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The experience of eleventh grade writers : the interaction of thought and emotion during the writing process.

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THE EXPERIENCE OF ELEVENTH GRADE WRITERS:

THE INTERACTION OF THOUGHT AND EMOTION

DURING THE WRITING PROCESS

A Dissertation Presented

By

Linda Miller-Cleary

Submitted to the Graduate School of the

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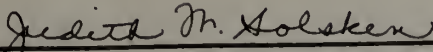
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This dissertation is dedicated to the twelve
eleventh-grade writers who gave of their time
and of their experience with writing.

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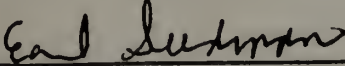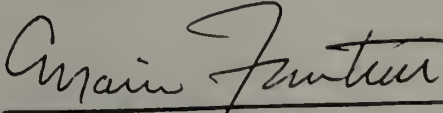
ABSTRACT

The Experience of Eleventh Grade Writers:

A Study of the Interaction of Thought

and Feeling during the Writing Process

(September, 1985)

Linda Miller-Cleary, B.S. Saint Lawrence University

Ed.D., University of Massachusetts

Directed by: Dr. Judith Solsken

This study describes the experience of twelve eleventh grade writers, focussing on the way thought and emotion interacted to affect ease or struggle in writing. The twelve developing writers were selected to assure diversity in gender, race, class, tracking level, and type of school attended to provide as broad a view as possible of the eleventh grade writing experience. They participated in phenomenological in-depth interviewing, did writing tasks while saying out loud everything that came into their minds, and were observed during classroom writing.

Data are presented in three ways: (1) In-depth studies of three participants show how emotion and thought interacted to cause struggle in writing. (2) Connections among all twelve participants show how family, peers, and teachers affected ease or struggle in writing. (3) The processes of basic, standard, and advanced writers are described,

and the effect that social factors linked with tracking had on their experiences with writing are reported.

Four types of writing struggle are identified. (1) Participants struggled when writing worries crowded their conscious attention. (2) Participants struggled when their life was so distressing that there was little room in the conscious attention for thinking about writing. (3) Participants struggled when emotion linked with a significant person in the writing environment became a threat to the self-view they wanted to maintain, interrupting and redirecting attention toward the source of threat. (4) Finally participants usually found in lower tracks struggled when the view of self that they wished to maintain was not commensurate with that reflected by the writing environment. After continued criticism of their writing, these participants ended struggle by refusing to write.

An integrated picture is presented of the impediments to written expression that the basic writer confronts in parents, peers, teachers, language, tracking, and remedial curriculum. The effect of defensive strategies used by these writers to feel all right about themselves was shown to increase their writing problems.

The implications of the study for working with individual writers are presented, and approaches to developing a more democratic writing curriculum are suggested.

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C H A P T E R   I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation describes and analyzes the past and present
experience and process of twelve eleventh grade writers, focussing on
the way interaction of feelings and thought affected ease or struggle
in the writing process. The study was based on a variety of
qualitative data collected through in-depth interviewing, verbal
protocols of writing tasks, and field observation.

Background of the Study

Recent studies (The Carnegie Report, the Report of the Twentieth
Century Fund, and the Report of the Commission on Excellence in
Education) have presented a concern about school in general and have
focussed on writing as a more specific area needing the attention of
educators. Concern was for the large number of high school graduates
who leave school without proficiency in school writing, who either
struggle with it or give up on it as a means of expression. The
Carnegie Report, for instance, proposes a four-course sequence for a
fifth-year teacher instructional and apprenticeship experience. One
of these four courses, The Chronicle of Higher Education stated, would
be "The Teaching of Writing" for, in the words of the report, "Writing
is an essential skill for self-expression and the means by which
critical thinking also will be taught" ("The Carnegie Foundation," 21

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September 1983, 16).

Along with, yet predating the new national concern, researchers have focussed on the writing process. The emphasis has changed in the last half of the century from studying the product that students produce to the process by which they produce it. This study follows from the recent process-centered research which has examined what the mind does before, between, and during the times when the writer actually puts pen to paper.

Some of this research focusses on thought processes during different phases of the writing process and stems from the school of cognitive psychology. Cognitive psychologist John Hayes and writing researcher Linda Flower (1980) collaborated to formulate a model of the writing process. To do this they asked skilled writers to say everything out loud that came into their minds while writing and analyzed these protocols. Among other findings, Flower and Hayes suggested that if the writer's mind did simultaneously all the things it must do to achieve a finished product, she or he simply could not write. The writer would experience overload; there are simply too many tasks for the conscious attention to handle. Skilled writers were automatic at (could do without thinking about) many of the tasks and had learned strategies to handle the rest. Hayes and Flower are important to this study because they studied the thought processes that absorbed the conscious attention during writing.

Until recently cognitive psychology has focussed on the thought processes involved in human behavior. Though the words "thought" and

"feelings" represent different concepts, they rarely play themselves out separately in behavior. Rather, observed behavior is the result of highly complex intertwining of thought and feelings. Very recently more attention has been given to the interaction of thought and feelings. Herbert Simon, during summative remarks at a 1982 Carnegie Mellon conference, "Affect and Cognition," made important comments about the effect of feelings (emotion and mood) on thought processes in the conscious attention. Simon did not make these distinctions with writing in mind, but as this study addresses the impact of the interaction of feelings and thought on the writing process, his clarification becomes important to the background of this study and will be further developed in the review of the literature.

Though writing researchers have yet to examine closely the effect of the interaction of thought and feeling on the writing process, psychologists and learning theorists and researchers have looked at interaction of feeling and thinking and its effect on learning. Links between an individual's view of self (and the self's abilities) and his or her openness to change, growth, and learning or susceptibility to a threatening learning environment have been established (Rogers 1951, 1961; Combs 1977; Erikson 1950,1968).

To fully understand the interaction between thought and feeling during writing and its connections with struggle in writing, another component must be drawn upon. Intertwinings of feelings and thought do not occur in a vacuum; they are both born out of an individual's acting upon and being acted upon by the world in which that individual

lives.

When talking about the interaction of feelings and thought during the writing process, it is important to view that interaction within an individual writer, and to view that writer within a social context. Lev Vygotsky gives us a perspective on this point:

> ...in order to study development in children, one must begin with an understanding of the dialectical unity of two principally different lines (the biological and the cultural); to adequately study this process, then, an experimenter must study both components and the laws which govern their interlacement at each stage of a child's development (Vygotsky 1978, 123).

A central concern of this study, then, was how the emotional factors associated with the developing writer's cultural surroundings (past and present, social and pedagogical) are apt to affect the writing process. The role of significant others (teachers, family, and peers) in shaping a writer's view of self and the world can affect the writer's view of writing and engagement in the writing process. The cultural definition of race, class, and gender can help shape the view of self and view of the world held. Cultural dissonance can occur when the way a child views self and world conflicts with what a school deems acceptable. Apart from school life, the more immediate life situation of the writer can carry emotional freight. Emotions linked with love, hate, or conflict can affect the writer, as can past and present pedagogical factors within the learning environment--past and present teachers, peers, tasks, audience for the task.

Following Simon's lead, this study sought to understand how feelings linked with the context of the writer can either cause

struggle in the writing process or facilitate it and can become part of the writer's internal view of self and task. To investigate struggle with writing, it was important to understand its counterparts: ease, excitement, and engagement in writing.

Before concluding the background for this study, it is important to mention Janet Emig and her seminal work, The Composing Process of Twelfth Graders, for she laid groundwork which influenced the inception, methodology, and focus. Emig took seriously the part that students' histories and feelings can play in the writing process. As a very small part of her overall work, Emig discussed the worries that writers have. "One way of approaching the matter of influence (on writers) is to note what Lynn worries about as she writes; then, to try to find possible origins for her worries in previous school experiences she describes" (Emig 1971, 69). This study follows up on Emig's beginnings in the search for the emotional factors that affect the writing process of the developing writer. This search does not, however, end in today's classroom, as many studies do, but will go beyond to the past and present life situation and social factors affecting the writer.

Thus four lines of investigation have converged to provide the basis for the present study. First, writing researchers and theoreticians have studied the experience of writing, focussing on thought in a process-centered approach. Few writing researchers have talked about the effect of emotional factors on the writing process, though Janet Emig demonstrated with her participant, Lynn, that

present worries during writing found their source in past pedagogy. A second line of investigation has been led by psychologists and educators who have studied feelings linked with context and how they affect what we do and how we learn. A third and new line of investigation has been followed by a small number of theoreticians who look at what happens in the conscious attention during task performance and seek to know how feelings and thought processes interact to affect that task performance. These three groups of researchers and theoreticians led me to formulate a study which examined the past and present experience of writers as fully as possible in order to reconstruct the dialectic of thought and feeling in writing and in learning to write. However, during the study a fourth line of investigation became necessary. While gathering the data on the environment of the writer and examining how that context, past and present, linked with and affected the writing process, I became more aware of the social issues of race and class which entered the world of the eleventh grade writer as factors of language or tracking. Thus a fourth line of investigation was added to the study.

Assumptions

It is the assumption in this dissertation that there is an innate capacity to write grounded on human attributes which are also the building blocks for speech acquisition--natural inquisitiveness,

tendency to imitate, responsiveness to feedback, the inclination to observe, and most importantly, the inclination towards self-expression. Unlike speech acquisition, however, school success in writing is not assured the seeker. And even those who have been successful in the eyes of peers, parents, and teachers, still struggle with the process, and are hence less apt to engage in it on a life-long basis or during certain phases in their life. Though it is assumed here that it is feasible for everyone (unless their language functions are impaired) to learn to write effectively, not every student does, and for each individual there is social, economic, and intellectual value in doing so, for the ability to write is valued by the dominant culture in our society.

Furthermore, this dissertation assumes that motivation for self-expression is inherent in the individual and that circumstances of and experiences with the world outside the writer prime that intrinsic motivation or decrease it. "Motivation is not a problem; by virtue of being human children are intensely interested in mastering language, which increases their control of their world" (Hart 1983, 8). Motivation for writing as a mode of expression then should be inherent if writing is modeled as a form of self-expression and if the writer, while learning the rudiments of the skill, finds writing a meaningful form of self-expression.

Statement of the Problem

This study was designed to describe and explore the past and present experience of eleventh graders in writing and in learning to write, and more particularly how feelings linked with past and present experience can either cause struggle or facilitate the writing process for them. There are relevant issues to explore. Emotions and/or mood, either fused with the act of writing, with the subject matter with which the writer is dealing, or with the context for that writing, interact with the thought processes involved in writing. The study sought to further understand this dynamic and its effect on the writing process. For instance, how does emotion and or mood affect the writing process, the generation of ideas, the organization of those ideas, the finding of words in which to state the ideas, the ability to transcribe those worded thoughts, the ability to step back, evaluate, and improve upon what has already been worded in light of given readers? How does overload of conscious attention fit into this interaction? These were issues to explore in seeking a deeper understanding of the nature of the interaction of thought and feelings during the writing process.

The study also sought to understand how the writing process was affected by social factors in the past and present context of the writers. To understand this, consideration was given to the classroom context and to the interaction of past and present pedagogy that might

have been a source of a writer's feelings. Though learning to write may or may not begin in the classroom, a good portion of a student's writing experience may take place in the classroom. How do intense or subtle feelings linked with the writer's life outside the schoolroom affect interaction with these thought processes? How do social structures pervade the classroom? How does the classroom itself perpetuate the social structures that pervade it? Life outside the school is not left at the doors of the classroom, but influences students' responses to writing. Three aspects of life situation and its relation to writing were attended to: (1) the effect of social context and its inherent issues of class, race, and gender on the student, (2) the effect of events in the student's life (emotional upheaval, conflict, happiness, etc.), and (3) the actual writing done outside of the classroom, independently of school-related assignments.

Methodology was designed to gather data about the writing experience of the twelve participants as affected by all the contextual factors being considered. Interviewing afforded the broadest view of how participants viewed the contextual effects on writing--past and present pedagogy, past and present life situation, and the effect of issues of race, class, and gender. Field observation offered data about present pedagogy and present behavior patterns surrounding writing. Protocol analysis provided data about thoughts and feelings during the writing process.

Rationale and Significance

The goal then of this study was to understand what the experience of writing was and had been like for eleventh graders and to understand how students' feelings about past and present writing and about the context for that writing had impact on their writing. This study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the interaction between thought and feeling in learning. As both schools and teachers are the context for much of a developing writer's writing and learning to write, a deeper understanding of the impact of past and present context on writing permits more clarity in perceiving how schools and teachers can best facilitate growth in writing.

An understanding of the experience of writing and of learning to write for eleventh grade writers will be valuable for present teachers and for teachers-in-training. The study provided access to the student's experience of writing seldom seen from the front of a classroom. Just as teachers of writing have been shown to benefit from examining their own experiences as writers, they may benefit from examining the varied experiences of students. While many books and articles describe quick steps to pedagogical success for writing teachers, this study holds that effective pedagogy would be fostered by exploring and understanding the complexity of writing and learning to write for the developing writer. A better understanding of how feelings and thought interact with the writing process may lead to a

validation of teaching strategies already used, suggest new strategies for the teaching of writing, and shed light on how social factors affect learning to write.

As the recent reports on the effectiveness of America's educational system show, writing is not an effective or comfortable means of expression for large numbers of students who leave high school. This is a loss of human potential. Sennett and Cobb talk of the "buried sense of inadequacy that one resents oneself for feeling" in comparing oneself to others and their "badges of ability" (Sennett and Cobb 1972, 58). Children, adolescents, or adults who don't write effectively may suffer from a feeling of inadequacy no matter how well they hide their inadequacy from themselves or others. Moreover, undeveloped writing skills may have an economic cost if individuals are denied access to highly paid jobs.

In looking at the intellectual gains that writing offers, it is important to view writing as a tool in thought development (Vygotsky 1978; Smith 1982). When one speaks, one's words are an outward realization of underlying thought. Written words become a more permanent realization of that thought--with an added benefit: they can become an adjunct to the conscious attention. Once on the paper, written language can be reviewed, and further thought, further abstractions, and heightened consciousness of one's situation in life can be triggered by one's own written words. More abstract structures can be built upon those which have gained some permanency through writing. Writing is at once a tool and a stimulus to further

thought.

Providing a clearer understanding of the experience that the twelve participants in the study have had with writing, of how emotion has interacted with thought during their writing process, and of how the context for their writing has caused that emotion and affected that writing may enable writing teachers to have a clearer view of how to proceed in their job of making writing a meaningful mode of expression for their students.

Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter I has given a broad introduction to the reader, has offered a background and rationale for the study, and has identified assumptions on which it is based. The remaining chapters are organized in the following manner.

Chapter II will review four areas of literature: (1) literature on the writing process, (2) literature on conscious attention and on the interaction of thought and feeling therein during the writing process, (3) literature from psychologists and educators about how context and reflected view of self from that context affect learning, and (4) literature on the effect of social issues of race and class and factors of tracking and language on the learner.

Chapter III will present the design of the study. Chapters IV, V, and VI will analyze the data from the study. Chapter IV will present in-depth studies of three participants and their experience

with writing and will examine the effect of that experience on their writing process.

Chapter V will focus on the interaction of the participants with the living people in their writing environment: peers, family, and parents. It draws on data from all twelve participants.

Chapter VI will examine the writing process of three groups of participants, those from basic writing classes, those from standard classes, and those from advanced classes and will then look at the effect of social factors on that process.

The final chapter, Chapter VII, will draw conclusions from the study and will address the implications this study has for the classroom teacher, the school administrator, and the writing researcher.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Four bodies of literature will be reviewed in order to establish a theoretical background within which to develop an understanding of the participants' experience with writing and the nature of their struggle and their enjoyment in the writing process. This theoretical framework is drawn from (1) literature on writing-as-process, (2) literature on the way an individual comes to a view of self and the way that self-view affects performance at tasks, (3) literature about conscious attention and the interaction of thought and feeling within the conscious attention and (4) literature about social factors and academic success. Additional literature in these and other areas has been called upon within each chapter to enrich the interpretation of the data in that chapter.

Writing as Process

Reasearch on writing has gradually shifted from an emphasis on product to an emphasis on process. During the last thirty years researchers have begun ascertaining exactly what writers do when they write (Flower and Hayes 1980; Graves 1982; Emig 1971; Perl 1979), have looked at developmental stages in writing (Graves 1982; Bereiter 1980; Britton 1975), have addressed issues of audience (Atlas 1979; Berkenkotter 1981; Britton 1975; Flower 1981), have looked at the

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values of and the process for "extensive" and "reflexive" writing (Britton 1975; Emig 1971), have looked at the effect of student-chosen versus teacher-assigned tasks (Britton 1975; Graves 1982), have looked at the effect of relevance in writing tasks (Heath 1981; Graves 1982), have investigated and compared the process of skilled and unskilled writers (Perl 1979; Atlas 1979), and have explored the effect that schooling has on writing (Emig 1971; Britton 1975; Moffett 1968; Applebee 1981).

The cumulative effect of the students' experience with writing over time has not been addressed in this process-centered research. Emotion linked with the context of that experience has been paid little attention. Attention to emotional factors is limited and narrow: limited because it has been only a by-product of the process research, and narrow because it has dwelled predominantly on the negative emotional factors linked with teachers-as-audience, their error-finding approach, and the tasks they assign.

Emotional factors connected with teachers as audience have drawn the most attention. Moffett finds the teacher "entirely too significant. He is at once parental substitute, civic authority, and wielder of marks" (Moffett 1968, 193). Britton finds that the teacher is most often cast by students "in the role of examiner" (Britton et al. 1970). Applebee (1981) borrows Britton's terminology to describe the audience to whom American students most often address their work. Moffett (1968) and Graves (1980, 1983) both decry the hazard of the error-finding approach that teachers have traditionally used, claiming

it doesn't give developing writers the confidence and success they need to take risks. Emig (1971) suggests that the source of worries that her twelfth-grade writers evidenced during the writing process stemmed from this error-finding approach of their past teachers. Peter Elbow concurs with Emig when he says, "We have a habitual way of relating to readers-in-general, and we have some particular memories of past audiences in our heads which can get triggered by present circumstances" (Elbow 1980, 186).

Shaughnessy and Rich link the low view basic writers have of themselves with the low expectations that their teachers had always had of them. Shaughnessy said, "The B.W. (basic writing) student both resents and resists his vulnerability as a writer. He is aware that he leaves a trail of errors behind him when he writes. He can usually think of little else while he is writing" (Shaughnessy 1977, 7).

Fear of error that has its nascence in the error-finding teacher can become transferred to, as Elbow says, "present circumstances" whether or not those present circumstances deserve the accompanying feelings. Britton discusses fear of task. He noted that self-initiated tasks went quite smoothly for writers, but that assigned tasks were troublesome for those "whose recollections of past failures make them fear they might misinterpret the task" (Britton 1975, 22). The writer "must recall his task to his own hierarchical construct system" (Britton 1975, 24). Recall is critical, yet it is lost in confusion and feelings of inferiority.

Atlas (1979) found that a writer who has experienced failure in writing may be so intimidated by the task that he becomes context-dependent. This writer will only use salient cues as probes to tell him what to write about and will stick to the materials immediately apparent; idea generation is limited.

Elucidation of the experience that developing writers have had in writing and learning to write is furthered by these and other researchers. Yet writing researchers and theoreticians who attend to emotional factors affecting the writing process, not only examine the surface level symptoms, but often locate the causes for these symptoms outside the writer--in the teacher or in the task. The teacher often takes the brunt of the blame for what is a complex interaction between the internal and external world of the developing writer.

An in-depth view of the cumulative nature of struggle and ease is missing from the process-centered literature. How past context can be internalized and affect the present behavior of the writer is an example of the complexity of the interaction of thought processes and feelings and their resultant effect on behavior. To focus on how writers' feelings (both about past and present writing and about the context for writing) may have an impact on writing for them now, it is important to examine a parallel body of literature, one which examines how the view of self and the view of self as writer is developed and how self-view affects writing-confidence and engagement in writing. The next section will look at literature that further explains the development of self-view and its importance in this "interlacement"

between the internal and external world of the writer.

View of Self and its Effect on Task Performance

A quick overview of the work that psychological researchers and theoreticians have contributed to understanding the effect that view of self can have on the learning of a skill will be helpful. It will permit a more careful look at the writer's view of self as writer.

Links have been established between an individual's view of self (and the self's abilities) developed at a young age and her or his openness to change, growth, and learning (Rogers 1951; Combs 1977; Piaget 1974). An individual strives to maintain a positive self-view. Emotions linked with threat to that positive self-view can cause a variety of defenses resulting in fixed behavior patterns (Erikson 1950, 1968; Rogers 1951, 1961, 1969; Hayakawa 1939). This is true especially in the self-conscious adolescent (Erikson 1968). These fixed patterns can close off the openness to change, the openness to viewing things anew and from a different perspective, the openness to taking risks that is viewed as essential to learning (Bruner 1956; Newell and Simon 1972).

Conversely, mood state and emotions linked with a positive view of self and the self's abilities can allow a positive response to what Goodlad (1975) calls optimum tension, to what Rogers (1951) and Combs (1977) call challenge, or to what Bruner (1956) calls taking risks. It then seems evident that emotion linked with defense of the

developing writer's positive self-view and the view of the self's abilities may affect her or his ability to write and ability to deal with the complexity of the writing process.

A closer view of the roots of a writer's self-view can be thus spun from the work of these psychologists. Whether writers feel generally competent at things they do and whether they will try new things is much dependent on their self-esteem and writing confidence, and this directly affects their writing and the enthusiasm with which they engage in it. The role that the family plays in the development of the view that writers have of themselves (self-esteem) and their view of their ability to write (writing confidence) starts at a very young age. Researchers and theoreticians seem to agree that even the view of self is developed by reflection from one's outside world. Collections of early response to one's self from parents become the profound base from which self-esteem is woven. Erikson says that if the self-love of infancy is to survive,

> the maternal environment must create to sustain it with a love which assures the child that it is good to be alive in the social coordinates in which he happens to find himself. Natural narcissism, which is said to fight so valiantly against the inroads of a frustrating environment, is in fact verified by the sensual enrichment and the encouragement of skills provided by this same environment. (Erikson 1968, 192)

Psychologists who emphasize the importance of the unconscious in human behavior agree that the earlier the influences on this development of self-view, the stronger. Cognitive psychologists and behaviorists see development of self-view as more accumulative. Experiences with a positive outcome would add to a positive view of

self, whereas negative self-esteem is ascribed to oneself by negative outcome of experience, irrespective of the age of the accumulator (Clarke and Fiske 1982; Hayes 1978).

Most psychologists recognize the importance of trust and acceptance in the development of self-esteem. When the parent accepts and trusts the child in trying out new things, the child develops the sense that much is possible. Research by Coopersmith confirms the importance that trust and acceptance play in the development of self-esteem. He found that the parents of children with high self-esteem had given them total or near total acceptance and clearly defined limits, with respect and latitude for individual action within those limits. These same children tended "to be more, rather than less, independent and more creative" (Coopersmith 1967, 238). Parental ability to lend respect and latitude for individual action seems an attribute that resounds among those who talk of self-esteem. A sort of inner store of self-esteem (or lack of it) is gleaned from early interaction with what is usually a parent-dominated environment.

When a child goes to school, teachers join parents in reflecting back to the child a view that becomes a part of his or her self-view. This study and other developmental research and theory suggest that though parents and teachers are highly influential in shaping children's views of themselves during early school years, when adolescence begins in late elementary school years, peers become more important. Adolescents, who face a profound physiological change

within, begin to channel their energy into a consolidation of their social skills. Desire for acceptance from peers becomes paramount even to those with strong self-esteem.

> They are sometimes morbidly, often curiously, preoccupied with what they appear to be in the eyes of others as compared with they feel they are and with the question of how to connect the earlier cultivated roles and skills with ideal prototypes of the day. (Erikson 1968, 128)

Their self-esteem increases if they gain approval from peers, decreases if they don't. Adolescence is least traumatic for youth who are adept in pursuits which either are popularly valued or are a requirement in school life. An adolescent is

> ...mortally afraid of being forced into activities in which he would feel exposed to ridicule or self-doubt...he would rather act shamelessly in the eyes of his elders, out of free choice, than be forced into activities which would be shameful in his own eyes or in those of his peers. (Erikson 1968, 129)

It is no wonder that young people are anxious about and avoid or even refuse to do anything which they do not feel they are good at. Though these researchers do not talk of teachers as being the "elders," it is clear that a teacher has great power, often unsuspectingly, to shame a student in front of peers. Adolescents' sense of self is vulnerable, yet self-esteem is vital to buffer that vulnerable self. Defenses to guard self-esteem are unconscious and essential to that maintenance. These are the turbulent years when defense takes the form of rebellion and refusal. All these changes can alter the way in which adolescents view peers or teachers in their writing environment, the way teachers can shame them unknowingly in

front of peers, the way they view themselves as writers (as a result of the way they perceive their peers as viewing them), and the way their writing is either facilitated or hindered by the presence of peers in that environment.

The self-consciousness of adolescents increases the vulnerability of their self-view and increases the possibility of their perceiving threat in the writing environment. According to Simon, Piaget, Hart, Combs, and Rogers, physiological response to threat can cause disturbance in carrying out a task. A clearer look at this dynamic will be important in this and later sections.

In Piagetian terms if there is threat in the context, the normal developmental course is interrupted. When there is harmony with the environment, change is possible. When there is disharmony, when extreme threat is evident, the threat is attended to instead of new learning.

Hart recognizes the protection of the self from threat as being connected to the evolution of the human brain. Modern man has a large cerebrum which

> being slow and complicated beyond imagination, would never have kept our species alive through more perilous time. For that we needed those simpler, fast responding brains (cerebellum). So, even today, if the older portions detect threat of any kind, they tend to at least partially shut down the slow cerebrum and let the older less sophisticated parts have more say. (Hart 1983, 8-9)

Because language is located in the cerebrum, and because the student being under threat tends to "downshift" to the use of the cerebellum, language functions are affected. "In short, to the degree

that the cerebrum is inhibited by threat, school learning tends to stop" (Hart 1983, 11).

Combs (1977) sees intelligence as dependent more on the richness and variety of perceptions presented to an individual than on the innate abilities of that individual. The self-concept tends to produce behavior (answers on an I.Q. test for example) that agrees with the self-concept originally held. The perception by the individual of threat to self seems to have major effects upon the perceptual field. Studies of perception show that in the presence of threat the perceptual field narrows and focusses on the object of threat. This in turn restricts the learning possible in the classroom or in counseling.

Unlike Combs, Rogers acknowledges that learning may continue on in spite of or even as a result of threat. (He gives an example of a platoon threatened by entering into enemy territory that quickly learns to put the new terrain to their advantage.) But Rogers (1961) differentiates between learning and growth. To learn in threat is just self-maintenance, survival, but to improve as writers means to grow beyond maintaining the strategies that writers already have in their repertoire, to take risks, to find new ways of solving the new writing problems that come with more complicated formats and material.

In bringing Simon, Piaget, Hart, Combs, and Rogers to bear on learning to write, it is important to see how the dynamic they present might affect writers. When the positive view they have of themselves

is threatened, two things might happen. They could have difficulty with writing, the process being disrupted, or they could maintain the way of writing that is tried and true--the way that neither incurs disapproval nor implements growth.

