between Wordsworth's autobiographical poem and Mill's *Autobiography*. They both chronicle the authors' "early lives, intellectual growth, crisis and discovery" (Stillinger ix). And although nearly every essay written by Mill talks about education in some capacity, like Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, Mill's

Autobiography speaks in depth about education and the role of imagination in the growth of the philosophic mind.

It is in the *Autobiography* that we learn of the specific shape Mill's childhood education took. He was educated under the sole tutelage of his father. His days were spent in study in "what are considered the higher branches of education" (*Autobiography* 19). By the age of eight Mill was reading Herodotus, the *Memorials* of Socrates, and Diogenes Laertius in the original Greek. He began Latin at seven, logic at twelve, and introductions to political economy by age thirteen. The educational experimentation James Mill conducted on his son has many of the attributes the Romantics found detrimental to the education of the young. In an earlier draft of the *Autobiography*, Mill revealed that his education was forced through fear rather than educed through love: "It was one of the most unfavourable of the moral agencies which acted on me in my boyhood, that mine was not an education of love but of fear" (Stillinger 33 *Early Draft* 66). In the later version of the text he recalls that his father was "often, and much beyond reason, provoked by my failures in cases where success could not have been expected" (*Autobiography* 19). Both Wordsworth and Coleridge bristled at the custom of using fear as a catalyst to learning. Coleridge was especially vocal on this issue, and Lancaster's tendency to discipline students

with inhumane punishment provoked Coleridge's fiery ire. In his *Lecture on the New System of Education*, he condemned Lancaster and his extreme punishments intended to infuse fear. In *Lecture on Shakespeare XI*, Coleridge argues that education is an active process that begins by instilling love, and that from the seed of love obedience will naturally arise.

The imaginative readings that Wordsworth believed an integral part of childhood growth and that Coleridge lamented having had taken from him were for the most part denied to the young Mill. Although Mill never claims that his father barred him from imaginative readings, James Mill neither gave his son books like *The Arabian Nights* nor created room for such reading in his curriculum. Mill recalls that the only time he had access to tales of fantasy and adventure was on the rare occasions that family friends would present him with a book like *Robinson Crusoe* or *The Arabian Nights* as a gift. Moreover, as an adult, J.S. Mill lamented the fact that the modern system of education had deleted the literature of chivalry and romance from the curriculum. In an essay of 1838, Mill mourned the fact that "for the first time perhaps in history, the youth of both sexes of the educated classes are universally growing up unromantic" (*Literary Essays* 53). Mill lauded books which stimulate the imagination with the heroic people, and keep alive the "chivalrous spirit."

James Mill not only neglected to include imaginative readings in his son's upbringing, but kept his son from participating in childhood recreation as well. In the *Autobiography*, Mill explains that his father shielded him from the "ordinary corrupting influence which boys exercise over boys," so that he might not be contaminated with "vulgar modes of thought and feeling" (*Autobiography* 22). Mill was not one of the "real children," rightly educated, that Wordsworth considered himself and the students that shared his Hawkshead education to be:

A race of real children, not too wise,
 Too learned, or too good; but wanton, fresh,
 And bandied up and down by love and hate;
 Not unresentful where justified;
 Fierce, moody, patient, virtuous, modest, shy;
 Mad in their sports like withered leaves in winds;
 Though doing wrong and suffering, and full oft
 Bending beneath our life's mysterious weight
 Of pain, and doubt, and fear, yet yielding not
 In happiness to the happiest upon earth.

(*The Prelude* V 411-25)

Instead, Mill was Wordsworth's "miracle of scientific lore." Because of the "deficiencies" in his education, Mill found himself to be a social "misfit" (*Autobiography* 24) just like Coleridge. In a letter to Thomas Poole of October 9, 1797, Coleridge, describing how the same sorts of deficiencies in his education made him a social pariah, could have been writing of Mill as well as himself:

I was fretful and immoderately passionate,
 and as I could not play at anything and was
 slothful, I was despised and hated by the
 boys; and because I could read and spell

and had, I may truly say, a memory and understanding forced into almost unnatural ripeness, I was flattered and wondered at by all the old women. And so I became very vain, and despised most of the boys that were at all near my own age. . . .

Like Wordsworth and Coleridge, Mill believes that normal childhood play and interaction with other children adds an essential ingredient to a youth's education.

Mill was not only denied the company of youngsters his own age, but simple physical activity was limited for him as well. Although he took solitary walks daily, these were subdued and "in general of a quiet, if not bookish turn, and gave little stimulus to any other kind of mental activity than that which was already called forth by my studies" (*Autobiography* 23). Wordsworth is also known for his solitary walks, but he had a balance unknown to Mill, and indulged in play as well as deep thought; Wordsworth was the Winander boy hooting back at the owls, while Mill was the "miracle of scientific lore." Wordsworth opened himself up to nature. He observed nature's ways, allowed his experiences in nature to stimulate all of his senses. Mill was "utterly inobservant: I was as my father continually told me, like a person who had not the organs of sense. My eyes and ears seemed of no use to me, so little did I see or hear what was before me, and so little, even of what I did see or hear, did I observe or remember . . ." (*Autobiography* 24). Because his senses were closed to nature he was unable

to nurture the experiential and emotive aspects of his intellect.

However, from the vantage point of an adult restored to health through the cultivation of feelings, Mill remembered two Wordsworthian-like experiences from his childhood that "bettered" his education:

From 1814 to 1817 Mr. Bentham lived during half of each year at Ford abbey, in Somersetshire . . . which intervals I had the advantage of passing at that place. This sojourn was, I think an important circumstance in my education. Nothing contributes more to nourish elevation of sentiments in a people, than the large and free character of their habitations . . . [the Abbey] gave the sentiment of a larger and freer existence, and were to me a sort of poetic cultivation

(*Autobiography* 35-36)

At Bentham's residence in Somersetshire, Mill was finally made aware of the importance of interaction with nature as a stimulant to feelings and thus to education. For the first time he found himself in circumstances allowing him the luxury of communing with nature.

The second occurrence Mill writes of was a stay in France where "the first introduction to the highest order of mountain scenery made the deepest impression . . . and gave a colour to my tastes through life" (37). As unemotional as this latter passage of Mill's might seem, it recalls Wordsworth's much more passionate telling of crossing the Alps. Perhaps of more direct interest is Mill's mention of

the "colouration" of his tastes. What Mill is suggesting is that the mountain scenery excited his imagination, and once having excited his imagination, this particular scene stayed with him throughout life, was stored in his memory, in the way Wordsworth's mind is "a mansion for all lovely forms." Also, the language chosen by Mill is strikingly similar to that used by Wordsworth in his discussion from the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* on the Poet's ability to imbue ordinary objects with imaginative vision by throwing "over them a certain colouring of imagination" (734).² Mill's language here, and his discovery that the natural world elevates the sentiments, reflect Romantic influences and premises.

It was in 1828 that Mill first began to question the education his father had so carefully planned and guided him through. Mill was suffering from severe depression and had begun to believe that his education and life had been for naught. In his *Autobiography* Mill comments that two lines from Coleridge were often in his thoughts: "Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve, / And hope without an object cannot live." It was Coleridge, wrote Mill, "in whom alone of all writers I have found a true description of what I felt . . ." (*Autobiography* 84). This despondent state of thought and feelings made reading Wordsworth for the first time an important event in Mill's life. Wordsworth's poems were "a medicine" for Mill's "state of mind":

they expressed, not mere outward beauty, but states of feeling, and of thought coloured by feeling, under the excitement of beauty. They seemed to me to be the very culture of the feelings, which I was in quest of. In them I seemed to draw from a source of inward joy, of sympathetic and imaginative pleasure, which could be shared by all human beings. . . . (*Autobiography* 89)

The salve for Mill's intellectual wounds came from Wordsworth's poetry, and it came in the exact way that Wordsworth intended his poems to work. Finally, in the autumn of 1828 Mill began to re-educate himself through the cultivation of feeling.³

Previous to this date, Mill's education had been structured for the sole purpose of building an analytic intellect. His education had failed to create feelings in "sufficient strength to resist the dissolving influence of analysis," while the whole course of his "intellectual cultivation had made precocious and premature analyses the inveterate habit of [his] mind" (*Autobiography* 84). But once Wordsworth's poetry began to educate the emotive side of Mill's intellect, Mill came to realize that his "habit of analysis" had the "tendency to wear away the feelings: as indeed it has when no other mental habit is cultivated, and the analyzing spirit remains without its natural complements and connectives" (*Autobiography* 83). Mill is arguing here for an education that weds an analytical mind to an emotive one, in order to foster the fully capable and creative mind.

In many essays written after the advent of his fuller intellect--after the emotional education began--Mill harshly derides educational systems that rely on rote memorization and "cram," just as Wordsworth and Coleridge had before him. In "On Genius," for instance, Mill bemoans the wide-spread tendency to teach this way:

Modern education is all *cram*--Latin cram, mathematical cram, literary cram, political cram, theological cram, moral cram. The world already knows everything, and has only to tell it to its children, who, on their part, have only to hear, and lay it to rote (not to heart). (*Literary Essays* 44)

Although in this essay, Mill advocates an education similar to that of the ancient Romans and Greeks, it is on the grounds that education at that time consisted "not in giving what is called knowledge, that is, grinding down other men's ideas to a convenient size, and administering them in the form of *cram*," but on "a series of exercises to form the thinking faculty itself, that the mind, being active and vigourous, might go forth and know" (*Literary Essays* 40).

Just as Wordsworth believed that many teachers were "guides and wardens of our faculties" who "would control all accidents" and "confine us down like engines," just as he believed that an education of cram and memorization led to students who could do no more than parrot back the facts force-fed them by instructors, Mill argued that rote

memorization resulted in pupils unable to form an opinion of their own. In "On Genius," Mill wrote:

At school, what is the child taught, except to repeat by rote, or at most to apply technical rules, which are lodged, not in his reason, but in his memory? When he leaves school, does not everything conspire to tell him, that it is not expected he shall think, but only that he shall profess no opinion on any subject different than that professed by other people? (*Literary Essays* 43)

Like Coleridge and Wordsworth, Mill knew that what should be required is "not to be indoctrinated, is not to be taught other people's opinions, but to be induced and enabled to think for themselves" (Letter to Rev. Carr *Literary Essays* 304).

In the *Autobiography*, Mill stresses even further the problems that arise in an education of cram:

Most boys or youths who have had much knowledge drilled into them, have their mental capacities not strengthened, but overlaid by it. They are crammed with mere facts, and with the opinions or phrases of other people, and these are accepted as a substitute for the power to form opinions of their own. And thus, the sons of eminent fathers, who have spared no pains in their education, so often grow up mere parroters of what they have learnt, incapable of using their minds except in the furrows traced for them. (20)

We might think this passage a perfectly drawn portrait of Mill and his education, since, after all, he was educated for the purpose of carrying on devoutly the ideas of his father and Bentham. Mill did so without much reflection

until after his breakdown and return to health. Throughout his writings Mill comments that he had not a creative mind or genius like his father and Mr. Bentham, but that he had a mind trained only for interpretation and analysis.

And almost as though J.S. Mill could hear Wordsworth and Coleridge pointing to him as an example of everything wrong with education, Mill explains that his education did contain valuable aspects that would be found in Wordsworthian and Coleridgean schemes. Perhaps the most important to Mill is that his education was not as passive as we might be inclined to think. It was active in that, according to Mill, his father never just doled out facts and answers:

Mine, however, was not an education of cram. My father never permitted anything which I learnt, to degenerate into a mere exercise of memory. He strove to make the understanding not go along with every step of the teaching, but if possible, precede it. Anything which could be found out by thinking, I never was told, until I had exhausted my efforts to find it out for myself. (*Autobiography* 20)

Unlike Wordsworth and Coleridge, Mill does not object to being introduced to all the "branches of science and philosophy" as a mere child. In fact, he does not believe that any "scientific teaching ever was more thorough,"

or better fitted for training the faculties, than the mode in which logic and political economy were taught to me by my father. Striving, even in an exaggerated degree, to call forth the activity of my

faculties, by making me find out everything for myself, he gave his explanations not before, but after, I had felt the full force of the difficulties. (*Autobiography* 19)

Mill objects not to what he studied, but to what was left out of his education: normal childhood activity, an appreciation of beauty, and the cultivation of feeling and the imagination.

John Stuart Mill carried forth the ideas of Wordsworth and Coleridge in his own writings, and as we will soon see, these Romantic assumptions reappear in twentieth century composition scholars. Certainly these ideas included those of a theory of poetics, as when he writes in "What is Poetry?" that the poet's task is to be sincere, to give a truthful picture of his own feelings and state of mind. But they also include those ideas pertinent to a philosophy of education. From Wordsworth and Coleridge, Mill understood that the mind cannot thrive if the analytical intellect is severed from imagination and feelings. Having learned this, Mill's *Autobiography*, as Jack Stillinger points out, "focuses on the role of the imagination in the growth of the Philosophic mind (xii)," and by the time Mill gives the St. Andrews Inaugural Address in 1867, he insists that there are three interrelated parts that make up a full education: "intellectual education, moral education, and the education of feelings" (*Mill on Education* 189). Wordsworth's and

Coleridge's hope for an education that will nurture an encompassing intellect inspired Mill to incorporate what he learned from them with his own educative experiences. In his writings he passed on to us the Romantics' desire to cultivate a vital and imaginative mind.

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)

Matthew Arnold found much fault with the literary and critical theories of the Romantic age which preceded his own Victorian era. Arnold believed Wordsworth to be limited in many ways and he felt Wordsworth was wrong to ignore the "modern situation" by turning back to the past in his last years. Arnold read Coleridge but he says very little specifically about him, and what he does say is for the most part negative. Moreover, Arnold thought that what he believed to be the "Romantic cult of the individual" was a "dangerous extension of prevailing English provinciality and cultural anarchism" (Gottfried 3, 50). Nonetheless, he was well acquainted with the work of the Romantics, and in spite of his differences with them and his dismissal of many of their ideas, his own poetry and his philosophical position on education bears the mark of a Romantic contribution.⁴

Wordsworth was particularly influential for Arnold's thought. Arnold himself cites Wordsworth as one of four

leading influences on his thought and life, and he refers often to Wordsworth in his letters, notebooks, and essays, and celebrates Wordsworth in a laudatory essay. Wordsworth was also a close friend of Arnold's father and the older poet spent a fair amount of time with the Arnolds.⁵

Arnold shared more than the writing of poetry and criticism with the older generation of Romantics. He also shared a deep concern for teaching and the state of education that is reflected in his essays and reports on the status of British education written during his tour as Inspector of Schools. Arnold's tenure as School Inspector began in 1851, and although he was not particularly pleased with the appointment, he went on to make it his life's work. His observation of education systems included not only English schools, but those on the continent as well. In 1865 the Schools Enquiry Commissioners assigned him the duty of investigating the educational system for the middle and upper classes in France, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland. Like Wordsworth, Arnold was interested in a national education, and his time as School Inspector resulted in many arguments for the changes he saw as necessary to ensure a system of education that was workable for the English masses.

As Arnold toured the schools of the continent and Britain, he saw still in place many of the problems that

moved Wordsworth and Coleridge to take a stand on the state of national education in England. Like Coleridge, for instance, he railed heartily against an educational system that tried to force knowledge of a factual kind into the minds of children at too early an age.⁶ In his report on the French schools, Arnold praised the French system for recognizing the intellectual limitations of children by not pushing competitive examinations upon the pupils, and he condemned the English system for its misuse of exams. The English school system's insensitivity to the intellectual limitations of young minds, in Arnold's view, had the same effect that Mill objected to in what he calls the "education of cram." Inappropriate testing had damaging results:

The French have plenty of examinations; but they put them almost entirely at the right age for examinations . . . To put to little boys of nine or ten the pressure of a competitive examination . . . is to offer a premium for the violation of nature's elementary laws, and to sacrifice, as in the poor geese fatted for Strasbourg pies, the due development of all organs of life to the premature hypertrophy of one.
(*Schools and Universities on the Continent*
92)

This premature "hypertrophy" means that the students will never reach a higher intellect capable of judgment, comparison, and synthesis.

When Arnold speaks harshly of examinations he is not condemning them entirely. In fact, his observations of German schools, where exams were completely foregone,

convinced him that examinations can be useful. His negative criticism of the examinations given in the English schools is that of Coleridge and Wordsworth before him--they are used to the wrong ends. In his *Reports on Elementary Schools*, Arnold points out that exams do not necessarily test any real knowledge that students might or might not have. He recalls children getting through the Revised Code examinations in "reading, writing, and ciphering, without really knowing how to read and cipher":

To take the commonest instance: a book is of a certain standard; all the year the children read this book over and over again, and no other. When the Inspector comes they are presented to read in this book; they can read their sentence or two fluently enough, but they cannot read any other book fluently. . . the circle of the children's reading has thus been narrowed and impoverished all the year for the sake of a result at the end of it, and the result is an illusion. (219-20)

In other words, knowledge for knowledge's sake was sacrificed to a system that requested the memorization of a few facts and techniques that could be coughed up on request. Learning, in effect, has come to a standstill.

Arnold, through his first-hand observations of the English school system, records further damage that is done by propelling children through a system that does not allow for natural growth and focuses too heavily on examinations:

nervous exhaustion at fifteen is the price which many a clever boy pays for over-stimulation at ten; and the nervous

exhaustion of a number of our clever boys tends to create a broad reign of intellectual deadness in the mass of youths from fifteen to twenty, who the clever boys, had they been rightly developed and not unnaturally forced, ought to have leavened. (*Schools and Universities* 92-93).

Arnold's concern with an "unnatural" intellectual growth recalls Coleridge's belief that education should be an act of educating, of calling forth; "as the blossom is educed from the bud, the vital excellencies are within; the acorn is but educed or brought forth from the bud" (*Collected Works of STC* Vol. 5 585). Arnold's argument is also reminiscent of arguments made by Wordsworth in *The Prelude*, which was published the year before Arnold began his tour as Inspector. In a well-known passage from Book V of *The Prelude*, Wordsworth celebrates his escape from such an education:

yet I rejoyce,
And, by these thoughts admonished, will pour
out
Thanks with uplifted heart, that I was reared
Safe from an evil which these days have laid
Upon the children of the land, a pest,
That might have dried me up, body and soul.
(V 224-229)

Arnold recognizes, in the "nervous exhaustion" of students, Mill's education of "cram" and the same debilitating educational system that Wordsworth was lucky to have escaped. He felt that the British examinations not only did not test any significant knowledge, but worse, that they resulted in "intellectual deadness." If wrongly and

untimely administered, examinations obscure the "true aim" of schools: "to develop our mind and to give us access to vital knowledge" (*Schools and Universities* 299).

This last phrase of Arnold's resoundingly echoes much in the educational theories of both Coleridge and Wordsworth. Coleridge, for example, separated "education" from "instruction" as it was commonly applied in the classroom. As David Calleo writes of Coleridge's stance: "True knowledge is not merely information or skill. It is the ability to see the fullness of things in their proper relation. It results in the ability to avoid partial view and thus to achieve a balanced and sane judgment" (*Coleridge and the Idea of the Modern State* 122-23). Learning does not take place through examinations or the mere instruction of facts. It comes, as Wordsworth argues, through the cultivating of the "vital soul," and as Coleridge suggests, through "vital excellencies"--terms quite similar to Arnold's "vital knowledge." Without an education that promotes access to the cultivation of "vital knowledge," the "truly educated mind," the encompassing intellect will never be achieved.

In their hope for a synthesizing mind at the end of the educational journey, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Arnold also share thoughts on what is necessary to make the encompassing intellect a possible outcome for students. For all of them

the role of the teacher is to do "as much towards opening their mind, and opening their soul and imagination, as is possible to be done with a number of children of their age and in their state of preparation and home surroundings" (*Reports from Elementary Schools* 238), or as Mill describes it, to prepare students to "go forth and know." Arnold, like Wordsworth and Coleridge, makes clear that the curriculum should advance this vital knowledge by "educing" active participation from students. He writes of elementary education that "a great deal of the work in elementary schools must necessarily be of a mechanical kind." But in order to counter-balance the mechanical aspects of the curriculum, Arnold argues for "creative activity":

whatever introduces any sort of creative activity to relieve the passive reception of knowledge is valuable. The kindergarten exercises are useful for this reason, the management of tools is useful, drawing is useful, singing is useful. (*Reports from Elementary Schools* 226)

Whereas Wordsworth, and Coleridge to a lesser extent, would claim both a student's interaction with nature and reading as a part of this counter-balance, they do not suggest specific classroom activities. Arnold, however, focuses more on the actual pedagogical techniques as his position of School Inspector requires him to do. Thus, Arnold speaks of drawing and singing in the early curriculum, and reading, particularly poetry, as the pupil advances through the

years.

Arnold desires the same movement toward creativity, imagination, and the encompassing intellect as Wordsworth and Coleridge do. And like them Arnold believes this movement is achieved, at least in part, through literature, which has a humanizing and moving effect. As he makes clear in an 1860 report on the elementary schools, Arnold was not against pupils reading, but against them reading "dry scientific" writings of an "inferior order" (215). He argues that in the everyday subjects of the curriculum (reading, writing, grammar, geography, history, etc.) that the teacher's design of instruction should be governed by the "aim of calling forth, by some means or other, in every pupil a sense of pleasurable activity and of creation; [the teacher and student] should resist being made a mere ladder with 'information'" (*Reports* 227).

In the same report, Arnold claims that the teaching of poetry is a valuable and necessary part of the curriculum because it is the one thing that can ensure the stimulation of creative activity. It is Wordsworth he turns to to make his point:

Wordsworth says, "To be incapable of a feeling of poetry, in my sense of the word, is to be without love of human nature and reverence for God." And it is only through acquaintance with poetry, and with good poetry, that this "feeling of poetry" can be given . . . it [poetry] inspires the

emotions so helpful in making principles operative. (*Reports* 223-24)

The importance that Arnold gives to "the emotions" is noteworthy here. He is suggesting, with distinctly Romantic language, a distinctly Romantic idea: that emotions are necessary for a full intellect to become "operative." In a curriculum where memorization is the major instructive mode, the mind is dulled unless there is an exercise of "pleasurable" and "creative activity . . . quite different from the effort of learning a list of words to spell, or a list of flesh-making and heat-giving foods, or a list of capes and bays, or a list of reigns and battles, and capable of greatly relieving the strain from learning these and of affording a lively pleasure" (*Reports* 226). Although we need not agree with Arnold that poetry is the only or best way to make all, including the imaginative, "principles operative," his point is nonetheless important: that at least some of the mechanical exercises in school must be replaced with those which open the mind and soul through "vital knowledge."

There is yet another affinity among Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Arnold. When drawing some further thoughts together in a general conclusion to *Schools and Universities*, Arnold describes what good instruction should and should not entail:

The aim and office of instruction, say many people, is to make a man a good citizen, or

a good Christian, or a gentleman; or it is to fit him to get on in the world, or it is to enable him to do his duty in that state of life to which he is called. It is none of these, and the modern spirit more and more discerns it to be none of these. These are at best secondary and indirect aims of instruction; its prime direct aim is to enable a man to *know himself and the world*. Such knowledge is the only sure basis for action, and this basis it is the true aim and office of education to supply. (*Schools and Universities* 290).

Arnold's position here bears a distinct resemblance to Coleridge's argument for self-reflective knowledge, and as will later become clear, it anticipates the current expressivists' concern with writing from and for the self. As passages previously quoted from the *Aids to Reflection* indicate, Coleridge believes that without reflection an essential means to knowledge in its fullest sense is missing. Self-reflection and self-knowledge are certainly a part of Wordsworth's profile for the fully educated mind. In fact, in his view it is that ability which nurtures the strongest intellect of all--the intellect of the creative poet. It is also in knowing oneself, then, that the educational theories of Arnold, and of Wordsworth and Coleridge converge.

Although the means each urges by which students should achieve a schooling that promotes the growth of a philosophic mind might differ slightly on various points, it is clear that Matthew Arnold, like Wordsworth and Coleridge

before him, sought a restructuring of the educational system in order to allow for that growth. He joined with Wordsworth and Coleridge in the belief that reading is an important part of intellectual growth, but that it is usually forced upon the students in such ways as to "only increase a child's stock of what is called information" rather than to "contribute to the opening of the soul and imagination" (*Reports* 239). Arnold agrees that the "philosophic mind" is gained through self-reflection and self-knowledge, and that the true aim of education is to develop the powers of the mind and to give students access to vital knowledge" (*Schools and Universities* 299). All three poets believe that knowledge in its fullest sense takes place through activity and creativity of the mind. In an 1874 report on the elementary schools, Arnold reminds his readers that "the animation of mind, the multiplying of ideas, the promptness to connect, in thoughts, one thing with another, are what are wanted" (221). This statement of Arnold's could easily be attributed to Wordsworth or Coleridge, so close is it in thought and phrasing to many of their statements on learning and the imagination.

John Dewey (1859-1952)

In discussing this next educator, John Dewey, I have moved, albeit rather rapidly, from Victorian England to

modern America. Although this leap might seem a vast one, Dewey is one of America's most renowned philosophers and he wrote prolifically on American education. He is, in many ways, one of the few American counterparts to the British philosophers and intellectuals like Mill and Arnold. Moreover, as we will see, he shares key philosophical ideas with the Romantics and with Mill and Arnold, which, I believe, become part of the general theoretical pool from which expressivist rhetoricians draw.

If we were to distill one basic concept of his philosophy from all of his writings it would be his belief that learning is a social process. Dewey is often seen as the forefather of social constructivism. He believes in collaborative learning and that as humans we are shaped by our culture:

through the influence of the social environment each person becomes saturated with the customs, beliefs, the purposes, skills, hopes and fears of the cultural group to which he belongs. The features of even his physical surroundings come to him through the eyes and ears of the community." (*Education Today* 295)

Since, as the previous passage indicates, Dewey appears to be a social philosopher, it might seem strange that I find him crucial to the history of Romantic educational philosophies that I am constructing here. If we remember, however, that my purpose is not to build a case for Dewey as a Romantic, but rather to show how certain aspects of

Romantic philosophies have been handed down to current educators and teachers of writing, the connections I will make here remain important.

The extent of Dewey's familiarity with Romantic thought is probably best encapsulated in *Art as Experience*. It becomes clear in this book that Dewey was well versed in the writings and theories of Schiller, Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, Lamb, and Hazlitt, to name a few. Although Dewey cautions against erring by accepting too unthinkingly Romantic theories of art because, he suggests, they can go beyond "individual" to "eccentric" (286), he nonetheless holds a primarily expressive theory of art. He believes, for instance, in the "inherent role of individuality in the matter of a work of art" (286), the importance of perception and individual experience to art, and in the Romantic version of the creative imagination.

