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Summer revisions: An ethnographic study of high school teachers in the culture of a summer writing program

Bonnie S. Sunstein

University of New Hampshire, Durham

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Sunstein, Bonnie S., Ph.D.

University of New Hampshire, 1991

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Ann Arbor, MI 48106

**SUMMER REVISIONS:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS
IN THE CULTURE OF A SUMMER WRITING PROGRAM**

BY

BONNIE S. SUNSTEIN

B.S., Boston University, Boston, MA, 1968

M. Ed., Boston University, Boston, MA, 1975

DISSERTATION

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

**Doctor of Philosophy
in
Reading and Writing Instruction**

September, 1991

This dissertation has been examined and approved.

Thomas Newkirk

Dissertation director, Dr. Thomas R. Newkirk,
Professor of English

Donald Graves

Dr. Donald H. Graves, Professor of Education

Jane Hansen

Dr. Jane A. Hansen, Associate Professor of Education

Burt Feintuch

Dr. Burt H. Feintuch, Professor of English

Patricia A. Sullivan

Dr. Patricia A. Sullivan, Assistant Professor of English

June 12

1991

Date

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Bonnie S. Sunstein

**To my mother,
Janet Schloss Stone**

who taught me to love people and the art of their language. She is an art teacher, a portrait painter, and a reader of biographies--written and spoken, published and unpublished. For me, my brothers, our children, her friends and her students--she enables us to become ourselves. She knows how to sweeten the struggle that comes with growth. In this dissertation, I paint word portraits about teachers who enable, create, and learn as they share the struggles of growth. She planted the seeds for this work.

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This dissertation describes teachers coming to knowledge together in an intense three week community; a collaboration between themselves and those in their temporary world, crafted through relationships and conversations. These acknowledgements reflect another community, one in which I have lived and learned intensively for three years and whose written scholarship had already influenced the first half of my professional lifetime.

This project involved a committee of six remarkable people who gave me their company as scholars, teachers, colleagues and friends. They asked tough questions and demanded clear research, thought and method, but their confidence in my abilities left the creation of the work to me. They taught me to teach myself, offering guidance and wisdom while they watched and listened. There is a piece of each of them in these pages. Their exemplary teaching will influence the second half of my professional lifetime.

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somehow always available to listen and think with me when I need her.

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I am lucky to enjoy support and collegiality in a large community of scholars. Don Murray's friendship, wisdom, support, sympathy, and humor has influenced my reading, writing, and teaching for over twenty years, but especially during my time here. Over many lunches and during my visits to their home, both Don and Minnie Mae Murray listened and helped with thousands of thoughts and details. Professors Tom Carnicelli, Grant Cioffi, Bob Connors, Bud Khleif and Pearl Rosenberg have been true teachers as well, interested in my work far beyond the boundaries of my studenthood and their courses. Betty Graves and Beth Newkirk have encouraged me as well with their interest, empathy, friendship, and hospitality.

My siblings in the UNH English department and the Education department's

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The University of New Hampshire enables people like me in mid-career to work and study here full-time. It is the best way to learn the importance of intense work inside a community--the very subject of this dissertation. During my assistantship with Don Graves in the Writing Lab for two years, developing projects and programs outside the university made me experience the "social construction of knowledge" and observe it as it was taking place. And then, a University Dissertation Fellowship endowed me with a

year of peace that most scholars and writers only dream about. During my dissertation year, I had the luxury of choosing my own interruptions.

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Most daily, my family tolerated my need to go to school when they didn't want it or understand it. They allowed me to stay in their universe, and they learned new independence when I joined another universe for a while. Drew, for twenty-five years my most critical reader, offered occasional insights from an alien world view, gave me extra memory for my computer when my mind wouldn't hold any more, replaced a lot of lightbulbs, and shared his laser printer and what's left of our money. Stevie brought me coffee, gave me kisses, and asked daily how my "concepts were coming along." Amy became an able assistant on the phone and the family calendar, at the washing machine, and in the kitchen. Nancy, my "other" daughter, buffered my motherhood with her counsel to two needy teenagers, and was patient with her own need for my time.

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learns. In my forty-fifth year, this dissertation paints word portraits about teachers learning. Phyllis Sunstein, my other mother, has supported my ambitions with a constant eye in the New York Times, buoys made of supportive words, and a dolphin made of silver.

And finally, nine very special teachers let me into the most private pieces of their lives. I rummaged around in their drafts, their journals, their rooms, and their memories for three weeks and then at school and home for a year, while they were engaged in the very private processes of examining themselves. They allowed me to maintain my researcher position, shut my mouth and open it at appropriate times, and keep our friendship and respect. While studying the effects of a writing community, we made one. Many times, as I wrote their words and analyzed their thoughts, I felt they were doing the writing for me. Much of this work is silently theirs.

We must rely on our scientists to help us find the way through the near distance, but for the longer stretch of the future we are dependent on the poets. We should learn to question them more closely, and listen more carefully. A poet is, after all, a sort of scientist, but engaged in a qualitative science in which nothing is measurable. He lives with data that cannot be numbered, and his experiments can be done only once.

This information in a poem is, by definition, not reproducible. His pilot runs involve a recognition of things that pop into his head. The skill consists in his capacity to decide quickly which things to retain, which to eject. He becomes an equivalent of scientist, in the act of examining and sorting the things popping in, finding the marks of remote similarity, points of distant relationship, tiny irregularities that indicate that this one is really the same as that one over there only more important. Gauging the fit, he can meticulously place pieces of the universe together, in geometric configurations that are as beautiful and balanced as crystals. Musicians and painters listen, and copy down what they hear.

from "A Trip Abroad" (178)

Lewis Thomas, *A Long Line of Cells: Collected Essays*

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ABSTRACT

SUMMER REVISIONS: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE CULTURE OF A SUMMER WRITING PROGRAM

by

Bonnie S. Sunstein

University of New Hampshire, September, 1991

This dissertation uses the term "culture" as a metaphor to describe teachers as they participate in a three-week summer writing program at the University of New Hampshire. Using ethnographic methodology, it blends composition theory, anthropology, folkloristics, and psychology. In the voice of the participant observer, the study describes and interprets both the people and the event as a "readable social institution." Teachers live inside a close collegial environment, a temporary, "liminal" state, away from their home and school responsibilities. They form a dialectical relationship with the "culture" as they write and talk inside a social environment in which other teachers read and listen. The study highlights a paradox: although teachers report feeling "transformed" by an external source, their experience involves their own internal processes of creativity, disciplined self-examination, and disclosure.

The community sustains fellowship by telling stories, sharing artifacts, enacting rites of passage, honoring elder "tradition bearers," establishing a lexicon, a set of symbols, and a system of beliefs that forms a shared identity. But this is a community of unique teachers with individual beliefs and long career histories. The study is presented in two forms: three long cases and five short intertexts. The three case studies portray teachers negotiating the program with internal oppositions: "a strange coexistence of solitude and dependence." Each intertext describes a "frozen moment," stopping an

action or profiling a person with thick description, citing teacher-produced texts, and relevant scholarship.

Other studies document change in teachers' classrooms after summer programs, but none has focused on the teachers' experience while they are engaged in it. New developments in writing instruction have had the least success in high schools, so this looks at high school teachers. The result is not "teacher empowerment" as it is traditionally defined for the purposes of external curriculum change. This study documents a personal internal shift that "empowers" the teacher as a reflective person independent of her school's curriculum; as a reader and writer able to understand herself better as a learner and hence able to bring her own literacy, in her own way, to her classroom.

CHAPTER 1

READING A CULTURE, WRITING A VOICE

To see social institutions, social customs, social changes as in some sense 'readable' is to alter our whole sense of what such interpretation is and shift it toward modes of thought rather more familiar to the translator, the exegete, or the iconographer than to the test giver, the factor analyst, or the pollster."

Clifford Geertz, "Blurred Genres," (1983, 32)

Two long brick walls flank the foyer of the University of New Hampshire's Philbrook Dining Hall. Each wall holds an open grid of wooden boxes. This afternoon, the boxes don't hold the usual student backpacks, baseball gloves or lab equipment. Straw, plastic, and canvas totebags spill out of the small oak boxes and cover a corner of the floor. The bags are stuffed with books, journals, and stacks of drafts; the work is far from over. It is mid-day Thursday, the day before the end of the New Hampshire Summer Writing Program, the afternoon of the annual lobsterfest.

Tomorrow morning, one person from each of twenty-two writing groups will read into a microphone to two large audiences in two auditoriums. The writing they read will be their own. Tonight in the dorms, as the train rumbles across the field marking each of the small hours of the night, they will draft, listen, revise, encourage, rewrite, suggest, and prepare. By tomorrow afternoon, they will be packed and on their way home.

Inside Philbrook, about two hundred fifty people stand in line and find places to sit together, filling their plates from trays piled with lobsters, corn on the cob, fried chicken, and a giant stainless steel pot of steamed clams. They scoop from bowls of salad, pots of baked beans, buckets of drawn butter and clam juice, and pour their bounty carefully into paper cups. The room looks less 'like a cafeteria than usual; there

are red and white checked tablecloths on each table, silverware, napkins, salt and pepper shakers, and special lobster-eating instruments.

They amble from table to table, stopping to chat. They are neither patrolling the room nor gulping their lunches. Here, they have more than eighteen minutes. Their talk is of writing and reading, graduate programs and school policies. They look less like middle-aged teachers than usual. They are wearing t-shirts and shorts, sandals and sneakers. Their t-shirt messages fall into categories. Some offer subversive statements, word plays appropriate for a community of teachers:

"All stressed out...and no one to choke"

"I think I can"

"Harvard Forensics Tournament: Crush the weak"

"I Don't Do Mornings"

Some have political or professional messages:

"Women hold up half the sky"

"Deaf people can do everything....except hear."

"Read a Book: It's educationa."

"Love a teacher; It's educational"

"Alaska Teachers Strive for Excellence."

Other shirts picture authors and playwrights, classic and contemporary:

Hemingway's house, Mark Twain's house, the Shakespeare theater at Folger, the Shakespeare theater at Stratford, Samuel Beckett, Virginia Woolf, Humphrey Bogart, the London production of *Starlight Express*. There are t-shirts marking special identities: a map of Casco Bay in Maine, Florida Oranges, Pottsville Basketball, California Angels, Indiana University, Cable News Network. And t-shirts from New Hampshire Writing Programs: '85, '86, '87, '88, '89.

Instructors, professors, and participants sit together at round tables in groups of four and six. They are all teachers. Some are authors of published books; some are first-time writers. Here they demonstrate techniques of lobster and steamed-clam eating while they talk about reading and writing. Some have done this before. Tom from Ohio offers his metal cracking device and wooden pick to Susan from Washington. He doesn't open the lobster for her. He coaches her from across the table as she learns to open the shell and get the meat for herself. She dips it into her cup of butter and enjoys her first bite. They talk about places to publish poetry, the mandated testing policies in Maryland, and the use of first person narration in fiction. Therese, a young teacher from California stands alone in line, hurt and confused. The three women in line ahead of her are laughing. She tries to be polite, but she is afraid they are laughing at the writing she has shared with them that morning.

There is a lot to read in this room, and there is a lot to write about. For the teachers in their t-shirts, feasting leisurely together, reading writing and teaching writing is part of a social institution very different from the one in which they usually meet their colleagues. It only lasts for three weeks, but it is an important event, sometimes a turning point in a teacher's career. I believe that the summer writing program is an event worthy of study, a readable text itself. It involves more commitment than a course. It is a social institution, in anthropologist Clifford Geertz's words at the head of this chapter, worth seeing as readable. It functions, in a way, as a temporary culture, away from home and work, a place safe to take literate risks, to self-explore, and to discover oneself in the company of others doing the same.

Some teachers leave this experience and return to school in the fall reporting feelings of being changed, "transformed." But this program insists they're not transformed. It suggests that perhaps the teachers are *even more themselves* than they were when they arrived. The program validates movement inward--to explore the

self, but it encourages a parallel movement outward--toward this culture which offers other people a chance to collaborate in the exploration.¹ Why do teachers label it "transformation?" Is it really a *transformative illusion*? Do they credit the program because they begin to read and write for themselves, begin to revise their ideas about teaching? Are they afraid to credit themselves for their shifts in understanding? On the day of the lobsterfest, Susan says:

I'm understanding that to read is to write is to listen; they're all the same thing..But what *is* this? There's *more to this*...I almost felt as though I was in a little bit of a cult...I got an uncomfortable feeling after a while, because I thought "*These people are teaching us more than this stuff*....Unless I make a deep change, I'm not going to be making any change at all"...That is scary for me, and I didn't know it until I thought about it...just about two days ago.

Frank, attending for the third time, describes it to me this way:

The first week is "Holy shit. I'm a wreck." The second week is "I don't know if I'm alive or dead, but I think things are starting to come together." And by the third week it's like, "I'm a writer."

Frank's words are direct; he's not sure how it happens, he knows that for a while he's "a wreck," that his involvement requires confusion, self-examination, and a condition in which he's not sure whether he's "alive or dead," but his experience concludes with self-confidence as a writer. Susan senses that by the end of her three weeks, she begins to think that "there's more to this." She cannot articulate what she means by "this," but she knows she has experienced it. With only two days left, she expresses discomfort and calls the program a "little bit of a cult." She knows she will

¹. In an interview with Tom Newkirk, who has directed this program since the beginning, he stressed that the program is "not trying to make this a transformation...it is a confirmation, an affirmation of who they are and what they're already doing." (5/28/90)

either be making a "deep change" in her teaching or no change at all, and the change is a result of her own reading and writing.

The "change agent" in this experience is a complex amalgam of the individual, her social environment, her sensitivity to and knowledge of her personal history and occupational traditions. Her writing functions to create internal dialogue--she writes to know what she knows. And the community functions for her to confirm and revise her knowledge. This summer writing program puts all the systems in place for the teacher to act as her own agent for change, and to determine new ways for her to enable her students to evaluate their knowledge and changes, as well. The "deep change" that Susan feels or the three week shift in writing confidence that Frank describes is a complex amalgam as well.

Culture-Making: A Dialectical Relationship

The summer writing program is temporary, itself a ritual. Its community sustains fellowship by telling stories, sharing artifacts, enacting practices and rites of passage, honoring its elder tradition bearers, establishing a lexicon, a set of symbols, and a system of beliefs that forms an identity for the people who enter it. Layered over that community are individual teachers with long career histories--reading, writing, reflecting, asking questions of themselves and their beliefs. Here teachers are neither at home nor are they at school. They are unburdened of their daily responsibilities. It is an intense "high context," full of the color and texture of teachers.

Creating and reflecting in the company of others creating and reflecting, these teachers produce for themselves what anthropologist Victor Turner calls an "ethnotext:" "To be reflexive is to be at once one's own subject and direct object." (in

Ruby, ed. 96) A look at teachers in a summer writing workshop can be a peek into how they organize and interpret their own ethnotexts, and in turn, their own perceptions of schooling.

Teachers form a dialectical relationship with this temporary culture. They grow by self-reflection as they write and talk inside a social environment that holds other teachers who read and listen. The relationship echoes psychologist Lev Vygotsky's description of human development as an "interweaving of two lines," the internal, biological growth processes in learning and the external, sociocultural functions that reflect back what has been learned. (1978, 56) Vygotsky believes that the essence of human development is language as it works in a social context. Teachers learning inside this culture are, in Vygotsky's terms, working in a "zone of proximal development:"

the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (86)

Writing theorist Donald Graves (1991) cautions that Vygotsky's terms "adult guidance" and "more capable peers" imply an intellectual hierarchy. Often we know that learning happens in the company of an equal, a collaborator. When a concept is almost formed, Graves says, it might be a "less capable peer" who puts in the missing link. For the adults in the summer program, there are zones of proximal development inside their peer conferences, their response groups, and the classes and lectures the program provides. But their learning happens outside these formal contexts. Learning comes in reflection; it connects when people are immersed in talk, and it seeps around the edges of the program. Concepts develop and ideas form in the dorms,

at the picnics, over coffee or beer or ice cream in the local restaurants and on weekend trips to the beach and the mountains. Karen, who is at UNH for the second summer, writes:

We sit in cubbied spaces looking out at each other...trying to read gestures....I'm wondering...how this brief encounter will work...wondering if I'll make a connection to anyone here...Writing is like that...If I dig deep enough I can look at myself and recognize what has always been there...It is a risk...[it] follows you into your bed whispering...I meander up and down the halls in search of a sympathetic ear...a door opens and a voice yells, "I can't write, I can't take it anymore, just give me a ditto and let me fill in the blanks." Another door opens and someone shouts "Listen to this, listen to this"...the hallway fills with writers sharing, whining, and laughing....

On the first day, Karen already knows that it will be a "brief encounter;" risky, but productive. On the last day, Susan, Therese and Frank think about their own reactions to their experience, and then they think about their students. These may seem superficial acts, but they smack of deep personal re-evaluation. When Tom coaches Susan in lobster eating and Therese worries about the women laughing in line, they all recognize that those moments hold lessons that are symbolic for them as teachers. For three weeks, they have read and written and learned together. They have also elaborated traditions, shared and expanded a language, enacted and shifted existing rituals and reorganized their belief systems. And they have examined themselves and their own positions in this temporary culture.

"A society's culture, writes anthropologist Ward Goodenough, "consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members...Culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behavior, or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the forms of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and

otherwise interpreting them." (1957, 167)

Psychologist Jerome Bruner suggests that we inherit culture, then we recreate our reality as we re-invent the culture for ourselves. Bruner expresses hope that our next generation will accept that there are many "possible worlds," that education will "become part of our 'culture-making.'" With our actions and our symbol-making, he believes, we are constantly reconstructing our "selves" as well as our culture. (1986)

For teachers who quite literally shape the educational actions and symbol-making for the next generation, it is important to look at them while they engage in their own reconstructions. If we accept the idea that we reconstruct our "selves," the actions and symbol-making that create our culture, and we enable the next generation to do the same, it follows that the process of education is never over. Development continues beyond childhood. Educational philosopher John Dewey believed that at whatever age, people grow in a "cumulative movement of action toward a later result....Growth is not something done to them; it is something they do....Hence education means the enterprise of supplying the conditions which insure growth, or adequacy of life, irrespective of age." (1916, 42)

Before Susan took her first bite of lobster, Tom lent her the tools and coached her from across the table until she found her own way to crack the shell. She stopped long enough to recognize his action as good teaching. When Therese worried about the older teachers laughing at her, she wrote about it in her journal and then later spoke with them. They were laughing at something else. But then she thought about her students; how she could arrange conditions for them to be able to do the same.

For teachers like Susan, Frank, and Therese, the culture of schooling is loosely wrapped in long threads of personal autobiography, personal school history, literacy habits, important mentorships, stories of home, workplaces, administrators and colleagues. There are threads of success and threads of failure, of power and

oppression, knowledge and beliefs that are at once acceptable and unacceptable. Wrapping the threads around a professional lifetime, and unwrapping to expose them open is something a teacher can do only in a state of reflection. Repatterning their own threads and helping others to re-pattern requires reflexivity and time.

Why the New Hampshire Writing Program?

This dissertation focuses on high school teachers during the summer of 1990 in the three combined New Hampshire writing programs: The New Hampshire Writing Program (NHWP), for teachers who have not attended a summer writing program before, The Institute for Reading, Writing, and Learning (IRWL), for teachers who have already participated in the NHWP or a similar program, and "Explorations in Genre," an advanced institute seminar for teachers who have been to at least two others. In the summer of 1990, there were two hundred thirty-three participants from twenty-seven states, Bermuda, Canada, and Japan. Female teachers comprised seventy-nine percent of the total participants, high school teachers nineteen percent. The forty-four high school teachers in the combined programs came from public and private, special education and special college-preparatory, rural, suburban and urban schools. (see appendices for distribution graphs). In the NHWP and the IRWL, each teacher met daily in two groups: a personal reading and writing workshop with teachers of mixed grade levels, and a shorter theory and methods group with teachers from her own grade level.

A cursory look at summer writing programs suggests that they are pleasant, efficient, relatively inexpensive inservice models for re-educating teachers in the summertime. The National Writing Project, with over one hundred sixty sites across the globe, began in 1974 as the Bay Area Writing Project in California, a staff

development model with a mission to identify good teachers of writing, train them to present classroom practices to other teachers, and then follow up their contact during the school year in inservice workshops and courses. It is based on a few fundamental concepts: that writing teachers ought to write, that the best teachers of writing teachers are other teachers, and that curriculum change must come from the "bottom:" the teacher on the inside. The Bay Area Project was not the first; summer writing programs have beckoned teachers for decades, but this one gave attention to the mix of pedagogy and practice that writing teachers need, and made the teaching of writing accessible to large groups of teachers.

Although the differences may seem subtle at first, the New Hampshire Writing Program, begun by UNH professor Tom Newkirk in 1979 specifically to offer help for New Hampshire teachers, is fundamentally different in its design and philosophy. In his original proposal, Newkirk (1980) outlined four major assumptions about the teaching of writing:

1. Writing is a process
2. Writing must have a purpose; students write to achieve real intentions
3. Writing is a natural activity, can begin very early in life and grow out of drawing
4. Writing has a place in all content areas as a special mode of learning.

Newkirk documented the public pressures that defined writing as a competence to be assessed, and pointed out that few English teachers were making an effort to teach composition, and most had no formal training. He described the strong resources available at the University of New Hampshire, both in the English Department's commitment to writing, with specialists in writing instruction, publishing authors in fiction and poetry, and award-winning journalists. The Education Department was in

the midst of its ground-breaking research in the development of writing in schools (Graves, 1983), becoming a springboard for much professional activity and publishing in the field of teaching composition in schools across the English speaking world. But these resources were missing most New Hampshire teachers. Over the summers, faculty members were splintered into workshops out of state. One-semester evening courses couldn't effectively accommodate most working teachers commuting in a rural state, and short inservice programs were insufficient.

Newkirk's description of the course outlines the three basic features: an experiential base, a theoretical base, and a pragmatic base which, ten years later, still stand. His words about the experiential base foreshadow much of what the teachers in this study will show:

Painting teachers should paint, acting teachers should act, carpentry teachers should saw, and writing teachers should write. Many English teachers do not write. And by not writing they experience both ethical and practical problems when it comes to teaching writing...A teacher will have difficulty dealing with students' writing anxiety when he or she is terrified of writing. No component of the proposed program will provoke as much anxiety among participants as the writing workshops, and at the end of the program no other component will have done as much to generate the enthusiasm for the writing process. The workshops provide the energy that runs the program. The purpose of the workshops is not necessarily to produce publishable writers but to help participants to discover (or rediscover) their own voices and to develop their skills. (1980, 12)

Participants live the "experiential" base daily, writing and responding to others' writing with teachers across grade levels. Both the "theoretical" and the "pragmatic" bases are the foundations for the daily grade-level sessions which represent one-third of their class time. After three summers, Anne confesses:

It's like a luxury, an opportunity to be able to do something that I know is going to be good for me but it's kind of a discipline that I'm a little scared of too....All the years that I've taught writing I would always start stuff but never finish, because that's when my students would need me the most....

The program makes a theoretical commitment to understanding "the relationship between language and learning and to the special contributions that writing can make to the learning process," and instructors choose texts that highlight this theoretical perspective. "Without a theoretical base," Newkirk writes in his proposal, "a writing curriculum can easily resemble a classic definition of 'history'-- one damn thing after another." (14)

Tracy's comments after her third year reflect her curricular decisions based on her gradual understanding of theory:

After the first summer I tried to do everything all at once, and it didn't work. So then I focused on one thing at a time....after the second summer it was even better. Now I feel as if I see the whole writing/reading philosophy so much clearer. Before it was broken up, like little pieces of a puzzle that weren't put together yet...Now it's going to be one connected picture...I'm too easy on the kids...I let them give up too easily....sometimes you have to push people, especially teenagers...they're not used to making their own choices when it comes to reading and writing.

The pragmatic base in the grade-level sessions applies theory to practice with specific strategies for the classroom, examples of student writing for study and practice, videotapes of classrooms, and demonstrations. Anne remembers her grade level instructor the first year:

She made me think about why it is that I taught what I taught, and what was important, what was valuable and what wasn't...And she didn't tell me what was valuable. She got me to ask the questions.

Unlike the National Writing Project,² the New Hampshire model does not state curriculum change or institutional transformation as a specific goal for its participants. But there is an implicit assumption that deep change will happen in the teacher herself, and it will continue to happen when a teacher is strengthened by her own literacy, her self-reflection, and the invitation to become a member of a solid community.

As Susan pointed out on the last day, "*These people are teaching us more than this stuff....Unless I make a deep change, I'm not going to be making any change at all.*" Although the program doesn't intend to transform teachers, it is Susan's implicit assumption that produces the illusion of transformation. And she is her own change agent. The paradox lies in what appears to be "a bit of a cult," a transforming experience coming from somewhere on the outside, involves disciplined self-examination and self-disclosure through reading, writing, and response.

Susan's tentative look toward her teaching practices begs for personal support when she returns to school. In his proposal, Newkirk wrote, "The very nature of a summer program makes follow-up essential. Its virtue is, in a sense, its

² In his 1983 *English Education* article "Is the Bay Area Model the Answer?" Newkirk commends the National Writing Project for the "justifiable euphoria" over its success and praises both programs for creating "an esprit and a continuing bond" different from traditional methods courses and the "enforced captivity of the mandated inservice workshop." (166) As a result of Newkirk's critique, during the following summer, Bill Strong, director of the Utah Writing Project, taught in the New Hampshire Writing Program and wrote a report for the National Writing Project's publication, *The Quarterly*. It is more like a course, and conservative in that way, Strong observed. It is not specifically aimed at creating curriculum change. The "political message," as Strong saw it, was "one emphasizing self-sponsored writing, integration of reading and writing, and the teacher as researcher," that "the real goal of these teachers was to become more effective in the classroom." Strong admitted that time spent in National Writing Project teacher workshops "holds the schedule hostage....from the activities of reading and writing." (20) He concluded that at New Hampshire, "teachers were participants in an Institute, not owners of it."

defect....teachers can study and work free from teaching responsibilities. Yet this separation can cause teachers to generate unrealistic expectations." (1980, 23) Susan knew she was "going to make a deep change or no change at all." Although the New Hampshire program grew big and international within two years, there is still an annual spring reunion conference for teachers, informal classroom visits between participants and instructors, and now a full program of summer course offerings for teachers leading to a Master of Science in Teaching degree. Anne, who is now in the Master's program, gave a presentation at this year's April conference. As she looks back over her summers, she talks about her gradual shift in attitude toward her colleagues when she began to know them as writers:

I tended to put people in boxes and label them...I could sort of write them off when they weren't in my group, but I have been repeatedly surprised...people who I had felt detached from I became attached to...then their writing suddenly looked better! And I came to see a breakdown of barriers....I came to have an enormous respect for junior high teachers who I always thought were lunatics...and elementary teachers will always take a stab at something that comes along, they know how to teach kids how to think and how to learn....

Peter, a high school teacher from a rural school, writes this "labyrinthine sentence" (Romano in Newkirk, Ed. 1990 and Weathers, 1980), one long and telling mouthful:

NHWP, also known as *English 919 The Teaching of Writing*, a graduate level class or program that offers its participants six earned credits in one of the country's leading universities pioneering the writing process examination of the author and text, actually gives out FREE coffee at break and a T-shirt you don't have to BUY and can even design if you have the time between supportive and well guided writing groups that live the philosophy that one should practice what one teaches in order to learn what one can then teach also has the best goddamn dorm food in the United States, prepared by some of the leading pioneers in mass-produced food preparation who make me want to run to

dinner from the library that holds New Hampshire's largest collections with volumes numbering in the hundreds of thousands and has the *best looking girls* restacking the shelves smiling at you from between the rows of books.

A week later, after a formal lecture on feminism and over an informal beer with a tableful of colleagues, Peter retracts his final statement about the girls, angry that he's been asked to delete it. But he'd still have written about the program, he says, even if the library workers had been male. Both Peter's and Anne's reflections emerge because they are free to re-evaluate everything from their own writing abilities to their personal social biases. The established cultural conditions and traditions of the program and its instructors invite them to be reflexive, to read and interpret the program's text itself.

Each year in the New Hampshire Writing Program, the special sessions and lectures change. But the teaching staff has remained much the same. "I'm conservative about the staff," Newkirk says. He gives careful attention to maintaining continuity, building yearly rituals and adhering to shared philosophical principals about teaching writing. "We've made our careers together," he says. In 1981, staff and participants all fit around one long picnic table for their first annual lobster dinner. In 1990, they used three rooms in the university's largest student dining facility. Of the 1981 staff, five people are still teaching in 1990, and in the current staff three have been participants in the program themselves. They are all practicing teachers who write and publish.

In 1981, of the staff members who were teaching in public schools, none had published a piece of writing for a wide professional audience. Since then, Newkirk has edited or co-edited three books about teaching writing, *Breaking Ground*, *To Compose*, and *Understanding Writing* which include chapters written by staff and

participants from the summer program. Collectively, the 1990 staff of thirteen has published hundreds of articles over ten years, eight books, with seven other books in press. The staff as productive practicing teachers engaged in writing and professional development reflects the history of composition studies, the teacher-researcher movement, and the history of summer writing programs. That would be another story; it is not the focus of this dissertation.

What Do We Know About Other Summer Writing Programs?

There is a general sense that summer programs have lasting effects on writing teachers, but there is not much documentation about the contextual details of the programs themselves or of teachers' experiences while they are engaged in them. *The Quarterly* is a periodical devoted to the teaching of writing and sharing relevant ideas, research and projects through an increasing international network of writing teachers. The Bay Area Writing Project publishes several series of curriculum models, monographs and papers, written by teachers and professors. Harvey Daniels and Steven Zemelman's book *A Writing Project: Training Teachers of Composition from Kindergarten to College* (1985) is a comprehensive training manual drawn from eight years in the Illinois Writing Project and written by its directors.

Sondra Perl and Nancy Wilson's *Through Teachers' Eyes: Portraits of Writing Teachers at Work* (1986) studies writing teachers across grade levels in one school system after four summer writing institutes. These researchers' case studies of six teachers are drawn from living in their homes and participating in their classrooms over two years. Teachers make changes in their classrooms with support from both their districts and the researchers in their classrooms.

Nancy Lester and Cynthia Onore's book *Learning Change: One School District Meets Language Across the Curriculum* (1990) is an ethnographic account of

shifts in pedagogy in a four year inservice writing program in one school system, designed to answer the question "How do teachers change, given their habits of mind, when they pose questions for themselves?" (1990, 65) Onore and Lester show that school change involves a group of people, supported together under one administration, uncovering and examining a complex web of hidden assumptions that guide their practices in teaching literacy.

Three recent studies describe teachers specifically after summer writing programs. Wendy Bishop's ethnography, *Something Old, Something New* (1990), presents college writing instructors during and after a two-summer intensive doctoral studies program, and documents change and lack of change in each of five teachers' college classrooms. Her study shows that teachers' beliefs and perceptions about what they do are not always consonant with what their students perceive.

David Wilson (1988) studied change in high school teachers after the Iowa Writing Project. His dissertation is retrospective; it uses a series of questionnaires, interviews, and case studies to look at influences of the writing program on classrooms three and six years after the teachers participated. It does not look at the teachers while they participate, nor does it study the program organization itself. It suggests that teachers, given time, reflection, and a community, are able to articulate and revise their beliefs and assumptions about teaching writing. It is important to note that teachers in Wilson's study claim that the community and their personal writing are much stronger influences than the books they read or the instruction they received, but he does not emphasize this among his major findings.

In her study of four secondary teachers returning to their classrooms after a 1983 National Writing Project session in Wisconsin, Mary Louise Gomez (1990) found: 1. that the teachers were disappointed at not being able to "effect change," and

"resocialization" would require time to meet, talk and think regularly, 2. that school change will require collaborative efforts with administrators, and 3. the isolating environment of a secondary school--its allocation of neither physical space nor time to teachers--constrains them from reflection, collaboration, or individual attempts at innovation. (in Hawisher and Soter, eds., 79)

All these studies examine "change" in the practices and beliefs of writing teachers as they apply it to their classrooms. Each one presents the writing community as a hedge against professional isolation, and as a support for articulating beliefs about writing instruction and implementing them into the structures of a prescribed curriculum. All combine researcher observations with teacher self-reports of shifts in their own beliefs, and a few employ pre-and post-survey methods.

No study investigates teachers in the summer workshop itself. None tries to define what teachers mean by "community," or look at teachers' attitudes about their own writing or reading as they share with their peers. Only two single out the special issues high school teachers face. There are no accounts of informal conversations, personal stories, or views of the environment in which the seeds of these changes take root. In short, no study yet has read the summer writing program as a text. This study attempts to fill that gap.

My purpose is *not* to show change; it is to document teachers' experience during one summer. To understand teachers in a summer program, I want to listen to their stories, see them as they work, watch as they read and write and respond, listen to their complaints and triumphs as they re-think their own literacies in the company of other teachers and writers, all teaching and writing. Anne, a high school teacher for fifteen years, remarks:

A lot of why I like this program is that there are no primadonnas...we are all writers whatever stage we are in at the time....you can be who you are, in

whatever creative way that you are, write what you want using the resources that you have and there isn't a formula...I've come away with great respect for elementary teachers, and--not a disdain for high school teachers, but I felt an impatience, an inflexibility, an unwillingness to learn something new.

Twin Laws and an Event that Re-presents

Several guiding concepts from folklore studies and anthropology inform this work. As Anne's comments suggest, reading this summer program as a culture means looking at its participants as more than a group of people taking a course. There is a relationship between them and the event itself. Participants in this event recognize its belief system and enact its rituals and practices while the event is taking place. They mark their own contributions with their individuality as they begin to adapt its cultural system, or as they reject it.

The "twin laws" of folklore process as Barre Toelken refers to them, are conservatism and dynamism. One has to do with a culture's tradition-keeping, and the other is its way of re-conceiving knowledge, rituals, craft, and verbal art as they are passed on. There is a conservative core, that which is fixed, the traditions which do not change: "all those processes and forces that result in the retaining of certain information, beliefs, styles, customs, and the like, and the attempted passing of those materials, intact, through time and space in all the channels of tradition and expression." (1979, 35)

These "conservative" elements, according to Toelken, mark "culture-specific worldviews." Tom Newkirk bases his program on a core of theories of learning from Jerome Bruner, John Dewey, William James, and theories of composition that draw from contemporary writings of Donald Murray, Peter Elbow, James Moffett, and James Britton, and such ancient composition theorists as Plato and Montaigne. His staff changes rarely, and he applies careful attention to the maintenance of the rituals

which he believes strengthen the program. These are as formal as the yearly presentations by composition and literature scholars and writers, the time allotted to writing groups and grade level groups, the formal reading of selected writings on the last day of the program. Other elements are less formal, but important conserving traditions: the cookouts, the annual t-shirt design contest, the lobsterfest, the daily newsletter, opportunities to view classroom videos, and informal classroom exchange visits.

But in the cultural products of a folk group, there is always a part in motion, the dynamic features of the event: the things that change each time the event occurs, with each person who is part of it. Toelken places dynamism at the other extreme of conservatism, "all those elements that function to change features, contents, meanings, styles, performance, and usage as a traditional event takes place repeatedly over space and time. Matters of taste, context, art, playfulness, change of function, translation, shift of audience...all encourage continual change...even when the bearer of the tradition tries to prevent it." (35)

Here, in the summer program, using this frame, I saw participants accepting its conservative core: the writing groups and the grade level groups and the functions of both, the lexicon, the formal lectures by writers and poets, the disciplines required in the crafts they were learning: reading, writing, and the teaching of both, the cookouts and lobster dinners. But the dynamic features lay in the shifting talk and use of the tools and the artifacts of their craft; the new crafts in the act of creation. There were long conversations about the simple tools of reading and writing like pens and pencils, lap desks and computers, and there were complex discussions and reconsiderations of such matters as genre and grammatical choices. In a culture that encourages non-competition, the competition for a t-shirt design was fierce; it took

three forty-five minute meetings to come to consensus. Throughout the three weeks, participants told stories about personal school failures, writing anxieties, classroom successes. They shared books they loved and books they hated by the tradition bearing elders, and were able to share their observations with the authors. Roles broke down as participants watched the tradition-bearers draft their own writing and participate in the events with them.

A second frame from folklore and anthropology studies offers a way to look at public events. Don Handelman (1990) describes public events as dense concentrations of rituals and symbols in any culture, often temporary in time and limited in space. Public events are occasions, he claims, "that people undertake in concert to make more, less, or other of themselves than they usually do." His illustrations are diverse: a holiday lesson in an Israeli kindergarten, a two-minute horse race in Italy, a female puberty rite in Senegal, practices of clowning and mumming, and a study of an informal snack break between two American factory workers. He classifies such events into three categories:

1. Events that model the lived-in-world (puberty rites, for instance, designed to cause a feeling of transformation by setting up conflicting states of existence to be overcome)
2. Events that mirror (civic ceremonies, parades, for example, that present the consistencies of a lived-in world as it exists)
3. Events that re-present a culture to itself, that "refract multiple visions of the possible...inversions of social reality" which can cause participants to question an existing social order.(49) The formal quality of the event itself, its design structure, presents an alternative model as well as raising contradictions about the existing social order.

The summer writing program, from this point of view, is an enactment of its own intentionality. Public events, says Handelman, "may not only affect social

order, they may also effect it." (15) First, the summer writing program offers teachers reflexive glimpses of themselves as learners, as readers and writers. Then it offers them a chance to project those glimpses toward their own teaching. In short, the very structure of the event itself re-presents, to a teacher, a new way of looking at herself in the culture of schooling.

Tom Newkirk senses the emotions that these experiences evoke each year. It excites him and it unnerves him. In a meeting we had on July 3, a week before the program began, he smiled while he told me he looks forward to it at this time each year with "a sense of dread...for the thing that's about to come down."

"Being There" On Paper: Blurring Academic Boundaries and a Cacophony of Verbal Data

I had never taught in this program, nor had I participated in it. But I began this study knowing three things for sure from two decades of teaching writing in secondary schools and colleges, working and talking with high school teachers inside and outside their schools:

1. That neither the culture of a high school as an institution nor a public high school's English curriculum supports an approach to teaching writing based on offering time, choice, and collaboration.
2. That the high school teachers I know who feel most comfortable teaching writing are ones who have attended summer programs, and that they will actively resist a prescribed curriculum in order to teach writing their own ways.
3. That high school teachers who want to write themselves have trouble finding time to do it, have little professional encouragement from administrators, colleagues, or students to pursue it.

Why does a high school teacher seem to need the support of a summer program in order to teach writing with confidence, against a prescribed curriculum? Why don't other kinds of inservice models affect people as much as summer programs? How does a summer program affect a teacher while she's in the summer context, and then how does she recontextualize some of its features in her own school in the fall? What is the nature of this encounter, and why see it as a culture? What kind of culture does this summer writing program provide for a high school teacher? These are a few of the questions I asked as I began my study.

I needed to live in the culture to understand it, and then I reconstructed it to give a sense, as Geertz says, (1988) of "being there." To do that, I needed to work from a combination of academic disciplines. I employ interpretive frames drawn from a mixture of disciplines: composition theory and sociolinguistics, educational philosophy and psychology, anthropology and folklore studies. Psychologist Jerome Bruner writes of his own use of interdisciplinary frames, "the boundaries that separated such fields...were matters of administrative convenience rather than of intellectual substance." (1990, xvi) Like Bruner, I chose to forego administrative convenience and join fields.

The summer program is a unique kind of event in the education of teachers, and I render this event to reflect its uniqueness. Geertz celebrates the union of literary art and scientific inquiry in ethnographic writing: "now that ethnographies look at least like romances as much as lab reports, ethnographers have to convince us...not merely that they themselves have truly "been there," but that had we been there we should have seen what they saw, felt what they felt, concluded what they concluded." (1988, 16) To represent and interpret this culture, I am blurring boundaries deliberately.

The event itself calls for a special way to represent it which is, to my mind, as important as the research question. I study this event and these people in a way that is an act of "artful science," which needs to fall into educator Elliott Eisner's category of "educational criticism." For this, the writer is selective in both perception and disclosure. "The making of a fine meal does not require using everything in the pantry," Eisner writes. (1990, 90) "Connoisseurship," his term, is a quiet act of appreciation (85), but as a private act has little social utility. For connoisseurship to have a public presence, we must turn to criticism -- "connoisseurship with a public face." If connoisseurship is the art of appreciation, "criticism" is the art of disclosure. An artful ethnographic narrative, according to Eisner, is an appropriate form of educational criticism.

How best might I design a study to write about a temporary three-week experience in which my informants are writing too? What kinds of multiple data sources can I find to let my informants speak in their own voices? How do I design an educationally critical narrative with the sense of "being there," out of pieces of other people's texts and lives? From Geertz's perspective, "How words attach to the world, texts to experience, works to lives, is not a question anthropologists have been asking for very long." (1988, 134). This is a question composition scholars and educational researchers are just beginning to ask. (Green, Lauer and Ascher, Kantor, Brodkey, Simon and Dippe) For this part, I need to use the tools of the contemporary ethnographer and adapt them to the special features of this culture.

Ethnographer Judith Green offers this quip about fieldwork: "If you stay a month you write a book, if you stay a year you write an article, and if you stay more than a year you know what you don't know." (1990) She doesn't mention dissertations. I stayed for less than a month. I wrote for more than a year, prepared for a year before that, but I've been "in the field" as "a native" in the profession for twenty-five. I know

what I know about what I've written, and I know what I don't know, what I didn't write. For my informants and me, the three weeks were only a moment in our teaching and learning lives, but for everyone it was an important moment. Like a good ethnography, it was a moment telescoped in time and space.

In order to provide, as Geertz describes it, a sense of "being there".... Pursuading the reader that this offstage miracle has occurred is where the writing comes in." (1988, 8) I began with seven informants and a set of guiding questions (see appendix). In earlier research and much preparatory reading, I knew it was important to look for personal stories, mentors and memories of past teaching and learning experiences, "turning" points in people's own literate histories. I wanted to see how they engaged or disengaged with others, what they chose to write about, in what ways they felt like members of the quickly evolving culture. Did they take part in shaping it, or did the culture just seem "there" to them? I collected data day and night: eighteen days, sixteen hours a day, a total of two hundred eighty-eight hours, thirty-two ninety minute tape recordings from two tape recorders, and two large plastic crates full of verbal data--the reading and writing of my informants. They gave me a rich amount of what I have since dubbed "ethnoverbian," a cacophony of verbal data. It included everything they wrote from the formal writing they published in the NHWP anthologies to their notes I found in wastebaskets, everything they said in the classes and informal conversations I observed and the regular interviews I had with them. I wanted their voices to tell their version of this culture. They spoke and read and wrote, and I listened.

Then, the three weeks were over. Suddenly came the quiet, the sorting, the transcribing, the filing and coding and re-coding. First, down to five informants, then four, and eventually three. And the methodological questions. Where does an

ethnography take place--in the field or on the page? As George Marcus says, attention to the language and form of an ethnographic text is the way we synthesize our fieldwork and our theory. It is, in his terms, an act of "deskwork as opposed to fieldwork." (in Ruby, ed, 171)

To render my study of this culture readable, I present it in two forms: long ethnographic case studies and short ethnographic intertexts. I offer three detailed portraits of participants, all high school teachers: Therese Deni, Dorothy Spofford, and Joyce Choate.³ I show them as they each try to "read" the program--its texts, subtexts, and contexts--with their own internal oppositions. Each confronts the interrelationships between her teacher-self and her writer-self, her past and her present circumstances, and the two cultures as she understands and participates in them: that of the summer, and that of her school. Each teacher is a vulnerable adult, a teacher-student, caught inside three agendas:

1. The teacher's agenda: to come to learn to teach writing and reading better in a six-credit course with a seasoned instructor at an institution with a reputation and staff well known for innovations in teaching writing.
2. The program's overt agenda: that writing teachers need to be writers, and to do that they must select their topics, write, read, and respond to others with plenty of time, choice, and community to support it.
3. The program's implied agenda: that there will be a natural, organic shift on the inside, that each teacher will discover a "consciousness of possibilities," not a transformation for her school's curriculum, but a unique literate consciousness to fit herself and her own teaching beliefs.

³ All names of participants have been changed. Unless otherwise identified, they are all high school teachers from across the U.S.A. and Canada. Informants chose their own pseudonyms. For this dissertation, all names of program instructors, professors, and institutions are not changed.

Each portrait takes a deep look at one teacher's experience over the three weeks as she shuttles between her personal agenda and the program's agendas. Through her tensions, her actions, her conversations with others, her formal and informal writing, responses to her reading, and my observations and interviews, I try to capture the ways she interprets the summer's academic and social system. The ethnographic intertexts are meant to be verbal snapshots of the culture itself: a description of an event or a person juxtaposed with an account in another voice. In each of the intertexts, I attempt to "freeze the moment" (Rosenberg 1989), stop an action to examine some of the thinking, pieces of texts, scholarship, and experience that contribute to it.

At first, the main character was me; I couldn't take myself out of the text. My informants weren't talking very much at all, and I was talking too much. I knew that subjectivity is an inherent part of fieldwork. It is the reflexive perspective that gives an ethnography its color, texture, and luster. But at the beginning, my text was still too subjective. I was still wondering, "How do I authorize a text that's been authored by someone else? And do it preserving the author's voice?" My informants had done a lot of writing, and I'd collected it. They wrote, they read, they talked and listened. So did I. But their texts needed to be louder than mine. They were thinking and learning a lot; they didn't always know it, and at the time, neither did I. I wanted to preserve their original voices and their intentions. I needed to preserve their texts inside my text. I had to foreground their own voices, fold them into my narrative.

When we work with writers, it is not just the final piece of writing that can give the information. It is the ethnoverbiage, all the verbal data, a cacophony of verbal data, that holds the clues. In my analysis, I learned to look for validation through multiple perspectives from different pieces of discourse and actions within the same person. Like a good poem, a good ethnography presents an impressionistic view of an event through carefully chosen words, metaphors, imagery, and, most important, real field

experience--through the lenses of both the informants and the researcher. Sociologist John Van Maanen observes that there is a trend currently for ethnographers to study their own institutions, that we are drawn to familiar places:

...with the slightly ironic intention of making them strange...the coke dealer as small businessman...the computer hacker as Bohemian artist...the congressman as tribal chief or flunky...the drunk driver as media fiction... (1988, 126)

This study's intentions may not look as "strange" as the ones Van Maanen cites, but it looks into a familiar place and finds a strange irony: the teacher as student, away from her institution in time and space, participating in an event deliberately designed to be different from school. I present it in a form designed to foreground the writing and thinking of my informants and myself. An "impressionist tale," Van Maanen writes, presents "the doing of fieldwork rather than simply the doer or the done." (105) I seek in this study to present four deep impressions of this culture: Therese Deni's, Dorothy Spofford's, Joyce Choate's, and mine. And to try to capture the landscape, flesh out the culture--its colors, textures and lusters--I use intertexts to highlight other teachers, other moments, other issues and other writings.

INTERTEXT**CONFESSIONS OF A PARTICIPANT-OBSERVER**

When I parked at the rear of the dorm, I wasn't thinking about writing or teaching. I was thinking about leaving my family for three weeks, guilty for grumbling at my daughter because she had forgotten to pack socks for camp, commanding my son to turn on his alarm each morning for summer school. I waved goodbye to them on the highway as my husband's car headed north and I forked east for Durham, just past the Bedford tollbooth. Three tentative arms, raised through the open sunroof, waved me away.

In the back of my car, my desk lamp rattled its arm against the room fan, and they both bumped against a plastic crate full of books and files. The lamp slid off my pillow and dug into my suitcase as I curved east. It was too late to re-adjust, to reconsider. My plan to study the New Hampshire Writing Program meant that I had to live it. I had registered as a participant and paid for a room in the dorms. I was about to "go native" in my own culture, to try to "see the familiar as strange," as the anthropologists say. My stuff was packed, my daughter's stuff was packed, the arrangements were made, and my family was on its way. None of us was very sure how the three weeks would go.

Forty-five miles later, I turned right at the public television station, passed the equestrian field, the dairy barns and greenhouses of the agriculture department, and glimpsed the white wooden sign with the blue seal of the university. This wasn't a new drive for me; I'd been a commuting doctoral student for two years, and as a public school and college English teacher, I'd driven here for many conferences and meetings. But what was strange was that I had time; I was going to stay. This time, I

was not panicked to find a parking place or get to a meeting or a class. I had *time*. I passed by my "home," the Writing Lab office in Morrill Hall, took a deep breath, and headed past the main campus and around to the dorms.

* * * *

I am surprised to find the three mini-dorms at the edge of the campus; I've just spent two years working and studying at this university and never seen them. Sackett, Woodruff, and Richardson are small, two-story wood sided buildings. They cluster around a common lawn--velvet grass encased in well-tended forest. A volleyball net stands between Richardson and Sackett, clotheslines hang outside Woodruff. There is a circular driveway, a flagpole, and a few giant flat rocks on the side that were the size of park benches. A long wooden stairway on the opposite side of the lawn connects the mini-dorms to the parking lot and the rest of the University. Each is unique among the others. Each views the campus from a different perspective. But the design connects them; structurally they are the same.

I glance at the family cars and vans parked around the driveway; daughters and sons and husbands and wives move cartons of books, suitcases, wastebaskets, desk lamps. They cradle computer monitors and printers wrapped in blankets and pillows. A fluffy white dog yaps through a car window; three small children wrestle on the lawn. Young athletes carry bicycles into the dorms, nesting them gently into corners and onto posts, wrapping metal cords, securing locks. Everyone is wearing minimal clothing: tank tops, sundresses, shorts, sandals, running shoes. The air is sticky; it is ninety-eight degrees and the forecast promises more of the same. I have lived in New Hampshire twenty-four summers, and I know that mid-July is like this.