John Goodlad argues that a "productive state of tension" exists, a state in which growth and experimentation is possible. He holds that for change to occur, both internal responsiveness (an organism being open to change--the writer) and external stimulation (an agent to stimulate change--the class or teacher) must be present. He sees a "productive state of tension between these two being the stage where the drama of growth can unfold."

> What is required for constructive change is, I believe, a productive tension between an organism wanting a better condition for itself (an inner orientation toward change) and an organism whose self-interests are served by assisting in the process (an outer orientation toward change). The self-interests of the two parties, although different, have something to give to and gain from each other. (Goodlad 1975, 163)

Where threat is not perceived, tension can be introduced and the tension can instigate risk-taking and new levels of performance in writing. Thus strides in writing must take place in the context of the writer's self-esteem and confidence in writing, the acceptingness of the environment, and the productive tension that the task and situation lend.

Understanding the "interlacement" of all these factors is important to forming a theoretical framework from which to understand the experience of the eleventh grade writers in this study, but

another aspect of the framework is important. How exactly could the writing process be affected by perceived threat? On a very focal scale what may cause writers to struggle in such circumstances? We will now turn to the literature on conscious attention to better understand how writers struggle and how their process is facilitated.

Conscious Attention and the Interaction of Thought and Feeling

The conscious attention is that area in the mind where individuals attend to the tasks that they are carrying out. Researchers Flower and Hayes and Graves looked at thought process used during writing in what Flower and Hayes call conscious attention and in what Graves calls children's "consciousness of what they do when they write" (Graves 1982, 235). Donald Graves noted that some of what children do when they write is automatic, some of what they do fills their consciousness, and yet other aspects of writing go unnoticed. Graves notes that young children can be excitedly engaged in their task when they are blessedly oblivious to aspects of writing that older children fret about.

The work of Hayes and Flower with skilled writers gave a clear view of just how complex the writing process is even for skilled writers. They demonstrated that if the writer's mind did all the things at once it must do to complete a product, the writer could not write for there would not be enough room in the conscious attention to cope with the complexity of the task.

The most obvious of tasks that necessitate thought are generation of ideas, purpose, organization, handwriting (or typing), spelling, punctuation, word choice, syntax, textual conventions, clarity, rhythm, how the writer projects himself or herself, prior knowledge, and audience. Hence the rhetorical problem, and these tasks, sometimes contradictory, need to converge for the finished product. Writers have learned to deal with this overload by juggling these demands on the conscious attention. Some plan assiduously. Others ignore numerous tasks until ideas are out and in order. Still others have automated a good enough number so they can concentrate on the remainder. The Flower/Hayes model of writing elucidates the complexity of the cognitive task and leads us to see how much of even a skilled writer's attention and energy must be focussed on the writing task during the writing process and how struggle could occur for skilled writers who try to attend to too many aspects of the process simultaneously.

Herbert Simon (1982) added a new perspective about what goes on in the conscious attention which is important to the theoretical framework for this dissertation. He stated that conscious attention, a term loosely synonomous with short term memory, is a place where thought and feelings are intertwined and where the mind works on a task. Simon says that the human body might carry on numerous tasks simultaneously if it weren't for what he terms "the bottleneck" of conscious attention. The mind's workings, thought processes intermixed with feelings, come to the conscious attention when they

must be attended to by the individual. This conscious attention simultaneously attends to those aspects of the world outside of the individual that are important to what is going on within.

Conscious attention is interrupted and redirected for certain reasons. It can be interrupted and redirected to something dangerous to the individual by the emotion linked to that danger. Emotion can be aroused directly by something in the external environment that threatens the individual (a critical audience) or indirectly by something internal probed in the long term memory through thought (remembrance of a critical audience). These emotional (which Simon terms affective) interruptions reduce attention available to other pursuits. Anger, surprise, and fear are representative feelings and emotions that interrrupt and redirect conscious attention. The source of these emotions is often, though not wholly, unconscious. One can be aware of not being able to concentrate on a task, but not always know the reason why.

Affect, often used synonomously with feelings, acts as an umbrella word for emotion and mood. Mood is a term for feelings which don't obviously interrupt attention but affect it. Mood, then, can be in place before a task begins, or it can be set off by affect associated in the long-term memory with the task itself, or by the audience for whom a task is to be performed. Thus affect is an inclusive term for emotion (which is interruptive and redirective) and mood (which provides a background for an ongoing activity). Mood affects that activity without noticeably interfering with thought

process involved in that activity.

According to Simon's summative remarks (1982) thought processes are highly specific; affect or feelings are hard to describe or classify. Thought processes involve distinct symbolic structures; they are easily separated and follow one after the other at a fast rate. Feelings belong on a continuum where gradation is impossible; they alter continuously--gradually. Mood or emotion carries with it a negative or positive value which can in turn probe similarly valued memories from the long term memory (Simon 1982).

Bringing Simon's remarks on mood and emotion to bear on writing may be a way to elucidate motivation for writing. A positive mood linked with writing may very well be close to intrinsic motivation to engage in the task; whereas, emotion linked with threat in the learning environment may well be linked with extrinsic motivation to avoid it.

Juxtaposition of Simon's remarks with the findings of Hayes and Flower clarifies why conscious attention is a valuable commodity during the writing process. When nearly full attention is available for the writing process, when mood and emotion are linked positively to the task at hand, one might surmise that the act of writing is facilitated. When emotion interrupts or redirects conscious attention from the writing task, when mood brings a negative mindset to writing, then one might surmise that the writing process is hindered.

With this view of what goes on in the writer during writing and how the external world can affect the inner world of the writer, we

will turn to literature about another aspect of the external world--social factors and how they might affect the writer.

Social Factors and Learning

If all human beings have the innate capacity to express themselves effectively in writing unless their language functions are impaired, then it seems important to investigate why some students learn to become effective in written expression and to value it as a mode of expression and others do not. In part this dissertation will look at why writing becomes a struggle for some and not for others, and why it becomes a valued mode of expression for some groups of students and not for other groups. Though little has been written that looks directly at the connection of school writing and the social factors that may explain why some learn and value written expression while others do not, there is literature that investigates the links of broader issues of literacy and schooling with social factors.

"The most important determinant of educational attainment is family background" (Jencks 1973, 129). Jenks and other researchers lead us to understand this phenomenon. They decry one possible explanation (which is also at odds with the assumption held herein) of why some children are more successful in school writing than others--the deficit theory of individual difference. A proponent of the deficit theory might say, "If children are unsuccessful in school, they are so because they are in some way deficient, less able, and

therefore can not perform as effectively as others." Teachers are generally trained with the deficit theory as an underlying assumption. "Fast learners," "slow learners," "bright," "limited," "gifted," are all in the vocabulary which underlies this training.

The reproduction theory sees teachers to be vehicles of "reproduction" of the school system as an inequitable institution (Connell et al. 1982; Bowles and Gintis 1976) which in turn perpetuates a closed class system. There are ways in which teachers are agents of a system begetting itself; they assist usually unknowingly in perpetuating inequitable social order. "The individual differences explanations of unequal outcomes is institutionalized in the education system itself. Competitive, hierarchically-organized schooling produces its own explanation of its own effects" (Connell et al. 1982, 185).

Teachers are often powerless and unconscious about the societal norms and behavior begetting inequities with which they have been enculturated and which they play out and inculcate in the developing writer. They come to each class and each student with a desire to be of help to those students, and yet with certain expectations (Rist 1970) of how those students will do. In many cases they represent what the school and dominant culture chooses to value as an appropriate curriculum and as an appropriate mode of oral and written expression for the particular students with whom they work. This curriculum may be incongruent with the acculturation of the child.

Connell and his colleagues reported a dynamic they found in their

research that paralleled one I found in my own which has led me to
include a review of this line of literature. They said that the
closer they got to individual participants, the more they became aware
of how their skills, interests, and outlooks were acquired as a result
of the circumstances in which they lived (Connell et al. 1982).

A beginning writer enters into school already infused with a
world view, resulting behavior, and a mode of expression linked with
his or her class, race, and gender. If this world view and its
resulting behavior and mode of expression does not harmonize with that
of the teacher and the norms of the school, the school context can
affect the way children view themselves and the world. Disparity
between the teacher's view of what written communication should be
like and a student's view of what written communication should be
like, as gleaned from the world in which he matures, leads to cultural
dissonance.

There are confusing messages for the student--the vocalized one,
"work hard and you'll be a success in school" and the unsaid one that
only a rare teacher might say, "but you must learn to express yourself
in this one way in which you haven't been socialized to learn."

Shirley Brice Heath (1983) writes of literacy in three
communities and shows how families in two of these communities nurture
their children in a way that doesn't lead to success in school.
"Neither community's ways with the written word prepares it for the
school's ways" (Heath 198 , p.235). Through the work of Heath,

Bowles and Gintis, Jenks, Rist, Connell, and others, another explanation of individual differences in success in school and in writing is possible. Class-linked ways of being which are unacceptable in the white, middle class classroom, keep working class children in the lowest tracks; perpetuation of social class is facilitated by schooling. The work of these authors is an important part of the theoretical framework through which my research with twelve participants may be viewed. Nevertheless, because this dissertation looks beyond the effect of schooling on class to the effect of schooling on the experience of writing, these reproduction theorists' views must be added to those of Paulo Freire and Sennett and Cobb.

Paulo Freire holds that the lowered consciousness of dominated people lessens their ability to see their world clearly and to act in ways that will enhance their lives. Lowered consciousness also lessens motivation to read and write and to benefit from reading and writing (Freire 1968, 1985). Freire's work supports links between consciousness and writing that are integral to this dissertation.

Inequitable schooling may limit ability at clear thinking and may limit the links between writing and thinking, but it also affects the way individuals feel about themselves and their worth. Freire's work provides a starting place to talk about feeling.

> ...school culture functioned not only to confirm and privilege students from dominant classes but also through exclusion and insult to discredit the histories, experiences, and dreams of subordinate groups." (Freire 1985, 15)

Sennett and Cobb too talk of insult that is class-connected and feelings of inadequacy that those who have been academically unsuccessful carry with them for the rest of their lives. To connect Freire and Sennett and Cobb's work one might say that the defenses used by the academically unsuccessful to maintain a positive view of themselves become barriers to the consciousness that might allow them to see their world and their place in it clearly. Ironically these same defenses do not eliminate the deep-seated feelings of inadequacy that the academically unsuccessful carry with them even through successful careers.

Thus four lines of thinking have been brought together to formulate a theoretical framework for an inquiry into the nature of the experience of eleventh grade writers and more specifically into the nature of the interaction of thought and feeling in the writing process. With this framework in place, it is essential to describe the design of the study and to consider the reasoning supporting the selection of methodology.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study explored the past and present experiences of eleventh grade writers in writing and in learning to write. Twelve eleventh graders from two schools in Massachusetts participated in the study which took place from December through June of the 1983-1984 school year. A variety of methods were used to explore their experience and to examine how students' feelings about past and present writing and the context for that writing affected it. In-depth interviews, verbal protocols, and field observation of these eleventh graders accumulatively provided the data. This chapter will describe the methodology and methodological assumptions, and will delineate participant selection, research procedures, and methods of data analysis.

Methodology

In this section each research methodology used in this study (in-depth phenomenological interviewing, verbal protocols, and field observation) will be described and this description will be followed by a brief discussion of past use of the methodology in writing and other research.

Interviewing

The bulk of the data generated by this study came from in-depth phenomenological interviewing based on the Seidman/Sullivan model, refined for research on community colleges. Theoretical underpinnings of this method stem from the phenomenologists in general and Alfred Schutz in particular. In this model the researcher deems the experience of the participant with the subject being studied as important in coming to an understanding of that subject. In-depth interviewing strives to maximize the participants' rendering of that experience. A series of three interviews provides enough time, privacy, and trust so that the participant can relate his or her experience, reflect on that experience, and to some extent make sense of it. The three-interview sequence allows one interview to build on another so that a deepening understanding of the experience is developed with every interview. The data are the words of the participant (Seidman 1983).

Although to my knowledge in-depth phenomenological interviewing of writers has not been used in a formal study of the writing process, unstructured interviews have been used. Reseachers Emig (1971) and Perl (1977) interviewed writers to further understand the composing process. Sondra Perl used a ninety-minute open-ended interview with unskilled writers to establish a writing profile augmented by four sessions of composing aloud. Janet Emig described difficulties of attaining information about the composing process through accounts of

the writers themselves. She said that interviews tend to "focus upon the feelings of writers about the difficulties of writing--or not writing--almost to the exclusion of an examination of the act itself." She saw this to be a possible problem in her use of interviewing as a methodology; however, in this study the tendency of writers to talk about difficulties that writing held for them was an asset. In addition the second interview in the series encouraged participants to talk about their writing process. This permitted the rich concrete detail about the writing process which Emig missed.

Previous researchers using interviewing to further understand the writing process have seen interviewing alone as weak evidence--dependent on the accuracy of the subject's self-knowledge. They all seem to substantiate interviewing with other evidence. Emig and Perl, as well as Stallard (1974), used protocol data. These researchers wanted "objective" knowledge of the writing process, whereas in this study it is the participants' reality, the participant's view of writing experience that is important to understand. Thus, an in-depth view of the concrete detail of the participants' experience with writing and with life, juxtaposed with their understanding of that experience are essential to the understanding of the interaction between feelings and thoughts in the writing process for that writer. Other methodologies were added not in an attempt to substantiate interview data but to augment its process and to allow a first-hand view both of what is on the writer's mind while writing and a view of the writer at work within the school

context.

Verbal Protocols

In verbal protocols the participant is asked to perform a task while thinking out loud. The transcript together with the resulting product are then assumed to be indications of what is going on in the participant's conscious attention during the task. Of course there is much that goes on in the mind that the participant can't or doesn't say aloud. Hayes and Flower use the following metaphor:

> Analyzing a protocol is like following the tracks of a porpoise, which occasionally reveals itself by breaking the surface of the sea. Its brief surfacings are like glimpses that the protocol affords us of the underlying mental process. Between the surfacings, the mental process, like the porpoise, runs deep and silent. Our task is to infer the course of the process from these brief traces! (Flower and Hayes 1980, 9-10)

Some brain processes leave only a final product in the conscious attention. Probing of the long term memory, encoding and decoding processes, and automatic processes are unavailable to the conscious attention (Ericsson and Simon 1980).

There are divergent views of the effectiveness of verbal protocols. Criticism concerns itself with the interference that protocol taking might have on the process. Critics feel that talking aloud changes the direction of thoughts and that participants might have written differently were they without researcher or tape recorder. A great deal of promising research using protocol analysis has been done by those studying problem solving (Newell and Simon

1956, 1972) and those studying creativity (Perkins 1981). This methodology has been found effective by researchers wanting to know more about what goes on in the conscious attention during the writing process. Researchers of problem solving and of creativity both defend the method. They don't insist that there is no interference, but hold that thinking aloud does not substantially disrupt mental activity nor does it substantially distort accounts of that thinking, as incomplete as those accounts might be (Perkins 1981; Ericcson and Simon 1980). It has been determined that "higher control mechanisms" do interrupt the conscious attention, hence the verbal protocols; causes of interruptions are sudden movements in peripheral vision, loud noises, and emotions (Ericsson and Simon 1980, 225). Emotional interruption of the flow of attention was seen as an asset to gaining an understanding of the effect of emotion on the writing process in this study.

Researchers studying the composing process have used verbal protocols extensively. Linda Flower and John Hayes, as mentioned before, used protocol analysis data as the basis for formulating their writing model. Carol Berkenkotter (1981) analyzed the Hayes/Flower protocols for audience-related considerations. Her purpose was to document the positive effects that being sensitive to audience has on writing. Berkenkotter described what is termed a text-bound condition which happens when the transcription process is not automatic and when the conscious attention is absorbed by concentration on that process to the exclusion of other concerns (telephone interview, February

1984). Perl (1977) used the process to further understand the writing process of unskilled writers. Although Emig (1971) was mainly interested in describing the writing process of twelfth graders, she touched on feelings of twelfth grade writers when she described the things Lynn "worries about" (spelling, legibility, and titling) during her composing aloud sessions. Emig set forth a causal relationship between Lynn's worries and the ways she was taught. Emig's attention to writer's "worries" steps closest to the use that protocol analysis will fulfill here. In that this study focussed on the interaction of feelings and thoughts during the writing process, verbal protocols were important in enabling the researcher to look at what was going on in the conscious attention during the writing process. This gave a view of what enhanced writing or what interrupted it. That the environment for protocol analysis is unnatural, that it might change the natural direction of discourse, that it only gives a partial view of the thought processes in writing are all valid criticisms of protocol analysis as a methodology. Yet, what was important in this study was the glimpse of what was happening in the conscious attention of the participants as one aspect of being able to understand how and why emotional response to a writer's past or present context affected the writing process.

Field Observation

Field observation was an important aspect of this study, for it

allowed the eleventh-grade participants to be observed in the learning environment. The classroom was one context for writing and for the learning of writing in the study; it was a present-day arena in which the dynamic between the individual writer and the learning environment, the writing environment, unfolded. Field observation of writing in the classroom occurred once before the first interview and again following the interview series.

Observation before the interviews allowed me as researcher to be grounded in the student's interaction with teachers and peers within the learning environment in order to be in a better position to understand "what writing was like for the student in the present"--the subject of the second interview (see Procedures). This was just a glimpse of what was a complex interaction, but extended field observation during the interviewing process was avoided as it might have affected that process. It seemed advisable to keep the interaction of the two methodologies minimal. Once the interviewing sequence was complete, further field observation took place.

Field observation was not used as external verification of the student's words or perceptions, for the reality I was looking for was the writer's perception of reality. Field observation, however, gave a view of the participant's writing process in a natural social context and of that particpant's present interaction with teachers and peers during writing. This study followed the passive participant observation techniques advocated by ethnographers and other social researchers (Lofland 1971; Spradley 1980). Value in using classroom

observation for researching the writing process was attested to in the reports of Graves (1981, 1982) and Gourley (1983).

Methodological Assumptions

Implicit in all three of these methodologies were certain assumptions. It was assumed that I as researcher could learn and understand things about the interaction between feeling and thinking through the words of the participant and that those very words were a reconstruction of the participant's experience. Also, it was assumed that I as researcher could draw inferences from the verbalization of participants' experience and could therefore "know" something about another person's experiences, as much as it was possible to know. Composing aloud brought with it a special assumption--that a participant's "saying aloud" what was in his or her mind during the composing process was indeed a partial reconstruction of what was actually happening in the conscious attention. Research predicated on field observation assumed that I as researcher could draw inferences from what I observed to explain the experience of the participant in a social setting. These assumptions were inherent in the methodology chosen for this study.

Participants

Twelve eleventh-grade participants were selected from two

different sites. Permission was sought from school administrators and contact was made with six teachers of writing either through those administrators or through mutual acquaintances. Teachers facilitated contact with prospective participants. Eight eleventh graders were selected from classes in a suburban/rural high school located in a town in Western Massachusetts. Though the school was predominantly middle class, there were numerous and various racial and ethnic minority groups. Three students were selected from an advanced elective called "Exposition." Three more were selected from a standard-level elective by the same name. The two remaining students were selected respectively from a basic-level elective class called "Writing Lab," and from the basic level in a homogeneous English class called "Cinema," in which writing was a major component.

The four remaining students were selected from two inner-city schools located in Western Massachusetts. The students in these schools came from a variety of racial, ethnic, and class backgrounds. Although two students (one male and one female) were selected from the only inner-city, college-preparatory elective that focussed on writing, one student dropped out of the study before it was complete. Three minority students (one male, two females) were selected from the lowest track of "Business English"--a class which emphasized writing. At the teacher's urging I selected three students instead of two in case one dropped out of the study as it was in process; no participant from this group left the study though there were problems with absenteeism. Diversity of gender, race, and social class was a

criterion for selection (see Figure 1).

The total selection from both schools represented the sexes equally. To establish diversity of social class, the students were asked what work their parents did during a preliminary interview. Although this selection of participants did not include a large urban representation, the four urban students expanded the diversity. Thus participants were sought from different tracks, different sexes, different classes, different races, and different schools. (A result of this diversification was the overrepresentation of minorities.) This stratification was a part of the design of the study so that a fuller understanding of the social dynamics at play in the life situation of the writer might be possible. This was one aspect of the study that demanded careful attention during selection of the participants. Though selection on these bases oversimplified the complexity involved, the broadest possible view of experience was sought so that commonalities found in the data would lend a view of the dynamics involved in the interaction of the writer's process and their context for writing. After assuring diversity, selection was done randomly. For instance, when I was looking for a white male in the advanced writing class in the suburban/rural school, four potential participants were available. I picked a name from a hat to select one of the four. In the college-bound, inner-city writing class there was only one minority participant available. In three cases selected participants declined to participate in the study; two could not get parental permission; the other, who had a severe speech

impediment, felt he would be too shy. As Agar (1980) suggested, I replaced selected but unwilling-to-participate students with students like them in as random a manner as possible.

Choosing students from writing classes (or classes which concentrated on writing) which were elective was done purposefully in order to increase the success of the methodology. For in-depth interviewing to work well, it was important that the participant have some interest in the subject to be studied. Since the students had agreed to choose a writing class, some heightening of consideration of writing was probably present; interest in the subject was apt to be higher. Students were also focussed on writing and the writing process during one class per school day. They were more aware of the experience of writing and of learning to write and more apt to be reflective about it. Selecting the eleventh-grade year was also purposeful. It seemed that eleventh grade writers would still have their minds on school work. They were also old enough to be beyond the most difficult adjustment of adolescence and thus more able to see the effect that that period might have had on their learning to write.

Procedures

Each of the twelve participants in this study were actively involved in five sequences of the procedure which was based on the findings of a pilot study done in the Spring of 1983. Before and

after their active involvement, the participants were observed in the classroom setting with the researcher being in a passive-observer role. The participant began his or her active part in the study by doing a fifteen-minute verbal protocol of a fairly simple writing task assigned by the teacher, or if an assigment hadn't been made by the teacher, a fairly simple task was assigned by the researcher. This was followed by three separate hour-long interviews which were scheduled at a mutually agreeable time and place with three to seven days between the interviews. The series of three interviews was structured in a way that would encourage and provide time for the participants to recall in as vivid a way as possible their experience with past and present writing and to allow them to link past and present experience and to make sense of that experience: Interview #1: Describe your life from your first memeories to the present, giving special attention to your experience with writing and with learning to write.

Interview #2: Describe what writing and learning to write is like for you now giving as much detail as possible.

Interview #3: Describe what meaning the experience of writing has for you. What sense do you make of the experience you have had with writing and with learning to write?

Following the interviewing sequence, the participant did a final verbal protocol. This protocol was done for approximately thirty minutes and was of a fairly difficult writing task assigned by the classroom teacher.

Participants and their parents signed a written consent form before they were involved in the study, and procedures used to assure anonymity were described. Anonymity was assured the participants by the use of pseudonyms that they themselves picked and by changing names of people or places in their interview material that might identify them. Only the researcher has had access to material that had biographical cues to identify participants.

Limitations of the Study

Due to the nature of the research, this study had important limitations relating to its selection of participants and its setting. The study endeavored to get an understanding of the experience of the eleventh grade writer and to achieve an in-depth understanding of how the interaction of thought and feelings affected the writing process of that writer. Because the study sought an in-depth view of the experience of only twelve writers, there was an attempt to select writers that represented as broad a spectrum of experience as possible. Nevertheless, there was no attempt to represent the entire population of sixteen- and seventeen-year-old students. Any such attempt was obviated by the participants age (eleventh grade students were not a representative sample of the population to begin with because some sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds had already dropped out of school) and by the permission that both participants and their parents had to give to be involved.

Practical considerations due to the use of three methodologies limited the number of sites for selection of the eleventh-grade writers. Though an attempt was made to select students from two very different settings, no generalizations may be made about the institutional settings.

Much could have been learned from broadening the participant and site selections to represent a broader spectrum of the experience of the developing writer. Longitudinal studies could also have provided useful data in understanding the developmental dynamic between thought and feelings and writing, but in this inquiry, it was advisable to concentrate on an in-depth view of what was happening. Insights from such an in-depth analysis were valuable in their own right.

Data Analysis

The data generated from this study were in the form of field observation notes, transcripts of verbal protocols, and transcripts of interviews. They were used in two ways: (1) in formulating an in-depth analysis of three individual writers to show how the interaction of thought and feelings affected their writing process and (2) in more thematic studies of aspects of the context of the writers and how that context affected ease or struggle in the writing process.

Data Use in In-Depth Studies

Data were used in the in-depth studies to look at individual participants, attending to what they did and what they said, and by subsequently trying to understand how and why feelings and thought processes interacted during writing to make for struggle or ease in the writing process. This analysis gave the closest look at the nature of the interaction of feelings and thoughts, and information therein built toward an understanding of how the context of the writer affected her or his writing. The presentation of these data will be in the form of profiles of three writers constructed from the interview material; each profile will be followed by analyses of the participant's writing experience which use interview material combined with transcripts of the protocols and field notes.

I chose Davy, Lisa, and Chris for in-depth study for a variety of reasons. Together they represented the diversity of race, class, gender, tracking level, and language tapped by the study, and this made their profiles and analyses important background for the subsequent chapters. The content of their profiles has been selected so that it touches on issues brought up in later chapters as well as being important to the in-depth focus on the interaction of emotion and thought during the writing process. Perhaps the way in which Davy, Lisa, and Chris were the most different from some of the other participants is that they were very open (probably for different

reasons, some of which will be discussed in later chapters) about their experiences with writing. Each of them was either coming out of a hard time with writing or had gotten beyond it, and was able to reflect on experience with writing and to make sense of it. Thus, though each of the participants had had hard times with writing and had compelling stories to tell, Davy, Lisa, and Chris were at a place where they were able to examine their experience and to shed light on concerns important to this study.

Profiles of the three particpants selected for in-depth study were built from interview material. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed in their entirety. Portions were selected from material that dealt mostly with the participants' experience with writing and factors that affected that writing. These were woven together to present the experience of the writer in his or her own words. Words were deleted to maximize brevity and to minimize repetition. An occasional word was added parenthetically for transitional purposes or to clarify meaning. Consideration was given to changing the language of the participant to maintain the integrity of the participant. However, as the study progressed and language became an important, I chose to use the participants' own language and began to see their integrity in new terms. Rare changes were made in verb tense so that the narrative would follow logically when interview material was woven together. In this quoted material, dialect markers such as the apostrophe were not used as variant forms were deemed correct to the user ("writin").

Working intensively with the three individual writers' interview material was an important step in the analysis. It was at this point that, as a researcher, I was pushed to give up some pre-existing theories about writing and writers. I listened to their voices and rethought previous explanations for writers' behavior, gave up stereotypes and pushed more deeply into the complexity of my subject. I also came to trust this interview material and the participants' honesty in relating their perceptions of their experience. Not only was the interview data internally consistent, but it was also borne out by data from other sources.

Protocol material was developed by tape recording the composing aloud sessions and then transcribing the tapes. When silences occurred a series of periods took the place of those silences on the page at a frequency of approximately two periods per second. Ericsson and Simon (1980) found that subjects ceased verbalizing or gave less than complete verbalizations when they were working under a heavy cognitive load. Thus silence may be as significant as verbalizations in analyzing the protocol data. Charts were made from the protocol material in an attempt to summarize what the individual writers attended to during the writing process. These charts are more complex renditions of what Graves did when he attempted to represent in chart form children's consciousness when they write (Graves 1982, 237).

Field notes were summarized when used in the in-depth studies.