Dewey writes forcefully in defense of experience and perception in *Art and Experience*. "It is mere ignorance," he argues, "that leads them [critics of expressivism] to the supposition that the connection of art and esthetic perception with experience signifies a lowering of their [the works of art] significance and dignity" (25). Dewey argues as an expressivist when he suggests, in antithesis, that "Experience . . . is heightened vitality" (25). In

other words, experience is vital and it enables the creation of art and knowledge. Like Wordsworth and Coleridge, Dewey sees the act of experiencing taking place, at least in part, through "perception" and participation with the world. According to Dewey, the senses are the way in which a "live creature participates directly with the ongoings of the world" (28). And again, we are reminded of Arnold's call for "creative principles" and Mill's desire to "go forth and know." This perception and participation, then, leads to experience, which in Dewey's argument leads to art.

He also makes the case, as Wordsworth and Coleridge do, that perception is more than mere nonparticipatory recognition, more than senses being bombarded by an external world; it is not completely passive. Dewey writes that "perception replaces bare recognition." In this replacement there is "an act of reconstructive doing and consciousness [which] becomes fresh and alive" (*Art as Experience* 59). It is this act of "reconstructive perception" that Wordsworth writes of in "Tintern Abbey": "with gleams of half-extinguished thought, / With many recognitions dim and faint . . . / The picture of the mind revives again: / . . . not only with the sense / Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts / That in this moment there is life and food / For future years" (53-65). What Wordsworth remembers and comforts himself with as he stands on the banks of the Wye

is the knowledge that through an active perception in the present, he can reconstruct the perception of the past, and his memory and experience will always be able to become "fresh and alive."

Dewey's "undergoing phase of experience" is receptive but not passive. "It involves surrender. But adequate yielding of the self . . . through a controlled activity that may well be intense" (*Art as Experience* 59). What Dewey has described here is particularly fitting to Wordsworth's "wise passiveness" and "spots of time," where the poet receives Nature in all her power, surrendering to the force of "dizzying raptures" so that the world wheels by with great intensity. When older and a poet, Wordsworth reconstructed his art from the "yielding of self" to experience.

Also apparent in Dewey's explanation of undergoing experience as it relates to art is the importance of a spontaneous overflow of feeling which both he and Wordsworth find necessary for artistic expression. Dewey, however, is not satisfied that the experience itself will lead to art; art is not just the overflow of spontaneous emotion, but contemplated spontaneous feeling. Dewey enlists Wordsworth to explain that it is the spontaneous overflow of "emotion recollected in tranquillity" that leads to expression (75), a concept we shall see that is crucial to current expressivist theory as well.

Dewey's tie to Wordsworth and Coleridge is also seen in his discussion of the imagination. In *Art as Experience*, Dewey bases his ideas about imaginative experience on Romantic theories of the imagination. In fact, he cites Coleridge on the "esemplastic Imagination":

"The poet," he said, "diffuses a tone and spirit of unity that (as it were) fuses each to each the faculties of the soul with the subordination of each according to relative dignity and worth, by the synthetic and magical power to which I would exclusively appropriate the name of Imagination." (272)

Dewey notes of this passage that Coleridge used "the vocabulary of his generation" which referred to the faculties and imagination as separate. Although he disagrees with Coleridge's "verbal mode" in this definition, Dewey agrees with Coleridge's meaning of the "imaginative experience" (*Art as Experience* 272).

Dewey's own description of the imagination is Romantic in flavor. He sees the imagination as animating, feeling, and actively composing an "integral whole":

it designates a quality that animates and pervades all processes of making and observation. It is a way of seeing and feeling things as they compose an integral whole. It is the large and generous blending of interests at the point where the mind comes in contact with the world. When the old and familiar things are made new in experience there is imagination. (*Art as Experience* 271)

Dewey's language echoes Coleridge's explanation of the Primary and Secondary Imagination from the *Biographia*

Literaria: we can pair Dewey's "animates," "pervades," "observation," and "blending of interest" to make "old" things "new" with Coleridge's creative Imagination. Dewey's description of the imagination also recalls Wordsworth's Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*. Dewey's statement "when the old and familiar things are made new in experience there is imagination" is an apt understanding of Wordsworth's project in the *Lyrical Ballads*:

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect[.] (Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*)

Wordsworth is reconstructing the familiar language of the "common man" so we can experience it anew; he has, in Dewey's terms, taken "old and familiar things" and made them "new in experience." By throwing over the common language of the common man a "certain colouring of imagination," Wordsworth's mind has, as Dewey writes, "come in contact with the world."

Dewey's earlier work of 1887, *Psychology*, which he states is a book "expressly for use in class-room instruction," looks, by its table of contents, much like an argument for faculty psychology. But, as he writes of perception, memory, imagination, thinking, intuition,

feeling, and the will as interrelated processes, it begins to look more like a Romantic manifesto. Here he distinguishes among the "Mechanical Imagination," "Fancy," and the "Creative Imagination." "The Mechanical Imagination," he says, "proceeds by the laws of association and dissociation . . ." while the Fancy "throws itself about all things, and connects them together, through the medium of feeling . . . It affords keen delight rather than serves as an organ of penetration" (*Psychology* 171). Different still, according to Dewey, is the Creative Imagination,

which is not confined to isolation and combination of experiences already had, even when these processes occur under the influence of sensitive and lively emotion. It is virtually creative. It makes its object new by setting it in a new light. It separates and combines, indeed; but its separations and combinations are not the result of mechanical processes, not of the feeling of the moment. They are filled with a direct and spontaneous sense of the relative values of detail in reference to the whole. (*Psychology* 171).

As in *Art as Experience*, Dewey's descriptions of the imaginative experience and the lesser powers of the Mechanical Imagination and the Fancy are essentially those of Wordsworth and of Coleridge. If we recall Wordsworth's discussion of spontaneity, of "separating unity into number" and "consolidating number into unity," as well as Coleridge's "dissolving" in order to "unify," the Romantic influences on Dewey's thought become more apparent. Dewey

also finds an understanding of imaginative processes necessary and important to class-room instruction, reinforcing, it seems to me, Coleridge's and Wordsworth's, as well as Mill and Arnold's, insistence on the importance of the creative imagination within the educational arena.

Many of Dewey's educational ideas correspond, in fact, to those of Wordsworth and Coleridge's. Again, I am not suggesting that Dewey accepted all aspects of Romantic educational theory. He makes a point of saying that he does not. He made explicit objections, for instance, to the use of the analogy of the development of a seed into the full-grown plant, an analogy he ascribes to Rousseau but which was pervasive among English Romantic poets.⁷ Dewey believed that the "growth of a seed is limited as compared with that of a human being . . . It has not got the capacities for growth in different directions toward different outcomes that are characteristic of the more flexible and richly endowed human young" (*Education Today* 289). He also objects to the more "exaggerated parts of Rousseau's doctrines":

sentimental idealization of the child's immaturity, irrational denial of superior worth in the knowledge and mature experience of the adult, deliberate denial of the worth of the ends and instruments embodied in social organization. Deification of childish whim, unripened fancy, and arbitrary emotion is certainly a piece of pure romanticism. (*Education Today* 69)

It is clear from the tone of this passage that Dewey does not accept "romanticism" when it is defined in terms of "whim" or "arbitrary emotion," and although Dewey does not directly address these criticisms to Wordsworth and Coleridge, he surely would have objected to Wordsworth's belief in the child as a Philosopher. Coleridge, however, was much more closely aligned to Dewey's way of thinking on this issue, and he himself takes Wordsworth to task. In the *Intimation Ode*, Wordsworth suggests that the child is by nature a philosopher. In Book XXII of the *Biographia Literaria*, however, Coleridge disagrees with Wordsworth and writes:

In what sense is a child of that age a philosopher? In what sense does he read "the eternal deep"? In what sense is he declared to be "for ever haunted" by the Superior Being, or so inspired as to deserve the splendid title of a mighty prophet, a blessed seer? by reflection? by knowledge? by conscious intuition? or by any form or modification of consciousness? (Walsh 18-19)

Like Dewey, Coleridge finds this particular position on childhood a "sentimental idealization" and a "deification" of the child. Although Coleridge shares a belief in natural development of the child with Dewey, Dewey differs not only from Coleridge but from Arnold and Mill as well, because he was reading about "experimental" and "emergence" psychology. In fact, he was beginning to establish a theory of "developmental" psychology.

Nevertheless, in spite of a more socially focused educational philosophy and certain objections to Romantic analogies and ideas, Dewey repeats many of Wordsworth's and Coleridge's arguments against the old traditions of schooling. He argues against a method of education that saw the mind of the student, in a metaphor that Coleridge might particularly have liked, as a "phonographic disc upon which certain impressions were made by the teacher, so when the disc was put on the machine and the movement started. . .it might reveal what was described upon it" (*Education Today* 242). In antithesis to this traditional schooling, Dewey argued for a child-centered curriculum and progressive schools which, I believe, draw heavily from a Romantic philosophy of education.

A passage from Dewey's "Progressive Education and the Science of Education" will help illuminate my point. In arguing for Progressive schools, Dewey writes that they "exhibit as compared to traditional schools"

a common emphasis upon respect for individuality and for increased freedom; a common disposition to build upon the nature and experience of the boys and girls that come to them, instead of imposing from without external subject-matter and standards . . . Emphasis upon activity as distinct from passivity is one of the common factors. (*John Dewey on Education: Selected Writings* 170)

Three of the basic elements crucial to an educational theory grounded in Romantic philosophy, the importance of the

individual, personal experience, and an emphasis on activity as opposed to passivity, are advanced in this passage.

Even though Dewey never forgets that individuals are culturally shaped, he remains adamant in his belief that the individual and individuality are important. Like the Romantics, Dewey realized that the individual was being lost in modern industrial society. He urged a firm stand against the suppression of the individual, and he argued that the only way to fight against this suppression was by looking inward. In other words, the responsibility is ours as individuals to "cultivate our own gardens" so that we might make changes in society. "Looking inward" to the self also becomes a mainstay of expressivist pedagogy later in the twentieth century.

"Individualism and socialism are one," he wrote. "Only by being true to the full growth of all the individuals who make it up, can society by any chance be true to itself" (*The School and Society* 7). Dewey wishes to underscore the value of individuality, and in "Mediocrity and Individuality," he argues for the use of the word "individuality" over "individualism" in order to make clear that his focus on the individual is positive:

Individualism is about the most ambiguous word in the entire list of labels in ordinary use. It means anything from egotistically centered conduct to distinction and uniqueness. It is possible to say that excessive individualism is an

outstanding curse of American civilization, and that absence of individualism is our marked deficiency. When the former remark is made, economic and legal conditions are in mind; when the latter, intellectual life is in question. Individuality is a surer word; it carries with it a connotation of uniqueness of quality, or at least of distinctiveness. It suggests a freedom which is not . . . external but which is intrinsic and constructive. (*Education Today* 164)

It was this same need for "intrinsic" and "constructive" freedom in an ever growing industrial society prone to suppressing individuality that spurred the Romantics to their reliance on, and defense of, the individual. Thus, what became important was the uniqueness and individual processes of mind that lay behind their art.

The importance of the individual is one of the basic concepts underlying Dewey's argument for Progressive schools and child-centered learning. To change from the receptive education promoted by the "pipeline" or "phonographic disc" method of teaching to a creative and active education, requires, according to Dewey, "studying and treating individuals in their distinctive and unique qualities" (*Education Today* 69). The question of the place of experience in the role of education is not, in practice, separate from that of the role of individuality. Dewey sees experience as the foundation which will lead to an education that honors individuality, an active rather than passive education, and which can eventually lead to the sort of

educated intellect that Wordsworth calls the "philosophical mind." "Moral and intellectual powers increase in vigor," says Dewey, when a "spontaneous interest and desire to accomplish something are behind them" (*Education Today* 79).

In Dewey's educational scheme, experience becomes the motivation for learning. A typical evil that Dewey finds prevalent in traditional schools is the lack of any positive motivation. Since "the lack of any organic connection with what the child has seen and felt and loved makes the material purely formal and symbolic" (*The Child and the Curriculum* 24), the learner has no connection or interaction with the material and cannot learn in the true sense of the word. The student can merely parrot back what has been read or heard. As Coleridge argues, true learning is organic, is "educated" and not externally imposed.

In *The Child and Curriculum*, Dewey argues that if the "subject-matter . . . be such as to have an appropriate place within the expanding consciousness of the child, if it grows out of his own past doings, thinkings, sufferings . . . no device or trick of method has to be resorted to in order to enlist interest" (27). This is exactly Wordsworth's point when he writes disdainfully of his Cambridge education where academic prizes became the "trick of method." It is also Coleridge's point when he responds with such ire against the Lancastrian system of punishment.

Dewey is in complete agreement with Wordsworth and Coleridge when he argues that

the externally presented material, conceived and generated in standpoints and attitudes remote from the child, and developed in motives alien to him, has no such place of its own. Hence the recourse to adventitious leverage to push it in, to factitious drill to drive it in, to artificial bribe to lure it in. (*The Child and Curriculum* 27).

For Dewey, as for Wordsworth, Coleridge, Mill, and Arnold, experience generated through perception and an organic connection between child and subject matter is the more beneficial path to knowledge than the external method of drilling facts into passive brains.

Dewey also shares with Wordsworth and Coleridge the same educational means by which to gain the experience so crucial to the encompassing intellect: interaction with nature. In "Democracy in Education," Dewey suggests that in order to "free the processes of mental growth," "the child [should be taken] out of doors, widening and organizing his experiences with reference to the world . . .". No real knowledge is gained about nature, for example, unless it is "nature study when pursued as a vital observation of forces working under their natural conditions, plants and animals growing in their own homes, instead of mere discussion of dead specimens" (*Education Today* 71).

Just as Wordsworth suggests it is "murder to dissect," Dewey rejects the analytical approach to learning about a

subject like botany where students are "pulling these flowers to pieces and giving technical names to the different parts," without an understanding of the plant as a whole. And to understand it as an integral whole, the student must see the plant as it is in nature, must see it in relation to, and interaction with, the soil, water, sun and air. In a stance truly reminiscent of Wordsworth, Dewey argues that "we cannot overlook the importance for educational purposes of the close intimate acquaintance with nature at first hand," because in this interaction with nature comes "continual training of observation, of ingenuity, [of] constructive imagination . . ." (*The School and Society* 11). It is this point that Wordsworth makes in the poem "Tables Turned." To "hear the woodland linnet" has more of "wisdom in it," says the poet, than the "dull and endless strife" of books ill used. Also like Wordsworth, Dewey believes that books are misused in traditional schools. He is aligned with Wordsworth when he remarks that it is not a "Philistine attack upon books and reading" that he has in mind, that the question is not "how to get rid of them, but how to get their value . . ." (*Education Today* 29). In a Wordsworthian educational scheme, the student is miseducated if books are not tied to experience, perception, imaginative activity, and interaction with the world. Because of his freedom to read what excited him, and because

of the Hawkshead school which promoted an education of experience, Wordsworth was an avid reader, and, as Book V of *The Prelude* points out, his readings were of great influence in the shaping of his philosophical mind. Wordsworth, in fact, fits the description of Dewey's ideal for learning through reading: "the child should have a personal interest in what is read, a personal hunger for it, and a personal power of satisfying this appetite" (*Education Today* 29).

Dewey realizes that a full intellect cannot be nurtured without the growth of personal experience and without interaction with nature, for without these, there is no nourishing of what Coleridge calls "vital excellencies" and Wordsworth the "vital soul." As Dewey talks about methods of learning to read he is arguing that only a "vital relation" to the subject at hand will breed successful learning: most methods "lack the essential of any well-grounded method, namely relevancy to the child's mental needs. No scheme for learning to read can supply this want. Only . . . putting the child into vital relation to the materials to be read" (*Education Today* 28). True learning that moves students toward an encompassing intellect must arise out of the cultivation of Wordsworth's "vital soul," Coleridge's "vital excellencies," and out of what Dewey calls "vital relations" and "vital observations." If this is neglected, the student will lack what Dewey has called

"spontaneous interest" and will instead be "thrown into a passive, receptive, or absorbing" educational setting where true learning cannot take place. (*Education Today* 13).

Like Arnold, Dewey further incorporates Romantic concepts in his view that "reflection" is a crucial aspect of the journey toward the encompassing intellect. He makes his belief in this matter clear in an essay entitled "Why Reflective Thinking Must Be an Educational Aim." Like Coleridge, he finds that the reflective mind is a prerequisite to the truly educated intellect:

A person who has gained the power of reflective attention, the power to hold problems, questions, before the mind, is in so far, intellectually speaking, educated. He has mental discipline--power of the mind and for the mind. (*The School and Society* 147).

Coleridge in *Aids to Reflection* makes similar points and urges his readers to "Reflect on . . . thoughts, actions, circumstances . . ." because not to engage in reflection results in a mind unable to make connections, unable to observe the whole. And as Dewey seconds, "reflective thinking is a process of detecting relations . . ." (*Education Today* 247).⁸

Coleridge suggests that through reflection we will nourish a sense of "distinction" and cultivate a questioning and active mind. In *The School and Society*, Dewey makes an almost identical argument:

True reflective attention, on the other hand, always involves judging, reasoning, deliberation; it means that the child has a *question of his own* and is actively engaged in seeking and selecting relevant material with which to answer it, consider the bearings and relations of this material (148) [original emphasis]

The questioning that arises out of reflection leads to Coleridge's sense of "distinction" which is like Dewey's selecting of "relevant material." Finally, for Dewey as for Coleridge, self-reflection and reflective thinking are necessary ingredients to intellectual success. In "The Process and Product of Reflective Activity: Psychological Process and Logical Form," Dewey wrote that something is "achieved through conquering, by personal reflection, the difficulties that prevent immediate overflow into action and spontaneous success" (*Selected Writings* 257), or as Arnold puts it, reflection and self-knowledge are prerequisites to action.

In John Dewey's educational stance on Progressive schools and child-centered curricula, we find many affinities with the Romantics' philosophy on education and learning. Dewey argued for Progressive schools, for instance, because he believed, as did Wordsworth and Coleridge, that the traditional schools were "hostile to genuine mental activity and to sincere emotional expression and growth" (*Selected Writings* 170-71). He also objected to the "separation and compartmentalization of emotion and

thought, practice from insight, imagination from 'executive doing'" (*Art as Experience* 27). Dewey felt that the mind could not be educated to its fullest potential in traditional schools because method relied on Mill's version of "cram": passivity, drills, and reason separated from emotion. Thus, like the Romantics, he sought an education that fosters emotion and imagination in conjunction with analysis and reason.

Not only does Dewey define the same problems with the school systems as do Wordsworth and Coleridge, but he offers the same solution when he suggests the "introduction of more active, expressive, and self-directing factors" (*The School and Society* 29). Dewey is incorporating Romantic ideas into his own philosophy. As he writes his educational arguments for us, he keeps alive some of the ideas articulated by Wordsworth and Coleridge more than a generation earlier. Clearly Dewey is passing on some of the most important concepts and ideas of a Romantic philosophy on education when he argues that "It is a method of discovery through search, through inquiry, through testing, through observation and reflection--all processes requiring *activity* of mind rather than merely powers of absorption and reproduction" (*Education Today* 242).

In my discussion of Arnold, Mill, and Dewey, I have begun to show how pervasive Romantic ideas are, and to make

explicit part of the "tacit tradition" from which the current philosophies of Romantic rhetorics arise.⁹ I have attempted to illuminate how these three educators, by enfolding Romantic assumptions and ideas into their own, have carried forward certain aspects of Wordsworth and Coleridge's literary and educational thoughts and theories, and thus point to several avenues by which the Romantic influence has entered the realm of education and expressivist composition theory. I have also shown how Romanticism emerges even in the most unlikely of places, and that to reject Romantic philosophies is to discard the key concepts of Matthew Arnold, John Stuart Mill, and John Dewey.

Endnotes

¹ This resurgence of Deweyen-like thought is easily seen in the 1966 Dartmouth Conference on the teaching of English. The conference participants encouraged an active rather than passive model of learning and emphasized self-expression in writing and language use.

² M. H. Abrams has pointed out in the *Mirror and the Lamp* that in the two essays "What is Poetry?" and "The Two Kinds of Poetry," Mill relied heavily on Wordsworth's Preface.

³ Mill's explanation for the healing reads like a shortened version or paraphrase of Wordsworth's statement of purpose in the Preface:

to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and, further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. (Preface 734)

⁴ Gottfried examines the Romantic influence on Arnold's poetry and theory of poetics.

⁵ At one time, Wordsworth even helped the young Arnold study for an examination. (Gottfried 6)

⁶ Coleridge argued that the growth of the intellect takes place in progression, that the child begins with a capability limited to appreciating only "A, and B, and C; but not ABC=X" (*Inquiring Spirit* 204).

⁷ M.H. Abrams takes note of the importance of the plant metaphor to the Romantics in *The Mirror and the*

Lamp.

⁸ Dewey had read Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* and occasionally quotes from this work.

⁹ Perhaps more than one reader will have noticed that as this history has unfolded I have neglected to mention the role that the American counterparts to the British Romantics might play in past or current Romantic educational philosophies and rhetorics. I am thinking specifically here of the American Transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson. But since I am not giving a full trajectory or geneology of Romantic ideas in educational thought and practice, Emerson need not be a major figure in my study. Further, James Berlin has already noted Emerson's tie to Romantic rhetorics and to the practices being established in current composition textbooks by teachers such as Ken Macrorie, William Coles, and Donald Stewart. (See *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges* and the 1982 *CE* article, "Contemporary Composition: The Major Pedagogical Theories".)

I am inclined to remind readers, however, that Emerson himself is directly shaped by the influence of the British Romantics, and especially by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. As the American critic F.O. Matthiessen points out in the acclaimed *American Renaissance*, Emerson's belief in the organic principle comes directly from Coleridge. In fact, Matthiessen even argues that "the most immediate force behind American transcendentalism was Coleridge, who gained many ardent readers in New England . . ." (6).

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CHAPTER III

DISCOVERY, EXPERIENCE, REFLECTION, IMAGINATION: ROMANTIC COMPLEXITIES IN ROHMAN, MURRAY, ELBOW, AND BERTHOFF

I have elaborated on the Romantic ideas in the educational philosophies of Mill, Arnold, and Dewey because scholars in the field of composition and rhetoric generally have not considered them as Romantic in any way, nor as having perpetuated key concepts and "governing ideas" of Romantic educational philosophies which, in turn, are major elements in current expressivist rhetorics. Mill, Arnold, and Dewey share much of the same philosophical ground as current expressivists. As a result they have had a broad influence on writing teachers, creating a tacit climate of opinion which we don't recognize as Romantic but which, in large part, is. The "vital" elements--feeling, experience, reflection, imagination--are as important to the current expressivists as to the three earlier philosophers.

Moreover, these Romantic ideas and "vital elements" that current expressivists share with the Romantics and with Mill, Arnold, and Dewey appear to be in response to historical contexts similar to those that sparked the original philosophies of the Romantics and the subsequent expressivist ideas of the later philosophers. In other

words, the pedagogies and theories of people like D. Gordon Rohman, Ann Berthoff, Peter Elbow, and Donald Murray arose in reaction to the conservative "establishment" which prescribed a teaching practice of skill, drill, and rote memorization and which subscribes to a mechanized view of writing instruction.

By the 1950's American education had swung into another conservative phase. Although "progressive" and "new" educational philosophies were not obsolete, they no longer held center stage. Technology continued to advance and Russia's launching of Sputnik in 1957 pushed the United States fully into the technological race. As the nation progressed as a leader in technology education did reap some benefits. Yet, there were negative outcomes from this technological growth as well. Teaching practices became more automated and mechanical, and encouraged student passivity. William Van Gil, the Chair of the Department of Secondary Education at New York University during the early 1960's, noted that the ideas that had occupied John Dewey were no longer being widely spoken about, and teaching practices seemed to revert to a traditional view of the student as a vessel to be filled with knowledge. This time, however, the traditional approach had a new technological twist:

American education in the early 1960's is engrossed with the application of

technology to education, by means of educational television, language laboratories, courses on film, and programmed learning through teaching machines. (Van Til 67)

Although we have come to use technology in the classroom more advantageously in the last decades of the twentieth century, during the time in which expressivists rhetorics began to emerge in the 1960's "teaching machines" and "programed learning" had become a part of the American classroom, promoting once again a mechanical view of teaching and learning. This general mechanical approach to teaching was reflected in writing instruction as well. "Current-traditional" rhetoric was in vogue, and by the 1960's most writing classes focused on mechanical skill and "correct" style, and any emphasis on process and the student's role in self-expression was rare. Writing was not seen as generative nor as an act of discovering meaning. When students wrote they did not focus on invention or ideas but rather were taught to focus on the product and to practice writing in certain models or modes. In reaction to this, the pedagogies that we have come to call "Romantic" or "expressivist" reentered the educational conversation. D. Gordon Rohman's work on "pre-writing" refocused composition instruction from mechanics, style, and product to invention and process. The 1966 conference at Dartmouth College on the teaching of English emphasized self-expression and an

active rather than passive model for the teaching and learning of writing.

What I am arguing, then, is that expressivist rhetorics are linked to the Romantics and to Mill, Arnold, and Dewey, in that they arose in response to similar kinds of social circumstances or historical patterns and not only through direct influence. Expressivists such as Berthoff, Elbow, and Murray build their theories on foundations similar to those of the earlier poets and philosophers. In fact, the crux of expressivist theory is based on a desire to create a pedagogy that not only cultivates writing capabilities, but develops students' minds to their greatest capacity. A pedagogy that works toward these ends according to expressivist doctrine, relies on what I have identified in the philosophies of the Romantics and in Mill, Arnold, and Dewey as discovery, experience, reflection, and imagination. These are the Romantic ideas that have flourished in response to mechanical and passive educational philosophies and product-centered writing instruction. While neo-classical rhetorics and cognitive writing theories also arose in reaction to product-centered writing instruction, these approaches still viewed writing as a linear and hierarchical activity which could be analyzed in terms of separate units or stages. Expressivist theory, however, does not view the act of composing as linear or

hierarchical, but rather as a blending of experience, reflection, discovery, analysis, synthesis, reason, and imagination. It is in this recursive blending of these "vital" actions that we can see the Romantic legacy.