Inside Sackett, there is an efficient system for registration. In a flurry of manila envelopes and keys, two young women smile and welcome me to the Summer

Writing Program, ask my name and offer me my packet. The lounge is the center of the mini-dorm, and they sit in the center of the lounge. I sit for a few minutes to watch and listen. The four sofas are upholstered in student-proof blue tweed, armed in oak, and they form a square for conversation. A large square coffee table in the center holds boxes of registration packets and a cooler of cold drinks. Against two walls, there are blank bulletin boards, an old refrigerator, three vending machines, and a table. From the sofa, I can see a kitchenette and a laundry room, a stairway leading to the second floor, and three doorways leading to halls of dorm rooms.

Claire is making posters, squeaking magic markers: red meal times, blue phone regulations, green mail procedures. People shuttle back and forth, accepting keys, asking questions, hauling cartons. "My desk doesn't look like a desk." "I have a broken light bulb." "My window won't open." She promises to assist someone. "I'm getting good at desk assembly; give me two minutes." Claire is young to be a dorm-mother and most of the people she helps are middle-aged. I hear stories: one woman from upstate New York began her trip at four a.m., dropped off her four children at four different places. Another describes herself crying an hour ago as she saw three people from last summer hugging on Main Street. The age reversals seem a bit surrealistic, and I begin having flashes of my own past.

Kate, who is also in her early twenties, is Tom Newkirk's administrative assistant this summer, and she's explaining how to open the combinations on the doors. In five minutes, she explains the procedure seven times. I hate complicated locks. I haven't negotiated a combination since my high school locker. I find my room, fumble with the lock four times, squeeze it, twist the lever, press the sequence of numbers. Doesn't open. Down the hall, a woman glances at me and chuckles; she shows me how to press the number buttons. Her fingernails are bright red, her knuckles are gnarled. They look like the hands of my sixth grade teacher; I haven't

thought about Miss Irwin in years, but I knew her hands well. I estimate this woman is in her forties, probably about my age. Inside her room, a teenage boy is playing a game on her computer while an older man cheers him on. She has set up family pictures on her dresser, pink and green decorator pillows on her quilted bedspread. She is here for her second summer.

My car is parked illegally at the rear of the dorm. I discover a side door, just down a rocky slope from my car. A woman smiles and holds the door open as I grab a wedge-shaped rock from the slope; it reminds me of the wooden wedges I've used for classroom doors everywhere I've taught. Together, we jam the door open. Her grey hair is matted and wet, and we share sighs about the heat. I climb up and slide down the slope, taking eight trips from the car to my room, churning dirt with my feet and peeling the sticky knit t-shirt from my back. A large woodchuck waddles across my path and disappears into a metal cylinder leading to Richardson House.

The room is meant for two students: two wardrobes, two dressers, two desks and a bunk bed. I am alone. I hang up my clothes thinking that three weeks of sleeping, reading, writing, cleaning and dressing will fit comfortably inside this tiny space. Like my dorm room in college; one small rack for ten months of stuff, the little desk which captured my thinking, reading, writing, and managed my social life in brown cardboard spiral notebooks. I set the computer gingerly in the center of one desk, arranging my books on the shelves above them. On one dresser I place a photo of my children and my four-cup coffee pot, on the other my printer.

The upper bunk is closer to the windows, I decide, maybe tonight there will be some air. I make the bed with my mother-in-law's old blue striped sheets, and hang my yellow towels on the rack. They were a wedding gift from my father, and they matched the claw-footed bathtub in our first apartment. Alone in the steamy afternoon,

I inventory my belongings in this new environment. Stripped of their cluttered context, they represent relationships. Stories. My dead father, my generous mother-in-law, the family picture that's been on four different desks at four different school jobs. My professional books line up above my writing surface, distant mentors and close friends; the texts that shape my own text. A room of my stories for three weeks of collecting the stories of others.

A busy life gathers artifacts with little time to sort or reflect. I am here to study teachers in a summer writing program for three weeks, but right now I am studying myself. What is it that makes us need a culture away from home and school? Why am I uncomfortable? Why am I thinking about my sixth grade teacher, college, my early marriage and towels in my first apartment? My dead father? Shall I share this with anyone? How? I will come to see in the course of the next few weeks that I am not the only person asking these questions.

The night is hot and lonely. I write a memo to myself, I worry that the printer will wake someone. A train rumbles past my room at 10, another at 11, another at 12. I stop worrying about the printer. At 6 am, I find the bathroom and take a shower. The shower is hard and warm and comforting; I hear quick breaths next to me, and as I step out, I see a woman about my age. We share an awkward smile again; she is the one who helped me wedge open the door. She is sobbing, and we are both grabbing at our towels. We hold a towel with one elbow as we brush our teeth and speak to each other in the mirror.

She has driven six hundred miles alone, and is ready to write, she says, but is afraid. She can write about anything; her instructor has written a letter to the class. Today is the anniversary of her husband's suicide, and she wants to write about it, but she just can't share it on Friday. It's just too personal; maybe she'll just write about her dog. Her honesty surprises me; her willingness to tell me her story, her

unwillingness to write about it. Talking to her in the mirror, I try to reflect what I know about helping someone choose a topic and be comfortable enough to write. She decides on the dog, tells me that this is the hardest thing she's ever done, and disappears into her room. Towelled and dry, I put on my shorts, tie on my sneakers, and pin on my badge that identifies me as someone who's paid for the meal plan.

At breakfast, a table of "repeaters" from last year's writing workshop re-enter their ritual talk before morning writing. They do a sweep of the other groups around the cafeteria. A few elderhostelers fumble with the giant cereal containers, jerking the lucite doors that will spill branflakes into their bowls. The pre-adolescent gymnasts eat sugar donuts and drink from the Pepsi dispensers; two bounce to their seats in their fluorescent leotards. At my table, there is dorm talk among my floor-mates. Sleeping away from home. Trains that pass through the night. Some find them comforting, others complain about the heat and the noise in the dorm. I apologize for my printer, knowing that the night train was louder.

We learn the complex procedure for busing our trays: glasses and coffee cups in the containers overhead, paper trash in the barrel, silverware in the watery bin, scrapings in garbage swirling water trough, dishes and trays on a revolving belt. I joke that it would be great to have a home version of this clean-up machine, including the smiling staff. What I don't realize is that this procedure will inspire several pieces of writing within the next few weeks.

Today I remind myself that I am here as a researcher, to gather data about high school teachers as they function in this culture. I don't hide it from anyone. I have signed on as a participant, but I am an observer. I will be neither teacher nor student. Although I am a native in this culture, I can't "go native." Renato Rosaldo writes about the awkward view in anthropology that "the optimal fieldworker should dance on

the edge of a paradox by simultaneously becoming one of the people and remaining an academic. The term *participant observation* reflects even as it shapes the field-worker's double persona." (1989, 180)

And mine is definitely a double persona, like the mirror conversation I had this morning in the shower room. I am a writing teacher who is studying writing teachers and writing about it, living in a my own culture in order to study it. Writing is not only my topic; it is also my method. My perspective will render this story, but it cannot smother it. Elliott Eisner suggests that the researcher's perspective is a crucial part of the study, part of the artful science of what he terms educational criticism:

In qualitative work the researcher's background can influence the way in which the situation is described, interpreted, and appraised...personal biography is one of the tools researchers work with; it is the major instrument through which meaning is made and interpretation expressed. It is not an interference; it is a necessity. (1990, 193)

So whose voice am I here to find? Whose stories will I tell? Whose view of reality will it be? Not mine. I don't want to write what John Van Maanen calls a "confessional tale," (1988) in which I foreground myself and whine stories of self-disclosure. This time, it is not my story I'm writing, and this morning, I realize it. I've brought all those artifacts into my room to help me record stories of other people. I am quiet when I leave breakfast, alone with my clipboard binder and the fresh paper that will hold my fieldnotes. I prepare myself to look for stories.

CHAPTER 2

THE FIRST TWO DAYS: SELVES AND CIRCUMSTANCES

Selves are not isolated nuclei of consciousness locked in the head, but are "distributed" interpersonally. Nor do Selves arise rootlessly in response only to the present; they take meaning as well from the historical circumstances that gave shape to the culture of which they are an expression.

Jerome Bruner, Acts of Meaning (1990, 138)

At 8:20 we are in Hamilton Smith Hall, the English Department building, milling around the wooden seats in a lecture hall. At the front, Tom Newkirk shakes hands with people, introducing himself. In a corner, a few people fill out course registration forms. A high school teacher from Pennsylvania, here for the second year, stops to chat with a friend. They've been corresponding since two summers ago. "I changed my attitude toward teaching. I'm more conscious of what I did before. I drove to the October conference here at UNH, and spent a day with Terry Moher in her classroom. There's nobody in my district who does anything with writing."

It is interesting to see that during the first two days of this program, the community establishes itself—in the dorms, in the classes, and everywhere there are people wanting to "do something with writing." Anne tells me about her first day, her first year, with the three colleagues she joins again this summer:

We were all talking....four of us....I showed up with my husband and the dog, bringing in my stuff. They had started a conversation first...We just jelled that very first day. I think in a half hour we were disclosing...things that my friends don't know....It's very strange to me that the writing I did my first year is still the writing that I had to write. The stuff was really inventive...I had to get it out first.

Themes establish themselves in talk, and they will nag at people for three weeks. They will write and read them out. In this chapter, I introduce the teachers who will "do something with writing" in the next three weeks, as I meet them in their classes and choose them to study over the course of the first two days.

Tom announces that it's a treat to get started, it's hard to believe this is the tenth year of the program, and he introduces the staff. It is 8:50; his schedule is exact. He wants to "honor the perspective of the teacher," he says, that "the teacher's voice informs everything we do." We try to "create spaces," to remind us about the importance of our own literacy, where we can explore our own reading and writing. He mentions some of the traditions of the program and some of the new additions: the Wednesday picnics at noon, the brown bag lunch talks by local scholars, created for commuters who can't stay for the evening talks, and he invites us to an open forum Tuesday night, a chance to ask questions and explore issues together. Ten minutes later, he closes with a quote from Annie Dillard:

One of the few things I know about writing is this: spend it all, shoot it, play it, lose it, all right away, every time. Do not hoard what seems good for a later place in the book, or for another book; give it, give it all, give it now. The impulse to save something good for a better place later is the signal to spend it now. Something more will arise for later, something better. These things fill from behind, from beneath, like well water. (*)

We look on the board for our room assignments, and I join Dorothy for her writing workshop class. In the dorm, at six this morning, the cleaning woman wiped her brow with a wet dust rag and shook her head slowly at me, "Gonna be another hot one." She was right. It is already ninety-six degrees.

Dorothy and her Writing Group: Listening for Stories

Ellen Blackburn-Karelitz's writing class meets in the faculty lounge of Hamilton Smith Hall. It doesn't look like school, or even feel like it. We sit in a circle, in wing chairs and windsor chairs with bowed backs, curled on leather sofas. Sneakers and sandals rest around the floor. Bare feet peek out of the carved oak chair slats. The oak and glass coffee table holds stacks of handouts, a clipboard, and books about writing: Natalie Goldberg's *Writing Down the Bones*, Eudora Welty's *One Writer's Beginnings*. The lights are off and outside the sky sogs gray with humidity. The fan blades buzz gently overhead in the still air; their puffs are lost to the high ceiling.

On the ceiling there are four hanging chandeliers with brass curls and white glass globes. One wall is broken by an enormous arched window with white painted molding around small square panes. The window is wide open, begging a breeze. Ellen looks around at the polished leather, wood, and glass, and her first words tease: "I think we forgot to see who'll bring the cigars!" She welcomes us to New Hampshire, and invites us to take a few minutes to think of a small story to tell about ourselves, not related to our teaching, "so we get a feeling for each other as people."

Ellen tells me later that this is her way to "set a community;" each person can establish uniqueness by choosing a personal anecdote. This opening serves several important purposes for Ellen's teacher/students, and for her as an instructor. In a writing class composed of disparate backgrounds, teachers of grades from kindergarten through college, each person, she believes, needs to be able to say "don't judge me by my writing," and these stories allow Ellen to think about how she'll arrange the response groups which she'll assign later. "If somebody is scared to death, I don't put them with an authoritarian or a critical person. I can tell by the stories they choose to tell about themselves."

In the still room, Ellen is quiet and calm, dressed in white cotton. Her hair and eyes are deep brown; gold chains gleam against her summer tanned skin. She jots down a few notes on her clipboard, then looks up and smiles. She tells her story first: she will be singing this summer with her dentist-husband's rock group, "a bunch of middle aged guys who only perform once a year." This year, they'll perform at a clambake in August, and she's not looking forward to it, she says. "Their lyrics are pretty raunchy, and the music is so loud I can't hear myself sing." She scans the circle of seventeen, waiting for the first person to volunteer. Today is like the first chapter of a thick novel, and I try to keep the characters straight. Anthony introduces himself first. He is one of two men in the class, an amateur boxer, active since college. "I run into people in boxing that I don't run into in education," he says. He is slight and balding, and his eyes smile. Three weeks later, his final piece of writing will be a profile of a teenage boxer.

Dorothy talks about the new house she's bought in rural New Hampshire, and her first vegetable garden, "a place to put dirt and green things." She plans to return on weekends to check the tomatoes and broccoli. "I haven't seen any critters yet. Everything is growing so far." She is straight and trim, guarded; her anecdote is more a personal statement than a story. She sits alone in a high-backed leather wing chair. Her knit shirt collar stands tall around her neck. Her thick black hair is pulled into a neat pony tail, clipped tight like her sentences. Dorothy's demeanor itself appears a sentry. I discover later that "watching green things grow in dirt" and "keeping the critters out" is a fitting metaphor for Dorothy's history as a teacher, as a woman, and as a young mother, and in each piece of writing she crafts, this will become a theme. Her final piece will be a fictional account of a disturbed little girl who achieves peace at her aunt's farm in New Hampshire, watching things grow.

Alison, a busy administrator/teacher in a private high school, is married to a professional writer and commuting during her time here. She sits in shorts with her muscular legs crossed on a chair, her sandals on the floor. She says she's just spent the fourth of July with her three nephews; "after spending time with them I now know why I'm here." People laugh and groan. She smiles. Over the three weeks, her writing will explore the personal strength of women--in her family and in rigorous athletic training. She will craft an impassioned essay on the values of cheerleading. She will write fiction and poetry for the first time since college, just as she had hoped to do. She will help Dorothy with her final piece.

Meg looks to be in her early twenties. She wears a gauzy Indian blouse and a long green cotton skirt. Her bracelets jangle while she uses her hands to speak. "I still feel so consumed by my first year of teaching. I moved home. I lost all my own stuff in storage, my adulthood. I forgot I'd be doing a lot of writing on my own here. I'm intimidated. There are some professional writers in my family."

Ellen reassures her, "Well, your family's not here." Pat mentions that Meg might want to read Mary Austin's short story, "Angel Over Her Right Shoulder." Meg writes it down. It's a nineteenth century story about a woman who has trouble writing because of all the distractions in her life. Later, both Dorothy and Alison mention it in their journals; they know it too, and Dorothy recommends the story to someone else. One short story shoots connections all over a room. Over the next weeks, Meg will draw help from her older colleagues. This is a tiny moment of "connected knowing" (Belenky, et al) a term currently associated with more feminine ways of learning. Ellen notices Meg's insecurity and confirms it, but reminds her that her family is not here to see her write. Pat offers a book that might be therapeutic, and Dorothy and Alison both register the name of the book for their own use. For both the men and the women in this group, it is the first instance of both a ritual of the program and an

experience that will lead to reorganizing, redefining, and revising personal definitions of literacy.

Dorothy's response partners will become important in her story. Susan is one of them, and she speaks next. She is elegantly slender. Her short grey hair is a surprise against her smooth face. Her cheeks glow pink. She is neatly pressed in a white button-down shirt and striped seersucker slacks. Her voice is velvet. She shares her frustration as a single mother with two adopted Asian children, living inside Washington D.C., and teaching in the suburbs: "I give a better education to the kids I teach than to my own. There is a chasm between the suburbs and city. I bridge the gap every day. The suburban kids are afraid of the city kids; the city kids think the suburban kids are boring." Her passion for her own children and the politics of a multicultural society are clear from her beginning statement. This week, Susan will begin writing a very personal piece about adopting her first child, and she will discard it in favor of writing an elaborate modern fairy tale with a political message.

There are seventeen personal stories, in order of volunteers, around the circle. Lenore listens intently and waits to be last; her chin points toward each speaker. She is fifty-ish, slim and chisled. Her mouth is straight and tight. Her notebook lies open on her lap, her legs set primly to hold it. She speaks last; her neck tightens as she talks. Her words are determined, brief, and efficient: "Writing is not something I like to do--at all. I do not like to reveal things about myself. I do not have many intimate friends, but I am close to my family." Over three weeks, she will always volunteer last. She will defer to everyone and respond to their writing enthusiastically. She will ask for extra privacy. For three weeks, her writing will explore issues of home and family: her dead father's stories, two elderly sisters who travel away from home, and her own lifelong investment in the trees that grow around

her house. Her stiff code of ethics will seep through her writing, but her insatiable appetite for information will push through all the efficient deference.

Ellen responds to Lenore. It is her first response as an instructor, and a lead-in to her conclusion: "Just as you're not comfortable, Lenore, you have children who aren't. It's a wall of censorship that goes up. With opportunities to write in different genres, people begin to feel more comfortable." Ellen's morning session ends with her summary: "We are all storytellers--that's what gossip is--writers are receptive to their own lives and what goes on in them." The ninety minutes have been smooth and natural, meticulously planned. We have noticed one another's differences. She concludes with a reading from Eudora Welty, reminding us to listen *for* stories rather than listen *to* them:

Long before I wrote stories, I listened for stories. Listening for them is something more acute than listening to them. I suppose it's an early form of participation in what goes on. Listening children know stories are there. When their elders sit and begin, children are just waiting and hoping for one to come out, like a mouse from its hole. (1984, p.16)

By the afternoon, Dorothy's response group is formed, and she meets with Susan and Lenore. Why did Ellen arrange these women together? Dorothy, the stiff high school teacher who watches green things and dirt? Susan, the serene junior high teacher from DC who reaches out with politics and ethics? And Lenore, of all people, an old-fashioned second grade teacher who is afraid to write and is stuck in her world of home? Ellen chose consciously by listening for their stories. Beginning on the second day with their first drafts, these three women will shape one another's work, they will construct their knowledge together, draw on one another's images and ideas and thoughts. Their group will establish a climate of "relationality," a term Maxine Greene uses, as the power source for their writing (Greene, 1990). Part of Chapter 4

will focus on Dorothy and her response group.

Mid-morning, the writing class disperses. Each teacher will spend the remainder of the morning talking about theory and practice with others who teach at the same grade levels. Dorothy and I head upstairs for our first daily stop in room 218. There is much talk about having no coffee this year. In the past, room 218 was not only the place for borrowing books, grabbing the daily newsletter, meeting for brief conversation and logistical connections, but it was also for morning coffee. This year, the square of tables is covered with a professional lending library, copies of past summer program publications, maps and travel guides, stacks of newsletters, notices of video showings and performances having to do with teaching and writing. There are message boxes for instructors, sign-up sheets for books, chalkboards for last-minute communications, but there is no coffee. The break time is brief, and I head downstairs with Dorothy.

Dorothy, Therese and the Grade-Level Group: The Courage to Arrange a Circle

The basement of Hamilton Smith Hall is a little cooler, and Terry Moher's class of high school teachers forms a circle that fills the perimeter of the classroom. I join them. It is a large class, and it looks very different from the writing group I've just left in the elegant faculty lounge. Here, there are wooden chairs with single notebook-sized arms, a beige speckled linoleum floor, aluminum-edged rectangular windows, and two sides of dusty blackboards. It is business-like. We scrape the chairs as we take our seats.

"No one sits outside the circle, please," Terry pleads. There are seven men in this group, a number disproportionate to the writing program as a whole. Most are English teachers, some are department heads, and two teach social studies. Twenty-

seven of us. Along with the twenty-three high school teachers in the class, there are also two sign interpreters and me. Lee, Ruth, and Linda, the three deaf teachers position themselves directly across from the interpreters. Terry chats with the interpreters, asks them to let her know when she speaks too quickly.

Terry's eyes flit around the room; she drinks from a thermos of coffee. "There's a lot of experience in this room," Terry continues, using her slender arms and hands while she speaks, open, smiling. "I will be willing to share what I've done, what I've learned from my mistakes, what I plan to do. There are twenty-three fine teachers here, and we ought to look to one another." She jokes about the coffee situation in room 218. There are knowing groans. "Tom doesn't have any coffee this year, so I'm not sure how many people will convene upstairs." The coffee ritual is a shared one. People seem at home with her joke; it marks one time in a high school teacher's day when she can meet with colleagues. Outside in the bell tower, the UNH carillon bells ring the half-hour. I've heard these bells often enough, but today I think about how different they are from the piercing buzzers that mark time periods in a high school's day.

Terry begins class with a paragraph from Natalie Goldberg's *Writing Down the Bones*, "to go back again and again to books....it frees up the writer to let loose," (1983) and then we write for ten minutes about issues that ought to be covered in the course. At the end of ten minutes, she asks us to summarize what we have written into one line. In our introductions, she asks that we mention where we teach, what we teach, and why we're here. We can use the line we've just written.

She begins with herself. "The kids are great, the system stinks," Terry says. Her voice is resonant and enthusiastic, her brown eyes dart around the circle. "I'm here to be enlightened. I need to come back year after year." She is a true teacher-instructor; she began the NHWP ten years ago as a participant. She has been here

every summer since. The introductions move systematically around the circle. "I don't feel like a good writer. An imposter, in fact," Arnold says. He signs while he speaks. He laughs a little, and looks for approval. Although he hears Terry with no trouble, he uses Sign to speak in his teaching at his school for the deaf. His colleagues jab him in the arm at the word "imposter." They don't notice his accent; they are deaf. There are more admissions of inadequacy and not "fitting" in. "I want to synthesize all the methods and techniques I've read about into a coherent whole. I am the black sheep of my department," sighs a blonde woman from New York state.

Dorothy speaks. Her black collar is still upright around her neck, and her sentences are succinct. She describes her school as "a public school although they think it isn't," and says she sometimes feels that she's running "behind a jangling horse cart of ideas" with so many pressures from school and "fads" to follow in the profession. In her notebook, Dorothy has written: "All it takes is a casual word and I realize I, my God, I have forgotten to "do" conferences in two weeks....I don't know why I teach except that I love the kids and I love to find words and ideas with them. Why am I here? To get graduate credit--to have time to work on writing." In her writing, she has circled "time." She's sensitive to the jargon; she feels guilt about forgetting to "do conferences," yet she mocks the term by calling it a "jangling horsecart," referring to "fads" in the profession.

A middle-aged man speaks up next, "I'm here to figure out how to get people to write across the curriculum. How to make writing the job of every teacher in my school." He has been an English department chair for twenty-four years, and now feels responsibility for all the writing in his building. Heads nod toward him, confirming him, implying that they share this pressure. "I have had a year of failures. Deadlines and demands," admits a young male first-year teacher from a

prestigious New England prep school. "I have all this literature to cover, and I don't know when to teach writing." He flits a smile, looks at his colleagues around the room, and then down toward his notebook. He is silent.

"I want to turn the 'ughs' to 'awesome.' I've gone from being a traditional lecturer to a collaborator with my kids, from reading to reading and writing," adds a woman from Ohio. She is here for collegial support, to find other people who want to think of themselves as collaborators.

"I am the least comfortable teaching writing, and am looking for techniques," a man confesses.

"I have been teaching twenty-three years, only three as an English teacher," signs Linda. "I want to make English my friend. I've had problems with English as a language, and I need to make it a better tool for deaf students. It is not their first language." The two interpreters look at each other and smile. They share the responsibility of interpreting in the class, switching every fifteen minutes.

"Students are the same at all levels with writing. Only the sizes change." an older teacher adds. She has taught most elementary school grades, and this year, because of staff reductions and state budget cuts, she will be teaching high school for the first time.

Around the large circle of desks, these introductory statements sound like religious testimonials, or therapeutic pleas for healing. They are not like the stories in the writing group which were personal as participants readied themselves for writing. Here, high school teachers seem eager to share their professional pressures with others who share the same jargon and worries: staff reductions and grade level changes, writing in the face of other departments' demands, handicapped teenagers who must "befriend" the English language, writing about literature in order to "cover" the demands of a curriculum, starting new approaches without

administrative or collegial support, feelings of failure and pressure. In twenty minutes, they are applying the process of "problem-framing," what Donald Schon identifies as the important step for a reflective practitioner, the art inside the "swampy lowlands" of real life work. Theories muddying themselves in practice. And, as Schon has observed, practitioners can re-frame problems when they are situated in a "studio," with a mentor or peer as guide. (1987)

Therese sits in the circle with the other high school teachers, but she is nervous, squirming like a student. Her brown eyes, large and terrified, follow each speaker around the room. She looks down occasionally, clasped hands covering her mouth and nose. Her head moves slowly from side to side, and her dark hair moves with it; her tiny white earrings peek out from under the curls. She is wearing a pink cotton top and crisp white shorts. She crosses her feet at the ankles; her pink socks are cuffed like a little girl's. Her long, sinewy legs seem out of place. She introduces herself, a teacher from California, entering her second year in a very traditional high school. "I *don't know how* to teach. I am frustrated. I want to convey my love of literature to them, and I don't know how." Terry acknowledges Therese's dilemma, and explains that she will spend time talking about "how to give up control in the classroom so you can gain it."

Terry confesses to her class, "I controlled because I lacked control." Therese writes rapidly in her notebook.

Terry gives a reading assignment in the three books required in her course: Don Murray's *Expecting the Unexpected*, Tom Romano's *Clearing the Way*, and Tom Newkirk's *To Compose*. Each of these authors will join them during the course of their time here, teaching and writing as well as grilling hamburgers, eating lobster, swimming, and climbing a mountain. She recommends Toby Fulwiler's

The Journal Book as well, and asks the class to keep a teaching journal. "I'm being vague on purpose," she explains. "In school, I want to find ways to get my students to do things their own way, especially honors students." Terry says. "Why am I in that classroom every day? Do have them do well on their S.A.T.s?" The class asks her to stop and repeat the assignment. Therese shakes her head and wrinkles her brow.

The strings of confessionals trail off, the questions stop, and Terry asks the class to write again for a few minutes about "What makes writing hard? Take this opportunity to use writing to think it out," she suggests.

Dorothy writes:

What makes writing difficult? I think it might be the unbalance between physical act and psychic focus. We need to have both going--both tuned in--getting down every time an idea occurs to me--it's easier to file it away, say while I'm driving, and promise myself time later. The time never comes unless I force it. I am too easily distracted by my children, clean clothes, and it's always easier to read than to write. I know that with discipline I could write good stuff, if I kept my needs simple.

Alison writes:

On one level I know I have plenty to say, but on another level, a deeper one, I don't know how to say it. Maybe I should find a pen that moves more slowly? For some people, not having words makes it hard. Having dyslexia makes it hard. Having a left-handed desk makes writing much easier. It's amazing. Fear, lack of confidence. Lack of direction. Physical environmemnt. Forced time. Time of day.

Therese writes:

I am frustrated because I know what I want to say but I can't find the words to say it. I know I have a story inside to preserve, but it won't come out. Writing workshops are scary things for me because I'd rather not reveal my stories. I want to, but I always fear revelations.

"What makes writing hard" is different for everyone. These high school teachers are as resistant as they are eloquent. Their empathy is self-directed and student-directed; their frustration is clear. "It is tough working with secondary teachers," says Terry to her class. "We are cynical and skeptical. We feel comfortable with our professional content, but we don't know much about how people learn." Dorothy, Therese, and Alison have expressed skepticism, insecurity, cynicism, and humor in this first session: Dorothy in her resistance and distant stance, Alison with humor and thoughts of classroom constraints, and Therese with her insecurity and admission of fear. Dorothy's skepticism and resistance, her stance as a teacher in the company of other high school teachers will be a part of Chapter 4.

During the next three weeks, Therese will re-conceive herself as an adult, a writer, and a teacher. Therese's story will be a solitary one, but cushioned in a context of people and events. With the help of her colleagues--in her classes, on the page, in the dorms and at leisure--she will begin to reveal her stories. Two weeks later, on the Sunday before the final week, she will reflect on what she wrote that first morning:

So I'm thinking...school and life experiences shouldn't be separated. Check this out...You know what this means, don't you? If I want to afford the same environment of trust and support in my classroom, I need to do some modeling. Do you realize how much courage I am going to have to find to arrange my classroom in a circle, establish writing groups, carry on conferences?

For three weeks, she learns about herself by asking and answering her own questions, following and breaking the rules she sets, writing about her reading, reading her writing, and reflecting on what she sees. Her story is the subject of Chapter 3.

Joyce's Institute: Toward a Therapeutic Narrative

Tom Romano's high school class in the Reading and Writing Institute meets upstairs. The lights are off; the yellowed shades are pulled down. A bright strip of aluminum roofing glows from outside one crooked shade; a pine bough drips over it. This classroom is on the second floor of Hamilton Smith Hall, near room 218. By the second day, Tom Newkirk has revised the coffee decision, and we can smell it brewing down the hall. Today's newsletter reads: "There will be coffee in Room 218 during the morning break. We'll have cups on the first day. After that, be environmentally conscious and bring a mug!"

Tom Romano is wearing leather sandals, khaki shorts, and a faded red t-shirt. He chats with his teacher/students as they come in. These are all high school teachers who have had previous experience in writing programs, and they are ready to consider the addition of "reading" to their classroom approaches. Many of the fourteen were here in previous years, and close groups have formed already since yesterday. In the dorms, in the cafeteria, and in Durham's eateries, there has already been much sharing. This group meets for the whole morning; no one has wasted time. By today, Tom seems to know everyone's name, and everyone is working on a draft. "You guys are gettin tough," Tom compliments them as he walks around the room. His neck stretches over his clipboard as he inspects drafts. There is a pocket in his t-shirt, holding a single index card. He pulls it out periodically to jot down reminders, to organize himself. Tom and I are fellow students and colleagues. We have taught classes, taken courses, studied together, and presented at formal conferences. I never seen him without an index card in his pocket.

His syllabus is clear and complete. There are two books and a packet of other

readings: Craig Lesley's *Winterkill*, a novel Tom has wanted to read, and William Stafford's *You Must Revise Your Life*, a book about writing. His syllabus invites more reading and writing, and it offers a few requirements and a few options. The syllabus reads:

Reading: First order of literacy: We'll dig into Lesley's *Winterkill* for reading and talk...We shall also read various articles out of the Kinko packet and Stafford book...The remainder of your reading is your choice. You know the personal and professional reading you want to do. Dive into it, write about it, talk about it....

Writing: Writing is not a sketch, but a big world mural. Poems. Personal essays. Fiction (historical, contemporary, for children, adolescents, or adults). Letters. Professional articles. Columns. Satire. Myth. Fable. So many genres and combinations of genres.

Each morning there will be time to read, write, and confer informally, and after a break, from 10:30 until 12:00, a small and large group session for discussion of reading, writing, and teaching. Tom's syllabus explains that there will be a completed piece required each Friday, a plan for personal literacy portfolio, including a one-page letter duplicated for the class, and an optional journal. The two pages end with a quote from Henry David Thoreau, a Peanuts cartoon, and a quote from Rainer Maria Rilke: "I know no advice for you save this: to go into yourself and test the deeps in which your life takes rise."

"It's an awful big world of writing there...If you're gonna write, write about what you're passionate about," he says. Today, everyone is writing by 9:00 and Tom is conferring with one writer at a time. As each person asks for a conference, he sits down with his clipboard, recording notes. His attention is on the writer. He leans in,

concentrating, furrows his brow, and asks questions. In a conference with Frank, Tom talks for fifteen seconds, and then Frank talks for two full minutes about his plans for a piece on his nephews and baseball. Tom agrees, "God, I know what you mean," confirming Frank's choices. "Yeah, I try to make it work for me." Tom suggests that he "try one genre, then try another," that the piece of writing might lend itself better to a story or an essay than a poem, but Frank might not want to decide that quite yet.

Tom pads softly on to Lila, moves a chair to face her, leans in, and listens. She reads for twenty-five seconds. Tom responds, "I'll be interested to see what this looks like if you choose to work this out." She talks longer, about her plans for a short character sketch. Tom smiles, looks into her eyes, blocking out the rest of the room, "That sounds really good, Lila." He moves his head as she talks in a mirroring kind of confirmation. Like the famous Marx brothers' mirror routine, a conference with Tom Romano is an act of reflexivity, writer to writer. "Well, I'll let you go," and he moves on to another writer.

I notice that the people in this group are comfortable already with shared rules, terms, ideas, and rituals. Already, on the second morning, people are quietly writing independently on self-chosen topics, they know that only a writer can know when it's time for a conference, that not everyone works at the same pace, that a piece of writing can "work" or "not work" for a person, that choosing a genre can be restrictive at the beginning of a "piece." The writer has the option of "working out" a piece or rejecting it. It is called a "piece" precisely because the genre isn't chosen yet. It is clear that this group shares a "lived culture," and they are comfortable with its ideas, rules, terms, and rituals. This community is already comfortable with some of the rituals and the language that are characteristic of the UNH Writing Program. These phrases suggest writing in draft, assume time to revise ideas, give the writer exploratory options.

Tom's conferencing style is smooth, collegial, and unintrusive. He only talks with the people who are ready to talk, and the group understands that. In his syllabus, he describes choices. The basic ideas of time, choice, community, and response associated with the UNH program are built into the culture of this class, both inside and outside the classroom, and the group knows it.

"I teach all year long and now this is my time," Ronald, a man from Pennsylvania tells me. After last summer's workshop, he bought a word processor and began to write daily. He corresponded all year with Lila, a colleague from last year, and now they are together in class again. Joyce sits in a corner during break. She attended a writing workshop ten years ago in Vermont, and feels that she hasn't written much in her classroom since. In fact, she tells me, yesterday she almost went home. As one of her dorm mates tells me later, she's afraid she's "with the big guys," and probably should have taken the "New Hampshire Writing Program" instead of this "Advanced Institute." She says:

I needed a professional kick in the pants--I did expect, after I read the brochure, that we would be moving on, and I'm looking forward to making the connections between reading and writing...if there's anything I do well in my classroom it is the sharing of literature, and speaking together, but, if I feel a failure, it's my own floundering in the field of writing. I'm not writing. I'm not writing. Except sometimes if I'm mentally filled up....So I come here and I think, okay, they're going to give me another shot in the arm, and I'm going to go back and I'm going to be better....I said that professionally I'm weary...one lady thought that it took a lot of courage to say that...I needed it to be known that I'm not feeling like Ms. Professional. Don't think I am, folks, 'cause I'm not. That gave me a sense of release to be able to say that.

I wonder what has happened between yesterday and today. Joyce's plans intrigue me; she wants to write this week about how she came to decide to stay. Lila

and Ronald took her out last night, they read and talked for two hours, and the camaraderie she felt quelled her fears:

By the end of the day, by seven at night in my hot sweltering room--sticking to my chair, my brain just will not work, the tears are beginning to come and I thought, get out! Go out into the world and touch somebody, get out there, you're like an ingrown toenail, you're so frustrated and sore! So I put on my running shoes, I put on my short shorts and my t-shirt, and I started to walk, briskly, because I was so tense.

Joyce talks for ten full minutes, in eloquent detail, about her walk around the campus which turned into a run--a cluster of teenage girls, a young man with a Beagle puppy, "I thought, Joyce," she says, "you have the talent, you ask very good questions, you bring people out, you have to try to pay attention to that and remember that's a gift you have." Then, she explained, the wave of fear came back as she ran closer to the dorm. "I really was thinking, Joyce, let this tell you that you want to leave teaching...don't be afraid, let the truth come out." So she walked into her room and closed her door.

I heard my name in the hallway and I thought well, there are other Joyces in the program, and I wasn't sure I wanted to hear my name...and then the knock...there's Lila and Ronald, a team from last year...they had their *Winterkill* in their hands and smiles on their faces....We're going to get some ice cream, sit in some air conditioning, and read this, you wanna come? And one side of me said "No, you must work. And the other side said "Yes, and if you go, this isn't work, but you want to go...I said "Yes."

From the moment we stepped through the doors into the evening, sitting at this little latter-twentieth century Grover's Corners ice cream table. Gathered around it, we were very close....Two hours, we didn't stop talking about that

book...I was very grateful...Then we read aloud, in the ice cream parlor, for an hour and a half... and then I realized, "Oh, for heaven's sakes, I'm watching myself here. I'm watching Ronald, I'm watching Lila....I have something I can write about. What is happening to me, what is happening as I perceive it to the others. How are we working together? What would I like to do with this in my classroom?"

There is a transformation quality to her story. She tells a therapeutic narrative; the sense of community she felt with Lila and Ronald brought Joyce through her fear, toward a re-definition of herself as writer and teacher. Throughout the workshop, Joyce will weave her dramatic oral eloquence, her fear of writing, and her new-found models of community and self-reflection. She is entranced with the notion of "watching herself" and her colleagues during the time she's here. In the ice cream parlor on the first night, she begins the powerful thoughts that will inform her writing. Her three weeks will end in triumph, at the public reading, with a personal essay she will call "Watch Your Head." Joyce's story is the subject of Chapter 5.

Anne's Explorations in Genre: Hearing the Voices Speak

At 1:30 pm, less than a mile off campus, a group of teachers gathers outside Don Murray's home, others are walking up the street. There is vigorous talk:

"Oh, it's so nice to see everybody."

"How was your trip all the way from Calgary?"

"Yep, it's summer camp for the terminally literate."

"I never understood why people went on retreats until I came here. Now I do."

"Of course I'm going to live here this year. Home is only an hour away, but if I go, my husband will want sex, and I'll just want to write." Anne announces

that she has just received word that *English Journal* is publishing an article she wrote three years ago here, in her first summer writing program.

"I love to drop out from my job, my family, my cooking. It's not okay to take a vacation, but it's okay to get six credits."

A few parked cars edge the front lawn, and I join several women who are admiring the garden by the mailbox. Rows of tiger lilies border two pear trees beginning to bear clusters of fruit. Pink and white carnations bud by the roses next to the driveway. Closer to the house, there are strawberry patches and two giant bushes jammed with clusters of green blueberries and draped in cheesecloth. The growth around his house is well trimmed and functional, just like Murray's writing. It will all be used; for decoration and for consumption. Both Don and his wife Minnie Mae are generous with the fruits of their work. Don has invited me to join this class of fifteen veterans of the summer program.

We walk through the garage door, into Minnie Mae's office, a ceiling to floor mass of books, seed catalogues, and paperwork. We gather on Don's screen porch. A detailed map of Durham hangs next to the sliding glass door, a chunk of blue glass and a set of metal windchimes dangle from the ceiling. "If you get a strange migraine, Barry," Don jokes to the balding man who sits under the windchimes, just reach up and take it off." We sit on black wrought iron chairs covered in yellow naugahyde. A long, low black painted table offers up a giant lobster claw, a souvenir from Newick's restaurant, where one of Don's daughters waitressed. Minnie Mae is in the kitchen, creating a cake we'll have with iced tea during our break.

Don hands out strips of white paper, copies of his motto: "nulla dies sine linea," ("never a day without a line"). "The more insecure you are as a teacher, the more handouts you have," he laughs, "And I am the handout king." He has already sent a

letter to each member of the class, the syllabus and the first assignment. He expects that we've all bought the packet of assigned selected readings, and his book *Shoptalk*, a collection of writers' comments. He hands out an eight-page collection of his "Daybook Notes" written the previous week, between July 2 and July 8. It begins:

I have found writing commentaries helpful to me as a writer, as a student of the writing process, as a teacher, and I have found them helpful to my students...When students and the instructor share their commentaries they become colleagues and the commentaries become the text of the course. They also often become the agenda for the conference....In the spirit of collegueship, here are my commentaries for the past week....

Everyone has brought one draft of a piece of writing and fifteen copies of a commentary about writing the piece. Murray's plan is to devote each week to reading and writing in one specific genre: non-fiction, fiction, and poetry. He hopes that participants will try using the same topic in each genre, but he will not require it. He begins with a personal story: "I'm sixty-five and I just had a barium swallow. I'm not sick, but I got a poem out of it, and I might get a column out of it, too..." This is the first of his range of stories; and those of us who know him and his work know that his stories always find their place on his pages.

There are some questions about the course: "Why do we write about the same topic in three different genres?" one person asks. Murray answers "Because it's interesting to the instructor." His laughter booms over ours. "Sometimes these connections are so vague. I would urge all my students to follow their writing first, then my syllabus. Think of the course as a writing course, with an overlay of the genre." Members share the commentaries they've prepared:

My writing process includes demons, stoppers. For example, meet the No family: no time, no audience, no discipline, no energy, no coffee. The No's do

not live alone. There are others. I have also tangled with the Critical Censor who chants: "You have nothing to say and who are you kidding anyway and you call that a poem?" After I had greeted and named these process creatures I hoped I had slayed them and they'd move it along. Well...not yet. I am satisfied with peaceful co-existence, but they constantly lurk in the corner of my confidence. To my demons I say, I'll write badly even when I have no time, and little energy but *never* without morning coffee.

Writing about writing?...Or how I can write about my writing when I haven't written much lately? Cold reality...During the school year I write sporadically with my students. Scribbled drafts, journals, bits and pieces, but then nothing is ever brought to completion...Summers at UNH are a brief respite from the "not writing" syndrome....This is summer number four and I fear my last possible attempt to overcome my malaise. Discipline, where are you?

The laundry is laundered. The ironing is hidden. The garden is hoed and mulched. The fridge is full. Writing is not tidy. It clutters things up....Where did I leave that envelope with ideas written in brown crayon?...Do you see my folder in the downstairs bathroom? How can I finish this draft with spaghetti sauce all over it?...After a year of forced writing I am anxious to write for myself again....Now I worry that I have nothing of my own to say. That's what this course is for. To loosen up again. And I'd better loosen up or the kids will pay in the fall.

I am a storyteller. I started telling stories when I was three years old and invented a purple grandmother...I am a reader. I was read to and started reading when I was very young....[At fifty] I am getting ready to become a writer. I collect pocket folders full of partially written drafts...I am beginning to look at how authors develop a piece of writing....I still spend more time talking about my writing than writing. I read books about the craft of writing but I hate to put myself on the line.

These commentaries show commitment to teaching, resistance to writing,

admissions of guilt, and a shared dilemma about how to be a writer and teach writing at the same time. Murray reflects on his own teaching. He has conducted dozens of writing workshops in the past few years, he "coaches" the writers at the *Boston Globe*, and he lectures regularly at schools, colleges, and writing conferences across the country. In his retirement, he works in all the genres the class will explore. This year, he has revised two textbooks and written another. He writes a weekly non-fiction column for the *Boston Globe*, aimed at retirees, called "Over Sixty." He is currently at work on a novel, and actively involved in a poetry writing group.

In the space of ten minutes, he pitches out phrases: "What I really got from teaching is learning from my students....It is important to get your standards down so you can start writing...Please don't take me too seriously....You should be thinking about publication," he continues. "We need to educate the public about education--those who are intelligent and to those who don't care....We want a fair piece, but not a balanced piece. Take a strong point of view, say one thing, develop it. That point may not be discovered until you draft or re-draft."

Within the first hour, everyone is writing. It is a period of quiet, in his words, to "let the mind reveal to itself what's in it," and "Shut up and listen to yourself." We are fifteen notebooks: loose leaf, spiral, yellow legal pads, small note pads on bare knees. Fifteen pencils and pens. Fifteen colors of variously aging legs. We write lists. We search for a fragment that reveals tension, look for something that surprises us. Unlike the other three classes, this one only meets in the afternoon. These teachers are more independent as writers; they have come to the first class with commentaries written, they are more ready to experiment.

Don sits with his spiral notebook with the stiff green cardboard cover poised on his lap desk. It is his seventy-third daybook, he tells us. He rests his feet on a stool, bites his finger as he "looks for a line." He is not wearing socks. "Don't go to a

sentence or a thesis statement. It's too long, too conclusive. That should come at the end of the writing. *Look for the line* that reflects the tension. A fragment." Don reads his list first: "a barium swallow, spooky room, half-light, two machines, waiting for x-ray, staring into our history." A week later, these fragments appear in Murray's *Globe* column and three weeks later other fragments appear in a poem.

There is a set of new rituals for this class in Murray's home, layered over the rituals of reading and writing this class shares from previous years. There will be a formal time at the beginning of class to share the day's commentaries. Morning is private time for reading and writing. Responsibility for responding is on the students. During group time, Don goes downstairs to his office to write. In this class, people form response groups easily, and they know how to read one another's writing. These people have learned habits of writing and responding and a shared lexicon with which to speak about writing.

The group is comfortable with the rituals of a writing community, but not with the writing itself. Anne asks for a conference; she wants to talk out a kernel of an idea she has for her first piece, the non-fiction essay:

Anne: "What keeps presenting itself to me is something that would be boring.
About my superintendent."

Don: If it's intruding that much, there's probably something that deserves
attention. Take a different point of view. Or person, or historic.

Anne: Do you write about things you don't want to write about?

Don: I complained about revising a book on revision.

Anne: I don't know that I want to work with conflict. There's nothing aggravating
me.

Don: There needs to be tension: a beautiful day needs to see a day that's not.

The theme in this class seems to be tension. On the second day, his own commentary "finds the tension" in this very situation: "Relearned the price of

teaching: preparation comes first. Didn't get to the writing because I was writing my presentation: "How to Get the Writing Done." Don, as a writer, feels frustrated with teaching, and he shares it with his fellow teachers. Anne, as a teacher, feels frustrated with writing in her commentary of the second day:

This is my third summer doing this. I've come to expect that a subject will feel right--that I'll know it when it pops into my mind. But now I'm dry--and I know why. I haven't written anything in so long, there's no source to draw from...The topic is a neighborhood issue, something I will have trouble seeing from the other side. That will be the problem to solve....It bogs down the piece to have to keep explaining what the history of it is, yet I know that many pieces can give background and the reader tolerates it well if he has already been hooked....I need to work on keeping the reader there without telling the whole thing over again.

There is tension between teaching and writing in this group of veterans, including Murray himself, and Anne expresses it well. She is an accomplished writer; one of her pieces will be published this fall for a large readership of English teachers. She has a sense of humor and a joy in the others in class. In this class, she understands the power of a writing community as the engine to drive writing and self-discipline. Her commentary for the first day says:

Writing can be such a high for me, I'm surprised I resist it so. Do I think it'll be better for the waiting?...In fact, just writing this has helped me get into writing. I needed to wade in a bit, feel the water around my feet, know that I won't drown this time either. Besides, you'll all make such helpful life guards...Writing works for me when I hear the voices speaking, my own and others...I try to write with dialogue to help the reader hear the voices. Right now, I am sick of my voice.

The next day, after one session together in a response group, Pam's commentary speaks to Anne's metaphor:

This group brought me into my piece. A "go ahead in, the water's fine" attitude. I tend to throw the students into the piece: go, go, go. Some people swear they learned to swim that way but I just learned how to make a lot of excuses to stay on shore. Easy does it.

Anne, like Pam and the others in this class, faces the summer with a vigorous mix of desire and dread, the tension she feels between being a teacher and being a writer. Her weeks writing in Don's class will be the subject of another chapter if this dissertation ever becomes a book.

Four Teachers, Four Classes, Five Themes

Over these first two days, themes emerge in teachers' assessments of their classes, their informal talk in and out of class, their first draft writing, and their journals. Whether they are beginners or veterans of writing workshops, teachers of twenty years or three, whether they are comfortable with the New Hampshire Writing Program rituals, rules, and language, or whether they are initiates, these themes seem to dominate the talk and writing:

1. I am not a writer; I am a teacher. I like teenagers and I have always loved words and reading literature, and I'm good at that.
2. I have a fear of writing in genres I haven't written before. I can remember specific times when I've failed at writing, especially when I was in school.
3. I don't like to share my writing with my colleagues; they will find out that I can't write. I don't mind talking about my reading, though, that's more like what I did in school.

4. I know I'm supposed to write with my students. I can always start writing pieces, but I can't finish them because that's when the students need me to help them.
5. I respect what my instructors are doing. I am interested to observe their techniques with double vision--my eyes as "student" and my eyes as "teacher," but I have trouble doing what they do in my own classroom.

My intent in this project is not to study or compare the instructors, nor is it to judge their uses of the language or rituals of the New Hampshire Summer Writing Program. As a researcher, I participate and observe at a different time in each instructor's class. The snapshots I've given in this chapter show different groups at different stages during the first two days; they are not meant to be parallel. Because of my own participation as a member of this culture, I have a separate personal and professional relationship with each of these instructors. I know each of them well. For the purposes of this project, my intent is to see how the classes they offer will provide part of the lived cultural context for the high school teachers I have chosen to observe.

Each of these instructors has published writing that the participants have read; their credibility as teacher/writers is high. But the instructors are as different as their personalities. Ellen is a listener, a quiet enabler in her writing group; she gives firm directions for sharing anecdotes the first day, and designs her response groups according to the stories people tell. She barely speaks during that first session of her cross-grade level writing group, yet she plans exactly the amount of time for people to share their stories, to read her Eudora Welty reading, and to invite the class back for the afternoon when she will go over the syllabus and the response groups will meet.

Terry is animated, a talker, a teacher who draws on her students. She plans her instruction about instruction; she challenges, teases, and jokes with her group. Her high school teachers share their dilemmas and complaints, they write about their

difficulties with writing in a high school setting loaded with demands and they talk about it. Like Ellen, Terry orchestrates the flow of talk stopping it at times to explore another topic.

Tom works one-to-one with his high school teachers as they write; they are veterans of other summer writing programs. When I enter his class on the second day, they have already begun to write their pieces for Friday and they are reading their first novel.

Murray's group meets only for half a day; together for half the time, and in small response groups after the break. They are seasoned summer writing program attendees, and he is a seasoned professor. Despite his collegiality, his handouts, and his own back porch, Murray cannot overcome his stance as an "elder" in the New Hampshire Summer Writing Program community; his only option is to joke about it. For the people in his class, despite the congenial sessions, this is the most difficult distance to bridge. Their very status as former Summer Writing Program attendees assures that they have heard him speak and they have read his writing often. Their familiarity with his work makes them more comfortable with the shared culture, but it makes them less comfortable sharing their writing at the feet of their elder, even though his feet are sockless, sneakered, and resting on a naugahyde footstool.