Data Use in Thematic Chapters

Data were used in the more thematic chapters by making connections among the experiences of the twelve participants to find commonalities and explainable differences in their experiences with writing and learning to write. Interview material was taken from transcripts and changed in the same manner as described for profile construction. This material was used only in short sections and was either summarized or quoted. Field notes were summarized. In early stages of analysis, material from transcribed interviews, protocols, and from field notes was sorted into thematic file folders in raw form. As more and more material was sorted, large categories became evident which were contextual concerns for the participants such as family, peers, teachers, school and society and files with narrower foci (disapproving parent, self-consciousness) began fit under these larger categories; an organization organic to the material developed. I often felt as though I was doing the bidding of the files rather than having a shaping influence over the themes that emerged. Categories such as "consciousness" emerged and were added under larger categories and occasionally categories folded into each other as did "handwriting" and "neatness."

However, data analysis was not complete when the files were sorted and ordered and an outline for presentation of data completed. It was in the writing that the full richness was uncovered and when

discrepant data appeared and necessitated alterations in previously written material or in the planned framework, inferences, and conclusions. At first it was tempting to make variant cases and deviant information "fit" in the existing or planned theoretical framework. But in each case the exceptions forced me to change that framework and view anew the complexity in the dynamics between the individual writers and their contexts. I began to trust and value discrepant data instead of being dismayed by it or worse, ignoring it. In each case it forced me further into complexity and deeper understanding. I learned a great lesson in research, that if one plays fair with the data, one's framework or model must change as work in both data analysis and in the writing continues.

Models for data analysis used by Emig (1971), Perl (1979), Berkenkotter (1981), and suggested by Lofland (1971), and Spradley (1977) and Agar (1980) were influential in evolving a form of analysis that best suited the data gathered from the study.

Conclusion

The data from this study were in the form of field observation notes, transcripts of verbal protocols, and transcripts of interviews. The connections and patterns, from which inferences and, hence conclusions and implications were drawn, evolved from inspection and analysis of the data as it accumulated. The amassed data had little to say in itself. The meaning-making took place through two

procedures of data analysis: (1) in-depth studies of three writers (Chapter IV) and (2) thematic connections among the experiences of all the participants about the interaction of living people with the participants' writing (Chapter V) and about the effect of school and society on the writers' processes (Chapter VI). The chapters that follow present the results of these analyses.

C H A P T E R I V

IN-DEPTH STUDIES OF INDIVIDUAL WRITERS

To fully understand the past and present experience of eleventh grade writers and how the interaction of thought and emotion facilitated or exacerbated the writing process, it is important to have two views of these dynamics--a view that focusses on what is happening within the individual writer and a wider view of how the writing context affects writing informed by connections among the experiences of twelve writers. This chapter presents in-depth studies of three writers. Each of these eleventh grade writiers had different experiences with writing and each had times of struggle and times of ease with the writing process. To understand the nature of struggle and ease in writing, a close analysis of struggle and ease and how they are related to the context of these writers follows. It is in these in-depth studies that the three research methods enrich each other to provide description of the writing process and the participants' perceptions of that process, of the writing context, and their views of themselves as writers.

This chapter not only will look at the experience of three individual writers and the nature of their struggle, but it will also show how more thematic issues which will be raised in later chapters are intertwined in real lives. These later chapters will look at connections among all twelve writers in terms of how family, peers,

teachers, and other social factors interacted with the view that they had of themselves as writers and with their development in writing.

I will begin with Davy Morales, describing both his experience and his writing process in some detail and then commenting on how one has affected the other.

Profile of Davy Morales

I first saw Davy Morales as he skipped into the English office of the rural/suburban high school and went from teacher to teacher, hugging most of them on the way. Later when he was introduced to me, I was hugged as well. It was unique access- a preliminary interview begun with a hug, but I came to see that moment as characteristic of Davy. Through the years he has gained acceptance from his teachers, especially his English teachers, and hence, by his own report respects and responds to them. Among the five basic students with whom I worked, he was the most accessible, the most open to me as an interviewer. He was also able to recount his early experience in the fullest detail and to reflect on that experience. Davy provides an additional interest in that his first language isn't standard English.

In the following profile I have woven passages of interview material to allow Davy to tell you in his own words of himself, of his writing and of the life situations that have surrounded his experience with writing.

When I was a little kid in kindergarten, I was trying to write my name and couldn't. I got so mad that I crumpled the paper and threw it in the garbage. I scribbled this way, up and down first, and then sideways. And then I took the pencil and went argh! I hated writing. I do a lot of writing at this school, at the high school. I don't write very well.

(In kindergarten) she left us alone. She was a tall lady; she was always wearin a dress. She had yellow hair, glasses. I can see her now. She was just a ...normal woman. Kinda like a housewife, takin care of kids.

But when I got to first grade, the teacher made me do a lot, but I hated it. She sat me in a corner when I'd be bad. The only thing I like is watching t.v. My best show was "Letterman." We'd go over to the next room and watch with the other class. I got left back in first grade. I stayed back, and I liked it. I'd watch still more t.v. I didn't know I'd stayed back.

I went downstairs to E.S.L. She was Spanish, and she would translate and say it was my language too. I spoke English out on the street, but at home I spoke Spanish. When I got to second grade, I had Ms. Banducci. I loved to read in her class. She let me read a lot in the group. I would always sit right across from her, and I just go, "Ah, Miss, can I read?" But in third grade I had Miss Hirsch; she still writes to me. She was my favorite. I did a lotta math, spelling, learning big words, learning how to do script, learning how to write and all that. I was excited learning how to do something new. They didn't mind run-on sentences, but they got to that later.

My father left. I think I was nine. I don't see him. He only came home Christmas day, once, and he gave me a guitar, a small guitar. Toy. And that's the only thing he gave me. He gave me a haircut once. And I watched my mother get a haircut. And that was it. And I sort of hate him now. He wasn't a father to me, playin with the kids.

In third grade I wanted to keep a diary. I only got small things to say. I mean, no, I had a lot to say! I had to talk over anything I did, but I couldn't write it; it was too long. I tried it for five days, but it was terrible--just a mess. Forget it; no more writing.

My mom, she's changed now. She doesn't punish the kids like she did to us. I used to run away, sometimes afraid to get punished, (sometimes with my favorite brother) Juan. I always wanted to hang on him, I was copying, all the time. He didn't go to school much.

I got in trouble; one time my friends broke into a shopping mall.

I didn't know where we were going... I was too scared to say anything. It was dark out...in the city too. We had to crawl to get out. I got caught then by the police, and then I went to a reform ...training school. My brother Jose was already there at the training school. He was my best brother; I wanted to be with him all the time when I was a kid. I whispered that I wanted to go. My mother knew a little English when she went to the courtroom with me. She said it out loud to the judge. I only went that once to court.

It (training school) was nice; I have a picture at home. We'd go swimming every Tuesday and Thursday. We'd go skating, and every Sunday we'd go to church if we wanted to. I liked that, but missing my parents; that's the only thing I hated because then they never visit me. Only once my Uncle came. I didn't like the school (part). I didn't like writin; I liked the teachers (though). I didn't know how to make a sentence. Every day I had to write. First goes my name, the date, then the weather, what's it like. Everyday I had to do that. If I get it wrong, I got to rewrite it--all over again. I didn't like that because I didn't know how. I was bad at makin up stories. I'd always talk about the outside, how the birds fly into their nests and feed the babies, same story. When I was a kid, I was dumb, too dumb. And I still am because I'm way behind. I didn't know how to write the story cause it was too short. I knew I'd be gettin it wrong. Then I'd have to rewrite it again, and again, and again. I stopped writing, but they made me do homework. But it was always wrong.

Everyone talked like I did there cause we all came from the city and city talk. We understood what we say--blacks, whites and Spanish. I used jive. But when we go to school, we hadda correct that.

There was this one lady came there. She told me how to start writing again. She'd say, "Write down what you can and what you know." I liked the way she helped me on things. She also taught me how to do plants--apple trees. I got a plant that big, and then it died. She said, "Write down on paper why it died." I passed it in, and she gave me a hundred. I felt good cause I'd see what's happening, and I'd just write it down. She bought me a kite cause she knew I loved kites. But she left the program. I stopped writing again.

The things I write was wrong. I wondered why I stopped. Now I realize why. I guess it's the way someone's lookin at it! Analyzed it. I like to write and I see what I wrote cause nobody's gonna grade it. I just write and write, but I don't know I'm wrong so I write. And I try to write about dogs in the city, how they are mean and when they hear the word, like sic 'em.... I was writing small. When I got to school, things that I did I know are wrong. I know the rest of the things are wrong. So I just sorta stopped. Why should I write when everything's always wrong? And just forget it. Not gonna write.

My mother never came to visit me or wrote. I liked her, but I hated her. My uncle came once. But Miss Hirsch--she tried to see me, to take me to the movies, on my Birthday and on Christmas Day, and she wrote me letters, a lotta letters. She still writes me. I want to send a good picture to her. (After training school) I was going to get sent to a foster home, cause my mother went away and didn't tell em. I got so mad cause my mother didn't come and get me. My uncle brought her to here, and she went to school, and she stayed up here.

I went to Junior High. I loved it. I don't know why people hate the teacher. I like to learn. But I hated (the resource room). It made me feel dumb. I didn't understand the classes and had to go in for extra help. Mr. Kendrick taught me a lot, how to express words like, "I woke up this morning. I watched the sun rise while I lied in the bed. And I got up, touched the cold floor, and I walked on the cold floor and opened the curtain, look out of the curtain, see a glare of light comin from the sun, hittin the ice, glarin up at my face. And I could feel the warmth from the glass from the sun hittin the ice and the glass." And like, he taught me that. It was fun, but I wanna forget what my grade was. So I had to write journals every day. My journals were really short. I didn't write very well.

I learned fragments in ninth grade--fragments. You put them together. I always put past tense into present tense. I still do that. It just comes to me as I'm writing to put it into the present tense.

My writing was always a mess. I mean every time I write, everything is wrong. I can't even read my own writing. I would write something down fast like, "My name is Davy Morales." I'd forget the "is." I hate to read my own writing, (but) I got used to it now. But I liked writing 'til I got to high school. There's a lotta writing there. Group communication I had to write papers. I had to do a lot of writing for "Men and Women in Society."

My writing got better. And I know more. I write longer, and I know I write longer, instead of short. And it takes me forever to put my thoughts down on a piece of paper. And now, lots of writing, lot of writing. I gotta do a five page paper, too. I think it's gonna come out to be like ten pages. So I have to proofread it, and see what's wrong with it and all that. I had to put more things into the paper, so I had to write on the side of the paper. I look over the essay and make my sentence clear. Make it sensible, and make it clearly, cause it doesn't look right.

I have to have tutors in school cause I can't get the work done by myself, cause like I don't know how to put it into words. Some words I don't know what it means. Mary Sue, (my tutor), helped me on another paper. I gotta B+ on it. Except for "president," that was

all that was wrong. I forgot to capitalize "president." I didn't
know it needed to be capitalized. I looked at the movie, so I know
what to say. It's memory. I know examples from the movie. I never
read. The reading, it's terrible. I never read the (assignment)
papers and things. I mean I don't like to read. We talked about it
in class. When I look at the sheets, the questions they ask. I think
about it before I write it--what I'm gonna say, how I'm gonna start
it. I get all the examples and then write it. I read it silently. I
make sure it's right. I read it slowly and make sure I understand it.
I go over it to see if I left any words out, and make capitalizations.
To me I don't know what sounds right. Did I say that right? To me I
understand what I'm saying. To other people they don't understand.

Then I give it to Mary Sue to read it. That's when I have a lotta
corrections! She tells me how to make it clearly and neat, and I need
more information in it. And I get it done, and don't forget the
periods.

When I was a kid, I think my mom was okay, but she could do
better. But it's hard for her, cause she has eleven kids. And my mom
was always worried about money when we were kids. We were poor. I
don't tell any of my friends that I'm poor, but I think Connie and
Allan know. I can't get in so much trouble (now) cause my mom's going
through so much. My mother told me once that she feels ashamed. She
wants me, but she doesn't really want me cause I should go to a better
family. My mother told me that cause she can't help me. She never
helped (in school work). My mom doesn't know how to do it. I would
take books home, and I always say why should I take books home because
I never do it cause of what's goin on in the house. I say, "Forget
it," and "I'm not going to take my books home." But I still do it!
And leave it on top of my bed all the time. And I look at it, and I
try to do one. I read some of my book. I like to read, but sometimes
I don't understand.

I try to do my writing but I can't. I don't have a table in my
room. When I write at home, my brothers and sisters and then my Mom
comes in the kitchen and cook and I have to leave. And so much noise,
and the cat gets on the table. "Get off cat; get away from my
writing." And then the t.v.comes on, and then my Mom is cooking. But
if I try to write, I smell the food, and I go taste it. I go back to
my table, and I have grease all over my hands and get a messy paper.
And the telephone rings. I don't write at home.

(Mom and I), we had a fight. So I am living at Mary Sue's now.
Mary Sue, my tutor, is helping me. She's like my third grade teacher,
she cares. At Mary Sue's I sit at a small table in the kitchen. Mary
Sue is in another room talking with (her daughter). I write my term
paper. I have books over here, paper here, extra, and the book I'm
working with. Had it (the music) really low, not blastin in my ear.
When I write sometimes I forget the radio's on. When my favorite

music comes on, I hear that. I stop and start singing with the music. And I go back to writing. I get a break! There's something there that keeps me company. That's good. After I finish singing, I go, "Oh no!, I gotta go back to writing."

In writing you have to do a lot of thinking. It hurts my head. I don't know what to say. So I look at the book and write down what the book says. I just write it down. When I write, I'm thinking what I'm going to say. I worry about when it's due, about how long is it gonna take, and how long they want it. I look over the questions again and again and again until I get the idea what they want. And then write it down. And I worry what's the paper gonna look like, am I gonna typewrite it or not? If I type it, it's short--it gets too short. I get a bad grade on it cause it is short. I worry how neat it's gonna be, is the sentence right? My tense is right? Did I use the right word, I mean, past tense all the time? I always forget that.

I had to do Shakespeare (in a school play), and I had to speak in a Spanish accent. My English is terrible. My English, to me I understand what I am saying; to other people, they don't understand. They have to tell me what's wrong. I just don't wanna speak. Once I said to my friend, "I have too much work to do." He said, "There's too many works to do." I don't know what words to use. I just say, "forget it" I'm not gonna say anything else. But I have to. My English crashes into the Spanish. It mixed together.

If I ever try to speak Spanish, Spanish people would say, "Are you English?" I say, "Yes." They say, "You don't talk like you're Spanish; you don't know how to speak well." So I just forget it. My Mother is always telling me I should be ashamed. I don't feel like I'm Spanish; I don't feel like anything. I just feel ... like a plant.

When I say I'm dumb, people say I'm not because I know how to read. So does everybody else. Some people in the streets don't know how to read. In school I am dumb. I mean with the students, not to adults. But with students I am. But Connie, a friend, she told me a problem, and I talked with her. Then she went to a counselor, and she came back. "Davy, you're right. I can't believe how smart you are; you make me sick. Davy, I just needed to talk to you. She told me almost the same thing you told me." When I talk to people, I have to use examples to make them understand me. And it takes a long time.

I can't write nuthin right. I get mad cause I can't believe how dumb I am. The ideas are not dumb; it's my writing. I cannot put it into words. When I was a kid, I was dumb, too dumb. And I still am because I'm way behind. Because I was supposed to be a senior this year, and I should have been higher, on my level, cause I'm in basic. I'm in a lotta basic classes. I hate being in basic level. I just sort of --my mind is being wasted. But I am gonna have to do it.

They (tried to) put me in ESL, and I didn't want to be in ESL cause I know I was way above that. I know I got the capability to learn, nuttin is helpin to bring it out. And I notice that--that my family's always in basic and low; I don't know why. My uncle's always sendin me to school, wants me to graduate. I just got around that pressure (by liking school) cause all my friends are there, teachers there. I hate being at home. I would be the first one in my family to graduate. I'm sort of taking my uncle's role with my sister Juanita. I don't think she is doing well. I just hope she graduates. She'd better not drop out of school...(I'd) go crazy.

I never wrote that much until this year, until I went to that film class. I never wrote so much. I'm in Upward Bound--it started last summer. I know that I'm gettin smarter. But not in the speed I wanted to. To me I feel dumb, but to other people, I don't know. I make them happy and smile. And I wonder, how the people look at me. I will be the first in my family to graduate. Why am I going to graduate? And when I don't know so much. Oh, I'm confused! Now I wish that I went back, to do better, to be born again, to do better.

I want to dance on stage, act, help people (understand their problems). And the other thing is making people happy! Makes me feel better. Especially in the English office. Everybody smiles when I come in. I want to go to acting school. Somebody told me that the university theatre is not good--but Yale it's excellent. Is it Yale? I want to be a professional actor, dancer. I love to dance. In eighth grade I missed a chance, cause at the Ballet Center (I could) go there free. I didn't go because of home problems. I had to work, but I didn't (end up doing it).

After I'm successful; I'll help my Mom. And during the process I'll help my Mother (with her problems) too. Plus I listen to my horoscope. It says, "You have to push to where you want to be and think that you can do it."

Analysis of Davy's Interview and Other Data

This was Davy's rendition of his experience as a writer, and from it we begin to understand Davy's view of himself, of himself as a writer, and of how his past and present context have brought times of

ease and struggle with writing. In these in-depth studies interview material will be complemented with the protocol data and observations of in-class writing to provide a view of the participants writing experience. In trying to understand Davy's and the other two participants' experience with writing, two threads emerge and weave through that experience which are important to this study: (1) the view these writers had of themselves and of themselves as writers, and (2) the roots of their present struggle or ease with writing.

Davy's View of Himself as Writer

Much of Davy's view of himself and of himself as a writer had been shaped by the response that he had received from his teachers. As Davy was developing a view of himself, there were key teachers who reflected back to him acceptance of himself as a person, and trust in his ability. This mitigated what would otherwise have been the learning environment which most of his eleven siblings had chosen to leave before graduation. Davy's third grade teacher became a much needed surrogate parent, someone who unconditionally valued his existence when his family wasn't available for him. When he left the "training school", a string of teachers reflected approval of himself, if not of his writing. They were an important source of approval for him and Davy strove to please them. English teachers from his high school had taken him on as a group project, getting him involved in Upward Bound and finding him tutorial help. Mary Sue, his tutor,

stepped in as the surrogate parent in eleventh grade when Davy was again in need.

Davy did, however, go through a time during "training school" when teachers did not affirm the writing which he viewed as an extension of himself. ("I can't write nuthin right. I get mad cause I can't believe how dumb I am.") Aside from the brief respite when the apple plant teacher valued his work, the negative view of himself that he gleaned from response to his writing ingrained in him a view of himself as a poor writer, and a view of himself as dumb. He defended himself in the only way he could. He stopped writing beyond what he had to do to avoid sanction.

Like four other participants in my study, Davy exhibited a struggle with writing which ended in a refusal to struggle. Actually it was more a struggle with the view he had of himself than it was a struggle with writing. When Davy said, "Why should I write when what I write was wrong?" he interpreted quite consciously what happened in fourth through sixth grade when he refused to write. Not engaging in writing was for Davy a way to defend a positive view for himself, for to engage in writing forced a negative view of himself as a student and as a writer. The only possible explanation that he found for his difficulty with school writing was that he was dumb--a suspicion that has lived with him until the present.

Though since junior high Davy had not indicated that his teachers viewed him as dumb, it wasn't until his friend Connie told him that he was smart that he began to see the possibility as real. As a

teenager, he needed validation from peers. In late high school years it seemed that intellectually he had decided that he was not dumb but "behind." But emotionally the old scar was raw. He still defended himself when being perceived as dumb was possible. The emotion linked with threat of having his inadequacies uncovered made him resort to defensive strategies which got in the way of his writing. An observation and subsequent interview that I did of Davy gives us a view of how he needed to hide his perceived inadequacy from his peers and from teachers who might inadvertantly expose it in front of peers.

I observed Davy writing an in-class paper for a double period class on "Cinema." During the first half-hour The China Syndrome finished, and the first period of the class had fifteen minutes remaining. I was sitting two seats to the left of Davy. Soon after the lights came on the teacher passed out criteria for an in-class essay that was to be completed by the end of that double period. During that writing time Davy interacted with two students and the teacher. He often asked questions of a young man who sat on his left wearing a Harvard sweatshirt. At one time this young man confused Davy by mixing up the words "choreography" and "cinematography." Davy finally figured out the confusion and corrected the young man. On one occasion he saw that his cohort to the left was busy, and he asked a young black woman on his right for the spelling of a word. Midway through the second period he asked the teacher to look at his paper. The teacher immediately pointed out the misspelling of "camera" and

then said, "You have plot. Is the camera man doing his job? What is the theme?" Davy went back to work, glancing at the clock. Later with five minutes to go, he put the last period on with a flourish and put the paper on the teacher's desk while saying in a hushed voice, "I don't think I did it right. I talked about the movie, the film." The teacher read the last paragraph and said, "You know what one of the problems is with the last paragraph? Your adjectives are good. Well done, but empty. Give reasons." Davy took a new paper and wrote in a purposeful, almost harried way and handed a new final paragraph to the teacher who said, "That's better."

As I walked with Davy to his next class, I asked him, "How was it when you first got the assignment?" He said, "I knew as soon as I saw it coming that I wouldn't understand it, but was embarrassed to ask questions in front of the class." I asked Davy who the young man who wore the Harvard sweatshirt and the black girl who sat between us were and what kind of conversations he had with them. He said he asked the young man lots of questions because they were both in basic, and he knew he wouldn't think he was stupid. He would only ask the black girl about spelling if the young man didn't know. He figured that was okay because she was advanced, and he had heard advanced students ask each other for spelling. He just couldn't do it too often.

When Davy was under pressure, he used strategies he had learned. He received help from the teacher and from fellow students. He did not fear appearing dumb in front of his teacher, but he selected the student he asked for help carefully, protecting himself from appearing

"dumb." As a result Davy asked questions of a student who ended up by confusing him instead of helping him. Davy went to long measures to keep himself from appearing dumb, to defend a positive view of himself. This fear of appearing dumb was no small concern of Davy's; he carried it with him, "I wonder, how the people look at me."

Because it was teachers from whom Davy gathered a positive view of himself, he strove to please them. That Davy worked so hard when he wrote and that he continued to do so was a tribute to the teachers who have worked with him; they provided the extrinsic motivation he needed to do the writing that he had little intrinsic motivation to do. Nevertheless, he had three years of negative response to his work, and the negative view of himself as a writer that he gleaned during those years was not without a cost. Not only does he still fight feelings of inadequacy, but he also lost valuable years of practice at transcription and at the time of the study was not yet automatic in that process. This as we will see in the next section contributed to his present struggle in writing.

Davy's Present Struggle with Writing

Among all the participants Davy was the best example of struggle that results from having too many concerns and too much to attend to during the process. Listening to what Davy tells us about his experience with writing leads us to a sense of what Flower and Hayes (1982) term cognitive overload. Davy said,

In writing you have to do a lot of thinking. It hurts my
head. I worry about what to say...when it's due, about how
long is it gonna take, how long they want it...(what) idea
they want...what's the paper gonna look like...(if) it gets
too short...How neat it's gonna be, is the sentence right.
My tense is right? Did I use the right word?

In looking at these worries that Davy mentioned in a few minutes
during the interview and at the other worries (capitalization,
spelling, language, punctuation, reading and organization) that he
described throughout the interviewing process, we can see that Davy
had too much to worry about while writing. For all writers there is a
healthy dose of concern and a debilitating amount of worry. Most of
Davy's worries promoted a consciousness which should have improved his
writing power. But the concerns could not all be attended to
simultaneously, overload occurred, and with the overload came
frustration. Hayes and Flower (1982) describe this cognitive overload
in regard to skilled adult writers for whom much is already
automatic.

Though the interview material gives us a sense of Davy's
struggle, protocols and observation allow a more focal analysis of
this struggle. Using data from interviews and protocols, I will focus
on just a few of Davy's worries which contribute to this struggle: (1)
reading, (2) language, and (3) organization.

Before looking more specifically at reading, language, and
organization, a look at what it was like for Davy to do a protocol
will give an overview of his writing process. Davy was required to
critique the film version of The Grapes of Wrath. He had begun his

assignment the day before and began this session by telling me about the difficulty he had in understanding what the teacher wanted and about how he had "read and read and read" the mimeographed sheets that explained the assigments, and even then did not understand. He solved the problem by using the topic sentence, "The movie is about a family trying to live through the Great Depression," and by then lapsing into chronological plot summary. Davy had no trouble at all getting into his work and was generally cheerful throughout. The troubles he had didn't overcome his will to persevere. The following is a two sentence excerpt from this sixteen sentence protocol:

> It was hard to sell the furnture because other people were throw out of the house or farms. and the didn't have money also. but the Joad were able to sell some of there furtures.

> When the Joad were on their way to California to looka job. Grandpa die.

The transcript of the verbal protocol of Davy saying everything that came into his mind while he completed those two sentences showed why the process was frustrating for him. Series of periods represent time elapsed when nothing is said aloud.

> It...was...hard.........to .....sell....the furnitures... f-u-r-n-i-t-u-r-e. It was hard to sell the furnitures because, because, how do you spell....... because? .... b-e-c-a-u-s-e, because .... hard to sell all the furniture... because.... because... because...... why?... because ...... other people ... other.... other... other people .... o-t-h-e-r, other people were throwing ..... out... of their house or farm,...Okay.....It was hard to sell the furniture because other people were thrown out of their... house.... or .... farm.... and........ they ..... didn't .... have... money..... either..... They didn't have money also.........But the Joad...(reads previous sentence) ......

but the Joad sold some of their furnitures (turns paper and
rereads from beginning of the paragraph, corrects "byu" to
"buy," adds "the" to make "with the money" and continues.)
But the Joads... said... some .... of.... the .... The
Joads said ...sold (misreads his own text) ..Oh!....sold
some ....of... their.... furnitures... (crosses out). The
Joad were able to sell some of their furniture....The Joads
....were.... able.... to sell.... some... of .... their....
furniture..... (Mutters, sings a little song, prepares to
start a new paragraph.) What should I talk about... they
have to struggle to get to California...... Can I borrow
another piece of paper... (paper noises)....... My name is
... v-y...Davy. When the Joad...... were... on... their...
their... way.... to.... California... Cal-i-forn-ia...
Um..... going to Californio... to look..... for... a....
job....for.... a job.......... (mumbles).......... They
didn't..... They... had.... to... Oh!... oh... Grandpa..
died... Grandpa...die....

In these two sentences we see very closely what writing was like

for Davy. Like Tony from Sondra Perl's "The Composing Process of

Unskilled College Writers" (Perl, 1979), Davy's writing pattern was

interrupted continually by editing concerns and subsequent recursion,

the act of returning to the beginning of a sentence or paragraph to

get his mind back on track.

During this protocol Davy planned sentences and parts of

sentences that he didn't write, and wrote things he didn't say. He

said things in standard English and then wrote them incorrectly, yet

he also wrote things correctly that he had versed incorrectly. He

often practiced a sentence before actually writing it, but then was

interrupted and forgot what he was going to write. He spelled the

same words correctly and incorrectly within even the same sentence,

and he made reading miscues in the recursive reading that made for

further writing mistakes. All this made for a very stop-and-go

process of working back and forth through the text. In addition to

all this, Davy also verbalized thought beyond word-by-word iteration of his transcription at which he is not yet automatic. He asked himself questions, made plans while writing, and didn't write down the first thought that came into his head.