This project is not, however, a definitive genealogy of Romantic ideas, but, in its larger scope, a critique of anti-Romantic and anti-expressivist arguments and most importantly a defense of Romanticism in its original richness, a richness that has contributed not only to the work of three very influential philosophers, but to expressivist rhetorics as well. There are many names, in fact, that I might invoke in a discussion of the influence of Romanticism on current composition theory: James Moffett, William Coles, Ken Macrorie, James Britton, Walker Gibson, Toby Fulwiler, Janet Emig, D. Gordon Rohman, Peter Elbow, Ann Berthoff, and Donald Murray. I will focus on the last four, all of whom have been associated at some point with expressivist rhetorics. Discussions on the aspects of their pedagogy and theory that relate directly to the tradition of British Romanticism, however, have been few in number and limited in scope. If, for example, the relationships have been noted between freewriting and spontaneity, or between pre-writing and the imagination, the notation of likeness has been merely cursory and without full recognition of the complexity and depth of the ties to

the Romantic poets. I have chosen these four scholars, moreover, because D. Gordon Rohman's highly influential article in 1965 on pre-writing is a key expressivist document, and because Murray, Elbow, and Berthoff are the most often beleaguered representatives of the expressivist movement. They are recognized as having Romantic assumptions at their theoretical center, but at best this recognition is cursory and is seen as a negative attribute. Yet, the grounding for their theories includes the most admirable of Romantic assumptions: the belief that students should be given every opportunity to cultivate the encompassing intellect.

As I have noted, the expressivist ties to Romanticism have thus far been merely surface recognitions. Lester Faigley, for example, notes that "good writing" according to expressivists includes essential qualities of Romantic expressive poetry ("Competing Theories of Process 529). He mentions "integrity, spontaneity, and originality," but he does not explore the complexity and richness of the larger Romantic philosophy from which expressivist ideas such as spontaneity arise. Similarly, Richard Young, although he admits that we lack "the historical studies" that permit generalizing with confidence, notes that the expressivist position seems

a reaffirmation of the vitalist philosophy
of an old romanticism enriched by modern

psychology. It maintains that the composing process is, or should be, relatively free of deliberate control; that intellect is no more in touch with reality than non-logical processes; and that the act of composing is a kind of mysterious growth fed by what Henry James called "the deep well of unconscious cerebration (1934 p. 23)." Above all, it insists on the primacy of the imagination in the composing process. ("Arts, Crafts, Gifts, and Knacks" 55)

Young points to the expressivist ties to Romanticism but he glosses over the major elements without supplying any of the "historical studies" that would show whether current expressivists actually are descendants of Romanticism, and if so, how these ideas of "mysterious growth," "unconscious cerebration," and "imagination" play themselves out in expressivist theory and pedagogy.

What I will show, through a less cursory examination than either Faigley or Young offer, are the specific ways in which certain Romantic ideas are incorporated into the theories and pedagogies of current expressivist rhetoricians. What will become evident as the expressivist ties to Romanticism are more fully articulated is that the theories and pedagogies of teachers such as Donald Murray, Ann Berthoff, and Peter Elbow form a coherent group of ideas that are founded on shared assumptions which do indeed include the "primacy of the imagination," as well as "unconscious cerebration," and "spontaneity." This is not to say, however, that each of these expressivist scholars is

identical to the others in theory or practice, for certainly, as Lovejoy argues for Romanticism, "there is . . . plurality of romanticisms, of possibly quite distinct thought-complexes" (68). Yet, just as Wellek counter argues in the debate on Romanticism, I would submit that among expressivists there are, in spite of various differences, "a unity of theories" that "form a coherent group of ideas" ("The Concept of Romanticism" 182). Thus far, as the passages from Young and Faigley suggest, the identification of these unifying theories have been merely noted but have not been explored in any depth.

Before turning directly to Rohman, Berthoff, Elbow and Murray, however, I would like to begin with a brief digression on Francis Christensen as a way of further showing how the Romantic influence will often appear in theorists and teachers who have not typically been labeled expressivists. Christensen, I suggest, was in fact Romantic in his philosophy on the construction of sentences and paragraphs even though he is often defined as a "formalist," a term usually used in opposition to expressivism (Gere 31). Christensen's "A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence" first appeared in the October 1963 issue of *College Composition and Communication*.¹ Although Christensen is not generally perceived as an expressivist, this essay and the work that followed on the generative paragraph are grounded in

Romantic theories of language. My point in looking briefly at Christensen is to underscore my belief that the Romantic influence is more pervasive and profound than we have realized.

In "The Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence," Christensen expresses his discontent with the traditional approach to the teaching of sentence-production. He suggests that "tear-out work books and four-pound anthologies" are ways of avoiding the hard work it would take to make a difference in student understandings of language. It may not seem likely, at first glance, that a discussion of the grammatical unit of the sentence, written from such a great distance in time from Wordsworth and Coleridge, would bear their influence. But the method Christensen would like to see in place of workbook drills is Romantic in theory. "We need," he argues, "a rhetoric of the sentence that will do more than combine the ideas of primer sentences. We need one that will *generate* ideas" (Graves 110).

Christensen perceives language as the Romantics do: as productive and creative. He suggests that when writing is successful it is not merely ornamental and static. Thus, Christensen offers the cumulative sentence as the foundation for generative writing because it is "dynamic rather than static, representing the mind thinking" (111-12). The

representation of the "mind thinking" is a key Romantic concept. Christensen's position here is the one articulated by Wordsworth and Coleridge in response to the eighteenth-century view of language. It is their belief that language is creative, and their poems in effect are meant to be the linguistic representative of "the mind thinking."²

Moreover, Wordsworth rejected the use of personification when used merely as ornamentation, because like Christensen he sees language as generative. When using personification in his own poetry, Wordsworth insisted that he was not using it for ornamentation, but that it grew naturally out of the passion and the language and context of the creative moment.

In his discussion on the grammar of the sentence, Christensen relies on organic analogies in order to establish that the cumulative sentence mirrors live and productive language in action. The cumulative sentence, says Christensen, is "probing its bearing and implications, exemplifying it or seeking an analogy or metaphor for it, or reducing it to details. Thus the mere form of the sentence generates ideas" (112). Coleridge's position on language also relies on an organic theory. In the Preface of *Aids to Reflection* he reminds us that words are "living powers," and in a letter to Godwin that words are "parts and germinations of the Plant," they are "Things, and living Things too" (*Collected Letters of STC* Vol. 1 626).

In this cursory gloss of Christensen's position on language, we can see that the "Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence" bears a Romantic influence. And in his argument against a traditional grammar and for a generative one, Christensen is searching for a theory and method that reveals "the language as it operates" rather than one that "leaves everything, to borrow a phrase from Wordsworth, 'in disconnection dead and spiritless'" (112). I am not suggesting that the Romantic influence is the only one that Christensen's work reveals. It would be hard to imagine, for instance, that an article written in 1963 about "generative" language might not bear the mark of Chomsky as well. What I am suggesting, however, is that the Romantic influence is perhaps more pervasive, profound and valuable than we have previously explored, and in my consideration of Rohman, Murray, Elbow, and Berthoff I hope to illuminate what some of those deeper Romantic ties might be.

D. Gordon Rohman

It is much less surprising to find Romantic metaphors and Romantic ways of "knowing and doing" in D. Gordon Rohman's 1965 article on Pre-Writing ("Pre-Writing: The Stage of Discovery in the Writing Process") than in Christensen's "The Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence." The assumption underlying the practice of pre-writing is

that students can write well, with "originality" and "spontaneity," if they can just discover the "exceptional power of revealing experience by expressing it first to [themselves] (Pre-Writing), and then to others (Communicating) so that we recognize the experience as our own too" (108). Rohman believes, then, that pre-writing allows the writer to discover experience.

Further, pre-writing for Rohman is tied to generative thought, and thinking he describes as "that activity of mind which *brings forth* and develops ideas, plans, designs, not merely the entrance of an idea into one's mind; an active, not a passive enlistment in the 'cause' of an idea . . ." (106). Thus, pre-writing is a creative act, defined in terms kindred to the Romantic Imagination. In fact, in their study on pre-writing, Rohman and his colleagues "sought ways for students to imitate the "creative principle" itself which produces finished works" (107). Much like Arnold's call for non-mechanical exercises that would introduce "creative activity," the pre-writing activities are meant to stimulate the imagination, the "dynamics of creation," so that good writing can occur. And "good writing" itself is an imaginative act according to Rohman, which closely resembles Coleridge's description of the creative imagination:

The meaning of writing is the meaning of the combination, the pattern that the

meaning of the many words makes when fused by a writer's consciousness in the moment of "discovery." (107).

Good writing comes from shaping, through a combinatory act (Secondary Imagination), patterns determined in an experience (Primary Imagination), an experience discovered through pre-writing. Worthwhile writing, says Rohman in a truly Romantic fashion, is that discovered "combination of words" which allows for "fresh and original" insight.

In order to help students "imitate the creative principle itself," Rohman and his colleagues employed the keeping of journals, the practice of religious-like Meditation, and the use of analogy as teaching techniques. The use of analogy, writes Rohman, enables us "to know anything in our present simply because we have known similar things in our past to which we compare the present. Each act of present 'knowing' associates the present with the past as another instance" (111). This associative or analogical "knowing" is a way of "rearranging and reassembling the focus of our experience" (111). Thus, this use of analogy is creative. Further, argues Rohman,

analogy also provides practice with the concrete world of the five senses, and, by enlisting the student writer in a personally-experienced encounter with his subject freshly seen from the perspective of a new analogy, we have provided him with the "motor" to make his subject "go" for him. (111)

In other words, analogy can help the student, as Wordsworth puts it, to "throw over" an incident "a certain colouring of imagination," and thereby lead to poetry in the poet's case, and good writing in the student's.

Since Rohman's assumption is that writing is a "personally transformed experience of an event," he suggests the technique of Meditation as a method that might give students "an inner knowledge transforming their 'events' into 'experiences'" (109). What he is after here, though perhaps in a less extreme way, is the sort of mystical experience that Wordsworth retells in the boat-stealing episode in *The Prelude*. Taking the boat onto the lake was merely an event, but Wordsworth's "meditative" powers, his ability to "transform" this event into an experience, brought the mountains alive and closing rapidly upon his back. This was an event that he transformed into an experience powerful enough to play a part in shaping the philosophical mind of the poet. Rohman sees the practice of Meditation achieving the effect of an experience no longer merely happening "to you but *in* you" just as it happened with the young Wordsworth. Since Pre-Writing and Meditation issue "from the same sort of dynamic interplay of self and world," the Meditation can help lead to the imitation of the creative principle that Rohman assumes Pre-Writing is.

Rohman's students were also asked to keep journals in which they wrote daily. They were given a long list of

questions that would hopefully provoke them to discovery of "what they believed, what they felt, what they knew" (109). Rohman and his colleagues were attempting to guide the students into the kind of reflective state that Coleridge, Arnold, and Dewey demand of the educated mind. Rohman explains that "in the process of introspection, formalized by the daily writing in the journal, we hoped to mobilize the consciousness of every student writer" (109). In other words, his hope is to foster, through reflective writing, the "distinct consciousness" that Coleridge claims comes from the same source: self-reflection.

In D. Gordon Rohman's initiatory article on Pre-Writing (bear in mind that in the twenty-five years following its publication that pre-writing became a term inevitably associated with expressive rhetorics), we can find a methodology that is based on Romantic assumptions about the creative imagination. He believes that as teachers we must foster experience and reflection in our students so that the "creative principle" can be imitated through pre-writing.

Donald Murray

Donald Murray, one of the best-known writing teachers in the field, has been talking and publishing about the process of writing since the early 1960's. He might be

seen, in fact, as one of the earliest of what we today are calling expressivist rhetoricians. He is usually noted as such because of his insistence on the importance of the process as opposed to product and the value he places on individual voice. At any rate, he is clearly another composition specialist whose theory and practice have deeper roots within the Romantic tradition than those usually observed. Murray often argues, for instance, that writing courses must go against the traditional classroom techniques and curricula. He makes this case because, as Wordsworth and Coleridge were over a hundred and seventy years ago, he is aware that real learning rarely takes place in classrooms that focus on rote memorization and passive reception of facts. He strongly believes that students do not learn to write under the circumstances or method of teaching that Dewey calls the "phonographic disc" method in which teachers' impressions are "described" upon the student's mind. In response to writing courses grounded in the traditional educational schemes, Murray offers a theory and pedagogy of composition which he hopes will foster what I am calling the encompassing intellect.

Like other Romantic philosophies on pedagogy, Murray's model for the teaching of writing is based on discovery of the inner self, perception, and reflection. These, in turn, lead to imaginative thinking and writing. While reflecting

on a piece of his own writing, for instance, he chronicles the progression from perception to the moment when the writing comes together:

There is the surprise of *perception* that I *experience* when the character in my novel saw no color. There is the surprise of *recollection* when I heard that terrible cough left over from a previous war. There is the surprise of *connection* when I relate my surprise in writing . . . There is the surprise of celebration when we *re-create* something. . . the surprise of *pattern* when a *whole complex of connections* click into place on the page. [emphasis added]
 ("Writing and Teaching for Surprise"
Expecting the Unexpected: Teaching Myself--and Others--to Read 9)

In this discussion on surprise we can see a list of terms that as a whole are clearly Romantic in complexion:

"perception," "experience," "recollection," "connection," "re-create," "pattern," "whole."

As the Romantics argued, to see, feel, hear, smell, and taste the outer world allows for the growth of the inner self; to actively engage the senses tills the soil of the soul for the fertile harvest of experience. The ability to perceive through all the senses leads to what Wordsworth has called a more "lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness . . . a greater knowledge of human nature"

(Preface to the Second Edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* 737).

And, in "Frost at Midnight," while speaking of the future education and mental growth of his infant son, Coleridge likewise stresses the importance of communing with, of

perceiving through the senses, the mountains, lakes, and shores of the natural world. Along with this external world, "Frost at Midnight" portrays the poet's mind at work, looking inward, perceiving, as it were, the internal world of the self.

Murray, recognizing the importance of gaining experience through perception, has incorporated this Romantic philosophy into his teaching. The full intellect, and thus the capable writer, is like the satellite, says Murray. The writer actively places herself in strategic places so that she is always "receiving" and "collecting" (*Write to Learn*). Murray's metaphor of the satellite antenna, though it might appear a non-Romantic metaphor, is in some ways analogous to Wordsworth's "wise passiveness." Although this receiving through the senses can be merely passive, it is, as Wordsworth suggests, "wise" because the passive receptiveness is the basis for perceiving and experiencing, and being wisely passive leads to growth of a great mind. Murray has said that the writing course is the practice of perception (*Learning By Teaching* 117). In "Internal Revision: A Process of Discovery," Murray discusses what he calls "prevision":

This term encompasses everything that precedes the first draft--receptive experience, such as awareness (conscious and unconscious), observation, remembering; and exploratory experience such as

research, reading, interviewing, and note-taking. (*Learning by Teaching* 73).

Experience, the process of taking inward what the world offers, is an important step toward effective writing, and learning to perceive leads to experience.

The reflective state is also a must in learning to write well for Murray. If we do not cultivate reflection, according to Murray, we will not be able to make meaning through language. Today's world does not allow the time needed for the inward looks afforded by reflection, and thus, Murray makes a point of starting the day with stillness in which he may "stare vacantly out the window" and into himself, "notebook open, pen uncapped" (*Reading for Surprise* *Expecting the Unexpected* 21). If he bypasses the reflective state, the writing will not work. It will be like trying to make "mashed potatoes pass through a keyhole." In order for it to work, we must return to that "reflective state" where we can "play with language, connecting and disconnecting, listening for voice" (*Writing and Teaching for Surprise* *Expecting the Unexpected* 8).

This reflective state can also result in what Murray calls surprise. Surprise for him is like Wordsworth's and Dewey's spontaneity. It is when something suddenly arises from within us. It is finding the unexpected. It is when we put ourselves in touch with the perceptions, feelings, and experiences that we have internalized. It is yet

another form of self-discovery. And the "wonderful thing about surprise" says Murray in "Writing for Surprise," is that "the more you experience surprise the easier it becomes to experience it. Surprise breeds surprise. And you can learn to be patient at your desk waiting for surprise to land" (*Expecting the Unexpected* 6). Once it has "landed," this surprise is likely to be the nugget for a good piece of writing.

It is important to note here that surprise in Murray's terminology, and spontaneity in the Romantics', is not something that just happens if people are lucky, and does not happen if they are down on their luck. Rather, surprise and spontaneity are cultivated through receptivity and reflection. It comes out of perception, feeling, experience, and practiced reflection. They come from opening the mind to experience. As David Perkins explains in *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Sincerity*, spontaneity

begins in a concrete immediacy, and goes on to ponder it in discursive terms. Out of a particular experience and reflection upon it, the poetry builds toward a moment of insight, when a general truth seems to break upon the mind with compelling force.
(23)

Surprise for Murray is this "moment of insight" as it "breaks upon the mind." Thus, the habit of reflection allows for the mind, as Wordsworth puts it in the Preface, to be "connected with important subjects" (Second Edition

735). Once the connection is made, Wordsworth can compose "blindly" (Preface Second Edition 735), just as Murray lets his pen be "the blind man's cane."

Murray's privileging of surprise is also tied to the Romantic idea of organicism. The writing should come as "easily as leaves to the tree" as Keats argues, from a "germ within" as Coleridge suggests, or as the "tree does from the vital principle that actuates it" as Wordsworth says. Not to let the writing take this organic path is to place the writer at risk. Murray cautions, for instance, that "we run the danger of closing down thinking, exploration, and discovery" if we impose pre-established form to the surprise, the insight, or the writing. What we must do, urges Murray, like the Romantics before him, is to trust to the organic nature of creating meaning--the organic nature of the imaginative act. It is a mistake to "pay too much attention to genre at the wrong time," he warns ("First Silence, then Paper" *Expecting the Unexpected* 45). Instead, we need to allow the surprise, the thought, the word, or the line to "lead us to form. And it should" (45).

Further, it is Murray's belief that if we have a theory and pedagogy for writing that cultivates discovery, perception, and reflection, we not only have a basis for surprise and spontaneity, but for the imaginative act of making meaning out of language as well. He sees writing as

active and creative, for instance. It calls on innumerable imaginative processes. It is, in his view, ever moving, ever changing perception, collecting, focusing, and ordering. Writing makes "meaning out of chaos" ("Reading for Surprise" 24). The language that Murray uses when he speaks of this act of meaning making is akin to the Romantic imagination:

Words . . . allow us to play with
information, to make connections and
patterns, to put together and take apart
and put together again, to see what
experience means. In other words, to think.
(Write to Learn 3)

Murray's passage echoes Wordsworth's definition of the imagination as a "modifying power" capable of "consolidating numbers into unity, and dissolving and separating unity into number." It is very close to Coleridge's definition of the Secondary Imagination which, Coleridge claims, shapes perception and experience into patterns and connections by fusing together and taking apart.

In Donald Murray, then, we can find kinships with the Romantic poets. Some of these ties are to the more complex Romantic traditions that he also shares with Mill, Arnold, and Dewey such as the belief in discovery, feeling, perception, experience, and reflection. We can note parallel theories of organicism and similar descriptions of imaginative acts. Finally, we can recognize, in Murray's strategies for the teaching of writing, the Romantic poets' educational ideas for the fostering of the philosophical

mind. We can see Murray's attempts to cultivate the intellect so that the student's imaginative mind can make meaning through language. As Murray tells his students, in words which resonate a clear Romantic tone, "write and look to yourself, pay attention to what you feel, what you say, how you say it, how you create a situation that makes your best writing possible" ("Reading while Writing" *Expecting the Unexpected* 108).

Peter Elbow

Peter Elbow, well-known as a composition theorist since the late 1960's, must be acknowledged in any discussion of Romantic rhetoric. Current scholars in the field continually place him as an expressivist, primarily, it seems, because of his focus on freewriting and voice. Both freewriting and voice are philosophical and pedagogical aspects of any discussion on writing for Elbow, because they naturally arise out of a concern with the writing process.

Freewriting, as Elbow describes it, is simply writing without stopping for five or ten minutes, simply letting the words tumble out and onto the page. The goal is not good, polished writing, but a stream of consciousness. The focus is on the process, not the product. If we write freely during the first stage of our writing process according to Elbow, we "will warm up all [our] faculties" (*Writing With*

Power 10). In *Writing Without Teachers*, Elbow describes this process as "cooking" and "growing"--metaphors that would feel quite comfortable to the Romantics. Once the faculties are warm, the possibility then exists for entire pieces of writing to "cook perfectly" in our heads. These pieces will "grow out of that magic which some excellent writers can call on at will: simultaneous creativity and critical thinking" (*Writing With Power* 10). The sort of spontaneity that Elbow suggests happens with freewriting is the surprise that Murray cultivates. This spontaneity comes from stimulating what lies within our unconscious. Once tapping what lies below our consciousness the good writing can begin to flow, just as Coleridge claimed it did for him in the creation of *Kubla Khan*.

Elbow also claims that freewriting can help in the development of a writer's voice, and what voice in writing implies for him is "words that capture the sound of an individual on the page" (287). "Writing without voice," he claims, "is wooden or dead because it lacks sound, rhythm, energy, and individuality" (299). Elbow's project for the contemporary writer is like that of the Romantic poets for their poetry. They rejected, for instance, much of eighteenth-century poetry which they felt was "dead and spiritless" precisely because it lacked the "energy and individuality" which came with infusing the writing with the experiences, feelings, passions, and voice of the poet.

In his quest for what he identifies as voice, it is easy to assume that Elbow neglects quality. Elbow himself acknowledges that he faces these charges (*WWP* 300), but one way in which he finds freewriting valuable is that in spite of the fact that it can turn out "careless, excessive, or self-indulgent writing," it can also nurture voice and lead to good writing. Thus, in his answer to the charges that he ignores quality, Elbow retorts:

My theory of voice helps me trust my own taste and deal with the accusation that I don't care about quality. I now see that caring about quality has two different meanings and springs from two different temperamental approaches to writing. On the one hand caring about quality implies a hunger to stamp out terrible writing. A hunger to destroy defects, failing, excess, and ugliness. I don't have this hunger. I am content to let people write much that is bad . . . On the other hand, caring about quality implies hungering for excellencies, wanting the real thing, not settling for mere adequacy. That's me. I want the moon. (301)

Elbow is not ignoring quality. He is out to get what is "real" and moving, exactly I would add, what the Romantics wanted for their poetry. As Elbow unabashedly admits, he and his students produce much that is not top-notch writing, just as the Romantics wrote a great deal of second-rate poetry. Nonetheless, Elbow's students do produce good writing and the Romantics have given us some of the greatest poetry of the English language.

Elbow also argues that there are many benefits that arise from student writers' search for voice. It can lead them "toward new thought, feelings, memories and new modes of seeing and writing" (*Writing with Power* 284). In effect, it leads to discovery on many levels. It also prompts reflective writing which leads to a "greater connection between their writing and themselves," which in turn leads to "growth or development" (284). Reflection occurs because the search for voice means exploring "angry feelings, perhaps depressed feelings, perhaps a particular area of their lives" (284). Coleridge felt that a lack of reflective thinking and writing led to stasis, but that active self-reflection led to mental growth; Arnold believed that the instructor's "prime direct aim is to enable a man to know himself and his world" in order to take any worthwhile action which could lead to intellectual development; Elbow believes that freewriting and the search for voice are catalysts to reflective thinking and writing which result in "growth or development" (284). The growth Elbow speaks of might come about through writing to voice anger, hurt, or betrayal. The crux here is feelings, and giving vent to feelings gives way to the sorts of healing and growth that Mill found inherent in Wordsworth's poetry.

Elbow is careful to explain more fully what he means by feelings and emotions as they relate to good writing,

however. He is aware that he may have "made real voice sound as though it is always full of loud emotion" (312). His message is not that writers must always be writing lots of "strong feelings," but that they must "experience" what they are writing about. He means something "much closer to 'should see and hear' than 'should feel strongly'" (333). Elbow grants that feelings naturally occur when we experience something fully but that strong feelings alone do not make good writing, and often, in fact, make bad writing. To be good, says Elbow, writing must come out of the "event or scene itself" (334). In order to experience something again we must go back and "see, smell, and hear everything":

Direct all your efforts into experiencing-- or re-experiencing--what you are writing about. Put all your energy into connecting with the object. Be there. See it. *Participate* in whatever you are writing about and then just let the words come of their own accord. (335)

Elbow further concentrates on ways of experiencing and ways to bring about re-experiences because like Wordsworth he believes that the ability to really experience something is educated out of children:

As children get older and more sophisticated, they get better at making the kind of *refusal* to experience that most adults are good at. At a certain age--often adolescence--we see a child working overtime to strengthen these refusal muscles. (321)

In poems like "We Are Seven," Wordsworth is arguing that the ability to imagine, to experience or re-experience, has

vanished by adulthood. The adult in this poem insists that the little girl and her siblings are five in number, not seven, since two "in the church-yard lie." The child, however, is re-experiencing play as it was when her siblings were alive: she is able, as Elbow puts it, to "see, hear, and smell everything": "'Nay'," says the child, "'we are seven!'" Like the Romantics' desire to maintain the "fresh gaze of a child with the obstinate integrity of a man consulting his own experience, and hence thinking outside traditional categories or interpretations" (Perkins 65), Elbow wants his students to be able to experience in order to think and write well.

Ann Berthoff

Ann Berthoff is forthright about her ties to Romanticism, and in fact, calls on Coleridge at every turn. He is, according to Berthoff, "our best guide in developing a philosophy of rhetoric" (*The Making of Meaning* 64). Her philosophy and pedagogy of composition are based on the idea of "reclaiming the imagination" and she uses Coleridge's definitions of the imagination as her starting point.

Berthoff argues for the "reclaiming of the imagination" as a necessity because positivists have relegated it to what they call the "affective domain." Berthoff understands, however, that in its complexity the Romantic imagination

does not pertain solely to emotions and feeling as opposed to thought. She sees the imagination, as Coleridge does, a way of knowing and making meaning. Its domain includes both thought as well as feeling. The imagination, in Berthoff's scheme, is synonymous with the "active mind." It is akin to Arnold's "vital knowledge" and Mill's "vigourous" mind. She defines and redefines the imagination throughout her various works in Coleridge's language: it is "the shaping spirit"; it is a "doer, an agent"; it is the "form-finding form-creating power"; it is, she says, as Coleridge wrote "in one of the most famous passages in the literature of criticism . . . , 'the living power and prime agent of all human perception'" (*The Making of Meaning* 28).