Although there are differences in the instructors and their groups, there are several strong themes in common, and they become the accepted themes under which this culture operates. Very quickly, these common themes overpower any isolation of self. As Jerome Bruner observes in the quote at the beginning of this chapter, these are "distributed selves," responding to a rich present and a past that has been rooted for them.

These are the common themes with which they can very quickly "make

meaning...from the historical circumstances that gave shape to the culture of which they are an expression:"

1. We are all colleagues, we are all teachers of reading and writing. The boundaries here at New Hampshire blur between teacher and learner. We learn from being together.
2. Teachers write and read with their students. In literate communities, we learn from our students and our students learn from us. The purpose of writing and reading is sharing ideas, information and observation.
3. It is in reflecting about our reading and writing that we begin to think, and there are important ways to build in that metacognitive step in all literacy, no matter what the topic: response groups, reflective journals and portfolio collections, and writer's commentaries.
4. The best way to learn to write is to write. For everyone, writing is disciplined work. The best way to learn to read is to read. An important part of the time allotted in a formal class ought to be allotted to reading and writing if that is a valued activity.
5. The stories of our own histories and cultures are the stories of ourselves, and those are stories are worth learning about. With choice of genre and subject, we can write about what we know, find out more about it, and let it lead to further investigation.

In their daily high school lives teachers can, in fact, be "isolated nuclei of consciousness," "locked in the head," as Bruner puts it. They do not often have opportunities to test their pedagogical security with their colleagues, nor do they have time to develop their thoughts or tell their personal stories. Their classroom doors are usually closed. Here, the expectations are turned and the risks are high. For these three weeks, they will be in constant touch with colleagues, teachers of other disciplines

and grade levels, with the expectation that they will write, read, and talk. Listening and honest self-examination, it seems, is hard work.

INTERTEXT
THE OPEN FORUM: PRESENTING A DIVIDED FRONT,
A CONSCIOUSNESS OF POSSIBILITY

At 7:30 on the second night, we pour into Richards Auditorium, 110 Murkland Hall, for an open forum. Richards is an old lecture hall, distinguished and traditional. The banked seats face a wooden stage, and a dusty black curtain is the focal point of the room. Like many New England town halls, courthouses, or college auditoriums, the walls are off-white, the long windows are gridded with old glass, and a few layers of paint show through the chips in the wood moldings. It holds about three hundred people, but its age and shape gives intimacy, like a New England town meeting.

Many of us have gathered in this room over the years with people that have guided our profession. These seats have held a lot of reflective writing teachers over the years. For lots of us, these are the original sites of our shifts in thinking, our personal changes in curriculum. As audiences have responded to speakers and speakers to audiences, students have responded to teachers here. Over twenty years in our schools, there have been drafts, revisions, journals, poems, much writing about thinking and thinking about writing because of the ideas begun, shared, and fleshed out in this room. Like the site of a New England town meeting, it is here that the tough, passionate, grass-roots business of community decision-making can occur.

Tonight I sit among new colleagues, sweltering. We are wearing shorts, sundresses, tank tops; we are chewing gum. We don't look like a convention of writing teachers. There are no suits, no ties, no stockings no high heels; not even

briefcases or totebags full of students' papers. The auditorium is heavy and hot. We use spiral notebooks to fan ourselves and we peel our bare legs from the seats.

The summer staff members sit on the edge of the stage, legs dangling. Tom Newkirk begins, standing on the floor. Above him, the wooden podium is empty on the stage. One shirttail hangs over his jeans, and he smiles. Tom calls Jane Kearns the "Writing Czar" of Manchester, NH, and he jibes each staff member as he tailors an introduction. Most of the staff has been together for ten summers. Some, like Terry Moher and Linda Rief, began as participants. All work daily in schools, just like us in the audience seats. I feel as if I'm in a faculty lounge at a table for two hundred, drinking coffee and ready for a good collegial conversation.

"It is here we honor the teacher." Tom Newkirk reminds us that teaching is putting our ideas and processes into procedures, that as teachers we need to be alert, attentive, and "wise on our feet." We are ready to ask questions and play with answers; there is no pressure here to make decisions. At Tom's suggestion, we take a few minutes to write a question we want answered tonight. We think quietly and write.

Educational philosopher Maxine Greene explains in her book, *The Dialectic of Freedom*, that we do not achieve real freedom until we have a forum in which to speak. A teacher is marginalized in the system of the schools; she must muffle her voice most of the time. The freedom to grow comes when there is a "consciousness of possibility," (1988, 16) Tonight there are spaces and possibilities. Here, we can play a little, and speak a lot. For the first two days, everyone has been writing, thinking, reading, and reconsidering. In classes and on paper, we have become conscious of our own power as teachers and writers.

Here we come together to talk about it. The questions cluster around four basic themes: standardized tests, staff development, students' writing and reading as it relates to thinking, and the specifics of change.

1. Standardized Tests

I am not surprised that the questions begin with evaluation of writing and standardized tests. "I am trying to find a way to deal with standardized tests. I need help;" comes a plea from the middle of the room. Terry Moher turns the question back to the audience, asking about what others do. Someone yells: "Standardized tests should be burned." There is roaring laughter.

Tom waits for the laughter to stop. "Suppose they make 'em faster than you can burn 'em?" There is a lot of motion in the room. Dozens of hands shoot up. We hear equal comments from staff and participants; for the next five minutes, we tour the states of writing assessment in the country:

We give 'em every year for a week at grades four and eight....My class doesn't dread them as much as I do. I'm the one who resents them.

It's my job to choose a measuring device for pre and post testing. How do we measure writing?

So you're asking for us to recommend one? Can't do it; we don't know your school.

Michigan and Illinois have been working hard--the Center for the Study of Reading has one.

The California Writing Assessment has eight "domains." Kids have to know the domains in grades 3, 6, 8, and 12, and they are given a "prompt" in each one and then they have to write an essay. It is scored automatically.

"They can make them faster than we burn them--it's true." Teachers want their students to speak, read, and write freely, yet they feel threatened by the public's need to measure achievement in literacy. The "they" and the "we" in those statements points to the stance teachers must take between the communities they serve and the students they teach. They describe assessment commonalities and differences, having read the national reports, heard the politicians, spent time in classrooms with students writing and reading. This is the tension that tears at the soul of a high school English teacher.

I see furrowed brows, telling glances, rolling eyes when I look at Dorothy, Therese, Joyce, and Anne. Therese is wiggling in her seat, shaking her head slowly. She has explained California's eight assessment "writing domains" to the group, and ended by asking how to allow for choice in genre when her juniors' writing must be locked into eight categories, and her department head demands that she teach them as eight forms of writing. Anne has spoken passionately, saying there are requirements she simply ignores. She has taught for twenty years in the same school, come here for three summers. Dorothy and Joyce sit silently alert. Dorothy is sitting quietly with her friend Colin, who is also a teacher, and Joyce sits with her friends from last night's ice cream reading group.

Newkirk stops the sharing and summarizes. There are clearly two issues, he says: the state's need to require an assessment, and the school administration's need to be accountable. He describes his own freshman writing assignments, that he saves the beginning of the year for "the self," so students won't think of writing "as a bunch of hoops to jump." We share this problem; state assessments won't go away. They are a bother to those who teach writing, because the results are too often interpreted as markers of students' progress. For people who practice formative

evaluation, knowing a student in the process of growth, the summative evaluation suggested by American standardized testing practices is a dilemma, he concludes.

Tonight, there are no answers about how to integrate standardized tests into writing programs. There are only questions. In ten minutes we see and hear people working hard on this question all over the country. Assessment and evaluation are marked with complexity and politics, and here we can listen to our colleagues and begin to frame our personal stances, ask questions of our own situations.

2. Staff Development

I know from living two days in my dorm that there are many people here who have mandates from their schools to return with something for their colleagues at home, and it follows that the next discussion is about staff development. How do we incorporate the "process approach" system-wide? Why do we have to call it the "process approach?" Isn't it just writing? Why does it need to have a name? What happens when a system "mandates" any instructional approach? How do we "get people" to "do it?" The room moves into action:

Go slowly, build up the few people who are already doing things. Show what people are doing. Give out a few articles.

We've got about 40 percent of our teachers working with writing.

Want to trade jobs with me? Your percentage is quite high.

I let people know a lot, and there are a lot of things going on.

Daily, weekly newsletters from principals to staff. The computer is a gentle way of promoting writing.

Send out a bibliography. To staff members. To parents. Include kids' writing.

We share writing at faculty meetings, parent meetings.

I know a teacher who spends Saturday mornings in her classrooms for kids and parents to come with their writing.

During faculty meetings, share a piece of writing by a student. Everybody's going to say, 'He did that?' or 'I saw her conferencing with you.' It's a slight subtle message that you're being supported.

We were just teachers in our districts. We were released so that we could go around and work in other peoples' classrooms with them. It helped to work with our colleagues.

We had developed a morale problem in our school. At one inservice day, we worked out our problem by writing.

One year, our in-service budget paid us to have afternoon writing groups. We had no outside consultants or workshops that year. We'll do it again; those who did it really got a lot out of it.

Waves of more muffled responses work their way through the auditorium.

The "subtle messages" are legal ways, within the system, to begin to push open people's spaces without forcing, or "mandating" that anyone change a practice. These teachers are coming to a "consciousness of possibility" by looking inside their own practices. Tonight they are free to speak in a forum of people who share their language. They are free here to raise shared questions and consider them without giving answers.

One person cites a principal she knows who tries to balance her "process-oriented staff" with some traditional teachers: "You can't force people to teach

writing this way." It seems, though, in this room, that there is a tacit assumption that there is one way to teach, and that is the "process" way. I squirm in my seat a little, hoping this will not turn into a religious-sounding testimonial session. I have heard many stories about people who refer to "The Atwell Model," "The Seven-Step Graves," and I know that no one dislikes those attitudes more than Nancie Atwell and Don Graves. Here at UNH, with some of the ritualized behaviors and the "elders" and authors teaching and participating, there is that danger of dropping old rigid practices and looking to replace them with new ones. Tom Newkirk speaks to that problem quickly. He jumps into the talk, grabbing the microphone: "I think it's really easy to fall into the conversion syndrome."

"A teacher has a right to reject this," says a staff member, "The real key to being a good teacher is the relationship with the students."

"Parent education is good. In New York, parents of 5th graders are demanding that their teachers go to Columbia to learn writing."

In Graves' words, "The enemy is orthodoxy," and orthodoxies are "substitutes for thinking;" they clog our ears," and we cease to listen to each other." (1984, 185) We are listening to each other tonight, forming and reforming our thoughts.

3. Helping Students Manage Their Writing and Reading

Tom asks, "Can we talk about the student? And how do we examine ourselves as writers? Writing takes so much work."

"Writing and reading are just tools to make them honor their brains." A teacher in the back tells the story of four well-spoken boys whom he felt really

understood the addictive nature of poetry when they wrote "Poetry: Just say NO!"

The discussion shifts from poetry to diversity of genre, that students need a variety of writing experiences. Tom's staff members look at each other and smile. It takes a minute to decide who will speak first. It is clear there is no one set of shared beliefs among them; they all have different answers. Ellen Blackburn-Karelitz answers: "First graders feel that they can write. I like to help them diversify, and a lot of little pieces of real writing accumulates. They write notes and observations. That's a genre."

Tom mentions that Jack Wilde is finishing a book about diversity in writing. Jack responds. "All of us are committed to single draft writing occasions as periods of reflection, but the biggest mistake is to think words are the only way to communicate....I have a problem with the notion that students should always choose what they do. I'm going to make them write it, sometimes," says Jack. Jack's talk is full of jargon: "single-draft writing occasions," "periods of reflection," "words are the only way to communicate," that he has a "problem with students should always choose what they do." I wonder how many people recognize the assumptions under his answer: that an "occasion" can just be a ten minute period of writing to "reflect" about an idea, maybe in science or math or social studies, that "ways to communicate" can be through art, music, mathematical and graphic notation, that students who "always choose what they do" won't know how to follow assignments. Embedded in Jack's short answer are four assumptions that will be questioned often during the next three weeks.

"What about remedial readers?" someone asks. An active rumble runs through the auditorium. "At the beginning of the year, they start out with one sentence and no focus in their writing." Another assumption.

"I focus on focus first, then go to content. By October, it might be more."

I let a lot of things go by in kids' writing, but I can't stand letting certain things happen: should I let my standards be lower? What should I do?

If I have to slice it up, then that piece is history; it's not theirs anymore...I bring in good pieces of fiction: why did this work?

Terry Moher adds: "The answers come down to knowing the students well--more and more I'm working with them individually." Again, Tom Newkirk summarizes: "Sometimes I wonder if our models of success show only the classroom working. When it's written in a book, it looks so successful, there seem to be breakthroughs on an hourly basis. Our image of success is unrealistic."

"Yeah, we don't have those perfect kids and perfect classrooms from the Heinemann books in *my* school system," Jane Kearns, instructor, and a K-12 administrator, retorts. Laughter and relief. There she erupts, laughing through her nose.

The conversation shifts to reading. One participant asks of each staff member: "If you were stuck on a desert island with the kids you teach, what one book would you take? Someone yells *Lord of the Flies*. More laughter. People are eager to hear each other's choices. What follows is an interesting, uncategorizable book list, revealing diverse private and professional personalities:

"Any guide to Ireland" Jane Kearns jokes

Bridge to Terabithia

Cracker Jackson

Charlotte's Web

The Cay

Huckleberry Finn

anything by Ezra Jack Keats
Where the Wild Things Are
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
East of Eden

I'd rather have them take pencils and paper and write their own.

There is no canon here; it is a recitation of each person's passions as reader, writer, teacher. Someone calls out "What about teaching reading?" Elementary teachers, high school teachers, and junior high school teachers begin to share practices here. There is vigorous dialogue, shared language, jokes. We are a diverse group of literate people. What we have in common is the classroom, our visions of possibilities, and this forum we have to talk about it. An elementary teacher says, "I have response groups for reading, just like in writing."

Anne adds: "I had high school juniors sit together, grouped by genre. The main characters had to meet; some came up with junk, but they solved problems in the thinking of other centuries and the understanding of genre differences."

Jane Kearns suggests: "How about children's literature with junior and senior high schoolers. Kids can read them quickly and enjoy them.." Carol Avery, instructor and a primary teacher, adds, "Our librarian puts an "E" on some picture books, meaning "for everyone."

Don Murray speaks from the back of the room. His deep voice commands attention. The sign interpreter signals to the deaf teachers that it is Murray speaking. They turn to see him. He mentions a school he's recently visited, in which parents and high schoolers recommend books to each other. He notes that would be a perfect situation for a parent-teen journal. Murray's contribution is considered momentarily. Grade level interests and personal tastes blend, but individuals stay in focus.

Tonight, like the rocks that emerge annually in New England soil, many of the foundational assumptions of this writing program have been unearthed, turned over, and re-examined. Through the perspectives and experiences of three hundred people, we can see that the "orthodoxies" are not "orthodoxies" at all. We re-affirm that "there is no one right way to teach writing." We learn, in Newkirk's words, to "honor the teacher;" here we can ask questions and play with answers, "think about putting ideas and processes into procedures," to be "wise on our feet." We have talked about some of what outsiders perceive as "The Process Approach" dilemmas: offering students time and choices for writing and reading in the face of conflicting political pressures from the school, using writing as a tool for thinking in all subjects, exploring and sharing personal reading experiences that may not be from recommended book lists, recognizing alternative forms of expression as literacy, acknowledging the politics implicit for teachers in an educational system that imposes schoolwide book selections, and training teachers through traditional "staff development" models. Like the rocks every spring, when the dilemmas emerge we wonder why they're still there, but this year is another time to think out how we'll do with them. Each year with a little more knowledge, we can be a little more inventive. The rocks still come cup; the soil shifts slowly.

4. The Specifics of Change

Newkirk adds "We must recognize that genuine change takes time. Pseudo-change is easy. It took ten years to get us to this point. *Remember that the turtle always wins. There's no version of that story where the rabbit wins. The turtle always wins.*" With this open forum, three hundred teachers are invited to

a "consciousness of possibility." Along with the underlying assumptions of the program itself, each person examines a self among possible selves: the adult, the teacher, the writer, the reader. This is a place to begin to re-consider, to re-affirm.

Tonight is, in anthropologist Victor Turner's term, "a 'flash' of 'communitas'" (1982, 45) in which people come together, form a set of experiences, share rituals, memories, and knowledge to re-examine and re-construct an existing social structure--their roles in school and their roles on the page. It is temporary in time and space, intensive in reflection and self-examination. Provoking possibilities has a long tradition in progressive education, seeing learning as constant, slow movement, open to experience and reflection. When a teacher searches for her own freedom by turning over possibilities, it will enable her students. Maxine Greene writes, "A teacher in search of his/her own freedom may be the only kind of teacher who can arouse young persons to go in search of their own...children who have been provoked to reach beyond themselves, to wonder, to imagine, to pose their own questions are the ones most likely to learn to learn." (1988, 14)

The roots of Tom Newkirk's progressive philosophy are clear in tonight's open exchange. Educational historian Patrick Shannon, in *The Struggle to Continue*, observes that progressive thinking moves teachers "toward a new conception of literacy, a different way of looking at their world and their work. It can help them to celebrate teachers' often courageous movement away from the scientific management mainstream and from the cultural imperialism of the renewed humanist approaches." (1990, 179) The forum tonight has invited us to re-adjust, to re-conceive our literacy, our teaching, and our schools, but not to settle on answers. It marks the beginning of our time here, not the end. It affirms our dilemmas, our common interests, and our consciousness of possibilities. It invites

us to look toward raising questions, examine new possibilities for the days to come and for our lives in the classrooms.

Outside, the lawn glows green and misty under the university lights; the night is dark and humid. Sandals click, sneakers squeak, and people continue conversations as they pour out of Murkland Hall and disperse to their cars and dorm rooms. In the parking lot I chat with two staff members. I hear a story about a woman from Connecticut who discovered that she had left her computer keyboard at home. Her husband drove it three hundred miles, had a cup of coffee with her, and returned home. I hear about a man who is complaining that he is only here to "get teaching ideas," and he'll leave if he doesn't have more "devices" for his notebook. I walk down the moist wooden steps to the dorm, and I see silhouettes swapping books. There is a round-robin of paper-sharing in the lobby of Sackett, around a large box of donuts. In my doorway, five teachers in pajamas, from Canada, Massachusetts, New York, and Missouri, consider the values of hyphens, dashes, and semi-colons while they hold their toothbrushes and towels. Laura, a second grade teacher, in her long tie-dyed t-shirt and bare legs, remembers her freshman writing instructor: "He told us we were stupid. He said 'green.' We wrote 'green.' That was the end for me. I haven't written since."

At forty-five, Laura is writing tonight. So are Dorothy and Therese, Joyce and Anne. It is the second night of the program. There is reflecting, there are stories, there is ritual and shared language. Computer keys are clicking and printers are chunking into the night. There is, from the open forum, in Shannon's words, "a sense of history and a sense of hope." For the next three weeks, there are open possibilities, no subtle barriers to reflective practice. There will be writing, and the writing will be read.

CHAPTER 3

THERESE: FINDING AUTHORITY ON THE INSIDE

The universal and the unique are entwined aspects of existence. In the course of growth, children are powerfully influenced by the living patterns of their family and community while also being subject to a common, species-specific trajectory of development....the contradictory pulls of necessity and choice.

Vera John-Steiner, Notebooks of the Mind, (1985, 60)

It is 10:30 p.m. on the fifteenth, the Sunday night after the first week, I knock on Therese's door and open it a crack. The beam of light from the hall hits her in bed. Her eyes pop open, and I wonder if she'd rather sleep. "Oh no, it's fine," she croaks and switches on a light, "I *really wanted* to talk with you." The air is muggy, and she has no fan. It's okay, she tells me, because she's taken two showers. Her nightgown is buttoned up to the lace around her neck. She arranges the limp sheets around my tape recorder as I plug it in. I notice a Bible angling out from a corner under her bed. An iron stands on the shelf next to a few folded cotton shirts; a skirt, two blouses, and several pairs of shorts line up on hangers. Her shoes are placed in pairs on the floor of the wardrobe closet: running shoes and a pair of white high heels. She has not brought her computer from California, but her desk is set up neatly with notebooks, paper, and writing utensils. Her required textbooks are ordered by size on the shelf above. "Make yourself at home," she invites me, "take off your shoes." When I flip off my sandals, I have an urge to place them in her neat shoe-line.

"It's small in here, but that's okay. I don't stay here." By now she has arranged her personal routine as carefully as she has arranged her possessions. A commuter in her class has told her where she can get "really good" coffee, so she

spends early mornings alone in Durham's Bagelry writing in her journal before her morning class. In the late afternoons, she has found an aerobics class, and after an early supper in the cafeteria, she writes in the computer lab every evening. Yesterday, Saturday, she took a trip to Boston with a few people from her writing group, and this morning, she walked to Durham's Catholic church for Mass. I see that she's feeling settled as she invites me to sit on her bed.

Framed snapshots of family members stand next to her notebooks. She speaks proudly of them all; she has moved to central California to be near her sister. "She got a job first. I wanted to live in California with her. I liked the climate. Not the school system." We swap stories about siblings in southern California, and I mention that I was there recently for my brother's third wedding, joking about Hollywood romances. She looks distressed. "Oh, I can't imagine what it must be like to get used to three different sisters-in-law!" Her comment jars me; I'd never seen my brothers' succession of wives as a problem for me. I realize that even extended family is very important to Therese. During the week just passed, she's phoned her parents and her sister several times.

Therese grew up in a suburb of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, daughter of an engineer who is a professor at the University. She talks with him often about teaching. She attended Catholic schools for twelve years. Aside from her father, I wonder, did she have any other mentors? "You know what?" Her eyes widen, "I wrote my way through high school: literary analysis and journals. I trusted Sister Elizabeth. She was my teacher both freshman and senior years. She is still my friend now. We just had a special relationship." She majored in English Education at the University of West Virginia, a two-hour drive from Pittsburgh. She loved writing in college because "we always had a topic. We always had a 'This is what you need to do.' All you had to do was look at the books." She first read Donald Murray's *A Writer Teaches Writing*

in her course on the teaching of writing, and was eager to see him here. She taught junior high and went to summer school herself the summer she graduated from college. A year later, she moved to central California where she has taught in a public high school for two years.

Last summer, she was selected as a "teacher-consultant" in the summer writing project at UCLA. "The way I got into UCLA was you had to send them a copy of a personal statement describing a teaching process you use. I wrote to them about how I teach *Lord of the Flies* to my grammar class, and how I integrated the writing with it. The teachers who got into that program all had to share their ideas. They shared the whole morning, and part of the afternoon was presentations." She did some personal writing, too, about a failed relationship "that opened my eyes to the world of dishonesty and distrust," and she wrote about it to "preserve my lessons on paper." Most of her writing last summer came from the teachers' presentations, exercises mostly devoted to curriculum. Therese had a comfortable routine there, too. She found a table at a gourmet coffee shop, and spent much time writing on the beach. With the other teacher-consultants, she published writing in a magazine and shared a favorite book.

Her major assignment was to write an "I-Search" paper, a model described by Ken Macrorie (1980/1988), written inquiry more subjective than a formal research paper, but full of information. As Macrorie describes it, an I-Search paper is a "story of a quest that counts for the quester." (56) Therese's instructor "just gave me the permission, and I just went away with it. And that's why it wasn't hard for me." She wrote about the eight California writing domains in the state writing assessment, a personal source of worry in her teaching. She enjoyed the assignment and the investigation. She had her students do "I-Search" papers at the end of the past school year, and she is proud and pleased with what they wrote. In a journal entry, she notes

that "the reason why the I-Search paper turned out so well is because I didn't etch directions in stone."

She came out of UCLA with a bagful of ideas and teaching strategies, eager to plant them in her classroom. But other than the "I-Search" assignment, she emerged from her school year with an enormous sense of personal failure. Her stories of student failures unfold as stories of her own failure as a teacher. "Unfortunately, these tell me more about myself than about the kids in my classroom:"

Mark Bernini , a member of my senior American Lit section, was tremendously verbal, always contributing to discussions, even joined my forensics team. We always had a lot to share, verbally. Mark hated to write. Because he rarely turned in assignments, he finally flunked my class. Mark gave up--literally, because I never bothered to listen.

Steve Tyler radiated downright hate. He never understood why I had them doing interior/exterior monologues. I saw his lack of effort and he earned a D instead of a C. His mother wanted him OUT. He cried during that conference.

Amy Willinsky's parents were convinced I didn't like her. She missed deadline after deadline, and was earning an F. I didn't slow down for her, and my "consistency" was interpreted as "not caring." Amy ended up dropping my class fourth quarter without a grade. She was removed--at her parents' request.

She aches over the discrepancies between knowing her students as individuals and the grades she gives them, over their parents' disappointment in them and in her. "Probably last year I perceived myself in a different way as a teacher. I can't begin to tell you. I really came close to saying I don't want to go on teaching. But I'll go back to it. Because, you know, I won't quit....And in my heart I love teaching as much as I did last summer. I can hear all the teachers in the world give all the presentations in the world, and I don't think right now that's going to be the answer for me. I can read all

the books, which is what I've been doing...I really think I've got to figure it out for myself, and I don't know if I ever will...I still question whether I'm a true educator. Do I belong in the classroom? I don't know after this year. I've got to find out for myself."

After a week here, she says this summer is hard for her. "Straight writing was not an exercise last summer to the degree that it is here," and after a week she says this summer is hard for her. "I'm finding it very much of a struggle. I'm mad at myself this year, because I want it to be like it was last summer...I didn't have any trouble writing." But here, this summer, she is responsible for designing her own piece of writing, revising it each day, and sharing her drafts in a group. It is the mix of the "straight writing," her immersion in new readings, her responses, and the stories from colleagues that are both exciting her and provoking her. Her colleagues are her mentors; their writing is her reading. She is thinking about rules and authority, both personal and professional. She shuttles forward and backward between answers and questions, listening and reading, talking and writing.

We discuss the open forum on Tuesday night; I thanked her for explaining the eight California writing domains. That night made her feel connected to our profession, she confessed, not alone in her feelings of confusion and failure. "People complained because they had work to do, but I loved that forum. I would do anything to have things like that all the time, where we could just ask questions. Just ask questions. And have people talk all around." She loved Jane Kearns' joke about the Heinemann books that show the perfect classroom. "Maybe there should be a Heinemann book out on how those teachers went about handling the kid who says 'This sucks!'"

She's asked a lot of questions in her classes, and she's shared her anxiety with

her colleagues. "I don't know as I'm a brave woman. I just want to find some answers. But I don't think I can keep reaching out for them. I think it's just got to be internal. I'm glad we have to do all these journals." This culture is beginning to provide her with some self-knowledge, and she is both eager and resistant.

Following Rules, Fearing Revelations

During her first week here, Therese spent a lot of time looking for "internal" answers. She asked and answered questions about external authority in her personal life and in her learning. Her search fell into two main categories. First, her personal writing focused on the conflict between a male friend and her parents' expectations for her. Whose rules should she follow? Whom does she really love? Can these loyalties co-exist? About whom is she most guilty? Second, because she resisted sharing her writing in a group, she questioned her concepts of trust, audience, and authority in teachers and learners. Will they laugh at her morality? Will they devalue her writing because it's a personal subject? Whose ideas should she follow when she re-drafts a paper? Who exactly *is* the teacher in a roomful of teachers listening to her draft?

While her writer-voice drafts its way through the week, her reflective journal-voice notices that the people in her environment are influencing both her thinking and her writing. She begins her writing plans on Monday in her writing group:

Monday July 9, 2:15 pm: Sharing requires trust. I admit, I am no longer the trustful person I once was, but today, my group taught me to let go just a bit...Through all this sharing, I learned much more about myself through the stories revealed by others....I know that I have a story inside to preserve, but it won't come out. I always fear revelations.

Her first draft, written Monday night, is a one-page litany of four happy dating

memories with John--a sparkling climb near a waterfall, giggling as she lurches forward in a car with manual transmission, waving goodbye from an airplane as it flies over the Sierra foothills--and it ends with the "pain that continued to grip her" through the fall and winter, and into February when it became "a celebration of friendship." Before she shares it with her group Tuesday morning, she writes in her journal:

Tuesday, July 10, 8:04 am: I am fearful of penning a story I don't want misunderstood (I have no trust). I know what I want to say, but I haven't a clue concerning how to say it. One thing I know--my subject concerns....a very special friendship and the tinge of sadness, rebellion, and misunderstanding. One subject? Two subjects? I really don't know.

During the day Tuesday, she works on another version of the first draft. She adds to the memories by referring to her personal journal from last February. At a party, she danced with John, twice-divorced, the father of one of her students. "I kept him company, listening to his story, dancing when he asked..." She sketches a list of incidents with him, and a triangle diagram "Family-Me-John." She documents her struggle, and surveys what she sees about her writing:

Tuesday, July 10, Draft 1, pm, Second attempt: I can't seem to begin this piece. I'm stuck. I don't like what I wrote this morning at all. It is full of cliches, and the cliches cloud what I have to capture. What do I want to say? (She lists seven possibilities), and then "Implications: 1. Although writing is natural, it is activated by enabling environments, 2. Character of these environments: **SAFE, STRUCTURED, PRIVATE, UNOBTRUSIVE, LITERATE.**

"The subject matter bothered me," she writes to herself, "It bothered me so much I couldn't sleep. I was worried about being a faithful friend to John and guilt-ridden because I didn't feel like a faithful daughter." She got up at 2:30 a.m. and

called John. "John didn't know where I was. Thought I was visiting relatives in New Jersey. Wierd. Interesting. Don't judge. I didn't call my parents." The breakthrough in her writing came after the phone call. She produced five pages of personal thoughts, a diary of sorts. But at this point, quantity was valuable to her. Looking over Wednesday's journal a week later, her reflective voice notices: "Wednesday's entry is interesting because I wasn't pleased with what I had produced. I was also bothered by the subject matter...I called my friend, thinking I could ease the discomfort...he did not even remember where I was. Translated--DID NOT CARE. It made me write more...What came out was a piece about transitions--transitions between childhood and adulthood." And the next day, knowing her response group would be waiting for the written piece, she develops it more:

Thursday, July 12, 8:30 am: I wrote constantly yesterday but am still unhappy with the fragmented product. I dread sharing the work today. I am embarrassed about my emotions, my thoughts. I realize it is because of the various conflicts--the incompatible emotions. I am not trying to assert my grown-up independence, but I keep asking inside "Mom and Dad, quit smothering me with your opinions, your beliefs."...I haven't called them yet.

This draft begins with "My shadow is fear. I fight my shadow"...it continues for eight lines of poetry echoing the oppositions of her fears: "I fear my parents, so I seek their approval/ I fear, so I fight...." and then several pages of personal narrative: "The blond-haired stranger said goodbye. It was a foggy evening, December 5, and I envisioned the Christmas tree that I knew we would never decorate. The man was now a stranger. I finally let go. 'God? God? This is a dream, right?'" Her Thursday draft is five different pages, and she reads it to the group. Her response group listens, offers response and suggestions, and enables her to revise it. In her journal the same night,

she notes:

same day-Thursday, July 12, 10:19 pm: Yes...I changed the damn thing again. I scrapped the poem, the God supplications, and the first person narrative. Why? Because of comfort, because I have to read it aloud tomorrow. Because I am afraid of hurting and alienating people I love. The writing stuff grows more difficult with each passing day...I finally printed out, knowing I had to set the writing aside. I walked back in the drizzle without an umbrella, missing sunny California, missing my parents, missing my friends...That's me, that's always been me (or "I," if you are grammatically oriented). I walked to the dorm, straight to the phone. "Hi Mom"

On Friday, she shares a five-page story called "Fragments of Fear." By this time, the five pages have new names, fictionalized characters, added dialogue and conflict from the suggestions of her group. In her writing, she has learned to achieve distance with four techniques: fictionalization through character details and changing names, careful attention to dialogue and creation of conflict. In her personal life, she has self-examined her dilemmas about rules and authority. Saturday she will go to Boston with three new colleague-friends. None of them has been to Boston before, they are all teachers, different ages, they will be tourists together. The events of her day will move her toward the next week's project.

Setting the Stage for Stories: A Progression of Trust

On the bus, Therese's friends scribbled ideas in their journals. She looked at the scenery. But a walk through Boston's Italian North End made her think of family. In an Irish Pub, she heard a storyteller who began his stories with the song "Take Me Home, Country Road." While she listened to him, she jotted down the words of the song on a slip of paper, and next to the words, some personal places, family expressions and names. The memories of her Italian heritage, warm thoughts of "home," and the storyteller's song blended into the nucleus for a memorial character sketch of

Therese's Italian aunt, Rosa. Her drafting process began again today. "I got up and went to Mass this morning and couldn't wait to get back to write. Delete. Delete. Delete. I'd write something. Delete. God, I mean, I only had a page and a half done. I hate it. I'm starting all over again." Four days later, she is sharing her writing, and examining her past:

Thursday 7/19/90: It was difficult to share my third draft...I am feeling badly even now. Today I worked on my fourth and final draft, and my heart ached. I missed everybody--my grandmother, Rosa, my sister and friends. I missed us the way we used to be--if that makes any sense, and all week long, I struggled to capture those people on paper. But I failed at that...I've gone through four drafts and three titles...Is it okay to feel tired? Is it okay to wonder if I really am a writer?

Her journal is full of thoughts about herself as a writer. She is not over her fear of sharing. But during this week, writing about her own behavior activates her thoughts as a teacher, her curiosity about students. A few hours before I come to her room, she has written:

Sunday, 7/15/90, 7:30 pm: I press the delete key too often...I delete words, sentences, paragraphs. I wonder if I really have lost part of myself over the past year...Look, I really think we better take a closer look at the "sharing" clause in the process approach...I can also see another can of worms opening--kids taking advantage of the fact that sharing is optional.

Tonight, she talks about her fear of sharing drafts. "What's the matter with me? It's because I need to share." I ask if she ever had to share her writing before. "They didn't make me. And I didn't want to. It wasn't like it is here. They didn't make you. And you got away with it." Does she feel that anyone here would force her? "Carol wouldn't. I'm sure she wouldn't force me. It's just the pressure of the group." I

ask her if the group is supportive, if she'll have the same group this second week. She doesn't know, and "it's another thing I'm worried about." Would she make a student share who will share nothing? "When I was writing tonight, that's what I said. I stopped myself and I said, Oh, yeah, but then the kid can keep saying 'I don't want to share, I don't want to share' and never share. I know. I know. What if they can't find freedom of expression because they're under this constant 'I have to share it' pressure?"

She connects her fear of sharing with her fear of the classroom: "As I read over my journal entries, I realized that the foundation of my impulse to overload the student is nothing short of fear. Question is--what the hell do I fear? Easy enough--REBELLION, loss of control. Ironically, this happened to my senior American Brit Lit class in a silent way. My class shrunk half the size from first to second semester....I lack spontaneity in my classroom, and I am fearful. Ah, but even that is connected. I am fearful, so I lack spontaneity. I am fearful, so I plan."

Therese realizes that last week's writing was connected to her confusion about her own authority--as a woman, a daughter, a teacher, a writer. And it was in her writing group in class that she came to make the connections. "My group revealed this, since I was struggling to write about a friendship very special to me, and the choice to continue the friendship despite family disapproval. I had to deal with the guilt of not telling the truth and the responsibility of making my own decisions.

"As I write, I realize I'm scared to death of teaching...the climate of my class is all wrong....The writing is happening *outside* of my classroom. Because in the classroom, I don't give them time to express themselves. It doesn't have to be a spoken rule. They know it....The majority of kids do *not* walk out of my classroom feeling good about their writing. And I know it's because of the way my classroom's set up. I use a lot of planning. I plan everything. I totally structure my plan. And they follow

what I plan....Yes, I can tell you all about the theory of this wonderful writing process. I've got so many books on it, but I can't make the leap from theory to practice. I don't know how to do it."

She may not "know how to do it," but she is experiencing it "being done to" her. Therese marvels at her teachers here. "There's something about the way they run this--I mean, they don't do much, but you know they're doing something...At the beginning of the week when we started writing? It's like, what's going on here? I mean, you know, it's hilarious. It's like I'm looking for this structure. And I'm sure they have their lessons written down somewhere. They know how to do it so that *we don't know*." And she has seen how hard they work--at planning, listening, and responding to each student--on paper and in classes. Over time, she watches her instructors in both her writing class and her grade-level class to see how they do it, and what exactly it is that they do. On the Monday of the final week, she writes:

Monday, July 23: Lesson? Classroom = Students/Teacher. Don't tell me there's no place for the teacher. Look at last week's progression of trust...But what do we do when outside forces ruin what we attempt to create inside the kid? Even now, I back away, but this summer, it's not working. Terry tells me I'm a wonderful student, welcomes my questions. My writing group welcomes my writing. Carol Avery hugged me because I shared my composition on Friday. I was invited to eat dinner by three people yesterday. Ming who works at the desk knows my name at the aerobics center downtown. Bonnie takes time to listen and record. I get it. It's more than academics. It's environment. It's welcoming--accepting. It's the opposite of rejection. It's more than tiptoeing carefully. It's knowing where to tiptoe.

Over the three weeks, Therese's work evolves in a dialogic pattern, and just like the daily routine she establishes, she forges the work to suit her needs. She has two voices, and they talk to each other constantly. One doubts, the other explores. One

follows rules, the other tests them. One takes risks, the other doubts her own abilities. One tells stories, one fears revelations. One is a wide-eyed student, the other is a cautious young teacher. The dialogue in her double-entry journal is a record of her voices, her observations of what she sees and learns from her colleagues, her reading, and her observations.

Sunday, July 22: As I read over my July 9 journal, I realize just how much I've trusted since I've been here....This past weekend, I can't say I was frustrated at all as the words flowed from pen to paper. Something radical is going on inside my mind.....Carol Avery says "build community." Terry Moher says "Give time." I am beginning to realize that a lot of this trust is established through environment. You have to set the stage, right? I even said "writing workshops are scary things for me because I'd rather not reveal my stories. Well, hell, everyone else was revealing their stories in our group...That's another thing, see. If you get it to be the norm and not the exception, then you have a community of trust.

Therese honors her "community of trust" in her final piece of writing. It is a letter written to her writing group, and she chooses it to publish it in this year's collection:

Lest I Forget...

Dear Writing Group,

One week from today, we will find ourselves home again. I've decided that it would be wrong for me to forget you. I do not want the memory of this circle to fade, because, you see, I will need to recall you and your stories at some point during the coming year...let me record the way it is, so that in the future, I will clearly remember the way it was....

She recalls the group's writing and offers back to them the details their stories: a hearing-impaired daughter, a sister in childbirth, a great-grandmother's bowl of cornflakes, newlyweds too hot to sleep, a mother too cold to visit her child, a lost three year old, a struggle with bigotry and racism, and ends: "When life brings the stuff

that clouds my vision, I will remember these stories, recall this circle, and reread this letter, lest I forget that this is the stuff life is made of..."

She has chosen it as her best piece of writing, "I wrote it right through, without much struggle at all. And I just remembered everybody in the class, and then when I read it to my friends, I thought it was soppy sentimentality, but I thought, 'Yeah, this is me,' the terrible thing about it is that I said to myself, 'This is *my kind* of writing,' at least now." Therese is aware that her audience might not like this piece for the same reasons she likes it, but it represents herself to herself right now, and she is pleased to have the authority to evaluate it that way. "Okay, I can write academic papers which are still going to have me in them, but I said, well, here I am, I've got to, and I did...it summarized everything I got from the program....Next year, it's going to be an act of courage for me to just put the chairs in a circle." She assumes now that she'll have an "act of courage" in her classroom, and less fear.

The environment that has been so critical in her shift from fear to courage is made of more than her two classes. "I have to start celebrating the surprise....Is it true that this whole thing goes deeper?...Is it true that what happens in your personal life and what happens in the classroom....See, it's getting too big for me....It goes deeper than education...this is a societal thing...this spills over....When you go to the Bagelry, there's Don Murray, reading the paper, and there's Tom Romano, stopping to say hi...and they're all working very hard. A community of people who are all working toward something, and writing."

Celebrating the surprise: A Silent Encounter with Don Murray

Therese uses her class journal to hash out dilemmas, to plan her own writing, and then to reflect on her changes. She also uses Don Murray as a teacher-god of sorts.

She has been using his books throughout her college and professional life; he is, in short, a tradition-bearer. She reveres them; to her his stature is legendary. Until people know him, they are jarred when they see him questioning, teaching, and flipping burgers at the picnics. During the next few days, she reads Murray's book *Expecting the Unexpected*, sits a few rows from him at the open forum, and asks questions during his formal presentation called "Pushing the Edge." Tom Newkirk introduces Murray with a personal quip that gets a howl Therese: "my dog Jessie thanks him for being featured in three columns in the *Boston Globe*." Therese sees Murray reading the newspaper in the mornings at the Bagelry, grilling burgers at two picnics and sitting with his wife and students at the lobsterfest. He becomes an accessible person while he remains an elder in the culture. His books bear the traditions: the discipline and experiments, the struggles and rewards in writing that she is feeling now.

Most powerfully, she holds a continuous silent conversation with him and his work in her journal. She reads Murray, she writes for herself and she responds in her journal. Then, two weeks later, she looks at her earlier self. Her reflective responses are marked with diagrams, arrows, and little heart-shapes. She sees herself moving forward as she watches her own dialogic pattern of questions, readings, and her own answers based on Murray and his work:

Tues, July 10 8:04 am: Murray terms his book "A Celebration of Surprise." My immediate reaction was--Surprise. I am not a spontaneous teacher. Now I know why I plan excessively. In *Expecting the Unexpected*, Murray explains his own experience (1987, 128): "I needed that power at first. I was scared in front of the class." [her underlines]. I fear my students will turn both me and the subject matter off...Murray's words ease some of my own writing pains. I feel a celebration inside of me, but I can't find the words to express it...

Wed, July 11, 1990 8:20 am: Last night, I delighted in meeting Don Murray at the

Open Forum, but I had a difficult time understanding him. This morning, while reading Chapter 5, I know he was making a point about bad writing leading to good writing....Murray may laud bad writing, but I loathe mine. Perhaps we could discuss why "unclear thinking" leads to good writing. From personal experience, this hasn't worked for me. My structured nature commands me to write only when I have something to say. On p. 102 he comments that "most people believe writers know what they are going to say before they say it. They do not know that writing is a thinking skill." Perhaps I am not a thinking person. Perhaps I plan too much. Perhaps I lack spontaneity."

She writes five quotes from his chapter in her journal. One week later, at his presentation, she asks him about "unclear thinking." Murray answers her "If it's all thought out, I wouldn't write about it, you'll end up with boring little essays." The question and answer period brings out a lot that intrigues her. "I do a lot of foolish talking, foolish playing, playing with language," he says. "The point is not the audience or the voice; it is to liberate people from the idea that one is right and one is wrong." She is confused and delighted. During the third week, Therese looks back at her notes from that night, and writes in her journal:

Sunday, July 22 (response): 'Writing is thinking' needs to be a productive unclarity--a confusion. He made us laugh, but I finally understand what he was talking about. (This is exactly what I myself was doing with John's story...he was responsible for calling my attention to transitions.) Wow! It still blows my mind...I need to afford the opportunity for surprise in my classroom. LET GO...BUT PLAN HOW TO DO IT CORRECTLY."

By the final week, she is thinking about "letting go," but still expects to learn a correct method for doing it. The first week, two days of thinking about Murray's book and his talk led her to the beginning of her self-discoveries. While she watches him read the paper and drink his coffee, she writes a letter she doesn't need to send, and two weeks later, she reflects on how his work has affected her work. He is both a "distant

teacher" (John-Steiner, 1987) and an intimate colleague:

Thurs, July 11: I can't believe what I'm reading in Chap. 19. It's almost like Murray read my thoughts. 'Writing as therapy' for this writer also. I used it as such last summer; I use it as such now...I wish I could talk to Murray again. I need to tell him I understand exactly what he is talking about...

Fri, July 12, 8 am, The Bagelry: Dear Don, Funny how people are, huh?...Our instructor Terry asked us to read Chap. 19 of your book *Expecting the Unexpected*. I read "Well, writing is therapy for this writer and for most others I know. We should certainly allow life in the classroom when it walks though the door. Some of our students will find it healing to write about pain and anger in their lives. And it is, after all, the raw material of art." (185) Last summer, Don, I experienced this on the campus of UCLA...I wrote, and healed a wound that left a scar and built a callous....I have never been in external combat, Mr. Murray. I have only experienced the internal combat--the tugging and twisting of emotions, the struggle to accept reality....Sincerely, Therese

Mon, July 23 (response): Perhaps there is a way to use writing as therapy. Murray's composition on his daughter reminded me of the book *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Couldn't this work in reverse? Couldn't the book remind the student of something he had to deal with? Murray said in his talk on the 16th "autobiographical writing is not confession." Come on, Deni, try it. I know that man would push me to the edge. You see, I am struggling once again with issues in my personal life--incompatible emotions....someone I felt intensely for....growing up and making my own decisions. Now. Aren't these the same issues our students are also dealing with?....I continue to have the vision of a workshop-classroom where the environment will be conducive to this type of introspection. I see writing groups in a circle, I see a class not afraid to take risks. What happens when this type of thing happens to a student--a tenth grade "skills" student instead of Don Murray?

On his pages and in his public talk, Murray has mentored Therese at a distance, shared his own fears of students, encouraged her to use writing as therapy, and confused her with his ideas about taking risks, writing badly, and "pushing her

edges." But he is not her only extra source of introspection, confusion and delight in this community. Two days after Murray's talk, she chooses to go to Tom Romano's mini-conference session, and learns to "Break the Rules in Style."

Breaking the Rules in Style: Into Wishin' About Intuition

Tom Romano draws the material for his session from Winston Weathers' book *An Alternate Style* (1980), and his own experience working with it in his high school classroom. Weathers' "Grammar B" demonstrates a non-traditional way of arranging words, and with it, "boundary-breaking written expression, and above all, glorious human diversity." (Romano in Newkirk, 1990) Tom says he tries to move students "out of the SAT English Usage Hoop" and into "syntactical promiscuity, linguistic anarchy." He notes that Emily Dickinson, John Dos Passos, Walt Whitman, e.e. cummings, and Virginia Woolf have all used "Grammar B" effectively, and so have his students. With examples, he demonstrates Weathers' techniques: the list, the sentence fragment, the labyrinthine sentence, orthographic variation, double-voice, and repetend, repetition, and the crot. (Weathers, 1980) We try a few and share them.

Romano hands out a packet of examples of his students' writing, and tells stories about each piece. One, written by an intrusive school superintendent's daughter, used particularly unconventional grammar. Tom published it in an article, sent them a copy and never heard from them. Therese reads it and rocks back and forth in her seat. Her mouth is wide open and her eyes smile. Tom shows more examples, gives a few directions, and commands "Give it a shot, let go, be licentious on the page!" "There is no pure language, there is no pure grammar. These are options for composition." We all try more, enjoy each others' products, and that evening, I find a note under my door:

Dear Bonnie,

I had a blast writing this in Romano's session today. I had to share it!

Sincerely, Therese

Attached to the note is a page of explanation to her writing class: "Grammar B presents an alternate style of grammar--a style that plays around with structure and syntax, and breaks the standard rules of style on purpose. The writer delivers a message through the unconventional use of grammar. Don't worry--Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman did it also...." She describes Tom's examples from his American Lit class, her failure with her own American Lit class, the history of her five weeks at UCLA and her enthusiasm and failure on her return to school. She details the six techniques she uses in the piece, and ends by saying "I normally don't use swearing in my writing, but I'm normally not realistic about things either. These were my seniors. This is how they talked."

Crash Course in Reality

UCLA

UC. I don't see.

Oh God. Fourth period. They're coming in the door.

Why did I eat yogurt for lunch? Why did I eat anything?

Ok, OK. Calm down. Clam up. The hand-outs are in order.

-The note to the students

-The sillybus

The Writing Goops

Oh God. You got Deni? HaHaHa.

Talk to last year's fourth period. She'll work your ass off

--no kidding. She has a thousand hand-outs.

Hand out the note first. Don't rush--don't talk too fast.

Remember last year's fourth period. Write--Right.
 UCLA...Integration...Intuition...Into wishin'

Here she goes. The first hand-out of the year.

Handout. Hand up. Question.

"Miss Deni, I have a question about the sillybus."

Hand up. A question--Oh God help me--a question.

"Will you give us the writing topics?"

Complain. Explain. It's plain. They don't understand.

"No. You see, it's like baseball." (But we play football).

"I'll pitch out the stuff. You catch what you want."

I pitch. You catch. We match. (I thought).

What the hell is she talking about?

"I don't understand what you're talking about."

I catch? You pitch? You bitch. (He thought).

The Writing Goops. Explain the Writing Goops.

Writing? I thought this was literature.

Integration. Into wishin'

I wish I was out of here.

It's all so simple.

UC. I don't see.

UCLA

July 18, 1990

Therese describes her delight in expressing a frustrating situation by breaking linguistic structures. "You have no idea how many times I cried over that situation. And then as I wrote that poem--It will never be the same again. I'm telling you, now I look back, I think of that first day. But see, the things I talked about in that poem happened over and over again. I was too thick-headed to figure out what to do

about it. So what did I do wrong last year? Did I have definite strategies in mind? Some, from the teacher presentations at UCLA. But was it student-centered? I don't think so, or I would not have had such a severe "Crash Course in Reality"

Romano's session gave Therese permission to "break the rules in style," and it helped her give herself permission to break her own rules about looking at her teaching. But this poem did not just flow out of her, even if she thought it had. The kernels of thought had been there since the week before. She was ready to write it. In the two previous days, she had written and spoken more reflectively about her school tension, and critically examined some of the words she plays with in the poem. In her journal, the night before she wrote the poem, Therese had written:

7/17: Terry just told me that I was a wonderful student--a perfect example of my lack of intuition. It is me, you see, not my students. I need to get in touch with myself, because I know my lack of intuition--spontaneity--etc is all related to my fear.