In this protocol we can see how much Davy has to attend to while writing, why it is so frustrating, and why in the process he swears, pounds his fist to his forehead, groans, and sighs. These are the outward symptoms of his inner struggle. The chart showing what is on Davy's conscious attention during this protocol (see Figure 1 in the Appendix) is inspired by Graves' representation of what was in the consciousness of beginning writers during writing (Graves 1982, 237).

Having this view of the crowded conscious attention with which Davy writes, I would like to focus on three concerns--language, the reading connected with his writing, and his attempts at organization--to see how they encumber his process.

Davy's Language. We can see from the chart how concern about syntax was continually in Davy's conscious attention during writing. Most of the syntax errors that Davy made in his writing and in his speech were due to the difficulties that a second language speaker faces. Davy often used English words with Spanish syntactical rules.

Davy follows the wrong rules. Subject-verb agreement and formation of plurals are constant problems for him, yet as we look at each miscue, it makes perfect sense given the Spanish syntax that seemed intermeshed with his English. Davy said, "The Joad were able

to sell some of their furnitures." The Spanish equivalent, "Los Joad" is plural but has no plural marker on the noun. Davy should have used furniture as a collective noun, yet he said "the furnitures" sometimes in accord with the Spanish plural, "los muebles." Later in the protocol he wrote, "There were enough job," confusing job and work which use the same word in Spanish (trabajo/work; trabajos/jobs). This would also explain his embarrassing moment that he described in one of the interviews when he said to a friend, "There's too many works to do (muchos trabajos)." He still remained confused about it because in the telling he thought the incorrect form was correct.

At one point Davy asked himself, "My tense is right?......What it would be?" which was perfectly legitimate Spanish question order. Davy's difficulty with tenses is more complex to explain. He said, "I always put past tense into present tense. I still do that. It just comes to me as I'm writing to put it into present tense." Perhaps his informal acquisition of English in the streets was one where the present tense and present things were most important; also present tense is often used in informal spoken narrative. The interaction of the Black Vernacular, Spanish, and standard English may hold the explanation of his penchant for the verb tenses that he identified as present tense, for reduction of consonant clusters in Black English leads to omission of past tense markers. Davy said, "To me I understand what I'm saying." (More Spanish syntax, but the meaning is clear.) He can't write acceptably without assistance, and he said his tutor told him how "to make it clearly." (The Spanish verb "hacer,"

to make or to do, would take an adverb; whereas, the English verb, to make, would require an adjective.)

Without tutorial assistance Davy couldn't sort out the different grammars that "crashed" in his head. Davy's internal editor (those internalized past teachers who responded to mistakes more than content in his days at "training school") continually interrupted his writing. In-process editing was a way in which he attempted to make writing correct and attempted to defend a positive view of himself.

If Davy had learned pure Spanish as a child until that language was complete before being exposed to a mixture of languages, or if he had heard pure Spanish and then pure English unmixed, he might have been able to develop separate rule systems for both languages and be effectively bilingual. But he had no chance to learn a language unto itself. From the first time he played in the street or played with his older brothers, Spanish, Black Vernacular, and standard English were always mixed. Davy was left with uncertainty and self-consciousness in both oral and written expression.

Though Davy had spent hours of classroom time doing grammar exercises, he didn't call up these grammar lessons when he corrected what he wrote. Rather, his strategy was to edit and revise on the basis of whether it sounded right to his already confused ear. Language is perhaps Davy's most consuming concern in writing, yet the hours of remediation spent in the classroom in no way benefited his language problem.

Reading connected with Davy's writing. Davy's carefully hidden

difficulty with reading has kept him working with yet another handicap. He had difficulty decoding assignments, getting material from books for research papers, and writing because of the mistakes he made in reading his own writing. Towards the end of my work with Davy, his tutor Mary Sue said to me, "I think Davy may have some trouble with reading." Davy's shielding of this truth had been so clever, that it took Mary Sue nearly eight months of working with Davy every day on writing until she began to realize it. Because Davy was in his first non-basic heterogeneous class, "Cinema," expectations had escalated. Mary Sue became aware that Davy struggled with reference books for his first research paper on Betty Davis. I observed Davy writing in the library. He groaned, sighed, worked back and forth through what he had written, puzzled over words, swore, pounded his head with his palm, went continually back to the book which seemed to be at once his security and his nemesis. He looked up at me and said, "I wish I could interview Betty Davis." It was the first time I saw upbeat Davy forlorn. His inability to read well affected his ability to get at the material he needed for his writing. It is doubly ironic that he so distrusted his own ideas that he still struggled to take as much as possible from books. Mary Sue had said, "What do you know about Betty Davis?" Davy could give a full account, yet still resorted to books.

Davy's stance with his tutor had been frustrating for her. "I don't like to read." He made half-hearted attempts to read the complex assignment sheets and handouts on theory of film criticism,

and then simply refused. It was better to appear lazy or obstinate than to appear unable to read. The field notes of the observation of The China Syndrome evidenced his difficulty with reading and his unwillingness to let it be known. Davy's subterfuge protected him from appearing "dumb," but again there is a toll. If he will not seek help, he will get none.

Finally Davy's difficulty with reading gets in the way of his transcription of thought. In the protocol of The Grapes of Wrath paper, Davy read "said" instead of "sold," during a recursion. This miscue in his recursive reading of his own work caused him to lose his train of thought and caused yet another recursion to get back on track. Davy's difficulty with reading became a problem in many ways for him in writing.

Attempts at organization. Because of all the concerns that Davy dealt with during the writing process, organization became an additional burden. It often became a constraint that Davy threw out in order to get his task done. He had difficulty with understanding what organization was wanted from him when it was presented in written form and with the complexity in carrying out a sophisticated, predevised plan when he was already overburdened in his task. These two difficulties forced him into slipping into the tried and true organization of chronological plot summary.

When Davy was given his assignment for The Grapes of Wrath paper, he told me, "I read, and read, and read the sheets about the paper, but didn't understand." He solved his problem by lapsing into plot

summary.   He knew he would pass.   The observation of <u>The Grapes of</u> <u>Wrath</u> in-class writing showed him using the same tactic.

Davy's planning of his Betty Davis research paper shows quite focally not only his ability at organization, but also his inability to carry out his plans.   Davy began a session with me by describing how he planned to carry out the task. "I want to go back and tell about her movie and the roles she's played, and then gradually go back to how she started...the way she learned." Davy came to the session with a rather sophisticated plan.   He began the protocol planning aloud:

> Betty Davis....What should I say about Betty
> Davis?.......The title should be Betty Davis (underlines his
> title)......Betty...Betty....Betty....Betty...Betty Davis is
> an actress who is....who is..What...who is....she?...I don't
> think I'm doing this right....Betty Davis is an
> actress....What am I going to say next?...Oh...Okay....What
> am I going to say? She was not good enough...good
> enough........for .....I wish I could interview Betty
> Davis....Okay.....Betty Davis is an actress. She was not
> good enough for show business...show biz..... What else am I
> going to say?.....Could talk about....(rereads)...but she
> tries hard to become....successful....How do you spell
> that....s-u-c-? she tries hard to become successful.
> (rereads)....with...her career....(rereads). Okay
> now.....(mumbles)....Betty was born in Lowell... Oh
> Damn...... Betty Davis was born in Lowell...
> Mass-a-chusetts..... Betty was born in Lowell....
> Massachusetts, with the name ..... with... name... of....
> Ruth..... Elizabeth... Davis.... Ruth...
> E-l-i-z-a-b-e-t-h...Davis...(rereads).....okay..um...ooooo,
> Jesus!...okay...(rereads)...... okay her mother... the
> name... comes.... from... her.... looks sloppy..... the name
> comes from her mother.... What is her first name? Does this
> make sense? ...... (rereads)....

Observing Davy during this protocol was valuable. His level of frustration was evident.   He began with the non-verbal gesture of

scratching his head and finally got to the point of pounding it while saying, "Oh, damn!" Then he slipped into a different format than he had planned. He gave up starting off with Betty Davis' present life and then reaching back in her life to show from whence she came, and started into the comfortable chronological approach. The complexity of the process led him to find a less demanding organization, a more automatic format.

In looking more focally at Davy's reading, organization, and difficulties with syntax, we see an intricate weaving of causes and effects of an overcrowded conscious attention. Emotion linked with fear of error and with fear of appearing dumb exacerbated this already overburdened process. That Davy continued to write at all is a tribute to Davy's cheerful perseverance and to the support and patience of his teachers and tutor. When things became tough for Davy he didn't quit as he did in his upper-elementary years, he called forth strategies that he found had worked for him.

Strategies Davy used to keep writing. "When a juggler has too many balls to keep in the air, the easiest solution is to simply toss one out over her shoulder. Writers can do this too..." (Flower and Hayes 1980, 41). Davy had many concerns to juggle while writing, and he , like Flower and Hayes' skilled writers, had found some strategies to manage his load. Tutor Mary Sue had helped him with additional strategies. We have just seen how he coped with an organization that was too complex for his ability at transcription, but there were others which worked with varying degrees of success.

Most delightfully, Davy used singing as a break in his writing. This habit was a strategy that I began to see facilitated the writing itself. It seemed to be a time of transition, a time for his mind to clear away the old paragraph's tensions and a time for incubation of new thought.

Mary Sue advised Davy to leave a blank space when he couldn't get the spelling of a word. I saw him do this twice. But if , as we have seen from his protocols, he left a blank space every time he had to think about spelling, his writing would look like a cloze exercise. He could and did, however, dismiss punctuation and capitalization until revision.

Spelling and proper syntax were too worrying for Davy to ignore while writing. As with Perl's Tony, his in-process editing and subsequent recursion continually interrupted the fluidity of his process. The work of Davy's internal editor was evident in both protocols.

Davy reported that he left more and more things that bothered him until Mary Sue could help. Davy's zone of proximal development, Vygotsky's term for the level at which one functions with assistance, was considerably better than the level at which he could work unassisted (Vygotsky 1978, 87). He felt better about himself, as well, when he received recognition for that assisted writing.

Conclusion

Davy was caught somewhere between feeling good about himself and bad about himself as a student and a writer. On the one hand he was trying hard, he was writing often, he was experimenting with new formats even though he couldn't implement them, he felt better about himself, and most importantly, he saw writing as important to pursual of sought-after goals. Davy was becoming more conscious of the cause for his writing problems and this decreased both the defenses he used and inadequacy he felt in writing. The whole interaction of defenses and consciousness in Davy was interesting. With most people defenses lie as barriers to consciousness of one's world and the way it affects one's experience. As Davy reflected back on his life and came to some realizations, he made some meaning of it. The oft-repeated, "Now I realize why," was one such indication that this happened. I asked him whether he got help on his work at home, and for the first time he realized that other students received help from their parents or older siblings. All of a sudden he felt less reprehensible because he had a tutor. Before he said, "I have to have tutors in school, cause I can't get the work done by myself. I'm too dumb." Later he said, "I didn't know other kids got help."

Other statements that Davy made indicated a growing consciousness of what was going on in the world which had surrounded his writing. "My ideas are not dumb. It's my writing; I cannot put it into words." When I showed him how Spanish syntax interacted with his writing, he said, "I didn't know I hadda Spanish grammar," and more worries about his intellect slipped away.

Davy's perseverance in the face of his struggle with writing was remarkable and was a symptom of increased self-regard and purpose. Nevertheless this eleventh grade year was critical for Davy; time was running out.

Profile of Lisa

When I pulled Lisa's name out of the hat that contained the prospective white, female participants from a standard writing class, I had to ask who she was. Lisa had kept a low profile in "Standard Exposition." She sat in the back row and only occasionally chatted with her neighbors, and as I talked with her I began to understand why. Unlike Davy, Lisa's struggle with writing was on the wane though old wounds had not allowed it to disappear entirely. She will tell you in her own words about her experience with writing.

Before I was six months we moved to my house that I'm living in now. I remember planting some bushes on the side of the house with my father, and going to my brothers' baseball games. I have two older brothers in college now. My mother works at town hall, and my father works at the University. He's a computer systems analyst or something. I guess when he first moved here and married my mother, he was working during the day and at a package store at night. He was taking a writing course. I guess he was (trying to) go back to school or something because I was looking through a box, and I was looking at all these papers of his. He wasn't a very good writer; he had a few D's. (Now) when I see him writing it is mainly just numbers, or contracts, or tax forms. I guess he writes programs for the professors' tests and then corrects them. He also owns a team, nothing big, but that takes a lot of time.

When my mother got married she was eighteen. But when I was maybe five or six, she went to community college, and so she graduated from college about ten years later. She had three kids at that time. I see my mother writing now because she is trying to get a promotion, and my aunt is helping her fill out some promotion papers.

I remember in kindergarten I would draw, but that's not like writing or anything. The first thing I remember writing was..we had the really big yellow paper with the lines and those fat pencils and I didn't like those. I remember that I wrote what I liked and I drew pictures. I remember I liked to write A's. In first or second grade there were thin tips, with no erasers. And I was writing something, and I wanted to erase it, but we didn't have erasers, so I crossed out

and kept on writing. It's funny because I can remember saying to my friend, I can't remember who the friend was , but I remember I was mad because I couldn't get the eraser to erase it and make it look nice. I liked the teacher, she brought a goat in one day. She was strict. We had to write some lines for a play. It was Alice and Wonderland and there was one scene that we got to write in our own words.

In sixth grade my penmanship was bad, and so I started out in the second-to-worst penmanship group. We were put into three groups. People who were very neat....people who were okay, and people who were sloppy, and I was in the okay. By the end of the week I was finally in the neat group, and I felt good about that because all my friends wrote neat. I used to write a lot of stories about dolphins....I found them really interesting,so whenever we had an assignment to write about anything, I would always write about a dolphin. I knew a lot about them, so I could.

I don't think I was a very good student because my teacher said to me that I could read fast, and so I said, "Why am I not in Dimensions?" And she said because I didn't have good sentence structure. I could read as good as the people that were in Dimensions, but I couldn't write as well as them. It was the highest reading group, but I couldn't get into it. I was practically in the lowest. I guess I wasn't a very good writer in elementary school. I wanted to get up there, but I couldn't. I felt really bad about writing then because when you're in a lower group I guess you naturally feel you're stupid. That had a part to play in my feeling bad about writing.

We had to write sentences or answers to the workbook questions, and I would just answer the questions but not in correct sentences. Once there was a competition thing. We had about a month to write it. I didn't really have any ideas, so I just started writing about a turtle, which wasn't anything, so at that point I decided I wouldn't hand it in. The person with the best paper would go into the newspaper or something. I wasn't good enough, I thought, so I didn't even try. I found out the day it was due, and that day when I woke up, I told my mother that I didn't feel good; she didn't make me go to school. That was the only time that I really played hooky because I really felt uncomfortable about writing. Other people were going to decide whether mine was good enough to go into the paper. Right now I don't mind if someone else reads it, but back then I did because I was more unsure of my writing.

I wrote the next paper in pencil and then I rewrote it in pencil. He told me I had to rewrite it in pen. I wrote the pen over the pencil, and then I erased the pencil. But I got in trouble for that, so I said, "Forget it. I'm not going to rewrite it; I don't want to go through this. I want to get outside and play."

In seventh grade I wasn't very smart I don't think. I wasn't a

very good writer at all. I had a teacher Ms. Joseph. I did not like her. One time we had to write a poem, and I really thought it was good. I was really upset because she didn't. I could tell that she didn't like me because everything would be wrong. My poem was talking about how the corral reef wasn't there because of pollution. There was always a "You're not doing this right." I didn't really want to work on it, so I stopped and I got a D+, and my parents weren't too happy about it. She didn't like anything I was writing about. So I guess I sort of rebelled, and stopping writing, got her really mad at me.

So whenever I got a bad grade it wasn't anything big. I knew I was going to get it. So whenever I got a paper back that was proving I was a bad student. I would feel really bad because everyone would be asking me what I got, and it was really embarrassing to tell them the grade. It really wasn't that important to me. In the beginning I was trying to do good, but after that I got a D+. It made me feel really stupid and then you'd say, "Well, I didn't really want to do it anyways." So I guess now I don't like it when people criticize my writing cause I feel that no one should be able to criticize my writing.

I had a diary; I think it was for my twelfth birthday. I would write what would happen that day, like my mother's been mad at me. I liked this guy. He was a lifeguard, really cute. He went off to college, and I was saying how much I missed him. It (the diary) was supposed to be for a full year, but my cousin would come over and read it, so I said , "Well, I better get rid of this."

Eighth grade I started writing papers. I had Ms. Dussel. I did better that year because I liked her and I learned a lot from her about verbs and stuff. We had to write book reports and about Anne Frank. I got B's on those, so I was doing better. And I wrote a paper for Social Studies and got a B+ on it. We had to pick an old house, and I picked my grandmother's, and he said he liked it because I talked about the old electric system.

In ninth grade I started doing good on papers. I got B's all the time, so I felt really good in her class.

I came home once (in the spring), and my parents said, "We have a surprise for you. You're going to summer school." I was having problems with Algebra, (but) my last quarter grade was a C+. It ruined the whole summer, and it hadn't even started yet. I was pretty angry at my parents for doing that without even asking me. They sent me for Algebra, Typing and English because it cost the same. I felt that I was above the others. I got an A- in it both times.

This year was when I started being really serious about writing. I'm doing really good. My grades are going up, getting prepared for

college.   I want to be a marine biologist and study sea mammals and how they pertain to human life. What are the benefits we can get by studying them, protecting them, find something out that will make me famous, like dolphins, do they communicate? And I want to write a book about the sea. I guess I'm learning that I'm going to have to use it (writing) when I'm older. I'm trying so much harder this year because it's coming down close to graduation.

I was going through my drawers and cleaning them out (a few years ago), and I said why am I keeping this poem, the one that Ms.Joseph hated, if it is so bad?   I threw it away. This summer, I was trying to remember some lines from it. I was with my brightly colored angel fish, floating by the corral, and then I said something about now there is no brightly colored angel, there is no corral reef left. I was really happy writing then, and I was thinking about how good a grade I was going to get on it. I was happy other times when I was writing about dolphins.   This summer I would just be fooling around and start to write a story, and then I'd read it over and then I'd throw it away.

This year I have lost my best friend so I'm much more into my studies. She was more important to me than my school work, but now my school work is more important. For the first half of the summer we had a job, and then when we came back to school we weren't talking or anything.

I'm a cheerleader, and she's a cheerleader, and her best friend now is a cheerleader. It affected my school work (in) that I wanted to do more work to get my mind off five years of friendship not anymore.   I started getting into grades and doing really well. I guess I'm sort of feeling better about myself because she did worse than me in Algebra. I found out she had a B or C for a quarter grade and I had an A. And she always did better than me in school and in sports, so it made me think, I am not that dumb, so why feel so bad?

I would talk to my mother about what was happening. I guess for the first week she listened, but then she said, "Why are you letting this affect you?" I started thinking, "Why am I letting her rule my thinking."   I was really upset... I didn't know what I was upset about, so I went upstairs, and I just started writing why what had happened.   I felt better about it. I reread it and I saw that that was probably partly my fault. I guess that was a good idea to write it down.   I never got a chance to tell her because she was with her (new) best friend.   This year I have changed. I'm more open. In a way it was the best thing for me because I've come out of my shell. I was always letting her talk. Now I'm the only one...no one else is goin to be saying this for me, so I'm more open.

(Now) in "Exposition" I get to choose about what I want to write

about, but what I want to write about I can't in that class. It is hard to explain. I can't write about the sea because she makes you read it out loud, and I'm embarrassed because I don't think people have the same views as I do. I guess I'm embarrassed about something I like.

In "Exposition" this year, I've learned different ways to express my thoughts better, so it's easier for me to write a paper. Before I didn't even know how to put words together, and I hated writing. (Now) I pass in a paper and wait to see what I get for a grade, and I didn't start dreading it when teachers would assign a paper so it was easy for me to write. Like if they say you have a paper due next week, it's no problem for me. They just say I will write this type of paper, and then I'll write it. Before I didn't know the difference between papers, but now that there's different types of papers, and ways to write them, it is easier. I have more control over my form. Last year my Social Studies teacher told me I had to write a position paper. Now I do. If I have a topic I know I want to write about, then I can, but if I don't have a topic, I can't write about anything in that class. I'll either talk to my mother about a good topic, or read a newspaper-- that gave me the idea for the paper I'm writing right now. Then I (can) go back and write in class. It's hard to think of a topic when you only have 45 minutes and then start right in. It's not enough time. I keep starting papers, and I don't like the idea so I'll either crumple it up and throw it away, or I talk to Barbara or Marie or John, or someone and then if they can't figure out one, then we'll just talk, unless they're writing, then I don't talk to them. I guess it's more talking and reading, the way I find my topic.

It's easier if they give you a choice of topics that way you can pick the one that is easiest. (But) when you have so many ways to write a paper, and so many topics to choose from it is really hard.

I just do a rough draft from my head, and that's a lot easier for me. I can't do outlines. I usually finish a paragraph or something and then think about the next one, write the next one and then keep writing and then go on. I'll read that over and change it so I don't have to make three papers. It's usually a rough draft and a final draft. I don't care (about neatness) cause I'm writing much neater and better.

I never feel comfortable with my parents reading my papers. In eighth grade I had them help me with social studies, and it was never good enough so I just said, "I want to do it myself." If I'm having problems in school, I'll ask my brother. I was having difficulty in 9th grade with my math and my father made me do the first two chapters in the book again. I'm not going to let them get involved anymore. I mainly just tell them about my sports. If it weren't always like it was my fault--If I didn't understand the paper, it was, "Why weren't

you paying attention in class?", or if I didn't like the teacher, or the teacher didn't like me, "What have you done to make her act this way?" I guess if they weren't so critical, always putting the blame on me, that would have been better for me and my writing. When they would read a paper of mine, they'd say what I should change, and then I'd say, "Well, I don't really think it should be changed," and then they'd say, "Well, then why did you ask for me to help you?" It's getting better though cause my mother when I ask her for help, she won't be so quick to say, "Well, why are you always disagreeing with me." She'll help me find a topic, and if she's in a bad mood or something, she'll say, "Well that's the only one I can think of now." And also she'll just be saying what she'll be interested in, not what I am. I don't really ask her help a lot.

When you have to read your paper out loud, and if I think I've written the paper well, then I'll volunteer, but if I don't think it's good then I won't volunteer. I volunteered to read a literary criticism because I thought I did a good job. But other than that , no, because I know it's sort of embarrassing me because the people are hearing it. I'm not that good of friends with everyone in the class, so I get embarrassed having to read it. I feel like they're thinking, "she can't write." So my face'll get really red, I'll start moving my feet, or bouncing up and down or something, or else I'll start hiding my face, or laughing, or talking really softly. It's happened this year in "Exposition" because we've had to read them out a lot....Oh God......I can remember now, I read something, but I don't remember the paper it was, and then she started giving hers (criticism) and then people were putting in theirs, and then I started to get a little embarrassed, and then I was going, "yeah, yeah." I start agreeing with everyone's decisions. I'll agree just to get out of that situation, so she'll go on to the next person. If I'm not feeling embarrassed, and I'm sure of what I'm doing, I'll start asking questions. "Well, should I have done it this way?" or "Should I change this?" What I most hate is when someone will read their paper out, and it will be really, really good, and then she'll call on me to read mine. I'll have so many corrections to do while other people don't.

But then....God.........I remember the paper....it was a paper that I did on Killer Whales, and she had me read that one out loud. I was very embarrassed because I thought people would think I was weird or something for talking about whales. She'll call on you, so I had to read it, and when I was reading it, I was reading it so they couldn't... I was leaving out words so they couldn't tell I was talking about a Killer Whale. So no one understood what I was reading, and I just got more embarrassed, and I just said, "I'm not reading out loud." I don't know why I've liked them (whales) so much because most animals people like are not with the sea. When I go to Maine, I'm there to pick up shells or to look at the ocean or something. I'm not there to look at the guys. They'll say, "Well did you see any cute guys?" and I'll say, "Yeah!", It's hard for me to

explain to them that I was really into the ocean. They won't understand the way I feel and think I'm weird for doing a paper or liking that type of animal.

I'm sure that if she just said "we'd" have to read them out loud and she didn't say that "I" would have to, I would have written that rought draft. I guess that's what made me not write it. It was so hard I just didn't know what to do, what kind of topic. I had a pad of paper and I would write something, and I'd say, "No that's not good," and I'd try again. It was something that had to be done, but I couldn't do it. Then I didn't have anything. I guess it is when I know I have to read it out loud and share it with people that I am intimidated and afraid.

I don't want to talk out loud in that class because some of the people in there, well one of the people in there, some of the people in there I don't like, and others, I don't really know anyone in that class at all. In other classes I am more willing to speak out. I was intimidated. It's easier for me to write when I understand what's going on. I had no idea what I was writing. But then when I asked the teacher, she explained it. When I understand, like I can write in almost any atmosphere, so it's not like I have to have a quiet room or a noisy room. It's easier when I know what I am writing about. Cause like, if I was writing a paper on the sea and the dolphins. I know how to put it in words. But if I'm writing about something that I don't really know, then I really have to think a long time what to put where and how to form the sentence and everything.

We can't use the word "got," and we can't use colloquialisms and whatever, so you got to avoid them or you'll have to go to a Thesaurus. It takes much longer to write, makes it more difficult. It takes longer and everything cause you have to find the appropriate word, and you have to fit it in the spelling, using the correct words, and the grammar. I'm not very good at grammar--punctuation. Commas I don't understand, so I have to go back. I have to reread the paper, and then I am still missing some because she'll have "look more to the use of commas." I'll read it over and over, and if I see that I have the word "got " in it....This is going to sound weird, but I've gotten more conscious of how I'm talking cause I'll look around and I'll hear people using words like "adamantly opposed" or something like that and then I'll start looking for other words.

If I get a good idea at home, then I'll just start writing. I've been thinking of keeping a journal, but I don't think so. I do sports, go to movies, go skiing, sledding, I'm a cheerleader, I'm helping out at my grandmother's house, cause my grandfather he can't work. Keeping a journal would take up too much time, but maybe sometime during the summer....

I've always been in all standard classes, except for basic math.

I'm doing really well, and I'm getting A's in it. If I get good grades well I like it. But last year I got C's in biology, but I really liked it. So it depends on the teacher and the grades, cause I could hate the class but like the work we're doing and the grades that I'm getting. If I'm getting a good grade that helps me to like the course better. I'll like going to the class to see the next grade. In the last years school hasn't meant much to me, but now that I'm starting to get better grades and everything, school's more important.

When I start writing a paper I have to think of a hooker; that takes the most time. The opening paragraph has always been the hardest for me because if you're doing a paper on a sea animal then it's hard to think of a hooker that is going to catch somebody's eye. You have to watch what you're doing. As you're reading it out loud someone's going to say, "That's a weak hooker." I don't like people criticizing my writing. So I guess it's from that time in seventh grade with Ms. Josephs. I felt stupid ...cause people around me would say well what did you get, and then I'd say my grade and theirs was always higher. Then you'd say well I didn't even really want to do it anyways. So I didn't even try. I was convincing my self that I was stupid, couldn't write. But my attitude started changing. Now it's really changed. I guess I've started to feel better about myself and my capabilities. And sports has changed me also. I'd tell my father, "Well, what's the sense of me trying to race her when I know that's she's going to beat me," and he said, "Well, how do you know that she's going to beat you if you don't put your all into it?" So how do I know if I'm not going to get a good grade if I don't put my all into it?" So I guess he's helped me too.