Berthoff's point is that once we have restored imagination to its proper realm, we have the perfect theory on which to build a pedagogy for composition because it gives us a basis for generating a concept of "forming":

Its power lies in the fact that it makes possible so many fruitful analogies between writing and all other acts of mind whereby we make sense of the world. *Imagination* can help us form the concept of forming. Forming depends on abstraction, symbolization, selection, "purposing"; it requires or enables us to coordinate and subordinate, to amalgamate, discard, and expand; it is our means of giving shape to content. (*The Making of Meaning* 4)

Here we not only see Berthoff's allegiance to the Romantic definition of the imagination, but to the idea that

language, or writing, is in itself a creative and forming act as well. "When we write," she says, "we represent our recognitions of relationships: that is what *composing* means" (*Reclaiming the Imagination: Philosophical Perspectives For Writers and Teachers of Writing* 1).

For Berthoff as for the Romantics and Mill, Arnold, and Dewey, the imagination is a crucial part of a fully capable intellect, and she relies on the Romantic means of nurturing the imagination in her own method of teaching. She suggests that as teachers we must realize that "perception" is an important model for the "process of making meaning" (*The Making of Meaning* 46). She argues that every composition course should begin with activities meant to stimulate observation because the ability to see and re-see is vital to the imagination. Observation is so important because looking closely is active and engages the mind. Without an actively engaged mind, no composing will take place. She recommends writing assignments such as a detailed record of ten minutes of observation and reflection carried out daily for a week. Close "descriptions and speculations in response to a seashell, a milkweed pod, a chestnut burr, or any natural object" could reap a rich harvest for the mind. But we must remember to "think of perception as *visual thinking*" or as Dewey would also argue, observation becomes a mechanical exercise for the sake of producing "vivid

detail about nothing much" as opposed to what it really is: the "mind in action" (64).

A theory of imagination not only provides occasions for the practice of perception, in Berthoff's estimation, but it gives us a new way to approach language instruction, even at the very basic level of the sentence. She concedes that "drill can teach youngsters--and college freshman--how to correct faulty sentences in workbooks," but drill is inadequate because it "cannot teach them to write substantial, readable sentences" (*The Making of Meaning* 24). To really "compose" sentences and not just glue together "somebody else's pretend subsentences, we will have to know something about language as . . . a means of making knowledge" (24). Language, and thus writing, for Berthoff as for her Romantic mentor, are alive and powerful. Writing creates meaning. It is an act of forming and shaping. It is the recognition of relationships. The process of composing is analogous to the imagination in action.

Berthoff offers the double-entry notebook as a pedagogical technique that arises from a theory of the imagination, and thus one that can teach students to "really compose." Her approach is to have students write continuously in a spiral-bound notebook. On the right side they make reading notes on "direct quotations, observational notes, fragments, lists, images--verbal and visual" (*The*

Making of Meaning 45). On the other side they make notes and observations about their original entries. The double-entry format, suggests Berthoff, "provides a way for the student to conduct that 'continuing audit of meaning' that is at the heart of learning to read and write critically. The facing pages are in dialogue with one another" (45). In the double-entry notebook Berthoff brings the processes of reading and writing together. She believes that writing in this way can help develop a critical method of reading as well as writing because it gives students access to watching a text come into being, in this case their own. It also encourages the habits of "reflective questioning in the process of reading" (45), which, we will remember, is what Coleridge urges us to do in *Aids to Reflection*. If we do not consider each part of the text in relation to ourselves through this kind of reflective questioning, then, according to Coleridge, we cannot cultivate the "educated mind" or what I call the encompassing intellect.

Berthoff also finds the double-entry notebook useful in that it sets up a dialectic in the juxtaposition of entries, which is important to Berthoff's method and theory of imagination because she believes that composing is a dialectical process. Through this dialectic students are able to generate new meaning. Here again her affinity with Coleridge is a strong one. In the creation of art, in the

voluntary action of what Coleridge calls the Secondary Imagination, are embedded reflective and dialectical processes. For Coleridge this dialectic takes the form of the "reconciliation of opposites." As the mind is engaged in the creative act of finding "multeity in unity," it engages in a dialectic of self and world, matter and spirit, nature and mind, object and subject. As the mind engages in this dialectic, meaning is forged through a "progression of contraries." Berthoff's aim for the composition of new meaning through dialectic is similar. When students write, observe, and reflect about nature, about objects, about their world, about their reading, writing, and thinking in the double-entry journals, they are faced with the dichotomies between subject and object, self and world, mind and nature. As they return to their original entries to summarize, formulate, find likeness in difference, they are performing the creative act of composing--forming new meaning.

If this dialectical process seems potentially chaotic for students, it is. In "Learning the Uses of Chaos," Berthoff argues that "learning to write is a matter of learning to tolerate ambiguity" (*The Making of Meaning* 71). She notes that chaos is scary for both students and teachers, but that if we give in to it and understand it can enhance composing. "Meanings," argues Berthoff, "don't come

out of the air; we make them out of a chaos of images, half-truth, remembrances, syntactic fragments, from the mysterious and unformed" (70). It is these sorts of "mysterious and unformed" images and remembrances from which Coleridge claims to have created the poem "Kubla Khan." And likewise, it is from chaos that the Kubla Khan decrees his "stately pleasure dome" within the poem. If, as teachers, we can encourage our students to accept chaos by cultivating Keats's negative capability as Berthoff argues we can, or as Coleridge has done in the creation of "Kubla Khan," they begin to find meanings which "can be discerned taking shape within it" (70-71). Berthoff suggests that the way to do so is to design assignments that let student writers discover the potential of language by playing with it, working it, pushing it to its limits. They must reflect on it and recognize that it is dynamic. If we can design courses that allow this then students will learn to tolerate ambiguity and chaos. And since chaos generates language, argues Berthoff, students "can learn to write by learning the uses of chaos, which is to say, rediscovering the power of language to generate the sources of meaning" (70).

Ann Berthoff is one of the most philosophical of composition scholars writing today. Much of her philosophy is grounded in the complex theories of knowing and creating that Coleridge set forth in the *Biographia Literaria*, and

she continually relies on his definitions of the imagination. She understands, as Coleridge did, that in order to write or compose we must "learn to intuit," to "see how things are related," to "grasp" the "relationship of parts to the meaning of a whole" (*The Making of Meaning* 57). She demands that we "reclaim the imagination," because once we have done so, we have a method for teaching that "recognizes the human need and ability to shape, discriminate, select" (29).

Murray, Elbow, and Berthoff, the three scholars still active in the teaching of composition, are not carbon copies of each other. Their interests, theories and pedagogies do vary. Yet, they also share certain characteristics and assumptions that arose in the 1960's with the advent of the New Rhetoric which sparked an interest in writing as a process. They hold the belief that writing is a complex process, and thus writing pedagogy should focus on this process, and they contend that our students will not learn to write well until they understand writing as a process. This is not to say that the written "product" is not important. Rather, they argue, a poem, a story, an essay, or a research paper does not mysteriously appear, in finished form, on the page or screen in front of us.

Their theories differ from other process-oriented writing theories such as neo-classical and cognitive

approaches, however, in that an expressivist does not see the process in terms of linearity, hierarchy, and in discrete units that can be clearly separated into stages. Linda Flower, the leading proponent of cognitive approaches for writing instruction, has written that her goal is to make "unconscious actions a little more conscious: to give writers a greater awareness of their own intellectual processes, and therefore the power and possibility of conscious choice" (*Problem Solving Strategies for Writers* vi). Her desire to make more conscious the "unconscious actions" indicates that Flower finds the expressivist attempts to cultivate the imaginative intellect ineffective because they result in a model for composing that is too muddled. In other words, the expressivists' rather global approach to the writing process remains unarticulated and thus unconscious. Yet, expressivists also try to make "conscious" how these more "unconscious actions" of the writing process work. Having students write about and examine their writing and thinking is an attempt to articulate the more unconscious aspects of writing; and certainly, Donald Murray's pedagogical use of professional writers talking and writing about their works is also an attempt to make conscious the actual working out of the writers' imaginative and composing processes.

It is not in trying to make conscious the unconscious, then, that expressivists and cognitivists differ. Rather,

it is in how to make this transformation take place. Flower, in order to bring forth the hidden aspects of composing, separates the process of writing into "distinctive parts" (vii). She builds a model of composing that can take place in stages. While expressivists do not object to Flower's using scientific methods to research the ways in which writers compose, they do object to a pedagogy that is founded on the hierarchical models that represent her vision of the composing process. Expressivists fear that this separation of the process into parts and stages can lead students and teachers to view writing in a simplistic light. They also believe that the cognitivist approach tends to sever the affective realm from the cognitive creating the potential to reduce the complex human intellectual and imaginative aspects of writing to a mechanical set of writing strategies.

Cognitivists, then, believe that expressivist theories are too nebulous to help students become better writers. And while expressivists can find value in cognitivist approaches as a research tool, they find fault with a pedagogy that bases itself on cognitivist composing models because, according to expressivist scholars, writing is not a set of distinctive processes but a process of discovery and coming to knowledge through an imaginative act. Writing is an act of the whole being for expressivists, and it is

through reflecting, questioning, feeling, experiencing, reasoning, and imagining that writers come to be. While this might seem an ambitious and ideal approach to writing instruction, I would argue that it is just such an ideal that we need to hold in order to truly educate students in a system that denies the emotive, creative, and imaginative aspects of the intellect.

The expressivist theories of Rohman, Berthoff, Murray, and Elbow, arose in reaction to a conservative educational system which denied the more creative aspects of the intellect and which promoted a theory of writing instruction that privileged passive learning, rote drills, and the written product over the process. Twenty years later we are still facing a less than enlightened educational system and Elbow, Murray, and Berthoff are still working against this system, each in his or her own way. Rather than standing in front of a classroom filling passive students with grammatical rules and the "correct" reading of a work of literature, these teachers are placing students in an active and participatory role in their own learning processes. Ann Berthoff's students, for instance, work in dialectical notebooks, responding in writing to what they read, think, and observe. Rather than being told how to read and write, her students develop, through work in the double-entry notebooks, their own methods for critical reading and

writing by engaging in "reflective questioning." Peter Elbow uses groups for developing a critical method of reading and writing. Students working together in these groups engage in dialogue about the texts being written and read. They are actively thinking, reflecting, questioning, and discovering. Likewise, Donald Murray subverts the traditional teaching model by making the student/teacher conference the center of his pedagogy. When the student enters into a discussion with Murray she is the "expert" and she makes decisions about her own writing. Through this close one-on-one dialogue, she learns to probe, question, reflect, and discover for herself. She may indeed be an inexperienced "expert," and she may in fact make many ineffective decisions about her work. But, as Murray would argue, it is in these false starts and failed attempts that real discovery, real learning, and thus real writing, takes place.

I have chosen to focus my discussion on D. Gordon Rohman because his article on pre-writing is a key expressivist document, and I have selected Murray, Elbow, and Berthoff because I find them the most often identified as expressivists, and also the most misunderstood or caricatured as expressivists. While scholars and teachers might recognize that these three have ties to Romanticism, they have not examined the underlying assumptions in depth.

The Romantic and expressivist privileging of spontaneity, for instance, is not usually understood as a skill that arises only as the result of practice and through cultivating a certain habit of mind. In extending this examination of the ties between the Romantics and Murray, Elbow, and Berthoff further than other critics have, I am attempting to show that the theories and practices of these four contemporary scholars are a complex and valuable reincarnation of what is most worthwhile in the educational and poetic theories of the original Romantics.

Their Romantic pedagogies foster in students the ability to create knowledge through writing. Rohman, Murray, Elbow, and Berthoff promote teaching practices which cultivate "authentic" voice--a voice which, contrary to what most of our students come to us with, is powerful and alive. And particularly interesting in light of the pervasive view that expressivists are primarily practitioners and lack a theoretical center is the fact that they not only share assumptions held by the Romantics, but that they share much of the same philosophical grounding as three men who are generally seen as profound thinkers and philosophers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries--Mill, Arnold, and Dewey. Like Dewey, they understand that having experiences and being able to know and name those experiences play a vital role in the discovery and creating of writing and coming to

knowledge. They share with Mill, Arnold, and Dewey the belief that education must not deny experience, must not separate the emotive from the analytical, but instead must capture what is most vital: feeling, experience, reflection, creativity. And like Dewey, Arnold, Mill, and the Romantics before them, Rohman, Murray, Elbow, and Berthoff, in an attempt to counter-act a pedagogy that views learning as passive and writing as a mechanical act, nurture the opportunity for students to reflect, question, and think deeply in order that the imaginative mind, the "encompassing intellect," can flourish.

The traditions and philosophies of Romanticism are clearly present in many of our composition theories and pedagogies. In fact, as Albert O. Wlecke and D. Gordon Rohman recently argued at the 1990 Conference on College Composition and Communication in Chicago, there is much of modern society that is deeply rooted in Romanticism.

Moreover, as M. H. Abrams says of Wordsworth:

he has affected our consciousness and our culture. Either directly or by way of his influence on other writers, he has altered the way we perceive and describe not only the natural world, but our own selves and other men and women, as well as the ways in which we respond to what we perceive. ("The Strangeness of Wordsworth" 45)

As the field of composition begins its exploration of social-epistemic theories, it will attempt to break free of many of these Romantic ties. Perhaps some of these roots do

need to be severed, but perhaps it would serve us better to graft many of these Romantic roots to the new shoots of the social-epistemic rhetoric. There is much in expressivist theories and pedagogies, and in their heritage of British Romanticism, that is worthwhile.

Endnotes

¹ The version I am using is collected in Richard L. Graves' *Rhetoric and Composition*.

² My oversimplification here does a disservice to the Romantic view on language. Their theories are complex and insightful. Three essays that I find helpful in understanding Romantic theories of language are A.W. Phinney's "Wordsworth's Winander Boy and Romantic Theories of Language," Jonathon Ramsey's "Wordsworth and the Childhood of Language," and Gene Ruoff's "Wordsworth on Language: Toward a Radical Poetics for English Romanticism." Also of interest is Isobel Armstrong's *Language as Living Form in Nineteenth-Century Poetry*.

CHAPTER IV
MISREADINGS AND REREADINGS OF ROMANTICISM:
NEW LIGHT ON OLD PROBLEMS

As new educational and rhetorical theories arise, many valuable aspects of Romantic philosophy and expressivist rhetorics are falling into disrepute. The attacks on Romantic rhetorics, although sometimes justified, often rely not only on a misunderstanding of the theories of particular expressivist rhetoricians but on a caricature or misreading of the tradition of Romanticism from which they evolve. In this chapter my defense of expressivist rhetorics will revolve around three levels of argument: that there are general myths surrounding Romanticism which have become commonplace and thus play a part in the reaction against expressivism; that stereotyping expressivists because of a denigrated view of Romanticism does a disservice to the complexity of expressivist theories; and that not only can we correct some of these caricatures or myths surrounding Romanticism and expressivist theories by looking to the Romantic tradition and understanding it better, but that this glance backward might also offer the opportunity to open up current expressivist pedagogies to new possibilities. Thus, I hope to remind readers of the positive aspects of expressivist theories and pedagogies, to

disinfect the term "Romantic" from some of the false associations that have hampered a more positive view of current Romantic rhetorics, and to widen the term "Romantic" for those who have conceived of it too narrowly.

The historian Jacques Barzun has pointed out that the twentieth century has harbored an "anti-Romantic animus" (*Classic, Romantic, Modern* xi). When we consider how pervasive and relentless the disparagement of Romanticism has been, it is not surprising that a theory of rhetoric which has been identified as a descendant of Romanticism should come under attack as well. Much of the aversion to Romanticism, however, seems based on caricatures of the Romantic poets, caricatures which have their roots in false images either perpetuated by the poets themselves or by the satirical portraits of Romantic contemporaries like Thomas Love Peacock.¹

Peacock's sympathies were with neoclassical critical principles and he adroitly parodies a number of ideas popularized by Wordsworth and Coleridge. Feigning Wordsworth's voice, Peacock manages to portray the Lake Poets as idealistic nature freaks who have no use for society, and who walk around being showered with "poetical impressions":

"Poetical impressions can be received only among natural scenes: for all that is artificial is antipoetical. Society is artificial, therefore we will live out of

society. The mountains are natural,
 therefore we will live in the mountains.
 There we shall be shining models of virtue,
 passing the whole day in the innocent and
 amiable occupation of going up and down
 hill, receiving poetical impressions. . .".
 ("The Four Ages of Poetry 495)

Although satire is sometimes based on some truth in what is being ridiculed, we must also remember that satire makes its case by reduction and simplification. From a passage like this arises the false sense that the Romantics were merely "nature poets" who saw themselves as virtuous souls in a decaying society. While the Romantics were idealistic and even they promoted a caricature of themselves as brooding, isolated, and lonely poets, they were actually less so than either they or Peacock portray.

Peacock goes on, this time in his own voice as literary critic, to suggest that the Romantics lacked reason and intellectual rigor, and to denigrate the imagination to a form of "fantasy": "[the Lake Poets] remaining studiously ignorant of history, society, and human nature, cultivated the fantasy only at the expense of the memory and the reason" (495). He also offers a scathing interpretation of the Romantic focus on feeling: "The highest inspirations of poetry are resolvable into three ingredients: the rant of unregulated passion, the whining of exaggerated feeling, and the cant of factitious sentiment" (486).

Jacques Barzun's cultural history of Romanticism, *Classic, Romantic, Modern*, explains that extreme views of

Romanticism like Peacock's became accepted though unfounded generalizations that promoted the twentieth century's negative view of Romanticism. Some of these widespread generalizations include the idea that Romanticism is stupid, anti-intellectual, fanciful, irrational, sentimental, an exaggeration of individuality, and overly emotional.²

The Romantic emphasis on imagination, creativity, and process, for instance, has often resulted in a charge of anti-intellectualism. We can see how this has leaked into discussions on composition when Richard Young reminds us that a "frequently heard accusation against the new romanticism" is its lack of academic and intellectual "rigor" ("Arts, Crafts, Gifts, and Knacks" 56). This general accusation picked up additional force when some expressivist rhetoricians dropped all reading from their writing courses and advocated that the students own writing be the primary text in the class. Donald Murray, for example, taught writing courses at the University of New Hampshire where the only required reading was the reading of the texts generated by the students in the course. This was in response, it seems, to the traditional Freshman English course, which was not specifically a writing course. Rather, it was taught as another literature course which required the typical literary analysis. Murray himself explains in his recent anthology of reading expressly for

composition classes that the typical approach to the teaching of writing did not allow students to make any connection between the problems they faced in their own drafts and the finished products they were reading: "When I first taught Freshman English I had to follow a syllabus that forced the students to read prose models that the students--and I-- could not relate to the problems they face in their own writing" (xiii). Although Murray's intent was admirable--to connect reading to the actual writing process--he might well have added to the already prevalent belief that anything "Romantic" lacks "rigor."

Moreover, it is quite possible that individual expressivist teachers have unintentionally curtailed intellectual activity in the classroom through an attempt to bring imagination, feeling, and spontaneity to the forefront. If for example, teachers allow students to write whatever and however they wish in the name of "creativity," or "spontaneity," while too often ignoring craft, content, revision, or the needs of an audience, then this charge is credible. I would urge expressivists, then, as well as those who wish to condemn Romantic educational theories on the basis of anti-intellectualism, to re-examine what the Romantics actually practiced.

The Romantics believed strongly in the importance of intellectual activity. Shelley wrote insightful and

knowledgeable essays on many subjects, including love, religion, and politics. Coleridge was a philosopher as well as a poet, and perhaps one of the best read thinkers of all time. Moreover, his lectures on Shakespeare remain a standard in the literary canon. In *Aids to Reflection* he argues not only for reading, but for reflection, analysis, and synthesis of that reading. It is a misunderstanding of Wordsworth, perhaps, that has most promoted the belief that the Romantics were anti-intellectual. If poems such as "Expostulation and Reply" and "Tables Turned" are read at face value, severed from Wordsworth's fuller philosophy, then it appears that he indeed might be privileging frolic with nature over intellectual activity. But Wordsworth was adamant about books and study, not only for himself, but in his plan for a successful national education as well.³ Finally, a study of all of the Romantic poets and their works reveals their thorough knowledge of the greatest works of science, history, art, and literature, not only of their own time, but of the past.

If we look closely at what the Romantics can offer a theory for education and rhetoric, it is a far cry from anti-intellectual. They simply argue for a different sort of intellect--one that is representative of the human mind working to its fullest capacity, an imaginative and synthesizing mind. It is study of books and study of nature,

it is reason and imagination, but not anti-intellectualism, that allow for the encompassing intellect. In turn, this fuller intellect fostered in our students can result in the ability to think and reflect deeply, and to create ideas and solutions. It is this that expressivists want for students and not merely the ability to repeat such memorized "facts" as dates and definitions, as Dickens' Bitzer does in *Hard Times*. As Ann Berthoff would argue, without an imaginative mind capable of "forming," composition becomes a mere act of drill rather than an act of making meaning.

Expressivist rhetorics have also been negatively appraised if not dismissed on the grounds that pedagogies which arise from the Romantic tradition are premised on a view that successful writing occurs only through inspiration or through genius. Unfortunately, this is another case where the Romantics help to paint a caricature of themselves. Linda Flower, for instance, argues that the myth of the inspired writer arose from Coleridge's introductory remarks on how he composed the poem "Kubla Khan." "Coleridge's account of his experience," explains Flower, "contains four major elements of the myth of inspiration" (*Problem solving Strategies for Writers* 42). In his introduction to "Kubla Khan" Coleridge suggests that the creative vision comes without effort, fully articulated, that it comes in a matter of moments, and that it cannot be

repeated because it is a gift from the muse. Flower finds that expressivism falls short as an effective theory for writing instruction, then, because this Romantic "myth of the inspired writer" does not take into account cognitive processes and such writerly strategies as problem solving and goal setting, and because the myth breeds passivity in students who would believe in inspiration and the muse rather than in hard work and the practice of successful writing strategies. John Gage argues that students learn to believe that "'Writers are born not made.' 'Writers are sensitive people, gifted with imagination'" ("Why Write?" 17). This belief, says Gage, is "mixed up with another general superstition, perpetuated by the culture, that writers are special people, an idea that has its origin in the romantic adulation of writers as a class . . . The romantic belief is a strong one, and it helps to kill the motivation of students who have struggled with mastery of technique" (17). Patricia Bizzell, like Gage, finds that her students accept the idea of writing as inspiration--the students seem to like the idea of "instant text production" ("Composing Processes: An Overview"). She further points out that her students are not alone in this fantasy of "instant text production." Bizzell suggests that it is "part of a more general notion in our culture, a sort of debased Romantic version of creativity wherein verbal

artifacts are supposed to be produced as easily and inevitably as a hen lays eggs" (49).

Here, Flower, Bizzell, and Gage illustrate my point about the way in which general myths surrounding Romanticism have entered the conversations about current rhetorical theory. It is true that we have come to view artists and poets as special beings blessed with transcendent power. This probably does have its roots in Romanticism as Gage suggests, perhaps because the Romantic self-projections, the poet figures in the poetry of the Romantics, emanate a blessed and special quality, and also because, as Flower points out about the introduction to *Kubla Khan*, the poets liked to give readers the sense that their poems and creative visions just happened upon them. Yet, in larger works such as the *Biographia Literaria* and the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, their theories on the making of poetry and the poet are less "adulating." Although the poets did believe they had a greater "sensibility" than the general population, they were not as elitist as Gage implies; the Romantics believed that this "sensibility" was something that could be cultivated.

Just as the accusation that the Romantics believed in a myth of the inspired writer is somewhat justified, the accusation that expressivists similarly hold to a notion of good writing as inspired, mysterious, and as some sort of

gift in not unfounded. Scholars like William Coles, for instance, have suggested that writing is an art, and since art cannot be taught as a mere skill, we cannot really teach writing as writing ("The Teaching of Writing as Writing" 111). While I agree with Coles that writing is much more than a skill and that if it is to be "good" writing it should not be taught as though it is a skill or a formulaic procedure, it still remains that it is dangerous to conceive of writing as an art or gift of genius. If we have a classroom where some students have god-given inspiration and others do not, or if we propose a theory that assumes good writers are inspired or must have innate genius, then an oppressive and undemocratic classroom has been predetermined. There are, after all, very few of our students whom we would classify as "genius," and thus there is no hope in the writing classroom for the majority of our students because we have automatically created an underclass.

David Russell sees this sort of undemocratic and oppressive end to expressivist pedagogy:

At the level of public policy, then, Romantic assumptions about composition have a particularly significant effect. If composition is an individual response to inner promptings, a mysterious process, then some will be prompted and some will not. Those who are not may be excluded. Sometimes that exclusion is direct: a student is not admitted, or admitted only to certain programs . . . At other times

the exclusion is more subtle: a student is excluded from an education that empowers her to take a leadership role in society because an institution assumes that many (or most) of its students cannot write well enough to receive such an education, or that they cannot be taught . . . to write. ("Romantics on Writing: Liberal Culture and the Abolition of Composition Courses" 144)

I am not arguing against Russell's point that public policy is affected, sometimes for the worse, if institutions assume that good writing happens only through inspiration or that composition cannot be taught. Rather, my point of departure is with what Bizzell hints at when she notes that the myth of instant text production is a Romantic idea which has been "debased." I will be more blunt and call it an understandable, but misuse nonetheless, of the term "Romantic."⁴ To misconstrue Romantic ideas about genius and inspiration has consequences: it confines expressivists to a theory of composing that is limited and perhaps damaging to students; and it allows critics of expressivism a convenient reason to dismiss expressivist rhetorics as too problematic to be useful. If we return to the Romantics in order to understand more fully what it means to be the "inspired writer" then perhaps this issue will become less of a stumbling block. Critics might be less likely to cast out what is good about Romantic rhetorics with what is bad, and perhaps it will offer expressivists new insight, not only into their heritage, but into the complexities involved

with the composing of "good writing." We can also begin to correct for our students the misconceived notion of inspiration and genius so that they do not continue to believe in the idea of "instant text production" and so that "motivation is not killed" for those who have worked hard to "master technique."