In Terry's class that day before, they had been having conferences and talking about conferences. Therese looked in her teaching journal from last February, and saw herself a new way: "They would come, I'd do all the talking, they'd come to my desk and sit at a little seat...Terry, how did you get to where you got?" Terry explained that she used to come to the students' desks and "skootch" down. Now she has two old wing chairs and a special table: "so it doesn't look like a teacher." She assured Therese that it took ten years for her to make this shift. Terry's last comment struck Therese deeply: "The purpose of the conference is to *get rid of the kid*--to give him a reason to go back and write."

Therese was upset when class ended. She wanted to continue, had more questions to ask. Alison scribbled a note to her, Therese nodded her head, and later I asked permission to take it out of the wastebasket. "It's not physical, I think. It's an

attitude. You sort of have to give yourself permission to screw up a little--because no matter what, they're writing. It's practice--Let's talk.?" Therese wrote back: "Oh, I'd love to. But listen, I talked last summer, too, but then the kids came in the classroom, and I SCREWED UP. It was dictatorship. My way of control. But yes--let's talk." They sat in the room through lunchtime. The subject of their talk? Intuition, and conferences.

Alison: What do you mean you screwed up when you tried conferences last year?

Therese: I never had intuition, which was my question for Terry if we had time. I was going to ask her what to do if you don't have intuition.

Alison: But I bet you do have intuition. You just haven't practiced it a lot. You haven't done it a lot. You haven't let yourself get in there and listen and ask questions. I mean, human beings have intuition, you've been teaching how many years?

Therese: I'm going into my fourth.

Alison: Okay. That's three rich years of experience. You've been a writer here.... I think it's really scary but it's a matter of letting yourself try things and not worrying about "Uh, I'll screw up" or "Uh, this isn't going to work this period and I don't have time." Do you have comp grammar classes or mostly lit classes? (they talk about classes, covering required topics and literature)

Alison: So what happens in a conference if you say you don't have intuition?

Therese: It was pitiful. It wasn't pitiful in terms of giving them directed attention, but there were no questions, because I had already told them what to write.

Alison: So what if you just stop talking? Try and give yourself one task for a conference. Just say "What's it about?" Let them talk...(Therese says she thinks they won't answer, that her classroom will get "chaotic," that this is luxurious thinking, and Alison can do that in a private school...)

Alison: If you start right off with a dialogue instead of a lecture, the atmosphere will shift...

Therese: I'm too structured. I don't blame them. There is not flexibility, I struggle with that...

Alison: What are you afraid of, in the structure?

Therese: Chaos.

Alison: Assignment chaos?

Therese: I'm afraid, I don't trust them when they're in their conference groups to be talking about what they're supposed to be talking about. That makes me walk around the room like a policeman, which they hate. I don't trust them to write out of class, because I think somebody else is going to be doing the writing. I'm not, in the beginning of the year, intuitive enough to know who's going to be the good student and who's going to be the one to take advantage of me.

Alison: I think it's good that you don't know that. Why don't you trust them? What's going to happen if somebody else writes it for a kid? And you start asking questions about where did this come from, why did you write about it, he's not going to be able to answer it, so then you say, go back and try this, try this, he's not going to be able to do that if somebody else did it.

Therese: How do you reach every one of them in a conference?

Alison: I don't know if you even try. If you start out thinking "I'm going to reach every one of these kids and have a miraculous change," you'll be so discouraged before you start, you'll never get there. (They talk about the projects Therese's students have done.) See, you're doing a lot of good stuff, you're doing a lot of good stuff, but...

Therese: Yeah, but it lacks the essential element, the stuff is in there but...the atmosphere is not relaxed.

Alison: But it might come down to the whole issue of trust. Think about why you don't trust them, what will happen if you let some of that stuff go, and just sort of mush that around in your head for a while.

Therese "mushes it around in her head" for a day, and with the help of Terry's class and Alison's supportive collegueship, in Tom Romano's mini-conference session, ends up with the poem that explores her self-image as a teacher and her self-perceived failures with her classes. While she explores these themes, she is playing

around with language and "breaking the rules in style" for effect. A week later, thinking about how she's produced this herself, she reflects on how learning comes from language play. "So you teach them backward? Is that what Romano does? You teach them so they recognize a fragment by using a fragment so that they'll know what a sentence is. If they're inducted enough in using fragments, in playing around with language, then they're going to want to know how to do that again."

She remembers the fun she had constructing the poem, breaking the rules, and she reflects on her own classroom. "That kind of relaxed rapport happens for me the last six weeks of school. And it's BECAUSE it's the last six weeks of school that it happens. And like, you know, well I can afford this now. The big stuff's over. I can talk to them. I can hear what they have to say. It's a shame. A real shame because they're human beings and they have so much to share. You know, this poem is humorous but there's a seriousness behind it." She is re-considering what the "big stuff" is, and what her students have to offer her. Also behind it, there are three days of tough, critical and humorous self-examination inside a community of people doing the same.

Warming Up to a Cold Reading

Once Therese has written her poem with Tom Romano, she allows poetry to become a form for synthesizing her questions, her readings, her confusions, her company, and her experiences. During this second week, she is still struggling with an issue that has nagged her since the first day of the program, one she labels the "cold reading." In Terry's class they have been trying "cold readings," looking at poetry and passages of fiction that they've never read before. On Wednesday the eleventh, the third day of the workshop, they had read the poem "Stargazer's Death" by Vasko Popa.

Three people responded in the large group, and then they each shared responses in small groups. A roomful of high school teachers, a roomful of interpretations. "In a hundred years, I wouldn't have come up with all these literary connections. I see what we do to our kids." Alison says. "Yep, we intimidate the hell out of them," echoes Terry. Dorothy is entranced with the language, examines a few key words, "crystals," "done," and then makes a connection to Galileo. Lee signs to Dorothy: "You had the most information from such a little poem. It's so analytical" Dorothy answers, slowly, so Lee can read her lips, "A lot of years of language training!"

Therese says "I did it wrong!" She is upset. Terry suggests, then, that they each write a quick "memo to the poet." The memos show multiple interpretation, many voices, and taken together, they provide a rich reading of the poem. "We need to give *approaches* to reading and writing." Again, Therese sighs, "I did it wrong!" The week continues. Two days later, on the thirteenth, in class she says "I've never taught poetry because I'm so afraid I don't understand it." In her journal, she writes:

Now, here's a neat but scary thing to me...Terry asks the class for poems they really didn't understand, and then they go over them together in a group. But she's never read them before. They all figure it out--That's a "cold reading." WOW. It blows my mind. I need to ask my dad if he's ever done a "cold math problem" in front of his engineering students."

Yesterday on the phone her father had said "I still believe in the traditional way. A kid has to know the facts before he thinks on his own." She begins to think about the implications of the "cold reading," and tells me: "I can't come to grips with the fact that the teacher hasn't read all the books." In her journal she writes: "What strategy do I use to GET THEM TO ASK THE QUESTIONS? YEP. THAT'S IT. If you do this kind of stuff with poetry, you can do this kind of stuff with short stories, novels, plays, etc...Ah, but the teaching world looks pretty from here, my friend...It looks so

pretty I can hardly wait to begin...but for the voice that whispers 'Be Careful. Be Realistic. Remember last year. Learn from your mistakes.'"

The next day is Friday, and Terry has invited her friend Mary, a teacher and poet, to come to her class. Therese, again, is intrigued with Mary's approach to teaching poetry:

Therese: How do you know they're reading in the class?

Mary: They're writing about it in class, too, and writing their own poems.

Therese: What happens if you don't understand a poem at all?

Therese freezes when she asks this question; the idea of "not understanding" a poem in front of students is terrifying her. Her hand is clenched, holding up her forehead, her other hand is dangling between her legs. Her legs are crossed at the ankles, feet tensed in her sneakers, pointed up straight. Mary shows some poetry exercises with students' detailed observation journals, offers some examples of exercises and poems from students, professional poets and a bibliography. "I try to keep the exercises very concrete." Her positions are strong: "The single event resonates outward," she says, "after kids bring up the details of experience-- memories, visions, smells.....Classroom sets of books are silly," she observes, "they need to read lots of poems.....Kids should have a varied diet of exercises and poems; after cooking something, if it tastes good, you eat it.....Everything I'm saying has worked for somebody, not for everybody.....In a read-aloud of finished poems, there ought to be no time for comments. Just listen, no judgements." Therese moves her head back and forth slowly. She is thinking, reviewing. She blurts questions: "What will you do if a kid needs a grade?" "What if the kid next to him doesn't do it the same way?" After class, Terry and her poet friend Mary invite Therese to join them for lunch. Therese is astonished, and that night writes in her journal:

Friday, July 20: Terry, I almost didn't take you up on that lunch offer, but like a starving pauper, I still didn't have enough. I thought, "In a week you will be away from all of this--standing on your own again." So I joined you and Mary at the Tin Palace....tonight, while I wash clothes, I am going to write about this strange and beautiful concept...Time....Mary said "You know, Terry and I didn't just decide to do the workshop approach and implement it in one day. We've been working on this for ten years." Perhaps I am expecting too much too soon. I've made that mistake in my personal life, so I could have made it in my professional life. "You set the environment for the student the first day?" I asked Mary. "Yep--I set the rules--and they are few--and I keep reinforcing them...I walk around, I get to know the student...If they like sports, I find some sports poetry"...Now, in class, she spends two weeks--one to read, and one to write. The kids choose their own poems from various books, record the poems and respond to them...they move on to the writing section and, of course, they write poems. Those that are good, she attempts to get published, those that are mediocre, she rewards for effort...Mary also has them keep *vocabulary collections*. Look, I'm trying not to get excited, but internally I'm screaming with enthusiasm."

In this journal entry, Therese reviews her discussion with Terry and Mary, explores the new concepts she's learned, and tries to situate herself in her own classroom. By now, at the mini-conference sessions, she has written a poem in Tom Romano's "Breaking the Rules" workshop, listened to Tom Newkirk and Pat McLure talk about "cold readings" with first graders ("I still hear Pat saying "I believe in having kids make their own choices and then holding them accountable for those choices." So you go to the library and grab all the literature you can find concerning the genre you're working with, and then you spread them in the classroom table, do a booktalk, and say, "OK, Kiddies, CHOOSE!").

Looking for Trouble: The View is Much Too Lovely

In the meantime, Mary has directed Therese toward Tom Newkirk's article, "Looking for Trouble, A Way to Unmask Our Readings," (Newkirk, Ed. 1990) a

detailed exploration of ways to unlock traditional, "inspired," thesis-driven, critical analysis reading. Newkirk shows ways to allow students to explore meanings in text, to "open" a text to student response, as he puts it. With scholarly support and examples from students, he asserts that a single text ought not have one interpretation, that when we assume one way of reading a text, we may lose what we and our students can learn from it. The article calls for "teachers and students...to drop the masks that can inhibit learning. We can all act as the fallible, sometimes confused, sometimes puzzled readers that we are. We can reveal ourselves as learners, not always the most graceful of positions." (220) Therese is intrigued with the whole article, especially with Polanyi's idea of "granting allegiance," that a learner can "believe before he can know," and Friday night she reads the article several times.

On Saturday morning, she goes on a trip. Wednesday's newsletter had announced that Tom Newkirk was planning to hike up Mt. Chocorua, about an hour's drive north of Durham, and anyone who wanted to come was welcome. Therese and her writing-group friend Barbara, join several others, Tom, and his six-year old son Andy for the trip. The next morning is Sunday, and she goes to Mass at the Catholic church. Afterward, she stops at the Bagelry for her solitary morning coffee and writing ritual, and crafts a poem:

Looking From Chocorua

Looking for Trouble...climbing Mt. Chocorua

Hey Newkirk, where do I go now?

The trail, you see, has forked

And little Andy's legs are tired.

Looking for Trouble...OK OK

I'll follow the yellow and find the top.

But what happens if I fall?
Will my students be there to catch me?

Looking for Trouble...these damn rocks.
I just scraped my knee; My foot slipped.
Oh, where's the top? What did you say?
Drop our masks? But what if I fall?

Looking for trouble...my heart is pounding.
This isn't easy. I never climbed this mountain.
Aerobics aside, I have no training.
I'm learning, too, just like my students.

Looking for Trouble...my eyes are lowered.
I'd rather not look up. The view is too tempting.
The scene is lovely, but I can't afford to stop.
You can, for you climbed the mountain before.

Looking for Trouble...I've got to make it.
Hey Newkirk, I'm almost there.
The turtle always wins; I chose the right trail.
Little Andy's in the lead again.

Looking from Chocorua...First Andy, then me.
Hey Newkirk--we finally made it.
The rock is hard; I lay down, but cannot rest.
The view is much too lovely from here.

July 22, 1990

She analyzes her experience, senses the series of encounters that enabled her to write this poem when she writes in her journal: "Remember when we were all climbing to the top of Mt. Chocorua yesterday and I wondered outloud if I would make it? I told Ruth "Yeah, you do things and *know* you can. I do things to *prove* that I

can....This approach will be like wondering if I can get to the top of Mt. Chocorua. Oh, I have a long way to climb, and my heart is beating so hard it might crack...But I want to climb this mountain, and I want to understand what I am trying to accomplish every step of the way....Today I ache all over, but I know I made it to the top. And you know what? The view from the peak was more than worth it." I asked "Are you all right, Andy?" Tom *confirmed* "You're doing fine, Andy." Do we ask--intending to show concern but revealing insecurity, like I did? Or do we confirm, like Tom did--do we say "You're a hell of a human being, you don't need my concern. Could it be that this response was released because of a developing "personal allegiance." (Newkirk, 1990) 'A passionate pouring of oneself into untried forms of existence....' Newkirk, you have a good point here...." She is reconsidering her definitions of affirmation and trust.

In her journal on Tuesday night, two days after the poem, she reflects on three articles she's read in *To Compose*. She quotes Sondra Perl's description of Gendlin's "felt sense"--"when writers pause and seem to listen or otherwise reach to what is inside of them." (in Newkirk, 1990), "I love this! First Newkirk proposes cold readings. Now Murray suggests daydreaming and wasting time....I really got worried when I began deleting entire pages. But when the subject emerged, I couldn't stop laughing. I really had fun with the poem. A connection between Newkirk's "granting allegiance" to the writer-reader-learner and Perl's "felt sense." Once a learner believes in his own ability, he is much more in line with what's going on inside of him. He believes he has something to say. Once he finds himself in an environment that validates rather than condemns, he is much more comfortable looking inside. Interesting....You know--the picture is all becoming very clear now. Trouble is, I have to implement it beginning one month from today....Carol, Terry,

Bonnie, Tom R, Tom N, how did they do it with me?...Hey, Deni,...that paper needs to be autobiographical. It needs to describe what's happening to you--what you're realizing about the connection between self-worth and writing. It's becoming very clear what these people are saying and doing."

When we talked on her bed with my tape recorder that Sunday when she wrote the poem, I could see that Therese herself knew she had been in what she described as "an environment that validates rather than condemns:" "I suddenly found this link between the two [climbing the mountain and reading Newkirk's article]. It's exactly like it. I kept saying "I don't know if I'm going to do this. I don't know if I can make it to the top. I really don't. Because Tom kept saying, 'There's the top. There's the peak. There's where we're going.' And it looked so far away, and he said 'It's only three miles.' And I kept thinking 'I don't know if I can do this. I really don't know. I don't think I can get up there.' And then when I got up there--Well, of course, I even wrote in the poem, 'Aerobics aside, I've no training.' Meaning that all of what I learned previously aside, I have no training in what that article was talking about. I have never gone in there and done cold reading. And then I finally made it. And I was tired. The first thing I did was throw myself down--nobody was there--I lay down and I looked up and said 'I don't believe I'm here. And then I wrote in the poem, 'because it's hard. The rock's hard.'

"And see, I couldn't rest. And that's how it's going to be. Even if I get this down in my classroom. Even now I can't rest. I can't. These ideas are swinging around in my mind. And I can't stop writing and I can't stop reading. I keep reading and writing and reading and writing. I have to start talking instead. (she begins to laugh) And I know when I get home, I can't share this with my dad. He's going to freak out. I know he is. Even on the phone. And that's going to influence me. That's going to influence me. It's going to draw me away. He says 'I don't care what's going

on, I still think that you have to tell a student what to do before he can make choices on his own." Therese tells me that only in the past few months has she stopped talking to her father "about all this."

"All this" has a new meaning for her now, a "felt sense." She is beginning to look inside herself for authority and the tools for making meaning, not toward her father or her teachers or her books. She is making connections between her own learning and the learning she needs to enable in students. She is seeing, through her experience here, that teaching and learning are both complex and interrelated. She is sensing that it is by reaching inside and looking at her own responses to this environment that she can understand other people--and draw the boundaries for her authority and theirs, for herself and her students.

In the culture of the summer writing program, she sees herself as well as her mentors in multiple roles. They may be the tradition-bearers of this culture, her distant teachers as the authors of her books, but by humanizing their god-like stature, she learns more about the discipline in literacy. "I mean, we go down to the Bagelry and there's Don Murray just sitting there reading the paper. And there's Tom Romano who stops to say 'How are you?' And Terry and her poet friend invite you to join them for lunch. And Tom Newkirk climbs a mountain with you. And I think, these people are people! They are really people! You know, you read them and you think, 'They're people just like you.' This is not something where you have the gods and the peons. It's something where you have a community of people who are working toward something and hopefully will get there."

"That's why I made the correlation with the mountain....I wrote it after church...Everything happens after church...just out of nothing. You know? Maybe I'm making too many connections. I don't know. But it was exhausting; it was just a

little mountain. I was, like, 'Okay, Okay,' I figured 'This is exactly what's going on in your life right now. You've got to start with a little mountain. And then you can climb the big one'....I don't think I realized that. Not for a long time. Last summer I got into that program, so I thought I was a good writer. But in reality, I didn't know the first thing about teaching that really counted, and that was to work from the inside out. Get them to writing. Trust them."

Living with Ambiguity

Although Therese thinks she made the poem "just out of nothing," it is clear that her three weeks of hard work and immersion in this culture have enabled her to begin to look inside for her learning. She is beginning to trust herself. Dewey (1938, 1963) describes education as the progressive organization of knowledge, that community and conversation blend with the internal motivation of the individual to create a culture for learning. It is continuity and interaction intercepting and uniting, "the longitudinal and lateral aspects of experience." (44)

Is it true that what happens in your personal life and what happens in the classroom...this is getting too big for me. Right now I've got to think about it. It goes deeper than education...the community, the trust, the environment--this spill all over into personal life and to professional life, and I keep thinking that family life and...unfortunately, it's going to be over real soon. And I won't have this anymore.

Therese uses her double-entry journal as a tool to survey her progression, and then to interpret it. She blends questions in class, conversations with mentors and colleagues, interview time with me, and her experiences in New England to organize for herself a three-week moment in her development as a teacher. She knows it's temporary, that these three weeks were different from the ones she had last summer,

but she's also beginning to notice that she might be able to re-create pieces of this for someone else. In her journal during the final week, she writes: "After talking to Bonnie Sunstein and Tom Newkirk and experiencing these three weeks, I begin to understand the difference. In a few days, I will walk out of here knowing exactly what it means to be a writer in a writing community. When I walked out of UCLA, I had a binder full of ideas but no clue as to the practicality of those ideas. My juniors and seniors were quick to show me." Vygotsky (1978) describes education as the blending of mind and society, internal development in touch with external action. It is this kind of blending that Therese works hard to do, whether she knows it or not.

The last time I use my tape recorder is to talk with Therese. I've promised to drive her to the airport bus, and she comes to my room. She has been packed since the night before. I'm packing my clothes, cleaning up my room, and dumping my trash as we talk. She tells me two stories about students' personal victories through writing:

One boy, through his "I-Search" paper, discovered who his real father was--he had two fathers, and he loved both, but he didn't know which one was his...well, he came to a real good conclusion...and then he ended up saying I'm really glad I did this because this has helped me figure out something I've wanted to figure out all my life. And then the other--a girl who never talked about friends, she'd been abused, a friend molested her as a child, and she finally talked about it, finally let it out.

These are the only school success stories I've heard her tell in three weeks, and it is an hour before she will catch the bus on the day she leaves. She continues. "SO-- that's what I want to get kids to do, through teaching writing and teaching literature, I want to get them to take a good look at themselves. I don't think it's egocentric. I don't think it's wrong to look within yourself. I think that's the essence of teaching, of education, and if you're at peace with yourself you can find peace with the world even if you haven't found it yet. I mean, if you're like me, and you're looking, and you're

trying to figure out the answer and all this stuff anyhow." Therese is still "trying to figure out the answer," for herself and for her students.

Therese's experience here is a solitary struggle inside a context rich with enabling people and new ideas, and she moves back and forth between the rituals she establishes and those established for her. The culture provides the opportunity for her to understand herself as a teacher, and the knowledge of herself made her understand her students. As she knows herself, she puts it into perspective.

Her story is one of productive tension that never gets resolved. But the most important thing that happens is that she learns that living and teaching with ambiguity is okay. There are no set ways to follow the rules or to break them. There is no "process approach." No one authority can determine the interpretation of a text, either in life or on the page. Each case presents a different set of criteria, each class presents a different set of students, each text presents a different set of words. There will be more failures and more successes. She will pull away from her parents and draw close to them, just as she will choose for her students and let them choose. The dialectic relationship she has achieved between herself and her community helps her to actualize herself as a teacher. Her trust was external before--in books, teachers, people. She negotiated authority from the outside to the inside. Now she begins with the inside. It is not a transformation; it is an actualization, an affirmation-by-context.

As I am zipping my suitcase, I happen to notice my watch. She is telling stories, thinking about what she's done and what she'll do. I have four minutes to get Therese to the bus stop in Durham. We gasp together, and we separate. I charge across the lawn and up the wooden stairs to get my car, Therese dashes to her dorm to get her suitcase. I careen my car around the corner, throw the suitcase into the back, and gun it toward Main Street. We reach the intersection just as the bus does. The bus driver doesn't

know we need him, sees our panic, and he nods and motions for me to go ahead. I hold the bus in my rear view mirror, in a temporary state for about a mile. We breathe relief, grasp hands for a minute as I stop the car. Therese grabs her suitcase from the back of my car, jumps on the bus and heads west.

INTERTEXT**ONE TEACHER'S JOURNAL: ADMINISTRIVIA**

It is Monday, July 9, at 8 p.m., the first night of the program. Alison sits down with a glass of wine at her kitchen table at home; she is a commuter. She is Director of Studies, a teacher-administrator at a private school, and she checks in every day on her way home. She is hoping to spend most of the three weeks away from her office, so she can drive to the university, keep her house in order, and concentrate on the reading and writing she'll do. She adjusts the piles of books and papers on her favorite writing spot at the table, next to the sliding glass doors. One of the cats peeks over the oval pine edge, and she shoos him away and begins to write in her journal:

My professional life is busy. It involves writing comments, writing letters, writing reports, writing to students on papers, writing memos, writing to faculty, writing to the board. I hope my writing is colorful, emotional--precise, succinct, effective, human, sympathetically understanding. I don't write with my students. I want to be told that's okay, but I suspect it isn't....I'm looking forward with some fear to doing more of what I secretly consider to be "creative" writing: stories, descriptions, poetry, personal narratives with a point. I don't know whether I have an eye or an ear for imagery, for detail. I know lots of descriptive words for students' end-terms, for describing kids to colleges. I'd love to know how the colleges view my summaries, my recommendations. The day to day life I lead is jumping around from moment to moment, task to task, assignment to assignment.

Alison does her functional school writing jobs mechanically and with confidence. She writes memos to everyone, end-term reports, college application letters; she "jumps around" as a teaching administrator. Although she knows they demand creative competence, she doesn't see them as "creative" tasks. Her journal

entry illustrates what Michael Apple calls "intensification" in education. Like overworked laborers, when teachers follow all the demands of the curriculum and the community, the quality of their work dwindles into "skill diversification," and they become "deskilled." Apple believes deskilling alienates them from a perception of themselves as professionals. (1986)

Although Alison works in a private school, has fewer students, and uses words like "end-terms" instead of "report cards" and "comments" instead of "grades," her time as a teacher-administrator leaves her skills diversified, and there is little room for her own reading and writing, the acts she secretly sees as creative. She feels that she works "moment to moment, task to task," maintaining a silent one-way partnership in her students' college searches, yielding to genres of memos and letters, and although she writes frequently, she sees herself as "teaching writing without writing." She continues in her journal:

I hope the reflection time here will also manifest itself in my writing. Can I teach writing without writing? I'm here to see if what I did last year in teaching the writing process was really teaching the writing process. I don't enjoy writing. I don't have a passion for writing. I have a passion for teaching. When my writing flows quickly and easily, I can't even read it myself. Normally, when I've had to write a paper or an essay, I've had to "burfle." To complain to who's ever around, to drink a drink or eat food, to talk on the telephone....So in this writing process, sitting thinking about doing my homework, I am angry at writing, at all the gurus who say one must write in order to teach writing.

I've done something called 'teaching composition' successfully for fifteen years, and now you're telling me I need to do more. What's been successful? I have to ask myself. What makes a good writing course? Well, for whom? Me or the kids? My confusion may lie in my own perception, my definition of a writer...I recognize my own reluctance to begin. This dichotomy, this separation between self and self-object is easier for me because it's objective. So am I writing in a journal right now? Am I writing a "piece?" Am I

beginning something? What the hell am I doing?"

As Alison's journal points out, her school's inadvertant prescriptions and reductive expectations can make her define "teaching" as moving students successfully through a system. Inside this definition, she devalues herself as a reader and writer. The voice in her memos blends into the school's background noise; there is no time left to speak of quality in either the products or the processes of learning. (Apple, 43) To survive in her job, she must yield to the control of the system. Both teachers and students risk becoming mute on the page and in the classroom. Maxine Greene observes that the barriers schools erect are subtle:

...in schools, like other institutions, there are memos, not actual barriers to reflective practice. There are conference and commission reports, not barbed wire fences in the way. There are assured, helpful, bureaucratic faces, not glowering antagonists to growth and freedom and an enlarged sense of being in the world. The 'weight' is only dimly felt... (1988, 15)

Alison's journal suggests that it is easy for a teacher in mid-career to accept our culture's idea of the teacher as "knowledge dispenser," and feel inadequate being one. Alison loves her profession, but she often loses patience for her job. A few days into the first week, she writes the first poem she's written since college fifteen years ago, and gives voice to some of the conflicts she feels about her job:

administrivia

phone rings
head requests
student needs
teacher asks
parent wants

colleague suggests
secretary buzzes

I stop--paralyzed.

How to do it all?

Just do it.
Just say no.

white notes, a blur of snow
blue stickys, shingled up the wall
pink phone slips, an open screaming mouth

the dizzying untrivial demands
of meeting needs and treating egos

paced by others
embraced by me

I wouldn't have it any other way.

She must construct a stiff public persona, be an "expert" in the face of a relentlessly demanding public constituency. In her school world, she has little response to the writing she does, and no time for reflection. In her personal world, she has frustrations she'd like to handle in her writing, just as she encourages her students to do. She feels anxious now that she has three weeks ahead of her that will allow time for her own literacy in the company of colleagues. At her kitchen table, with some time and a sip of wine, her first night's journal explores those frustrations:

Whence the anger? I rail against I know not what or whom. Getting started...I have lots of ditties for my students to get started, but I've no idea where to start. Oh damn, It's because I want to know where I'm going before I start. Will I end up with a piece about my mother? my aunt? my grandmother? my sister? The women in my family? Talkative, strong women with a purpose, a closed ear...do we all have a closed ear? I want clearer assignments...my students and I are now in the same boat--but they have oars and I have none? No we all

have oars, but I'm used to functioning as their rudder? No, I'm jumping out of this metaphor. It's leaking. A conscious recognition of a nice turn of phrase...Does this mean I need to have a purpose before I set to write? Can my purpose simply be to "fill two pages?" I'm uncomfortable with that notion, because I question its usefulness. Yet I'd tell a student it's fine, and I'd go back to find in the writing something to start with. So I have two things: the knowledge that I have direction or think I do, and my leaky metaphor. And yes, I feel better.

It is no accident, Apple observes, that "deskilling" is gender-related because teachers are predominantly female and administrators predominantly male. No wonder Alison's metaphor is leaky; she is in the same boat as her students, and someone else is rocking it, a hierarchy with males above and mostly females below. In her first journal entry, she begins to explore her history as a teacher and as a woman. It is no accident that during the first week, Alison decides to write about the strong women in her family, and later, in the final week, she writes an essay using cheerleading as a metaphor for collaboration.

CHAPTER 4

DOROTHY: DISTANCE, RESISTANCE AND RESPONSE

The alternative to monologue is conversation or dialogue. Bakhtin called dialogism a "merry science," because it has to do, not with formal concepts existing outside of history, nor with prescriptive language imposing "truths," but with talking, interrupting, writing, rewriting, communicating as living and diverse beings in the midst of life.---Maxine Greene, (1988, 373)

On the evening before classes begin, I find a note from Dorothy taped to my dorm room door inviting me to her apartment. I'm relieved that she wants me to find her; I have felt uncomfortable since she decided to live away from the dorms with her friend, Colin, another high school English teacher. I've known her for a year, and I want to include her in my study. So I walk across campus. In front of the cluster of two-story red brick apartments, I can see eight door buzzers inside the foyer of Building H. There is no bell, no phone, and the outside door is locked. I stand on the wet grass, under the final purple wisps of sunset, tip my head, and yell Dorothy's name upward toward the second floor. I hear a printer, and I see a fan in the window; I wonder how many people I've disturbed. With my little tape recorder dangling from my wrist and my head tipped toward the twilight, I feel like a stumbling cartoon sleuth. And, although she has agreed to cooperate, the fan and the printer behind the window make Dorothy feel distant and inaccessible.

Eventually, Colin waves, runs down the stairs and invites me up. There are piles of books on the two coffee tables in the living room, a computer and printer on the desk, and a large tote bag with beach towels and bathing suits in the corner. I see that the bed is unmade and there are stacks of books next to it. "We can keep things messy here; it's not home," Dorothy laughs, and tells me they plan to spend time at the beach,

swimming in the university pool, and deep-sea fishing. The window fan makes a thin breeze in the hot night air.

While Colin uses the computer, Dorothy and I sit at the kitchen table with my tape recorder, pouring diet coke on mounds of ice in disposable cups, a ritual we will repeat nightly. In her bare feet, Dorothy pads from the sink to the refrigerator to refill the ice tray; her skin is evenly tanned and her legs are tight from exercise. She moves like a cat; fluid, quiet, sure of foot. Despite the humidity and the hour, the collar of her shirt stands straight up, and its tails are still tucked inside the waistband of her shorts. Her thick dark hair is caught in back with a tortoise shell barrette. She is "tucked in" in so many ways, and I can see it too in her personal agenda for three weeks.

I arrange my time with Dorothy differently than with the others. We decide to meet for a half hour, at 9:30 each weeknight in her apartment. I will go with her to both her classes, see her at special events, and collect her writing, but I will not interrupt her time alone with Colin. Dorothy's personal paradoxes are the subject of this chapter, as I see them inside her shifting pedagogy. In her grade level group, with other high school teachers, she expects to collect ideas for her classroom. But instead, it offers her a different way of thinking about learning. As a successful academic, Dorothy is traditional. As a feminist, she believes in alternate structures for learning. Her grade level class presents those alternate structures; it annoys her as a student, but it excites her as a teacher. In Dorothy's other class, the writing group, she comes wanting "an intelligent audience" for her writing. She is disappointed to find that she is with teachers from other grade levels. But she writes, revises, and enriches others' writing in a small response group with a second grade teacher and a junior high teacher. Their texts and lives intertwine over three weeks as they work and talk with one another. In that group she enters an interrelationship different from friendship,

more personal in some ways than family. It is a relationship she doesn't expect or even want to have. Dorothy's contribution to her group and theirs to her comes not just from what happens in class, but from their "intersubjective reality" of the collaborative relationship. They "cultivate literacy," as David Bleich suggests we do in social contexts, "to refine and enhance our mutual implication in one another's lives and to discover and exercise our mutual responsibilities." (1988, 67)

Dorothy wants to be here, but she controls her participation carefully. By living in the apartments with Colin, she has already made some personal choices that disengage her from the rest of the group. When I ask why she decided to come, what appealed to her about this program, she reminds me that when she was here last summer, she heard it and saw it:

I heard so many people raving about it, and watched them through the windows of the cafeteria last summer....sitting in circles with notepads on their knees, talking and enjoying themselves. I saw barbecues. I knew I could get six credits in three weeks, and I wanted to have some time to work on my own writing, because I'm having a hard time fitting *that* into my life. *Time*...I can't keep on going by sketching an idea down on an envelope and maybe finishing it three months later....My commitment to recycling at home is to use every bit of trash. But to do that I have to set up my cellar in a series of boxes. I have to be in a frame of mind that I'm going to do this. *Time boxes*, this is how I'm going to do it.

She admits to what she calls her "guilt-insecurity syndrome:" "I feel that I'm never doing a good enough job. Writing, anything to do with school, I can never be good enough. But then again, I can never be a good enough mother either." Dorothy's personal history suggests that the "need to be good enough," as a writer, a scholar, a teacher, a woman, and a mother is not new for her. It is a tangled mass of events, places, and relationships some of which will unravel in her writing and in her talk, as

conscious craft and unconscious surprise for her during her three weeks here.

She is a cheerful skeptic, full of paradoxes; an interesting mix of guarded enthusiasm, stiff confidence, intellectual energy, and self-doubt. She is an English teacher who majored in linguistic anthropology and speaks four languages. She is a beginner with experience, a writer who doesn't want to share her writing, a participant who has arranged for only partial participation. She talks directly and cheerfully, and is never afraid to tell me what's on her mind. Her eyes are soft and dark, but they strike through the thick lashes that guard them. Her tiny frame contrasts with her robust opinions and strong words.

A Two-Headed Woman and a Jangling Horse-Cart

Dorothy's grade-level class is a massive circle of twenty-two high school teachers in college lecture chairs, two interpreters for the deaf, Terry Moher the instructor, and me. Terry announces that the point of this course is to learn "how to give up control in the classroom so we can gain it." She talks about her own experience ten years ago as a participant in the first New Hampshire Writing Program, and as a high school English teacher for fifteen years: "We're a cynical lot, skeptical. We get comfort from our professional content. We don't know a lot about how people learn....I had never been exposed to elementary teachers as colleagues before I came here. As secondary teachers, we are isolated from them. Elementary teachers *know* how to get kids to learn." She assigns a teaching journal, and asks people to write only on one side. "I'm not sure what I'll do with the other side yet," Terry says.

Dorothy is disappointed in the class. That night, she complains: "it's a huge group. I certainly wouldn't want to teach it. I feel pretty uncomfortable...If I come away from this with some tips and some new ways of trying things, I'm going to be satisfied, because that's what I expect." But she is dissatisfied today. "I didn't learn

anything. She was unprepared. She didn't address anything directly. It was all so vague."

In that first class, I watched Dorothy from across the room. She laughed and shook her head at times when others weren't doing either. I wondered about her notetaking patterns. *Why* was she writing *when* she was? *What* was she writing? She was writing in her "compost journal," a half-sized looseleaf notebook, a conglomerate of class notes, personal reflections, and ideas for teaching that she has been keeping for a year. "What I'm writing about isn't so much what we're talking about as what I see Terry doing. I want it to be a model for me...I wrote things in my notes that occurred to me when somebody else was talking...nothing to do with what they were talking about." On the top margin, she's doodled a Janus-like female double-head, with curly hair and earrings. One head faces forward, mouth open, laughing, and one faces toward the other page of the notebook, pensive. Another paradox. On a page near the two headed woman, she has written:

Do I live two jobs? The tense, tired commute to work always ends...the bells ring and I face over and over that circle of young people. This year's freshmen--funny, energetic, very willing to work on the tasks I get rolling...I can't define teaching...I am never done running behind some jangling horsecart of ideas...All it takes is a casual word, and I realize "I, my God, have forgotten to "do" conferences in two weeks"....

The irony in her words is as two-headed as her doodle. The "circle of young people," a shape she sees them in, is one she must "get rolling" with tasks. She thinks they are supposed to be in a "circle," she is supposed to be "doing" conferences, and feels guilt, and somehow this is all connected to teaching which she "can't define." She feels responsible for controlling her students' shape, their momentum, their energy, their humor, and their learning, "getting them rolling" with "tasks,"

"conferences" and "teaching." And she is suspicious of and exhausted by both her mythical horsecart and her real commute. I want to know what she will do with these paradoxes. The first night in her journal she writes:

The lessons I spend the most time planning never work out right....I know I'm a good teacher. My students learn, read, write, think, and argue with me until we all get mad. But they come back, say "Hi," share a book, lend me music, laugh over teachers, whine over assignments. I don't know why I'm a teacher, except that I love the kids and I love finding words and ideas with them. Why am I here?

Dorothy has entered this class looking for tips. But she's already found that Terry's goal is not to give tips. It is to conceive a classroom as a place in which the teacher must "give up control in order to get control." Dorothy is writing about a school culture in which she has control: lessons that go wrong, freshmen who are willing to do tasks she sets, a definition of success that involves her getting students to "read, write, think, and argue until everyone gets mad." She expresses disappointment in Terry's class that she labels "unprepared," which is asking her to reconceive her role as a teacher, telling her she's going to give up control. But she "loves finding words and ideas with them," and that is a clue. Her passion for language, reading, and learning new information will be the personal intellectual themes with which she will explore her work here.

Tuesday night after the open forum, Dorothy tells me she's disgusted with the jargon already; it is my introduction to her sensitivity to language. "I'm sick of the word '*abandoning*.'" There must be another way of saying that. I can think of several. *Stop writing*, for one." She laughs. "And sharing, '*group sharing*.'" And "*That really works for me*." She laughs. Her reference to forgetting to '*do*

conferences' mocks the jargon people associate with this program and the "process approach."

In her sarcasm, Dorothy recognizes that this program, like all cultures, establishes a group identity through a lexicon of special terms and phrases. She recognizes them as more than that; they are emblems teachers use for "the process" approach, and she's not sure she wants to wear them. "I think my bullshit meter is pretty accurate....I noticed that one of the people in the secondary group picked up a phrase of the teacher's and made it her own. I thought it was amazing how fast that happened...I'm sure it's totally subconscious." But she learned a lot from the forum, she tells me, and Colin did too. "These are questions that need to be asked and answered over and over again."

She is intrigued with ideas that Terry offers in class from Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). They are paradigms of teaching and learning Dorothy hasn't thought about at all, issues of cultural control she has never applied to the classroom. "My background leans toward social-cultural things," she tells me on Wednesday night, "I'd like to read Paulo Freire. I liked the sentence Terry read that educational reform will never happen until the basic student-teacher relationship is transposed. *Altered*. I really liked that idea...." Terry's class urges Dorothy to reflect on herself, not only as a teacher of a body of knowledge called English, but as a teacher of adolescents. Days later, in her journal she writes:

....most significant is my own lack of motivation....It is very hard to *do writing process*....Sometimes it's just easier to teach a whole-class lesson, assign a reading. I don't want to always be interactive, acting at my best. I'm not in love with the adolescent mind, nor their hormones. Sometimes I don't want to be nice to them....I guess there are two reasons I'm experiencing failure: A. I'm not doing it right, consistently, B. I'm trying to do too much. I should go for success in one or two techniques, rather than limited success in many.

She is as critical of herself as she is of others, and in her criticisms lie her paradoxes. Dorothy recognizes she needs "close personal contact," and resists it. She feels that "it's hard to *do* writing process," assuming that it is *something to be done*. Intellectually, she endorses the summer program's underlying precepts: students and teachers who write and read together can be co-learners; their relationship can be "altered, transposed," as she learns from Freire. She believes in the collaborative nature of writing, but isn't sure how it works. She wants to "succeed with her students," but knows what it is to be unprepared; she feels exhausted and anti-social. She knows that learning requires guiding students to pace their own work, but she likes the clean, academic structures of teaching formal lesson plans and wants classroom "tips." She has had no formal training as a teacher, and has relied on colleagues, her own literacy, and intuition. When she says she's not "good enough," she is competing against a model of "good enough" in others that she hasn't really defined.

Dorothy thrived in the traditional academic model. It is reminiscent of her own past success as a student. She admits with a sly smile that she never officially graduated from public high school, but her scores were good enough for college admission. Her parents were traditionally educated and upper middle class; her father is a physics professor at a prestigious Ivy League university, and her mother was a chemistry major. They met in college, divorced when she was a pre-adolescent, and she lived with her father in a Boston suburb. Her high school junior year was with her mother in Puerto Rico, attending a bilingual private school in which textbooks were in English and classes were conducted in Spanish. During her father's sabbatical in Cambridge, England, she spent her senior year at an elegant school with

British academic standards, and she enjoyed the competition. She followed her passion for language to two colleges. This summer, she is risking herself in models of both learning and teaching that are less familiar.

She complains that Terry's high school class is too big to form relationships. She rejects its jargon and its ritualistic features; her internal "bullshit meter" beeps at everything that bothers her. She wanted tips for her teaching, and she is disappointed that she isn't getting them. She is sensitive to the language of this culture, uncomfortable with the separation between grade level groups and writing groups. She has set a major goal for this class, and it is to work on using journals in the classroom, a result of a promise she made to herself a year ago in another summer academic culture.

Women's Voices in an Academic Community

Last summer, Dorothy attended a month-long institute in women's studies, six credits underwritten by a large national endowment, a stipend, and free tuition. It was her first full-time course since college, her first time away from her two small children. She lived in the dorms with other women, studying women writers of the nineteenth century. Although the institute dealt with a new theme in scholarship, its method was traditionally academic. She read voluminously, kept journals, and wrote a scholarly paper at the conclusion of the workshop:

I had never considered women's studies at all...We had a huge amount of reading, six hours a day, and then lectures and group readings. I was really entrenched in the community...By the end of the week, we were having beer fests at night and going to the beach to read....A lot of times, ideas would just spring into our conversation.....I realized how much I wanted to be part of an academic community. And how much I really love being in school, taking classes.

Dorothy's knowledge of women writers improved "a hundred percent....I knew almost nothing, except for the traditional ones in the anthologies." Her teaching this year reflected the influence of the institute, she says. She championed women's writing in textbooks and women's rights in school. "Now, every time we read something by a dead white male I throw in a female." On her department's committee to choose new textbook adoptions, she counted women writers. She provided opportunities for students to write and read about women writers, keep journals, and to examine women as they are treated in literature.

She likes to highlight female characters in the study of traditional literature; on Halloween, she dressed as Hester Prynne, carrying her daughter's baby doll in a baptismal gown. She is passionate about the value of journals, a form associated with women: her own, her students', and those written by others. Beside providing reading opportunities and requiring journals, Dorothy listens carefully in class to amplify the voices of her female students, sometimes at the expense of the males:

The one thing I know I did differently, in addition to teaching women writers, was I made sure I addressed myself...*pointedly*, to the girls in the class...I had really been listening to the boys because their voices are deeper and louder. If a boy started to interrupt a girl, I would cut him off *for her*...it's taken some real effort on my part to get them used to not doing that....They love to tease me about being 'Ms. Spofford, Ms. Woman's Lib.'

One male student, she laughs, referred to "Ms. Havisham" when he wrote about the characters in *Great Expectations*. Her personal mentors were all language teachers, but the one she remembers most fondly was a woman:

I had a dynamic teacher when I was living in England. I can see her. She was tall, in her late thirties, with short blonde hair, very modern and hip. She could read Chaucer with a real authentic accent....she made Middle English come

alive for me. In fact, I loved it so much and studied it so hard and took private lessons from her, that I got the highest grade on the Chaucer exam. Out of all those kids, those English kids, I got the highest grade. I was so proud of that. I really loved Chaucer because of her...her voice reading it, and the sound of the language.

Her mentor is a woman, and her understanding of a classroom model of learning is traditional and academic, like the Chaucer exam she took. Dorothy's comfort in the culture of schooling is based on learning truths through skepticism and argument. As she told me, "my students learn, read, write, think, and argue with me until we all get mad." Composition theorist Peter Elbow labels this paradigm of learning "the monopoly of the doubting game," the academy's tradition of "seeking truth by seeking error." (1973, 148) Elbow feels that it needs to be balanced by another paradigm. He argues against it in its own tradition--by expressing doubt:

Indeed I attempt to make my argument persuasive to someone who accepts only the doubting game. My goal is only to make the doubting game move over and grant legitimacy to the believing game....For somehow the doubting game has gained a monopoly in this culture. (1973, 150)

Dorothy will spend much time these three weeks trying to make "the doubting game move over" for her. She is twenty-nine, probably younger than her "modern, hip" British mentor, but her personal academic history has deep roots in mainstream academic traditions of "the doubting game" and its corollary sense of competition. "I was overseas in high school, so I never read the traditional American Lit canon: *The Scarlet Letter*, *Moby Dick*; I wasn't in America then." She feels unprepared: "I don't have that old American school background. I'm always winging it...I'm aware of gaps." Now that she's read a little about reader-response theory (Probst, 1989), what Therese labeled as "cold reading," Dorothy comments, "supposedly I could read *none*

of the books and get along just fine, but I think there are times when I need to know where this fits into that, so I can help them make connections. I agree that in theory I can just be a co-learner, but I also think I need to know at least where to find the stuff. And it's kind of fun to be a know-it-all, too, you know? I like telling them about obscure authors that knew so-and-so and said something. It's part of what makes it fun." Dorothy's purpose for coming here--to get ideas for her writing class--is connected to her comfort with the traditional academic model. She resists immersion in the culture and its accompanying jargon. She plays "the doubting game," taking a critical stance, and she toys with new ideas as she hears them.

Journals and The Transfer of Control: Re-writing Last Summer

Dorothy's personal agenda is clear for Terry's class; since last summer's institute, she's been determined to use journals successfully in her classroom. On the first night, she knows that journals will be her focus in the grade level group. In her own journal she writes:

I really need help with journals...some kids just give me something that they wrote for five minutes during lunch....there was a broad section of kids that totally blew this journal off...I tried to treat them as I would treat a college student...It seems like any time I give them freedom, they will just shirk their responsibilities. It seemed to be mostly boys. It sounds sexist, but it was mostly boys. But I'd like to get the boys into it. The ones who did had some beautiful stuff to say.

Dorothy's interest in classroom journals illustrates some major themes in her history as a teacher and learner. Her hopes for the grade-level class are tied to her wish to make boys more conscious of gender issues in writing; she wants them to try to use the journal as a form. She knows she's treated them "as college students,"

expecting them to take freedom and know what to do with it. She doesn't want to "control them," but she'd "like to get the boys to do it."

At the end of the first week in Terry's class, I ask her what she feels is new for her. "What's new is the chance to *think about it*. And *time*. I know if I have a real question that comes up, I can ask somebody about it. On the first day, Terry had us write questions on index cards that we wanted answered this summer, and the next day she said 'start answering those questions in your journal,' and low and behold, I'm already beginning to write the answers--the answers are there, I already know the answers." By the second week, after some hard reflection, she tells me, "I started thinking about when I do journals with my juniors, I tell them....but I never *go through it* with them and *show them* how to do each kind. I assume they know how to do it." She tells me about a boy who hated doing his journal, so she had him write a letter about hating doing a journal. "It just didn't work. This kid's not going to jump through my hoop." Dorothy is beginning to buy into the program in her own way; she "already knows the answers" she's interested in, and concentrates on thinking about journals. With time to think about it, she is acting as a reflective practitioner, looking at "the mess" of her daily life in real practice, trying to "find problems" rather than solve them. (Schon, 1987)

By the second week, she is feeling better about Terry's class but confused about her responsibilities, just like her students when she "gives them freedom." She is waiting for directives and not getting any. "I don't even know what it is I'm supposed to be doing. I really don't." she says. "I know Terry's leaving it perfectly vague so I can find my own topic. I know that." I ask about ideas for her final paper. "Nothing that I would care to write about....I'm perfectly willing to write a research paper, but I don't think that's what she wants." Dorothy noticed a student who wouldn't jump

through her journal hoop. In Terry's class, Dorothy looking for hoops and can't find them: "I don't even know what it is I'm supposed to be doing," she sighs.

She is annoyed, too, by people's portrayals of successes in their classrooms. "I guess I would take the neatest bits of writing I could find, too." But "there was a part of me that was growling not to sound so optimistic....sometimes I'm cheerful and bubbly but sometimes I go into class and I want to kill the first kid that crosses me." She finds this class "anecdotal and self-inflating." At the same time, some of the people annoy her because they "seem to be challenging rather than listening. Bitching about things like spelling." In one of her journal entries, she describes a dream she had after hearing too many testimonials of classroom success:

It was the first day of school of this coming fall.....In the room were all the worst students I've ever had. Foremost among the crowd was Darryl Perreault--my devil from my first year. They were all over the place, writing graffiti on the bulletin board, throwing papers, sassing to me. I was screaming at them, begging them to stop and pay attention. I wrote the assignment on the board: "Read pp. 1-100 in Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*." I handed out the book amid laughter, but they started to read right away. The magic of literature took over. Silence while we read--except for exclamations. Suddenly the bell rang--except instead of a bell,...the *1812 Overture* was blaring over the intercom. Kids jumped up and began marching out of the room in single file, in time to the music. Smiling boys started to 'high-five' each other with their paperbacks. I was left alone in the room, watching the kids march out. I sat shaking, exhausted and happy as the music died away."....I have only met two or three kids who like *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*. Colin said it was from listening to too many success stories. I must remember that all teachers love to describe the successes. We try to forget the failures.

Dorothy has been telling me stories of her personal teaching failures, stories of being "not good enough." It is difficult for her to listen to the success stories in that

class of high school teachers while she is thinking of her failures and re-conceptualizing her classroom. The dream, complete with triumphant music, shows a swarm of resistant boys in calm compliance, reading one of Dorothy's favorite books written by a female. They haven't lost their masculinity. They are still "high-fiving" each other as they march out of her classroom in a line. Dorothy is exhausted but satisfied. They got what *she* wanted them to get. It is a teacher's dream of control; her concept of a successful classroom. And, with Colin's observation, she recognizes it.