This year "Exposition" has helped me a lot. I never realized until I started talking. I thought it's just a boring class, but now it is helping me because I feel I'm older. I felt like a little kid, but now I feel more like I'm an eleventh grader writing. I've felt stupid a lot, I guess. I noticed this yesterday at Student Council Meeting. The people the way they were talking and then the way I was talking. The way I was talking, it was so people could understand, you know, not..."I feel that my position on this is...", you know all this high class stuff. This school seems so different than other schools and more high class than other places, but I don't I have to impress people on my word choice because it seems that the people that talk that way are the brains or they have money, and I'm not a brain, but I'm not poor. I guess it's when you feel dumb or illiterate that you don't want to let people know how you are doing in school or talk. But as you get older you become more your own person. You think more of everyone as an individual and everyone has weaknesses and strengths. If yours...if you don't know big words, then that's other people's problems, not yours. At the student council meeting I felt inferior, cause the people who were talking were the brains, and the people who were not, were not the brains, I guess. Then I was

talking; I was focusing on my words and listening to mine and then remembering what other people said, so I just said, "Well, I'm just going to say what I want to say and that will be it. But I was thinking how they're going to say, well, "She knows what she's talking about, but she's not saying it in the right words," or something. It was weird. It didn't change my way of talking because I guess I didn't have time to think of something to say, but it made me more reluctant to speak out again. I'm trying not to let things like that bother me. When I tell my mother that I used to be shy, she wouldn't believe me because on every single report card, I've gotten except for my last two years, they always say, "Stop talking."

I guess at the Student Council meeting it (shyness) was there, about, yeah!, my word choice. When I would get a friend who had advanced classes, and me not I would feel inferior to her. (Like my best friend), I'd end up asking her everything about a paper, but now I have to pick my own, and I have to write it by myself. So it's me now, not her and me, her and my writing.

I guess I'm coming out of my shyness. I'm growing up and seeing that you're going to have to say your feelings or your opinion. You can't just not express yourself. I guess that's what it is. I don't like to compete against my school mates, there is always going to be somebody who is going to do better than me, just my family because I know I'm better than them I guess. I can say I'm doing better than them which is helping me because my brother almost had to stay back in ninth grade. I haven't failed a course at all, and both my brothers have in junior high school and high school, and in college I think, but not me. So I guess I'm not as dumb as I used to think I was. I guess I will have a better life than my brothers because I'm real serious about my studies; they'll pay off for me when I'm older and when I want a career. My job will mean more to me because it will be something that I wanted, not something that was the easiest major and the easiest thing to get a good grade in.

I didn't think I was a good writer, but now I do. I'll be able to write my papers in college. I think I'll do fine. It's like a chore. Maybe when I get older it will mean more. Because when I'm thirty or forty, I'm going to write a book. I guess really one way to get fame or to be known is to write a book. No one in my family really has. I don't want to be a secretary. I want to do something that I guess not many women are in right now.

I want to get married after I have my career. I'll be living somewhere near the ocean, and rich, rich. That's what I want to be rich and famous. I tell my mother, "Watch, I'm going to make something out of myself."

Analysis of Lisa's Interview and Other Data

Lisa's View of Herself as a Writer and Past Struggle

Much of Lisa's struggle with writing seems to stem from the view that she developed of herself and her writing in sixth and seventh grade. Lisa's perception of herself as "stupid" seemed to develop in sixth grade and was linked with ability grouping. "I felt really bad about writing then because when you're in a lower group. I guess you naturally feel you're stupid. That had a part to play in my feeling bad about writing." Her teacher explained that the reason she was thus grouped was (in Lisa's words) "because I didn't have good sentence structure." Lisa's relationship with her seventh grade teacher reinforced the negative view she had begun to develop of her abilities. "She never liked anything I did. There was always a, 'You're not doing this right.' Lisa received no extrinsic motivation from her teacher to encourage her writing.

The reaction of Lisa's parents to her writing adds another facet from which Lisa receives a negative reflection of herself as a writer. "I never feel comfortable with my parents reading my papers cause it was never good enough." Lisa stopped getting help from her parents. Her parents did not add extrinsic motivation for her in writing, nor had they provided her with strong role models for seeing how school writing might serve her in the future.

Lisa began to be sensitive to peers' reaction to her performance

in school as well as to her parents' reaction. "I would really feel bad because everyone would be asking me what I got, and it was really embarrassing to tell them my grade." The view Lisa gleaned of herself as a writer as reflected from those around her was threatening. She found ways to maintain a positive view of herself.

Effect of Coping Strategies on Writing

Erik Erikson noted that an adolescent "would rather act shamelessly in the eyes of his elders, out of free choice, than be forced into activities which would be shameful in his own eyes or in those of his peers" (Erikson 1968, 129).

Like Davy, Lisa found a way to cope with continued negative reaction to her work. On several occasions she defended herself from public criticism by refusing to engage in writing. "(Low grades) made me feel really stupid, and then you'd say, 'Well, I didn't really want to do it anyways.'" About being urged to copy over a paper in ink in sixth grade, she said, "Forget it, I'm not going to rewrite it. I don't want to go through this. I want to get outside and play." It is no wonder that she avoided writing, that she put it low on her list of priorities, for to engage in it was a reminder of her own inadequacy. "I guess I sort of rebelled and stopped writing, got her really mad at me." With perceived threat to a positive view of herself, Lisa threw up defenses. Projected negative response to her work killed her intrinsic motivation to engage in it.

When Lisa played hooky, she avoided sharing her writing more than she avoided doing it. "I found out the day before it was due (the turtle paper), and I didn't want to go to school." "Other people were going to decide whether mine was good enough." Not all Lisa's strategies were so negative. She hustled when she felt she could get somewhere. "My penmanship was bad, and so I started out in the ...second to worst group... By the end to the week, I was in the best...neat group." Criticism, being grouped in a "low" group, bad grades, all gave Lisa a negative view of herself. Lisa jeopardized her growth as a writer by refusing to write or giving the activity low priority.

Effect of Grades on Self-Perception and Struggle

In eighth and ninth grade, a change of teacher and better grades made Lisa's coping strategies less dramatic. About eighth grade she says, "I did better that year because I liked her, and I learned about verbs and stuff." Whether learning about verbs actually improved her writing, her grades did improve. What was important was that her willingness to participate in the writing process had increased, and her success in it changed her self-perception. "In ninth grade I started doing good on papers. I got B's all the time, so I felt really good in class." Whether Lisa was a good writer in her own eyes was often defined by the grade she received and that grade affected her willingness to endeavor to do good work. Did improvement of her

work improve her grade? Or did improvement of her grade reduce her anxiety enough to permit her to do good work? "If I'm getting a better grade, that helps me to like the course better." This is not true in every case because if she liked the content as she did in Biology, or the teacher as she did in "Exposition," she still worked hard. "I pass in a paper and wait to see what I get for a grade, and I didn't start dreading it when teachers would assign a paper, so it was easy for me to write." Grades and "criticism" of Lisa's work directly affected her performance and her willingness in doing it. Self-perception changed, "(Before) I just said, 'Well, I'm dumb.' But my attitude started changing. Now it's really changed. I guess I've started to feel better about myself and my capabilities."

Lisa's Present Struggle

Though she feels much better about herself as a writer, her self-consciousness comes back unbidden to cause struggle with writing. Lisa's struggle isn't over. A closer view of what comes to her mind while she is writing will allow further understanding of this. The following is a brief but characteristic glimpse of the protocol she did of a "gothic" short story.

> He beckoned her in..his frantic beckoning...no his frantic calls to her made her run up the ...made her run... frantic...calls........made..her run up the ...What?...the sidewalk...no they're rich...stone...path...yes the stone path to their ...house...his frantic calls made her run up the stone path to her house...and she...When she arrived at the door...Amin...Aminadab...was blocking her view to the inside...No...Mrs. Arkus, you may not go in there, you musn't.....................That's stupid..(disgust in her voice)........I...........I can't think of what to

say.........stupid paper.....oh God!.......I don't really
like anything I've written.....

Two things are apparent from this small section, that Lisa
(unlike Davy) is automatic at transcription, that she can think, plan,
and write simultaneously, and that she has an inner critic at work
when she writes, an internalized representation of past critical
audiences ready and waiting in her conscious attention to interrupt.
An inner voice which signals the need for revision necessary for
audience understanding is a valuable asset, but for Lisa it sometimes
becomes debilitating.   As we can see from Figure #3 (see Appendix)
Lisa thinks about a lot as she writes, and emotion linked with a
critical audience would be enough to overburden, even block the
process.   This occurred when Lisa was painfully self-conscious, in
situations in which she had to read her work in front of the class.

Effect of peer audience and self-consciousness on writing.
Before my first interview with Lisa began, I observed an important
moment in her "Standard Exposition" class. She sat toward the back,
listened to the teacher intently, and took notes during description of
an assignment.   A rough draft was due the next day, and the last
statement made pleasantly before dismissal was, "Tommorrow we will
work with the drafts of those who have shared their work infrequently,
like Lisa." The next day Lisa was to join me for the first twenty
minutes of "Exposition" to do her first protocol. When we met, she
said she had to talk to the teacher first and marched resolutely
forward to announce that she had tried but couldn't write the rough

draft, that she needed more time. Lisa's teacher murmured assent, smiled warmly, and Lisa came along to do the profile. Neither the teacher nor I was aware at the time that the unfinished draft was a manifestation of Lisa's struggle with writing. As Lisa and I walked down the hall she described the starting and stopping process and how that ended in frustration. And as interviews, protocols, and observations went on, the reason for Lisa's inability to write that evening became more evident. "I'm sure if she just said 'we'd' have to read them out loud, and she didn't say that 'I' would have to, I would have written it, but I also didn't understand it. It was so hard. I guess it's when I know I have to read it out loud and share it with people. (I was) intimidated and afraid."

Lisa's anxiety about reading her work to the class was compounded by the anxiety she felt in working with unfamiliar and incompletely understood formats, and with a topic that didn't please her. There was too much on which to concentrate, too much to worry about.

The data provided by the protocols of these high school writers might indicate that when enough of the transcription process becomes automatic (see Figure #4 in Appendix), writers can begin to have audience on their conscious attention during writing. Lisa's protocols show that she was aware of her audience during writing and interrupted her work when she perceived that what she began to write would be unsatisfactory in their eyes. During another part of the protocol of the "gothic" short story she was writing, she said, "How will they know (meaning the readers)...?" and her voice trailed off.

Her work is interrupted and she goes back to the beginning of the paragraph to make sure that her audience can follow her. This audience awareness served Lisa well while writing her gothic short story, but during the writing of her unprotocoled interpretation paper, when she feared a critical audience, this same audience awareness apparently caused struggle.

At the time I thought, "Well, given her past experiences with critical audiences, it is no wonder that she has transfered her fear of criticism to present audiences." But I was to discover there was more to the situation.

As Lisa and I walked down the hall together before our last interview, she directed my attention with a silent nod toward an attractive young woman in cheerleader garb. After we passed, she said, "That was my best friend." The ex-best friend was engrossed in conversation with another cheerleader whom I recognized as the student who sat in the front row of Lisa's "Exposition" class. "Is that her new best friend?" I asked. Lisa grimaced assent. All of a sudden I understood Lisa's painful self-consciousness in that "Exposition" class. She had already said in an interview, "I don't want to talk out loud in that class because some of the people in there, well one of the people in there, some of the people in there I don't like, and others I don't know." I was struck with the strong effect that the presence of peers, even one peer, can have on a student's writing process, especially for the peer-conscious, audience-conscious, self-conscious high school writer.

By Lisa's report her relationship with her "best friend since seventh grade" has kept her from developing her own strength as a writer. Britton (1975) said that when writers were involved with the subject and made the writing task their own, they were able to bring to bear the full force of their knowledge on the rest of the language experience. Yet for years Lisa had been getting acceptable ideas for writing from her best friend, and self-consciousness did not allow Lisa to write about the subject that makes writing easy for her. Yet,

> It's easier when I know what I am talking about cause like I was writing a paper on the sea and the dolphins, then I know what to say; I know how to put it in words. But if I'm writing about something I really don't know, then I really have to think a long time what to put where and how to form a sentence and everything. You have to watch what you're doing. As you're reading it out loud, someone's going to say, "That's a weak hooker."

Lisa became embarrassed when she had to write about sea animals because she was concerned that her peers wouldn't understand and worse would scoff at her. She went underground with what meant a lot to her. "I was leaving out words, so they couldn't tell I was talking about a Killer Whale. So no one understood what I was reading, and I just got more embarrassed."

Lisa without her best friend was a Lisa who was starting to come into her own power. "Why am I letting her rule my thinking? This showed in her writing. "I'd end up asking her everything about a paper, but now I have to pick my own. I used to get ideas from her, and I have to write it by myself. So it's me now, not her and me, her and my writing."

New coping strategies. Lisa's new coping strategies to foster a positive view of herself are more conscious. "When you have to read your paper out loud, and if I think I've written well, then I'll volunteer." She was open to feedback when she was confident, but consciously slipped out from the scrutiny of her peers if she wasn't. In doing so she missed peer feedback.

Lisa used comparison consciously as another strategy of reconstructing her view of herself as student, herself as writer. She compared herself with her ex-best friend. "I found out she had a B or C for a quarter grade, and I had an A. And she always did better than me." She compared herself with her father's clandestinely-discovered writing and her success in academics with that of her brothers. "I know I am better than them which is helping me....I guess I am not so dumb as I used to think I was."

Lisa went through a process of redefining herself as a student and as a writer and kept herself from being a victim of her own defenses in doing so. Her way of being as a writer was dependent on the view she had of herself as a writer. When one changed, so did the other.

Language--a new cause of struggle. Just as Lisa was developing more writing confidence she began to come to a troubling awareness of her language and its inaccuracy and inadequacy in the eyes of others. The result of this recent awareness caused her a new source of self-consciousness and there must have been a certain dissonance for her in speech and writing.

> We can't use the word "got," and we can't use
> colloquialisms and whatever, so you got to avoid them or
> you'll have to go to a Thesaurus and find different words
> for them and that's hard. I mean it's not hard, but it
> takes much longer to write, makes it more difficult. I'll
> read it over and if I see I have the word "got" in it, in
> the paper....This is going to sound weird, but I've gotten
> more conscious of how I'm talking cause I'll look around,
> and I'll hear people using words like "adamantly opposed" or
> something and then I'll start (looking) for words.

One might postulate that this constant vigilance to negate her

natural propensity for errors in standard English and to choose

sophisticated words would overburden her conscious attention during

composition. And this was borne out in her protocols.

Lisa's struggle to find the right word was evident in her

protocols. Frank Smith says, "None of this word-generating is

conscious. Words come, they are shaped, as James Britton says, 'at

the point of utterance,' on the tongue, the pen, or in the voice we

hear in the mind if we rehearse them mentally" (Smith 1982, 108). But

for Lisa this word search was conscious because words that came to her

unconsciously she often censored as too simple or incorrect.

Lisa's new struggle in both writing and speech seemed to be in

finding acceptable language. Lisa worried when she couldn't find the

right word, used the Thesaurus, and lost her train of thought as she

did so. When this occurred she was forced to go back and read over

what she had already written to reorient herself. When Lisa was

self-concious, even threatened by her audience, her writing was

interrupted by emotion linked with past and present experience.

Struggle ensued, and finding words became difficult.

I've felt stupid a lot, I guess. I noticed this yesterday
at the Student Council Meeting. The people, the way they
were talking, and then the way I was talking....I felt
inferior cause the people who were talking were the brains.
If you don't know big words that's other people's problems,
not yours. It didn't change my way of talking, but it made
me more reluctant to speak out again."

This developing consciousness of her own self-consciousness and
making sense of the way it affected her performance eventually will be
valuable to her and her writing. "Oh, God!" was what Lisa said when a
memory that she had held down popped out during our interviews.

It's happened this year in "Exposition" because we've had to
read them out a lot, but not as much as it used to
happen...Oh, God.........I remember the paper; it was a
paper I did on Killer Whales, and she had me read that one
out loud.

When the memory came she could process it. "I thought people
would think I was weird."

Lisa was coming clear, as she said, "growing up," caring less
what people thought about her. "I feel that if I want to impress
them, they will be impressed by myself, not the way I talk or the
clothes I wear." Lisa's voice was a bit angry, but conscious. She
was becoming conscious of how the world acts upon her and how she was
beginning to take up power in that world. "I'm trying not to let
things like that bother me now."

Lisa's feelings and their effect on her writing, however, lagged
behind her rhetoric. Interruptions in her transcription as she wrote
and her responses to feedback stemmed from a less conscious level, a
less controlable level.

Conclusion

The negative reponses to Lisa's writing in sixth and seventh grade by parents and teachers were probably responsible for the internalization of the view of herself as inadequate writer. To feel okay about herself she used such defensive strategies as refusing to do writing, avoiding writing, and "not caring" about writing. These defensive strategies slowed down her growth in writing because she spent less time engaged in it. In eleventh grade Lisa was committed to writing, but old responses lingered as new ones developed. She cared, she didn't avoid or refuse, but she was continually interrupted in her transcription by finding what would be acceptable language, and if the task was difficult and the audience was deemed critical, her conscious attention became so taxed that she could not write. Lisa was still struggling and much of that struggle was old responses to new situations.

Profile of Chris

When I told Chris that my research was about writing, he agreed to participate immediately even though he was stressed by the time crunch of the end of the academic year. After the first interview Chris told me that I had come along at a good time for him. "Here's somebody who actually wants to listen to me talk about my writing just when it is troubling." And as he began to talk, I wondered if maybe the timing wasn't providential for me as well. I learned a lot from Chris because I could investigate his struggle while it was happening. Chris may have benefited from a listener, but I played little active part in his making sense of his experience with writing. I present Chris's understanding in his own words below.

My parents both grew up in town, and we live in the same house now that we have lived in for thirteen or fourteen years. My father taught fifth grade for a couple of years before he and my mother got married, and my mother had been teaching elementary school, too. Ben, my first brother was born two years behind me, then my brother Bobby. My parents read to me all the time. We had a giant chair. Usually my father would sit on the chair, my two brothers in his lap. I would sit on the back of the chair above him. And that got me really interested. I learned to read by hearing words a couple of times, and then you look at the words and figure out the same words have the same meaning. My parents encouraged us to read a lot. I also read a lot of comic books, and I still like comic books. I've got to admit that. I used to use the library. They would give you little stars to encourage people to read. I was on the top of the list for awhile.

In Kindergarten they had you draw a picture and you would explain what it meant and they would write down what you wanted them to write. I don't remember the first time that they had us write ourselves. They taught us how to do our names. That was a real achievement if you could only have a few letters backwards. We made little presents in the holiday season, and they had us write our names. "From Chris" on a little piece of wood with a picture on it.

When I first started writing, there was a tremenduous influence from the books I read. I had been reading these books about a boy inventor, and so I stole one of their plots, and I just wrote it and made a cover, and I drew some pictures to go along with it. I would kind of make up the sentence as I went along, without thinking about it ahead. I had a whole string of "said the boy,". It was fun. I found it about a month ago, and I read it. I wrote a lot of that kind of story, copies of things I had read, science fiction, giant robots, things like that.

We didn't really do much writing until fourth grade. (Then) we had little essays, and in fifth grade you had to turn in a certain amount of stories, one a month, a monthly booklet. I was turning out this high class stuff. I think part of the reason that my writing gets too wordy, too many thoughts in one line is because I had a wide vocabulary, and I'd like to make these complicated sentences even when I was in elementary school, and teachers encouraged that, cause not a lot of kids were doing it. I never had too much trouble with grammatical errors. In fourth and fifth grade we learned about nouns and things, but grammatical rules never really sunk in. I didn't make many grammatical mistakes, maybe because I had done all this reading. I knew how it was supposed to read. I knew what punctuation to use and things like that. So even now I would probably do very poorly on a test that had me diagraming sentences, but I won't make any mistakes in grammar when I write.

I get frustrated now when I am writing. It is a chore, but when you don't have much work in elementary school, and you can write about anything you want to, then it was enjoyable. I won this little contest; it was Halloween, and you were supposed to write about something supernatural. I liked the attention, like kids at that age do. When they read it out loud, I didn't recognize it word for word. I had just written it; it was just kind of pouring out instead of being contrived. I knew it was mine, but I didn't recognize every single line. Then it was fun to write. Now when I hear something that I have written, I have it all in mind because I agonize over it when I write it.

I remember one time that I was trying to write something for a contest, and I couldn't get off the track of this television show I had been watching. My dad kept saying, "You have just copied down what they have said." He wasn't nasty about it. I wanted to think of something original, but I couldn't. I enjoyed writing more when I had my own original idea, but all that reading kind of directed my thoughts. I couldn't always think of something original. That was the first time I was really conscious of it. I took it really seriously.

I can get a lot of pleasure out of writing if things are going

smoothly, and I know what I want to say, and I don't have to agonize over it. I do better when I am not too concerned. Last year we were supposed to write some historical story. I wrote about a boy that worked in some factory in London, and it went really well because I was really interested in it. This might sound kind of strange, but when I was doing papers in European history, that was easier because I didn't have to come up with any original ideas. Maybe that goes back to what I was talking about before. Sometimes I get an assignment that has a lot of creativity, and I have to think of something first. That's the stumbling block, after that, I will be all set.

In 6th grade I wrote this story about a terrific battle. And I read it out loud to the class, and I was surprised. I had put all this intensity and emotion into it. He (the teacher) was a little surprised. I could see by his face, but I had gotten so involved in the story. And it wasn't a heroic story about sacrificing your life and honor; it was pretty unpleasant. I finished and my face was all red. I wasn't blushing. My heart was beating faster, and he had this really thoughtful look on his face, and said, "That was powerful." Generally in school I behaved. I would just sort of sit and do what they told me. But I felt like I had exposed myself to the class then, that I had made myself prominent. I was nervous because all these people were staring at me all of a sudden. I think I thought that I would rather not have put my feelings out on the line like that for everyone to see. And then I remember a sort of block that happens to everyone once in a while. But I felt really guilty. There were two occasions that I didn't turn in a paper, and the other kids in the class did. I guess the teachers overlooked that, but I felt badly about it for a long time. One was a paper; I couldn't think of anything original. The other...they always taught you to cross things out with a line, instead of scribbling it out, and I scribbled, not hastily or in a sloppy way, but because I had changed a lot of things while I was writing. We just did one draft and they asked me to do it over, and I ended up not doing it at all. I guess I didn't appreciate the criticism, and I was kind of afraid to deal with it after that.

In sixth grade we had to write a letter as if we were the main character, Huck Finn, in the author's style. Something about that bothered me a lot. He said, "You look really unhappy", and I said, "I don't think I can copy someone else's style. I never really figured out why it bothered me that much. Maybe it was because all that time I was worried about thinking of my own original ideas. I was not happy that someone was telling me that I had to copy someone's style." I never particularly liked it when teachers told you that you had to do things in a certain way.

(In seventh grade) I worked a lot harder because we had very little homework in sixth grade. That was a wrenching transition. I found though that English teachers were still impressed by the complexity of my writing. We had to make up some stories. I was

trying to be impressive in my language, and in my depiction of events. I would describe things with too many adjectives and that kind of burdened the writing. One time the teacher read one of them out loud, and I sat there and heard all these adjectives, and I realized that it just didn't flow at all. It must be hard for her to read. It was fancy, but it wasn't really substantive. I was not pompous, but I was really more serious than some people were. I had a teacher tell me once that it was part of older child syndrome. She sat in class and said, "You are probably the oldest. They are eager to do well to show the parents, and then by extension later, be successful adults, be responsible, that kind of thing." She was right. There are some disadvantages, too, to being the oldest.

In eighth grade the teacher told us not to use passive voice, but we really didn't understand exactly. So we'd just try to avoid have and was words. In that class I remember feeling really proud because the teacher, one of the hardest teachers had raised my grade because she liked the way I wrote. She told me I was a good writer, so that gave me a lot of confidence.

Coming to your own conclusions and having the burden on you to make statements. That is difficult. That started in ninth and tenth grade. I was always confident in my writing in school and I always did very well. The English Department nominated me for a National Council of Teachers of English Award. Two of us submitted our entries, and they were accepted. They had to be sent to the finals. That was this fall before my problems started. This fall I had "Masterpieces of Western Civilization." You were spending a lot of time drawing your own conclusions. We had an exceedingly hard teacher, too. When I took a test, I wrote furiously on four or five pages while everyone was doing the same thing, but when I got the grade back, and I got one of the highest grades in the class, I was overjoyed. Another time when we were talking about what Plato was saying, I didn't really have any original thoughts of my own. It wasn't a spectacular piece of writing. I had a few ideas that were what he was looking for. I did well.

But there were times (this year) when my self-confidence wasn't as high as it should be. When I'm gone on my confidence, that results in writing blocks, and frustration. I get to the point where everything I think of...when every word that I think of is not satisfying. There's nothing I wouldn't rather be doing. I wander around, and I eat a lot. It's really serious. Sometimes it takes hours to build up to the point that I can say somthing. And I also can't just say, "I have to get this done so I have to start right now." It just doesn't work. Nothing of value occurs...though that is just my interpretation because no one else gets to see it.

(My parents) were always supportive in my education. Now that I am having trouble in school for the first time, now they're telling me

I have to do work. I was terrible in Math. Because that isn't the way my mind works. I am really annoyed when they tell me to do my work. It makes me less inclined to do my work. My mother just doesn't understand that I can't just study and do better in Math, because it doesn't work that way. That's my limitation, end of the line. My dad is more willing to let me be. He helps me with writing, too. Maybe because we are of the same gender, I am closer to him. I am going to take Science and Math as long as I have to and then forget about it. The talent I have in language, in writing...maybe I have that because I don't have other abilities, abstract math, and things like that.

I've been a little worried because I've had this perception that I had lost my self-confidence. It was apparent to Mr.B. that I lost confidence in my writing. He went to school with my father. He told me that my father had been one of the better students in the school. I asked my father about that, and he said he just got mostly B's and a few A's and brushed off his ability. He skipped a grade when he went from fifth to sixth grade, and maybe he felt out of place, and I suppose he didn't really know what he wanted to do. So he went to UMass, and he dropped out and then got back in and finished. He wasn't really doing what he wanted to do. He had had a lot of different jobs. Mr. B. told me that at just about my age my father lost some of his self-confidence, too, and his direction. When I heard it, I thought maybe there's something in our background that is causing me --not genetic, but like environmental--that causes this failure to happen, a failure -- not as a person or human being, but as a student, something goes wrong within ourselves and then causes us to do worse. Mr. B. meant it as an instructive conversation.

There are two aspects to my writing this year. They're cut into last semester, and this semester. They're entirely different experiences. And part of it might be the teacher and part of it is the pressure of the second semester, grades and everything. At the beginning of the year I wasn't having too much trouble with my writing. Once I thought of something concrete, I could write about it. At the end of the term I had achieved all of my goals, all A's except in Chemistry. But the pressure had been so intense. I wasn't ready for more pressure. And the writing block set in, and I've had trouble doing this writing for Mr. Schultz. Now I have trouble concentrating. I don't know if it's just Mr. Schultz's fault; something else could be causing all the problems. I can't say exactly what the problem is, or I would do something about it. It's something emotional I suppose. It's involved with academics in school. It's not an outside thing in my life that's causing the trouble. It's a real problem because it's started to crowd my other work. I'm sure Chemistry and "Exposition" aggravate each other, having two classes that weren't going well. There's really no connection between the two. One class requires that kind of thing that I always thought I was good at, and the other requires things that I wasn't confident

about at all. Once I lost my confidence in the one, it aggravated my feelings that I was having with the writing because I was having criticism from the teacher there, and I had the sense of being overwhelmed by all my other work anyway.