Both expressivists and their critics who argue that expressivist theories suggest students must be geniuses or inspired to write well are confusing the education of the imagination or "encompassing intellect" with the production of a great poet or artist. Wordsworth and Coleridge probably would argue that an imaginative education is a precondition of becoming a great poet, but they nowhere suggest that it is *only* great poets who have imagination. Wordsworth, for example, believed that the imagination is innate, as his poetry about children suggests, but that it is "educated" out of us. He believed that the imagination can be cultivated and nurtured in all people, and since the imagination is the key ingredient for genius, he believed that genius is also innate but that it needs to be drawn forth with the right kind of education. Coleridge was more skeptical of this belief because he held that all people have Primary Imagination but not all are capable of utilizing the Secondary. However, the Secondary Imagination can be put into motion by a mind self-consciously aware of

its own imaginative potential (*Biographia Literaria* XVII). Like Coleridge's discussion of the educated mind, this claim that the imagination can be voluntarily invoked points to the Romantic faith that people can nurture an imaginative mind. Thus, when we examine issues of inspiration, genius, and the imagination in this light, the negative criticism that a Romantic pedagogy does not work because our students are not poetic geniuses is less credible.

To expressivists who claim that we might as well not teach composition because good writing happens only when those few students who have genius and an imaginative mind happen to be struck with inspiration, and to critics who disregard Romantic rhetorics because of a debased understanding of Romantic inspiration, I suggest that a closer look at Romanticism will offer an alternative reading. I have already discussed the question of genius. Ideally, the issue of inspiration takes care of itself through the entire enterprise of cultivating in our students an encompassing and imaginative intellect. In other words, when the mind is properly prepared, inspiration becomes a habit, not an occasional gift from the muse.

In *The Prelude*, Wordsworth has written:

for I neither seem
To lack that first great gift, the vital soul,
Nor general Truths, which are themselves a sort
Of Elements and Agents, Under-powers,
Subordinate helpers of the living mind:
Nor am I naked of external things,

Forms, images (Book I 149-155)

This passage identifies "general Truths," "external things" and the "vital soul" as necessary seeds for the growth of the philosophical mind. At least two of these core ingredients--"vital soul" and "external things"--also become essential to the educational philosophies of Arnold, Mill, and Dewey. Likewise, they have traversed time and are inherent in the theory and pedagogy of current expressivists such as Elbow and Murray. Each has made the point that if we foster what Wordsworth calls the "vital soul" or "living mind" we are promoting observation, perception, experience, discovery, feelings, and reflection. These, in their entirety, allow Wordsworth to compose poetry that appears to be spontaneous and inspired, allow Elbow to tap into the "good writing that can just flow," and allow Murray the surprising "moment of insight," not just occasionally, but on a regular basis for almost any writing task. In other words, inspiration for the Romantics, and for most Romantic rhetoricians, is not a phenomenon that is random and involuntary. As Coleridge says, the creative act is motivated by "voluntary will," and in the Preface to the Second Edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* Wordsworth suggests that it is practice that makes the poet different from the nonpoet: "from practice . . . a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those

thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement" (737).

The problem for a theory and pedagogy of writing, of course, lies in the fact that a writing course lasts ten to fifteen weeks--certainly not enough time to cultivate an encompassing intellect in students. Yet, it is Wordsworth's "practice" that Romantic rhetorics foster and hope to set into motion, not just for ten or fifteen weeks, but for a lifetime. However, when expressivists advocate pre-writing, freewriting, searching for voice, and discovery as ways of not only inducing "good writing" from our students but as a way of incorporating writing into their lives and for initiating the continued growth of the intellect as well, they are saddled with the unwarranted criticism that the expressivist approach sees no writing "worth doing" but writing for discovery. This is yet another way in which expressivist rhetorics are unfairly disparaged. Maxine Hairston, for instance, misreads expressivists on this point:

They [Murray, Elbow, Coles, Berthoff] believe that we create meaning by writing, that meaning does not exist as a separate entity to be communicated by writing. They hold that the essential features of good writing are originality and an authentic voice. These teachers seem to believe that every time students write they should do Class III writing [what Hairston calls reflective writing], spending substantial

time on discovery and working through several drafts to find out what they mean. They imply that no other writing is worth doing. ("Different Products, Different Processes: A Theory about Writing" 449)

Hairston is correct that expressivists believe "students should write to discover themselves and to make sense out of their world," but they do not imply that other kinds of writing are unworthy. In *Writing With Power*, Peter Elbow spends many pages discussing writing strategies for tasks that do not lend themselves to discovery, drafting, and reflecting. What Elbow does argue is that doing reflective writing and writing for discovery whenever possible can make one a better writer and thinker, thereby helping out in any writing task. Like Wordsworth and Coleridge, he is talking about "personal," "authentic," and "emotive" writing as necessary to the growth of self and mind, not that it is necessary for every written document. Like Mill, he realizes that the emotive cannot be separated from the analytical without consequences.

Elbow addresses these misguided criticisms himself when he tells his reader that

in the short run there is probably a conflict between developing a real voice and producing successful pragmatic writing--polished pieces that work for specific audiences and situations. . . Deep personal outrage, for example, may be the only authentic tone of voice you can use in writing to a particular person, yet that voice is neither appropriate or useful for

the actual document you have to write.
(*Writing With Power* 307)

Elbow would argue that a quick five- or-ten minute freewrite might clear the mind of this outrage, thus allowing for the faster construction of the appropriate text. The feelings are not denied but remain a counterpart to the analytical approach which produces the "appropriate" text.

I would argue, finally, that much of what creates the "vital soul," and thus what creates the most fertile opportunities for successful writing, can be taught to our students. We can, for instance, teach them to feel, to know and understand their passions through such exercises as Peter Elbow's freewritings and through personal journal writing. We can take the important step of teaching them to reflect on their feelings, thoughts, observations, perceptions, and experiences as Ann Berthoff does with her double-entry notebook. There is much that we can teach, and if we take our cues from the Romantics, perhaps we can envision and define a pedagogy that makes insight and inspiration a recurrent aspect of every student's daily thinking, and of the majority of their writing tasks, from the most mundane to the most artistic. If, on the other hand, we choose to teach writing as a skill of form and style and not as an act of thinking, or an act of the creative and imaginative mind, there will be very few students indeed who will become "good writers."

As this discussion on inspiration, genius, "vital soul," and good writing illustrates, it is difficult to discuss Romanticism and expressivist rhetorics without "emotions" and "feelings" creeping into the conversation. At the beginning of this chapter I noted that there are certain myths, usually negative ones, surrounding Romanticism which have become commonplace. The Romantic concern with the emotive has resulted in one of these general misunderstandings. It has become a generally accepted cultural assumption that to be "Romantic" is equivalent to being overly sensitive, sentimental, and emotional. Likewise, there is a general feeling that expressivist rhetorics are "touchy feely," overly indulgent, and inappropriately tolerant of students wallowing in their own feelings. Admittedly, expressivists, especially Peter Elbow, do not balk at the idea of bringing personal feeling into the educational arena and the writing classroom; thus, it is easy to see how this assumption continues to thrive.

As I pointed out in my earlier discussion of Peter Elbow (Chapter 3), learning to write well relies a great deal on learning to write with a "real voice." Elbow believes that the search for voice means exploring feelings: "angry feelings, perhaps depressed feelings" (*Writing with Power* 284). This search for voice, in turn, is a catalyst to the sorts of reflective thinking and writing which result

in "growth or development" (Elbow 284). If we remember, Elbow indicates that intellectual development might come about through writing to voice anger, hurt, or betrayal. His point is, finally, that these feelings, whatever they may be, are crucial. However, just as it is wrong to view the Romantic poets as overly emotional, it is mistaken to assume that Elbow's students are allowed to devote an entire writing course to indulging their feelings.

Elbow is not advocating raw emotions and feelings as good writing even though they are part of fully experiencing something. He is advocating the Romantic version of experience and Wordsworth's and Dewey's belief that expression is at its best when an overflow of powerful emotion is recalled and recreated through language at a later time, not at the moment of the overflow. That is, as Wordsworth puts it in the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, "Our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representations of all our past feelings" (1815 735). What is important here, but often forgotten or ignored, is that Wordsworth's poetry is not written at the moment he is overwhelmed with raw feeling, but it is written from a distance while re-experiencing some event that yielded those strong feelings. This is exactly Elbow's point when he says that good writing arises out of the re-experience, the participation in an

event. Peter Elbow is aware that people misconstrue the part emotions play in his rhetoric, and thus he makes a point to explain that writing is not just "loud emotion" (312), but rather, as Wordsworth argues, a "recollection in tranquillity."

Relevant to this discussion on emotion is the notion that the Romantic emphasis on personal feeling, greater sensibility, and experience is a reflection merely of the inner self and therefore meaningful only to the individual. The Romantic poets' focus on self-discovery and personal vision are often interpreted as outright self-centeredness or egocentrism. In fact, this interpretation lies behind the fact that a focus on the personal seems to have entered into the general lore surrounding Romanticism as the "radical individualism" that Barzun identifies as an undeserving general accusation. In a similar vein, expressivist rhetorics appear to have been infused with this generally held misconception, and are perhaps too unthinkingly thought of as self-centered and "radically" individualistic (Berlin "Rhetoric and Ideology" 492). The Romantic notion of self, however, is more complex than these charges assume. Once again, in order to share with expressivists a deeper understanding of their heritage, and to dispel the tendency to stereotype expressivists because an ill-conceived myth has spilled into the ways in which we

view current expressivist rhetorics, I would like to point out that it is a commonly held misconception that Romanticism is primarily subjective to the point of egocentricity.

Perception, observation, and reflection led the Romantics to a sharpened sense of empathy which allowed them to go beyond egocentrism. Coleridge makes it clear that the poet should transcend personal interest and any form of radical individualism. As poets, indeed as human beings, we should

live in the universal, to know no self but that which is reflected not only from the faces of all around us, our fellow-creatures, but reflected from the flowers, the trees, the beasts, yea from the very surface of the waters and the sands of the desert (From *The Philosophical Lectures*, quoted in Wellek 162)

For Wordsworth, poetry exists primarily to work on human feelings for the purpose of reaching mental and moral happiness. He thought the circumstances of the poet were often a buffer to what others actually suffered in the world; thus, he believes sympathy and empathy are critical:

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious, that while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an

entire delusion, and even confound and
identify his own feelings with theirs.

(Preface 737)

Wordsworth also argued that one of the functions of poetry is to agitate people out of their "savage torpor" and "spread relationship and love." He aspired to give people more feeling in order to create not only happy and moral individuals, but a happy and moral society, and he saw his job as a poet to bring all of society together: "the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time" (Preface 738).

Blake has said that the most sublime act is to give up the self for another, and scholars have noted that Keats was sincere, generous and open-minded, having "extraordinary sympathetic and tolerant understanding of other people" (Bate *Major British Writers* 317). Keats's concept of "negative capability" suggests that one way to grasp the complexities of life is by negating our own egos while being imaginatively open-minded, sympathetic, and receptive to differing kinds of experience.

Shelley, too, believed in an individualism which did not create an unfeeling or isolated self. In *A Defense of Poetry*, he argues that a moral and just society relies on "love":

or a going out of our own nature, and an
identification of ourselves with the

beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. (Noyes 1101)

Within the Romantic enterprise, then, is the undergirding for a rhetorical pedagogy that is based on the opposite of radical individualism or egocentrism.

Those of us who teach first-year college students are painfully aware just how easy it is for students to get stuck in the subjective, to believe what they think and feel is more important than what anyone else feels or has to say. In light of this, it is possible, in fact probable, that some Romantic rhetoricians, in their hope to foster uniqueness, personal vision, and voice, have focused on individualism in such a way as to promote an already predisposed egocentricity that does not result in empathy. Many have not, however. Peter Elbow echoes Coleridge's cry for living in the "universal," for instance, when he argues that an organism cannot grow, the mind cannot grow toward knowledge, unless we allow ourselves to be "swallowed by what is different from the self--to merge or expand into what is different" ("The Pedagogy of the Bamboozled" *Embracing Contraries* 97). Elbow's "doubting and believing" game promotes a methodology for learning that is based on empathy. It is, in fact, a concept reminiscent of Keats's

"negative capability."⁵ "The believing game," says Elbow, "is essentially cooperative or collaborative":

the central event is the act of affirming or entering into someone's thinking or perceiving. It tends to imply a pluralistic model of knowledge--namely, that truth is often complex and that different people often catch different aspects of it; and that we get closer to seeing correctly by entering into each others' conflicting perceptions or formulations. ("Methodological Doubting and Believing" *Embracing Contraries* 289)

Like Keats, Elbow is aware that empathic action often leaves one with a chaotic or disjointed feeling. Elbow suggests that this uncomfortable feeling comes from a reluctance to practice "believing" or empathy, and Keats argues that it is the ability to sit comfortably with chaos or uncertainty that is valuable: to be "capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason" (*Letters* December 1817).

Donald Murray, though he differs from Elbow in that his pedagogy seems less obviously based in empathy, is also an expressivist who tries not to foster an egocentric individualism in students. In fact, he urges students toward an empathetic understanding of otherness. In *Write to Learn*, Murray's text for student writers, he writes:

Another way to make yourself receive information that may be helpful to you as a writer is to practice empathy, the ability to put yourself in other people's skins. We can imagine what it might be like to be rich if we are poor or poor if we're rich,

to be a policeman, to be selling or buying.
(33)

In addition to role-playing, he urges students to make personal contact with people. Observe and join a child at play, he might suggest. Or interview a poor person in order to find out what it is like to be without food and medicine, to hear first-hand about the pangs of hunger. Just as empathy allows Keats to take part in the existence of the sparrow that comes before his window, Murray wants his students, through observation, imaginative role-playing, and interviewing, to be able to take part in the existence of the lives of other people. He wants them, through their receptiveness, sympathy, reflection, and ultimately their writing, to discover other worlds, and make connections which make them aware, allowing them the greater possibility for communicating through language with those who are different from them. So, as I have argued, the Romantic self is not based on an individualism that supersedes concern for others. Nor, as Murray and Elbow show us, do current expressivist rhetorics necessarily promote egocentricity or negative forms of individualism in this regard.

The simplification of the Romantic philosophies of the self and of the pedagogical theories of Romantic rhetoricians does not stop with issues of empathy and understanding of others. Unfortunately, Romantic theories

have perpetuated a sense that audience is unimportant. It is true that previous to the Romantics poets saw pleasing an audience as the major concern of artistic endeavor, and that part of what is so revolutionary about Romantic thought is the importance of the individual vision. It is a major shift in artistic orientation when the mind in the act of creation and composing becomes a major part of the rhetorical situation and the role of the audience seems subordinate to this vision. And although this shifting to include the importance of the individual vision can be interpreted as slighting the importance of audience, it certainly does not exclude all concern with audience.

Wordsworth, for instance, usually evaluates his poetry by its effects on the reader. He recognized that in order to gain the effect that he wanted he had to revise and perfect technique. There is overwhelming evidence of Wordsworth's laborious and constant revisions of both his theoretical discussions and his verse. Further, until recently critics have viewed Wordsworth as a poor theorist, or illogical in the argument he makes in the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*. This view is changing, however, and critics now recognize the rhetorical nature of Wordsworth's Preface. John Nabholtz, for instance, sees the Preface as a rhetorical work in which Wordsworth is attempting to build a relationship between himself as writer and his audience as

reader (*"My Reader, My Fellow-Labourer": A Study of English Romantic Prose*). Although Anhradha Dingwaney and Lawrence Needham take issue with Nabholtz's reading, and believe that Wordsworth was not uniting reader and writer, they nonetheless argue that the Preface is audience-directed and "rhetorical in a specific sense" because it "seeks to clear the way and create a taste for the *Ballads* by taking to task those 'codes of decision' (and the audience which subscribes to them) standing in the way of a genuine appreciation of the poems; by doing so, it seeks to *influence* the subsequent reception of the *Ballads*" ((Un)Creating Taste: Wordsworth's Platonic Defense in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* 334). And Coleridge, in spite of his attempts to make his poetry appear as though it came effortlessly and fully forged from the mind, always worked to create a product of careful and conscious organization. Finally, let us not forget that like most poets, the Romantics meant their works to be read and taken seriously by an audience: "Poets do not write for Poets alone" (Wordsworth Preface 739). In fact, the Romantics were the first generation of writers to appeal directly to the reading public, not to patrons.

The propensity for Romantic rhetorics to face similar criticisms--that their focus on spontaneity and personal voice slight the importance of audience--seems natural considering how regularly the ill-conceived generalizations

surrounding Romanticism have become commonplace today. Once again, Donald Murray helps to distinguish deserved criticisms from an unwarranted criticism that takes its power from a stereotype of Romanticism. He serves as an example of an expressivist who does not suppress the rhetorical importance of audience through a focus on the self. Murray does not allow his own writing, or that of his students, to remain egocentric or isolated from a wider audience. He pushes his writing, and that of his students, beyond the personal and private to the social. Murray is, after all, a poet, novelist, journalist, and regular columnist for the *Boston Globe*. As a writer, his goal is to reach an audience. He has written innumerable articles on audience and revision (eg. "What Makes Readers Read," "Write Research to be Read," "Teaching the Other Self: The Writer's First Reader," "Make Meaning Clear: The Logic of Revisions," "The Maker's Eye: Revising Your Own Manuscripts"); his texts always contain discussions on this part of the writing process, and his class is structured so as to pursue the craft of continuous revision. His students draft, and they meet in conferences with Murray and then draft again. They try countless leads and conclusions. They rewrite the same paper in a different style or voice. Sometimes they work on one project, continuously revising throughout the semester.

Because Murray believes that the most accurate definition of writing is "the process of using language to

discover meaning in experience and to communicate it" (*Learning By Teaching* 73), he advocates moving from what Linda Flower calls "writer-based" prose to "reader-based" prose. "Communication" is the key word, and the end goal, for Murray and his students. If you can order information, he says, "into significant meaning and then communicate it to others [you] will influence the course of events within town or nation, school or university, company or corporation" (*Write to Learn* 4). The awareness, the empathy, the greater understanding of self and others gained by Murray's students are set before the world in an attempt to understand and communicate. Contrary to what critics of Murray's pedagogy might think, this focus on self in his teaching philosophy does not totally eclipse the importance of audience.

Peter Elbow seems an easier target than Donald Murray for the accusation that expressivist rhetorics ignore audience more than they ought to. In fact, a major difference between Elbow and Murray is what Murray recently revealed to me as his obsessive need for closure and a relentless call for revision. Though Elbow does not ignore revision, he seems much more at ease with a lack of closure and with putting the emphasis on invention, and Murray makes no bones about this difference between them.

At any rate, it is certainly clear that audience is not the central element of Elbow's rhetorical teachings. Elbow

acknowledges that there are charges of "audience dismissal" pending against him when he states: "It will be clear that my argument for writing without audience awareness is not meant to undermine the many good reasons for writing with audience awareness some of the time" ("An Argument for Ignoring Audience" 50). That Elbow anticipates resistance to his position is not surprising when a few paragraphs later he takes the controversial stance that "ignoring audience can lead to better writing--immediately. In effect, writer-based prose can be better than reader-based prose" (53).

Yet, those of us familiar with Elbow's work know that he does directly address the issue of audience in his texts. In *Writing With Power*, for instance, he writes:

They [readers] don't have us with them as they read and they lack all those cues they would get from watching our movements and hearing our tone of voice and emphasis. In writing we must get the words on the page so clear that there's no need for audio-visual aids. Thus, readers in their solitariness need more of the very things that writers in their solitariness are most likely to omit. The moral of the story is obvious: pay lots of attention as you write to your audience and its needs. (177)

Elbow is aware that the most "frequent weakness in the writing of beginners . . . is too little attention to the needs of the reader" (178). This is why discussions of audience remain important, even in the expressivist's classroom.

Admittedly, audience is not the primary focus for Elbow, because like Murray, Elbow believes that a premature emphasis on audience can have deadly effect on student writing: "some of their worst writing--both jumbled and flat--comes from worrying too much about audience" at the inappropriate time (178). He returns to this argument in the more recent "An Argument for Ignoring Audience" as well: "It is not that writers should never think about their audience. It's a question of when" (51). And when the time is wrong, suggests Elbow, not only is bad writing the result, but the process of making meaning comes to an abrupt halt. Elbow has placed his argument about audience in opposition to that of neo-classical rhetoric:

Notice that two pieties of composition theory are in conflict:

- (1) Think about audience as you write (this stemming from the classical rhetorical tradition).
- (2) Use writing for *making new meaning*, not just transmitting old meanings already worked out (this stemming from the new epistemic tradition I associate with Ann Berthoff's classic explorations) (53).

As with the Romantics, the onus for expressivist teachers has shifted from audience as the cardinal rhetorical concern, especially at the beginning of a writing task, to personal voice and vision, to what the writer is trying to say. Nonetheless, audience remains a part of the rhetorical situation. I suspect, however, that most people in the discipline of composition understand Elbow's

argument. They may not agree with him, but nonetheless they probably realize that Elbow is not advocating that students flatly repress their concern for audience in all writing tasks.

I would certainly grant, however, that students might misunderstand Elbow's teachings unless we apply his theoretical stance with care. I sense the possibility for misconstruing Elbow's perspective on audience is linked to the cultural assumptions surrounding the "myth of the inspired writer" that I discussed earlier. When teachers such as Murray and Elbow focus on personal voice and vision it is easy for students to cling to Bizzell's notion of "instant text production." As she notes, the result of this notion is a resistance to revision. "After all," students might think, "this is my personal vision. I said it in my voice how I wanted to say it, and it was inspired." From here it is an easy leap for students to resist revision and to deny that an audience should have any impact on their writing. What seems crucial, then, is that we be extremely careful when we apply Elbow's argument for ignoring audience, and that we be sure that the focus on personal vision does not continue to reinforce a misunderstood version of Romantic inspiration.

It is interesting to see how the denigrated theories of the Romantics come into play with current rhetorical

theories when Elbow himself writes, "To celebrate writer-based prose is to risk the charge of *romanticism*: just warbling one's woodnotes wild. But my position also contains the austere *classic* view that we must nevertheless revise with conscious awareness . . ." ("An Argument for Ignoring Audience" 55). Elbow seems to wish to dissociate himself from the Romantic tradition from which his theories have evolved, perhaps because he has not considered an interpretation that sees Romanticism as already containing the delicate balance between raw material and revision. Romanticism is not advocating "warbling one's woodnotes wild," and it is worth offering another interpretation so that expressivists, and their students and critics, begin to realize that the Romantic tradition offers a version of inspiration that comes only after hard work and much practice. Even "an inspired piece of writing" is laboriously revised in light of an awareness of audience.

Recent criticisms by scholars such as Karen Burke LeFevre and James Berlin who align themselves with theories of marxism, social construction, or social-epistemic rhetorics find expressivist theories lacking because they seem to focus on the individual as opposed to the relationship that involves the dialectical interaction among writer, community, and social, political, and economic conditions of existence. Karen Burke LeFevre has written,

for example, that within the Romantic tradition "the inspired writer is apart from others and wants to keep it that way" so as to "prevent himself and his creation from being corrupted by society" (*Invention as a Social Act* 17).

And James Berlin has claimed that

expressionistic rhetoric is intended to serve as a critique of the ideology of corporate capitalism, proposing in its place an ideology based on radical individualism. In the name of empowering the individual, however, its naivete about economic, social, and political arrangements can lead to the marginalizing of the individuals who would resist a dehumanizing society, rendering them ineffective through their isolation." (492)

LeFevre's criticisms are at least partially founded on the debased commonplace definitions of Romanticism that Jacques Barzun has found so prevalent. Of course, the myth of the inspired and solitary writer, since it is so widely accepted, will continue to do the damage that LeFevre reports until we actively debunk it as I have been trying to do throughout this chapter. Berlin's charge against expressivism is also tied up in the misinformed generalizations surrounding Romanticism, but the misunderstanding lies with expressivists themselves and not Berlin. What Berlin presents is a clear case of expressivist theory gone awry in its application. That is, I believe Berlin is correct in his assessment that "expressionistic rhetoric is intended to serve as a critique

of the ideology of corporate capitalism," but that in practice expressivism can backfire. I will argue, however, that there is nothing inherent to a theory of expressivism that creates "ineffective" citizens, but that in the real world of the classroom a sort of "radical individualism" is practiced, perhaps because of a misconstrued vision of the Romantic individual.

As I have already pointed out, expressivist rhetorics and Romanticism evolved in part as a reaction to the establishment. In the case of contemporary expressivism, individuality becomes important since it appears that the individual is lost in the face of modern bureaucracy and corporate capitalism. In order to regain any sense of selfhood in the modern capitalist world, the predominate focus is shifted to the individual. Preliminary ethnographic research by Amber Ahlstrom, a doctoral candidate at the University of New Hampshire, suggests that teachers trained in an expressivist writing program are unaware of the complexities and depth of expressivist theory, and thus latch onto what is most accessible about it: a belief in personal voice, a belief in personal vision, and a continual reinforcement of the individual in its opposition to a society that diminishes the individual. They understand these, however, in the most limited of terms so enacting or coming to grips with the social aspects of

language, writing, and learning seems difficult for them. The teachers in Ahlstrom's study appear to support Giroux's belief that the "expressive view of writing ignores how writing works in the world, hides the social nature of language, and offers a false notion of a 'private self'" (Faigley 531). Consequently, Berlin's appraisal has merit: It is possible for "empowered" individuals to change a "dehumanizing society," but because they are unaware of the "economic, social, and political arrangements," they remain marginalized themselves and thus unavailable to precipitate change. Although expressivist theory evolves from a tradition which recognizes the economic, social and political conditions of existence, the practitioners of expressivism often seem to fall short of incorporating this tradition into their pedagogy.

Expressivist theory is not alone in its propensity for misapplication, however. It is as easy for those who are advocates of a social-epistemic rhetoric as for an expressivist teacher unintentionally to render students "ineffective through their isolation." Consider, for instance, if it is not as much of an alienating and isolating experience for a student to be constantly forced to examine herself in terms of a political and economic existence, to hold an opinion that is not yet hers, to be told that her conservative ideas are oppressive and

undemocratic. I am not suggesting that there is something intrinsic to social-epistemic rhetorics that makes them equivalent to raw propagandizing anymore than there is something inherent to Romantic rhetorics that guarantees "ineffective" citizens. The potential for misuse is there for teachers who honor social and marxist theories for writing instruction, however. Yes, students must take responsibility for their ineffectiveness and the ways in which they oppress others, but the social-epistemic agenda, if not carefully applied, can shut down students rather than empower them. Of course, force-feeding students any ideology, whether it is one we would consider desirable or not, will not necessarily create politically aware students. Recently, in fact, I had the opportunity of working with teachers and talking to graduate teaching assistants in Mississippi. They noted that one of their largest problems was applying a social-epistemic rhetoric in their classrooms. Their ultra-conservative students, according to these teachers, become more resistant and dogmatic as the instructors attempt to place reading, writing, and classroom activities in relationship to social class, politics, and the material conditions of existence. In effect, many of the students consciously isolate themselves or withdraw from the ideology that is being impressed upon them.