The day before Terry's final class, there is buzzing confusion about her expectations for the final project. Around the circle, people shuffle papers and scrawl notes. Terry teases them about having the same grade-grubbing behavior they've complained about in their students. But Dorothy doesn't think it's funny:

Lee: Could you put what you want from us on the board?

Terry: (laughing) No!

Lee: (fake whining) Please?

Terry: Being vague in assignments always goofs up the kids who want A's...(grits her teeth, joking) *Oooh, you secondary people.* For those who are uptight, how about if others explain?

Dorothy (interrupting): I *care about* an A; I'm in a master's program. I feel tense. This is the first time you've seen my writing. I have *no idea* how you'll respond.

Terry: Should I have collected it earlier? I would hope you've self-evaluated....The toughest thing about the secondary group is that each of you came with a different agenda. I'm not grading the polished product...the purpose of learning is not grading...we're teaching a *process*, and that legitimizes a grade for effort....

Dorothy shifts uncomfortably in her chair, puts her pencil between her eyebrows. Terry glances over. "Dorothy, are you comfortable?" Dorothy snaps, "The chair is hard." Later, when she submits her final paper, she attaches a note to her

journal with an apology to Terry:

I want to express my regret for what happened today in class....you must have felt attacked. Having been in that position myself, I'm sorry for anything I did to contribute to that effect...I should have expressed my dissatisfaction sooner to you personally....I feel that you should model the behaviors we'll exhibit as teachers in our classrooms.

I had expected to be conferenced with about my paper; I expected an opportunity to revise and redraft. This, after all, is the basis of writing-process teaching. I still don't understand why we weren't given this chance. In all other regards, I've enjoyed this course very much. It has been refreshing to be with other secondary teachers, sharing ideas and techniques.

In three weeks, Dorothy has adapted much of the jargon and paradigms she has criticized. She admits to Terry that she expected to "be conferenced with," although Terry had made it clear she believes conferences are the responsibility of the students. When she wants a conference, she should ask. Other students, like Therese, asked for and received innumerable short conferences. In her quest for modeling, she has noted Terry's pedagogical strategies and adapted them for her current self; she is actualizing Terry's dictum "*There is no right way to do this.*"

Left alone to create an assignment for herself, Dorothy has found her own hoop and re-examines it. In a very literal way, to use Elbow's terms, she has "made the doubting game move over" and granted some legitimacy to the "believing game." Ironically, she has done it by arguing with herself. Her final paper is called "The Abuse of Journals in the Classroom." It speaks directly to a paper she wrote six months earlier called "The Use of Journals in the Classroom." It is an argument with her own work, a gutsy, reflexive act. She re-conceives her teaching as she writes about the "rosy view" she presented in January: "I provided excerpts from my students' writing that illustrated the range of possibilities....I *glowed* about how kids loved to spend

time writing in their journals...In short, I wrote that paper convinced that the journal was one of the most important facets of my class."

Her writing is breezy, fluid, written for an audience of teachers. She uses traditional forms of argumentation to oppose her own traditional past practices. She is honest about her students and herself, critical of her own teaching decisions as she re-defines her position, answering the questions she poses, opening herself to possibilities. She writes:

....It was a researched paper, complete with detailed references to Fulwiler's *The Journal Book*....However, it became clear by spring that there were serious problems in our journales. The students' fresh, imaginative entries began to dry up...[she describes response journals in her American Lit class]....Sounds great, huh? Why did students slowly start to write only half-page entries, some pulled straight from Cliffnotes? Why did I get platitudes instead of discoveries? Worse still, why did some students stop writing journals altogether? I have a lot of questions. Some have been answered in my reading. Some have come out...in the process of keeping my own journal this summer. I think I'm starting to see some answers....

Dorothy categorizes five of the "answers" she is beginning to construct. By examining her own practice, she has taken what initially appeared as vacuous jargon, superficial success stories, a personal quest for classroom "tips," and she has applied it all. With this paper, she enters the culture, quite literally, in her own terms. She has used a reflexive posture to look at her own teaching practices, acting at once as both teacher and student:

1. **Instruction** What I forgot was that people forget. After the first week was over, I assumed my students knew how to do it. I realize now that I must teach, review, and illustrate good journal-keeping techniques all the year through.
2. **Sharing.** The best way to teach 'journaling' is to encourage sharing among

the students...in any number of ways.

3. **Time.** I forgot that for many, the school is their haven, their quiet place. I also 'disremembered' the axiom of teaching: 'Give time in class for what you value. If I value journal writing, I must dedicate time to it.
4. **Purpose.** All too many kids see this as just another way to "please the Teach." I can provide specific instructions, and students can learn different ways to work, to please themselves, not me.
5. **Evaluation.** Sometime during the course of the year I began writing negative comments...such pearls of wisdom as "Try harder!" "More!" or "Incomplete!" at the end of a page....Pointing out the good is always more effective than condemning the bad....

In her response to Dorothy's paper, Terry writes "You've presented the very problems many teachers have with journals, in very real ways...Look for a place to publish this--it's real." Although Terry's class presented problems for Dorothy, and Dorothy presented problems for Terry's class, her paper shows critical reflexivity and a shift in her thinking about her own teaching practices. Dorothy has come a distance from last summer when she was reading the journals and stories of nineteenth century women. Ironically, she has reconceived the practices and themes of the women writers she studied and applied them to her twentieth century educational practice. She has not solved problems, she has found them. She has resisted, questioned, and answered her thinking of six months ago, and re-examined her own practices with students' journal keeping. In her writing group, Dorothy's experience involves her feminist themes and personal paradoxes as she negotiates a set of ritualized practices that intertwine her with two other people and evoke a personal re-examination as she writes and reads with them.

The Writing Group: Listening Beyond the Text

During the afternoon of the first day, when their instructor Ellen, herself a first grade teacher, arranges Dorothy's response group based on the anecdotes they told in the morning, Dorothy doesn't sit in the high backed leather chair. She takes off her shoes, sits with her group in a circle on the thick grass outside Hamilton Smith Hall, and begins the interchange that will last for three weeks.

She remembers their anecdotes from the morning, when she had introduced herself by describing her garden; "a place to put dirt and green things," keeping her eye out for "critters." There is Lenore, the fifty-ish second grade teacher who confessed discomfort with her writing, not many friends, and close ties to her family. And Susan, the junior high teacher from D.C. who crosses the chasm between her own children in the city and the ones she teaches in the suburbs. By the second night Dorothy tells me, "I got a better idea of who people are and where they're coming from. I'm happy in that group. Very happy."

Dorothy keeps a critical eye, too, on Ellen's teaching, noting Ellen's balance between control and independence. "Ellen isn't talking all the time, she's telling us what to do, and then we go off and do it by ourselves....we need both." The writing group meets twice a day, twice as long as Terry's grade level class, and its purpose for Dorothy is "to do something we've never done before....It's kind of exciting to be asked to write different kinds of stuff. I've been doing mostly poetry for years and I really need to branch out a little bit....I think as a writer I need to work on getting away from myself. Writing something that doesn't have *anything to do* with my personal past."

Her passion for language explains her personal preference for writing poetry. I ask about that. Did she write during the time she was learning languages? When did she begin to consider herself a poet? "I used to write really drippy teenage poetry.

The adolescent stuff, you know, 'everyone hates me, no one understands me,' and that was really therapeutic. I've written with increased confidence over the past five years, simultaneous with starting to teach English. In forms other than college essays. Reading and teaching poetry is a part of my job. I love getting paid to do it."

Early in the week, Dorothy begins to write a piece of fiction. In her journal, she writes, "I've attempted to fictionalize a real occurrence. To do so I changed the names, setting, events, and point of view. Result? Pure shit. I hate it. It might go in some pulp mag, or under a Harlequin cover. I can't write fiction. I've never felt comfortable with it. I'll try again tomorrow using *Writing Down the Bones* for a jump start...I won't let failure get me down." Tuesday night, she tells me "I wrote it, but I don't like it at all. I hate the fiction I write....It sounds like pulp...not how I intended it...." She discards it for now. Two weeks later, it will serve as the core of her final piece, a short story.

But for now, to be on the safe side, she's decided on an essay defining male and female relationships. Sitting on the lawn outside, she talks with Susan and Lenore, trying to frame a starting sentence:

Dorothy: I'm trying to find a series of boys from my past.

Lenore: To me your first line summarizes what you need to say.

Dorothy: Like the luck of the draw, my definitions might be different if they hadn't been in my life.

Lenore: You don't have brothers?

Dorothy: No.

Lenore: I can tell.

Dorothy: I think I'm pretty clear about *what* I am doing, I just don't know *where to go*.

Susan: You're defining your concept of maleness. [they share stories about boys in their lives: "Billy eating my shell collection," "Skipper making me take off my pants and tossing them in the laundry chute," "Dickie impaling his sneaker on a rusty nail"]

Lenore: We remember their names when they did that stuff, don't we!

Susan: I wonder if *they* do.

Dorothy: Of course.

Lenore: Alienation. Once it's a closeness, then you have to be separated?

A lot of writing and thinking comes out of this short interchange, out of each woman's reading of Dorothy's ideas. Dorothy has picked up on her own word, "definitions," she has received Susan's perception that she's defining maleness to herself, and Lenore's observation that women remember the names of the boys who first defined maleness for them. The talk sets Lenore thinking about her brothers, "closeness, then separation," a theme that she'll use in her own writing this week about her father. Wednesday night, Dorothy writes. It is still a plan for an essay, but it is different, more personal. The draft shows fluid movement of her thinking, a combination of her "inner speech" put to paper (Vygotsky, 1978), a dialogue with herself, and a text she is forming:

Draft #3: A Progression of Relationships

A girl's life is so often determined by the males who find her attractive. Dickie Dorr lived down the street, spent his days and mine following me as I rode my tricycle until he tried to prove his gender by putting his sneaker through a rusty nail.....[she describes other relationships for three pages]...I married [my ex-husband] because I recognized his maleness....Today I've come to re-evaluate my definition of maleness...I've been freed to pursue other characteristics in men. My relationship with Colin is so much better... STOP. 10:45 p.m. 7/10/90. Q: Where to go next? A: SUMMARIZE WORDS: male-role models, maleness, violence-power, separation-differentness, violation, alienation, "Luck of the Draw"?? It was pretty clear to me even then that to be male is to be bold, reckless, free, and sexual. The female role was....a victim of her own inability to get what she wanted....I see that I have chosen men because they were 'masculine'....To relate with that kind of male I had to negate something crucial in my soul, deny that part of me which is bold, daring, and exciting. Slowly, so slowly I've grown to enhance my own maleness or maybe find a new definition for sexual roles. It's as exciting as

stepping on nails.

While she explores her personal thoughts and knowledge, Dorothy can test it on her response group. The rules are clear; Ellen has given them a way to respond. She has taught four techniques: "pointing, summarizing, telling, and questioning." It is new language to everyone, and to Dorothy it seems rather simplistic. "She's covered *a little* about responding, but I think there's *a lot more to it* than she's presented so far," she complains Tuesday night.

When I talk to Ellen, her comments verify what Dorothy has learned. She tells me she likes to give very clear guidelines the first week. "It's safer for them, it allows them to *feel* what different responses can do." As their instructor, she believes in beginning by sharing her own writing. "I have to move in and out of the community. They're going to bond *with each other*, and sometimes they do it *because* they're mad at me. Ultimately, I have the final authority because I have to grade them." Whether she likes it or not, there will be a grade in this course, and Ellen knows that fact separates her from the others.

The guidelines for response are simple, her own adaptations from Peter Elbow's *Writing Without Teachers* (1973): "Pointing" highlights a phrase or word that has particular appeal to the responder, "summarizing" is the practice of relating back to the author what the responder has heard, "telling" suggests that the responder relate what she hears to something she knows, and "questioning" is asking for more information. By Wednesday, "hump day," the day of the first picnic, when everyone needs a break to "get over the hump," Dorothy and the rest of the class are using them consciously. After the picnic, there are no afternoon classes. Dorothy and Susan go off together to Portsmouth. Although she minimized it by saying "Ellen covered only a

little about responding," Dorothy is practicing these techniques again and again.

"The one question I've addressed thus far is how to include my own writing in the classroom without feeling vulnerable," Dorothy tells me. Ellen is also modeling, just what Dorothy wants to see. "Yesterday Ellen read something she had written. That's very brave. I have a hard time doing that in my class. Something that was obviously in draft form, she read it, and she had us respond the way she had just taught us about responding. That was very good." Dorothy has never shared her writing with students, and she has talked about it to me. "Frequently my writing is so personal that I don't want to share it with people in a small town....I have children of school board members in most of my classes. If for nothing else than there might be a word in there that isn't pretty....I feel like I have to edit everything I show them...."

In Ellen's class, she begins to take a complicated reflexive stance, using double lenses as she watches both herself as a student writing and herself as a teacher of students' writing. When she reflects in her journal, Dorothy lists comments she's heard from others during the week. They may appear as aphorisms of "the process approach," but each thought moves her toward thinking about her teaching in a deeper way than just collecting tips:

- The response group supports quality of *thought*, even if writing does *not yet* convey that. *No assignments* means opportunities.
- What I'm doing now is scarier than being a teacher who writes in her spare time.
- *Listening beyond the text*: reason peer groups often fail is because they obsess about what is *already written*. Teacher can look for strengths first! Then, writer sees possibilities.

Dorothy begins to connect herself to the business of being at once a writer, a respondent, and a teacher of writing. By Thursday night, her essay about the men in

her life has turned into a poem, and she has presented it to Susan and Lenore. "I put all the drafts there, and they pointed out the spots that were unclear....The first version of the first stanza was unclear to Susan, so I *showed* exactly what happened, not just *told* how I felt about it." I ask if their help was useful. "*Oh, yeah*, it was. Often, when I'm done with a poem, I'll go over it six or seven times, and then I'll give it to somebody and just say 'Here, enjoy.' I'm not usually looking for response, in fact at that point I've got so much invested in it that I don't want to hear anything." Susan and Lenore have "seen it in daily pieces," she tells me, and this is new for her.

The First Friday: A Quiet Ritual

On Friday morning, each person in Ellen's class reads a completed piece; the order is determined by volunteers. There are sandals strewn on the carpet, toes curled around the oak chairs, legs splayed against the leather chairs, ragged drafts spilling out of totebags. Knees are bent, hidden under pastel cotton skirts, male and female legs exposed out of shorts. A breeze ruffles the loose papers, puffs against thin fabrics and stray hairs.

Ellen explains the procedure. Listeners will respond on slips of paper with short phrases. Dorothy interrupts to ask if their responses can be anonymous. Ellen looks at her, surprised, and then she scans the circle. No, she hopes, because today everyone reads and everyone receives formal responses. Ellen reminds the class that today's reading is public: "The time for change is passed. This is *publication*," she says, it's *not a time* to be critical." Ellen adds some humor. "Be kind," she says, "it's Friday the thirteenth."

The readings begin. Silence falls. Muscles tense and release with the readings. When each author is finished, the others rise silently to offer their paper responses. "This is a very odd feeling," Meg whispers as she gathers her slips of

paper, nodding, her eyes thanking each respondent, "it's like a reading shower. Is it polite to read them when they come in?" She smiles as she reads. Ellen knows from experience that this first Friday is an emotional event. "It's kind of like Valentine's Day," she says.

I note that it looks like a series of ceremonial offerings, sacrifices, rituals. This tradition of the Friday public reading is a symbol--writers enacting the creation of literature for their readers. The responses are different from the learned oral responses earlier in the week, when the writing was in process. Learning the four techniques of pointing, summarizing, questioning, and telling gave each respondent a way to function as audience, to enable the writer to see her writing as a reader sees it. The midweek, mid-draft reading and response was an actual enactment of the process of constructing a written text meant to be read, a living oral version of the "transaction" between the writer and the reader. (Rosenblatt, 1938) From these transactions during midweek, writers can go about redrafting with their readers' responses in their minds. The responder's function during midweek was like that of the informed audience at a performance in an oral culture; the audience's response serves to help the performer construct his text as he performs. (Bauman, 1975) The event is one that honors the writer as a part of a literate culture. "Historically, literature," writes David Bleich, "has been an enterprise which temporarily fixes a culture's uses of language. Even in nonliterate societies, a literary event is a pause in everyday life marked by a gathering of people with the common purpose of experiencing the event." (1988, 114)

Dorothy volunteers fifth. "I think I'm ready to read." The collar of her cotton shirt stands guarding her neck, and she fiddles with the rope belt at her waist. Her voice quakes a little, and then she reads her poem loudly, smiling:

Definition

Dickie Dorr raised his foot,
 bragged his shoes tougher
 than an upright, rusty nail.
 He slammed it down and was carted off
 the ambulance screams were mine.

Carl Foster, blond haired idol,
 could run shouting, sweeping
 muscled arms about his naked chest.
 But mine were locked in a girl's
 chant of watching envy.

Doug Flanders made drunk off
 Tenth grade liquor-mix,
 made 3rd base love behind the school
 He did, I allowed;
 it was, it was.

These were my boys, males, men
 bold, reckless creatures
 defining
 friends, lovers,
 a husband
 became these long-forgotten names.
 We could not transcend
 the prescriptions fo his sex.
 Like a fist smashing a wall of fury,
 this definition had to go.

"Will you read it over?" a classmate asks, "There's a lot of depth in there."
 She reads it again. They write, rise, and walk over to hand her slips of paper. Her
 classmates' careful listening shows in their written responses: "Word choice and
 juxtapositions were excellent." "It echoes a lot of "girl stuff" for me--the kind you

can't usually discuss. Whew! Keep writing about this stuff." From a man: "Dorothy, Good job. Your title was ingenious--woven into the theme of the poem, a lot of depth. May I have a copy? Keep writing poetry."

Susan and Lenore smile at each other while Dorothy reads; their comments show a week-long investment and pride in Dorothy's work. Susan points to the images that struck her, and notices that she has re-crafted the first section overnight:

"Dorothy: title so effective! Images of reckless, violent males. No blame. Dickie Dorr--I will always remember with a nail in his shoe--and 'liquor mix' and 3rd base love. Such clear images. First section clearer! Good!" And Lenore writes: "Dorothy: I feel your poem is almost mine now, and I recall each of the revisions. I could tell it had its impact on the others, too."

The requirement for Ellen's writing course was to submit a minimum of two full pages of writing at the end of the week. Dorothy breaks that rule by submitting only this poem. When Ellen explains that the deadline carries with it a responsibility for a certain amount of text, Dorothy argues for the value of the finished poem as a week's work. At the beginning of the following week, Dorothy discovers that submitting one poem "brought me up short," and she will make an appointment with Tom Newkirk: "I'm going to argue with him tomorrow," she tells me, "that if we choose to write poetry we'd have to write five poems for it to count as one piece....they're afraid we're just going to slap something together real quick and everything is going to rhyme, or it's going to sound like a Hallmark greeting card." Argument is still her first line of defense in an academic experience. Despite the shower of response from her colleagues, she's afraid it's "not good enough" and angry a policy she deems disrespectful.

One week of writing in a summer writing program has not obliterated Dorothy's personal paradoxes. Writing and reading, listening and responding,

traditions, rituals and a new lexicon have not transformed her into a new teacher or a new person. But the program has allowed her opportunities to explore. The techniques that Dorothy has complained about but practiced all week have given her new lenses for looking at her own ability to respond to others. Like all the jargon she complained about in Terry's class, what appeared at the beginning of the week as "just a little bit about response" has become a crucial idea holding an important vocabulary for working with writing. As she has learned to use the terms, she has shifted her status from skeptical outsider looking for classroom tips to an engaged participant.

In both her classes the first week, Dorothy and her colleagues have re-constructed their autobiographies, told their stories to each other in their talk, to themselves in their journals, and to the group through their public texts. It has not been from assignments; it happened as a natural outgrowth of what they have each set out to do. They have chosen topics and genres in which they feel comfortable. For her first week in the writing class, Dorothy has attempted and rejected both fiction and the essay. She has chosen poetry as a comfortable form with which to explore her personal history with men. Her first week has echoed the garden she used to introduce herself at the beginning of the week. With one eye out for the "critters," she has planted "some green things," and "so far everything is growing."

With the writer's determination to construct a personal piece of writing lies the need for the others to be a safe audience of trained listeners. Educational philosopher Madeline Grumet believes that teachers need to reach back and reconsider their own stories in order to teach to their own potential. "In order to understand our own experiences of teaching we must truly stand under them...." (1988, 74) Dorothy's resistant stance in the larger group has given way in the culture of the small response group. When she sets aside the familiar "doubting game" of her traditional academic

training and tries the "believing game," she enables others and herself. She erects barriers around the language and the symbols of "process teaching," but they give way to personal action three weeks later when she re-conceives her own practices in her final piece about journal writing, and when she sits inside the intimate circle of her response group during the first week to construct her poem. She uses the traditional "doubting game" to argue for its validity, but she has created the poem in an environment based on "believing." The culture, the rituals, and the language surrounding the writing program have offered her the tools to write her own way through her resistance without having to give up her critical stance. Gradually over the next two weeks, as Dorothy engages more in writing and response, her role as a learner and her involvement in the art of creating fiction overtakes her need for collecting teaching tips.

It's Really not the Topic, It's What You Do with the Topic

During the second week, Dorothy completes a short story about deep-sea fishing. The idea began the Wednesday before, when they had the afternoon off and she took Susan to Portsmouth. Sunday, Dorothy and Colin returned to Portsmouth to go out on one of the fishing boats. She's wanted to write something entirely fictional, something that has "nothing to do with her." It takes this second week and much examining, tinkering, listening and responding for the story to take shape. On Tuesday, she refuses to read the beginning of her piece to Susan and Lenore. When the group gathers in the afternoon, she knows which parts she wants to read:

I started writing this total garbage. And I said "I gotta get focused here....I was just meandering around about fluorescent colors....God, I just hated it, and I had to stop, and re-think where I was going, so I ended up crossing out stuff that I didn't like, and writing little notes in the margin...then I started writing from an outline. So the outline is this...(she gives a synopsis of the story)

Lenore: That's how fiction is born.

Susan: That's neat, giving it some structure with an outline.

Dorothy: Now I know where I'm going; it's a matter of writing it.

Susan summarizes what Dorothy has already read: "You've already done the physical description, they've had the little tussle about who's going to be first. Has the captain been upset to look at the markers yet?" Dorothy answers "I've cut that whole part...so he's just heading out to sea. She reads the text of her piece, "A Short Story as yet Untitled." It is five typed pages, single-spaced, with red slashes and black handwritten notes. Her draft is a complex story that begins:

"Do we need to show you our ticket?" asked a young tourist.

"Well, you see, you don't need a ticket to ride out, but you do need one to get back," joked the captain of the *Seagazer*. George Gilmore's tanned face shone in the early morning light. His great height seemed in proportion with the size of the ship, and his hands wrapped easily around the rigging connecting him to the shore....Twice he had to speak to Roger, who leaned over the stern saying fond goodbyes to his girlfriend.

"Shake a leg, mate, you'll see her in a few hours!" he roared, clapping Roger on the shoulder blades. "Dan, see to the bait-buckets as soon as we are past the bridge."

As the story unfolds, the *Seagazer* goes out to sea, and the "fluorescent tourists" contrast with the "expert fishermen" of the crew. Old Domenico, a Puerto Rican dishwasher from the local Bell-in-Hand Pub, comes every Saturday with his grandson. "The day-tourists appeared pale and ignorant beside such fishermen. They took their Dramamine tablets and applied layers of sunblock before boarding." With misplaced bait, the careless tourists attract dogfish sharks which the crew must untangle from the lines, or kill by twisting one shark's body and throwing it, bloodied, into the water to attract the other sharks. Dorothy juxtaposes this scene with one of a

young child, his mother, and her boyfriend. They punish the child when he asks for a soda, and banish him to sit on a bait bucket. Captain George offers to make the little boy his helper, lifts him up on his shoulders, and takes him to the steering wheel at the bow of the ship. Dorothy's story is full of details of New England deep-sea cod fishing, Spanish and Italian dialects, and ironic contrast between the close relationships of the Puerto Rican family and the "fluorescent low-life" mother and boyfriend's abuse of the little boy. Dorothy finishes reading the outline-draft. "The Italian accent I have to work on," she apologizes.

Susan: It feels to me like you have some momentum going now. There's some speed to it. Sort of like the boat. It has some direction to it.

Dorothy: Oh. I like that. This story is starting to feel like a boat speeding up.

Lenore: That's so symbolic--that he lifts the boy up, and takes him to the steering wheel.

Dorothy: Yeah, and he's a tall man, so the child's going to be way up high....And then the cruise is going to end....

Lenore: Echo something that happened earlier?

Dorothy: Maybe something about the tickets again, I don't know. Typical essay structure, "Stop the way you begin"

Lenore: *People like that, though*, it's like "coming home" in music.

Dorothy: Yeah, like a coda.

Lenore: You know how you always come down? Most pieces do, *it just feels good*.

Ellen joins the group for a while and asks Dorothy what she has asked for help with. "Gotta see the end in order to get to the middle....I guess what I want to know is whether this is something that's only interesting to me because I like fishing. Is this interesting to an average reader?"

Lenore: Especially! I'm interested in that because I've never been deep sea fishing...

Susan: And I was thinking too, *it really isn't so much the topic, it's what you do with the topic*. It is not the fishing, but what you show us here is what we

don't know all about it...the details.

Dorothy: Are there enough details like that to keep it interesting and not just a "Love Boat?"

Susan: The plot's enough to make it not like that...

Dorothy: ...The hardest part's coming up...that's going to be a lot of dialogue, they have to seem natural, the way people would act in such family situations. I'm making up most of it....

Lenore: But you're not making up *all* of it.

The session continues with a long discussion about how carefully the fishermen handle the hooked sharks, that "not worrying about the pain of animals" makes a good contrast with the captain's concern about the pain of children. Dorothy finishes this session recalling a quote, "Emerson asks the rhetorical question, 'Can't you name all the birds in the forest without a gun?'" She marks her paper in a few more places. Over her "A Story as yet Untitled," she writes "The Luck of the Draw?" On the bottom margin, she writes "make clear the theme and irony: describe captain watching both families." She fixes a few inconsistencies she noticed as she was reading, circling places where she needs to add information: killing the sharks, clarifying the mother's relationship with the boy. After the session on Susan's piece, they have all learned to be more careful to articulate their needs--as writers and respondents. Dorothy has asked for general help, response about consistency and information, assurance that her story is interesting. She was afraid of producing "garbage," wrote an outline, but needed to be reassured. She is comforted by Susan's insight, "It really isn't the topic, it's *what you do* with the topic."

Dorothy's greatest fear about her story was that it would have a "Love Boat" quality, seem cheap like the tourists she created, contain boring or superficial information. Equipped with her own ideas and reassurance from her audience, Dorothy heads to the computer room to create another draft, one that will be polished

with dialogue and language, information, character details and irony. Tomorrow, it will have the ending she envisions today.

Wednesday, the three partners come together on the lawn. It's been a long week already, and their pieces need to be finished in two days. They joke about the conflicts they feel connected to reading and writing: exhaustion-elation, oppression-freedom, anxiety-concentration:

Susan: Yesterday I'd just *had* it. (laughing)

Dorothy: I went through a stage yesterday where I decided I *hate* writing. I never want to write ever again, and I'm not going to *read*, either.

Lenore: I looked at one of those photostated articles, and I said "these are *hateful*" -and I sat at that computer and said "Who likes sitting at this machine?"

Susan: Who says we have to be writers anyway? I want to be a scientist!

Lenore: I *do think* sometimes we're rather enamored with our own self-importance. I mean, who *cares* what I did yesterday? Let me quietly live my life and not litter my planet....let me be like the Indians, let me just tiptoe through and not leave such a big gash in the earth. We put an awful lot on language, we really do, particularly written language.

Susan: ...Now that I'm in a better mood, I'd say we might be less likely to leave such a big gash in the earth if we were more reflective.

Susan gets serious: "I would like to *hear* these drafts. We need to know what you want us to listen for." Dorothy has worked up another draft of her sea story, and she is very clear about what she needs. "I guess now I'm most worried about *significance*. I'm not sure whether there's anything important about this story--any reason why anyone would want to read it, and I need some tough criticism, okay? *Don't be nice!*" She laughs. "I want you to tell me if this is something you'd enjoy to read if it appeared in a magazine, or if you'd just put it down after the first paragraph...if you hear something that really sounds dopey and dull or like *McCalls* or *Seventeen*-ish, tell me. I also need a title; I haven't got a title yet. She reads the

story. It is five pages, single-spaced, and rich with the dialogue and irony she had hoped for:

"But Capitan, you know that is the luck if she loves me today. I no can catch nothing without her." Domenico lowered his voice, "You no notice the family at the back? They bad. 'Mala gente,' we say.

....Sitting on an overturned bait bucket sat a little boy, maybe four or five years old. He was very pale and skinny, but his clothes seemed tight, short in the pant....He wore a silver and red Medic-Alert bracelet around his wrist, which jangled as he moved his hands. He seemed engaged in some kind of fighting game with his fists. George could hear him speaking in low tones, "This is the good guy, this is the bad guy." The fists were engaged in a heroic battle. Suddenly he looked up and addressed a woman standing nearby. She was large and red. Her unevenly bleached hair flapped around her face when she turned to face the child.

"Mommy, can I please get up?"

"Sit still, I told you!"

"I'm thirsty, I want a soda, like you and Roy."

The woman turned to her companion, who was just reeling up. "Roy, do you have any money left? Mikey wants a drink."

The man reached into his filthy jeans, all that he had on, and made a gesture of emptying out his pockets. "Tough luck, brat, I got no money left. Here, have a suck on my beer!" Roy laughed as he held out the can to the boy. "Oh, I forgot, you can't get off the bucket, so sorry." He took a dramatic gulp, and wiped his scraggly mustache with his hand. Roy turned his back, and dropped his line and the can overboard...."Why don't you just throw him overboard, woman? Ha, that would be good! He weighs about as much as a chunk of clam. What do you say, Mikey, how about a drink of seawater?"

Dorothy finishes reading her story, and asks again for response about significance. Her partners comply:

Susan: You put a lot more in since yesterday. You put the whole thing about the--what do you call them? The "low life?"

Dorothy: Oh, the "Mala gente."

Lenore: ...I like it that you made the old fellow Spanish. You put that Spanish

in. That was good.

Dorothy: I speak Spanish, so I felt more comfortable with him putting that dialect in....

Susan: Well, it worked for Barbara Cooney, she put the German in, and it really works well for this piece too. It added to his character. And it's easy enough Spanish that anybody can...

Dorothy: Um hm, I didn't think people would have a problem following those words. "mala," and "gente."

Lenore: The fact is that you didn't make it the mother and the father, you made it the mother and the *boyfriend*, cause I see that a lot of that in my own classes, you know...

Susan: Beautiful dialogue. I see your concern with theme....Significance? I was waiting for the end, because the end will pretty much cement it. I was wondering where you'd stop....or the ticket, the ticket, you don't need a ticket to go out, but you need a ticket to get back.

Lenore: Well, if "luck of the draw" is trying to draw a parallel--if that word--is there a parallel between luck of the draw of catching the best fish and luck of the draw of who your parents are?

Dorothy: Yeah, I think emphasizing the *luck* is going to have to be my job for revision....and winning the pool. There's a lot of information in there.

Susan: And then emphasizing the relationship between that one family, they're so close, and then there's this other family--hardly a family at all....

The discussion continues until Dorothy has a lot of options to make her ending significant, exactly what she asked for. In her journal Wednesday night, Dorothy writes "I just finished writing the first draft of my deep-sea fishing story. I'm feeling really good. I've never completed a whole story before....I balked at first, but I'm glad I've kind of been forced into it. I'm also pleased that the story has absolutely nothing to do with me!" Although it "has nothing to do with her," it is full of her knowledge and personal history, as well as a week working closely with Susan and Lenore. Dorothy's lifelong interest in language is clear in her decision to create a loving Puerto Rican grandfather and an Italian fisherman. The little boy's behavior, she tells me, is based loosely on her own son, and his mother's deference to her abusive boyfriend is a

pattern with which she's familiar. The people in the fishing boat are exaggerations of those she saw over the past weekend. The themes and fishing details in her story come directly from her connection to Susan and Lenore as readers--their hunger for information, the questions they've asked. The reading and writing discussions taught her what her story needed. In her journal on Thursday night, Dorothy writes:

....One thing I noticed is that in fiction there are endless possibilities. Changing one element of the story can result in a ripple effect. After reading my story to the response group this morning, I felt excited. They actually like it. I actually like it. They helped me consider *theme*--how to create an effect with the story--how to end the story simply. I'll miss having this response group. It really helps.

Their exchange about her story has put shape to her final draft and given her some specifics to complete it.

"And We're All Teachers to Each Other"

Thursday night, Dorothy invites Susan and Lenore to her apartment for a glass of wine. I join them after they've been there for an hour. When I arrive, they are relaxed, flopping on the chairs in Dorothy's living room. This week, there are four piles of books on the floor, both Colin's and Dorothy's. There is a cluster in the corner of travel guides, beach towels, and tote bags. The computer is surrounded by stacks of paper print-outs, and the wastebasket is overflowing with those thin tracks of holes torn from the sides of computer paper.

Susan has had some wine, and is delighted with the fairy tale she's written. She has been working on it for two weeks. "It's satisfying," Dorothy says of Susan's fairy tale, "like giving birth." Lenore says the value of learning "summarizing" and "pointing" helped her with her intense discomfort. "We're all teachers to each

other, for heaven's sake," she says. "I don't consider this a workshop for *real writers*." She reacts strongly to Don Murray's "Pushing the Edge" talk on Monday, in which he took an auditorium full of teachers through a few writing exercises. "He was *way over my head, completely over*. All that stuff he made us do! I didn't know what he was talking about. It was like talking about the fine points of diving to someone who can only doggie paddle." She is still uncomfortable with her role as writer, and resists the implication that she should be one. Dorothy and Susan disagree; Murray's exercises helped them try new angles with the writing they were working on.

They begin to joke about school; Susan and Dorothy complain about "the g-word" (grading) and "the other g-word (grammar)." And curriculum: "I had my program all worked out until I got here; wait until they see what I'm going to do when I get back!" This is the first bit of subversive school joking I've heard; now it is about school structures which muffle teacher creativity. The time here has been spent creating, "pushing at their edges," and their only joking so far has been yesterday's exhausted talk about writing. When the wine bottle is empty, Susan, Lenore, and I drive back to the mini-dorms in the misty dark, past the lacrosse players vollying across the edges of the street, past the white lights that illuminate the lawns, around the back end of the campus. I write my memo at 11:10 p.m., and finish it just as the midnight train passes my open window:

Through the windows I see groups of people sitting on beds in nightclothes, looking down at papers, looking up at each other. *Response*. It's not like a teacher's room here. Not time for subversive stories. No one jokes about the administration or unruly kids, houses or cars; barely anyone talks about their own children.

On Friday morning, Susan begins the class session by reading her Australian

fairy tale. Dorothy sits cross-legged, barefoot, sandals on the floor, her legs draped over the arm of the leather chair. Her black eyes are fixed on Susan when she begins. She smiles, tilts her head back and closes her eyes to listen. Lenore is sitting straight in her chair, knees together holding her notebook, her gray head cocked over to the left. She shifts nervously in one of the smaller chairs. People smile as they jot notes on slips of paper. Susan finishes, and the group gasps. They shower her with paper responses and requests for copies.

Dorothy looks around, searching the room to see if it's time to volunteer to read next. Lenore and Susan beam when she begins, look at each other, then at her. Dorothy announces, "I'm glad I'm not writing about myself." Her final story is called "Winning the Pool." She reads it with dialect, toward a carefully crafted new ending:

"Here you are, mate. You've done a fine job, but now you must go back," said George, returning Mikey to his parents.

"Sure you don't want to keep him, Captain? Maybe you could use a new bait-boy." Roy cracked. The mother waved a plastic bag full of cod fillets in front of George.

"I won the pool. I got the biggest fish. Fifteen pounds! I won 100 dollars!" she crowed.

"Come on, get going," Roy pushed Mike up the dock. The boy's eyes sought those of Captain George.

"Bye Captain, and thank you," he said, waving. George waved back silently, then rubbed his hand over his eyes. He looked up to see Domenico observing him.

"Catch anything, Padre?" asked George.

"No bites. Today is not good to me, I think."

"It's all luck, pure luck of the draw," answered George, staring down the dock.

"You are 'buena gente,' Capitan. I see you next Saturday, I think maybe I go for the whole day, eh?" Domenico walked up the ramp, allowing his grandson to carry the gear. George watched the receding forms, saw Mikey standing alone in the parking lot, saw Domenico's grandson take the old man's hand.

"Are you the Captain? Do we have to show you our ticket now?" asked a flaming tourist.

Without turning his head, Captain George replied.

The group rises, and they fill Dorothy's hands with slips of paper. Dorothy reads the papers eagerly. They summarize, they point to passages that struck them, and they tell her the feelings and pictures her writing evoked in them:

Hands on the rigging, connecting him to the shore, fists having heroic battle, "mala gente" indeed--they're awful! The perfect irony of that horrible woman winning the pool. Domenico--good voice, "flaming tourist," what a sad scene, and drawn so well--Alison.

Great description of tourists...I got a feeling of the movement of the boat and the smell of the sea. Deep sea fishing isn't all recreation, is it? I'm thinking of the tourists and the sharks and the family. Thank goodness someone came to the child's rescue. I wonder who will rescue him next time and next time. I hope someone will. Pure luck, the kind of parents we get. Thanks.--Ellen

Lead: "no ticket to go out"...good New England humor, full cycle with last line. Grandfather's dialect. Poor little Mikey! Great story. Very much enjoyed it--contrasts, vivid details--Nick.

But Dorothy's response partners' papers show their investment in the entire life of her story. Susan writes:

Dorothy: Love the details about Domenico....Such good dialogue: "Have a suck of my beer, How about a drink of seawater! Perfect ending! You did it! I'm so glad I got to hear your drafts!

And Lenore's note refers to the growth she's watched in Dorothy's writing over the week, too:

I like what you did with the ending. It really read well, Dorothy. Very entertaining. The point made in the title came across, too. You are growing every day.

Not wanting to impose, Lenore waits until everyone is finished reading, hoping the allotted time will be up. "Is everybody ready to listen so we can go home? You're awfully good, all of you," she smiles stiffly at each person in the circle. This is the third time she has waited to be last in the large group, not to mention her deference during the response sessions. Susan told me earlier in the week that she thinks it might be scary for Lenore to recognize how smart she is. "She doesn't *want to impose on anyone*....At supper I forgot a knife. I needed one for my pork chop and I said, "Are you using your knife?" and she said "Oh, no, here, you can use it. *But I wouldn't want to impose.*"

She reads her piece, a sophisticated fictional reminiscence of elderly twin sisters on a European trip, "They were...skeletal with hair coiffed to look plastic....all of a color...champagne-tinted hair, milky blue eyes, ivory teeth and clothes in neutral and pastel shades....although not big eaters the sisters seemed to imbibe continuously....a tourist ashtray from a rest stop in the Swiss Alps was selected with the same care as the gold necklace from Florence...." Lenore's reading meets with loud howls and great enthusiasm on paper: "I like the tone you set off as the two women bicker." "The dialogue at the beginning really worked! You heard their voices." "There were so many great lines I don't know where to begin. A thoroughly enjoyable slice of life. Beautifully written, have it published!" "It reminds me of the English ladies who travel in E.M. Forster novels...your subtle focus on time as their greatest flaw was a thread skillfully drawn through the entire piece...." Lenore gathers them graciously, bundles them in her long fingers, and lowers her head. Susan and Dorothy's comments show their investment in their week watching her piece grow, their affection for Lenore, and their own personal contributions of language and observation to her work. Dorothy writes: "Lenore, your language is perfect! dialogue-

-Right On! Your structure worked out beautifully. I think you enjoyed reading it. I know I did! 'Weaving' much better word than ricochet...'eager and unsteady' told the story. GREAT!" And Susan writes, "Such excellent descriptions. Statuette in window at shop in corner. You have a beautiful command of language whether you admit it or not. May I have a copy?" That night, Lenore's journal tries not to celebrate, not to impose even on herself. It reconsiders the act of creativity, and ends in a guilty admission of personal triumph, bolstered by the confidence she cannot ignore from her partners or her class:

Today we had the sharing of our pieces of writing....I felt no better about reading this week's piece "The Sisters" than I did last week. I do enjoy listening to the others read....Perhaps none of us appreciates our own efforts....the finished product does not live up to the vision we had when we began....Once in a while I can step back and look with real pride on something I accomplished, and when I can, I really do savor the moment.

When Ellen made the initial decision to create this response group, she knew, as she told me then, "not to put strong personalities together....Dorothy was closed, Lenore was going to need attention, and Susan was an enabler." Ellen set the environment for natural growth to happen, for relational thinking and the integration of these three women's voices. She set the stage for, in Maxine Greene's words, the "opening of spaces."

Rather than posing dilemmas to students or presenting models of expertise, the caring teacher tries to look through students' eyes, to struggle with them as subjects in search of their own projects, their own ways of making sense of the world. Reflectiveness, even logical thinking remain important; but the point of cognitive development is....to interpret from as many vantage points as possible lived experience, the ways there are of being in the world. (Greene, 1988, p. 120)

To learn to teach this way, to learn to help others find "their own ways of making meaning in the world," having the experience is the key. It takes time and open spaces, projection and reflection, an "intelligent audience," as Dorothy put it, and a sense of trust in the value of experience. In the final week, Dorothy, Lenore, and Susan will each write another piece. For all of them, it is both the most personal and the most distanced.

Heal Thyself: Finding Fiction in Fact

By the final class reading during the last week, everyone prepares for the ritual of tearing paper to write messages of response. Ellen checks her watch. Today's pieces are far longer than the required two to three pages: "In three weeks, everybody's writing books!" Although it is only Wednesday, this week's pieces show people polishing, playing with the writer's craft, and taking risks in one another's company. Dorothy has decided to return to the personal piece she discarded during the first week. At the time, she wrote in her journal:

I'm learning how to write fiction. The advice to supplant the third person for the first and then retell a personal narrative has worked for me. The story I am working on has needed to be told for a long time, but I've been fearful of writing it in the first person....By turning myself into Emily, a fictional person, I've been freed up to alter the events for narrative efficiency. I was able to cut out stuff, add stuff, and outright lie, but still maintain the integrity of the feeling. P.S. I'm aware that everything I'm writing right now is pretty depressed and self-centered. I just need to get some of these things out.

She held on until she could try again. No matter what she did with this story, it would be autobiographical; it would raise issues with which she felt uncomfortable. She had attended Becky Rule's reading of two short stories Monday night, and loved

them. The stories swamped her with the task that she had set for herself, but they also challenged her to write more fiction. In her response group, she asks for specific help, and this time she needs a judgment on the theme:

I switch time a lot in this and I need to know if it's clear...last night after hearing Becky Rule and getting depressed that her stories were so funny and mine is so serious, I decided I wasn't going to go for 'good,' I was just going to go for 'different.'....A lot of this is autobiographical, but I have changed things....I thought it would be fun to try taking the persona of the psychiatrist....I want it to be a happy ending for Emily. But the fact that she can heal herself--is it there?

She tells them that she's been reading about dialogue tags in fiction, that in her first draft she had used the language all wrong: "I was writing 'exclaimed,' 'cried,' 'said,' everything the book said not to do, but I'm also working on character development through plot details."

By now, Dorothy has objectified her story, and is concentrating on matters of craft, the very issues, as an English teacher, she wants her students to know in literature. The piece is called "Heal Thyself," and it is told from the point of view of a psychiatrist who is treating a nine year old girl. An excerpt:

Heal Thyself

Paul Bragdon told me that his daughter had been exhibiting strange behaviors. On the phone he was concerned about Emily, for she had difficulty sleeping at night, and had acquired some unusual habits.

What kind of habits?" I asked

"Well, she picks at herself."

"Picks at herself?"

"Yes," he replied, "her fingers are all raw. She has sores on her arms, legs, and face...."

Emily was a small child for age nine. Her hair was brown and long, hanging over her face....Emily was plump, and held her hands over her stomach as if to hide the elastic waistband on her jeans. She pulled the sleeves

of her top up over her wrists....

"I'm here because my father is worried about me. He thinks my problems are psychosomatic." said Emily.

"That's a pretty big word. Do you understand it?"

"Yes." she replied. "It means I'm not really sick; I'm just pretending."

"Is that true?" I asked

"No....I can't sleep at night, because it itches so much." She pulled up her sleeves....."I have to press it against something cold, like a piece of metal. I walk all over the house looking for cold metal to press my skin against....

The Bragdon family lived in a wealthy neighborhood...complete with a maid, flowering gardens, and a fragrant cherry tree in the backyard. Until her ninth year, she had been unaware of the tensions that ran under the surface of her parent's relationship....Most terrifying were the long silences, after the fights at night...Emily would rise out of bed to search for something cool against which to press her ragged skin....Cold radiators worked well, too....Once she came upon her mother balled up in a corner of the pantry....

On the next visit, Emily brought me a picture she had drawn...a girl feeding a horse. Emily rolled up her sleeves and showed me her arms....She was healing.

"It's about my Aunt's farm in New Hampshire...." Several months after the separation, Emily was invited to her Aunt's farm, where there were eight cousins to play with....animals to feed, a horse to ride, a lake to swim in....Emily's face shone.

"I went home at the end of August....my cat had kittens while I was away. I wanted to see them...she had twelve, but she didn't want to be a mother. She ran away. I had to feed all twelve kittens with an eyedropper. One died because he was the runt. Mother had a new friend, Tom"....

"Mr. Bragdon, why doesn't Emily live with your wife?"

"Ex-wife, Doctor Williamson. She's better off with me."....

In this final piece, the one she had wanted to write during the first week, Dorothy has crafted a short story based on, as she says, "a story that has needed to be told for a long time." There are shards of the private personal history she has told us, but the story remains a fiction. The class loves it, they want her to volunteer to read it in the large group, and she refuses; she does not feel comfortable. "Sorry," she says,

flattered, "Everything I have is either too long or too personal."

I notice the affection she holds for New Hampshire in this story: her aunt's farm as a healing place for Emily, the lake, the garden, her nurturing of the kittens whose mother had gone. She selected the kittens deliberately: "I wanted a nice symbol, a juxtaposition," she says. Little Emily's hair is hanging out of place, and she holds her hands over her elastic waistband to hide her waist; Dorothy seems so carefully "tucked in" all the time. Dorothy is shocked when she realizes the importance of Emily's fictional aunt. She decides to call her real aunt in New Hampshire that night. She introduced herself the first day of class with her garden, "a place to put green things and dirt," and each weekend she's gone back to check on her garden and her cat. How much of the fictional Emily is in this piece? How much of the real Dorothy? How much of Susan, how much Lenore? How much intersubjective reality? In her final self-evaluation for Ellen's class, Dorothy writes:

Where have I pushed the edge? Definitely in the area of fiction writing. I've been an avid reader all my life, and you'd think I'd find it easy. But I found it difficult to be the author....I switched pronouns...I gave real people fictional names. Then I began selecting and reordering details to meet the needs of a story. My reader's eye told me what worked and what didn't...And my response group....Then came revision for style, effect, language. I worked on dialogue, description, creating an effective ending....How interesting it is that we have not once had to speak about mechanics or grammar usage. These things take care of themselves when the writer really cares about what she's doing....

Without the resonance she had with her response partners, I doubt that Dorothy would have re-worked this personal piece during the final week. Both Susan and Lenore spent the last week working on pieces that were intensely personal, grown with a distanced eye and with careful control of their responses. By this week, they know better what they need from one another and how to ask for it. In her self-evaluation,

Dorothy writes to Ellen:

As a responder my greatest growth has been in shutting up! I've learned how important it is to listen, to wait. Before I used to jump in and give my opinion....Now I see the benefit of letting the writer ask for what she needs. I can help her most by letting her read it aloud, by telling her what I hear, what I like, what confuses me.

Lenore's final piece is called "Trees." It is a tender description of her intimate connection with particular trees, an autobiographical chronicle of her life, told through the specifics of the trees she has known. Without Susan's suggestion to identify each tree, or Dorothy's attention to detail and language, Lenore would probably have a mess of papers and a frame of mind that would prohibit her reading this to anyone. Like Dorothy's story, it is both intimate and literate. It reveals her family loyalty, her fierce protection of the natural world, and her commitment to a quiet life, "not wanting to impose on anyone." Lenore's last journal entry and final evaluation point to the strength of the community of respondents she felt in order to come to this writing:

I wish to say something here about the importance of the response group to myself as a beginning writer. I need the input of these supportive and interested people, mostly to verify my own hunches about things and to keep me on task. I question the value of my own writing....I had to take the risk of exposure and failure by putting myself in the situation. When I become emotionally involved I learn. I change. I grow. I have reached inside and labored to give birth to the writing I have produced these three weeks....I wish to give the children in my care the opportunity to take charge of their learning and the time to communicate and explore their interests. I have accomplished my personal goals. The momentum has begun.

Susan's final piece is a humorous essay that she did not recognize at first as humorous. It is called "This Train is Bound for Glory." It is a first person narrative

about a town in Illinois, home of an entire culture devoted to the study and elevation of the Bible. Susan tells the story by taking her reader on the train with a narrator who sounds a bit like a mix of Garrison Keillor and Becky Rule, and her reading in class evokes yelps of recognition, tears of laughter. "Lenore and Dorothy have helped me by listening and telling me whether there is anything there, what they hear me saying," she tells me. "I work on transitions and cadence. It must have rhythm; it must flow smoothly. It must speed up where I want it to speed up and slow down where I choose." Her work on cadence and rhythm show Dorothy's language influence. All week, she has been sharing details with Dorothy, whose background includes a stint at Bible camp and a few years as a born-again Christian.