This wasn't the first time my writing had been criticized, but for some reason it really bothered me. And then I subjected the writing myself to even greater criticism that was really devastating.

I used to write papers pretty spontaneously, and it would be fine. I almost never revised unless it was a major paper. Before I'd get a thought and say, "Now , I'll just put this into words and I can build the paper around that." Now everytime I have the thought, it doesn't fall into correct grammar that the teacher was looking for, so that ruined the way I wanted to start on it, to build on it. I couldn't express it in the way that they were looking for, like non-passive voice and things like that. It just made everything take more time, and finally I would do papers in my free periods (or get them in late).

I think my writing is as good as anyone else's in the class. People aren't openly critical of me--probably they aren't at all. But that's just what I think about, (that they will) find out that I'm not doing well and alter their perceptions of me. That's pretty unrealistic because if they're really my friends, then that won't change their minds at all. I had a 3.75 grade point average, top member of the class. My grades aren't going to come close to that this quarter, and my whole average will come down. I might even get some C's and that bothers me a lot. I've never been too wrapped in grades, but last quarter I got a C in this class, my first C. I just want the year to end now.

Mr. Shultz says I have potential. But I have to really change everything to do the way he wants. And I can't. That's too much. Underlying everything (is) my writing style. He calls it, "Victorian, archaic....It's too cluttered....It's too nineteenth century." I admit that teachers have told me that before, even the ones that liked it. They say, "It's too tight; have some shorter sentences, give the reader a break every once in a while." Mr. Shultz didn't like that at all, so I was changing every thought into some other form. And it started to sound simplistic to me. But I knew I wasn't going to get anywhere with him if I kept on doing things the way I had been doing them before. He would say to do ten revisions using sensory language; (when I already had) more than enough. The idea of doing ten separate changes and setting them down on paper instead of going over the whole paper--that's like bits and pieces and really disorderly. The complaint I've had in the past was that I hadn't really said anything of value. And now I've been told the problem is the way I'm saying it. That's a real switch.

When I went into Mr. Shultz's class, the English Department had

already nominated me for that award. So other teachers had told him about me. And I saw this class as really a test because it was pure writing. It was like I had to prove myself all over again to someone new. He said, "You have some talent; don't lose it. We have some things we can work on." And that didn't bother me; that's the mildest from of criticism I can possibly think of. Everyone in the class was surprised when they got back their first few things, low grades. I turned some things in late, and he thought that I was trying to talk rings around him. And the reality of the situation was I was having trouble with getting the work done. So we had this climate of mistrust. And although I didn't exactly worship him as a human being, he's another teacher that I could be on good terms with. At the end of the quarter, you were supposed to put on a little slip of paper what the grade you thought you deserved, and I gave some thought to it and looked over my work, and I put a B-, and I got that C+ for the term. That was a real blow to my confidence. The next quarter I turned in the first three papers on time. And then the stress got worse than it had been earlier.

One of the things bothering me is that I've lost some of my creativity. Generally I try to think of something that's really exotic for a title, but the last time I passed in an "Exposition" paper, I couldn't think of anything for about twenty minutes, and finally I put down something I didn't like. I looked on his desk, and about twenty people had written the same title.

I don't really write much on my own anymore, although I always say I'm going to. I just feel bad about it I think; I'm just not motivated to do it when I have the time. I've thought of my own stories and something different too. (But now)sometimes I think I'm more satisfied with the thoughts I have in my head than what it will look like when it's written. I used to type because the typewriter is fun to play with, but it was like ripping off other people's technique and characters. So that was completely unoriginal. I've thought of my own story once and something different, too. But usually I don't do writing like that.

In ninth or tenth grade we started this note, and the note eventually became "The Note", stretched to about five hundred pages. Most of it was really ridiculous humor. We would start stories and then give it to someone else. You could do whatever you wanted to do: you didn't have to please any teacher. One of my friends still has it.

My Dad used to look over (a paper) for grammar mistakes. And as I got older, he would correct maybe two spelling mistakes because that was all that he could find wrong with it. As time went on, it became more of a tradition. Now, when I have a paper due, and it takes me until the last minute to do them, they'll help me type it. My dad has an odd schedule. So he's not around when I'm having all these

problems. My mother sees me wandering about and keeps telling me suggestions. But they really don't help, and it's annoying. So there's not a lot they can do about the situation. My mother went in to talk with Mr. Shultz and with my chemistry teacher. Another teacher told me that if she was aggressive towards him, then he would be angry at me and that there would be more papers lower. And she said she'd be very tactful. He had her as a student. She wasn't too happy with the way things turned out. They were very helpful when I was younger, but now they don't make much difference. One of the reasons why I continue to let my dad read them is that it would take awhile to make a few comments, and I would just have free time.

(My friends) don't edit each others papers or things like that--unless it is required by a teacher in the course. We ask questions, "How should I write this," "What should I say?" Next Tuesday I have to take a ditto master and take one of my papers and copy it down on that, pass those out, say what revisions I made, and talk about the writing process. I want to pick one out that people won't mind listening to. Every person in the class wants to be witty. I thought I was good at making little puns and sarcastic remarks in my papers; now I am worried whether my writing was funny enough, good enough.

Most important to me right now is getting out of this school for the summer, to get over all this academic trouble I'm having right now. In college my major will be in English of some kind. Sometimes I see myself as teaching courses in English, maybe high school or college. If I do that, I'll probably write in my spare time, to amuse myself, to make a living off of it, I don't know. I could end up anywhere, working on any kind of literary thing. I'll hopefully get rid of my over-crowded style of writing. I think that'll be an improvement. I think that in human situations everyone needs to be entertained. And then some writers have the serious task of examining life. Mr. B. brought in some quotes by James Baldwin one day who said that writers are the conscience of society, to educate the people. I thought about this for awhile.

I'll be writing in the future, you know, for my education. You have to be able to write to really understand what you read. You have to find out whether what you're saying is true to you or not.

I've almost always done what they wanted. I was never perfect, but in terms of what parents and the people who have control over you, like teachers, what they expected of you, I got used to being, to doing exactly what everyone wanted. In elementary school I just went along with the rules instead of thinking things out. I remember getting yelled at for stamping in puddles on the playground. The principal was furious. I wasn't in the crowd that was nabbed, but I felt guilty about it. (But now) I really feel bad, being so frustrated that I can't deal with my work. I used to wonder how

people could not do school work. I wondered...that's really bad for you, damaging to you. I was mature earlier, and then I lost some of that later, I guess.

I didn't like to get criticism, cause I wasn't exposed to it. But this problem worries me a little bit. I started to have a little of it last year; I started to wonder if I was able. I don't think it's because I've reached the end of my ability, but I got to a point where I couldn't handle all the tensions, especially the ones that I'm imposing on myself. And I feel badly about that. After years of doing well, I started to wonder how I did get that grade last time, how did I possibly do well earlier? I can't possibly do that well again. When I got my college boards back, I got a 750 on the verbal and that really made my day! But I didn't feel like I was able to do it again.

This thing about doing so well all your life and having trouble all at once. You feel like there's something wrong with you. And also I see these other people; they're my friends and they're doing just fine where I'm sliding down. I've had friends who have some standard classes, who still see me as this great student. "Well, Chris you're going to Harvard. I'm going to Community College." If we have an award ceremony, "Oh, you're going to get ten awards." A vicious little circle of humor designed to cut the other down. They put pressure on me. I never felt (my grades) made me a better person.

This year was definitely the worst year of my scholastic life. This year I kinda went to pieces. That's the way I feel. I did good work and ended up with okay grades, but it took a lot out of me. It shows even when people thrust a yearbook into my hands and say, "Write something." You try to sum up everything that they have meant to you in one paragraph. I wrote to two girls that have been a great help, just keeping my spirits up while I was having all these problems. And I ended up writing something for one that sounded a lot like what I had written to the other person. I wasn't satisfied; it was pretty lackluster. I dread yearbook signing cause it's a little too much to ask right now, and everyone else is going to read it.

For the few things I have learned, like to avoid the passive, it really doesn't match up to all the damage that has been done in terms of my self-confidence.

Analysis of Chris's Interviews and Other Data

Chris has made my job of analysis easy, as he diagnosed the roots of his struggle. He, of all my participants, seemed most conscious of how his context, his teachers, his parents, and to a lesser extent his peers, interacted with his writing and his struggle to do it, and he was conscious of the role that self-confidence played in this, too.

Chris's View of Himself as Writer

As a child Chris was successful early on with his writing career. His writing was met with encouraging approval. He developed a view of himself as a precocious writer--an internalization of reflected reactions from his teachers and probably parents.

Chris strove to please, to live up to the expectations of those he cared about. Positive feedback from pleased adults both acted as an extrinsic motivation to keep writing, and helped him build a positive view of himself as a writer at a young age. As he grew up with two parents who were trained as elementary school teachers, perhaps he learned how to please teachers. He won contests; teachers were impressed with his language. But his enjoyment in writing was not all in the reaction he got from other people, intrinsic motivation for writing came from playing with words and writing stories like the ones he read. Nevertheless, he consciously used his "fancy language"

to impress. Chris's joy in writing was untrammeled. "I was on the top of the list...." "It was fun to write." "That was a real achievement." "I never had too much trouble with grammatical errors."

Chris's parents began as his most appreciative audience--an audience that reflected success back to him and helped him form the sense he had of himself as a good writer. They also affected the view of himself as a writer by modeling the process and its value. He saw what they wrote, how writing worked for them in their lives, and what priority was given to it. When he was in early grade school he began to notice them writing, "I laughed and thought it was funny that they did something we did in school. It was as if they sat in the corner and played with blocks." Later Chris reported that he became more interested, curious about the notes they left for each other, about the check his father was writing, and that he asked a lot of questions. "When I was older, my mother wrote a book with two other women. And they were always in the living room with papers all over, talking about revisions, draft two, draft four. It went on a long time. Thus through reflection and modeling from Chris's parents and teachers, Chris formed an early view of himself as an effective and somewhat gifted writer. It wasn't until this view was challenged that struggle with writing began.

Chris's Struggle with Writing

The first notch in this positive view of himself as a writer was carved when his father pointed out that his ideas weren't original. "My Dad kept saying, 'You have just copied down what they have said.'" He began to enjoy writing more when he had his own original idea and to worry a bit when he couldn't come up with one. This concern was still active when he participated in the study, but it was a relatively simple worry and one that was usually resolved before the transcription process began. "I have to think of something (original) to write first. That's the stumbling block, after that, I will be all set." This worry wasn't a particularly debilitating one.

In early adolescence Chris had a bout of self-consciousness in front of peers. He read his war story aloud to his class. "But I felt like I had exposed myself to the class then, that I had made myself prominent. I think I thought that I would rather not have put my feelings on the line....And then I remember a sort of block." Chris didn't pass in two papers. Though the link is not really clear, he had his first experience of feeling self-conscious with peers, and subsequently he felt at once angry and guilty because he hadn't lived up to teachers' expectations.

But even though Chris entered a self-conscious stage quite dramatically, he still knew he wrote well. "That was powerful," the teacher had said. Chris never spoke of being affected by peers again

until eleventh grade; the teacher seemed to be his major focus through those years. And teachers still reflected to him a positive image of himself as writer. Even in the first term of his eleventh grade year as his struggle in Chemistry began, he still excelled in written work. Nevertheless, that semester was stressful. Chemistry wasn't going well, and he felt the stress of his "exceedingly hard teacher." "But it wasn't insurmountable."

In the last semester of his eleventh grade year, however, writing did seem "insurmountable." The main thing that Chris had excelled in became a struggle to him. A variety of factors converged to shake his self-confidence, his view of himself as a successful writer. A critical writing teacher, further difffculty in Chemistry, fear of not living up to his writing reputation in the eyes of teachers and peers, fear of loss of creativity, pressure of the grade-important junior year, fear of following in his father's footsteps--all contributed to the struggle Chris felt with writing.

At the beginning of the term Mr. Schultz said, "You have some talent, don't lose it." Perhaps Chris hadn't thought of his talent as a losable commodity before, but several factors made that possibility more real in his eyes. This early-term forewarning loomed as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Simultaneously Mr. B. gave Chris a new view of his father as a man who lost his confidence and direction when he was Chris's age. Chris began to wonder whether "environmental" factors for both his father and himself could have caused "failure," loss of performance, to happen. Chris might have handled this new

view of his father, had his own self-confidence been strong at the time. But he was doing worse in Chemistry and for the first time in his writing career had received considerable criticism and a C from a teacher, Mr. Schultz. This criticism dwelt around Chris's "archaic" style-- an aspect of his writing to which he had previously given only minimal thought.

"I just have to change everything to do it the way he wants. And I can't. That's just too much." Mr. Shultz demanded not only a new style, but also a new method of revision which required him to add ten additional instances of sensory language to work that Chris already deemed excessively sensory-laden. "This class wasn't the first time my writing had been criticized, but for some reason it bothered me. And then I subjected myself to even greater criticism, that was really devastating." Chris, as the school's NCTE Award Nominee, felt the added weight of disappointing Mr. Shultz and other teachers. He began to feel a sort of fraud who would be unable to repeat past performances.

He also began to have a sort of peer paranoia that added to his struggle. "People aren't openly critical of me--probably they aren't at all, but that's just what I think about." He feared that his friends would adjust their esteem of him because he was "sliding." Self-consciousness in front of peers returned, "Every person in class wants to be witty. I thought I was good at making little puns and sarcastic remarks on my papers; now I am worried whether my writing was funny enough, good enough." Chris lost his delight in signing

yearbooks and told me as we walked down the hall, that he had begun avoiding acquaintances bearing yearbooks. Loss of confidence precipitated other stresses around his writing. He feared, and then experienced, loss of creativity. He couldn't construct an original title, a skill in which he had previously taken pride. His parents who had previously allowed him to be independent in his schoolwork began to interfere in an "annoying" manner which, he reported, further exacerbated the problem. He knew they worried whether he would still be able to get into a "good" school. He stopped the out-of-school writing that he did on his own, and struggled with his school writing. "I'm more satisfied with thoughts I have in my head than what it will look like when it's written."

Worries mounted and they took their toll on his writing. Chris might have dealt with these worries if they had come one by one and if his self-confidence had been high. But accumulatively they undermined his self-confidence:

> Before I could get a thought and say, "Now, I'll put this
> into words." Now every time I have the thought, it doesn't
> fall into correct grammar that the teacher was looking for,
> so that ruined the way I wanted to start on it, to build on
> it. I couldn't express it in the way that they were looking
> for, like non-passive voice and things like that.

Chris's struggle in writing becomes clearer in examining his written protocols. This data indicated that his description bordered on understatement.

The first protocol that Chris did took him forty minutes and in that time he generated the following twelve sentences of a combination satire/speculation paper:

In history class we learn that technological advancement and historical change are closely related. New plows prompted an agricultural revolution, and Gutenberg's printing press put religious and political matters directly into the hands of the common people. The entire feudal system might never have developed without a single implement, the stirrup. Without this simple piece of twisted iron and leather, the mounted knight would not have been able to dominate the masses. The nobility would not have been able to demand that the peasants provide them with labor, goods, and sundry luxuries in return for protection. A milennium of Western Civilization would be erased from the blackboards of our European history courses; our entire heritage obliterated in a cloud of chalk dust. In its place, a different social order would have risen in the place of the feudal system.

The horseshoe may be a simple implement, but it gave the opportunists a means of subjugating the common people. Before the stirrup, cavalrymen could not strike blows from the saddle, and simply hurled arrows and spears, trampled their opponents, and vanished in a cloud of dust. With the aid of the stirrup, the mounted knight could deliver a vicious blow without being unseated. With a sword and armor to complete the ensemble, knights dominated warfare. The peasants contracted the knights to protect them from the barbarian hordes and brigands that had destroyed Rome.

Looking at what was in Chris's conscious attention during that writing gives us a better understanding of his struggle. Figure #5 (see Appendix) is a representation of those things that interrupt his transcription.

Idea generation and planning were not actually an interruption of transcription but actually fed it. Chris probed for new thoughts in a sort of brainstorming manner, and when he found what he wanted, he wrote it down. Simultaneously he made plans.

But there were other categories that did interrupt Chris's progress. Thoughts relatively unrelated to his task popped into his conscious attention, and they seemed to entertain him in this bout

with writing, "Karl Marx wouldn't have lasted long in the middle ages.
They would have cut him in half as soon as he said 'class struggle.'"
These statements came and went with only slight interruption. Looking
for the correct words gave him more distress. Occasionally the
interruption went on long enough for him to have to backtrack to
regain his direction. But none of these interruptions were as long as
those heralded by the probing of angry Mr. Shultz. An image of Mr.
Shultz became the harbinger of a "block" as Chris describes it. This
occurred three times during the first protocol, and each time there
was a substantial interruption. ("He" refered to Mr. Shultz, and
series of periods represented elapsed time.)

> He can't stand colloquialism....like hand in hand...it is
> not a personal relationship anyway.............let's try
> this.....I can see his correcting pen all over
> this.......new plows...um....starting,
> creating...begin...sloppy....there is a mental vacuum.
> There is absolutely nothing in my head.............wait for
> a word to pop out................................might
> prompt revolution.

And Chris was finally back on track. Another time he talked of
"burning my fingers on colloquialism" and followed with "bad time when
you get something in that class and then apply it to everything; can't
escape it....being unseated.....I can see Shultz's face hovering over
me...." And the second block began.

When Chris came to the end of a page, he said, "A whole page! It
took me hours to write one page the last time I tried this."
Apparently this session at composing aloud was only a mild version of
the struggle he could have. The next day he said,

The protocol was new for me. I just went through it to get

ideas to refine later. I had a lot of trouble with that afterwards. I was going to revise it into the paper. I started about five different times, and I couldn't deal with it. I was too worried about having it perfect for him, and for me to. I finally just did something else for a paper."

Apparently the protocol was only the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

Chris said several times that Shultz's reaction triggered in him a self-criticism that was even more "devastating." This was evident in a protocol of a short story that he began after his last final exam. It was about a young man who retreated to "the solitude of the hill tops" to "silent memories of endless exams and draining assignments."

At the beginning of the second protocol, he talked himself out from under the penumbra of Mr. Shultz. "This is not a school assignment. No need to put a name on it. Titles I can do without. Shultz has me using fewer colloquialisms. I'll have no margins. No margins, no comments." He purged himself of Mr. Shultz's interruptions, but his internal critic held court. Mr. Shultz was internalized. "A terrible introduction." "Fancy language again." "Another word. The word is hovering. I can't take this again. I don't believe it. Oh, no! I'll think of it twenty minutes later." During twenty-five minutes and seven sentences, he interrupted himself ten times with self-criticism. Searching for words, avoiding colloquial and "fancy" language, criticizing his logic, blaming himself for unoriginal language, language similar to London, to Tolkein, and to Virgil were all the subjects of his bouts of

self-deprecation.   Each   instance   interrupted   his   transcription.   Yet

at the end of the protocol he proclaimed it was a relief from previous

writing.

Before   analzying   the   data   from   Chris's   composing   aloud.   I

thought   that   Chris   had   too   much on his conscious attention during

writing,   and   that   Mr. Shultz's demanding Chris to change his style,

something   that   was   previously   automatic, along with the "tensions"

from other academic pursuits and life concerns, gave Chris too much to

attend   to   during   writing.   These   remain   components   of   Chris's

struggle.   However, on more careful analysis of the written protocols,

I began   to   see   an   example   of   Simon's   (1982)   explanation of the

interaction of "affect and cognition."   Emotion linked with Mr. Shultz

and   his   critical   perspective   of   Chris's   work,   interrupted   and

redirected Chris's conscious attention during writing three times in a

protocol that Chris deemed to be smooth-going.   Mr. Shultz represented

a threat   to   the   way   Chris   perceived   himself   as a writer.   Chris

focussed   in   on that threat and that process disrupted his ability to

get at his task.   As it turned out, Chris's estimation of Mr. Shultz's

reaction   to   his   work was not ill-perceived.   Chris was sensitive to

something   that   was   there.   Mr. Shultz sought me out in the teacher's

room   one day to tell me that he thought Chris's work was "overrated."

One   might   think   that   one   critical   voice   in a chorus of approval

wouldn't be enough to shake Chris's belief in himself and his writing,

but he was "down on himself" for other reasons, and they all converged

to make him vulnerable, to perceive Mr. Shultz as a threat to his view

of himself. In many respects Chris analyzed this writer's block as well as I can, but he continued to look for one cause to his difficulty. He saw the parts of the whole struggle, but couldn't see that the whole was composed of the parts. No one thing seemed serious enough, yet each component added to what made inroads into the conscious attention that he had available for writing.

Chris's Lack of Coping Strategies

The basic writers that I studied and even Lisa had dealt with criticism and lack of success by developing bulwarks of defenses and coping strategies which permitted them to still feel good about themselves. Chris was more vulnerable in that he had never before needed defenses to protect his view of himself, in that he was more conscious of what was happening, and in that he defended those who interacted with his writing to cause struggle. When he recalled his father pointing out his unoriginal story line he said, "He wasn't nasty about it." When Mr. B. unnecessarily commented on his father's unchecked loss of confidence and direction, Chris said, "Mr. B. meant it as an instructive conversation." And Mr. Shultz was "another teacher that I could be on good terms with." Chris took the responsibility for his own struggle, and perhaps this self-criticism exacerbated the struggle, allowed for the internalization of that critic that still plagued him.

When Chris struggled to write, he began to better understand why

past acquaintances didn't get their work done; he lost intrinsic motivation to engage in the process. His only motivation came from his concern for maintaining a positive view of himself in the eyes of teachers, peers, parents, and the universities which would receive his eleventh year grades.

Conclusion: The Nature of Struggle

This in-depth study of Davy's, Lisa's, and Chris's experiences with writing presents a view of the nature of struggle and how it intertwined with the writer's view of self and the need to maintain a positive view of self. Four varieties of struggle have surfaced. First Davy struggled when he had so much to attend to that the process was overburdened. Probably elements of the "cognitive overload" exacerbated the already troubled episodes when Lisa didn't understand the assignment that she had to read aloud. A second type of struggle occurred when Lisa and Chris feared that the audience for their writing would disapprove of it. The results of a third form of struggle were seen in non-struggle--a refusal to continue what was humiliating. When Davy's and Lisa's writing was continually criticized, they refused to continue to engage in the process for a period, thus avoiding continual confrontation with their inadequacy. A fourth cause of struggle further complicated the struggle that already existed for Chris and Lisa. Worries connected with their life situation strained the amount of attention they had for writing.

Chris's confidence ebbed as a result of situations unconnected with writing. He received disturbing information about his father and said of Chemistry, "Once I lost my confidence in Chemistry, it aggravated my feelings I was having with writing." Lisa's ex-best friend's new best friend sat in the front row of her writing class and heightened Lisa's self-consciousness in the writing process. She was so nervous about reading her paper to the class that she couldn't write. Thus life situations of the writers got in the way of their writing. Further evidences of all four forms of struggle arise in later chapters.

To better understand struggle it is well to look at its antithesis as well. Davy, Lisa, and Chris all had times when writing was exciting for them. When Davy wrote about the apple plant, when Lisa wrote, liked what she did, and waited to see how she did, and many times when Chris wrote what pleased him and his teachers, these writers felt interested, successful, and powerful in the writing process.

Common themes came up in the experience of these three writers. All were affected by how parents, peers, and teachers interacted (or didn't interact) with their writing and with the view they gleaned of themselves from that process. The next chapter will focus thematically on these interactions.

CHAPTER V

PEER, FAMILY, AND TEACHER INTERACTION WITH WRITING

Whereas the previous chapter focussed on the inner experience of three writers (both on how the way the writer's self-view and view of the writing context affected that writer's process and on how inner experience was influenced by parents, peers, and teachers), this chapter focusses more on the family, peer, and teacher interaction with the twelve participants and how that interaction affected writing.

Family Interaction with the Developing Writer

The families of the twelve participants in the study interacted in various ways both with their schooling and more specifically with their learning to write. The following themes emerged from the interview material of all twelve participants. (1) The way the families viewed the developing writers' actual work and their process in doing it affected the view the writers had of themselves as writers, for self-esteem and self-confidence were in part an internalization of reflected reactions from important others. (2) Family members interacted with participants by being role models for them, exemplifying the purposes for writing, the ease or difficulty with which it might be done, the priority that should be given to it,

and the value that it had. (3) Family expectations for the participants' schoolwork affected how they went about it. Participants internalized expectations and made them their own. When those expectations were not met, pressure from the family or from participants themselves affected their relationships with writing. (4) Finally, the way the family actually involved themselves while the participant was in the writing process affected the way they learned to write.

A fifth theme emerged which, though connected with family, will be developed in Chapter VI when interaction between the writing process and social factors is developed. Briefly summarized, the participants' language, acquired from their family at a young age, was or was not acceptable in the eyes of teacher and school when it was applied to the written page. This affected the view they had of themselves as writers and their willingness to engage in the writing process.

These different levels of interaction between the participants and their families (families and self-view, family expectations and pressure, families as role models, and the families' actual involvement in the developing writer's work) converged to have a substantial effect on the twelve writers and their writing process. Interview data about these interactions and the way they facilitated or hindered written expression will be the substance of this section.

The Family and Self-View as Writer

Whether writers feel generally competent at things they do and whether they will try new things is quite dependent on their self-esteem and self-confidence, and this directly affects their writing and the enthusiasm with which they engage in it. The role that the family plays in the development of the view that writers have of themselves (self-esteem) and their view of their ability to write (self-confidence) starts at a very young age. Researchers and theoreticians seem to agree that even the view of self is developed by reflection from one's outside world. Collections of early response to one's self from parents become the profound base from which self-esteem is woven.

Participants in my study did not or could not talk about their earliest years with their parents. And though as the previously reviewed literature indicates, early parental interaction and the view of self that is engendered through it has an important and lasting effect on developing writers, this study has little data to document that. On the whole memeory of parent interaction before school years was vague, a few statements about early years give us a sense of the importance of parental approval and its links with writing.

Tracy, the only black participant in a college preparatory track, told a bit about pre-school years.

Before I went to school, I can remember my mother always had bunches of paper, a big box of pencils and crayons, and I

loved to just scribble and scribble and show it to my mother, and she used to pin it up on the walls. She had my scribbles all over the walls. She made so much about it.

Tracy's mother showed approval by valuing Tracy's scribbles. Elana remembered enthusiastic response to gift cards her older siblings helped her make. Elizabeth remembered enthusiastic response to chalk board scribbles. Though comments on parental reaction to pre-school writing were few, much was remembered about early school attempts at writing. Sonia sought approval from her family and one would surmise from her memory that she received it.

> We used to get stars on your paper to show you did good, and I used to try for those stars so hard, and every time I'd get a star I'd run home and show it to Mama. "I got a star!" I'd show it to everybody in my family; anybody that entered that house-you better believe they were goin to see that star that I had on that paper.