Although the effectiveness of social-epistemic theories is in need of examination by composition scholars, I would

like to return now to expressivism and Romanticism in order to open up and enrich the possibilities for expressivist teachers and their critics by offering a rereading of the Romantics and Romanticism in regards to the individual and society.

While the Romantics helped to perpetuate a vision of themselves as isolated, lonely, and misunderstood by society, it is short-sighted to believe that the Romantics thought isolation was a natural or desirable condition or that an extended application of Romantic ideas has to result in a naivete about political and social issues. A more accurate view of Romantic "individualism" reveals that there is nothing inherently naive or undemocratic about the Romantic self, nor that the Romantic honoring of individuality implies a disparaging of social interaction. In fact, the Romantic self is not as different from the social-constructivist self as we have been inclined to believe.

If current expressivists are true to their Romantic roots, they are returning to a vision of the human as an autonomous being with powers and rights. As Kathleen Coburn points out, Coleridge demanded that we respect the individuality of our friends, and even our opponents. She suggests that in Coleridge's view, "the worst thing one human being can do to another" is to deny a person autonomy,

powers, and rights (*The Self-Conscious Imagination* 34). The fight against oppression was as important to Coleridge as it is for social-epistemic teachers today. Coleridge insisted on the need for self-consciousness, in part, because he felt it could help alleviate prejudice. He believed that we could not know others until we had a "consciousness of self," and that until we knew ourselves difference would continue to be linked with hatred (Coburn 32). Expressivist teachers like Murray uphold the Romantic tradition on this issue with statements like "respect them [students] as individuals, delight in their difference" (*Expecting the Unexpected* 108).

Contrary to popular misunderstandings, the Romantics did not deny the social construction of the self; they simply asserted the importance of the individual in a social environment that ignored or suppressed autonomy and individuality. In fact, if sociologist Dmitri Shalin is correct, it was during the Romantic era that the notion of the self as a social product was first established ("The Romantic Antecedents" 51). It would be useful, then, for expressivists to understand the nature of the self as defined by their Romantic heritage.

David Perkins points out that "beginning with Wordsworth, it is generally accurate to say that art tends less to distinguish between the outer world of events and

the inner world of consciousness" (16). Rather, art attempts to display their "interfusion." Thus, it is Wordsworth's understanding that "we can know outward things only as they are reflected and modified in some particular consciousness or 'point of view'; and we can know our inner world only as we are responding to something outside" (Perkins 16). What we have, then, is a dialectical relationship between self and world. Dmitri Shalin points out that this dialectic is also present between the "structure of self and the structure of society" (55):

The [Romantic] self is social not only because it reflects the needs of the moment, because it can assume this or that mask depending on the others with whom it interacts; it is social through and through because it has no objective being outside of its interaction with other selves, because it comes into being within a community, rather than merely adjusts to it, as the predecessor of Romanticism tacitly supposed. (51)

In other words, the paradox here is that in refusing the idea of an objective self and embracing that of a subjective, the self is always changed, if not created, by the community that self is in. As I have already suggested in my discussion of empathy, the main goal of the self for the Romantic was to commune with another self. As Shalin puts it, "to be conscious of oneself," to be "conscious of anything at all, according to the Romantics, the individual must become another to oneself, see oneself from without,

from the standpoint of the other--a feat one can perform only as a member of society" (51).

In part, the Romantic desire to honor individuality is in reaction to Locke's view of the human infant as a blank slate or "tabula rasa." The self that arises from a Lockean model is entirely "social," entirely a creature of its environment, but is not in interaction with its environment. The Romantic self, on the other hand, is shaped by environment but is also self-unfolding. In other words, as Coleridge's plant metaphor implies, the individual is the joint product of an innate seed and an extrinsic or environmental soil, air, and water. The community and the individual are interdependent; they cannot be separated.

My point is that it is false to assume that Romanticism defines a "radical individualism" that is unaware of how the self is socially shaped. It is, in fact, an awareness of the ways in which we are socially shaped that prompted their special focus on the personal and subjective. And, as Shalin suggests, the Romantics were the first to acknowledge the self as a social product; thus our current elaborations on notions of social constructivism are further extensions of a very valuable Romantic idea.⁶

There are current expressivist rhetoricians who, like their Romantic predecessors, also acknowledge the social aspects of the self and of the writing situation. Ann

Berthoff, for instance, embraces social theories as a part of her expressivist rhetoric. She often writes from an expressivist's point of view with a social constructivist's insight into social influences:

Language seen as a means of making meaning has two aspects, the hypostatic and the discursive. By naming the world, we hold images in mind; we remember; we can return to our experience and reflect on it. In reflecting, we can change, we can transform, we can envisage. Language thus becomes the very type of social activity by which we might move towards changing our lives. The hypostatic power of language to fix and stabilize frees us from the prison of the moment. Language recreates us as historical beings. ("Is Teaching Still Possible?" 751)

Berthoff's belief in experience, reflection, the imagination, and knowing as the "mind in action," and her acceptance of language and thought as not meaningful "outside a social context" and as necessarily established in a "social setting" (749), identifies her as an expressivist fully attuned to, and willing to embrace, social theories of the self, learning, and writing.

There is one other aspect of the Romantic and expressivist self that needs clarification. Critics of Romantic rhetorics, such as David Kaufer and James Berlin, believe that these rhetorics have the potential to focus on individualism to the point of rendering students or writers politically and socially ineffective. And similarly, Lester Faigley points out that "Marxism would accuse expressivism

of failing to deal with key concepts such as class, power, and ideology. Kaufer, for instance, in "Point of View in Rhetorical Situations: Classical and Romantic Contrasts and Contemporary Implications," assumes that expressivist rhetorical theories are only committed to their "personal point of view" for reasons of "self-development," and that they are not "bound to social action" (185). If Kaufer is right in his assumption, if Marxist critiques are right that class, power, and ideology fall by the wayside, and if Berlin is right in his argument that expressivist rhetorics result in individuals who are naive about "economic, social, and political arrangements," then perhaps those of us who remain interested in expressivism as a theory for composition pedagogy could learn some important lessons from our Romantic ancestors.

The English Romantics were, in actuality, very aware of political and economic concerns, and they were without doubt *dedicated* to "social action." The British Romantics saw the people of nineteenth-century England as indifferent and apathetic. The Romantics envisioned a better world, changed through their educational ideas and their writing. They wished to stir the imagination of the masses. They wanted their readers to be concerned about war, the reform of Parliament, dislocation of rural life, and a starving lower class, so they could improve, as Mill says, "the physical

and social condition of mankind." They yearned to be, as Shelley argued they were, the "legislators of the world."

The Romantics were actively involved in the movement for social change. Coleridge, for instance, preached "sedition" from both pulpit and pamphlet for many years. Wordsworth went to France twice during the Revolution and was quite taken with political fervor. Young Shelley went to Ireland and printed leaflets of advice for social change, and Byron denounced crown policy in his first speech in the House of Lords. Byron died in Greece while trying to help the cause of Greek independence.

The Romantics were greatly concerned with, and wrote extensively on, the forces and political ideologies behind the French Revolution, and the consequences of the ideologies for English society. Blake wrote of the atrocities done to children in poems like "The Chimney Sweep." He pointed a harsh finger at both the church and the government in poems like "London," while graphically bringing to our attention the squalor and destitution of the city streets. Shelley spent a great deal of time writing and talking earnestly about renovating society, and in "England 1819" he draws an unflattering portrait of George III while revealing the horrid realities of this ineffectual king's rule:

An old, mad, blind, despised and dying king,--
Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow

Through public scorn, --mud from a muddy spring,--
 Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor know,
 But leech-like to their fainting country cling,
 Till they drop, blind in blood, without a blow,--
 A people starved and stabbed in the untilled
 field,--

(lines 1-7)

Even Wordsworth is clearly, in Kaufer's terms, "bound to social action." The poet's job, according to Wordsworth is to shake people out of their "savage torpor" and to bind society together. In poems like "The Ruined Cottage," Wordsworth wants to force readers into questioning a society where the horrors of poverty are abundant. Margaret, the main character of "The Ruined Cottage," is suffering the ravages of war and rural poverty. Her husband has left her and two children behind to join the army in order that they might receive the bonus money given him for enlisting. Margaret obstinately awaits his return, and in so doing she and her humble cottage fall into ruins. By the end of the poem Margaret's moral decay matches that of her physical decay. Wordsworth indicates her final devastating fall into despair when the eldest son is given to the church and the infant dies of neglect. Wordsworth does not make our task as readers easy in this poem. He does not make a moral judgment for us, but instead unfolds the scene in front of the reader, pushing us into thinking, questioning, and reflecting on the economic, political, and societal structures that are the root cause of Margaret's demise.

The expressivist heritage, then, is not apolitical, and expressivist teachers themselves can strive to problematize social and political concerns as part of the classroom agenda. We can politicize our courses and make the students socially aware through discussions and writing about campus, state, national, and international events, and issues concerning class, race, poverty, and bigotry. The Romantic tradition and the first generation of expressivist teachers and theorists have given us much to build on. In a sense, I am calling for a new generation of expressivists who can reclaim the Romantic heritage and put into action what is best about the rich and complex theories of the Romantic poets; of Mill, Arnold, and Dewey; and Peter Elbow, D. Gordon Rhoman, Donald Murray, and Ann Berthoff.

I would like to note, however, that the expressivist agenda is already more political than we might realize at first glance. For instance, the fact that the expressivist teacher views herself as an authority but not as the absolute repository of knowledge is the buttress for a democratic and non-oppressive classroom environment. Expressivists assume that the act of writing, and the things that go into it--observation, discovery, vision, reflection--will lead to knowing. Thus, the teacher's job is not to parcel out what she knows, but rather to help students create knowledge on their own. By allowing

students their own authority expressivist pedagogies can begin to dismantle the hierarchy of the traditional classroom. In this regard, expressivists share an important tenet with the liberatory pedagogy of Paulo Freire. Like Freire, expressivist pedagogues offer "a revolutionary model" because they provide "a method which does not depend on knowledge that has been 'deposited' (in Freire's best-known metaphor of education as banking)" (Berthoff "Paulo Freire's Liberation Pedagogy" 364). Ann Berthoff, for instance, has become Freire's most ardent proponent. She recognizes that Freire's "pedagogy of knowing" is the pedagogy she cultivates as an expressivist. Of course, it is clear that Berthoff differs from Murray and Elbow in that she does not hesitate to make politics a central part of her educational philosophy. To the contrary, Murray is adamant about refusing to force a political agenda on his students.

The issue of student and teacher authority is not easily settled, but expressivists are not naive about the difficulties that arise when teachers attempt to shift traditional patterns of power within the classroom. Although Donald Murray prefers to stay out of the discussions on "liberatory pedagogy," Elbow, though he disagrees with Ann Berthoff's whole-hearted acceptance of Freire, enters freely into the political fracas. In "The Pedagogy of the Bamboozled," for instance, Peter Elbow

argues that in order to create a "truly liberatory" classroom "the teacher must work as a collaborating ally of the student, not as a supervisor [original emphasis] (*Embracing Contraries* 87). But this is difficult to achieve within the institution, and Elbow insists that it only "seems" as though we have a genuine collaboration with students:

There is a crucial contradiction in the role of almost every institutional teacher that prevents our being genuine allies of the student: we are both credit-giver and teacher. As credit-giver we are the hurdle the student has to get over; as teacher we are the person who helps the student get over the hurdles. It is very common for teachers to imply that they are more truly allies of the student than this contradiction permits. This is a source of bamboozlement for students, especially in their relations with experimental, liberal, open teachers who profess to be entirely "on the student's side." (88)

Since we cannot truly give up all authority, what we can do, according to Elbow, is to be forthright with our authority. When we choose the readings for our students, we should do so as an authority; when we give a grade, we should do so as an authority. As Elbow argues, "An honest exercise of authority, even if it is hated, would not bamboozle" (91). Unmasking our authority is itself a step toward dismantling the traditional hierarchy--a hierarchy which, in part, claims its power by hiding the extent to which it owns the reins of control. So, while Berthoff seems willing to

believe a liberatory pedagogy is a possibility, Elbow remains less enamored by it.

The expressivist emphasis on personal voice and vision also helps to establish a pedagogy of equality. In nurturing individual uniqueness, vision, and voice, expressivists are creating a climate in which all students can be heard. Those who remain silent or oppressed in other courses, or in their daily lives, can enter into the empowering act of naming their own experiences when they know that their voices and experiences are not only encouraged, but heard and valued. Also, the fostering of each individual voice leads to a chorus of perspectives. We must be wary, however, of letting the focus on individual vision and voice isolate our students from the social aspects of writing and selfhood. And even though I believe expressivist pedagogies, or what Patricia Bizzell calls "personal-style" pedagogies are valuable, there are pitfalls that we must watch for. Bizzell reminds us, for example, that it is necessary to bear in mind how

One's speaking, reading, and writing are always shaped by one's social and cultural background and by the political relations this background creates with audiences of similar or very different background. This shaping is as much a matter of what the writer knows as of what she does. For example, a student may fail to produce an acceptable personal-style essay because she comes from a social group that does not value the sort of intense introspection such an essay calls for. Hence, she may

either be simply too unfamiliar with introspection to produce it, or too wary with classmates (and teacher) from other social groups to produce it for them to read. ("Composing Processes: An Overview" 55)

If we are not aware of the social, political, and economic conditions that bind our students our success will be limited and we may, in fact, oppress the very individuals we are attempting to liberate. I am not, however, suggesting that we should back away from personal introspection and the kinds of writing that elicits personal reflection. As Kurt Spellmeyer argues, the sorts of personal essays that expressivists often ask their students to write are probably the last opportunity our college students have to "discover the relationship of mutual implication, a relationship fundamental to all writing, between the self and the cultural heritage within which selfhood has meaning" ("A Common Ground" 269).

While I do believe that the cultivation of personal voice and personal perspective should not be compromised, at the same time, I do not believe that any opinion, especially those that are bigoted or fascist, should be unconditionally tolerated. To believe, however, that Romantic rhetorics actually provide a catalyst for bigoted thinking is a simplification of the expressivist stance. For instance, what Donald Murray realizes is that diversity, in its fullest sense, cannot become a reality if any opinion, no

matter how atrocious, is cut off and not given the chance to be heard. Even though Murray is generally thought of as apolitical, his perspective on diversity is as radically political, and perhaps more so, than some social-epistemic perspectives.

Although the bigot in an expressivist classroom will be given the chance to speak, he will also face hard-line resistance. Elbow's point in "Methodological Doubting and Believing" is valid, however. The student will not grow, there is no hope for a change in perspective, if the teacher and classmates do not play the "believing game" before the "doubting game." More often than not, if the student holding the unacceptable belief is not afforded this initial hearing he will retreat, sand-bagging his opinion against the flood of criticism and holding onto a bigoted conviction in defiance. Doubting remains important, but if what Elbow calls a "bargain and an exchange of temporary or conditional assent" ("Doubting") is reached, then the student is more willing to examine his belief critically. And, it is in *unexamined* convictions that the greatest danger lies. The expressivist acceptance of personal vision is an attempt to protect diversity, but it is not an acceptance of bigoted thought. Rather, expressivists like Donald Murray and Peter Elbow realize that the unacceptable opinion needs to be voiced, *and heard*, in order to be examined. If it is not examined, there is no hope for change.

Expressivist classrooms also encourage group and collaborative work, and the recent surge of research and scholarship on student collaboration has increased the opportunity for successful results. Group work provides a built in forum for differing perspectives to be heard, tried out, revised, and sometimes rejected. Since many expressivists pedagogies rely on group work, student interaction, and discussion rather than lecture, plenty of opportunities are created for conversation and dialogue to take place. Further, the expressivist emphasis on empathy helps assure that a diverse classroom will become a reality. Diversity can thrive where a multiplicity of voices is truly heard, and where students and teachers bend into those voices in order to empathize with and understand, though not *unthinkingly* accept, a plethora of divergent perspectives.

Though we are inclined to forget and thus are apt to ignore or misuse what is already there, the expressivist approach to classroom pedagogy is broadly political in nature even though it does not necessarily have politics as a subject. It strives for a democratic classroom, equality, and true diversity. It pushes hard against pedagogies that strive for the assimilation of those who are different. By consciously working from a foundation of empathy and personal voice and vision, it offers the chance for students to become effective rather than "ineffective" citizens. In

the end, expressivist rhetorics and pedagogies are capable of creating a democratic classroom.

There is much about Romanticism which has been misunderstood by scholars in composition studies and the culture as a whole. These misunderstandings have led to perspectives which assume Romanticism and expressivist rhetorics promote a dangerous form of radical individualism. In reality, however, Romanticism is much more balanced and complex than expressivists know and anti-Romantic critics have been willing to admit. In its embracing of emotion and the particular individual, for instance, Romanticism's and expressivism's goal is to accept humankind as it really is--diverse. The Romantics themselves arose out of a great political and social need for change and reconstruction. As Jacques Barzun insightfully argues:

The vast horizons opened up by war and social upheaval gave romanticism its scope: it was inclusive, impatient of barriers, and eager for diversity.

It . . . respected the individual as a source . . . Accordingly, its political philosophy was an attempt to reconcile personal freedom with the inescapable need of collective action. (*Classic, Romantic, and Modern* 137)

If we re-evaluate our conceptions and interpretations of Romanticism, perhaps we will find aspects of the tradition from which expressivist rhetorics develop worth keeping alive as we continue to explore the rhetorical theories of the present and the future. Finally, if expressivists can

reclaim the rich heritage from which they evolve, new possibilities for Romantic rhetorics will arise.

Endnotes

¹ Peacock's essay, "The Four Ages of Poetry," is what prompted Percy Shelley's solemn response in *A Defense of Poetry*.

² Barzun attaches an appendix to his study which lists some of the ways in which the term Romantic is being used in modern conversation. These include "attractive," "exuberant," "ornamental," "unreal," "materialistic," "irrational," "futile," "heroic," "mysterious," "bombastic," "picturesque," "formless," "fanciful," and "emotional on principle."

³ Wordsworth, in *The Prelude*, actually calls the reader's attention to the fact that he has short-changed the importance of books in both his childhood and in later years: "Thus far a scanty record is deduced \ Of what I owed to books in early life; \ Their later influence yet remains untold;" (Book V 606-608).

⁴ What Russell does in this article is label Lounsbury and Campbell Romantics because of their desire to abolish writing courses on the grounds that writing cannot be taught and that good writing only happens to those few who are inspired.

⁵ Keats, of course, argued that Coleridge, though he wanted to be, was incapable of really living "in the universal" or practicing "negative capability" because Coleridge was not able to "remain content with half knowledge."

⁶ Shalin's article, "The Romantic Antecedents of Meadian Social Psychology," chronicles the growth of George Herbert Mead's stance on social psychology out of Romantic philosophy.

CHAPTER V

ROMANTICISM AND ROMANTIC RHETORIC: A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

As a woman and a feminist I have always found myself quite comfortable with the fact that I am also a Romanticist and an expressivist teacher. Some of my friends and colleagues find feminism at odds with Romanticism, and wonder at my ease with Romantic philosophies. It is true that Romanticism and feminism are not perfect counterparts or easy allies in all regards. There is, however, much about Romanticism and expressivist writing theory that accommodates feminist theory and pedagogy, and it would, I think, behoove expressivists to consider Romantic rhetorics in light of recent feminist contributions to both literary and composition studies. If, for example, expressivist theories and pedagogies are already empowering for women in various ways as I hope to show they are, then a conscious revision of expressivism that includes feminist perspectives will be invaluable for creating a theory of composition that strives for gender equality.

Feminist discussions on Romanticism have been slow in coming to literary studies. Feminist critiques of Romantic rhetorics have been equally slow. A collection of essays edited by Cythnia L. Caywood and Gillian R. Overing entitled

Teaching Writing: Pedagogy, Gender, and Equity, is the one major contribution to the conjoining of feminist studies and expressivist theories, or what the authors call "revisionist" writing pedagogies. Other scholars will sometimes mention the compatibility of expressivist and feminist teaching styles, but they do not make a critique of expressivism their major concern (Flynn "Composing as a Woman" Goulston "Women Writing").

Perhaps the timid move toward feminist perspectives on Romanticism are a result of just how resoundingly male the Romantic tradition has been. Anne K. Mellor points out, for instance, that the Romantic canon has lagged behind all others in any reformulation in light of feminist contribution (7). This "lag" in the canon is two-fold: feminine voices from the Romantic Age have been slow to enter the literary canon; and the canon of scholarship, if I might call it that, has been slow to see the influence of feminist scholarship on Romanticism. Virtually hundreds of writers, many of them women, from the late 1700's to the mid-1800's have been marginalized or ignored as possible Romantics. Prior to the early 1980's and the contribution of feminist scholarship by such writers as Margaret Homans, Anne Mellor, Susan Wolfson, Mary Jacobus, and Susan Levin, the Romantic canon has consisted of primarily six males: Blake, William Wordsworth, Coleridge, Percy Shelley, Byron,

and Keats. As my own project illustrates, the tradition from which expressivist rhetorics arise has also been, in large part, identified as male.

Thus, the time has come to examine, from a feminist perspective, what the implications and consequences of this are for expressivist theories and pedagogies. A feminist critique will raise potential philosophical questions for a rhetoric and theory of education based on such a thoroughly male tradition. In her introduction to *Romanticism and Feminism*, for example, Anne K. Mellor has suggested that the canonization of only six of the writers from the Romantic age has "legitimized the continued repression of women" (8). It is worth noting, however, that these six writers did not canonize themselves--male literary historians of a later date have done so. We still might ask, though, if a rhetorical pedagogy primarily grounded in the philosophies of two of these six Romantics would also continue the repression that Mellor notes. After all, there is a long history of denial of education for women and the Romantics did not all work to ensure women access to a full education. Although Percy Shelley did, Coleridge, a major figure in my history of expressivist theories, makes clear that his argument for a schooling which would nurture the "truly educated mind" was solely for men. Women were to be educated differently and for other purposes than that of the cultivation of the imaginative and reflective mind.¹

Of more immediate concern for writing theory is James Catano's argument that the expressivist rhetorics of William Coles, Peter Elbow, and Ken Macrorie are masculine because they are built on a male self-formulation. This self-formulation, according to Catano, describes learning to write in language which is combative and aggressive, and sees learning to write in terms of mastery. Masculine aggression is apparent in Coles and Elbow, and this aggression excludes women and is even "anti-feminine," according to Catano (433). Peter Elbow's language in *Writing with Power* demonstrates what Catano identifies as aggressive male language:

Having rejected "subjective bullshit" in the first text (141), Elbow follows up in the second with a variety of aggressive descriptions and metaphors of writing: "the experience of battle conditions with live ammunition" (33); "my decision . . . to force the world to listen to me" (122); "wielding the knife and seeing blood on the floor" (123); and "the power of the words to hit readers in the gut" (369). (Catano 429)

This "masculinist" use of language is widespread and the works of other writing theorists are also saturated with a language of aggression and combat. I have recently been examining the metaphors that arise from a rhetoric of violence in the works of social-constructivist David Bartholomae ("English Studies and the Metaphors We Live By"), for instance, and Susan Meisenhelder has noted that

"examining modern conceptions of rhetoric and the handbooks on writing we teach shows us that we often teach an adversarial model of discourse" ("Redefining 'Powerful' Writing: Toward a Feminist Theory of Writing" 186).

Meisenhelder suggests that when we teach writing based on discourse models that are built on metaphors of war and violence such as "attacking" and "defending" points of view, and when we talk of using words as weapons and as acts of aggression we are "promoting a patriarchal mode that encourages students to internalize a rhetorical stance of dominance . . ." (186). This has negative consequences for women students because it reinforces a way of acting and writing in the world which is unfamiliar to them and it works to keep women oppressed by a male hierarchy.

The fact that expressivists' discourse models also harbor language that is exclusionary and even "anti-feminine," as Catano suggests, is an issue that should concern expressivist rhetoricians as well as feminists. We should make concerted efforts to remove these metaphorical constructs and to replace them with language that welcomes and invites rather than excludes women. Perhaps we can make better use of nurturing and connecting metaphors and help bring forward the expressivist focus on empathy and discovery. Peter Elbow, for instance, has a pedagogy that is so clearly built on empathy that it seems strange to find

these aggressive metaphors, and I suspect that they are not present in as large a number as more accommodating metaphors. Yet, it does seem urgent that he reconstruct his language in passages like that quoted above by Catano.

Although some of the metaphors on which an expressivist model of discourse is built do need prompt attention, they are not reason to abandon expressivist rhetorics. To the contrary, expressivists need to explore what feminists are now identifying as the feminine tradition in Romanticism in order to alleviate some of these problems and issues as well as enrich the Romantic tradition from which composition scholars and teachers can draw. Further, in spite of Romanticism's male tradition, it is not necessarily a "masculinist" tradition; on the contrary, the poets often attempted to cultivate a "feminine consciousness." Finally, Romanticism, even without the additional benefit that will arise with a consideration of a female tradition in Romanticism, can benefit from and accommodate feminist theories and pedagogies thereby creating the potential for a rhetoric that is empowering for our women students.

First, let me point out that we must continue to be concerned by the fact that Romantic educational theories were originally male-centered. We must not be deterred, however, or women will continue to be denied a valuable educational experience. As Jane Roland Martin points out,

women have been excluded throughout the history of education, both as objects of educational thought and as subjects ("Excluding Women" 135).² In order to stop the recurrent denial of the feminine by forcing women into a masculine mode of education and composing, we can expand the realm of expressivist rhetorics by widening the male Romantic tradition to include women, and by revising expressivist theory in light of feminist contribution. This widening can take place on several levels. It can include both women who were contemporary with the Romantics and it can include women as writers, readers, and learners in today's academy. As expressivists we can join our colleagues in literary studies to explore what Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, Felicia Hemans, Emily Bronte, Dorothy Wordsworth, and others can add to our tradition. Many will be surprised to find that Wollstonecraft anticipated current social theories by arguing that women are social constructions, shaped by our environment and the type of education we receive (Martin 77), and that the writings of Dorothy Wordsworth offer a "female version" of the Romantic self which takes into account "the complexities surrounding a woman's psychological development" (Levin 5). Further, feminist literary scholars have already begun to show that Dorothy Wordsworth's vision of the self expands "individual subjectivity to visionary community" (Wolfson

Romanticism and Feminism 145), offering further reason for not dismissing Romantic rhetorics on charges of radical individualism.