Susan is surprised at the class's reaction, but prepared because of Dorothy's responses earlier in the week. Her own artistry is an even bigger surprise: "Donald, a high school teacher, pointed out something to me that I didn't even know I did, 'Tension running through the whole piece, then the humor starts to steamroll. How did you do that?' he said. I need to think about this one....I have a skill that I didn't know I had...If I need to write in order to learn what I'm doing so that I can point things out to kids, this is very valuable." Susan feels the value of the mixed grade levels in the writing group: "A second grade teacher is much less likely to be pointing out sophisticated writing techniques like Donald or Dorothy can." In her self-evaluation, Susan writes:

...I have learned that writing involves diving down deep. It was at least forty fathoms down for "This Train," and I understand now what Mark Twain means when he says "Sometimes you have to lie to tell the truth"....I know that writing is not as solitary an exercise as I had experienced it, that it is so helpful to have someone respond at various times in the process....I know now how to leave papers alone and teach the students....I thought I'd landed on the moon when I first came. Now it feels more like coming home.

Susan's feeling of "coming home" suggests that through her hard work and intense relationships with other writers, readers, and listeners, she has found her own voice, tapped into the resources of hers that were always there. She has, in Murray's words, "pushed at her edges." Aside from the time she needed for reflection, she needed the community of her response group; the social interaction as well as the intellectual activity of reading and writing.

In the early part of this century, at John Dewey's lab school, there were scheduled weekly meetings in which teachers formed social and intellectual relationships. They were encouraged to reflect, to contextualize for themselves:

They were both social and intellectual relationships, constantly to be reflected upon and to become the subject of discussions....Dewey knew full well the kind of responsibility to interpret, even while engaging fully with the learning process itself. Today's reader cannot but be struck by the reflectiveness, the wide-awakeness for which he was asking....his concern for open dialogue among the teachers becomes as striking as his interest in the school itself as a learning community for adults as well as the young. (Greene in Jackson, ed., 24-25)

In their three weeks together, Dorothy, Susan and Lenore have had those social and intellectual relationships that John Dewey wanted for his teachers. The "reflectiveness, the wide-awakeness, the open dialogue" has happened to this response group as they gather daily in the lounge and outside on the lawn--sharing their products, processes, and possibilities. For each of these teachers, Ellen's class is the home of their shared literacy, the "learning community for adults" that Greene suggests was Dewey's goal. For Dorothy, Lenore, and Susan, Ellen has not taught them; they have taught themselves in the company of one another.

Dorothy's experience has been full of paradoxes, but as a temporary member of this culture, she has learned much about teaching, not the "tips" she came for. In her final evaluation, Dorothy writes to Ellen: "Most interesting for me has been watching you, Ellen. Your gentle, consistent orderly approach does wonders for setting this writer's mind free!" This was not the traditional course with readings and papers that Dorothy had learned to be successful in; it wasn't even the "academic" community that she had expected it to be. By participating in a different paradigm for learning, Dorothy is beginning to understand it. She has watched Ellen carefully, she has learned much about herself as a writer and written much about herself as a teacher through her experiences with the others. I ask her if she would count Ellen as one of her mentors, and what she has learned from her:

Quietness. Unobtrusiveness....Because I tend to be pushy with kids...I'd not call her a "mentor." It would be more like a "model." I will *do my own mentoring*. What will help me is the fact that I have, in my hand, papers that I wrote. And the way I did that was by going through this process.

On the last night, Susan joins me for my visit to Dorothy's apartment. We sit at Dorothy's kitchen table, drink cokes, and talk together with the tape recorder on. Susan says, "We didn't get any negative comments at all, not once, this entire three weeks....We have those little piles of papers. Plus the oral comments that we got in response group."

Dorothy, still the skeptic, says, "Part of me said that those nice comments were false. They couldn't possibly be real. You know? They couldn't be sincere...But they were, because they *had to be* specific."

"You can't argue when somebody remembers something in your writing. Phrases, clusters that a lot of people seem to comment on. You know that it had to be a good one if more than one person remembers it...."

Dorothy fills our cups. "It suddenly occurred to me today that the three weeks went by very very fast. There was a point last week when I just wanted to be home with my garden. But by the time three weeks have gone by, even by the time one week has gone by, you're a group, and you're loyal to each other....That's what kids want, too." A few wisps of hair fall out of her barrette, and her shirt collar sags a little.

"You know, Dorothy, it never occurred to me to do that...my fear was that kids wouldn't learn if I didn't teach them everything real fast...now I know they'll learn, more slowly, *if you just leave them alone to grow.*"

"Yes, "Heal thyself." Dorothy smiles. "What will help me is the fact that I have, in my hand, papers that I wrote."

INTERTEXT

CARING AWAY FROM HOME: POETIC SANCTUARY

It is 7:45 a.m, the third day of the program, and I cross the street toward Hamilton Smith Hall in a cool drizzle. I walk past Kingsbury Hall, the engineering building, past the Paul Creative Arts Center, on to a damp footbridge over a summer stream. The rocks are darker than usual; I delight in the drizzle on my nose and back. Today the pine needle beds make the campus smell as pungent as a New Hampshire resort.

Ahead of me, a young woman twirls patterns with a red checked umbrella. Her backpack is sagging, heavy with books. It is covered with plastic buttons. I quicken my step to catch a peek. There are two photo-buttons of two little boys, and another photo button of a man playing with the children: her husband, their father, I imagine. One button encases a child's crayon writing: "This is a mom," and one shows a crest of a high school in Ohio. She walks briskly in her sneakers, thick socks rolled over them, her green jumper flopping in the drizzle. She moves toward the library, and I am still behind her, inventing my version of her story. She's away from home, perhaps, for the first time since she's had her children, and she teaches high school. The buttons encase snapshots of the pieces of her life, they identify her, and they dot the bag that sags with her current efforts. Is she lonely or refreshed or both? Is she writing about her children or her husband or her students?

She is still twirling her umbrella when we top the hill. A sleek older woman greets her, folding her arm around her shoulder, squeezing under her umbrella. The older woman looks casually elegant in a pink and grey sweatsuit, pink quartz earrings swinging under her grey hair. "Hi Honey, were you cold last night? Did you sleep without a blanket?" The computer room was locked last night, and in another window of

the same building stood stacks of folded blankets, unavailable. Just like a mother, I think, or a teacher. Teachers handle daily glitches: locked closets, locked machines, broken machines, broken spirits, missed paperwork, unavailable materials, injuries, sickness. They merely notice and act--detail after detail. "We'll be sure to get you a blanket," she says, and together they walk into their morning.

Away from home, this young teacher wears her story on her bookbag, and in the thin morning mist, an older teacher reads it. She is the "one-caring" for "the cared-for," as Nel Noddings suggests, a female way of relating. Noddings describes the "ethics of being cared for" as reciprocity; an attitude natural to both parent-child and teacher-student relationships, "mutual inclusion," a "climate of receptivity." To accept "the gift of responsiveness" is an act characteristic of both mothering and teaching. (1986)

There is a paradox in this situation. This young teacher-mother is away from home, but in another way, she is closer to home than her own home usually allows. Her bookbag marks her identity. Both the older teacher and the writing program itself offer her a temporary sanctuary, placing her in "cared-for" role so that she can have the peace to reflect on her role as the "one-caring" at home and in her school. "The teacher as "one-caring," observes Nodding, "needs to see from both her own perspective and that of the student in order to teach--in order to meet the needs of the student." Just as caring is conceptually dependent on being cared for, teaching is conceptually dependent on learning. (67) Over time, she explores the double-bind of her double role. Two weeks after this casual encounter, the young teacher/mother with the buttons on her bookbag places this poem in the final NHWP publication:

SANCTUARY

*Hunched under the fluorescent glare
I slump
Present day Quasimodo*

*A freak of nature born of stress and fatigue.
Lips stretched white over clenched teeth,
Deep ridged brow over spastic lashes,
Ears ringing, I hobble to his room to find my sanctuary.*

The moon, half hidden by clouds, covers his walls with shadow and light.
There on his sheets he lies, arms stretched outward, opened to the breeze.
I lie beside him.

He unconsciously folds toward me,
his small hand just touching my arm.

I study his face
the creamy smoothness of his lids and brow
the stillness of his lashes
the wafer of air between his lips.

If I am patient, he will move and fold himself toward the moon patterned wall.

And I, his disciple
can follow.

I conform to his body,
My jutting neck realigns to fit
his downy head under my chin.

My spine slowly straightens as I press my chest against his back.
Together we form a C

as
our legs curve in unison.

My knees serve as the pedestal for his tiny feet.

I listen. I follow.

He breathes.

I breathe.

My heart slows to his steady beat.

I lie in sync
with his slow
waltz
time.

Beth

INTERTEXT**TO REALLY CHEER: QUESTIONING OUR ASSUMPTIONS**

During the second week of the writing program, the university was host to a high school cheerleading camp. The participants looked quite different from the gymnasts of the first week, pre-adolescent girls under the scrutiny of their male coaches. We saw them more than we saw the lacrosse camp boys, who volleyed their balls across the street in arcs over passing cars as they lumbered to distant playing fields. The cheerleaders were a visual presence, more than the high school instrumentalists who squeaked and strained inside the arts complex all day and made sophisticated music through the dorm windows into the night, playing an occasional game of volleyball in awkward coed groupings.

We watched as the cheerleaders practiced their moves gliding through the cafeteria line. They traveled in packs; in the dorms, and on the lawns. They wore their school uniforms only on the last day, but on the other days, each team dressed alike. There were the Purple Tops/Socks with White Shorts/Sneakers, the Yellow T-shirts-Yellow Socks with Black Shorts/Sneakers. There were Red T-shirts with Names on the Backs, and there were the Black-and-Whites, the Glitter-Experimenters, the Green-and-Pinks, and the Blues. One team had hair crusted high with spray, and pony tails festooned with red fabric, another team wore long hair swept to the left side, clipped with purple barrettes. The color, volume, and identity of the teams was remarkable; we believed that they were following a carefully regulated policy that had not come from their schools.

The cheerleaders were the object of affectionate joking among teachers in the cafeteria : "What do you call a group of cheerleaders?" "A Gaggle?" "A Giggle?" "A Swarm?" "A Blast?" "A Burst?" The girls smiled and giggled, looking well organized

and independent despite the oppressive heat and their rigorous physical daily practice schedule. We never saw their coaches. Their cafeteria trays were full of fruit, grains, and salads, and an average of six glasses of water per girl per meal. Their food did not look like the donuts, cokes and french fries of the pre-adolescent gymnasts the week before. The girls carried large plastic water bottles which they filled each morning with gallons of water. By Wednesday morning, there was a sign outside the cafeteria asking them to please refrain from filling their water jugs, that it held up the lines.

Their cluster identity was not news to teachers; adolescent girls need the security a group provides, and cheerleaders are lucky to have it. Recent work of scholars in education (Gilligan, 1990) is beginning to highlight the profound developmental differences in belief and identity between adolescent boys and girls inside a complex world of academics and work. Girls in early adolescence become confused about trust and relationships, and throughout their later adolescence, they struggle to "authorize their voices" against the conventions of a society which is more in line with male development. Adolescent girls experience confusion and depression, and they form cliques to experiment with inclusion and exclusion. While the boys are becoming increasingly comfortable as they fit into institutional hierarchies, girls' discomforts and struggles increase as they get older. At this point in their lives, older adolescent girls need relationships with adult females and groups in which to experiment with the struggle between what they believe and what they think society wants them to believe. They need to express their struggle and their resistance. Gilligan's research team suggests having girls write diaries, engage in collaborative projects and performances, and enter into group discussions with one another and with adult women.

The fate of the second week's cheerleaders evoked a passionate written response in one teacher, Alison. She experimented with it in a group of other women, and eventually

published it in the workshop collection. On Wednesday, the temperature had climbed to ninety-eight degrees, and the dew point indicated saturation. The girls bounded to the fields, giggling and gossiping in colorful clusters after breakfast to begin their morning practice. By late morning, forty cheerleaders collapsed, and were taken to a local hospital and treated for heat prostration. One teacher, who happened to be writing a poem on a nearby lawn, said "I remember them being carried out, poor things. Their heads were lolling, their eyeballs were rolling. They looked so unfocused. They were limp. They had to be dragged away, and the other ones had their legs dangling over the stretchers." Ambulances shuttled back and forth to campus, the local newspaper announced the incident, and several of the girls had to stay overnight. The jokes among the teachers erupted. "Did they drop in a gaggle, in a squad, in a pile?" "Didn't anyone notice when the first one fell?" "They looked so much alike, how could they tell how many fell?" "Why didn't the coaches stop them?" "Why didn't they drink more water?" "Did they go down screaming?"

Inside Hamilton Smith Hall, Alison becomes angry and concerned when she hears the ambulances. At forty-two, besides her job as a teacher-administrator, she is an aerobics instructor and an ex-cheerleading coach. She was a cheerleader herself in high school and college. After the incident, during the following week, she writes seventeen drafts of a personal essay that begins with a sad comment: "Today forty cheerleaders had to be carried off the field...." The afternoon before she crafts her final draft, four women read their drafts in a group, and Alison begs for time. "I really need some response from you guys on this. I'm almost done, but I need you to hear it:"

To Really Cheer

Knee-jerk reactions make me want to punch the jerk in the knee. Some words seem to hold the power of those little hard-rubber hammers doctors use to test reflexes. You say the word, you get an automatic response. "English teacher" produces nervous comments about watching grammar. "Cheerleader" evokes a grimace of distaste. These

reactions, I contend, illustrate a human unwillingness to question assumptions.

English teachers are not grammar police. They have more interesting things to do than carp at split infinitives. A cheerleader's focus is not the focus many assume: look good and yell loud. In fact, cheerleaders are multi-talented. Like athletes, they need aerobic fitness, for two hours of practice daily, then a three-hour sequence of leaping, clapping, and using their lungs. Like musicians, they need a sense of rhythm; crowds won't respond to an arrhythmic cheer. Like dancers, they need balance and flexibility to stand atop a peer's shoulders or somersault into a supple split. Like artists, they need creativity to determine patterns for at least fifteen floor and fifty sideline cheers. Like teachers, they need patience and diligence, working for hours to achieve both unison and unity. Like any team member, they need cooperation. You can't have jealousy of the one who's in front or on top because he's the shortest or she's the lightest. Like entertainers, they need to be continually pleasant and smiling; nobody pays attention to a scowl or pout. And like drill sergeants, they need to be loud.

When she stops reading this section, she experiments and re-conceptualizes the remainder of her essay as she hears her colleagues react:

Pam: Are you saying that just *anybody* can be a cheerleader?...to me, you were saying that they're really special and to these qualities, and I think you're right, it is hard work--the picture is wrong. So I think there's some confusion there.

Alison: I'm saying anybody has to work hard. But you're right. It's confusing.

Susan: I didn't know who you were talking about at the beginning, I didn't know whether we were going to be hearing about whether teachers are cheerleaders, or cheerleaders are teachers.

Alison: I'll just take the English teacher stuff out.
(In unison, like cheerleaders, all four women yell "No!")

Alison: So somehow I need to move from "cheerleaders are special" to "one of the qualities that they have is a universal support"--I think that's what I'm trying to say, that "yes, they're not just flashy show-offs who jump around in short skirts"

Dorothy: Just like English teachers are not just people who go around slashing papers.

Susan: Exactly.

Alison: Maybe what I should try to do is in here, this transition, use that power, or that spirit, or that joy, as an example for the rest of the world, and then try to carry it on....

Pam: Yeah, that's good.

Susan: Mmmm. Exactly, because not all principals and not all of those people you list *are* cheerleaders....sometimes they're just playing their own game.

Alison: That's sort of what I'm trying to say...when I finished last night, I thought, "I'm not done," but I really didn't know where I was going....I don't want my audience to be just English teachers. I want my audience to be every person in this profession....I get so angry when people say, "Oh cheerleaders, show-offs," because they're so much more than that. And I have an English teacher's perspective, because that's who I am.

Dorothy: It would be funny to use split infinitives through the paper.

Alison: Well, the title is "To Really Cheer."
(They laugh.)

Alison: If I try to convey the universal quality in that third paragraph, and then I might end up with a different beginning, and just clean up the ending a bit.

Barbara: Or talk more about our assumptions.

Alison: *Ah Hah*, I need to go back to assumptions at the end.

Susan: Right, because that's what you're really talking about.

Alison: *Okay*, thanks everyone, that helped a lot. (She makes a triumphant flourish with her pencil and closes her stuffed folder.)

Pam: Good stuff!

Alison: Well, it *bugs* me enough, it *ought* to be good. I was a cheerleader for eight years, and a coach for ten years, and I know whereof I speak. It pisses me off when people start criticizing.

Dorothy: This was a good session, so many different voices here.

This five-minute collaboration shows women engaging in "connected knowing," a better way, they contend, for women to learn. It is ironic that as both teacher and student Alison crafts her idea into a passionate personal essay with the help of a support group-- four women, two of whom have been cheerleaders themselves, all of whom are students and teachers of adolescent girls. The following day, she has re-worked the final sections:

We can learn something from these boys and girls in matching school colors. The discipline, the physical exertion, the uniform may pertain to the sport of cheerleading. But the energy, the unity and the joy are universal. There is something about the spirit of a cheerleader which ought to translate into the larger arena of school and community. Perhaps it is the desire to urge a group toward a common goal.

Think of the particularly joyous, spirited fan whose energy at a game raises a riotous yell at the crucial moment. Picture the faculty member whose very presence spurs sharper play, or the principal who offers words of advice and encouragement to an excitable crowd of students before the annual game against the cross-town rival. And what about the coach who can revitalize flagging energies at half-time? Or the player whose entry into a game ensures a spurt of superb play from teammates? These, too, are leaders of cheers.

Do we grimace at them? We usually applaud. We support the spirit, joy, and pride. Cheerleaders do not deserve their customary scoffing, any more than English teachers warrant grammar-bashing. Assumptions are thoughtless reflexes; they do us no honor. We must always remember what it is to really think.

Belenky, et al, colleagues of Gilligan's, found in an extensive study of that women learn in a state of "connected knowing," that emerges in such collaborations. They describe "connected teaching," as a state of "disciplined subjectivity." Alison and her colleagues were doing both:

...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 the lessons we have learned in listening to women's voices. (1986, 229)

The cheerleader topic and Alison's theme is an apt metaphor for this encounter. Here, these women can question their assumptions about girls, talk, learning and teaching. With the same "team spirit" she evokes in the cheerleaders she writes about, Alison has engaged with her colleagues as they practice "connected teaching." She has re-conceived her writing, confirmed the major themes of her argument in the presence of a supportive community. With their help, her piece links the job of an English teacher with the work of a cheerleader.

CHAPTER 5

JOYCE: THE MATTER OF HEAD-WATCHING

All the arts need to be supplemented by philosophical chatter and daring speculation about the nature of things: from this source appear to come the sublimity of thought and all-round completeness...Plato, Phaedrus

When Joyce Choate decided to sign up for this summer's Institute on Reading, Writing, and Learning, it had been ten years since her last summer writing workshop. She knew from the brochure that this was *not* a course for beginners. The 1990 brochure reads: "The Institute is designed for classroom teachers (K-12) and school leaders who have participated in the New Hampshire Writing Program, or who have extensive experience and training in teaching the writing process...This institute will deal with the following topics: Teaching the reading process so that it parallels the teaching of writing/ Using many forms of writing and reading to pursue an area of interest/ Addressing skills in a process-based program/ Evaluation/ Use of learning logs/ Use of the library, interviews, media, and other sources of information/ Helping students become researchers." (see appendix)

Joyce tells me, "I did expect that we'd be moving on, and I was very interested in the incorporation of reading with writing, and I'm very interested in making connections." Her purpose for being here is clear and focused. She is here for a "shot in the arm," a "professional kick in the pants," in her words. She does not need to solve her personal problems through writing; she has done that quite successfully for herself in other ways. Joyce wants help incorporating writing into her teaching and into her own literacy. She has never been comfortable personally with writing.

Over time, Joyce admits and I confirm that she is an eloquent talker, a superb

dramatic reader, and she enjoys direct contact with people. By the end of the program, a classmate phrases it well: "Joyce, you speak in final drafts!" Her first love is drama; she is both singer and performer, and along with her personal passion for reading, she has loved being able to share her dramatic skills in the classroom. "I've always enjoyed being able to take a text in class, to read it out. I love to read. I am a good reader. And they eat it up. Like it was frozen yogurt. Just eat it up." But she worries that her students are not getting enough, that they need more writing. "As excited as I can get the students from talking about literature and reading literature, enjoying it myself, I'm letting an entire area of teaching go, because I am anxious about it. Very anxious about it, in my own life, and in the life of my students." Loving them, "the children," as she calls her fourteen year old ninth graders, is not enough, she has decided, "professionally speaking, I am concerned for more than just *my relationship* with the students....I hope I haven't done anybody a terrible harm over the last ten years, but I have not done them a great service either."

We eat dinner together and continue our talk as we walk down the hill, through the woods to the dorm. It is the second evening of the program, and we're both entranced with the frozen yogurt machine. We've snuck cones out of the cafeteria, and we finish them as we talk. She is slender, athletic looking. I calculate she's in her early to mid-forties. She has that preppy look that evokes clothing catalogues for the casually elegant. Her hair is short, curly, and sensible, and tonight she wears a pink mesh cotton shirt, pink and green madras shorts and tennis shoes. Her tiny gold hoop earrings touch her ruddy cheeks. We aren't discussing the country club or the swimming pool. We are talking about school and home. Isn't it nice, we marvel, that we don't have to cook or clean while we're here. "It's not only nice," she says, "it's very important not to have to use any creative energy in thinking about the running of

the household because you've got to have it all for the writing." She returns to her fear of writing in almost every subject we treat.

When she admitted during her first day of class that she did not feel like "Ms. Professional," that she is terrified of writing and she is "professionally weary," I asked her if she would admit that feeling to her colleagues in an English Department meeting. "I think I'd frighten them if I told them. They would be concerned..." She shares an office with colleagues in other departments: "it's a real fraternity/sorority," she tells me. Although they don't share philosophical concerns about reading and writing, they share what she calls "professional concerns." "We work in a large room together, we have six desks on one side of the room and six on the other....In the eleven years I've worked with these people, we've become pretty darn close."

Joyce has been teaching these years at a small high school in central Vermont, a "lovely place to teach." During the summer of the first year, she took the writing workshop at the University of Vermont. After seven years of single parenthood in several southern states, she settled in with her teenage son and second husband Gordon, a gun engraver. She is a native of Long Island, and her in-laws, now deceased, were Vermont farmers from families of schoolteachers and writers, "intelligent people who would much rather have been professors at the University, but fate would have it that they live on this little Vermont farm."

Joyce recognizes that her teaching-self-esteem has had a slow leak over a long period of time. "I've been having real concerns about myself as a teacher. I love the kids and I'm not sure I like my teaching." Here, on the second night, just before we go to the open forum, she begins telling a series of stories in which she examines her past as a teacher and a student. Her stories will continue throughout the course of the three weeks. "Just two incidents does not a confident person make, if that's all she is involved with, because we're looking at thirteen to eighteen years worth of something

else that happened in my life. What do I bring to my teaching that comes from my first day in kindergarten?" This is a theme that will recur for her.

I later see that Joyce uses much of her time here to examine her personal history, her learning autobiography, and connect it to her teaching. "Somewhere along the line in my growth and development, my speaking was reinforced. I know that my mother and I spent a lot of time together in my early years...Wouldn't it have been wonderful if somebody had asked me, 'What do you like about school?' And I would have said 'Music.'" The subtle, steady pressure of remembering our past, "the rememberer's interlocuter," as Jerome Bruner (1990, 59) calls it, helps us reconstruct our experience with narrative and re-conceive our ideas about our cultural institutions. "Experience in and memory of the social world are powerfully structured not only by deeply internalized and narrativized conceptions of folk psychology but also by the historically rooted institutions that a culture elaborates to support and enforce them." (1990, 57) Our own stories of schools reinforce how we produce school stories in others. Our memories can serve a dialogic function as we begin to question and interpret our narratives.

As Joyce tells me about her past, she begins a three-week investigation of her own verbal literacy--reading, writing, speaking, and listening, how schools support it and how they do not. Joyce began teaching twenty-some years ago, for a year in a small town in Massachusetts, married, moved to Florida and had a son.

Depending on a Voice out of Heaven, Loving in an Enforced Peace

She returned to teaching full time in Tennessee six years later, when her son entered first grade. By then, she was divorced. "I had a hell of a year that first year. I

was a damn yankee schoolteacher and the kids and I...The blacks and whites were two separate cultures and me--trying to get along. They did beautifully but there was always that coldness there in the classroom. There was the obvious disparity in their backgrounds and what they brought to this white man's cultural education. Oh, golly!" It remained a struggle for a while:

I finally said to the principal after a troubled day, "Mr. Row, I *do not* have control of this class.," and he simply said "Oh." And I thought, the man isn't hearing me. I can't cry about it anymore. I can't have a nervous breakdown about it. I have to have this job, I want this job, I want to teach these children....If you wanted to learn, you pulled your chair and just got to the front of the room. If you didn't, and you stayed back there I wasn't going to ask you. So I was teaching these few kids at the front of the classroom....I was not going to make them join the group, but I was going to hold them responsible for what the group was doing. The kids at the back of the room pelted chalk at me, everytime I turned to write on the board, I'd feel chalk on my back. It was a real Gettysburg. North and South, again. But the kids who were near me could hear me because I was talking with them, as you can tell, in a very direct voice. (This voice is to my advantage in teaching. Can you tell?)

Joyce's voice is, in fact, controlled, dramatic, and expressive. She chooses her words and her metaphors slowly and carefully. I enjoy the Civil War metaphor, and I can picture the lines of battle, the chalk bullets, and Joyce sitting, brave and straight-backed, in the middle. Eventually, "It was noisy that day and suddenly I heard this voice from the speaker on the wall...." Her principal sent for the troublemakers, paddled and suspended them. "We had peace in the classroom for a week....They knew if I wasn't gonna do it, *The Lawd* was on my side, and he was right up there on the wall listening all the time, a voice out of Heaven. And when we had that kind of *enforced peace*, we were then able to begin to love each other...I had a lovely, lovely senior year with the same kids."

All those years ago, Joyce talked herself out of her trouble, invoking the

principal's intervention. She saw the battle lines drawn between her students, wanted to create peace in her classroom. Her "war and peace" metaphor suggests that she perceived the classroom as a battleground. The social reality of school as she saw it as a young teacher was, in fact, a matter of taking sides. Lakoff and Johnson suggest that our own metaphors will guide our future action, become self-fulfilling prophecies (1980, 156), and metaphors when applied to schools (Tomlinson, 1988) can be inexorably mixed with the way we see curriculum.

At that early point in her career, Joyce knew that literacy in the classroom was her responsibility, but she still needed some divine intervention, the "voice out of Heaven" to suspend the militants for a while, confirm her decisions, and "enforce" the peace she needed to cover the prescribed curriculum. But even then, she worked her way through the situation by using silent talk for herself and carefully crafted literate talk with her students. She is sensitive to voices, hers and others: "This voice is to my advantage in teaching. Can you tell?" she underscores. It was her memory of Mr. Row's voice on the wall, a "voice out of Heaven" that saved her. Throughout her literate life, Joyce has built her personal knowledge through both reading and talk, and she will use these three weeks to examine how. Her oral narrative style serves her in the same way pre-writing exercises serve others. James Britton has shown that it is in talk that students learn. "The quality of our words in the head, inner speech, must be closely tied to our experience of talking with others which gives us resources for thinking and learning, for self-prompting and intellectual adventure." (1984, 126) Joyce produces compelling oral commentary, and she knows it, and she wants to discover how it ties in with her fear of writing. "Some children need to discover their voices, find their tongues, and some teachers need to rediscover theirs. When pupils are free to talk, teachers are free to observe and to understand what kind of learning is

going on. For in the end, the teacher can only make sense of his pupils making sense." (1984, 127). For Joyce as she functions as both student and teacher, and in a reflexive posture as both observer and observed, she will begin a powerful dialogue with her own self as it functions as a pupil in the act of making sense.

Writing from Talk: The English Language Should be Heard

Talking to herself, on tape and with others, is Joyce's way of organizing her thinking, and she learns to use it during her three weeks here. On the drive to UNH, she tells me, she spoke to her tape recorder about her expectations for the program. Throughout her time here, she explores the tension between her comfort with speaking and her discomfort with writing. Over time, it becomes a very important theme. "Well, from the moment I got here, I loved being with the people. Never for a moment did I *not* love being with the people...if it was reading and talking about what we were reading and learning, I would have absolutely thought I'd died and gone to heaven."

When she tells me the story of her walk around the campus on the first night, it is so full of images that I decide to turn on my tape recorder. She doesn't mind that I tape her story, but so far she hasn't written a word. "I started to walk, briskly, because I was so tense." She saw clusters of people and imagined similar tensions in all of them. A group of young couples was having a cookout in the married student apartments: "How the hell were those mothers going to manage their work with the toddlers running around, and when were they going to get in and get started?" She walked by a group of teenage girls: "They were in that slow walk, walking backwards, animated kind of conversation, one girl, very alive in her face, caught my attention when she said 'Oh yes, the first thing I'm gonna do is *get out of New Hampshire.*' I thought 'I'd like to get out of the world right now. Get out of New Hampshire, honey, I can relate to that.'" Then she ran into a young man playing on

the lawn with a Beagle puppy. "So he flopped in the grass and I got down low, because that puppy is only nine or ten inches long, But doing all the things a girl dog would do. I enjoyed talking with him, I listened to myself. I thought, 'Joyce, you have the talent, you ask very good questions, you bring people out, you have to try to pay attention to that and remember that's a gift you have.'" She thanked him, and decided to turn her walk into a run.

"For a few moments I felt a release, that my mind was empty, but then the wave of fear came back. It came back because I was getting closer to the dorm...to the task at hand. I really was thinking, 'Joyce, let this tell you that you want to leave teaching'...So I blasted through the door, and two young women looked at me, I don't know what the look was in their faces...My son says 'Mom your eyes get wild and your hair gets frizzy and you're crazy,' and I knew I was crazy, temporarily." She had just entered her room when her classmates Lila and Ronald, "my ministering angels," invited her to join them for reading together in the air conditioned ice cream parlor.

She had felt overwhelmed over the prospect of writing, and even the bulk of reading responsibilities began to bother her. "Tom (Romano) said, at the end of class, reading Chapter 1 aloud, taking turns around the room. 'I want you to read a big chunk of this tonight, because I want you to finish it by Friday.' It's 330 pages! And that threw me for a loop because for me, reading a novel together is just that, sitting and experiencing that story and that language out loud, to me the English language in many cases should be heard." I ask if she does that with her students. "Yes, it's a spiritual experience! Which I wouldn't miss for the world, and if there's anything I do well in my classroom it is the sharing of literature and speaking together." So, by ending her first day with Lila and Ronald, talking through the reading, avoiding the writing, and talking to herself again, Joyce was able to decide to stay. "It was the joy I

needed, and then I realized, 'Oh for heaven's sakes, I'm *watching myself* here. I'm watching Ronald, I'm watching Lila. I have an observation to make here. I have something to write about." Not only does this "spiritual experience" serve her in her writing this week; it foreshadows a triumph that will come for her three weeks later, at the end of the program.

She writes the second morning in class. Tonight, though, she is under pressure to write more. She must share a draft in the morning in a small group, and so far she has written very little. I offer the tape we've just made, and suggest that maybe it will help her to shape a piece of writing. She takes it. Her agony lasts until Thursday, through drafts and small group conferences, tapes and transcriptions. Her drafts are hand-written in large, feathery script, double-spaced, and they use every inch of the notebook paper she writes on. The margins are full of angled notes to herself ("I could write all day, no problem, if I didn't have to share it with the group.") Her doodles are sequences of budding plants and flowers, arrested in their growth. There are chunks of words in boxes, straight cross-outs, and wavy deletions. Each page is dated and numbered. Of the drafts remaining *outside* the wastebasket, I count nine separate starts in three days' work. She calls it "heavy" and "out of control."

Although she is wracked with insecurity about her writing this first week, Joyce knows that her strengths lie in reading and responding. On Thursday, she is still upset about her own product, but she defers to others and talks to herself about it: "...by then my piece, the first one, had grown to gigantic proportions, heavy duty, go-nowhere. Frank needed a conference. We gave it to him. I kept saying, 'Joyce, one of your joys is helping the other guy and seeing his or her writing grow. Remember that. Remember that. Get away from yourself and work with Frank and enjoy it.'"

She returned to the dorm alone, in tears. "I thought 'Joyce, you CAN go home. It's only money. And if you go, you don't feel like a failure. You just say, 'This

wasn't for you at this time." When she reached the dorm, her husband was on the phone. He asked if she had been running, and she told him no, that it was crying and she wanted to come home. "He said, 'Well, that is a choice. I hope you don't. I hope you stick it out. I want you to do it. And then he went on to give me a pep talk as only Gordon can...He wasn't pompous, but he was focused.

'Remember Abraham Lincoln,' he said, "when he finished reading that Gettysburg Address, as far as he was concerned, he was a failure'...In my head I remembered it, my eleventh graders had just done The Gettysburg Address as a musical piece, and what a gem of simplicity it was....He reminded me of his brother, who takes piano lessons and plays in recitals when his playing isn't as competent as others....I was listening but I wasn't hearing, if you know what I mean. But all of that information must have stuck in my head, because when I went to my desk I realized that keeping it simple was, for me, a solution...that will be my message to my students...Quantity is meaningless if there is no quality, and very often you have to chip away at the hunk of coal before you get to the diamond."

In her room, she began reading what she had written all week, finding the parts she was pleased with. She blended her own conversations helping others all week, the conversation with her husband, her aural memories of the Gettysburg Address, and the taped record of her adventure the first night, trying to make some meaning for herself in the mechanical act of transcription. She wrote, she listened, she transcribed. And suddenly, she stopped. "I got to the point where I could stop transcribing. And I realized, 'The reason you can stop here, Joyce, is because it's finished! You've said what you need to say. Eureka! I was flying. And I thought, 'It's Thursday night!'" She flew down the hall to Cindy's room and then across the lawn to David, two people in her writing class. "At least I'll know. They'll tell me the truth.

And so I read it to them."

Cindy, who knew the piece, said 'You've said what you need to say.' And David was positive. We remembered one of our classmates talking about the book *Writing Down the Bones*, that a writer is simply someone who writes, and writes, and writes. I realized that that is what I had to do all week to get my piece, and I had to have the faith, which I didn't, that something would come out of all that writing, and it did....So, I went off in euphoria on Friday morning, to breakfast and to class and to the rest of the day. So I went into Friday going 'Phew.' Feeling light-hearted. Feeling that I could read." Her colleagues in the dorm relieved her insecurity and celebrated with her. "It's the forced proximity that was so helpful," she told me. Her final piece, written in her black feathery script, becomes a letter to her students:

Woodruff Hall, room 120

UNH, Durham: July 13, 1990

Dear Kids,

Remember in *Great Expectations* how Matthew Pocket pulls himself right up out of his chair by the roots of his own hair when his wife's craziness drives him mad? Well, I pulled a Matthew Pocket last night, going crazy with anxiety about my writing for the group I'm in.

You remember I told you I'd be a student this summer at UNH, and some of you smiled at the thought of me out there where you've been all year? So, you can feel satisfied because your misery is now mine....one similarity you can definitely relate to is all the work...my teacher must think we've got clones of ourselves here helping us do some of this....

I was fighting with my writing mind, forcing it to grow up...now! But my mind is more stubborn than I am, and it was winning the fight. The more I pounded, the less it produced. The less it produced, the more panic stricken I got. Even though brainstorming covered my desk, none worked. I'd shuffle through all those papers hoping one of the ideas I'd started would befriend me and take me further, but each brainstorm was nothing more than an acquaintance on the way to someplace else.

That's when I pulled my Matthew Pocket routine, jumped out of the chair, yanked on shorts and sneakers, and marched out of my stifling dorm room, down the hall, and into the night air. I figured I could walk my fear away, but I'd have to push it. So I forced my body just like I'd been forcing my mind....

The letter describes the people she saw on her walk, much of it an embellishment of her story as she told it on tape, and it ends simply saying "I'm still here and thinking of you." She closes with an old-fashioned hand-crafted, feathery scroll, and a very traditional "Mrs. Choate."

She reads the piece in class on Friday morning with dramatic intensity and flair in her voice. The class listens intently, and after she has finished, they sigh and mumble, shuffle and smile, bend over their file cards, and write responses to her finished piece. They walk their cards across the circle to her, placing them on Joyce's desk. She reads each one, smiling. The class is silent for a few minutes while she reads. The written response, accompanied by silence, is an important Friday ritual, and although this is the first Friday, the members of this class have participated in such ritual before. They know the value to the author of real audience response. The

writing is, for now, a finished piece. It deserves silent consideration. They have participated in the crafting of this piece all week long. The Friday response ritual recognizes the importance of the writer's finished contribution and the audience's respect for it. And because Joyce's classmates have experienced this before, they are reverent about following the ritual.

The cards are thick with specifics; Joyce's audience of high school teachers responds to her piece with comments about style, diction, and effect. Some point to imagery, genre, and word choice: "Comparison to *Great E*--good lead!" "Clones of ourselves'--great line!" "Walked backwards! Great idea-a letter--and it works" "The eloquent descriptions of your turmoil, the mother slumped over, the teenager who wants out...very effective! Keep on writing." "I like the genre you chose--who else to write to when you're struggling with writing but the people you teach?" "The line 'would befriend me and take me further'--love it."

Other responses mention its emotional impact, and recognize Joyce's week-long agony: "Well, Joyce, you gave us you *and* ourselves. The truth screams back 'the writer is an observer.' You did and we reflected with you. Come hold my hand." "You convey well the turmoil. Will you show it to the kids?" "The humor and the anxiety were very real," "A trip to find yourself--I shared your experience last summer--I have never been so frustrated, homesick, and lonely in my life. Would love to talk."

And in others, there is a shared philosophical connection with the theme of Joyce's piece: "Our students don't realize that we struggle many times just like they do. I think your students will enjoy and identify with your letter." "It ties in the reasons why we're here--kids, writing, and self." "A fine projection of a teacher as student." "Bravo! I'm sure glad you're still here. You made some excellent choices both personally and in your writing." "I don't feel so alone now."

Bringing the Talk to School, The Challenge to Create a Receptive Spirit

Joyce begins to think about this ritual, through her observation of the people with whom she worked closely, about her own classroom. "It's fascinating on Friday to see what happens to pieces that you were part of conferencing. I would very much like my students, perhaps with a paper or two a week, have a volunteer early in the week, read a rough draft and then get to hear that paper again on Friday, being conscious of what stage that writing was in--let's say Tuesday or Wednesday. And I'd like to see my students capture the spirit of cooperative learning, in helping each other with their writing and improving the voice, clarifying the information, etc."

"Cindy and I helped Frank on Thursday, and he was all excited, and he went home after Simic, and he not only wrote a poem about Simic's poetry, called 'Charles Simic: Please Come Back.' You've got to hear him read that! But then to hear his piece and to see what he did with what we expressed were problems, and suggestions we made, to help him clarify what I thought was a very difficult job he was trying to do. He was recapturing a moment in a stickball game, and he was juggling dialogue to reveal character...he was juggling the fact that readers might not know the rules of a stickball game, and he was juggling the actual development of the game itself." Joyce's description of Frank's poem shows her engagement in Frank's creative process. She sees his "juggling," his week-long manipulations of words around the writing problems he had set for himself--between character development, attention to audience, and the actual information he needed to include about stickball itself. Her investment in Frank's piece is strong, and she is pleased with the finished product--for the collaborative effort, and for the writing itself. Her pride in the collective work of the class mirrors her surprise in her own success, and having experienced it

herself, she needs to think about how she'll work with this experience in her classroom.

Joyce wants to spend the weekend alone, reading and thinking. I can see that she needs to separate herself from everyone, but she offers to talk to me on tape. During the weekend, she works hard to fold her weeks' experiences as an insecure student into her life as a secure, seasoned teacher. In the quiet of reflection, she is able to think about the physical dimensions of her own classroom, and about herself as a classroom designer. "We sit in rows, the teacher's desk is at the front of the room, you've seen it a million times. That's okay for some things, and I won't change it except when we read aloud pieces to the group...I think I will invite us to sit on the floor and to create a circle where we just celebrate the writing...let that create a more receptive spirit...a circle of friends rather than rows of competitors."

Joyce postulates some larger projects, for her colleagues and her students: "I'd like to think that there will be some kind of support group that we teachers will get together. I would prefer to keep it very small, maybe even just women..maybe four of us. I'd also like to get a network in which we get in touch with more student publications and help students to prepare pieces to send in for possible publication."

She listens to the tape she's made for me, and then she adds a reflection on her reflection: "I heard two things that made me think how lingering old thought patterns and habits are. One of them is I've been referring to *MY* classroom, *MY* curriculum, etc. I hope that I will go in this year in the spirit that this is *OUR* classroom, this is *YOUR* ninth grade year of English, and I am here to help you accomplish that which you feel is important...to look at the options to decide what you might like to do with your ninth grade year. Also, I realize how traditional I am in thinking of myself as a student in Tom Romano's class. I thought more about his collecting a piece than my reading it to a group of peers. I might be willing to take more risks, if I knew that this

was not going to be evaluated so to speak by my peers, but simply listened to and perhaps conferenced or responded to...I might have done something more imaginative than I did, still put as much thinking time in. But I was very academic. I put physical and organizational time into it, thinking I was putting it into the hands of a teacher who wouldn't have me there reading it aloud for him."

Joyce's first week has been exhausting, and she recognizes it in others. "I noticed the weariness of participants at the end of the week. It's a challenge to be helpful to each other. We got very tired--five hours of sleep for many of us Monday through Thursday. There's also just so much sympathy we can give. People were very good to me, but that's that. That's enough now, Joyce is here, she will stick the program through, and we can laugh about it and we're not going to discuss the stress anymore. You just have to get in there and swim to keep your head above water." Over the weekend, Joyce catches up on her sleep and her reading, works on her portfolio, and talks to me on her tape recorder.

"I found it a great relief just to be here pretty much by myself. I cherished the fact that I was alone and I was not surrounded by talk of the Institute. I needed a rest from that intensity....It was an academic sort of job we had, no, that's not true. It wasn't academic. It didn't have to be. I read two hundred pages on Saturday, I outlined the draft to my response to the novel, and I felt a big relief at having done that. Today, I've been reading toward my Friday writing, and that's a little slower, that's a little bit more sluggish...like the humid weather we're having today, the work is dragging a little long, about the pace that the people's bodies are." When I listen to the tape, I realize, as she does, that she is far more comfortable with the "academic" tasks of reading and outlining a conventional response for her teacher. She is comfortable with outlining, reading, and responding to literature, but she anticipates another week

of writing. She chooses to do the more "academic" tasks, and despite her success this past Friday, is still feeling "sluggish" about her writing.

Old School Stories: Filling in the Blanks

Joyce's second week yields an even richer mix of people, talk, events, books, and writing. And she is the one doing the mixing. Much of her thinking comes from the informal talks she has with colleagues outside of class. Although she doesn't know it, she is still working with some themes that came to her during the first week: fostering competition as it clashes with forming community in schools, understanding personal learning histories, and overcoming writing apprehension. On Monday afternoon, I join her sitting on a rock with Bob, whom she calls one of her "support people," a colleague in her writing group. The rock is big and flat, enough for all three of us to sit comfortably. It is the one at the edge of the circular drive, from which we can survey our crescent of mini-dorms. A few people shuffle in and out of the doorways, swapping papers and books. Bob is wearing a tank top and shorts, about to take his evening run. Joyce is relaxed, glad to have had some time to herself over the weekend.

This morning we heard Don Murray's talk, "Pushing the Edge," and Friday is still four days away. "The edge," Murray said this morning, "Is the outer limit of our confidence and experience, when we attempt more than has been possible for us before...to learn, we need certain conditions: an experiment, an instructive failure, and a sense of humor" Joyce was moved by Murray's emphasis on exploring and experimenting, the essential element to move forward in a piece of writing. "It's the irony of the thing," Joyce told me after Murray's talk. "And yet, what will make a story is going to be, as Donald Murray says, the tension. That's really what I did, isn't it? I signed up for a little tension....It's 'Get your ass out there and flex your buttocks,

baby!" She laughs.

It is just before twilight, and so far there are no mosquitoes. Joyce has just finished reading Mike Rose's *Lives on the Boundary*, and Bob has read John Mayher's *Uncommon Sense*. Both books investigate "the system," the structure of public schools and its implicit values. Joyce and Bob are discussing both books, telling stories of personal failure and competition. Bob tells Joyce, "John Mayher is helping me to see why this operates the way it does on us. Well, you know, common sense education is 'We are paying those teachers. Therefore, they've got the knowledge, they've got the answers. You sit and shut up and we'll impart that to you....if that's going to operate effectively and efficiently, we've got to have students sit there and be consumers of education. We can't have them visiting among themselves because that will waste time. That's inefficient. On the other hand, the research would say that in order for students to become articulate users of language, they've got to use language. One cancels out the other...every page is loaded with ideas I'm connecting with my own education.'" As these two teachers visit with each other and talk about the reading they've done, they re-construct their own school histories and investigate their beliefs about their teaching.

Joyce's memories are sparse, but they fall into the two categories of learning in groups to create, and learning alone to compete. She remembers the joy of making butter together with her class in kindergarten, and then gradually learning "the challenge to be the first one and getting so I could be the first. In fifth grade I was shamed by my reading teacher into the knowledge that I was not reading....I did a report on a little bunny rabbit. It was a book probably for first or second graders, and it was the book I chose reluctantly, because I didn't want to do a book report. And my teacher asked us all to stand in front of the room...and when I gave mine, there was a

silence, palpable. And the teacher just looked at me with a very deadpan expression, and I read from his face, 'If this is where you want to stay all your life, help yourself, but you've got to realize you are not growing up...I saw from the look on his face, the blame was on me.' She has no other memory of that year. She "read his face." His talk and his expression was clearer than words on a page, and it spelled failure, blame, and competition.

The following year, by sixth grade, Joyce had mastered "the system." "In that class I learned that getting 100 on a spelling test meant I could give the next week's test from the front of the room. And now I begin to see where I enjoy that aspect of teaching-being at the front of the room. I learned to organize, I learned to study and memorize, and in January and June we had exams just like they did in the high schools. And if you had a 90 or better, you were exempt. And I worked every fall into the winter so I could be exempt from exams, and the same from the spring...I was very proud...That was my elementary school education...What was I learning to do? Be proud of memorizing...I was learning the system."

"Learning the very thing that imprisons us. Learning how to put the bars around ourselves." Bob's voice is strangely soothing, ironic. He stares out toward the mini-dorms, where groups of people walk from one dorm to another to trade papers and read together.

"Yes. Yes, absolutely." Joyce answers quietly. "I nailed in my own coffin nails, you know."

"All of us. We victimize the victim. We blame the victim for his or her learning problems....I failed first grade"

"And what impression do you think that made on you? On your life and your education?"

"Well, I think fortunately...given how young I was...I don't think it

hurt...Although, who knows? You know, I still bring it up, don't I?" Bob realizes that he has mentioned it several times since he's been here. He has taught at every grade level, raised two grown sons, and is now a school administrator, a language arts coordinator for a large state agency in the midwest. But he is determined to return to the classroom. "I've already asked for a sabbatical the year after next to return to the classroom to teach elementary."

Joyce has read Mike Rose's *Lives on the Boundary*, and she tells Bob she was moved especially by Rose's problems in elementary school. His high school experiences were unusual, and he was lucky. "As Rose goes on into high school, although it's still powerful, I think I become jealous. All of a sudden a very influential mentor, Jack McFarland, comes into his life. There was *no* Jack MacFarland in *my* life....I don't know that my teachers were necessarily that interested in me...for those of us who were girls and most of our teachers who might have mattered, the Jack McFarlands in our lives were men." Bob stiffens, moves back and forth on the rock, his arms grasping his knees, and looks up at the sunset. "Oooh, yeah, that kind of relationship *couldn't* have happened...the high school male teacher, going out of his way...to help her come into the temple...couldn't do that...boy, that's powerful."

Joyce remembers that her years in junior high shaped her gender identity, but not her knowledge. Her rewards were tied to Miss Bell, "who was very neat and proper and young and clean and short cropped hair, and again I was rewarded for my neatness and my good-girl behavior....I do not remember anything I read in seventh grade, I don't remember writing anything. I remember filling in some blanks." Her only clear memory is one from an eighth grade science class: "And while I was listening the kid to my right leaned back in his chair and without my realizing it, he put his left arm behind my back, and then in an instant grabbed and snapped my bra

strap. And I could cry now...Because the teacher laughed at him."

"Male teacher?" Bob asks

"Male teacher!" answers Joyce.

"Your memories of junior high are *not non-academic*. They have the aura of what happened and what didn't happen."

"It happened in the classroom and it spoke about school and what happens in schools...It broke my heart. It made me feel foolish to be a girl...Like I was being used. And I was an object. Donald Murray talked today about having a sense of humor. Tell *that* to an eighth grade girl."

Joyce's high school memories are gender-bound, as well; they center on "being in love with my English teacher, Mr. Ford," and starring in a play "Girl Crazy." "I have a singing voice. And I learned my lines. I had no soul in my lines, but when I sang my songs, I wowed them. Again, non-academic....From tenth through twelfth grade, I hated school...It was totally competitive. And that was it for me. I paid my dues, I got my fees...I became anonymous...They called me 'Kuhn.' They called us by our last names. And if you didn't answer the question in about five seconds, they went on to the next."

"Why did they do that to us?" Bob asks.

"I have no idea. Was it post-World War II? Was it post-Korean? Was it male-military system?" Joyce snaps her fingers and swings her arm in a rhythmic, marching cadence. "We put 'em in rows. We march 'em out. We produce 'em....Okay. Kuhn, when was the American Revolution? When did it start and what were three causes? You didn't get it? Okay. We'll go on to Welch."