Parents often showed approval and pride in their children's accomplishment by saving written work. Chris, Lisa, Tracy, Sonia, Joel, and Elana all commented on the enjoyment they received from going through the papers that their parents saved. Elana said, "It's funny. I like looking at pieces of work that my mom has saved from me (when I was) really little, and I just love reading it. It is so funny. At the time I'm sure they made perfect sense, but now it's just so silly, and I like doing that." Even in eleventh grade Elana cherished this tacit approval.

But Elana didn't always get complete approval from her mother.

> I feel more threatened by my mother than either of my sisters. My mother is probably one of the most intelligent people you will ever meet. She had two masters degrees.

> It's not just that she is educated, she knows so much about
> so many things. I'm not as bright as her, and I think I
> have felt threatened by her in the past. She would say,
> "Elana, you should know that," or "Elana, why didn't you see
> that." And she doesn't yell at me, but she'll say it in a
> way that is slightly condescending, and I'll say, "Mom, I
> didn't see it. I just didn't pick up on it okay." I just
> don't understand, and that's hard.

Though the view that Elana received of herself from this
interchange with her mother does not add to her self-esteem, the view
that writers develop of themselves from family as students and writers
is not dependent on parental acceptance and approval alone.
Comparison of themselves with members of the family allows them to
define their ability and to accrue or lose self-esteem in the
comparison. Sonia, Tracy, and Lisa, all of whom were going to go a
level higher in school than their parents, felt good about themselves
because they did better in writing than their parents. But most
writers compared themselves with siblings. Older siblings, with the
exception of Joel, seemed to have little difficulty or concern with
how they fared in comparison to younger brothers and sisters. But
Joel felt the pressure of his younger sister's success.

> I remember in grade school; we didn't have grades, but we
> had S's and O's, and I remember I had never gotten an N in
> my life. I always got O's, and I would compare them with my
> sister's S+'s. Now she has been doing better in junior high
> than I did. I think she really puts a lot more work in.
> When I see her staying up til 11:30 and coming home with A's
> I may be a bit jealous that I didn't try harder, but of
> course she took totally different courses.

Joel found several defenses for his sister's better grades.
Defining her success by the different courses she's taken and by the
extra hours of work she put in may have made the comparison less

damaging to his self-esteem.

On the other hand, writers who excelled over an older sibling took pride in this. Tracy, Lisa, Zac, and Lilia gained confidence by comparing themselves to older siblings. Tracy said,

> She used to push me around, I guess because I was much younger, and I used to get most of the attention, but we grew out of it without competin against each other. And I was always good and she was terrible in school. And she behaved it. She got fairly good grades, but she would be happy if she got a C, and I'd be depressed if I got a C. So we was like opposites.

Tracy claimed the competition was over, but she delighted in the parental approval of her success in school.

Elana's sense of herself as a writer and scholar was complex. She held that her "brilliant" older sister had had little effect on the way she felt about herself as a student and writer, but saw a definite effect on her older sister who was the middle child.

> The fact that my oldest sister was a really good student really put a damper on Maxine. She was compared a lot, and people would say, "Why aren't you as bright as your sister?" I mean she was actually told that a couple of times. That really was demoralizing. Maxine is bright. I know that I work harder than she did. I don't think it was until one or two years ago that she really realized that she was intelligent. It was a very nice realization for her. It made her very angry at teachers, my parents, and even at my oldest sister a little bit, to bring that on her.

Even when comparison was unstated by parents or siblings, there was always one sibling who did better work and whose view of themselves as a student and of their ability at writing was enhanced through the implicit comparison and another sibling or siblings who didn't do as well and whose view of themselves and their ability at

writing was diminished as a result. The participants in my study who were better than their siblings in school seemed less hampered by low writing confidence.

Family approval, acceptance, and trust had an indirect effect on the writing process itself. Lisa became irritated with her family's lack of trust in her. After trying to have them understand the trouble she was having with a junior high teacher, she stopped talking about or getting help in her written work. "I guess if they hadn't been so critical, always putting the blame on me, that would have been better for me and my writing." Lisa defended a positive view of herself from lack of acceptance from her parents by not allowing them to react to her work. Lisa began to compare herself to her family and said, "I know I'm better than them I guess. I can say I'm doing better than them which is helping me....I guess I'm not as dumb as I used to think I was." And as Lisa felt better about herself, her writing improved. We have also seen how Chris's parents lost trust in Chris and begin to "get after him" about his school work when he had been quite independent for some time. Chris added this lack of trust and acceptance to a long list of concerns that brought on "writer's block" for him.

From the reviewed literature of psychologists, we saw how family acceptance, trust, and approval of young children gives them a base of self-esteem and a sense of power in their world. Family acceptance, trust, and approval continued to be important to the view that the participants had of themselves and their abilities, and the more

positive the view they have of themselves, the more they trusted in themselves to be able to tackle more complex writing tasks.

The Family as Role Models

The participants in my study were each members of a social group, and their understanding of their world and how to "be" in it was linked to how they perceived those closest to them as "being" in that world. The families of the twelve participants presented varying models to their children demonstrating what writing was used for, what it is all about, what pleasure or displeasure there might be in engaging in it, how it was connected with earning a living, and what priority was given to it. There was great disparity among these role models and the disparity seemed linked with the educational level of the parents. What most of the participants saw their parents do was much the same as what they saw themselves doing in the future.

The participants whose parents had not graduated from college (Lilia, Davy, Zac, Orion, Sonia, Lisa, and Tracy) had a different view of how writing might serve them than those whose parents had more schooling. Lilia's parents had completed the least schooling of the parents of my participants. She said,

> The only thing my mother can do is make an X. It is legal to the state. I have to sign her checks. It don't only happen to her. Other people be makin X's also. My mother could write her name, but it would be all sloppy. She'd rather make the X and have me sign the check. She got no further than third grade because she had problems. My father went til sixth grade; he write to his mother, or write songs out, or like if he goes to unemployment office,

he has to like write his names, information of where he worked before.

Lilia was the family scribe. Even though her father could function in this capacity, he was seldom present. Her view of the purposes of writing came from her necessity to conduct family business. She communicated to the family in Puerto Rico, communicated to her brother in the service, and carried on family financial business.

Lilia's mother, though capable of signing her name didn't want to because it was messy. When the children of parents with the least schooling talked of their parents writing, they were usually referring to handwriting. Orion mentioned that his mother wrote well. I asked him how he knew; Orion replied, "Cause, I see it. She writes cursive all the time. She writes letters to people. My father can't even read his own writing. He writes invoices though." At the end of the interviews, I asked Orion what he planned for his future and how writing would fit into that. "Probably like a technical engineer. I don't think writing will be much. Get paper work like invoices and requisitions and everything." Not only did Orion have trouble with his handwriting, as did his father, but he saw himself writing in the future for the same purposes as his father presently did. Sonia said,

> My mother probably made it (writing) so important to me cause she always makes a big deal out of writin. Like she'll say, "I just can't bear my handwritin." And I like to make her feel even worse. "I can write your name better than you can." We always used to write stuff and then compare it with the other to see who can do better.

The accord given to neatness and handwriting by a parent seemed to affect the attention given to it by the children, perhaps to the exclusion of other concerns.

Zac and Davy rarely saw their parents write. Zac said, "My Dad, he never write a letter, not that I saw. My grandmother sends some letters down here, but they (his parents) call. My mom, she do figurin, or something like that." Zac planned to get a desk job much like the one his mother finally held after years of assembly line work. "My Mom would want me to work at a desk." The only mention Davy made of his mother writing was that the only communication she had with him during the four years he was in Training School was a note on one Christmas card.

When college-bound Tracy, whose parents finished high school, mentioned family writing, she talked about the note leaving that took place among her mother, grandmother, sister and herself and then said, "My mother has beautiful handwriting. Well, she doesn't really write that much. She reads a lot . She has piles of books...one book in one day. My father doesn't write that much." Because of their parent models, these students see writing as serving the purpose of family communication and business. And the more the telephone is used the less writing is needed. Family writing was often defined as good or bad if the handwriting was good or bad. A certain pride seemed to be attached to its surface quality. It is easy to slip into the role models fasioned by those who are close to you. Lisa, Tracy, and Davy, who want to go on to college, will have to find for themselves new

ways to view writing.

Joel's and Elizabeth's parents all had advanced degrees, and Joel's and Elizabeth's view of what writing is for, what priority is given it, and how it enhances life were quite different than that of Zac, Orion, and Lilia. Joel's parents rewrote the Passover celebration.

> You know what the Haggadah is, right? They made up a special one which does not only have to do with the Pharoah's slaughter of the Jews, but has to do with the Holocaust--all the plagues like racism, sexism, a lot of social problems. One I remember was about South American countries and the Black Civil Rights Movement.

Joel was clearly excited about this family event. His parents' celebration writing gave him a new view of the way writing could enhance life. Joel had recently taken up writing poetry for the school newspaper and writing songs for a friend's rock group.

Elizabeth saw her parents write for professional reasons.

> My mother just quit her job as a prosecutor to write a book. She usually writes really late at night like from 11:00 P.M. to 5:00 A.M., so I don't really see her that much when she writes. If I use the pen that she writes with, she'll get very protective of it. She'll say, "I can't write if I don't have that feel in my hand." She's a good writer. She seems to enjoy it. I'm a lot like my father. I really respect him. When he writes articles or speeches in the study, he closes the door. He's very absorbed in his writing. I usually see him when he runs upstairs for a book. He doesn't even know I'm there. If I go in and ask him a question, he'll go "uh...uh....uh..." for like five minutes straight, and you won't get an answer, so I never disturb him.

Elizabeth did her writing in her father's study. She, too, closed the door. She decided whether to write with a pen or a

typewriter depending on whether she liked the pen she had. If it was a good one, she would do it by hand. Writing was work, but she focussed in on it and got it done "without much fuss." Neither Elizabeth or Joel cared about their parents' handwriting. "It's readable," said Joel.

In contrast the only table in Zac's house that was good for writing was in the living room, and he usually sat there while the family watched T.V. and did his writing. Zac had a different view of the priority that writing might have, a different view of what it could be used for, and a different view of how engaging it could be.

The purposes that my participants saw writing as having, the priority given to it, and the value accorded it seemed directly linked with the way their parents viewed writing, and the way their parents viewed it seemed linked with their educational background. Parental view of writing is a legacy. For some students upward mobility demands that they throw off this legacy.

Students like Tracy, Lisa, Davy, and perhaps Zac, who aspired to an educational level that their parents never considered, will have to find their models for what writing can be in other places. Lisa saw her aunt help her mother with the paperwork she must complete for a promotion. Perhaps she began to look to her aunt as a role model. Tracy's mother enlisted the aid of the family neighbor who was a librarian to help Tracy with schoolwork. Perhaps Tracy's neighbor and Davy's tutor and teachers had begun to become role models for them.

Family Expectations

> They tell me, "It's your choice if you want to go to
> college." But they say, "It would be good if I went because
> they didn't go." Well, I kind of do feel the pressure cause
> I would be the first in our family to go through college
> completely. My sister tried. My father tried, so I think
> that has something to do with them wanting me to go and
> finish it completely. I think it will be better for me. I
> just have that idea in my mind.

It was no accident that Tracy had that idea in her mind. It had
been her parents' expectation for years. Tracy was one of the few
black students in the Writing Workshop in an inner-city, college
preparatory high school. And since her sister had dropped out of
college, Tracy has gotten a stronger message. She would be the first
in the family to make it through college, and that outcome would not
be a result of Tracy's competence and endeavor alone. When Tracy
started to have more interest in friends than school work, a normal
occurrence in junior high, her grades dropped slightly. Tracy's
mother intervened, "She told me I have to study, that I'm not dumb or
anything. She know I can do the work." Each term when Tracy's grades
came out, "My father writes to me and tells me how proud he is of me,
and he mails it to me. He tells me how proud he is of me, how much he
loves me, and how much he wants me to do good and everything." The
idea that Tracy had in her head to go on to college is an
internalization of her parents' expectations.

Like Tracy each of the eleventh grade writers that I studied
strove to please those for whom they cared, to fulfill the stated and

unstated expectations of their family. Three writers in basic classes, Lilia, Orion, and Davy, were all to be the first in their family to graduate from high school. Orion said, "I wanna finish school. I'm gonna get my diploma; I don't care what anybody says....My father doesn't want me to drop out of school." Orion's parents were proud he would make it, and they took over some chores he originally had so that he could devote more time to school work. Orion worked to pass. "If it's passing its okay," because he could get the credit and graduate. Lilia's mother wanted to return to Puerto Rico, but she would not leave until Lilia graduated. Almost daily Lilia heard, "After you graduate, and we all go back to Puerto Rico..." When Lilia had a boyfriend, her mother begged her not to get pregnant as her two sisters had and supervised her carefully so that she could finish high school.

Davy had had a series of surrogate parents whom he strove to please (his uncle, his tutor, his drama coach), and more recently with his involvement in Upward Bound and with the high school faculty, the expectations for him have been escalated to college.

The family expectations of all the writers that were in standard writing classes (Matt, Lisa, and Joel) went beyond "passing." All three participants were expected to go to college, and all were distressed if their grades slipped below B. They lived with internalized expectations. Joel said, "There are times when I'm just getting so bored with classes, but I just know I need to do this, and I keep pressuring myself."

For writers in advanced classes there was an interesting disparity in family expectations. Elana's and Elizabeth's parents had reached the top of the academic ladder (two professor fathers, a lawyer mother, and a health care administrator mother); all had advanced degrees. Elana and Elizabeth felt little pressure from parental expectations. They strongly believed that their parents would support them in any endeavor they undertook; nevertheless, they both had aspirations that depended on a college education. Elizabeth said, "Maybe if I didn't like what my parents were, I'd work harder to not be like them." Even though Elana and Elizabeth didn't feel external pressure to excel, the model their parents set forth for them and their resultant career plans made excellence important to them. Chris's parents, an elementary school teacher and a clerk, had both attended college but did not have high status positions. They had clear desires for Chris to get into a "good" college. In his eleventh grade year desire changed to pressure

Aside from the parents of Elizabeth and Elana and possibly Joel, the parents of my participants had expectations for their children to attain an educational level above the one that they themselves achieved. Connell and colleagues (1982) talk of similar findings. "Having learned that educational qualifications were a ticket to a better kind of job--usually by not having them--this made them strongly support their kid's staying at school as long as possible. The parents, in short, saw the school as a way of putting a floor beneath their kids' future economic circumstances." Parental hopes

and expectations were evident to the participants of my study and in each case these students have internalized these expectations.

The interview material, quoted above, dealt more with family expectations and their affect on general schooling than their effect on writing. But with students at all levels there was the understanding that writing was essential for meeting expectations connected with school work. And, as schools are now set up, external or internal expectations are met (or not met) on a day to day basis as a result of writing. Tests, quizzes, papers, homework normally constitute a substantial part of the grade that allows or disallows the realization of long term or short term expectations.

Pressure of Unmet Expectations

When students perceive that there is a divergence between expectations of them and their ability to fulfill them, stress that affects the writing process may develop. Participants in the study had dealt very differently with parental pressure. Zac, Lisa, and Elizabeth had found a way to deal with family concern over the quality of their work. Each prevented pressure from escalating by not allowing their parents to review that work. Zac would only bring home grades that were C or above. Ever since Lisa had had difficulty with her junior high English teacher, had to do a math chapter over, and had to go to summer school, she had stopped talking to her parents about schoolwork. Zac and Lisa still felt pressure from internalized

expectations, but they had learned how to avoid disappointing their parents. They strove in school but impeded family knowledge of shortcomings.

Actually this strategy worked quite well for them, and Elizabeth had a variation on this. Elizabeth was an intellectual sparring partner to her father, and after having her father criticize a paper, she began avoiding her father's interference with her writing by only allowing him to see what she considered to be her strongest work. Elizabeth was not concerned about her teachers' view of her work; she received consistent A's in her advanced English classes. Pressure came from her father's evaluation of her argumentation.

Matt, an immigrant from India said, "My father says, 'Yeah, you should be proud; you a Indian. You should do (good things)...a lot of stuff.' I consider that crap...superstitious. I'm (not an Indian) just a human being; that's what I am." But the pressure Matt felt to live up to his Indian heritage was evident in other actions and words. The pressure carried with it the implicit message that his heritage made him more able than others, and that he should live up to that ability. Essentially his confidence was high. Matt worked hard to overcome language difficulties in writing, but saw them as just a stumbling block to the "trick" of writing that would take time to get.

Elana and Chris, both of whom were struggling with writing at the time of the study, had not taken up evasive strategies, nor was their confidence in their ability high even though they were advanced

students. Parents' concern over their work added to their worries. With Chris this concern escalated to "nagging." Chris and Elana feared their inability to do the work, to get it done. Their families had not imparted their full trust in their being able to do so. The worry they felt was debilitating. It added to the struggle and lowered writing confidence. Tracy's mother gave her a different message. "She know I can do the work." Tracy got to work; Elana and Chris struggled.

High parental expectations with trust in the student's ability to meet them and parental approval of work accomplished seemed to be the combination that fostered self-esteem, writing confidence, and success in school.

The Involvement of Families with Actual Writing

Parental care and concern for their children's schoolwork and their children's writing was evident as participants told of their experience, but parents' ability to "help" their children write varied.

Though none of the participants in basic writing classes reported parental help with actual writing, each participant's parents seemed to help in a way that they were able. Orion's parents took over some of his chores, Sonia's mother monitors Sonia's homework time and homework environment, Lilia's mother stayed in the United States when she really wanted to go home, Zac's mother told the principal that she

would beat up Zac's third grade teacher if she continued to put Zac under the desk when he couldn't write his letters correctly.

Considering the thirteen children of Davy's mother, her poverty, and the fatigue that she must have felt, perhaps she realized that her only way to help Davy was to urge the judge to send Davy off to "Training School."

I asked Davy why he never took his work home to ask for help.

Cause I might get it wrong. And my mom doesn't know how to do it. She would tell me that. And I would take books home and leave it on top of my bed all the time. I never do it because of what's goin on in the house....My mother told me once that she feels ashamed cause she can't help me. She wants me, but she doesn't really want me cause I should go to a better family.

When I asked the other participants whose parents hadn't graduated from high school if they asked for help at home, several had trouble answering the question. It is possible that they did not want to talk about their parents inability to help them, or as with Davy were surprised that other students received help from home. Zac, Lisa, and Sonia said they asked for ideas for writing sometimes. Lisa's mother was often an important sounding board for her Exposition paper topic ideas. Lilia found no help for her school work. College-bound Tracy indicated that she didn't get help from her parents. Whether Tracy was aware that her parents couldn't really help her was not clear. "I haven't asked my parents for any help since elementary school since I can work it out pretty well myself. I get a little help from my teachers every now and then." Even though Tracy's parents didn't work with her writing, they facilitated it in

ways that they could. Her mother arranged for the neighbor to help, her grandfather bought her a writing desk, her father hung up her report cards and wanted to see her papers when they came back, they were faithful attenders of parent night at school, and they related feedback to Tracy which she might otherwise have missed.

> When my parents came to open house, they said all my teachers were pleased, but my English teacher was excited. He said I should go into creative writing for a living. He put a big encouragement for me in writing. I didn't know it was that good. It made me want to try harder.

Even though Tracy hadn't received help from her parents, she along with Lilia, Davy, and Zac, had received help from older siblings on school work when they were younger. Orion, who was the oldest, and Sonia, whose brother was only slightly older, did not have even siblings as a resource.

The quality and quantity of actual parental involvement with the participants whose parents attended college was quite different. Whereas the other parents lent various degrees of support around writing and schoolwork, college credentialed parents sought more active involvement with schoolwork and with writing. In early years before that more direct involvement began, they participated in familiarizing their children with the written word. Elana, Joel, Elizabeth, and Chris all talked about the hours that they spent with their parents reading in pre-school years. Another form of family interaction in younger years was the provision of relevant reasons for early writing. Chris and Elana both reported the excitement engendered by the notes that they wrote with assistance to family

members for celebrations. Later involvement usually took the form of providing rich resources for the content of the students' papers and providing editing work after a draft was completed.

Elizabeth, Chris, Elana, and Joel all reported conversations that they had with parents that led to paper content. Much of this was just general information from which they gleaned future paper topics. Elizabeth reported,

> I will sit and we'll talk, argue about major issues like capital punishment just because we enjoy it, not because I'm thinking about my paper. My topic for Exposition is criminal justice. And later, if I work one of his arguments into my paper, he likes that.

Joel talked of the important relationship he and his father had as mutual "nature freaks." "I could always remember writing, looking at my safari cards, looking up in some book we had, or asking my father some information. And I still write about animals a lot." Elana's mother acted as her inspiration for paper topics.

> Mom is great with ideas. She tries to help me. She really also has a way of stimulating ideas in my own head, saying things that are going to cause me to react. I know you can't call, "Mommy!" when you get to college, but I'm only in high school, and input from parents teaches me to think in a very different kind of way.

This is not to say that those parents who did not get through college did not have quite meaningful discussions with their children. Close contact between most parents and children was evident. Nevertheless, the content of discussions was probably less aligned with what was acceptable content for school papers.

Participants with college-educated parents, Elana, Joel, Chris,

and Elizabeth, had also gotten help in the editing of their work. Sometimes the help was with language. "I can have brilliant ideas," Elana said, "but sometimes I ask my mother to help me say them. She just comes up with $5,000 words, and I use $400 words." Elizabeth said, "When I'm under pressure, I can't think of any good vocabulary words. My Dad helps me out." Now that Chris was older his parents were less able to help him in refinement of his work, but at a younger age, "The things they taught me about language and things like that were very helpful." Most often the help that the college-educated parents gave was with correcting mistakes. In later high school years this "tradition" as Chris described it could be annoying, though Chris enjoyed the break it gave him from his work. This was more than "annoying" for Joel.

> I just ask for corretions and whether things sound alright--not actually on stuff that he thinks I should have in (my paper). My father actually ends up doing it anyway. It's sort of frustrating that he can't just take my work the way it is. I just want them to correct it.

When parents criticized content the friction began:

> Last year I had to write a positon paper on whether or not I thought terminally ill patients should die. And I guess I came on a little too strong in that paper. And my Dad said I should really tone it down. And I thought what I had written was really good. You know, I showed it to him and everything, and he said, It's all wrong." I was just really frustrated; I don't know. I ended up--we got in a fight about it. That's why I don't really like him to see what I've written. Once something is finished, I don't want my father going through. I don't want to do it over again.

One reason Lisa didn't show her parents her writing anymore was because she disagreed about content. When they made suggestions she said, "I don't think it should be that way." And their retort was,

"Well then, why did you ask for help?" Lisa told me, "If they were just nicer about my opinions, it would have been better."

For understandable reasons correction of word level errors was acceptable. They would rather have their parents do it before it got to the teacher. And parental input was welcome, even sought after, when they were coming up with ideas for their papers. But when parents suggested changes in content of a completed draft, two things happened. They felt their parents were critical of their ideas, and they envisioned having to make major changes.

Most often family interaction seemed just to be one factor contributing to a more complex struggle students had with writing. With Chris we saw that both the new view of his father as having lost his direction and also his parental nagging exacerbated Chris's growing crisis of confidence. However, with Elana, family became the major source of struggle with her writing in Expositon. Emotional occurrences in her family life were so linked with content of her writing that to fret about one was to struggle with the other. "Zionism has been a very active part of my life for the past eight years. I decided to use it as my term subject for Exposition." Midway through the term, Elana's grandfather died. "The death of my grandfather started triggering off lots of feelings I have about me and my family (and Zionism)." At the same time her sister decided to leave for Israel. "I'm very, very close to my sister, and she made a decision that I will have to make in two years. And all of a sudden I got very frightened. I chose my topic for a reason; I wanted to learn

more about this, but I had no idea what I was getting myself into."
Elana began to have difficulties with writing. She petitioned her
teacher to allow her to change her term topic. Her teacher refused
but was sympathetic during the days immediately following her
grandfather's death, allowing her an extension. Then he started being
quite strict with he over paper delays. When Elana had to write a
satire of her topic, Zionism, she simply couldn't do it. To find a
way to criticize/satirize something already emotionally charged left
her unable to cope. Emotion linked to events in Elana and her
family's life made writing not just difficult. She couldn't do it.
Elana's mother bought some time for her by sending notes to the
teacher, but this advocacy did not work for long. She started losing
credit because of late papers. And only time seemed to allow her to
get writing again. An emotional life situation was so closely linked
with the subject material of Elana's task that that task was
continually interrupted, and her attention directed to the linked
stress. This is the fourth type of struggle with writing evidenced in
the participants of this study.

Elana's mother's attempt to buy time for her raised another
aspect of parental involvement with developing writers.
College-educated parents acted as advocates of their children in the
school system in a much different way than the other parents did.
They seemed to better understand the workings of the school system and
stepped in more quickly to keep their children doing well in a college
preparatory track. Lilia's mother was probably unaware when her

daughter chose to step out of college preparatory classes so she would have teachers who would allow her to go to the meetings she needed to attend as Class Secretary. Zac couldn't figure out the protocol of how to get into college preparatory classes, and though his mother could have used a telephone to intervene, she didn't. Yet Chris's mother made appointments as soon as his grade slipped below an A in Chemistry and "Expositon."

Perhaps parents who were less alienated by the school system saw this interaction in their childrens' schoolwork as positive involvement, and perhaps parents less aware of the school's workings saw this kind of interaction as potentially humiliating.

Connell and his colleagues came to similar conclusions in their study of Australian schools. They described the situation of college-educated parents and then less educated parents and their interactions in the schools on behalf of their children.

> Yet the fact that the parents are mostly richer, more powerful, and often better educated than the teachers, and that they are (even if indirectly) the teachers' employers, gives them a marked confidence in these transactions and a strong sense that they have rights to exercise" (Connell et al. 1982, 128).

Later they relate the position of the less educated parent, whose "own schooling is of humiliation" (Connell, et al. 1982, 131). "Divergence between the parents and the child's culture and that of school put them at a loss of how to operate" (Connell et al. 1982, 132).

Nevertheless, no matter what the education of the parents, it was clear that they endeavored in whatever way they knew to facilitate

their children's school careers and their progress in writing. If parental wishes were realities, each participant would have been adept at written expression of thoughts and feelings.

Conclusion

The families of the participants in this study had a strong impact, both positive and negative, on the participants' development as writers. Before school age families were important in shaping self-esteem, and throughout the school years families offered responses to the writers' work which helped develop the view that participants had of themselves as students and as writers. Families established certain expectations of the participants, modeled the value, priority, and uses of writing, and for some participants provided material for and help in the actual process of writing.

Peer Interaction with Writing

The experience of the participants in this study showed peers to have an important influence on the developing writer. Like parents, peers provided models and expectations for the participants and provided reactions to their writing that affected the writers' view of themselves and their approaches to writing. In addition peers were both inspiration and audience for important writing that the participants did outside of school. Most of the participants in this study demonstrated an increased sensitivity to peers that started in fifth and sixth grade and seemed to ebb in the tenth and eleventh grade years; however, some of the writers were still painfully self-conscious with peers during their eleventh grade year. The more important peers were to the writer, the more impact they had on the participants' view of themselves as writers and hence on their writing process.

This section will report how peers affected the participants and their writing process by reviewing how peers interacted with the participants in matters of self-view and self-consciousness, comparison and competition, peer feedback and peer support, peer audience, peer-inspired writing, and peer pressure.