Although we are inclined to see "collaboration" and writing "communities" as primarily feminist orientations, feminists themselves are reminding us that Romantic writers very consciously formed discourse communities through which they enabled their art and writing. Levin reminds us, for instance, that the Wordsworth circle at Grasmere was a "community of language; and it was finally a community of writing, a mutuality of writing energies in which each shared in his or her own way" (6).³ It is in such writers as Dorothy Wordsworth and Mary Shelley that we find an alternative to the myth of the lonely writer. Their works show the community in action and collaboration, a community of men and women alike.

In order to alleviate the masculinist rhetoric that Catano has perceptively pointed out in expressivist pedagogies, we must be self-reflective and we must incorporate feminist theoretical and pedagogical perspectives into expressivist stances: we can examine and change our metaphors so that they are not anti-feminine or anti-woman; we can include a feminist rhetoric which models a mode of composing founded on metaphors of collaboration and caring rather than on metaphors of "war" and "rape"

(Meisenhelder 193). We can recognize and problematize the fact that the powerful autonomous self of the Western world is usually that of the "self-made" man not the "self-made" woman or the socially constructed woman; we can take our cue from feminists and change the expressivist rhetoric of the self to a plurality of selves. In sum, expressivists can publicly articulate feminist theories in contrast to masculinist theories.

A feminist investigation of the feminine tradition in Romanticism will yield expressivist theories many valuable prospects for teaching, but the philosophies of the male poets also lend themselves to a feminist perspective. In *Reclaiming a Conversation: the Ideal of the Educated Woman*, the feminist educational philosopher Jane Roland Martin calls for a rethinking of education which will enable emotion and feeling to become as much a part of the educational process as analysis, critical thinking, and self-sufficiency (192-193). As I have shown, this was the basis for Wordsworth and Coleridge's educational plan. Martin also asks for an educational system that honors, and melds together, both "reproductive societal processes" which have traditionally been seen as the feeling and emotional realm of the female, and the analytical realm of knowledge making which is seen as the "productive societal processes" usually ascribed to the world of the male (197). Martin

recalls a 1977 address by Adrienne Rich to women college students in which Rich asked the students to claim an active education that would connect with their experiences as women rather than to passively receive one that privileges the male experience. Adrienne Rich, writes Martin, "was saying that in becoming mere receptacles for a university learning that excludes their experience and thought, women's lives can be damaged beyond repair" (2). As I have been arguing throughout, the Romantic philosophies allow for a version of an ideal education which promotes what Rich and Martin argue for: an active rather than passive education, and a wedding of the emotional and analytical, or the reproductive and productive processes.

Although William Wordsworth has been accused of relegating nature to the realm of the feminine in order to assert his masculine poetic identity over the natural world (Homans), he is just as likely to assert a more feminine consciousness. As the feminist critic Susan Wolfson argues, "just as typically, and with a full range of investigation, this poet may represent male consciousness as passive, itself inscribed by voices of the 'other'" *Romanticism and Feminism* 147). She quotes *The Prelude*: "'the changeful earth . . . on my mind had stamped / The faces of the moving year' (*Prelude* 1.586-88); the 'common face of Nature spake to me . . . impressed / Collateral objects and appearances, /

Albeit lifeless then, and doomed to sleep / Until maturer seasons call them forth / To impregnate and to elevate the mind' (1.615 24)" (147). In these lines, argues Wolfson, "the self is not just passive but feminine, and imaged, implicitly, with the potential of female (re)productivity" (147). In effect, Wordsworth's lines here depict his male consciousness in a state that is not asserting its identity against the natural world. Rather, as Wolfson suggests, his male consciousness is being "inscribed by voices of the 'other'." The result, as Wordsworth implies, is an "impregnation" of the mind and the distinctly female ability to give birth, to (re)produce. In effect, Wordsworth's description of the philosophical mind is androgynous.

Coleridge, too, strove for a consciousness that was as much feminine as masculine. As I have already pointed out, he believed that the imaginative and "truly educated" mind must be androgynous, must combine the feminine with the masculine. Indeed, by using the figure of the androgyne as a central metaphor throughout his philosophical discussions, Coleridge was able to suggest a union between the masculine consciousness and the feminine, thereby creating a mind that is potentially (re)productive.

It is valid to note that the male poets were not always successful in their attempts to nurture a feminine consciousness along with their male consciousness. This

failure prompts some feminist critics to argue that the Romantics' attempts to incorporate the feminine did irreparable damage to the women of their community (Homans, Richardson). It is also clear that both Wordsworth and Coleridge viewed the feminine in a stereotypical manner. An examination of their writings, for instance, shows that they ascribe the feminine part of the androgynous mind with passivity rather than action. Coleridge's model of the androgynous mind can actually be broken down into typical opposites--the masculine as light, life, mind, and reason and the feminine as darkness, death, body, and passion. Coleridge and Wordsworth's acceptance of the feminine as crucial to the education of the encompassing intellect, then, is premised on diminishing views of the feminine.

Feminists should be leery of terms like "male" and "female" or "masculine" and "feminine" when referring to the mind or consciousness. It is but a simple step to essentializing masculinity and femininity. When the creative mind is viewed as masculine, feminine, androgynous, or in any way gendered, it is because centuries of male writers have constructed these metaphors. My ambition is not to argue for these essentializing metaphors, but for the intent, no matter how badly represented, that Wordsworth and Coleridge had in trying to deconstruct the image of the creative mind as solely masculine. They did work toward

cultivating a feminine consciousness during an historical time in which the feminine consciousness was seen as inferior and in which the feminine was conceived of in stereotypical terms. At the same time Wordsworth and Coleridge were working from this stereotypical perspective of the feminine, they were also attempting to work against it, for embedded in Wordsworth's quest for the philosophic mind and Coleridge's belief that the creative mind is androgynous is a theory consonant with a philosophy that honors the connection of feeling and emotion, analysis and critical thinking, and the productive and reproductive processes necessary to create an education that truly accommodates women as well as men. And, if we are willing to join with feminists in diffusing the stereotypical views of the feminine and masculine and in deconstructing the belief that the attributes of masculine and feminine must be separate, perhaps current expressivists can succeed where our Romantic forebears failed.

A recent study of women's intellectual development also suggests that aspects of Romantic educational philosophy are beneficial for women. In *Women's Ways of Knowing*, Mary Field Belenky, Blythe McVicker Clinchy, Nancy Rule Goldberger, and Jill Mattuck Tarule, chronicle the psychological development of women as they move from positions of "silence" to positions of "constructed

knowing," from powerless to empowered selves capable of not only receiving knowledge, but of making knowledge. Their study suggests that the development of voice and self is crucial to the development of women's minds and they find that for the most part the process of education has traditionally not allowed for the psychological and intellectual growth of women because it has separated the affective from the analytical, and lived experience from academic experience. Likewise, although she differs with Belenky et al. on other points, Jane Roland Martin finds that the educational journey is primarily one which is damaging because it splits reason from emotion ("Becoming Educated"). Interestingly enough, the suggestions Belenky et al. make for creating an educational system that would foster the development of women echo many of those made by the Romantics for the cultivation of the "philosophical" or "truly educated" mind:

We have argued in this book that educators can help women develop their own authentic voices if they emphasize connection over separation, understanding and acceptance over assessment, and collaboration over debate; if they accord respect to and allow time for the knowledge that emerges from firsthand experience; if instead of imposing their own expectations and arbitrary requirements, they encourage students to evolve their own patterns of work based on the problems they are pursuing. These are lessons we have learned in listening to women's voices.
(229)

The Romantics advocated growth of the self, discovery of voice, "connection," "understanding," "experience," and although we don't usually perceive of the Romantics as "collaborative," in practice they formed writing communities, shared their work, and even collaborated on the writing of their poetry. Wordsworth and Coleridge, for instance, not only collaborated to compile the *Lyrical Ballads*, but often made additions, sometimes full stanzas, to each other's poems. They used each others' poetical ideas and conversations with each other as ways of overcoming writing blocks or as means of "inspiration."

Moreover, the epistemological stances in women's development identified by Belenky et al.--"silence," "received knowledge," "subjective knowledge," "procedural knowledge," and "constructed knowledge," are similar to the developmental path described by the poets in the growth of the creative, knowledge-making intellect.⁴ In the stage of silence, for instance, women seem to be "'deaf and dumb' and are unaware of the power of words for transmitting knowledge" (36). "Silent" women are cut off from their experience; they are unable to connect with the world around them, nor are they able to connect with language. They are voiceless and without self:

Even though each of the women had the gifts of intelligence and of all their senses, they were unaware of the potential of such gifts. While no one was actually "deaf and

dumb," this metaphor suggests their experience more accurately than does "gaining a voice." They felt "deaf" because they assumed they could not learn from the words of others, "dumb" because they felt so voiceless. (24)

Because they are cut off from the practice or privilege of "making sense" of the world around them, do not "perceive" as the Romantics would say, cannot connect with experience, these women are missing a crucial link in the discovery of self, which in turn leads to the ability of "finding a voice" and making meaning through language.

Belenky et al. suggest that the silence these women suffer is culturally imposed. In its most extreme, this imposition comes through such tragic and drastic forces as emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. If, however, women can shed this cultural imposition and the consequent "deafness and dumbness," if they can learn to connect with experiences in some way, they move toward a means of knowing that is analogous to Wordsworth's "wise passiveness."⁵ During a time of "received knowledge," women begin to observe, perceive, and experience. They "learn by listening" (36). And as it is for Wordsworth, this stage is important to women because although passive, it is a time of experiencing and discovering through observation, and this experiencing becomes important in later stages of creating knowledge through language.

Having found ways to move from silence to the ability to "receive," the women in the study by Belenky et al. were able to begin the important job of constructing self-knowledge through language. This necessarily comes from a position of subjectivity, just as it did for the Romantic poets. What becomes important is the individual's lived experience or vision, and at this stage the "subjective knower" starts to see the world in terms of an individual self. She finds her own experience understandable and worthwhile, perhaps for the first time in her life. The authors of *Women's Ways of Knowing* capture the difficulty women who finally come to trust their own experience have connecting with the experiences of others with a quote from a young woman who was a "subjective" knower. This woman could find little sense in the experience revealed in classical texts because it seemed irrelevant to her own experience:

A college senior was highly critical of a male professor: "I never knew what the man was talking about. It was the way he spoke or the words he used or just the way he put words together that was hard for me to understand. You can't learn from teachers and books like you can from experience."
(74)

Her experience did not match the sense of this academic world and at this point she is able to trust little else but her own words and experience. Because she has finally found the power in her own experience and her own words, she finds

it difficult to relate her experience to anyone else's and she seems hesitant to reflect on the disparity between her own experience and that revealed in the texts she is reading or that the professor is trying to convey. She remains stuck as a "subjective knower" because she has not, as the Romantics knew was crucial, "abandoned both subjectivism and absolutism in some areas [of her life]. . . in favor of reasoned reflection" (*Women's Ways of Knowing* 88).

According to Belenky et al., reflection is of utmost importance to women's intellectual development just as it is to the growth of Wordsworth's philosophical mind and Coleridge's educated mind. For Coleridge, reflection leads to mental growth which eventually leads to a "distinct consciousness," which is, in effect, a mind capable of making meaning. Likewise, the ability to be reflective is the catalyst that moves women into the stage of development that the authors of *Women's Ways of Knowing* call "procedural knowledge." Within this stage are two modes of knowing: "connected" and "separate" knowing. Separate knowers seem to be the less productive of the two. When a separate knower is given a writing task, for instance, they "write well," but often "feel the papers they write are pointless. They have no connection to the papers they write for teachers and they [the papers] are empty of their own feelings, ideas, and voice" (188). "Connected" knowing, on

the other hand, is not disconnected from the self and world as separate knowing is. It is the "epistemological orientation that is toward relationship" (101). It is the balanced position between subjectivity and objectivity that the Romantics strove to find. Connected knowing seems to bear much in common with Romantic philosophies. In fact, the authors of *Women's Ways of Knowing* suggest that Coleridge is a connected knower (113). The ties are not limited to Coleridge, however. Belenky et al. write,

Connected knowers develop procedures for gaining access to other people's knowledge. At the heart of these procedures is the capacity for empathy. Since knowledge comes from experience, the only way they can hope to understand another person's ideas is to try to share the experience that has led the person to form the idea. (113)

This quote seems to describe the Romantic desire to connect themselves with others. It is reminiscent of Keats's "negative capability," the ultimate ability to negate one's own ego in order to identify and connect with an other. And it is certainly reflective of Wordsworth's entire project as a poet: "to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes" (*Preface* 737).

Unlike "separate knowers," women who are connected knowers are not only able to write well in the conventional sense, but they are also able to do so with voice, feeling and critical thought. Separate knowers are examples of what

the Romantic poets felt that a misguided education of analysis, severed from the emotive and experiential, produced. Separate knowers are capable of parroting back information they have received, but as Belenky et al. note, they are incomplete and uninvested in the making of knowledge: "For women . . . who are separate knowers, thinking and feeling are split asunder; they feel fraudulent and deadened to their inner experiences and inner selves" (135).

If women are able to cultivate experience, feeling, voice, self, and reflection, they can become connected knowers, and connected knowers are able to move into the fifth epistemological position identified in *Women's Ways of Knowing*, that of "constructed knowledge." This stage is finally the culmination of growth and development. It is most like William Wordsworth's mature mind--the philosophical mind. Constructed knowers have the abilities of the encompassing intellect. They blend reason and emotion, subjective and objective. They are able to create knowledge because they have, in effect, incorporated those things the Romantics found crucial to a viable educational process, "reflection," "experience," "empathy," "self-consciousness," and "personal voice":

These women [constructed knowers] were all articulate and reflective people. They noticed what was going on with others and cared about the lives of people about them.

They were intensely self-conscious, in the best sense of the word--aware of their own thought, their judgments, their moods and desires . . . Each was ambitious and fighting to find her own voice--her own way of expressing what she knew and cared about. Each wanted her voice and actions to make a difference to other people and the world. (133)

Romantic educational philosophies, although originally directed primarily at men, are also useful in the epistemological development of women. The research done by the authors of *Women's Ways of Knowing* suggests that women students would actually benefit from Romantic educational philosophies, and likewise, they would be well accommodated by expressivist rhetorical theories and pedagogies. In fact, some feminist researchers have noted a correlation between feminist theories and expressivist theories. Cythnia Caywood and Gillian Overing, for instance, suggest that "revisionist" writing theories are a critique of a patriarchal system just as are feminist theories:

In assembling it and reviewing these two bodies of research, we have discovered a consistent pattern, one characterized by the recurrent intersection of several major premises at the heart of both bodies of research. The most important of these are: the relation between revisionist critiques of traditional writing theory and the feminist critique of masculinist, patriarchal ways of being; and the correlation between the revisionists' restructuring of pedagogy and revaluing of the student and feminists' restructuring of cultural models and revaluing of the experience of women.

The familiar revisionists view of writing as process, which challenges the

classical view of writing as product,
offers a paradigmatic dialectic appropriate
to feminist discourse. (Intro *Teaching
Writing* xii)

Both feminist theories and revisionist writing theories question authority: feminist theory that of the patriarchy and revisionist theory that of the product.

While Overing and Caywood do not specify expressivist theory as the "revisionist" theory they argue for, the focus on the private and individual voice, personal experience, and the process over product they identify as aspects of "revisionist" theory clearly belong to expressivism. So expressivist rhetorics seem linked to feminist theory in their critique of oppressive hierarchies as in earlier decades when Romantic ideas and philosophies arose in Mill, Arnold, and Dewey, and in Berthoff, Murray, Rohman, and Elbow as reactions to oppressive establishments and traditional schooling curricula. In effect, as Caywood and Overing argue, expressivist theory, what they call "revisionist" theory and feminist theory are kindred in their opposition to an established hierarchy: "the process model, in so far as it facilitates and legitimizes the fullest expression of the individual voice, is compatible with the feminist revisioning of hierarchy, if not essential to it (xiv).

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule also find expressivist rhetorical theories and pedagogies

accommodating to women students. They refer to and quote Peter Elbow extensively in their study. They cite him as a writing teacher who fosters a learning climate in which women can excel. Both his focus on development of voice and the privileging of "believing" over "doubting" allow women to take part more fully in their own educations because they are able to work from a center of assent rather than dissent and debate.

Peter Elbow's pedagogy also relies on connection and empathy, two qualities critical to women's emotional and intellectual growth. Small groups provide Elbow's students with the environment necessary for connections among people to take place. His "sharing" groups, where students learn to share their writing and listen closely to each other, are helpful for women who are both searching for their own voice and learning to "hear." These groups stress active listening, and they give students a chance to say what they know without facing, in the beginning of the search for voice, negative criticism and harsh response. As Belenky et al. point out, many "silent" women do not survive the academy because they are not themselves secure with language. For many of these women, language is a weapon which has been used against them to ensure their continued silence in the face of male dominance and abuse. Elbow's groups, then, provide at least two important educative needs

for women: a place to practice using language and finding a voice; and an environment in which negative criticism is deferred until the writer has enough sense of self and voice, perhaps alleviating the feeling that language is necessarily a weapon to silence them.

Romantic rhetorics nurture experience and a "wise passiveness," and expressivist teachers advocate seeing, listening, hearing, receiving, and putting experience into words through such exercises as Ann Berthoff's detailed record of ten-minutes of observation and close description. Moreover, Berthoff and Murray's use of the journal is another example of how expressivist's pedagogical techniques invite women into the realm of discourse. Feminists have recognized that the private language used by women in journals can be an important step toward learning how to speak in the public language of the academy (Gannett *Gender and the Journal: Diaries and Academic Discourse* forthcoming). Meisenhelder finds the journal invaluable for women students and feminist teachers:

In this way [through journal writing] we aim to launch students--often especially women students--on a private search for self-identity and meaning in their own lives. This is an important development for several reasons. Besides the value in helping students develop awareness, teaching such a form of writing has been an important step in transforming notions about discourse and language. This kind of writing allows students to experience the power of important feminist ideas about

language--especially the value of the particular, the concrete, and the emotional. From journal writing, students learn that language doesn't have to be distanced, logical, objective, and abstract in the traditional model of rational thought for it to convey meaning. (184)

Peter Elbow's freewriting is also a way in which students can learn that language which is emotional and non-logical has value. In fact, pre-writing of all kinds are especially inviting forms of discourse for women. As Wendy Goulston reminds us,

Prewriting is, after all, what women have been doing for centuries in letters and journals and conversations with each other, "freewriting," brainstorming," meditating, overflowing with uncensored feelings and ideas. ("Women Writing" 25)

When we use these familiar and "expressive" modes as a foundation for academic prose, says Goulston, "women can draw on their own thinking and feeling to develop the rhetorical strategies that best suit their styles, their arguments, their values" (25).

Pre-writing, freewriting, journal keeping, exercises of observation and reflection are the kinds of activities that can help move our women students from the position of silence where they are without self, voice, and power, to a discursive position where they can break through "dumbness and deafness." By learning to experience, perceive, and listen they can move to the position of "received knowledge." Activities such as pre-writing and freewriting

can allow our women students as well as men to make their personal experience part of their learning process. As Peter Elbow suggests, they can write about their feelings and what is important to them. Elbow believes that freewriting can help in the development of voice, and voice is a crucial part of women's emotional and intellectual growth, according to feminist researchers.

Also, the expressivist focus on reflection, empathy, and voice can provide the vital means of moving through "subjective knowing" to "connected knowing," and eventually to the stage of "constructed knowledge." When teachers like Donald Murray create a learning environment which focuses on discovery of both self and others, our women students can learn to become connected knowers through empathy and an understanding of how the self interacts with the world. Moreover, through practice like Ann Berthoff's students gain while writing in double-entry notebooks where they rethink, question, study, and reflect on their own observations and experiences, our students can move beyond subjective knowing to connected knowing. In sum, since Romantic rhetorics, both in original and modern forms, foster an encompassing intellect in our students through pedagogies which blend the emotive and analytical, the subjective and the objective, discovery of self and discovery of others, they offer a theory and practice that can help women reach their potential as "constructed knowers."

Although I have initiated a feminist response to Romantic teaching philosophies and expressivist rhetoric, there is still further need of examination from a feminist perspective. Feminists can discover in what ways the expressivist emphasis on the imagination, feeling, and voice, empower women students, and we can determine what kinds of "selves" we are empowering. We can learn in what ways we fall short of creating the ideal learning situation for women. Feminists can revise the Romantic tradition from which expressivist theories grow to include the feminine tradition in Romanticism. We can begin to explore what Emily Bronte, Felicia Hemans, Dorothy Wordsworth, Mary Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft and many others can add to an expressivist rhetoric. By continuing to explore expressivist rhetorics from a feminist perspective we can not only widen the tradition from which they arise, but we can continue to illuminate what is valuable about them. We must understand, however, that although Romantic educational philosophies and expressivist rhetoric do provide an educational climate favorable for women by integrating reason and emotion, thought and action, and self and experience, it is not satisfactory to just make note of this. As Jane Roland Martin argues, changing the educational realm in any valuable way will require an understanding that

the exclusion of both women and the reproductive processes of society from the educational realm by philosophy of education is a consequence of the structure of the discipline and not simply due to an oversight which is easily corrected. Thus, philosophical inquiry into the nature of those processes or into the education of women cannot simply be grafted onto the philosophy of education as presently constituted. ("Excluding Women" 148)

Thus, it is only in continuing to revise and redefine expressivist theory and pedagogy in light of feminist perspectives that we can create a theory for composition that truly strives for an education of equality.

Endnotes

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1 Coleridge held this view in spite of the fact that he argues that the imaginative mind cannot reach its full potential unless it is feminine as well as masculine, unless it is an androgynous mind. This, of course, raises the philosophical question for feminists as to whether the Romantics wanted to grant the feminine autonomy and power at all, or whether they really wanted to absorb the feminine into the masculine.

2 Martin points out that Rousseau's educational plan for Sophie, which was drastically different from that of Emile's, is rarely mentioned throughout the history of educational thought and philosophy.

3 Other Romantic communities included Byron and the Shelley household, the Hedge Club, and the Transcendental Club in America. All of these groups included writing women members. (See Levin's *Dorothy Wordsworth and Romanticism*)

4 I am grateful to Thomas Newkirk for noticing that Wordsworth was a "connected knower." Professor Newkirk's insight led me to explore more fully the parallels between women's ways of coming to the act of knowing and that of the poets.

5 The authors of *Women's Ways of Knowing* suggest that often the ability to connect with experience comes for some of these women when they are able to make the human connection between themselves and a child.

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CHAPTER VI

A NOTE ON ROMANTIC RHETORICS AND THE CROSS-CULTURAL CLASSROOM: THE WEIGHT OF TOO MUCH LIBERTY

In exploring the value of the Romantic tradition for composition studies I am not recommending acceptance of the entire program of Romanticist or expressivist theories. The lashings expressivist theories have been receiving from proponents of social-constructivist rhetorics will hopefully push expressivists to closely examine their assumptions, theories, and pedagogies. If we are not willing to reflect, question, and critique with rigor the underpinning philosophies of expressivism, we will not only fail to draw on a valuable tradition as advantageously as we might, but we will be blind to its problems and pitfalls as well. I believe, for example, that expressivists have not reflected enough on cross-cultural issues, and minority and non-native students. There is a great deal for expressivists to learn from our ethnic minority students and non-native speakers, and from our colleagues in linguistics and English as a Second Language. James Paul Gee and Shirley Brice Heath, for example, have shown us that ethnic minority students come to our classes with discourse conventions that are culturally, socially, and historically formed, and students

themselves have pointed to differences between what writing teachers ask for and what they traditionally do as writers of their own culture. It is important, in light of what these students and scholars can tell us about cultural issues, to examine closely whether expressivist theories and pedagogies are helpful to minority students.

Fan Shen, a Chinese graduate student at Marquette University, has made it clear that there are culturally determined writing structures and has noted the distinctly different forms that the writing of his native Chinese and that of the Western world take.¹ He claims, for instance, that although it is often the expected form in the American academy, the topic sentence format is not "natural" for Chinese writers:²

A Chinese writer often clears the surrounding bushes before attacking the real target . . . before touching one's main thesis, one should first state the "conditions" of composition: how, why, and when the piece is being composed. ("The Classroom and the Wider Culture: Identity as a Key to Learning English Composition" 463)

According to Fan Shen, this "bush-clearing pattern" has been accepted as the norm in China for over two thousand years (463). Fan Shen notes "that clearing the bushes" began with Kong Fuzi (Confucius) who says that "one first needs to call things by their proper names" (463). Fan Shen explains that this requires stating how, why, and when the essay is being

composed before one states the major thesis: "like the peeling of an onion: layer after layer is removed until the reader finally arrives at the central point, the core" (463). In time this technique became formalized and the "Ba Gu" or "eight-legged" essay became the norm. Most Chinese students, according to Fan Shen, are taught to follow a certain pattern in the writing of narrative essays as well. A recent Chinese textbook for writing he tells us, lists six necessary "steps for writing a narrative essay, steps to be taken in this order: time, place, character, event, cause, and consequence" (463). With my students I often try to get them to shake up the order of things in a narrative essay. It is apparent by what Fan Shen points out that the request to shift place and time or consequence and cause might cause a Chinese student an especially difficult problem.

My own limited experience with Japanese women suggests that they are culturally shaped in ways that make argument, as usually defined in American terms at any rate, an almost impossible task for them. Most of these women appear to work within a language of conformity and obedience, and they seem to have an unwavering respect for age and authority. To these students, for whom polite negotiation and accomodation are the norm of social interaction, the confrontational American approach to argument is threatening and silencing. When asked to write an argumentative paper,

the Japanese women have been unable to do so in conventional American style. Their papers take a completely different form, a form that is usually a summation of ideas but that contains no personal disagreement with any of the ideas presented. The Japanese society is also a culture where to bring shame on one's self or to another is to be avoided at all costs. To claim disagreement is to bring dishonor not only to the student, but to the person she is disagreeing with. Thus, argumentative papers by these students tend to present various perspectives without critical or negative comment.

It stands to reason, then, that if this is the "natural" form the writings of at least some of our Asian students will take, we either have to accept it as is (and I expect the academy would object), or work with the students so they may become conversant in the American traditions as well. This will require pushing against "two thousand years" of cultural tradition in the case of Chinese students and resocializing a way of being in the world for many Japanese women. Not all non-native students will come to us with such drastically different forms as Chinese and Japanese students do, but we be can sure that differences will be abundant. In fact, the more different the structural forms of our students from what we are familiar with, the easier the forms may be to address. If the

differences are subtle it may prove more difficult to ferret out these differences in order to address the various structures. If we choose to help these students learn the American forms, expressivists will need to address the "varieties of structures" (Mitchell) in a forthright manner.