"Assembly line. Performance. Produce. Product." Bob echoes Joyce's rhythm. In the book *Counterpoint and Beyond*, NCTE's response to the 1985 U.S. Government national report called *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, an examination

of the metaphors in the report points to the very paradigms that Joyce and Bob invoke as those which entrapped them as students, "research as debate, winners and losers in the teaching of reading," learning to read as industrial training, and educational policy as quality control. (Bloome, et.al., in Davidson, Ed. 1988) Joyce resists a system that measured her on a hierarchical scale, not according to her success in group-centered constructive learning (the butter in kindergarten, the music, her dramatic successes), and resents that her self-image in high school was related directly to the males with whom she interacted. The recent work of feminist scholars (Gilligan, Belenky et.al, Flynn) supports Joyce's informal observations of herself as a student, that none of her male teachers could have provided a mentor like Jack Mc Farland was to Mike Rose, that in her adolescence she "felt foolish to be a girl," and even in her dramatic success she spoke "lines that had no soul." Their informal school memories together on the rock bring Joyce and Bob to speculate on their roles as teachers.

"How the hell did you end up wanting to be a teacher?"

Joyce laughs. "That's what my students ask me. I tell them I really can't answer that question. But we all sit there, we laugh together, and I say 'I don't think it's to inflict pain...they laugh and I think, though, although *it is* lovingly administered, there's an element of pain...I think I'm searching through my teaching to find the love of learning."

Bob considers their stories, and he assures Joyce that going through the system with pain insures that they will make it better for their own students. "I think we have a double-edged advantage if we reflect and use our experiences." As they talk, Joyce and Bob examine their collective past and the histories they have created for their students. The reading has sparked their talk, and later that week, it will be the nucleus of Joyce's writing.

Joyce tells me how her writing formed during the week. "You and Bob helped me out of the rough there...I came in and I wrote my 'I remember' piece. I remember kindergarten, I remember first grade, I remember second grade, and I went on and on and on. And I was remembering very well, and I was at least able to document what happened and how I felt about it. I may not have been putting down writing that was artistically done, but I thought, 'I do not want to write. I don't know why. I don't want to do this.' So I flipped my paper over and I wrote 'What do I want to do? I want to show that the system has betrayed me, that it probably blotted out whatever creativity was starting by the time I was four or five years old.' I wrote two or three more things on the side of the paper, then I drew a line down the center and on the right side I tried to crystallize all that, in images, and realized that if I had anything, I had a form. All I could do was try to crystallize it into one great expression of what I was feeling the first week..."

Despite her moment of jealousy, reading *Lives on the Boundary* gave Joyce much support for her personal reflections. In her journal, Joyce had written some notes in response to Rose's book: "Rose as a writer, student educator...Amazed at the contrast between Rose's desolate environment but his obvious alertness to all its details--the people, their jobs, their fatal flaws, his poor education....implication of the book for me: the need to review the patterns of my own learning--literacy--home-school-to have my students do the same, evaluate their literacy past."

At the end of the week, Joyce writes in the letter to her class that accompanies her portfolio: "Mr. Rose reveals the status of students in the latter 20th century. Horrified and hopeful, I read: 'Harold was made stupid by his longing, and his folder full of tests could never reveal that.' (127). The writer of II Kings tells how a lost axe head floats to the surface of the Jordan River, and I believe I've seen the miracle repeated several times this past week." This week, Joyce's writing "miracle" takes

shape, with complex invisible support of reading, writing, reflecting, and collegial talk--the "philosophical chatter and daring speculation about the nature of things," (Plato, 89) that helped her dig into her past. She writes: "My response to reading Rose boiled down to a single reflection on my own elementary school education. What began on Monday night as her "I Remember piece," by Friday has become this poem:

Winthrop Ave. Elementary, 1951

After kindergarten,
they took the brassy, flashy cymbals,
the silver, tinkling triangles,
the rolling, swaying, pounding piano music and locked them away.

They handed me the scissors,
 sticky with old paste,
 stubborn like cold fingers
 fumbling with a key.
Struggling for smooth, I cut ragged edges.

Then they took the scissors
And pushed a pencil in my hand,
 a fat, leaden, pokey pencil.
My sprawling letters,
 wayward and willful,
Strayed from the straight-lined path.
My mind did, too.
So they tied me
 to the words
 on the page
 of a book.

Like a chain gang detainee,
I sounded off, in turn,
 around the stumbling circle,
 shackled with the words
they forced on me,
 the links

chaining my thoughts
to theirs.

The Personal Portfolio: Attesting to Arrested Writing, Resisting Responses to Reading

Joyce's poem is full of alliteration, sound images, and a cacophony of silent shrieks against a system that privileged words on a page over making sounds, a system which taught her early to "sound off in turn" and "shackled her" to words and thoughts she didn't choose. Her poem receives enthusiastic responses from her colleagues in class on Friday, but Joyce's fear of putting her words on paper has not disappeared this week. "Have I improved in my writing? Slightly," she tells me at the end of the week. "But that's going to take years, because if my theory is correct, somewhere in that part of my mind, my growth is arrested...Much more than I have had any time in my life. I've written papers in college, but they were always responses to what I was reading...what so-and-so said about something...I did enjoy those papers. I can remember the hysteria of writing for twenty-four hours with books literally piled all around me, and the adrenalin was pumping, and I guess I did pretty well." She enjoyed the papers in college, she recalls. She had mastered the system's formula for writing, and she saw it as a challenge. But her writing was mechanical and distant, safe from self-disclosure. Someone had given her the topic, the formula. This summer, she is having to construct her own assignments, conceive her topics, choose her genres. She compiles a portfolio to represent her reading and writing choices and her work, and explains her choices to her classmates in a letter each week.

For her class with Tom Romano, she is reading *You Must Revise Your Life* by William Stafford, and in her portfolio letter to the class she writes: "Mr. Stafford speaks and I listen reverently:

And you discover where music begins
 before it makes any sound, far in the mountains where canyons go
 still as the always-falling,
 ever-new flakes of snow."

"You and Art" (27)

Joyce's choice of quote shows her lifelong preference for sound. She conceives Stafford as "speaker" and herself as "listener." In her silent dialogue with him, she participates in his writing struggles and thinks about her own. She writes nineteen quotations in her journal as she reads the book, and chooses this page of her journal to put into her portfolio. On the edges of her notes, she scratches: "write, write, write, boil, boil, boil. Writing is not speaking for me. Music. Voices. Rumbling bass harmonies." From very early in her life, Joyce's engagement with words is through their sounds. At the end of her note to the class, she quotes Stafford again: "Maybe your stumbling saves you, and that sound in the night is more than the wind." Her poem "Bill Writes" reflects her own writing struggles and her engagement with Stafford's. She describes it as a "study in spontaneity:"

Bill Writes

Bill bashes his brain
 As he thrashes his paper,
 Whipping it with his pen.

Bill snorts as he sorts
 The words which flow
 For awhile then
 Stop short.

Bill suffers from brain fever,
 Mind malaria,
 His psyche convulsing
 From the bite of an idea

So small
 He never saw it coming,
 Hardly felt the sting.

(notes: I'd rather get rid of the rhythm and try to maintain the sound in a freer form. I'll set the poem aside, and when--if I go to revise, I'll begin in my head--use words spoken aloud in some lonely spot, Then I'll return to paper.)

In his response to her writing of that week, Tom writes: "Joyce, I was there at the genesis of 'Bill Writes.' I'm not so much pulled by the rhyme as I am pulled by the rhythm and meaning in the last stanza...In reading through your notes, Joyce, I can see what a big impact Stafford and Rose had on you...You're reflecting carefully and letting go bit by bit. I can see it."

This week, there has been an undercurrent or resistance in Joyce's group, I notice, and in many people I've met in the Reading/Writing Institute. They feel that their reading time is cheating them out of writing time. Many have returned this year because they wanted time to write and respond as they had done last year. As with most good experiences, the second time is different. "We've all felt that we have not had the time that we needed to get into our writing, to conference the way we wanted to, to talk about our pieces, and to write, and to revise. That's a six to eight hour a day job if you're going to produce a piece by Friday," Joyce tells me. She complains that they have not had "enough time to bond," and the weight of the reading assignments is keeping them from writing more. Like Joyce, many of the participants are confused and tired, unclear about what they need to be doing.

"Ronald was saying last week that he felt it was too soon to come back. But today he changed his tune. He realizes now he needed to come back this soon because the steam was working its way out of his engine. He needed another jet propulsion here, to make him go back this year armed with more spirit, more information, more goals." I note in my fieldnotes that people seem to rely on the program itself to give

them what Joyce calls "jet propulsion." This week, the program is giving mixed messages.

"Yeah, there's been some frustration. There was a real directive that came down on us at the beginning of the week. And that when we chose pieces for Friday's big read-in, that we would try to choose responses to reading, and then everybody said, 'Waaait a minute. This is against the very philosophy that we're supposed to be working with...So we're puzzled.'" In Joyce's group at the beginning of the third week there are exhausted jests and dissatisfactions: "Are we written out by this time?" "I could go home right now, I pushed myself to where I want to be. I'm happy, for heaven's sake."

After Joyce reads her poem, Elaine says, "I felt that Tom had sort of given us a "prompt," when he said he would like us to respond to a piece of reading that you're doing, and I thought "I *don't wanna* respond to a piece of reading that I'm doing--I *don't have* to do this, so I thought, well, I'm just not going to do this. I want to write another piece of fiction, but I *just realized* when I listened to you that I *am* responding to a piece of reading. The writing *has* come from my reading--my listening to my son's reading over the phone." She continues:

I have written something about my son--he called me the other night about something he was writing. I was so glad he wasn't watching TV. I thought, I think he's trying to emulate what I'm doing--while I'm writing, and so he's writing this week, too. I was so proud of myself. I didn't play mother at all, I did some nice teacher questioning, and he said "Can I call you tomorrow," and he called and read me his piece. Well, of course it was a long fourteen-year old robo-suit story, and someone cuts off someone's

head. So I was thinking about the fact that I love him so dearly, he works so hard to be cool, to be accepted, and he's just not. He has to accept the fact that he's going to be a four-eyed loser for a while. So what I wrote about was him, and my first line was "He stood off to one side of the cafeteria, contemplating his strategy, like a stray dog."

Their frustration seems to be directed toward Tom, but it is clear that they view the problem with their two pairs of eyes: as teachers and as students. A participant in another class seeks me out and makes the same complaint--that she wishes she had the time to write that she had last year, and resents the reading she must do. In their attempt to follow what they perceive as directives, their very resistance helps to solidify their beliefs. Joyce reports, "Where else might there be balking? It could be just the nature of us high school teachers...Cathy is doing a reading response. And she is not enjoying it one little bit. Richard is liking the books he is reading. I don't think Tom meant to be directive. One little misrepresentation can fire a class."

Joyce begins to make plans about her own class, toying with what she sees this week as teacher directives and student resistance. "I'm going to start my school year with, the very first day...I'm just going to treat it as if we'd been together since the whole summer, and 'Hi, come on in. Sit down. I have something to share with you.' And then we're in, and that's it. Just begin....I think I didn't realize I was doing what I was doing well....There's a lot I have to do next year, but I think I'm going to have to simplify. I think my kids are just going to read and write next year...I have decided we're going to have some real quiet time in the classroom, where everybody can write....We're going to have time when everybody can either write or talk. We're going to have time when we can read alone, their own choice. We're going to have time when we can read together and hear the language and enjoy the language

together. See the words on the page and feel them. All of that. Be interesting." Joyce and her classmates each choose to handle their frustration according to an individually perceived plan and rationale, and to document their choices in their portfolios--for their classmates and teacher, exactly what Tom's syllabus had suggested that they do.

But along with all this resistance, there is much private activity inside the small groups--swapping favorite books, reading, and talking about them. In Joyce's group, they have been sharing books about poetry and writing. From Tony, Joyce has borrowed Joseph Langland's *Twelve Poems With Preludes and Postludes*, and from Elaine she has borrowed Peter Elbow's *Writing Without Teachers*. Both have inspired her this week.

This morning in my room I was reading my little devotional book and it begins with a verse from Isaiah where the Lord says "I will lead the blind in a way they know not of...and I just mused on that, thinking of myself as the blind, wanting to know the way...realizing I just have to be faithful and walk on, even though I can not see. So anyway, I put my books in my bag, and came here to read. And then Tony begins the session telling us about this book of poems he found in his house, the author talks about reading and memorizing his own poetry, and then when he's alone, setting it to music, so I asked Tony if I could see the book, and as soon as I started, there it was--"The way I knew not of!"

Each poem is followed by a postlude, a story about what happened to the poem, and in many cases, the poems have been set to music. "I'm finding out how creativity, writing, poetry, all of this has got to spring from the freedom to find out what's inside of

yourself. Although these poems are inspired by something external...She is intrigued by one poem written by a soldier during World War II after his brother has died in combat, and the poem has had a long history and a world wide readership. "And so here this man writes this poem in his grieving, although it was many years after his brother was killed. Little did he know it would be translated for the very people who were his enemies, the very people against whom his brother was fighting, the Japanese mother who herself lost sons, and how it helped her through her grief. She reads the poem to her group on Monday, "and that is what we want writing to do--to go out into the world and be of some help to someone else, and I appreciated that because that's what I needed to hear." To get too attached to my own writing and to only write for myself is imprisoning, it's just awful, it's worse than what I think dying might be. But to think that I might be writing something, that even though I don't send it out into the world, it would go, in some way, and it frees me up." Joyce's interest was piqued, once again, by her engagement with oral texts--where they come from and where they go.

Elbow's description of freewriting also frees her up: "I decided I had a few minutes, and I would push my pen. And let my mind flow through. So I found that if I did *not* pick up my pen that connected all my words, didn't ever separate my pen from the paper except to go to the next line, that I could keep writing. But then last night when I came back to it, writing in the conventional style of separating words from one another, it took me five and a half hours to put something down on paper that isn't flowing along at all. Would you listen to one little thing I wrote about that?" She asks her group to listen to a paragraph she's written, which was inspired by another poem from the Langland book. Inspired by a story of some divers who swam into a grotto in the Mediterranean Sea, she sees the grotto as a metaphor: "They swam down into, not knowing the way, not knowing what they would find, and up into the cave in which light filtered down to the sea and also up into the cave and reflected from its walls and

roof. My cave, my grotto is yet unknown to me. My fears are as a diver, fears of close places, fears of surprises, of the unexpected, searching, finding my own cave is difficult, but ever beckoning me on, and that I'm really a fearful person--I have no idea how far back we could go, (Joyce breaks into a nasal voice, mimicking a psychiatrist) 'Into the womb, you know, we should go through the birth experience.'"

"And that's what's happening these three weeks for me is that I'm re-discovering an opportunity to just push through and keep going, and if it weren't for Fridays, I wouldn't do it. Fridays help create the fear, but because it's there, and I'm supposed to produce something, it makes me keep going into that cave. I'm not very deep into it. The fear of being wrong is the fear that dominates my life. Getting me out of my fear has to do with my community. I cannot do this unless I am with my friends." It will be a moment with her friends which will spark her thinking for the piece she'll produce for the last Friday of the workshop.

Reflection, Metacognition, and the Act of Head-watching

In her notebook at the beginning of the third week, Joyce writes on the margin, "*(meta)cognitive=thinking about thinking,*" and she circles the word "metacognitive." As her freewriting and talk of the past week suggests, she has been immersed in thinking about thinking, learning about learning, reading and writing about reading and writing. Everything has made her think about literacy. She has had the opportunity to spend time watching her own process of writing as it takes shape inside a community designed to support it. She has examined her ability to express herself orally and her lifelong love of reading, as it contrasts with her fears of expressing herself in writing. At the beginning of the third week, she tells me: "Well, from the moment I got here, I loved being with the people...if that's all this was, if it was

reading and talking about what we were reading and learning, I would have absolutely thought I'd died and gone to heaven. It's the writing that has been really tough for me." By re-examining her personal educational past, Joyce begins to understand her own literate process. By the end of the three weeks, she calls this self-discovery "a phenomenon:"

"I don't know how I speak, because I do it spontaneously, pretty much. The human response, you're looking at me when I'm speaking, and I can tell by the look on your face what's happening...And then I go to write! It's back to first grade again, afraid of making mistakes; when I put something on paper, it seems permanent."

She completes her time at UNH writing a triumph of metacognition called "Watch Your Head." It is a piece that is borne of three weeks of careful self-examination. Early in the week, she has read Peter Elbow's *Writing Without Teachers*, which she borrowed from Elaine. With her characteristic mix of fear, curiosity, and thoroughness, she tells me she began it by conducting "three-minute experiments" with herself in free writing, "where I just wrote on, on both sides of a sheet of paper, until I filled the paper, I didn't stop, I didn't lift my pen until the paper was filled....at least I have an idea in my head." She tells me that this week she feels better because she's had an idea since Thursday: "I was putting my dishes away, and I heard back here "Watch your head." And Lila said "Joyce! Watch your head!" When I turned, the lady is passing me right by with this big wad of glasses on a tray and she's trying to put them up on a shelf past me. I said, "Lila, isn't that fascinating? 'Watch your head,' I mean, where are you if you can watch your head?" And I thought, that interests me. I'd like to see if I can play with that. So that's what I did, and I realized that's what we'd been doing for three weeks. We've been watching our heads."

By Monday, she laughs when she tells her group "I don't know what it is, It's called 'Watch Your Head,' it sounds like I'm taking drugs." She isn't ready to read

anything that day, "I think I've said all I want to say today." But this week has been "much more lighthearted," she reports to me, because she's been playing with this idea. By now, she expects to write, she knows she will read it to her colleagues tomorrow in its early stages and finish it somehow by the end of the week. Joyce may believe that the idea for this piece began in the cafeteria on Thursday, but she has toyed with a nucleus of it since she arrived here. I've recorded it, in my notes of her talk, my tapes, and the writing she's produced so far. Two weeks ago, on the first night, during her reading session in the ice cream store, she moved back to look at herself and Lila and Ronald when she told me: "It was the joy I needed, and then I realized, 'Oh for heaven's sakes, I'm *watching myself* here. I'm watching Ronald, I'm watching Lila. I have an observation to make here. I have something to write about." On the second day, she had met a woman in her class who denied being a writer a year ago, even when the class had selected her piece to read. "So I picked her brain about that later that day, and she and I agreed that verbal communication and writing are not necessarily, at least *in the head* of the person doing it, closely linked." From the very beginning, Joyce has worked hard at taking a reflexive position in order to understand herself as a literate person. "You could say, so tell me something new, Joyce, and I can see you don't have any trouble...But, send me back to the dorm, and put me at my desk--that's an entirely different story."

This final week, she has faced her writing with a sense of experimentation, swimming around in her "grotto." The paper begins with an aural incident, a memory from the cafeteria, and, in its early stages, it exists on seven slips of paper, stuffed into her notebook. One piece has three comments scratched on it: "lighten up, cut your hair, lose three pounds, *get a life-got a life--freedom for mind to do when and how--letting go of categorical thinking.*" Another: "At best, watching your head is

both science and art, method and madness, and is probably best done both critically and fancifully." Another refers to Peter Elbow's "freewriting" techniques: "Free-flow writing helped me escape self-consciousness. It moved me where I could watch my head and surprised me that I could break away for a moment from my 'clothes closet' thinking, that organized style which puts my brains behind bars and forbids any foolishness. Now I look forward to practicing foolishness, interested in where it will take me....."

Her own written comments on the margins of the first draft of "Watch Your Head" show her reflexive posture, even as she is working on it. "The crossed out sections, the margin writing, writing on the backs of pages, showing my thinking, my honing process. I've lightened up--ideas flow--taken one idea through entire piece." The first draft, which she reads to her small group on Wednesday, says, "Whatever the circumstances, you've got to be somewhere outside yourself to get an objective look.....At first all I heard was the jeering crowd, the voice of my own guilt at not having practiced what I know to be good" On other slips of paper, she writes "what do I hope to convey? The value of writing as headwatching, the value of head watching" On the margins, she scratches "Peter Elbow, *Writing Without Teachers*." After she reads her first draft in class, Joyce tells me "my people now know where I'm coming from....That is, *for them* it is a terrific piece. For me, it's a nice little thing; it's fine....I have another side of my mind that can look at my writing and see that it is rather...immature..." She demands a lot of her writing, she knows it, but she is also aware and grateful for the positive response of her readers, and it pushes her from that "immature" side of her mind she doesn't like toward a final version which she chooses to place in her portfolio. With it, in her letter to the class, she thanks them for helping to shape it:

July 25, 1990

Mis Amigas y Amigos,

The writing is...my most recent and, in my opinion, reveals my growth during these three weeks with you: "Watch Your Head." Thank you, all! Either directly or by your example as expressed in your writing and discussion, you've given me what I needed, what I came for, and that is a kick in my professional pants. Thank you, too, for giving me what I'd hoped for--your genuine encouragement and support. Your kindness will be passed on through me to my students. I've gone the distance, grown in confidence and ability, and rejuvenated my enthusiasm for my own and my students' literacy development.

Your friend, Joyce Choate

This is the complete text of her final version:

Watch Your Head

The other day while standing in the cafeteria line putting my dirty dishes away, I heard faintly from somewhere behind me, "Watch your head." Since I still had mine, I paid no attention. Then again, I heard more forcefully spoken, "Watch your head!" and before I could consider, my friend ordered into my left ear, "Joyce, watch your head!" just as the cafeteria worker three inches from my right lifted a rack of drinking glasses to the shelf above.

Watch your head, I thought. It's an interesting imperative, don't you think? Where are you if you can watch your own head? What's your vantage point? Are you

somewhere in the jeering crowd as the gleaming guillotine blade falls to sever your exposed neck? Or on the shore with the other frightened spectators watching as you sink the second time because you swam out over your head? Perhaps you're sitting in the neurosurgeon's office studying the X-ray of your skull as the doctor points out the shadow behind your right eye socket. Whatever the circumstances, you've got to be somewhere outside yourself to clearly see your own head.

And how do you get out? Do you bolt as if from a burning building or slip away as you would from the back of the sanctuary on Sunday morning when you'd rather not face the minister? In order to watch your own head, detachment is a must; movement outward gets you to the vantage point.

Once you're out there and ready, how do you watch, in what stance, and attitude? With amazement as you would view the finger flight from over the concert pianist's shoulder or with critical concern as when your son takes off in your new car for his first solo drive?

At its best, watching your head is both science and art, method and madness, and is probably best done both critically and fancifully.

Here at UNH for the past three weeks we have immersed ourselves in a means of head watching called writing, which, until recently, has been a practice reserved for the gifted and educational elite. But, here at UNH the doors are flung wide and all who would are encouraged to enter, challenged to write their way ever closer to consciousness. Not having written and read the mentors regularly as modeled for me at UVM several years ago, I entered the program a backslider and found the lack of

practice made writing painful for me. But, in the fellowship of other writers, I've endured the jeering crowd--the voice of my own guilt--and I've stood with the spectators watching my head bob to the surface, albeit blubbing and sputtering, as I begin to write again.

Watching my head emerge on paper, I discover the angry, fearful child within and by giving it voice, cut the cord of inhibition which threatens to destroy the life I hope to nurture. But inhibition clings fiercely and restrains writing's free flow. The only release comes in the doing: writing freely, fancifully, even madly if we must to break from the gripping fear, "Am I making mistakes? Does this sound stupid?"

Tonight, I wrote non-stop on a single sheet of paper until I filled it, giving no care to sense or convention. Here is some of what came from my head.

...as the trumpets and the flutes and the trombones practice in the dorms nearby I'm going to practice free flow letting my fingers fly watching the words eat up the page and wondering what's next. My friends will smile to see the mess but will be happy with my success because of them I've got the guts to try....

Free-flow writing helped me escape self-consciousness. It moved me out where I could watch my head and surprised me that I could break away for a moment from my "clothes-closet" thinking, that organized style which puts my brains behind bars and forbids any foolishness. Now I look forward to practicing foolishness, interested to watch where it will take me.

Free-flow writing showed how important the writing community is to me, another surprise, because I've allowed the community only selected opportunities to help me with my writing. Fear of facing and working on all the problems I think they'd find in the week's time frame has kept my requests very limited. I've looked to them to cheer me on, and they have, enthusiastically. But, in a real sense, they are the neurosurgeons I referred to earlier. Eventually, I will give them my writing and we will step back together to view my head with both amazement and concern. Their object is not to alter my thinking, but to help me remove the shadows from my writing that hide my thinking from the reader. Brain surgery couldn't be a more delicate process than this.

My free-flow writing might help here to show the relationship of the writer to her community, the value of watching your head in the company of other writers.

Together we write and read together we discover what's in our heads we watch each other's minds float out around the room and light where they will on chair or window sill they say what they want instead of what they must I trust my friends to accept my place so far for I've not come so far as they but I am moving ahead away from anger and fear and on toward creativity in which I discover my own soul and mind and heart.

Here's to head watching. If I see yours in a crowd, I'll be sure to point it out to you.

When Joyce reads it, her class is delighted. They laugh, they clap, and they vote her to represent them on Friday at the final reading for all the classes. Their

written responses show that not only do they recognize this as a clever, well-honed piece of writing in the traditional essay genre, but they celebrate the personal triumph hidden inside Joyce's metaphor. Tom writes: "Joyce, am I exaggerating if I say that you've had a monumental three weeks? The probing you've done, the writing, the reading...the thinking. You became one with your voice. This last piece, 'Watch Your Head,' is a synthesis. The metaphor works, and for so many of us, watching our head is exactly what we are doing. Talk about metacognitive!"

A member of her response group, who has heard it in several stages, writes about its growth: "Joyce, when I heard the beginning of this on Monday, I had no idea where it would lead. Your way with words astounds me, your ideas always intriguing. Thanks!" Several classmates note her use of figures of speech: "Your comparisons are lovely. My favorite part is the neurosurgeon--examine head with amazement." "...brain surgery, great analogy. Great piece! Joyce, you are a wonder. Many thanks for your humor and encouragement--and your writing. May I have a copy?" "You capture the writer's vulnerability and insecurity. Thank you for reassuring me in your empathy. The interweaving of images and metaphors is wonderful."

Other responses recognize her personal growth: "Free up--you did it nicely--I'm sure you'll continue to write, watch, and grow." "Your perceptions of tiny details that I miss because of my blindness add poeticness to your writing...three weeks ago, you could not have made such a statement. Don't let the profession lose you."

It is fitting that Joyce's final triumph is oral and dramatic. On the last Friday of the program, in the summer heat, she stands crisply at the podium, dressed formally, like a teacher, in a skirt and a neat white blouse. She glances at her writing as she reads it, but mostly looks out at the crowd of over a hundred faces in the Reading and Writing Institute. She punctuates her strong, clear voice with flourishes of hand

gestures. Her reading is slow and expressive. The audience laughs every few sentences, and explodes into applause when she finishes. I remember our first talk, when she told me that she loves to read aloud to her classes, "I've always enjoyed being able to take a text in class, to read it out. I love to read. I am a good reader. And they eat it up. Like it was frozen yogurt. Just eat it up." Today Joyce reads her own text. We can see that she loves to read, we can hear that she is a good reader. And, watching our heads while she invites us to watch hers, we eat it up like frozen yogurt.

INTERTEXT**GETTING THE WORDS SECOND HAND:****DEAF PEOPLE CAN DO ANYTHING--EXCEPT HEAR**

"Everything you hear directly is what we hear second hand." Lee, one of my hall-mates in the dorm, explains how it is to be deaf in a hearing world. For these three weeks, the university has hired free-lance sign interpreters each day. Each week there is a new crew of interpreters, probably because it is summer and many of them teach or go to school. Few people here know how to sign, but we can see there are differences in the interpretations. There is American Sign Language (ASL), considered a language, and Signed English, a coding system. Each interpreter appears different, but, like translators, their job is to interpret spoken text as closely as possible. To an outsider, the interpreters are performers. We've enjoyed watching the texts of our spoken words dance in their hands and on their faces. It has added a poetic dimension to the summer and some dramatic physical action to all our talk about writing. The language of Sign is an artful mix of letters, facial expressions, and gestures.

As in all languages, we discover, translation is not exact. It is a special verbal literacy that requires quick and artful interpretation, on the part of the hearing interpreter as well as the deaf recipient. I ask Lee if it's difficult to get oriented to so many different interpreters, and mention that I've noticed major differences in them. "Of course," she signs while her mouth forms the words, her speech a bit blurry. "You are very observant." In this encounter, we talk about language and writing with a twist I hadn't considered.

On the lawn in front of the mini-dorms, we lie in the sun together, pick at the

grass, and talk about how crucial it is for all disabled students to maintain the connection between reading and writing. We do not need an interpreter. Occasionally, we need to write out a word that one of us doesn't understand. Lee shows me a notebook she keeps of her students' "malapropisms." Their approximations in using English language are amusing and poignant. It illustrates the difficulty a deaf adolescent has interpreting Sign into writing: "Oh, thank gosh." "A shovel slaps the snow." "Going camping, I wear my pack-back." "There was a terrible plane crush." "It is time to clam down." "When I went to my girlfriend's house, I rang the door bellring," and then we had an "argumen." I put the words in "alphabetable order." There is a "broadwalk at Ocean City." I found a "secret passway." "After the argument, my mouth was wild open," I had to go to the hospital to get an x-tray." "The police arrived in a helicopper," "The weather is short of warm," "The dance was wowerful, fanstatic." "I ran the lawnmotor," "I saw a hummerbird."

There is inherent logic in each of these miscues, and they all show creative understanding of the words they use. "Wild-open" mouths and beachside "broad-walks," weather that is "short of warm," and crushed planes conjure up lucid poetic imagery. Deaf students are bilingual, and, Lee believes, given an environment rich with reading and writing, they thrive. She is deeply aware of the unnecessary disenfranchisement her students suffer. She and her colleagues have many stories to support their stance. Because her school is a "model" school, and it is in Washington DC, students are often "on display" to foreign diplomats and other interested people. Visitors are not always enlightened. She tells a story that she later incorporates in a paper about disability and power:

....This spring, one of my classes was visited by a South American dignitary from a country where educating deaf people is not the norm. My students had

just finished reading *Sounds of Silence*, a young adult novel by Marilyn Levy that includes a mainstreamed deaf teen as a major character. The dignitary watched with visible awe as the class worked individually and in teams writing an additional chapter to the novel, drafting invitations for the character to come to our school and experience the Deaf culture the students themselves enjoyed.

Our visitor could suppress her confusion no longer. "You mean these deaf students have all READ this book? But how?"

Julie, a junior, confidently stated what was to her the obvious. "With our eyes, of course." And Julie was perfectly correct....

This story illustrates a moment that is at once embarrassing and triumphant. It is a story of all marginalized populations in school: the severely learning disabled, the handicapped, the foreign language speaker, the ghetto dialect speaker. Like Julie and her classmates, disabled students deserve *more* fully connected language opportunities in school, *not fewer*. A rich mix of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in the company of other English language users is critical for their literacy. This means literature, not grammar worksheets. (Sunstein in Stires, Ed. 1991)

Lee and I explore the "deficit model" thinking that seems to pervade most work with disabled students: "If our deaf students cannot read and write literature on a level with their hearing peers," she observes, "it may very well be that they've never been exposed to real literature at all...Too long, we have been making deficit assumptions and spoon feeding (sometimes force-feeding) our students with a conceptual mash unable to create or sustain intellectual or linguistic growth. By thinking deaf students incapable of reading and writing real literature from the beginning, we've created a self-fulfilling prophecy....Reading and writing are power, and empowered students are hooked for life on their own learning."

It is not any lack of intelligence that prevents a student from fuller literacy; it

is often the self-fulfilling prophecy of the "disability testing and remediation" she must endure. If these students are given little pieces of language to exercise their broken parts, they will never have a chance to use English whole, or to see how others use it. As their teachers experience reading and writing for themselves here this summer, they re-think their own teaching practices and reflecting on their teacher-training histories. Lee's colleague Ruth writes:

Teacher training programs set the pace for the field of education of the deaf. When I began teaching deaf children over twenty years ago, I took classes towards a certificate that showed I understood deafness and how it made deaf children different...in Language Development I learned ASL was to be ignored...in Speech and Speechreading the hearing professor was embarrassed about having deaf students in his class...in Audiology we learned about how language development is affected by degree of hearing loss...in Psychology of Deafness, we learned certain personal traits deaf children have, and that the teachers were martyrs...there was rarely a course in American Sign Language, the language that most deaf people used...but there were newly developed systems of signs to help children learn English....

Ruth explains that many educators of deaf students still have a clinical, pathological point of view. As a deaf person herself, she writes "We prefer to be seen as a culture, with a rich heritage passed on by children of deaf parents....It will be a long time before my rage is completely gone. Like Toni Morrison said of white people, 'historically, we were seldom invited to participate in the discourse even when we were its topic.'"

Ruth and her other colleague Linda are among the five percent of the deaf population who come from deaf families. The deaf child born into a deaf family has a distinct advantage in literacy, Linda tells me, a home environment rich in language. The home language is American Sign, and English is a learned second language.

Linda's parents and grandfather signed stories to her when she was a child, created a context for learning much the same as in any privileged home. But for deaf children born into hearing homes, there is minimal communication. Linda says that Don Murray's term "inner voice" was a new idea to her. She tests herself: "I noticed that I do have a 'deaf voice' based on the dreams I dream. The characters in my dreams have conversations in ASL. With the interpreters, the ones who signed in ASL, I received the messages very comfortably and directly whereas those who signed in Signed English, I had to translate into ASL--especially the phrases, idiomatic expressions, sounds, and puns, and then into English." Linda writes:

For most of us whose first language is ASL, writing is a laborious chore. We have to translate our native language into English and then put it down on paper. In order to write well, we must read a lot, so when we switch our language into English comfortably when we write.

One of Linda's pieces during the three weeks is a poem called "The Forbidden Language," detailing her "seven solid years of battle" during the nineteen-fifties, in a school in which ASL was prohibited. At night in the dorms, one student would stand in the doorway, watching for the housemother, as "a circle of kids would watch a storyteller signing, secretly" and then scatter when she came. Although they were punished, they "dared to continue the risks." Her sister's scarred thigh clued Linda's parents to "the hairbrush beatings" they received for signing together. A formal legally filed grievance and a subsequent victory placed Linda and her sister in a different school where signing was respected. Had her parents not been deaf, Linda and her sister and their classmates might have stayed there for more years, deprived of their native literacy.

On one night during the first week, Lee, Ruth, and Linda sit in a circle on Lee's bed in their pajamas, eating candy, drinking Diet Coke, joking, and reading

one another's writing. Linda is wearing her favorite t-shirt. It is black, with white letters across the chest: "deaf people can do anything--except hear." Lee's computer is printing out her latest piece of writing, her cloth-bound journal sits inside her folded legs, and the floor is messy with wads of discarded drafts. They are signing wildly to each other when I walk by.

Ruth invites me to take a walk down the hall with her. She has just discovered a planetarium in her room. She points upward and then turns off the light. The ceiling is covered with plastic stars, affixed in configurations that reproduce a few constellations. They don't twinkle; they glow plastic yellow-green over our heads. We can't talk in the dark, but we jab each other and laugh together at the hidden legacy from a recent college student. When she turns the light on, the stars disappear. It is a fitting metaphor for the shared literacies we are all experiencing here. When "the lights go on," the eerie spots of plastic difference disappear. But they become a bond between us, the knowledge that each of us has a secret in the dark worth exploring together. Whether we "hear it straight" or "second-hand," it is in speaking about those differences that we can celebrate our human abilities to communicate.

CHAPTER 6**BACK TO SCHOOL: SUMMER REVISIONS**

The docile teacher is a comfortable instrument for the designs of others. But students, and through them most of the rest of us, can only profit from critically conscious, informed, and self-directed teachers whose knowledge of the making of knowledge lies at the heart of learning and therefore the heart of our growth as a literate society.

C.H. Knobloch and Lil Brannon, "Knowing our Knowledge," (1988, 27)

For the teachers in this study, their classrooms and curricula will not be new in September; there will be no change at school when they return. They'll walk the polished hallways in late August, unpack the cartons sitting where they left them in June, unroll the posters and dust off the cardboard Globe Theaters for another year. They will place new names in the red rank books and on the seating charts, and new files in the drawers in their metal cabinets. Their colleagues will tease them about spending three weeks writing; a few will be jealous, and a few will want to hear a little about it. They will listen to their superintendents' welcoming speeches on the first day. Last year's scuff marks will be gone from the floors and the pencil graffiti scrubbed off the desktops, but in the next ten months, there will be new scuff marks and more pencilled messages. On the surfaces, not much is different. There is no new curriculum, no change in administrative support. Hardly anyone will care that they spent three weeks reading, writing, and thinking about teaching.

So what has happened? What can these teachers do with their summer experience? What does this experience suggest for teacher education? Teacher literacy? Surely it's more than the pages of classroom "tips" they've just filed away.

There's no time at school in September to disclose private thoughts to a public audience of peers, languish in book talk, put into consciousness ideas for a possible curriculum in a perfect school. The days and nights to revise subjective realities into objective fictions are gone with the t-shirts and lobsters. Susan writes:

My first thoughts upon arriving home....."Did I dream New Hampshire? Am I the person who wrote those pieces? Did I think those revolutionary thoughts? It's a good thing my writing notebook and all my new books were spilling out of my suitcase. I might otherwise have thought I had made it all up, seen a good movie....

Therese, Dorothy, Susan, Lenore, Joyce, and Alison each "saw a good movie," but not the same movie. There were two-hundred thirty-three "movies" during the summer of 1990. Each teacher will produce her own movie now. She will create a classroom culture different from the one she had last year; partly because of her experience this summer, partly because it is another year. And each teacher will create a different classroom this year because she has regained her personal literacy. She aware of her uniqueness because of the reading, writing, and reflecting she has watched others do and she has done herself. Each teacher will use her personal literacy in her own creative way; it is her very own reading and writing, speaking and listening, that informs the curriculum choices she makes for her classroom.

Our uniqueness causes us to represent and interpret our environment creatively, anticipating expectations and intentions that grow. We revise continually as we add more experiences to our world view. (Kelly, 1963) Our own uses of language, written and spoken, establish us to ourselves, as thinkers able to act. "Language," said George Herbert Mead at the turn of the century, "put the intelligence of the individual at his own disposal." (Rosen, 126) Harold Rosen adds:

The quality of our words in the head, inner speech, must be closely tied to the

experience of talking with others which gives us resources for thinking and learning, for self-prompting and intellectual adventure. (1969, 126)

Over twenty years ago, Rosen argued that teachers develop their content knowledge through language. The summer's writing and talking, reading and listening enabled Therese, Dorothy, Joyce, and the others to recognize and understand their own processes of creative reconstruction through language. For each of the teachers in this study, interpreting, communicating and participating in the summer culture itself was enough to disrupt her old view of school culture, enough for her to raise some questions about teaching and learning she hadn't raised before. The summer culture itself placed each teacher in "a strange coexistence of solitude and dependence," as one participant told me, and allowed her to re-think that stance for her students. This chapter serves as an epilogue of sorts. It glimpses a few moments in the lives of each teacher during the following school year as I encountered her, and as I saw those moments connect her, consciously and unconsciously, back to the summer.

Professional Revisions: Making Knowledge about Making Knowledge

When they come to their classrooms in the fall, what the teachers offer to their students is far too complex to label "change." For each person, the summer was an encounter in a culture different from school, a consciousness of possibilities, and out of it came one teacher in revision. The summer encounter made her critically conscious and self-directed, in Knobloch and Brannon's description above, more a person "whose knowledge of the making of knowledge lies at the heart of learning."

It is not a surprise that after they returned to school, my contact with the teachers in this study reflected them as I knew them in the summer. I visited most of them and was in monthly contact with all of them by mail and phone. I didn't visit Therese

because she was on the west coast. We had long phone conversations after east coast midnight. For her master's thesis at a school in California, she decided to study theories of writing as self-discovery--an idea which she got from Don Murray's "writing as therapy" in *Expecting the Unexpected*. I wasn't surprised. She sent me two greeting cards, thanking me for "paying attention" to her and wishing me good luck with this dissertation.

When I asked her to send me photographs of her school and classroom, she followed my directions precisely, obediently. I received six views of her classroom, desks in straight rows, shelves stacked neatly, six numbered computers surrounding the perimeter of the classroom, posters of landscapes, balanced by size, stapled to the bulletin boards. There is not a student or a student's work in sight. In the picture, her desk gleams clean with only a paperback dictionary on the surface. She sent five snapshots of the outside of her school; an early seventies-vintage high school, vertical glass and concrete, stretched on flat sun-parched land with dim hints of green and surrounded by the dry brown bush of California winter. There are no students on the outside of the building, either. I hadn't thought to ask for pictures of students; I assumed they'd be in her view of school. There was a snapshot of her, smiling, away from school, on a weekend trip to a resort town. She sent samples of students' writing with her comments, and a letter to me about their writing. All five student pieces were personal essays of self-disclosure, much like the ones she wrote in the summer. She engaged quite literally with Murray's work, my requests for data, and her students' writing, much like she had engaged with the summer culture.

I had very few phone conversations with Joyce, and we were not able to schedule a visit. It didn't matter. She sent three audio tapes. A single tape would document her thinking over five or six morning trips to school in her car. It was much the same

relationship we'd established during the summer; she was best at talking out her most intimate thoughts. On the tapes, as her colleagues quipped last summer, she "spoke in final drafts." She explained classroom and workshop procedures in detail, profiled students and their interactions, asked and answered her own questions. She offered me descriptions of her Vermont countryside, complete with literary references, as she drove. Here is an example from early spring:

Good morning, Bonnie. You can probably tell from the background noise that I'm in the car again. It's fascinating to listen to the tapes I make to you...my formality as I begin. I can hear in my voice the lethargy of the day. It's a very gray morning. Sometimes the sun is so dazzling....I like the muted colors. Right now I'm going through a flat section and the balsam trees are plentiful. This morning they are almost black-green. They stand out against the gray sky. The mountains are still brown, and yet the raspberry bushes in the lowlands are a deep rosy red. They're stalks. The Indians called them "purple swords," I think I remember that from reading Conrad Richter's *Light in the Forest*.

Joyce sent lots of papers: the letter she wrote to her students in September, explaining her curriculum, and samples of student writing and reading logs and portfolio letters. But it is not a surprise that the tapes of her spoken words held the most interesting clues to her classroom's culture.

I visited Dorothy one frosty October morning just at the end of the foliage season. She teaches in a small, sleek contemporary high school hidden from the main road, nestled in a pine grove inside the foothills of New Hampshire's White Mountains. A few lingering leaves echoed the bricks on the building and the bricks of her apartment at UNH. Her desks were arranged in a circle in her classroom. One bulletin board was labeled "An American Album," and on it were posters: "The Early Romantics," all tiny oval portraits of male writers, and next to it was a large portrait of Susan B. Anthony. Student writing in many genres hung with the portrait display:

analyses, critiques, poems, fictions, and journal projects about American literature, including a poem of Dorothy's. At the bottom of the bulletin board were five drawings labeled "Mom," signed "Paul," her son, and a piece of writing by her second grade daughter. On another wall, under a large computer banner labeled "Writing at its Best" were sixteen student pieces, a variety of genres, and the journal paper Dorothy wrote last summer in Terry's class. A banner on the far wall had a purple leaf Victorian border, and it quipped, "Some are born to greatness, Some achieve greatness, Some grate cheese." This year, Dorothy has collected her paradoxes, all the pieces that she claimed were "never good enough," Her writing, her reading, her mothering, her intellectual history, and her personal sense of humor, and put them on display for her students. Last spring she told me she never shared her writing with her students. This spring she spent a three day weekend with two students, writing at a workshop in Breadloaf, Vermont.

The summer experience has enabled each of these teachers to revise her own literacy and hence her priorities for literacy in her classroom. What has happened is both subtle and continuing; it is an act too complex to simply label "change." Participation in the three-week event has given each teacher a quiet look at herself, but offered her the power to enrich her students by constructing a classroom culture that is consistent and comfortable for her. It is an unremarkable shift that will produce remarkable personal strengths in individual curriculum design and grounding authority on the inside.

The Classroom as a Cultural Event: Creative Contexts

"The most remarkable feature," Handelman writes of public events in general, "is just how unremarkable, noncommittal, and innocuous they are. They

really tell us almost nothing, apart from some vague sort of instruction, perhaps akin to *"PAY ATTENTION: SOMETHING SPECIAL IS GOING ON HERE AND NOW."* In such events the structural qualities are like those of an aesthetically beautiful utilitarian object; the very design of the event implies its intentionality for the participants. There were images of summer inscribed on each of the contacts I had during the year with the teachers I came to know.

The teacher who has had the summer workshop experience begins to model what she's seen as she negotiates encounters between herself and her students in her classroom. She has had her own creative experience in a context that was designed to foster it. As Therese told me on the phone, "It's not just a job anymore; it's a commitment." Her mentors in summer have acted as coaches in a studio atmosphere, working and reflecting on their "professional artistry." Together, they have "learned to become proficient at the practice of the practicum." (Schon, 1983) They will be able to model and mentor, in turn, for their students.

The summer program, in its design of reading and writing groups, puts into place a mentoring system. Vera John-Steiner's studies of adults suggest that mentoring is a crucial component in learning creative work. (1985) What creative adults have in common, she found, is a system for knowing what they know, representing what they know to themselves and others, and it is "a personal system made from a lifetime of mentors in resonant apprenticeships and times of intense absorption, cycles during their work-lives in which they continually "stretch, deepen, and refresh their craft and nourish their intelligence." (54) The mentorships she documents come from homes, books, journals and studios; they rarely come from schools. Live mentors, according to John-Steiner, are real people, knowledgeable partners who "say you matter," and through whom we acquire a set of "invisible tools" to work inside our disciplines. Our "distant teachers," those we find across time and

space, who write the books, tell the stories, use the tools, and accumulate the past histories of our fields are important, too. Establishing "collaborative endeavors across generations" through the tradition-bearers of the field, through life or book or hearsay, is important to a creative person. (201)

John-Steiner traces thinking processes in creative artists, scientists, philosophers, and historians. But she does not include creative teachers on her lists, nor does she study the mentor relationship in detail. Creative teaching comes out of a culture in which an individual can come to reflective knowledge inside an environment full of people who act as mentors to support it. For the teachers this summer, the characteristics for creative meaning-making were in place. The lines blurred between mentorships and collaborative clusters. Response groups, authors, instructors and participants all functioned as mentors for one another. Even the "distant teachers" were there--in the talks and readings from Don Murray, Barbara Cooney, Rebecca Rule, Charles Simic, and the other authors of books and articles who were involved in the program. Other "distant teachers" surrounded the program in print and talk: they shared a heritage of school literature and personal reading. Each private book conversation, each oral or silent reading of a text was a relationship with a distant teacher, shared and examined. When she returned to school having reflected on her own teaching creativity, each person reconstructed her classroom as she designed the encounter there, set herself up as an elder tradition-bearer, and became a mentor in a way that suited the personal literacy she had re-conceptualized this summer.

Dorothy is still very much herself, but the influence of her professional revision was clear the day I visited. Next to Dorothy's classroom door, there were four blank calendars, one for each class, on which students have signed their names. At

the start of one period, a tall skinny boy stood up just as the late bell buzzed. He tugged on his faded red shirt as he read the poem "The Horse Chestnut Tree" by Richard Eberhart. Dorothy smiled, thanked him, made a mark in her rank book, and the class had begun. The poem was his choice; his name was signed to the calendar that day. A few minutes into class, a student excused himself to go to band practice and handed her a mass of computer print-out pages. She looked at him sternly, with a wry smile: "Are they organized? I don't like messes. I'm very finicky, you know." The student began to organize his pages, and Dorothy commanded, "Little ferners off the side, please...." It was her love of language that made the boy laugh at "ferners," her original word for the tracks of holes on the sides of his computer paper. During late morning, she left the juniors watching a video of *The Scarlet Letter* to take her son to kindergarten. The juniors lay on the floor, chins on pillows of stacks of books, hands sprawling responses in notebooks. They talked, comparing the book with the video using their journals before she returned.

Later, in her writing classes, Dorothy shared a piece of her own writing in progress. She handed out slips of paper like she had seen in her workshop with Ellen, she asked students to write a title in response to what they heard from oral readings of drafts. They responded, then began reading their own. After twenty minutes of oral reading, one student asked "Can we have time to write now, please?" Dorothy answered "Amy needs to read two poems. If you need to go to a corner and write, go ahead." Three ninth grade girls presented a song they'd written together. The rhythm section consisted of pen-on-desk and a French braid pulled at the appropriate moments. The influences of Dorothy's summer on her classroom culture were complex. All day I caught echoes of her experiences in Ellen's and Terry's classes as I watched Dorothy practice her craft, frame problems and answer questions creatively. She seemed to know what she knew and help each of her students begin to do the same.

Dorothy thanked both Ellen and Terry for being models to her at the end of the program, her response group gave her a studio relationship with colleagues who functioned in a version of mentorship, and the fruits of those relationships showed in her classroom contacts.

For Therese, it was mentoring that triggered her self-reflection. Therese wasn't ready for the collegial relationships Dorothy had. She needed more traditional mentors, and she was able to get them in her instructors Terry Moher and Carol Avery, Tom Newkirk, Tom Romano, Don Murray, the women in her writing group, Alison, and even me. She called Carol Avery once just before school began, for some advice. The culture she created for her students was like the one she experienced: one in which an individual can meet her mentor and feel comfortable enough to examine old rules and even possibly break them. Although there were no students in her snapshots, they spoke through the photocopies of the papers she sent.

Therese's mentorship of her students echo the mentoring she sought. With each major paper they selected to turn in, her students turned in a detailed "Reflection Sheet." On it, they wrote at least five sentences evaluating the usefulness of five areas for that paper: writing workshop procedures, writing activities, mini-lessons, weekly writing assignments. Her final exam for the semester was to "write an evaluation of yourself as a writer and your progress this semester based on the comments you made in the five areas mentioned on your Reflection Sheets." Layers of metacognition. Therese set the stage for her students to engage in the self-discovery she experienced during the summer. "It's like a drug," she told me on the phone, "I can't stop writing." She shares her writing with her students in order to get them to do the same: "I take a deep breath and I share it with the kids. This is hard for me, but it invites them." In one class, it took until November for anyone else to volunteer. She is

exhausted after a day of school. "Now I believe in it emotionally as well as intellectually," she writes, and she describes the students whose writing she sends.

Three excerpts:

1. *Therese*: Talia is in my fifth period Intermediate Comp/Grammar class. Her attitude is often one of sarcastic hostility, but she is always revealing a deeper side through her writing.

Talia's writing: When you are in love, you are usually in danger of making decisions that you normally would not make....you must first be sure of what the person you are in love with will want you to decide....This may be good or bad, it all depends on the two people.

2. *Therese*: Danny is no longer in my seventh period English Skills II class. He is no longer at Whitfield High, having encountered problems both social and academic. One day, the boy, in Tom Romano's words, "cut loose." I include what he wrote.

Danny's writing: My mom is sick, real sick. I have been ditching school to see her in the hospital....Why does it happen when you are doing good before you know it something bad happens? If it takes me to fail school to help my mom I will do it!!! Why does love hurt so bad!

3. *Therese*: Jose was a triumph of human achievement. I taught him last year, and he failed the first semester. Last semester, he repeated my class with a great deal of success. His writing speaks for itself.

Jose's writing (excerpts from final reflective essay): Conferencing may have been good for me and not so good for others....It helped me explain my thoughts more clearly and freely...read-around groups helped me. In a way I felt uncomfortable because I didn't know whether or not to trust the group...At first I would keep what I really felt inside...the final drafts on the computers helped...It takes a lot of work but it is also fun..

Unlike Therese who needed teachers as mentors, or Dorothy, who needed her mentoring among the people in her writing class, Joyce enjoyed mentoring

relationships with her colleagues outside of class as much as she did with her teachers. Her talk with Bob about school triggered a personal memory that led to a poem, her readings with Lila and Ronald led her toward reflective talk about writing and eventually to her "Watch Your Head" essay. Her oral reflections of her classroom showed some complex shifts in her view of herself as a mentor, and recalled the relationships she experienced this summer. It seems that she began to loosen her definition of what a teacher needs to do in a writing class in order to "teach" writing. Here are a few snippets from her of one writing workshop:

One word I'd like to use to describe it is "loose." Not that my expectations were loose...I didn't put them in groups. I just let them go. I simply stood there as a resource. I would leave them alone, be available to them. They found that they wanted to speak to me quite a bit. They simply got in line. It seemed to me that there were times that they discussed with each other the problems they had, and I would watch them drop out of line. I assume their peers helped them. In this loose fashion, they did hard work.

It gave me freedom to serve my children, completely serve them. I didn't need to lead them, I didn't need to control them, it was lovely. I just stood there and served them. And they came to me because they wanted it, not because they had to have me, and that was pure pleasure.

There was a lot of instruction going on. "What do you call this?" "See what I've done here, what do you call this?" I'd say, "An introductory participial phrase." Well...never in my wildest dreams would I throw that out to these children at this point....Now whether they remember that or not doesn't matter to me. *They wanted to know.* But what they *did* learn was *how to make this thing.* You could call it a rose, a pig if you wanted to, it doesn't matter....they were interested to see how you subordinate an independent clause, and attach it at the beginning of another independent clause for variety or condensation, or to tighten up. They wanted to know what you call a sentence that has one subject and more than one verb, and I was very pleased with that.

One boy's writing was sparse--it was all "telling," very clearly "telling,"

making statements, but it lacked life. This kid is a very tall, skinny kid, and he could stand...to have a lot more flesh and muscle on his bones. And his writing fit his personality--it was *skinny writing*--it's one thing to tighten it up, it's another thing to starve it to death. I wrote him a sentence or two about myself. I wrote a "telling" sentence and then a "showing" sentence.

Reflecting on one writing workshop helped Joyce re-position herself in the classroom; she was there to "serve" her students, and she did it her own way. They lined up to see her but helped each other in line. They saved for her the questions about functions of grammatical construction and subtleties of exposition, and she was delighted. Sometimes she is discouraged, she told me, "because this way every child becomes an individual, and my temptation is to stay in control...I like my chickens under my wing..." But now they are confronted with the fact, she said, that education is *their* responsibility, and "I say, okay, get out of the way and watch them go."

For Joyce's students and many others, school is not their responsibility. It is not even very related to their lives. Learning to connect it with real life, independence and self control requires, as Joyce describes, placing them in their own control, into a context of possibilities. Without stating it, Joyce's description of this workshop echoes her own summer experience: "in this loose fashion, they did hard work."

A Flash of Communitas: Keeping Contact

Like Joyce's students "loose" in her workshop, the people who enter the event of the summer, when they enter as initiates, put themselves into what anthropologist Victor Turner calls a "liminal state." They suspend themselves "betwixt and between the structural past and the structural future," in the middle of their already established statuses in everyday social roles. Turner describes it as the "subjunctive mood" of a culture, "the mood of maybe, might-be, as-if, hypothesis, fantasy....Liminality can

perhaps be described as fructile chaos, a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities." (in Schechner and Appel, Eds. 1990, p.12) It is an "anti-structure," different from the group's established norm. In this state, participants form a strong fellowship:

...an interval, however brief, of margin or limen, when the past is momentarily negated, suspended, or abrogated, and the future has not yet begun, an instant of pure potentiality when everything, as it were, trembles in the balance....(1982, 44)

Turner names this sense of fellowship "communitas." It is a phenomenon that can only be temporary. It happens, he observes, as a momentary flash; only as a "subversive flicker, as it is put into the service of normativeness almost as soon as it appears." (1982, 45) The summer writing program for teachers is a thickly textured but temporary event, a "subversive flash."

The social drama of the summer writing program is, for most of its participants, a three-week long reflexive moment. It makes sense of the frenzied mess of everyday life, and its very liminality allows time for re-examination and revision. Hence, the transformative illusion, the "refreshment," the "retreat." The sociocultural roles teachers express in their writing and oral stories are oppressive in their very normalness: parent, administrator, public school teacher, homeowner, taxpayer, student, daughter or son. Neither Therese, Dorothy, nor Joyce entered the summer experience seeing herself as a writer or a reader; in fact, writing and reading were "personal luxuries" on their lists of priorities.

Each teacher began the summer with an expectation, and each ended with something different from what she expected. Therese's need for simple answers to complex questions ended in some unconventional poetry and her scholarly investigation into the principles of reflection. Dorothy's search for "time boxes" and

"tips" ended as new paradigms opened for her and her "jangling horsecart" quieted down. Joyce's desperate run around the campus the first night and the ice cream reading afterward ended in her beginning to see the value of her ability to construct knowledge and writing through talk. Without a strong connection to the others, these liberating shifts would not have happened for anyone.

Although the summer's "flash of communitas" ended on July 27 at three o'clock, the professional friendships and mutual support for writing did not. The mail and phone calls that crossed the country held serious fellowship and professional dignity. Therese received a Christmas card from Beth, the woman from both her groups with whom she went to Boston. It contained a portrait of her with her husband and two little boys, the family she wore on the buttons of her backpack. One, of course, was the child she wrote about in the poem "Sanctuary": "How are your classes going?" she asked. "My freshmen have really responded to my changes, just like Terry predicted. I'm still having problems breaking away from my traditional methods with juniors and seniors, though. Would love to hear how you are doing."

Joyce and Lila exchanged several letters. In October, Lila wrote:

I'll try to keep the swimming metaphor going a little longer. It's nice weather for a dip in the pool, but unfortunately during sixth period, I'm gasping for air. I don't think I'll ever enjoy a relaxing swim. Most of them are sophomores who have failed English 9...I want to create literate young people, but it ain't gonna be easy. Don't you usually sink before you can swim? I'm finding the year less hectic than previous ones...I'm not spending most of my evenings doing school work...I'm making time for pleasurable reading. I still have to force myself to write regularly. I do keep a reading log just like my freshmen...It would probably be better with an oral reading and a trip to the yogurt store with you.

Lila told Joyce that she'd received a letter from Ronald that week, and two

reprints of an article she had written about collaboration and sent last April to a national journal. It was published, and shortly afterward Lila received a note from Tom Romano, her instructor, saying he'd read it. She writes to Joyce:

This past week...I feel as though I've done a perfect ten from the high board...I gloated near the people who fail to realize I know what I'm talking about....Thursday I received a post card from Tom Romano...sounded like him...abbreviated, and difficult to understand the chicken scratches. The next day I got a call from a school district five hours away. They needed someone to do a Writing Across the Curriculum workshop on Friday, because their person backed out. I had one ready and my principal said it was okay....

Alison, the administrator-teacher from the private school, speaks in many places in this study. She wrote "Administrivia" and "To Really Cheer," and initiated the conversation about intuition with Therese which triggered her poem. She was moved by Dorothy's writing during the last week, and responded to "Heal Thyself" while it was in draft. Before the summer workshop was over, she had asked Dorothy's permission to photocopy it for her students. The following April, Alison sent an envelope of fifteen letters, all written or typed formally, some on personal letterheads. She wrote:

Dear Dorothy:

I asked my students to read "Heal Thyself" in my Short Story course....So...enclosed are the letters I asked them to write to you, and I hope you'll find them both interesting and helpful...These kids are...motivated, from a variety of socio-economic levels, but primarily upper-middle class...Many of them have divorced parents....the kids make some interesting assumptions--that you used a "case study" format, that you are the doctor, that the doctor is male, that the doctor is female, that this is a draft...but they all assume you're a writer. Have fun!

The students notice Dorothy's use of language: "This story reminds me of a

case report done by a doctor because of the simple use of language. Was this your intent?" one asks. "From the story I have read, I believe that you are a talented writer. Attributing to this belief is your unique style and language use. I...thank you for letting me read it." Others relate personal reactions based on her rhetorical choices:

I enjoyed the way in which you presented the troubles that Emily had to endure-through the report of the psychologist. By the way the parents acted it seemed to me that the parents were more like children than Emily was. This was never openly shown yet I noticed it in the descriptions of the parents and I liked it.

Right now my parents are divorcing and the story was uncomfortable to read at times. I saw myself as that girl in many areas of the story. Instead of eczema, I slept all the time....you used that well by having the girl physically affected by the torment.

I liked the metaphor you created between eczema and "the tensions that ran under the surface of her parents' relationship."....The external fighting of the parents created a volatile stew of emotion that was suppressed inside Emily....The burning in her heart seemed to be surfacing on her skin. The mental turmoil manifests into physical discomfort as the internal pain becomes external.

I loved your choice of topics. I've seen many friends suffer through their parents divorces, and unfortunately, I've become closely acquainted with their torment.

One letter assumes that Emily is Dorothy: "Did things get better for you, and how did your relationship with your father change after meeting with the doctor? Did you have a choice of which parent you wanted to live with? When you wrote this story, was it your intention to make parents more aware of their children? I think you did accomplish that." Six letters commented on the detail of the summers at Emily's aunt's house in New Hampshire: "Including the description of Emily's summers

gave a feeling of relief." "The summer was a wonderful idea to have the child's problems almost escape from her. I thought that was discreet and effective." "The summer at the farm helped me to understand the great conflict it had on her normal life."

Some letters gave suggestions for changes: "I've read your story through four times and each time I seem to be looking for something more....I'm dying to hear, as a reader, the feelings of the doctor....These changes would give so much more substance to your short story...Please consider my comments for your next draft...the story has a lot of potential. I would love to read it when you think you are done." "As a whole, at the end of the story I was angry at the parents of Emily. This is a good sign because stories are supposed to evoke emotions. The only real problem I had was...it ended too abruptly. I wanted to hear more about what the doctor would say to Emily...."

Dorothy loved receiving the letters; it "gave her a real boost," she said, and after writing a note to Alison, she went back to the story to revise it. She told me she felt "immensely flattered," knowing that Alison's students had "no ulterior motive to say nice things." The students, as readers, "picked up the things I was trying to say without anyone having to hammer it into their heads." The "biggest thrill was to be taken as a professional writer....Their comments were *serious!*"

These are only a few stories of three people's professional connections with three others. During the year that followed the summer, I heard about hundreds of other contacts between people, many inter-visitations and other swapping of student work, other teachers' sharing of their own reading and writing.

The "sense of *communitas*" fostered by these contacts, in this case for Dorothy, Therese, and Joyce, are not like the kinds of collegial banter and story-swapping that goes on in a faculty lounge. (Sunstein, 1989) The social drama here is quite different. Here it is between people who want to continue the same literate relationship and

professional inquiry that began for them together in the summer. Each of these examples is an echo of the "liminal state," that "subjunctive mood" of culture, the "fructile chaos" that Turner describes. For Therese and Beth in the Christmas card, there were simple possibilities: sharing writing with ninth graders and working within curriculum constraints for juniors and seniors. In Lila's letter to Joyce, the swimming metaphor itself places her in a state of in-between-ness, and she gloats over her professional successes and the knowledge that her colleagues "don't even know she has." She reaches back to the readings in the yogurt store as she describes her real-world improvements reading with her students. And for Dorothy and Alison, the "storehouse of possibilities" Alison offers her students through Dorothy's short story becomes a liminal state for them. In turn, Alison's students offer Dorothy a set of informed and communicative readers, an extension of the very literate audience she came to the summer to find.

Stories of Job Craft and Political Action

I was surprised by the differences between the relationships inside the summer community and the relationships I have seen in teachers' everyday workplace. When I began my study, I expected to follow storytelling like that I heard in my earlier studies of teachers rooms and gatherings of English teachers. Stories in school involve quips and jokes about students' reactions to literature, student success and failure stories, stories of subverting the administration, stories of losing papers, stories of being out of control. (1989 a,b)

The stories in summer fell into very different categories: personal school failure , personal writing failure, single important mentors, teaching failures, classroom bumbling. There were far more questions than there were stories; people engaged in inquiry because they were encouraged to do so. The culture of the summer,

in Tom Newkirk's words on the first day, "honors the teacher," opens spaces for thinking, invites a consciousness of possibilities. The culture in school does not.

When I began to see the summer program as an event that honors the teacher's personal literacy, I realized why there was such a difference. Folklorist Roger Abrahams suggests that "intense service-client relationships" are interesting occupations to study. American English teachers, as they work with students and writing, are in just such intense relationships. Educational philosophers Patrick Shannon (1988) and Michael Apple (1986) write about the job intensification and voicelessness in school settings. Folklorist Archie Green suggests that we can learn much about an occupation with a good case study placed carefully "between the poles of job craft and political action." Through my case studies and their stories, I saw that an individual teacher's personal literacy lies at the opposite pole from where the school would like them to be. The writing workshop culture restores teachers, allows them to reclaim their voices.

Superficially, away from the oppression of the school day and in the context of the literate community, teachers may have the illusion that it is as Susan said, "a little bit of a cult," and they come away with the learned rituals and written artifacts to prove it. In the temporary cultural event they perform the rituals, enact the symbols, create the artifacts, tell and write the stories. But more deeply, their experience offers them a chance to explore, as Bruner asserts, "not how things are, but how things should be," or as Turner describes, "the subjunctive mood of culture." For these high school English teachers, finding their own folk psychology and telling it to themselves in the company of others is an important story. The time is short, but it is concentrated time, hot and dense. They can tell the stories here that they can't tell in a school culture that oppresses them. They can revise themselves as teachers and as literate people.

Despite any mandate with which they may have been sent by their schools, these teachers discover that curriculum reform is neither part of this program's overt nor part of its implied agenda. To claim an explicit need for curriculum reform would be to disclaim a teacher's personal value, and that is not the purpose of this program. She is there first to listen to her own voice and to hear the voices of her colleagues. As the earlier part of this chapter shows, the application to school depends on her.

Teacher Education and the American High School

Research in high school teaching writing practices is sparse, but it is arid in teacher education for high school writing teachers. In his recent survey of 1,557 studies covering ten annotated bibliographies over five years in *Research in the Teaching of English*, Russell Durst (1990) observes that although composition studies are abundant, studies in teacher education represent only four percent. He calls for a closer look at how writing is taught in high schools. Durst suggests that studies try not so much to resolve questions, but to "open up new questions and learn from the "pendulum shifts" in writing pedagogy, such as the "move now taking place from process to context."

This dissertation studies process inside a context for teacher education that assumes reflection for the teacher and revision for her students. It opens many questions about both student and teacher education inside the culture of the American high school. The teachers in this study have the high school as their daily context, a culture that assumes goals of completion and mastery, not reflection, revision and re-constructing knowledge. Joyce observes:

By the time they come to me in ninth grade, [my students] are hardened, prejudicial, cynical about teachers in school. I hold them partially responsible for not giving me a chance, but on the other hand, I also realize that probably a

lot of the reasons they are hardened against school and teachers is because school and teachers have wronged them more than one way, more than one time.

At the end of the day I visited Dorothy in October, she had kept one girl after school for detention. The girl hadn't turned in any writing, and showed no signs of keeping the drafts she had written in class. Dorothy pulled up a chair next to her, and spoke quietly:

I want to support you in your writing, not make you feel badly about it...I try to save all drafts of my writing, especially poems...shall we set up a plan? Can you pass in two poems on Monday? Two poems will count as 'one piece.'

The student tells Dorothy she couldn't write in class, and she can't write at home. Dorothy suggests that the girl bring music to class, and earphones. "It's okay with me if it helps you relax. I won't tell the administration. If anybody asks, just say you need them....I hope things work out for you." Later, Dorothy tells me the girl is "an enigma." Her mother was in jail for shooting a state trooper, and she lives with a foster family. "They're slime balls," she says of the foster family, "Six or seven junk cars in the yard, and noise in the house. No place to work quietly." Dorothy recognizes the girl's personal needs, offers her a solution that runs counter to school rules, and encourages her to continue writing at all costs. She gives the girl a workable and satisfactory assignment, one that recalls her own discussion with Ellen last summer about drafts and poems and "what to count as a poem." In a local coffeeshop afterwards, Dorothy wonders as she talks to me: "Why do my detentions always turn into counseling sessions now? Last year, they straightened out the shelves, and erased the boards." The strength she has gleaned from her own literacy has shifted Dorothy's view of herself as an English teacher and her picture of her

students. She engages with the girl on a level of personal literacy, not according to her school's administrative policy.

One of Joyce's students broke into a local liquor store on a Saturday night, and was shot by the owner. The boy bled to death as his friends waited for the ambulance. Joyce heard about it the following morning:

I have spent many many days thinking about the ramifications of that boy's death, why and how these young people became involved in breaking and entering in the first place....I daresay I was closer to him because he and I wrote together....Once that writing is shared, more of that person is shared...I guess I just found myself very angry with....school as an institution for doing maybe not enough for helping children learn quickly and decisively the consequences of their actions....And I wonder how writing, and writing workshop might in fact enhance the teaching of consequences....We're not doing that early enough in children's lives. There is much reason for doing it....I think children should be protected. They are very dear and they are very tender....perhaps reading and writing workshops, if we truly hold our children responsible, will be to help them take responsibility, and when they fail they will not be able to say, "Because the teacher *gave me a bad grade.*"

In her thoughtful grief, Joyce is angry at the institution, sensitive to the ironies it suggests about freedom and responsibility. Her quiet plea for students learning about consequences moves her far from her role as Certified Secondary English Teacher. She knows she's grown over a twenty year career and she's still growing. She is still making knowledge.

Freedom and responsibility for teachers isn't much better than it is for students. Social pressures assume that an English teacher comes to school complete. As a conscientious high school writing teacher, Joyce is stuck between two paradigms. The public and the institution demands that she model "received knowledge," but both her professional understanding and personal literacy suggests a model of

independently and socially constructed knowledge.

English Education historian Arthur Applebee observes, "School programs have an inertia which can create a surprisingly large gap between educational thought, as expressed at conferences and in the professional literature, and educational practice as it actually transpires in schools." (1974, 29) Susan's comments to me this summer echo those of Applebee and the other scholars who voice their frustration:

I'm sorry to say that I just don't trust all teachers to use these approaches. This assumes that a teacher is a wellspring of life and love and literature and information about writing. There are several in my building who died a while back.

"Those who died a while back" have died in a hard squeeze between approaches to literacy and approaches to measuring schools. The educational research currently accepted by the general public--those who make the decisions for high school teachers' working environments--are based on authority, control, replication, and reproduction--the very models the public calls "school." The aim is to normalize the typical, to generalize about large populations, to pile numbers and samples until they form a bell-shaped curve. This is the research that drives instruction; it is the very frame on which American curriculum and textbooks are built. (Apple 1986, Shannon 1988) Our high schools, teachers and students, curriculum choices, and time spent are set by standards from commercial achievement tests, college entrance examinations, and large-sample national and state measurements. In models like this and the research that supports them, both teachers and students are the variables that are "controlled." As Tracy told me:

The writing curriculum where I am...has a philosophical core they call "process," but we are supposed to teach spelling, we have vocabulary from a workbook....and grammar chapters out of Warriner's....We have to pass our

plan books in once a week, and the administration reads them...I don't give the vocab from the stupid exercises, the kids work them into their writing, but in the plan book it looks like I'm doing what I'm supposed to...

The teacher who wants to create a community for knowledge-making must be almost subversive. She must plan, as Tracy does, to make it "look like I'm doing what I'm supposed to do." Joyce describes a successful encounter which began as "serious consternation" and ended in a state of "gracious and generous" peer revising:

....I wonder if I'm really an English teacher or a spiritual counselor...I wonder if the taxpayers would continue to pay me if they realized that that's what I believe I'm doing more than anything else. I realize that I am using writing and reading to encourage young people to get in touch with their minds and their hearts and their social consciousness.

For Joyce, her community of students functions as much to confirm and revise her own knowledge as it does for the students. She feels that the taxpayers would never support her if they knew she was allowing them to "get in touch with their minds...."

The summer writing program puts the systems in place for the teacher to experiment, to act as her own agent for change as she reads and writes and re-examines what she is doing. It encourages her to determine new ways to enable her students to confirm and revise their knowledge and changes, no matter what her institution expects. Without realizing it, without telling subversive stories or carrying banners, by choosing her own literacy as a way to engage her students, she chooses to subvert the system.

The American high school is the villain in this story. He is an aging, silent villain, barely a hundred years old. He is benign, classically educated, and rather oblivious. He began the tradition of homogenizing the English curriculum in the

public schools when the elite eastern colleges issued their Uniform Booklists in 1894, based on an even earlier nineteenth century model meant for prospective students. (Applebee, 1974, 49). Dissenting voices were there then as they are now. At the turn of the century, both John Dewey and Jane Addams, among others, were arguing for more experience-based and socially equitable models of teaching, but most of the townspeople weren't listening to their calls for reform. The High School was sorting out its "best and brightest," and sending them to college. (Cremin, 1961, Shannon, 1990)

The American high school hasn't changed much in its hundred year history. James Conant's 1958 report *The American High School Today: A First Report to Interested Citizens*, was designed to address a more diverse population of midwestern farmers and factory workers, those not headed for college, and in it he drew some post-Sputnik guidelines. After a thorough study of fifty-five of the best high schools he could find, Conant made twenty-one recommendations for creating a more inclusive comprehensive high school that would train all of our citizens in separately tracked programs. Among his guidelines he singled out English composition:

The time devoted to English composition...should occupy half the time devoted to the study of English. Each student should be required to write an average of one theme a week...corrected by the teacher...no English teacher should be responsible for more than one hundred pupils...a schoolwide composition test should be given in every grade and graded by a committee of the entire school...Obviously, adequate instruction in English composition requires that teachers not be overloaded. (1958, 50)

Despite his industrial-like "product" expectation of one theme per student per week, not to exceed one hundred themes per teacher, Conant acknowledged that writing is important enough to make up one-half of the English curriculum, and that

overloaded teachers cannot teach writing. Thirty-seven years later, most of today's high schools are still struggling to meet Conant's recommendations, as well as to readjust them according to a post-industrial American high school population quite different from the one he studied. If anything has happened, it is that our Silent Villain has outlived the abilities he once had, and the townspeople haven't noticed. Most of today's English teachers not only attended high schools like the ones Conant described, but now they hold tenure as their employees.

Since Conant's report, there have been periodic gatherings to define the English curriculum and describe the teacher's role in it. The most recent was the English Coalition Conference, sixty school and university teachers from eight professional organizations met for three weeks in the summer of 1987, and attempted to create a report that would re-define currently accepted perceptions of "English studies" and "language arts." For teachers working with secondary students, the coalition agreed on the following principles (Lunsford and Lloyd-Jones 1989, 17):

1. Learning is the process of actively constructing meaning from experiences, including encounters with a broad range of print and nonprint texts (films, videos, TV and radio advertisements, etc)
2. Others--parents, teachers, and peers--help learners construct meanings by serving as supportive models, providing frames and materials for inquiry, helping create and modify hypotheses, and confirming the worth of the venture.
3. Learners at different ages and stages of development may well learn in different ways.

The conference itself was an event much like the summer writing program in this study. In his foreword to the official report of that conference, Wayne Booth reviews how the recommendations emerged. With an edge of surprise, he notes that

the participants' talk forced them to reconceive even meanings of clichés. In the time they spent shaping goals for students, the teachers discovered what they needed for themselves:

...what was new was our having enough time together--three weeks soon began to look too short--to get beyond our stereotypes, to listen to each other, to try to understand and fail to understand and then try again...we found that our own "learning problems" resembled those of our students back home...In short, our own learning illustrated just why our students show so much resistance to learning: like theirs, it was inevitable "recursive," spiraling, requiring repetition after repetition...After all, it is only when we teachers engage in reflection on what we want to learn and why, only when we "take responsibility for our own meanings," that we become models of what we want our students to become. Only if we lead our students to take such active responsibility will they become full participants in the political and cultural life they will meet after they leave our care." (Booth, in Lunsford and Lloyd-Jones, 1989, x-xiii)

It's Not about Literature, It's What Literature is About

In *What is English*, Peter Elbow's personal account of that conference, he suggests that active participation was more important than the core of knowledge that the profession often values about itself: "Perhaps English can end up being a discipline that is, above all, about making knowledge rather than about studying already existing knowledge." (1990, 118) Most high school English teachers didn't become teachers to make new knowledge, to keep up with their own writing, or to work with teenagers. They are often people whose love of reading led them to choose English as a major in college. As Anne observed one day:

My theory is that [English teachers] are so afraid they are going to be *found out*...to be non-writers, and not terribly good writing teachers. They're so afraid that the jig is going to be up....that someone will discover that they

masked it all with "I really don't need to know anything else. I have *my way* and it works for me."

....People can be English teachers because they like to read good stuff. And they don't feel their forte is really writing....I also think you can blame the models. In college, they were The Answer Men. They were the people who had memorized all the footnotes and knew all the allusions and T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, and could tell you what James Joyce was talking about, and I just stood in awe of them....I figured never in a million years would I pick that up, without reading reams of stuff. And we grew out of that tradition. That's exactly where we came from.

Recent studies (Sizer, 1984, Goodlad, 1984, Powell et. al., 1985) show that Anne's theory is a good one. All over the country, English teachers are still stuffing their students with uniform "received knowledge," the stuff of Anne's college "Answer Men:" curriculum prescribed literature, state-mandated literacy "requirements," school-mandated "skills," and a test-inspired illusion of what colleges want them to be. Without reflection or appropriate preparation, teachers teach according to the models with which they were taught, inadvertantly employing their own "institutional biographies" (Britzman, 1988). Teachers with a traditional English literature major as their primary background, without much work in either composition or pedagogy, duplicate in their classes the models by which they have been taught. (Grossman, 1989). No course or program has offered a different model; as new teachers in public high schools, they are not encouraged to be creative.

Elbow admits his surprise and the surprise of his college section colleagues when they discovered that the conditions for high school teaching appeared significantly worse than those for elementary and junior high schools "High school teachers have much less opportunity to control their environment and to experiment than elementary and college teachers do."(1990, 222) High school teachers do not fare

any better than their students in terms of support for academic growth. The conditions of their professionalism are depressing. They are isolated from their colleagues (Lortie, 1975, Lightfoot 1983), they feel flattened and powerless (Goodlad, 1984, Johnson, 1990); the curriculum and the school day are more fragmented and distracting than they were when Conant recommended them. (Lightfoot, 1983, Sizer 1984, Powell, et.al., 1985)

Both the public's demands for high test scores and the textbooks' attempts at uniform homogenization by "teacher-proofing" curriculum materials force teachers to work mechanistically, in the paradigm of technical control. (Apple 1986, Shannon 1988) In English classes, when students spend time writing, it is more content-based, less personally expressive, and when it is personally expressive they do not move it out of that mode into other, more reader-based forms. (Britton, 1975) The older the students are, the less time their teachers have them spend writing in class (Applebee 1981, Simmons 1991). And teachers don't have the time, the support, or the reflective self-confidence to act. Tracy described a friend who teaches across the hall at her school:

She's an awesome lit teacher, she just has a real passion, and the kids sense that...I've heard them say "She's the best literature teacher I've ever had," but she's a terrible writing teacher. Her idea of responding to a piece is to read the whole piece and on the last page she writes a grade and "Thanks for sharing." So they might write ten pages...the kids have no idea what they're doing right or wrong, how they might revise....She was trying to find a class this summer, a lit class, and they were all booked. So I said "Why don't you take a writing class?" "No. I've been teaching writing for fifteen years," she said, "and I *know* how to do it."

Like Tracy's colleague, most teachers are not encouraged to expand their teaching methods or philosophy; they are only expected to enlarge their content knowledge. Public school teachers who attend conferences or hold office in

professional organizations usually attend meetings at their own expense. To take time off without pay for scholarship often means risking or losing jobs. Inservice programs, according to a recent study by Susan Moore Johnson, are not effective when they are mandated, and they are usually mandated and in-house. Johnson found that most funded support for teachers falls into two categories tied to salary scales, "payoff-centered" for program development, and "investment-centered," for the teacher's development. (1990, 261) She suggests that schools should be investment-centered rather than payoff-centered, that teachers from schools willing to invest in independent summer opportunities for "learning and restoration" felt that their schools were committed to their professional growth, and in turn felt committed to their schools. But such support is neither cost effective nor evenly distributed.

The summer writing program provides a hedge against all of these depressing conditions for a high school teacher. It offers what Johnson's study identified as the crucial piece of teacher development: "investment centered support" to evoke "restorative powers." One Wednesday night during the summer, I joined Anne and three English teacher friends from four different states. Except for one who had partial funding from her school, all teachers were at UNH at their own expense. They were taking a break before returning to their writing. They talked about school over beer and iced tea in air conditioned comfort at the Tin Palace:

Peter: (a department head himself) I'm here to learn something. Teaching to me is a very isolating experience, so I come here wanting to check out what I've been thinking about all year or what I've been doing, to not only have people listen, but to see how they respond...Am I saying something's true that's only true from my very limited perspective?...my limited experience? Or am I saying something that can be reaffirmed by other people, or valuable to other people?

Anne: Yeah, you can't really test that with the people that you work with...

Beverly: (teasing) You can't share with your colleagues because you have to sit around and bash the department head.

Peter: (serious, though Beverly's joke was directed at him) See, *I am* a department head so there are a lot of dynamics about it with me. I mean, it's interesting for me to come here and hear people bitch about department heads, because I would give my right arm (well, maybe my left!) for my people to...do something different. I try to feed them articles and send them stuff about where they can take courses, but *I can't force them*....I've learned that the worst thing you can do is waste people's time...and force them to be in a place wasting their time where they don't want to be.

This informal moment offers a key to the summer writing program; these teachers are opening questions, exploring their literacy growth, affirming their collegial freedom and professional responsibility. Not wasting people's time, not forcing anything, and "doing something different," as Peter attempts to do in his department, are the cornerstones on which this program was built. The theories of composition that highlight talk (Moffett, 1968, Britton, 1970), and the works by composition teachers about opening possibilities on the page (Murray, 1968, Elbow, 1973) were among the original influences on Tom Newkirk's vision for the New Hampshire Writing Program. His theoretical foundation was rich with philosophies of growth for the individual who listens and responds to a surrounding culture (Dewey, James, Vygotsky). Like the design of the program itself and its participants, growth in literacy is in a constant motion, tuning in to possibilities, listening to its own "fructile chaos." Susan's words to me, "I'm understanding now that to read is to write is to listen," offer her own version of the program's theoretical base.

In order to understand teachers' classrooms, it is important to look away from them and into the literate processes of teachers themselves. To respect teachers as

reflective practitioners and researchers, we must understand the complexity of what it is to be a teacher. We need to look at who they are and how they got that way. Each point of contact a teacher has with a student involves two personal histories: the teacher's and the student's. When both of them can tap into the depth and breadth of that history, into their own literate behaviors, then the exchange between teacher and student we call education can begin to take place. For English teachers in high schools, curriculum change will only be superficial without attention to the teacher's literacy growth. Pre-service and in-service education ought to include opportunities for inquiry in context: after school writing and reading groups, meaningful collaborations with writers, actors, publishers, other academic communities, on-site teacher-research projects in and out of school, literacy biography projects that disrupt and question personal patterns of teaching. These are places for reflection and collegiality like the summer culture offers.

There is rich teacher education inside the summer culture. In the talk and the sharing, in the reading and the writing, each person answers her own questions and develops the principles she will put into place in her own classroom. There is learned performance inside this culture, what folklorists call "verbal art" in oral cultures. (Baumann, 1975) Teachers read books and write papers about teaching as they do in conventional courses, but they also read the personal texts that they each create, and they learn responses and develop language to enable the others' continuing creation. In short, they *enact literature*. People in the program learn to enact the program's beliefs about the structure and function of a community of writers. This is not just about learning literature; it's enacting what literature is about. For many high school English teachers, this part of the literate experience is new.

"In the teaching of literature," writes Louise Rosenblatt, "we are basically

helping our students to learn to perform in response to a text....The reader performs the poem or the novel, as the violinist performs the sonata. But the instrument on which the reader plays, and from which he evokes the work, is--himself." (1938/1983, 279) In the text that is the summer writing program, the instruments are teachers who perform what they write, and who "play" what their colleagues read and write by performing in response. They read the culture, too; it acts as their accompaniment.

These are not particularly "empowered" teachers; they will not return to affect curriculum change. The shift is far more subtle, more internal. It is not a shift toward an externally induced curriculum. Rather, because it is a deep, internal shifting, curriculum change is possible inside each teacher's classroom, no matter what her school requires. Teachers form close bonds in the summer writing program with no competition, but their internal realities compete like electrical activity in a summer thunderstorm. To re-conceive writing and reading means bumping up against a personal definition of literacy, and against a school's definition of curriculum and evaluation. To re-conceive teaching means crashing against a personal autobiography, often one that holds old stories of literacy failure. To re-conceive learning means wandering around in time and space, colliding with personal stories of learning that happen in places outside of school. Those stories need to be told and they need to be written. And it is in the telling and the writing that revisions begin to take place.

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APPENDIX A
ORGANIZING QUESTIONS

The main question which framed this study was: What kind of culture does a summer writing program provide for a high school teacher? What does a high school teacher do to carry this culture back to her classroom in a public high school? Inspired by Denny Taylor and Catherine Dorsey Gaines' method of using "organizing questions," shown at the end of her book *Growing Up Literate*, I used these other questions as guidelines during my data gathering:

- What are the differences between the stories high school writing teachers tell in a summer program and the stories they tell in their schools?
- What is the relationship between a high school teacher's own writing and her beliefs about teaching writing?
- What is a high school teacher's attitude toward her own writing? Does it change over three weeks?
- What do high school teachers choose to write about? Are their writing choices influenced by the conversations they have?
- How do high school writing teachers shape a social context in three weeks with their colleagues in order to reconsider and reconstruct their professional knowledge about writing and teaching writing?
- How do high school teachers interact with teachers from other grade levels in their writing groups? In the dorms? Does this change as the time goes on?
- What dissonances show among high school writing teachers during a summer writing program? What do they complain about? What do they joke about? What do they express conflict about? What do they challenge? What annoys them?

- What are the cultural features--verbal art, artifacts, rituals, behaviors--in a summer writing program that enable people to create a community in such a short time?
- How do those cultural features differ from the cultural features of a high school?
- How does one teacher react to these cultural features, and what is her relationship to her colleagues in the culture of a summer writing program? How does she view herself as a writer in this context?
- How do seven teachers differ in their relationships to the culture of a summer writing program? In their knowledge about themselves as teachers and writers?
- What are the differences between beginners and repeaters? Why do people need to return to a summer program?
- How do teachers absorb and synthesize the influences of a summer writing program, reflect and re-write it for their classrooms? For themselves as teachers in a traditional system? For themselves as literate, creative people?

APPENDIX B
DATA COLLECTION SCHEDULE
DURING THE SUMMER PROGRAM

During the three week summer program, I organized my time to balance my participation/observation between my selected informants. What was in it for them? An opportunity to document their own reflection, to have some extra attention, to share their writing with me; to "slow down" their thinking and learning enough to look more carefully at themselves as members of the community. Of the people I invited to participate in my study, no one declined.

Informants:

1. Periodic interviews (several times per week; see questions)
2. Daily classroom observation
3. Multiple verbal data sources: drafts, completed copies of writing, journals, notes, letters, tapes, written responses from others
4. Tapes of conversations
5. Follow-up in classrooms and school collegial contexts (department offices, teachers' rooms) of each informant

Other sources of data:

1. Fieldnotes from observation notes written in class: condensed and expanded accounts
2. Nightly self-memos in journal: my perspective as participant and observer
3. Taped interviews with informants
4. Complete collected writings of informants, selected w
5. Collected artifacts from SWP and instructors
6. Photographs
7. Photographic observation

APPENDIX C
GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

WEEK I:

Draw up an "academic history" map and a "mentor model"

What do you expect from these weeks? professional? personal? for students?

In what ways do you feel like an "outsider" this week? what problems have you had?

Have you had personal difficulties managing 3 getting here for weeks? getting away from home?

Do you have collegial relationships at school? dissonance at school?

How does writing fit into your high school curriculum?

What is your school's expectation of you as a writing teacher?

WEEK II:

What is surprising you?

What difficulties are you encountering?

In what ways do you feel like an outsider this week? like an insider?

What are you writing about?

Any new relationships with people? how have they responded to your writing?

What have you learned about other high schools?

What's new for your classroom?

What's new for you as a writer?

WEEK III:

What have you learned about writing?

What have you learned about yourself as a writer?

In what ways do you feel like an insider/outsider this week?

Have you had some personal victories?

What has helped you learn?

How will writing fit into your curriculum?

What will you try that's new in your classroom?

What will remain the same in your classroom?

Re-work the "academic history" map and "mentor model:" how has it shifted?

For returnees:

Why did you return to the UNH SWP?

What do you expect from this summer's program?

In what ways do you feel like an insider? An outsider?

What personal writing habits have changed for you since the first writing
program?

What were some of the important experiences from the first SWP?

In what ways are you thinking about the connection writing has with with reading?

APPENDIX D
OVERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ALL
1990 NEW HAMPSHIRE SUMMER WRITING PROGRAMS

Daily Schedule:**NHWP****IRWL****MURRAY**

8:00-8:30 video showings, browse in lending library in 218, pick up newsletter

8:45-10 writing groups 8:30-11:45 grade level groups writing time

Morning break: pick up newsletter, coffee and browse in room 218

10:15-11:45 grade level groups

continue grade level groups

11:45-1:00 lunchtime (brown bag lunch talks, staff meetings, social time)

Wednesday picnics followed by no p.m. classes, Lobster Fest on final Thursday

1:00-3:00 writing group

1:00-3:00 writing group

1:30-4:30, M-Th, class

Special Programs:

Morning Presentations: Professor Donald Murray, "Pushing the Edges," Children's book author and illustrator Barbara Cooney, entire writing program staff: "Mini-Conference," selected participants: final reading programs (separate for NHWP and IRWL; Murray's class attends one of their choice)

Brown Bag Lunch Talks: Prof. Sarah Sherman, "Sarah Orne Jewett: An American Persephone," Prof. Patricia Sullivan, "Feminism and Composition Studies"

7:30-9:30 evening programs: Open Forum, Charles Simic poetry reading, Rebecca Rule fiction reading

**1990 SCHEDULE OF SPECIAL EVENTS,
INCLUDING ACTIVITIES OF INFORMANTS**

WEEK I:

Sunday, July 8: Check in at dorms and register from 3:00 p.m.

Monday, July 9:

8:30-8:45 a.m. Opening welcome meeting

Brown bag talk: Sarah Sherman: "Sarah Orne Jewett: An American Persephone"

Tuesday, July 10:

7:30 p.m. Open Forum

Wednesday, July 11:

(newsletter announces it is "hump day" and coffee is restored to room 218)

12:00 picnic

no afternoon classes (Dorothy goes to Portsmouth with Susan)

Thursday, July 12:

a.m.: Charles Simic meets with Summer Studies and Murray classes.

(newsletter announces first t-shirt committee meeting)

7:30 p.m. Charles Simic, poetry reading

Friday, July 13:

(newsletter mentions options for weekend: open poetry in Portsmouth,
swimming at UNH Mendum's pond, restaurant recommendations, outlet
shopping on coast, etc.)

Formal readings in classes

weekend: Therese goes to Boston, Dorothy and Colin go fishing and to beach, Susan drives coastal route to Maine, Lenore writes and reads in library, Joyce stays on campus

WEEK II:**Monday, July 16:**

10:30-12 Don Murray: "Pushing the Edge"

(newsletter notes four videos to be shown this week at 8 am beginning tomorrow, second t-shirt announcement, meeting at 3:00 today)

Tuesday, July 17:

8 am: Roald Dahl video (*Author's Eye* series)

10:30-12 Barbara Cooney lecture "Hattie and the Wild Waves"

Cooney meets with IRWL writing groups 45 min each

third t-shirt announcement, mtg at 3 p.m., design must be at printer's Wed.

Wednesday, July 18:

8 am: Katherine Patterson video (*Author's Eye* series)

10:30-12: Mini-Conference in a.m.

12:30: picnic, no p.m. writing groups

Thursday, July 19:

8 am: "One Child's View of the Classroom" (UNH video, Heinemann)

10:30-12: Mini-Conference in a.m.

11:45: Dorothy takes informal Carillon Bell tour with Terry's class at

12:00: brown bag talk: "Feminism and Composition Studies,"

1:00-3:00 pm: writing groups meet

Friday, July 20:

8 am: "Collaboration" (UNH video, Heinemann)

(newsletter announces t-shirt update, congratulations to Anne who had an article published in *English Journal*)

8:30 a.m. classes as usual

Formal class readings

weekend: Dorothy and Colin go home to cat and garden, return and go deep sea fishing, Therese climbs Chocorua, Joyce goes home to Vermont

WEEK III:

Monday, July 23:

(newsletter announces videos for this week, UNH October conference)

8:30 a.m. classes as usual

7:30 pm: Becky Rule fiction reading

Tuesday, July 24:

8 am: "A World of Difference" (Lucy Calkins video, Heinemann)

(newsletter has final reminders about check-out times)

8:30 a.m. classes as usual

Wednesday, July 25:

8 am: "Toni Morrison" video

8:30 a.m. classes as usual

Thursday, July 26:

8 a.m. "Reading Recovery" video

8:30 a.m. classes as usual

Lobster Clambake at 1:15, 3:00

Friday, July 27: Formal reading sessions, check-out of dorm is 7-8 am, 12-3 pm

APPENDIX E

MAJOR PIECES OF WRITING BY INFORMANTS

WEEK I

WEEK II

WEEK III

NHWP:

Therese: Fragments of Fear Crash Course in Reality Lest I Forget,
Looking From Chocorua

Dorothy: Definition Winning the Pool Heal Thyself
The Abuse of Journals in the Classroom

Dorothy's response group:

Susan: Bidgie and the Bunyip (two weeks), This Train is Bound for Glory

Lenore: My Father's Stories The Sisters Trees

IRWL:

Joyce: letter to students Winthrop Ave Elem, 1951 Watch Your Head
Bill Writes

Other writing:


- journals for grade-level groups and writing groups
- portfolio letters in IRWL classes and commentaries in Explorations in Genre
- reading response log to personal readings in fiction, non-fiction and poetry as well as professional readings
- writing exercises done in classes, at Murray's presentation, and at mini-conference
- response slips and notes on others' writing as they read it in small and large group
- personal course evaluations and formal course evaluations

APPENDIX F

BROCHURES FOR 1990 SUMMER WRITING PROGRAMS

10TH

Annual
Summer
Institute



July 9-27
1990
Durham
New Hampshire

The New Hampshire Writing Program

Thomas Newkirk, Director

The University of New Hampshire offers a three-week summer institute on the teaching of writing in grades K-12. The course is designed for a variety of educators—classroom teachers, principals, reading teachers, learning disability specialists, curriculum specialists—who want to initiate or extend writing programs that focus on the writing process.

<p>Method:</p> <p>The course is divided into two parts, one focusing on the participants' own writing and one dealing with instructional techniques for the classroom. In the first part, the writing workshop, participants write daily and share their writing in small groups. The New Hampshire Writing Program is founded on the belief that this kind of engagement with writing provides insights that can be gained in no other way.</p> <p>The second part of the course deals with the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing development • The writing conference • Prewriting • Revision • Evaluation • Classroom management • The relationship between reading and writing • Writing across the curriculum 	<p>Instructors:</p> <p>As in past years, the staff will be composed of classroom teachers who have worked extensively in teacher education. The 1990 staff will include:</p> <p>Carol Avery Manheim Township School Lancaster, Pa.</p> <p>Judith Fusyo University of New Hampshire Durham, N.H.</p> <p>Ellen Blackburn Karelitz Educational Consultant South Berwick, Maine</p> <p>Jane Kearns Writing Coordinator Manchester Public Schools Manchester, N.H.</p> <p>Pat McLure Mast Way Elementary School Lee, N.H.</p> <p>Terry Moher Exeter Area High School Exeter, N.H.</p> <p>Thomas Newkirk University of New Hampshire Durham, N.H.</p> <p>Jack Wilde Berruce Ray School Hanover, N.H.</p>	<p>Guest Speakers:</p> <p>Barbara Cooney Author and Illustrator Damascus, Maine</p> <p>Donald Murray Professor Emeritus University of New Hampshire</p> <p>Cost and Credit:</p> <p>Tuition and fees will be approximately \$707, which entitles participants to register for six graduate (semester) credits. Those who do not register for credit must also pay the full amount. On-campus room and board is available for approximately \$420.</p> <p>A deposit of \$80 will reserve a space for you in the program. The balance of the tuition and fees must be paid by June 1 in order to guarantee your registration. If you withdraw from the program by June 1, 1990, \$50 of your deposit will be refunded.</p> <p>Advanced Degree: Credits earned in the summer institute may be applied toward a Master of Science for Teachers (MST) degree in the UNH English Department. For information about this degree contact Sabina Foote.</p> <p>Register Early:</p> <p>The institute is limited to 120 participants. Class size is 20.</p>
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New Hampshire Writing Program

3 RD
Annual
Summer
Institute



July 9-27
1990
Durham
New Hampshire

Institute on Reading, Writing, and Learning

Jane Hansen, Coordinator

This program offers an opportunity for participants to extend their understanding of writing by exploring its relationship to reading. The institute is based on the belief that writing and reading are both modes of learning and that students should read and write for a variety of purposes.

Like the New Hampshire Writing Program, this institute will engage participants in the activities of writing and reading, and it will ask them to reflect on this engagement.

Focus:

The institute is designed for classroom teachers (K-12) and school leaders who have participated in the New Hampshire Writing Program, or who have extensive experience and training in teaching the writing process. Educators who are primarily interested in beginning a writing program are advised to attend the New Hampshire Writing Program first.

This institute will deal with the following topics:

- Teaching the reading process so that it parallels the teaching of writing
- Using many forms of writing and reading to pursue an area of interest
- Addressing skills in a process-based program
- Evaluation
- Use of learning logs
- Use of the library, interviews, media, and other sources of information
- Helping students become researchers

Additional Information:

Sabina Foote
Administrative Secretary
(603)862-3963

Instructors:

Paula Flemming, ConVal School District, Petersborough, N.H. Language Arts Consultant, Grades K-12. Developer of Writing In-Service Program which was recognized as a Center for Excellence by the National Council of

Teachers of English. Author of articles on the reading-writing connection and the use of questioning in a writing program.

Jane Hansen, Department of Education, University of New Hampshire. Author of *When Writers Read* (Heinemann, 1987) and co-editor (with Thomas Newark and Donald Graves) *Breaking Ground: Teachers Relate Reading and Writing in the Elementary School* (Heinemann, 1985).

Linda Riel, Oyster River Middle School, Durham, N.H. Author of articles in *Learning, Language Arts, and Educational Leadership*, and chapters in *Breaking Ground, Workshop I, and Workshop II*. Recipient of Kennedy Fellowship for Teachers of the Arts and Writer in Residence for the Kennedy Center (summer 1988).

Susan Stiles, Center for Teaching and Learning, Maine. An original member of the Boothbay Writing Project directed by Nancie Atwell, and more recently a teacher trainer for the Teachers College Writing Project. Consultant and researcher in teaching reading and writing to primary and special needs children.

Tom Romano, Graduate student at the University of New Hampshire formerly of Edgewood High School in Trenton, Ohio. Author of *Cleaning the Way* and prose and poetry in *English Journal* and *Language Arts*.

Guest Speakers:

Barbara Cooney
Author and Illustrator
Damascus, Maine

Donald Murray
Professor Emeritus, Department of English
University of New Hampshire

Cost and Credit:

Tuition and Fees will be approximately \$707, which entitles participants to register for six graduate (semester) credits. Those who do not register for credit must also pay the full amount. On-campus room and board is available for approximately \$420. A deposit of \$80 will reserve a space for you in the program. The balance of the tuition and fee must be paid by June 1 in order to guarantee your registration. If you withdraw from the program by June 1, 1990, \$50 of your deposit will be refunded.

Advanced Degree: Credits earned in the summer institute may be applied toward a Master of Science for teachers (MST) degree in the UNH English Department. For information about this degree contact Sabina Foote.

Hours:

Classes begin at 8:45 A.M. and end at 2:45 P.M.

Register Early:

The institute is limited to 70 participants.

Institute on Reading, Writing, and Learning