Some ESL experts argue that expressivist rhetorics are not helpful, and are perhaps even harmful, when it comes to writing instruction and the minority student or non-native speaker. Candace Mitchell, for instance, a cross-cultural literacy specialist, suggests that the expressivist assumption that writing will "naturally" find form can be less than helpful. She argues that what "Berthoff and others of the expressive school" do not address is the "issue of the varieties of structures and ways of coherently ordering reality through texts that exist across cultures" ("Four Schools of Writing" 13). Mitchell seems to suggest that there is something inherent in expressivist theories that keeps us from addressing the different traditions and culturally-bound written forms of our minority and non-native students:

The message is, again, that form will emerge naturally as long as opportunities to engage in the "process" are provided. No explicit statement as to what constitutes good form is needed as the assumption is that students will come to uncover the implicit expectations of the academy. Somehow out of the search for and the subsequent finding of meaning will emerge a coherent form. Form-finding and

form-creating may in fact be natural abilities. Coherence may in fact emerge in the act of writing. The point remains, however, that the form to emerge may not be the form anticipated by the academy. (13)

Although I find nothing inherent in expressivism as a theory that warrants Mitchell's charges, she does raise issues that expressivists should explore. In practice, does our acceptance of organic form privilege forms "natural" to American students while excluding the "natural" forms that arise from the cultural heritage of our ethnic minority students? (When I use the term "natural" it is with full recognition that what is "natural" for our students is culturally determined.) If so, are we unintentionally placing these students at a disadvantage? In order to alleviate the risk of this possibility we can make efforts to recognize and understand the various structures that will "naturally" arise when students of differing cultural backgrounds write. And it seems that expressivists are in a good position to do so since it is less likely that we would demand an ethnic minority student to write, at least initially, in a structure privileged by the Western world if we truly allow "organic form" to emerge. In other words, expressivists are apt to have created the opportunity to consider and understand the various cultural structures by fostering an environment which forgoes extrinsic structure for what comes about "naturally."

Mitchell also argues that the "organic" form the student writer comes to may not be "anticipated" or accepted by the academy, and she hints that the expressivist emphasis on organic form excludes the teaching of these anticipated academic conventions and structures. She further implies that "academic" form is the only "good" and right form: "[expressivists provide] no explicit statement as to what constitutes good form . . . as the assumption is that students will come to uncover the implicit expectations of the academy" (13). These are troublesome issues indeed.

Composition scholars have joined Mitchell in taking expressivists to task for not specifying and making explicit the discourse conventions of the academy (Bartholomae, Bizzell). They agree with Mitchell that the "natural" forms students produce do not always take the forms expected and privileged by the academy. David Bartholomae believes that unless we teach the academic discourse conventions to all of our students, and especially our underprivileged students, they will remain outside the academic conversations and will thus remain marginalized and perhaps even be winnowed out of the academy as failures. But the potential discrepancy between academic conventions and the forms that students come to is recognized by most expressivist teachers. In fact, the expressivist emphasis on voice, sincerity, reflection, and organic form is often an attempt to counter-

act the academy's forms and conventions. The expressivist stance is a conscious stand against the barrage of empty, lifeless, prose that often mirrors our students' lack of critical thought or investment in a subject, and which often comes neatly packaged in one or another of the academic prose forms.

Admittedly, the primary goal of an expressivist rhetoric is to foster the growth of the whole being, the imagination, and ultimately the encompassing intellect rather than to teach specific forms. However, the expressivists' goal of educating the encompassing intellect through a pedagogy that honors student voices, lived experience, and emotional capacities does not have to remain separate from introducing students to the forms and conventions of the academy. Mike Rose's success with underprepared students, for instance, relies heavily on incorporating his students' lived experience and interests into his pedagogy. Rose is aware, as are expressivists, that a model for the teaching of writing "must honor the cognitive and emotional," and he is aware, as are social theorists, that these cannot be separated from the "situational" dimensions of language ("The Language of Exclusion" 357).

Rose, then, like the Romantics, Mill, Dewey, Murray, Elbow, and Berthoff, knows that the cognitive and the

affective should not be split asunder. He also shares with expressivists the perspective that writing is a "means of defining the self and defining reality . . . and is an activity that develops over one's lifetime" (348). He is in sharp disagreement with most expressivists, however, and joins Mitchell, Bartholomae, and Bizzell in the argument that to deny students explicit practice within the discourse conventions of the academy is to perpetuate the potential for failure. He argues that our students ought to be required

a complete, active, struggling engagement with the facts and principles of a discipline, an encounter with the disciplines texts and the incorporation of them into one's own work, the framing of one's knowledge within myriad conventions that help define a discipline (359)

To require students this engagement with a discipline is a tall order, and it certainly would require the cooperation of the university as a whole. Some expressivists, moreover, might argue that it is not the composition teacher's job to teach students to write for a discipline, but rather to teach students to write to learn for a more general knowledge and for the world at large.

Expressivists can learn from teachers like Rose how to prepare students to be successful within the discourse requirements of the academy while still preserving the focus on lived experience, self, and voice. Mike Rose, it seems,

has begun the synthesis of cognitive, expressivist, and social theories that Lester Faigley has called for ("Competing Theories of Process" 537). Ultimately, expressivists need not ignore academic discourse conventions, for academic forms are only some of many to choose from and they do have their place. This is not to say, however, that expressivists will continue to differ from many of their critics in that academic forms remain of secondary importance to the more important goal of educating the whole being and encompassing intellect.

More problematic, however, than whether the teaching of academic forms is of primary or secondary importance, is Mitchell's implication that academic forms are inherently "good." For many expressivists, academic forms are anything but good. We are regularly dismayed by the formal correctness of our students writing when it matches what the academy asks for, say an "objective" essay that argues a point through a particular linear structure and that contains a clear thesis statement at the end of the first paragraph. What is often distressing about this "correctness" is that it more often than not lacks, on the student's part, any real critical thought, insight, or even personal involvement with the content of the writing. The crux of expressivist theory lies in personal vision and engagement, and in deep, reflective thought. Therefore, it

is not surprising that expressivists question whether we should teach academic forms that often seem lifeless, a form that students are capable of producing, but which are not necessarily going to promote learning or the making of knowledge.

Questions surrounding academic forms become even more muddy in light of some liberatory pedagogies and social-epistemic rhetorics that accuse the academy of replicating non-critical, "corporate-minded" students who leave the ivy halls and enter mainstream America (e.g. Berlin, Ohmann). The problem, according to scholars like Ohmann, is that these "corporate-minded," non-thinking students become citizens who perpetuate the most destructive and oppressive facets of the "military industrial complex" which fuels America (*English in America*). Writing instructors have come to realize that students can produce forms the academy requires without necessarily engaging on any personal level with what they are writing, or without engaging in critical thought. Thus, it has become the opinion of many in the field of composition that those academic forms which are more concerned with particular stylistic or discourse conventions than with any making of new knowledge might actually contribute to this replication of non-critical students. It was expressivists during the 1960's, for example, who precipitated the movement away from academic

form. Patricia Bizzell describes the anti-academic prose movement this way:

the academy itself began to seem discredited, in the eyes of many students and teachers, by political developments in the nation at large. . . the academy was reluctant to incorporate new methods of responding to these developments . . . this reluctance was seen as enforcing discriminatory social sorting, with white middle-class men being educated for positions of power and all others being disenfranchised. Academic expository prose, the mastery of which was a prerequisite for traditional academic work, was implicated in the indictment of the academy as an institution of political oppression . . . By fostering students' own styles, instead of forcing conformity to an oppressive institutional standard, writing teachers could feel they were making their own contribution to reform of oppressive academic and political institutions. ("Composing Processes" 52-53)

Having seen little change in the academy as a whole over the intervening years, some expressivists continue to wonder whether traditional academic expository prose should be taught, especially in introductory writing courses.

Feminist scholarship which argues that academic forms are oppressive, especially for women, because they privilege a white male discourse have helped bolster expressivists' resistance to academic conventions. Further, if there is a correlation between the "mastery" of academic forms and oppressed American citizens, it seems insidious to turn our ethnic minority students, students who might well work to correct what is most negative about our society, into the

same passive and non-critical writers and thinkers as are many of our American students.

Granted, many minority students might well be eager to enter into what many of us find negative about mainstream American ideology, and participate in what they see as the rewards. Expressivist theory and pedagogy, however, and its stand against empty form, can still play a vital role in engendering the necessary critical capacities in all students, majority and minority. Because of the focus on diversity, expressivist approaches to the teaching of writing might, in fact, be especially useful in promoting the differing perspectives minority students already hold. In other words, expressivist pedagogy can offer the opportunity for identity within diversity to flourish, and this can enable our ethnic minority students to both participate in and also criticize mainstream American culture, including the academy.

It is, of course, unfair to assume, as Mitchell seems to, that no expressivists talk about what constitutes "good" or "academic" form. Some may not, but it is not an emphasis on "natural" form that precludes this, nor is it Romantic rhetoric as a whole. The expressivist stance is simply that pre-determining form can be inhibitive and limiting. Writing that is allowed to grow into form will find its own coherence, and it does not necessarily have to conform to

traditional conventions of academic discourse. Joseph Harris argues against the notion that

our students should necessarily be working towards the mastery of some particular, well-defined sort of discourse. It seems that they might better be encouraged toward a kind of polyphony--an awareness of and pleasure in the various competing discourses that make up their own. ("The Idea of Community in the Study of Writing" 17)

If we are not careful with the instructional trend toward pedagogies that focus primarily on making students conversant in academic discourses, our students can end up like Richard Rodriguez--fully fluent in the public language of the academy but exorcised of the private language of their cultural discourse and community. There is, of course, a debate raging over whether the loss of an ethnic cultural background is debilitating or even whether replacing one's culture with another constitutes a loss at all. Rodriguez suggests, in *Hunger for Memory*, that the loss of his familial culture and his assimilation into the majority culture was not a bad thing, and was even necessary. What seems to me, however, to be the better option is the one Harris offers: students can become members of a number of discourse communities "whose beliefs and practices conflict as well as align" (18).

Perhaps, then, we should not push our students toward the leaving of one community so that they might replace it

with another. The better solution might be in creating a classroom where they can reorient themselves in connection to several discourses or what Harris calls a "polyphony." "Our goals as teachers," argues Harris, "need not be to initiate our students into the values and practices of some new community, but to offer them the chance to reflect critically on those discourses--of home, school, work, the media, and the like--to which they already belong" (19). Expressivist theory would seem to supply what is necessary for students to take a critical look at these various discourses. The expressivist focus on reflection, for instance, especially if we apply Coleridge's summation of reflectiveness which requires critical examination not only of the self but of what is read and written, might easily initiate the opportunity to "reflect critically" as Harris requests. Moreover, the emphasis on organic form allows for the "polyphony" or multiple discourses to arise in the first place.

This is not to deny that expressivists should address "variety of structures" with our students--non-native and native alike. If we do not, however, the consequences may be greater for our minority students, and as Mike Rose has argued, for those underprivileged students on the "boundary." One of the insights I have gained from colleagues in ESL is that many foreign students are

overwhelmed by the expressivist's tendency not to offer some formal structure. Initially this lack of explicit form is too great a liberty and students are left confused and unable to write at all. Perhaps, then, we should reevaluate our position: we can still let the form emerge "naturally" if our cross-cultural students are able to overcome confusion and compose at all; we can also make sure our students know the various forms from which they can choose. In fact, if we look back, once again, to the Romantics themselves, we can see that the Romantic emphasis on organic form does not deny the usefulness of formal structure. Here is William Wordsworth on the value of form:

Nuns fret not at their Convent's narrow room;
 And Hermits are contented with their Cells;
 And students with their pensive Citadels:
 Maids at the Wheel, the Weaver at his Loom,
 Sit blithe and happy; Bees that soar for bloom,
 High as the highest Peak of Furness Fells,
 Will murmur by the hour in Foxglove bells:
 In truth, the prison, unto which we doom
 Ourselves, no prison is: and hence to me,
 In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
 Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground:
 Pleased if some Souls (for such their needs must
 be)
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
 Should find short solace there, as I have found.

Through the tightly structured form of the sonnet, Wordsworth not only illustrates the value of form, but suggests that it is not always confining. Structure, then, can be liberating, and our prison of academic forms may not always be a prison for our students, especially for those who have "felt the weight of too much liberty."

Expressivists, then, are faced with these questions: Do we need to make explicit, perhaps especially for minority ethnic students, how the form that their writing takes differs from what the academy asks for? Are we inclined to accept the "natural" forms of our American students over those of our non-native and minority students? Are we promoting forms that privilege a certain race, gender, and class? Do we wish to teach academic forms at all? And finally, what are the consequences of the way in which we answer these questions for our ethnic minority students?

In order to answer these questions we need to enter into conversation with our associates in ESL, and we must not stop examining and reflecting on our goals and assumptions. If, for example, our agenda is to subvert the expectations of the academy in an attempt to change its literacy conventions rather than continuing to accept them, we must ask if we are harming or sacrificing students by not giving them every opportunity to empower themselves within the codes of convention upheld by the academy. We must determine if we are explicit enough about varieties of form, including academic form, so that our students of all cultural orientations will be able to manipulate form and discourse conventions well enough as readers and writers to survive and flourish in the university and in the public world for which it prepares us. In other words, we must

answer for ourselves as well as for our critics, how the emphasis on organic form can lead to student empowerment through choice and flexibility rather than to a naiveté about, or unthinking acceptance of, academic forms. Let's rise to the charges leveled by Mitchell and others, and as expressivists consider the "varieties of structures" and the ways in which forms that "naturally" arise are determined socially, culturally, and historically.

A particular cultural concern, for instance, which needs reflection and investigation in this regard is the nature of the self or "I." Since the growth of the self is such an important aspect of Romantic rhetorics, it is necessary to consider that the self will be very different for our students depending on their cultural heritage. The "I" of the middle-class white student will differ greatly from that of a student whose culture has taught her to suppress the "I" for the good of the collective. James V. Catano, for instance, in his recent article, "The Rhetoric of Masculinity: Origins, Institutions, and the Myth of the Self-Made Man," argues that the self of male rhetoricians like Peter Elbow and William Coles is that of America's "self-made" man, the hero of the Protestant work ethic or the ideal corporate entrepreneur. We must examine the cultural "I" we privilege as rigorously for our cross-cultural students as feminists have for women. We must be

aware that the singular, autonomous "I" that Elbow and Coles are comfortable with is one that values individuality, whereas the "I" of our students might not.

In fact, the self is not even a concern in many non-Western cultures. Xio Ming Li, a Doctoral student in Composition Studies at the University of New Hampshire, suggests that a focus on self is a problem unless we explain what the "Self" is. Li questions the validity of "self-expression" because it presupposes an autonomous self. For her, self exists only in relationship to others. Since, as Xio Ming Li suggests, many cultures do not have as much of a stake in what is "personal" as we do here in the United States, oriental students will often have difficulties writing a personal essay at all, and they will be more confused than liberated by an expressivist emphasis on self discovery and personal voice. Perhaps reading and discussing with these students concepts of the self that arise in American writings like Thoreau's *Walden*, Whitman's *Song of Myself*, and Maya Angelou's *I Heard the Caged Bird Sing* would help. Nonetheless, the concept of self raises important questions if we wish to retain the self as an important element in expressivist rhetorics. Is our goal to have our non-native and minority students learn to take on the more American "I" of the majority of our students? Is it to allow the students to retain their own culture's

concept of self while also being able to understand and employ American selves? How can we best aid this transformation?

Since the "I" or self is culturally formed, and since the "I" plays such an integral part in expressivist theory and pedagogy, expressivists would do well by their students to consider whether Romantic theories of the self can successfully cross cultural boundaries. Fan Shen suggests that they can, but that in order to help at least Chinese writers, it is "helpful if he or she [the teacher] pointed out the different cultural/ideological connotations of the word "I," the connotations that exist in a group-centered culture and an individual-centered culture" (466). Are we willing to do as Fen Shen asks, and if not, are we willing to consider that the result might be expressivist rhetorical pedagogies that are less than helpful, perhaps even harmful, as our critics like Candace Mitchell suggest?

Terry Dean's essay, "Multicultural Classrooms, Monocultural Teachers" suggests that expressivist classrooms are beneficial for ethnic minorities in some regards. Dean points out that ESL students, no matter how educated, often stumble into difficulties with errors and pronunciation which become what she calls "writing blocks":

It is not unusual for ESL errors to persist in the writing or the pronunciation of highly educated people (doctors, lawyers, engineers, professors) because, consciously

or unconsciously, those speech patterns are part of the person's identity and culture . . . Language-oriented topics are one way to allow students to explore this kind of writing block. Assignments that require students to analyze their attitude towards writing, their writing processes, and the role that writing plays in their lives can make these conflicts explicit. (30)

Expressivism's orientation toward "process" predisposes it to be useful in solving the problem Dean has identified here. Moreover, some expressivists, as in the case with a great many teachers at the University of New Hampshire where the expressivist hand of Donald Murray is no longer directly active but still felt, it is common practice for students to write reflective papers about their writing processes, ways in which these processes may have changed, and ways in which learning about these processes have changed or not changed them as writers and people.

Dean notes that response groups, a mainstay of many expressivist pedagogies, can also assist the teacher of a multicultural classroom: "peer response groups encourage active learning and help students link home and university cultures" (31). Working in peer groups can help students to function in more than one discourse community at a time. Dean argues that group work is valuable for providing " a supportive environment for exploring culturally sensitive issues that students might hesitate to bring up in class discussion or with the teacher" (32). Joan Wauters suggests

that a non-confrontational approach is especially valuable in the multicultural classroom. She points out that in some cultures a "direct verbal criticism implies 'loss of face'" ("Non-Confrontational Critiquing Pairs: An Alternative to Verbal Peer Response Groups" 159). Although Wauters's argument in this essay is for pairs of students to work on editing in a non-abrasive way rather than in peer response groups which can sometimes lose their supportive tone in the fervor of criticism, it appears that Elbow's non-confrontational sharing groups might also achieve worthwhile results since the hard and fast rule of no confrontation or harsh criticism are followed by group participants. Yet, we must not just assume that this nurturing environment is helpful in all regards. A recent article in the *Boston Sunday Globe* (June 10, 1990), for instance, points to the negative aspects: "the nurturing and cultural reinforcement in bilingual classrooms often unravel when the students move on to regular programs" The possibility exists, then, that the nurturing aspects of expressivist pedagogies set students up for a way of learning that does not exist elsewhere in the university.

There are many questions that arise when we consider expressivist rhetorics and the cross-cultural classroom. But as Peter Elbow says, in the search for knowledge we must "fight the itch for closure" (*Writing Without Teachers* 177),

and thus, I have offered few, if any, answers here. My discussion merely brushes the snow from the top of the cross-cultural crevasse. We need further investigation into the ways in which our theories and pedagogies are helpful or short-sighted in multi-cultural classrooms. We need to listen to the experiences of non-native writers like Fan Shen, and we need to turn to our colleagues in second language acquisition, cross-cultural literacy, sociolinguistics, and anthropology for information and guidance. Expressivism needs to reconsider itself in light of cultural issues. Expressivists can learn more about social theories, adapting to them and perhaps embracing many of them since it is clear that even "organic" form is not "natural" in the sense that form is in important ways culturally determined. Finally, we must not dogmatically hold onto assumptions and theories assuming that if they work for American students they will work for all students. We can begin to reconsider expressivist pedagogy as it relates to students from various cultures. There is much in Romantic rhetorics of value and we should not dismiss expressivism; yet we must be willing to reflect on and, if need be, let go of those assumptions which are not useful.

Endnotes

¹ Throughout this section, "form" is a term that shifts meaning. At times I use it to mean types of discourse defined by a topic (as in the discourse of science or the discourse of literary studies), at other times the way the subject is constituted, and at times sentence or speech patterns or methods of exposition. There is a problem, I believe, in coming up with any clear definition of what I mean by "form" because the word has multiple and conflicting uses in the rhetoric of our discipline.

² I am not willing to grant that the topic sentence is necessarily "natural" for the Western tradition either.

CONCLUSION

A common complaint among educators in general, and teachers of writing in particular, is that many of our students are passive and indifferent. They seem not to care about the problems of the modern age. They seem to ignore the urgent environmental dilemmas which have become an undeniable part of their inheritance; they often appear untroubled by moral issues such as abortion, the arms race, capital punishment, sexism, and racism, believing that if they are not immediately and directly affected by these concerns, then these pressing issues are not of consequence.

In response to this legacy we have witnessed calls for "new" approaches to teacher education, critical pedagogies, and literacy. Paulo Freire, for instance, argues for a "pedagogy of the oppressed" in which literacy becomes the means for peoples of oppressed societies to take action against dictatorial leadership. Maxine Greene argues for a dialectic leading to an "education of freedom" achieved through imagination and resistance to forces that limit, determine, and oppress. Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren strive for a "democratic" schooling that values student experience and student voice. James Berlin, speaking for many in the field of composition who have turned toward social theories for composition, calls for a "social-

epistemic" rhetoric that educates students who become conscious of economic, material, social, and political concerns and strive for a more ideal democracy. What these various perspectives have in common is that each is informed by a perceived need to find a pedagogy that reduces the passivity and indifference of students and offers them an active role in their own intellectual growth.

What I have argued here is that, inasmuch as these scholars call for an approach that places individual students as participants in their own education rather than as mere "observers" or "beneficiaries," these scholars may turn to, and rely on, many of the tenets of the educational philosophies of the British Romantics. Romantic educational philosophies also offer expressivists a teaching approach that denounces oppression and that educates students who are democratically conscious. Wordsworth and Coleridge articulated a theory of education and the intellect which is built on active and participatory education. These ideas have been passed down to us not only through their own writings, but through those of other educators such as Mill, Arnold, and Dewey. Current expressivists share a similar philosophical grounding, not only with the Romantics, but with Mill, Arnold, and Dewey, and the best of Romantic ideas are now evident in the teaching philosophies of current expressivist rhetoricians like Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, and Ann Berthoff.

When we examine the Romantic tradition from which expressivist rhetorics arise and the assumptions under which expressivists themselves operate, it becomes clear that there is much to value. Romantic rhetorics lend much to feminist theories and pedagogies. And if we consider that a Romantic rhetoric, like the original Romantic movement in England, is not anti-intellectual, it defies the charge that this pedagogy loses intellectual rigor by focusing on creativity. A Romantic pedagogy need not exclude challenging reading and writing, both in depth and breadth. Rigorous study and a wealth of knowledge gathered from various doctrines and disciplines are a valued part of what Wordsworth has called the "philosophical mind." So too is imaginative activity, which by combining both analytical and imaginative study for our students can result in a synthesizing intellect.

Moreover, since a fuller understanding of Romanticism shows that it does not require our students to be geniuses or "inspired" (in the generally misunderstood sense of the "inspired writer") in order to communicate and write well enough to make changes in their world, as teachers we need not fear that composition cannot be taught, or that our students cannot learn to be good writers. As teachers of writing we can cultivate both analytical and imaginative ability in our students; we can model what Coleridge has

called reflection and a "mind self-consciously aware of its own imaginative potential."

The charge that Romantic rhetorics have a tendency to create isolated and self-centered students who do not write to communicate with an audience beyond themselves might be true far too much of the time. This short-sighted application of Romantic theory, however, is not inherited from the British Romantic poets. To believe so is a false conception of the poets and their work. To the contrary, the poets have given us a model of open-mindedness and empathy, and if expressivists understand our Romantic heritage we can choose to include this valuable model in our teaching philosophies. We can, for instance, choose a teaching model that urges students to practice empathy. We can create the opportunities for our students to talk with people who are different and have had differing experiences. We can create the opportunity for contact with ethnic minority students and others who differ in some way from the majority classes. We can introduce reading and writing assignments that bring students in touch with other ways of living, thereby setting various ways of seeing against each other, enabling them to "recognize the political and moral implications of competing models of understanding" (Paul Armstrong 31). Through seeking new experiences, and understanding and awareness of others, our students are able to take part in the existence

of the lives of other people. Through their receptiveness, empathy, and ultimately self-discovery, they gain knowledge and the ability to imagine and reason about ways in which to work with those who are different.

As educators working from a pedagogy founded on Romanticism, we can make a concerted effort to make sure our students do move beyond isolated selves to the social world. As expressivist rhetoricians we can embrace social theories while retaining what is most valuable about expressivist doctrine. We can nurture the process of discovering meaning in experience and communicating it. We can make sure that our students know that personal experience is information that can be shared as public information, and that communicating it can influence "the course of events within town or nation, school or university, company or corporation" (Murray Write to Learn 4). The awareness, the empathy, the greater understanding of self and other, that students can gain through a rhetoric based on the philosophy of the British Romantic poets, need not be kept within the individual, and it need not undercut an awareness for social and political realities. Nor need it deny that the self is socially as well as individually defined. As even Kinneavy who has argued so energetically against Romantic theories must finally admit:

expressive discourse is, in a very important sense psychologically prior to

all the other uses of language. It is the expressive component which gives all discourse a personal significance to the speaker or listener. Indeed, the expressive component of discourse is what involves a man [or woman] with the world and his [her] fellows to give him his [her] unique brand of humanity . . . A democracy which ignores expression has forgotten its own roots. (396).

A personal definition of self aids, and is indeed necessary, in the development of humans' awareness of their socially defined interactions with others.

What I am finally arguing is that a rhetoric and a pedagogy based on Romanticism can be one of vision and possibility, one that urges students to see and understand themselves and others. A pedagogy that works from a basis of empathy and diversity is vital if we are to teach students how to interact and communicate in the challenging, changing, and complex world they will live and work in. For too long we have focused our concern primarily on preparing students to be productive members of the labor force. In a time when we are destroying our environment, facing starvation and drought, world-wide epidemics, and the possibility of nuclear destruction, we must prepare them for more than competency in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Not only must they have the technical knowledge to discover a cure for aids, but they must have the vision to understand the importance and significance of their work outside the laboratory walls. They must be encouraged to imagine a

better world, and not dismiss the idea as "unrealistic" or "utopian." They must learn to empathize and communicate. As teachers we must aid them in doing this by insuring them at least the potential for reaching the full use of their intellectual powers. By means of a Romantic teaching philosophy and rhetoric that celebrate self-discovery, personal experience and the experience of others, empathy and awareness, and the imagination as well as reason, a better world may have a better chance at becoming a reality.

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