Self-View and Self-Consciousness

Essentially writing is the relationship between the writer and the material (Seidman 1982). Analysis of the written protocols of the participants showed that writing was most untroubled when writers concentrated on the material with a sense of audience resting only unobtrusively in the corner of their conscious attention. This study and related research indicate that the extent to which audience will affect the writer is at once a function of the development of that writer's self-concept and a function of the development of the writer's transcription abilities.

Very young writers' sense of self is largely egocentric. Their view of self is a function of the parental love they feel and the potency they feel in doing things. Donald Graves describes the gift of self-centered confidence the beginning writer has.

> The child will make no greater progress in his entire school career than in the first year of school simply because self-centeredness makes him fearless. The world must bend to his will. This child screens out audience....the child centers on a very narrow band of thinking and ignores other problems in the field (Graves, 1983, p.239).

In the following elementary school years the child goes through a transition, becoming more aware of audience's understanding or lack thereof. Teachers become important as audience unless the peer audience is emphasized. Writers have a sense of themselves as writers as a result of teacher and parent response to their writing.

As children round the bend into adolescence, the way they feel

about themselves and the things they do ceases to be reflected only from adults and begins to be largely reflected off peers. It is a period of self-consciousness. It is not unlikely that it is also a stage in which writing is less a relationship just between the writer and the material, but among the writer, material and others.

The development of adolescent self-consciousness explains why all the participants in the study showed parallel self-consciousness with writing in their late elementary to high school years, and why the writers who have been presented in-depth demonstrated that emotion linked with self-consciousness complicated the writing process. It explains why Lisa began to refuse to write in sixth and seventh grade, why Chris felt he had "exposed" himself to his sixth grade class and didn't complete the next two assignments, and why Davy went to great lengths to hide his poor performance from peers.

Though all writers demonstrated in their protocols an attempt at what Graves calls decentering, of consciously taking steps to take a reader's point of view to make their work understandable, only the writers more able at transcription seemed to have conscious attention available during transcription to worry about the particular whims of a critical audience. Bereiter (1980) calls what able adolescents do at this stage communicative writing--when social cognition allows for calculated effect on audience. Chris, who was automatic in transcription, concentrated on what effect he would have on Mr. Shultz, and this concentration was possible to the exclusion of other important considerations.

Another possible, though less likely, explanation is that writers less able at transcription simply didn't care about their audience. Yet Zac was an example of an extremely self-conscious young man who as yet showed no evidence of concern with peer or teacher audience during the writing process. The data in the study indicated that he was one of the five participants who hadn't as yet enough room in the conscious attention during transcription to be distressed by critical audience for their writing. They were text bound. Zac had to concentrate too hard on transcription, so he was in many ways blessed by little audience sensitivity.

Zac was text-bound even though he had reached a point in development of self-concept where he was painfully self-conscious and approval of peers did have an affect on his willingness to put a lot of effort into writing. It was clear that peers were important when in sixth grade through eighth grade peers were more vivid in Zac's mind than the teacher or the curriculum.

> I had Mr. S in sixth and that's probably the best class I had. My cousin was in there, this guy named Scotty. We used to mess around all the time. He let us have fun most of the time, but I guess we did some work. I don't remember...
>
> Seventh grade I had a class with Dennie, Victor, Vincent coupla other guys in my class. I got a lot of E's. Like the first year in every school I mess up....
>
> Now in eighth grade I had Kenny, Donald, Calvin, like ah I had basically the same stuff I had in seventh grade. Who did I have in seventh grade? I don't remember.

Later in the interviews Zac described what he called his "shyness." He didn't do well on a test in tenth grade in a new school

because he was too nervous to get up in front of a whole classroom of people to get a second piece of paper for the essay questions. "In tenth grade I didn't know nobody. That's probably why I messed up...because it was my first year. (I was) closed in. I couldn't talk good. But this year I relaxed with the people around me. I'm on the honor roll this marking period." But Zac was ambivalent about his academic stature. On the one hand he was pleased to be on the honor roll and wanted to be transferred into a college prep course, but on the other hand he was self-conscious about his academic attainment. In his inner-city school and with his basketball buddies, one wasn't popular for one's good grades. In Zac's school to appear stupid was anathema, but at the same time excelling was "cuddling up" to the teachers and brought unmasked contempt from peers. There was value in passing, but none in excelling.

> Most of the time like I'm in the spotlight, with the teacher just talking about me. He say, "Zac got an 80 on his test, and this and that and this and that. He keep talking about me and then he say, "Zac tell everybody how you studied." I bout die, look down, can barely say "I just read the book, man; that's it."

Zac did not receive peer approval for doing well on written work and school success itself was threatening to his relationships with his peers. Peer expectations in his school were to pass--get by; he didn't draw attention to his academic success.

As Zac squirmed in the spotlight and could hardly speak, as Lisa couldn't write because she knew she had to read her work in front of the class the next day, as Chris worried that he would make himself

prominent in front of peers, as Davy worried that he would appear "dumb to the students--not to the adults," each felt a threat to the way they would like their peers to see them and to the way they would like to perceive themselves. The weight of peers in the writing environment was evident. Emotion linked to that threat actually affected their performance in written expression.

Herbert Simon, as cited in the literature review, said that emotion linked with threat caused the conscious attention to be interrupted and redirected towards the source of threat. Lisa's inability to write when thinking of what she perceived as a less-than-amicable peer audience was an example of this.

When Chris, Lisa, Davy, and others perceived disapproval by peers (or by parents, or by teachers as we will see in the next section), and when the view that they had of themselves was threatened, two things happened. They had difficulty with writing, the process being disrupted, or they maintained a way of writing that was tried and true--the way that neither incurred disapproval nor implemented growth. When Lisa discontinued writing about sea mammals, she lessened the chance of the threat of appearing foolish in front of peers, but then she had to deal with subject material in which she had neither investment, nor prior knowledge. Even with the new material, she was blocked when she had to write for classmates as her audience. Davy, when overwhelmed with worries about writing, slipped into an old familiar pattern, chronology. Without risk taking, old patterns were repeated. Conversely when Chris was self-confident, he didn't worry

about his level of wittiness in front of peers, and when Lisa was confident of her literary criticism paper, she was open to class feedback.

Though perception of threat and its subsequent disturbance of the writing process were not the private possession of the adolescent writer, adolescence with its accompanying self-consciousness and peer sensitivity was the time when participants in my study reported the most difficulty with writing, and when peer-linked worry had the strongest positive and negative effect on the writer's view of self and on the writing process.

Self-View, Comparison, and Competition

Just as the participants in the study developed a view of themselves as writers through comparison with their parents' and siblings' ability to write, so they compared themselves with their peers to the same end. This comparison affected the way they viewed themselves as writers and hence the way they engaged in it.

Teachers and S.A.T. tests assisted in this comparison by giving formal and numerical renderings of comparison. These comparisons were important to the participants, but they also compared their writing with that of peers in ways other than through teacher evaluations and standardized tests in order to develop a view of themselves as writers. Lisa said,

> What I most hate is when someone will read their paper out and it will be really, really good, and then she'll call

on me to read mine. When it comes to me, she'll say all
these things that I should do, and it will be like...okay,
I'll have so many corrections to do while other people
don't. In a way this is competition by having a memory of
their paper and me wanting my paper to be as good as theirs
or to sound like theirs or something like that. I don't
know whether it is competition or not. I know it's
competition when you're wanting to get a better grade than
someone.

At once Lisa attempted to define competition as a formalized

comparison and acceded that she competed in an informal situation.

Though the teacher orchestrated a situation where comparison was

possible, it was Lisa who made the comparison between herself and a

peer, came off lacking in the comparison, and then internalized that

in her view of herself as a writer.

Though the grades of the participants in the study had an impact

on performance (Orion, Lisa, and others commented that when they

received a good grade in a class, they felt valued and they worked

much harder in that class), the comparison they made with fellow

students seemed to be what had the strongest impact on their view of

themselves. Tracy said, "The teacher said it was good. At first I

thought, 'Eighty-six, well, that's okay. But then when I found I was

the highest in the class, I felt much better." A teacher's

comparative pronouncement that, "You are the best in the class," is

the supreme compliment. Only Tracy and Chris have received such

honor.

When students came out well in the comparison with peers, the

view they had of themselves increased self-esteem, increased writing

confidence, and perpetuated good performance. Orion reported enjoying

school writing for awhile after he won chocolate chip cookies by writing a winning slogan. Early competitions for Tracy and Chris brought approval and validation for their ability. Simple good grades were not as powerful as doing better than peers. Chris said, "The problem was I'm in this environment where everyone I know gets A's all their lives, and they're always in advanced classes." He felt "wonderful" about himself when the supreme compliment came his way. Excelling in comparison was more poignant clarification of his view of himself as a writer. As Chris had difficulty, as he feared his friends would think less of him if they discovered he was slipping, fear of peer censure heightened the academic stress he felt. Chris reflected back on the way he viewed himself before his writing problems. "A while ago, modesty aside, I would have said, 'I know I'm good at writing.' Now I say, 'I think I'm good at writing.'" So just as coming off well in comparison heightened his performance and enhanced his view of himeself as a writer, coming off poorly in comparison changed his view of self, and a lowered view of his abilities made his writing troubled.

But writing competitions and comparison only allowed one person to be a winner. For those who didn't win or compare favorably in young years, defensive behaviors were set in motion to prevent a lesser view of themselves. Lisa refused to write, even played hookey, to prevent such comparison. And then of seventh grade she said,

> I felt stupid cause people around me would say well what did you get, and then I'd say my grade and then they'd say

theirs, and it was always higher. It made me feel really stupid, and then you'd say well I didn't even really want to do it anyways. So I didn't even try. I was convincing myself that I was stupid, couldn't write, when it shouldn't have been that.

At this time Lisa again refused to write, and Lisa couldn't improve her writing skills when she wasn't writing. Davy reported a similar reaction.

Participants sometimes showed quite purposeful attempts to compare themselves with others so they could feel good about themselves. Lisa picked a particular student by which to measure herself. At the end of the term she covertly found out her ex-best friend's grades, and in finding that her grades had been higher, her confidence soared and her work improved. I asked Joel whether he ever felt competitive urges. He quickly responded, "Not at all." And then with a sheepish grin he said, "Yes, I do. I try to finish fast a lot, giving me a feeling of superiority that I finished this first. I used to do that on tests also, but I realized how stupid that was cause I didn't have time to look it over." When I observed Joel write an in-class essay, he worked with great concentration, seemingly oblivious to the chattering around him. He was the first finished with a draft. When he asked if anyone was ready for peer-editing, he was in his moment of glory as he received impressed stares from all those still writing. If he had been in a basic writing class, the stares might have been hostile. Lilia, with her problems with standard English, found few bases to excell in comparison with her classmates. But when I asked Lilia if she was a good writer, like

Lisa she piped forth with a comparison with a particular student. She could at least be better in handwriting than Stacy White. "She is a black girl, and she writes so tiny, and she would cheat in everything. You wouldn't be able to read it."

The writing process of the participants in this study was facilitated when their writing compared favorably with that of peers in their writing environment, and writing became troubled when their writing compared unfavorably. The comparison that participants made between themselves and the writers around them or that teachers made held more weight than the indirect comparison of teacher evaluation through grades. In competition one person, maybe several, won writing confidence and many didn't. In comparisons done privately, one person gained or lost, writing confidence depending on the way that person perceives the comparison. In comparisons done publicly the stakes were high. Either a person's writing confidence soared or the comparison humiliated.

Peer Support and Feedback

Actual peer involvement in the writing process of the participants was often reported. This involvement usually took the form of informal peer support during idea generation, organization, and transcription or of peer feedback between drafts. This informal "help" was a sort of role-modeling. "This is a way it can be done. This is the way I go about it." More formal peer feedback on

school-generated drafts was not reported to take place voluntarily, but occurred frequently in the surburban/rural school at the request of teachers.

Informal Feedback and Support. Chris made the distinction between formal and informal help. "We don't edit each others' papers unless it's required by a teacher, but I have people call me from Law and History classes and ask me questions--not specifically 'How should I write this?' more like 'What should I say?'"

Most of the participants mentioned that they valued informal peer help in thinking of ideas and in helping with the organization of what they would write. Participants also mentioned that talking with friends allowed them to consolidate ideas and to find a direction for their writing. Lilia said that if she "gets stuck" in getting started, "I will catch on with somebody else." Chris said, "We ask each other questions when we don't know how to answer the questions the teacher is asking." Zac often had immediate ideas of his own and would write them down and then depend on friends. "If I know something about it, I would just write them down, and then I'll ask one of my friends or something like that."

Observation of writing classes allowed me to see how highly interactive the students were. Most often after students had gotten going, after preliminary idea generation and organization were complete, students took responsibility for their own work but reached out for support on particulars. "How do you spell....?" "What's a word that means....?" "Something's wrong with this sentence. What is

it?" "I need another example for this point I'm making." This interaction was given free rein in the suburban/rural school. Even in the basic class Orion and his writing buddy Jason chatted back and forth during whole class periods dreaming up ideas for each other's "fantasies" and making suggestions about organization and its possible effect on the reader. Jason said to Orion, "Save that shock til the end; that'll leave 'em shivering in their boots."

In the inner-city school the teachers kept the class relatively quiet, but much of the same activity still went on covertly with note passing, whispers, and sometimes angry insistence. Upon reprimand one irate young man said, "I'm just asking for spelling." He added an under-the-breath expletive for the benefit of his neighbors.

Peer support did not occur only during the writing process. Zac received a sort of peer career counseling from his senior basketball friend Vic, who advised him on the importance of college, on the importance of relations with teachers, on writing, and on grades necessary in order to get to college. Vic allows Zac to have a new view of possibilities in life. "He said, well, that they'd (college) see that in tenth grade you was messin up, but he say if you keep it goin in eleventh and twelfth, they see you keep improvin...like that."

Chris and Tracy received support from peers when they were having difficulty with a particular writing teacher. Chris commented on the support that Elana and others gave him. He reported that their validation that Mr. Shultz was giving him a harder time than he gave

others bolstered his self-confidence so he could go on. Tracy reported a similar experience of peer support in writing class.

> In homeroom trying to finish up homework, I would say, "I hate that English class because I try my best, but he always picks on me and stuff." And they said, "Yeah! He does." Before I used to go, sit there. I didn't participate. After I just did it, no effort (into) anything, but I did it.

The participants in the study requested or offered informal feedback only from or to friends. It might well be that the participants knew that friends had a thorough enough knowledge of them and their abilities that help would be not an acknowledgement of stupidity, but rather mutual getting on in a situation. Trust in the relationship removed threat from the situation. Feedback and support among friends facilitated the writing process.

Davy and Lisa were clear about the need to get that kind of in-process support from friends they trusted and who knew them well enough to know they weren't stupid. Lisa chatted freely with her friends in the back of the classroom about the drafts.

As seen in the in-depth study, Davy protected himself from appearing dumb and hence asked those least skilled to help him with the more complex writing problems. Davy's fear of others' perceptions of him prevented him from tapping the richest resources for support in writing.

Formal Peer Feedback. Formal peer feedback was often set up by several teachers as a one-on-one, peer-to-peer conference when a draft was complete. This feedback seemed acceptable to the students who participated in it. I observed Joel and a student spending twenty

minutes giving feedback to each other. The process seemed exciting for them, and Joel reported that he used the feedback in the redrafting. Elana said, "It is really nice to be exposed to other people my own age and their writing which is something that I have really never done before. I actually critiqued their work. Not only is it good for them, but it really helps me to find the flaws in my own work."

Students' openness to support or advice was related to how self-conscious they were and to how large the group was. And the more self-conscious the writers, the less willing they were to get feedback from the class as a whole. I watched Elizabeth, the participant who seemed to have the most self-confidence, write a fifteen minute, in-class, first attempt at satire. Elizabeth wrote a full page in the time and was the only one in class willing to read her satire to the class. She seemed unbothered when they examined it to see if it was indeed satirical; in fact she joined in the critique of her own work. She said later she learned a lot from it and was ready to write a complex satire paper. This incident juxtaposed to Lisa's attempt to write when she knew that her teacher would ask her to read aloud shows the different ways that students can view whole class feedback. Lisa described how she shut down in the face of whole class feedback to her work. "My face'll get red. I start hiding my face or I talk really softly. I start agreeing with everybody's decisions whatever they are. If I'm sure of what I'm doing I'll start asking questions, 'Well, should I have done it this way?'" When she was self-conscious,

she described what seemed an example of what Hart termed "downshifting" or what Combs called "tunnel-vision" towards the source of threat. In the next paper she had to "share," she couldn't write, and what she didn't complete, she didn't have to "share."

Elana talked about this same experience with class feedback. "If I think it is a good paper...if I get across the point I want to say like cream, then it doesn't bother me at all. If I think it is a weak paper, it bothers me a lot." We saw the effect this same dynamic had on Lisa when she had to share what she feared would be mediocre work and on Zac when he was praised for good work in front of a whole class of peers. Both Lisa and Zac had difficulty even speaking in front of the class, and both behaved in a way that would get them out of the spotlight as quickly as possible.

Formal peer feedback, when it was requested by the writer or voluntarily submitted to, had a positive impact on writing. From class feedback Elizabeth was ready to take the risk of doing a complex assignment, Joel felt ready to tackle a final draft, and others reported similar feelings. But when a writer was self-conscious or lacked confidence in a particular piece of writing, or if the writer didn't trust the peer audience (or even one member of it in Lisa's case), peer feedback (even positive feedback in Zac's case) was debilitating and promise of it could even keep students from doing the writing that would be peer evaluated.

Effect of Peer Audience

Researchers assert that students rarely write for a peer audience (Moffett 1968; Britton et al. 1975; Applebee 1981), that they write best for a peer audience (Moffett 1968), and that competent writers revise more frequently for peer audiences than teacher audiences (Monahon 1984). In the inner-city I never observed a teacher provide a structure that encouraged writing for a peer audience, and yet it went on. In the suburban/rural school the teachers of all the participants developed a structure in which a peer audience was available for both support and feedback; it was a feature of the writing classes there. Nevertheless, even knowing this before the study began, I underestimated the importance of the peer audience in the developing writer in that school as well. Applebee, Moffett, and Britton looked only at school writing. This study found that the participants did a substantial amount of writing aside from classroom assignments for peer audiences. Furthermore, it was this out-of-school writing that participants found to be not only relevant but thoroughly enjoyable or else they would have had no reason to engage in it. They wrote because they wanted to and chose an audience of peers whom they wanted to read their writing. Aversion to the peer audience (as evidenced by some of the participants who were sensitive to class feedback) was not a problem when this audience was one of their own choosing.

There was variety in the unassigned writing that participants did. Orion and his friend Jason, friends since seventh grade, wrote fantasy stories that they shared. Sonia and her cousins would get together after school to write stories, songs, and poems. Elana would join her camp buddies and write stories,

> We used to write down a sentence and the next person would write down a sentence, and we'd keep going. We'd come up with some of the best stories. That was a lot of fun. That's when I was about ten.

Davy, Matt, Joel, Lisa, Tracy, and Lilia talked about letters and notes they wrote to friends and family, but this more formal communication did not seem to carry for them the unmitigated pleasure of other writing for peers. In Outward Bound Matt had to write letters to other crew members during the two days he was on his own in the wilderness. He was to "tell them how I felt about them. It was like...(Matt made a grimace and groan about writing to people so openly.)...I wrote it anyway. You know. Sometimes when you're lonely, it was pretty good." When Elana was home she sometimes wrote to particular friends in school, "Sometimes if I am thinking about a person at school, I might write them a note telling them I am thinking about them.

Perhaps the most gleeful writing that occured for peer audiences was the rather contraband note writing and yearbook signing. Chris called my attention to yearbook signing by his temporary abhorrence of it, and thereafter I became aware of it during class observations. Writing went on inside desks, behind books, in moments after assigned

work was completed, and sometimes in open defiance of a teacher who was too fatigued to oppose it. Orion's yearbook was confiscated. Students even stayed after school, lounging on hall floors to write. If it had been an organized classroom assignment, with teachers as evaluators, it wouldn't have had the same appeal. They were writing to their peers, and sometimes they were even writing what they felt about those peers.

By far the most covert and copious writing that was reported by the participants was note writing. Every student in the study reported that they had participated in it. Chris recalled (with amused tolerance at his youthful silliness) "The Note" that he and his advanced friends compiled, five hundred pages of "ridiculous humor," and shared stories written in the same manner as Elana's group. "And that was good for us because you could do whatever you wanted to do; you didn't have to please the teacher."

There were other variations on the note practice. Orion took great pride in the notes he wrote on the desk to those who sat there in other periods. He kept up running dialogues with unidentified correspondents. Joel said that he communicated with an "odd" loner who he wouldn't normally hang around with. "He seems to write weird things that I reply to." Even shy Zac succumbed, "If somebody in school write me a letter, I'll write back to them." I asked Lilia, who had trouble writing a short paragraph in English, how much she wrote, and she said in one class she filled up about two pages a day to her friend Rosa. It is my guess that participants from basic

writing classes, especially the female writers who seemed to be more enthusiastic about generating "notes," probably had more practice in transcription through note-writing than they had in the skill/exercise type writing that they reported having done under the auspices of their English classes.

This peer-motivated, peer-audience writing seemed to be an important component for students in their acquisition of written expression. It was meaning-driven, allowed students to communicate in their own world, and its content was of utmost importance to them. It provided practice in developing voice and audience awareness and allowed some skills to become automatic (like transcription) so that more room was available in the conscious attention for more complex writing strategies. It was free of constraint and was never reported to be troublesome to the participant.

Peer Inspired Writing

Another type of writing that students reported doing was a very private type of writing. The writers themselves were the only audience, and peers (and less frequently family) were the subject of this writing. This peer inspired writing, writing about peers, relationships, social concerns, was only reported to be done by female participants (except for Matt who did it when it was required in Outward Bound). It took two forms: diary or journal writing and what I will call cathartic writing.

The purpose of journal/diary writing was to make sense of what the writer was experiencing in her life. Unlike most school writing the writer searched to understand through writing; she wrote to know rather than needing to know in order to write. Experience with friends and boy friends was most often written about, though writing about family relationships was reported as an important sideline.

Elizabeth was most conscious of what journal writing did for her.

> It really helps me as an outlet. It helps me to collect my thoughts. When you write it all down, you can look at it. I guess it helps me analyze what I'm feeling. When you see it written down, you realize that things are not so big that they're just going to take over your life--that you're going to get through them."

Sonia reported writing not about everyday life, but about troubling things that she wanted to remember, that were lessons to her that she wanted to take seriously.

> In ninth grade I wrote about visiting a friend. Everyone was wondering where she was at. She was in the hospital. I visited her and she was crying because she had a miscarriage, and the guy who got her pregnant wasn't even there, and he didn't want anything more to do with her. It was on the last day of school, and I wrote about it so I could remember it.

Sonia also wrote songs in her journal.

This journal/diary writing for Sonia, Elizabeth, and all the other females was enhanced by the emotion they brought to it. Unlike assigned writing where concentration was sometimes interrupted by problems that the participants were facing, this writing allowed the writer to reflect on problems and make sense of them. Problems did

not disrupt conscious attention; they were the focus of conscious attention.

Cathartic writing was a highly emotional response to a particularly distressing life situation. It wasn't saved for a journal, but written on whatever was available. It was similar to journal/diary writing in that it was an attempt to make sense of anger, depression, sadness, loss, or confusion. It was only reported by females. The situations were so highly personal that I will not describe them, but peripheral remarks may illuminate this process in which emotion is so intensely dealt with that it brings a purging and clarity for the writer. Elizabeth and Sonia used poetry for this kind of writing, Lilia, Tracy, and Elana used unsent letters (letters that they knew while writing that they wouldn't send), and Lisa used prose. Elizabeth said, "I never found it really a task." My sense from these female participants was that this cathartic writing was almost a necessity, a compelling urge that must be given vent. Elana said, "I was furious, filled with feelings of overwhelming inadequacy, and hatred....It helped a lot."

I asked two male participants if they ever wrote when they were really upset. Davy said, "No. I just keep it in me, and chew it up." Joel said, "I think...I calm myself down by telling myself what I'm going to say to this person, then I usually don't do a whole lot about it."

Writing out feelings, either in journals or through cathartic writing, seemed to work well for female participants. It seemed

unfortunate not only that for whatever reason this reflexive mode of writing wasn't available to male participants, but also that schools didn't value this mode in which women were intrinsically motivated to write.

What stands out about cathartic and journal/diary writing is that it is mostly peer inspired. Peers interact with the writers to cause content for quite a large quantity of writing that serves its generators in an important manner.

Peer Pressure

> And I had my friends, some of my friends are in standard classes, and have seen me as this great student, saying, "Well, Chris, you're going to go to Harvard; I'm going to go to Commnity College," and they're giving me this all the time. We had a little award ceremony and they say, "Oh you're going to win ten awards" and things like that. This vicious little circle of humor that's designed to cut each other down. I hate that kind of thing. I never--that's not true--I used to do it, just like everyone else. To a degree. But I try not to do it now. You know, they were putting more pressure on me and saying, "Well, you're just a fantastic student, and I'm not; you must be better than me." I mean, my friends telling me I was better than them because I had been a little bit more successful in school. I never thought it made me a better person. And so, my friends having those school prblems in their lives made me separate.

This comment by Chris taken in the context of his concurrent feelings of fear of "slipping" in the eyes of his advanced friends showed the double bind of peer pressure that he was in. Chris reported that he formed friendships more and more with advanced students. It was clear why he felt more comfortable with them. It is

a microcosm perhaps of the exclusivity of social class.

While Chris squirmed in this double bind of at once living up to advanced peer's Harvard expectations and dealing with the thinly suppressed bitterness of standard students with whom he no longer felt comfortable, Lisa, a standard student, did her share of squirming too. For years Lisa felt pressure to accept ideas from her best friend for writing instead of pursuing her own interests. And it happened in Student Council, too. There she was caught between being determined not to care what others thought of her language and being intimidated by the smooth and sophisticated language of advanced class peers into reluctance to speak again. Her feelings of concurrent anger and self-consciousness were perhaps one of the "hidden injuries of class." She had her own form of peer pressure and it was uncomfortable.

Meanwhile Sonia and Zac squirmed in their basic writing class.

> It's laziness...from myself, I know it's laziness. I just don't want to admit to it. My grades. I could be getting A's. I just get to a point where I want to get out of school. Just anything to get by. You have to deal with different attitudes....peer pressure and everything. I mean it's a big heavy load.

While this quote is a bit enigmatic out of context, Sonia was referring to something that Zac referred to--the pressure to be the kind of student that your peers would have you be. Laziness for Sonia was giving into peer pressure. To be successful for her was to get by and get out.

There was strong pressure for Sonia and Zac not to excel in their basic class. In a way their upward mobility was stifled by peer

pressure. They tread a narrow line to do well enough not to appear stupid in front of their peers, and not so well as to be accused of "cuddling up to" (in lieu of a more oft-used but less acceptable term) the teacher. But basic class peer-solidarity, alienation, buck-the-teacher or authority would not serve future economic success.

While Sonia, Zac, Lisa, and Chris felt the discomfort of peer pressure in school , many others have escaped it by leaving before they could become eleventh graders. Sonia said to me once, laughing at my naivety, "There isn't nobody gonna tell you they're dumb." In her social group appearing dumb was worse than even appearing to "cuddle up." To avoid that, the drop-out has left school rather than being "forced into activities (in which his performance) would be shameful in his own eyes or in those of his peers,"--rather than "feel exposed to ridicule or self-doubt (Erickson 1968, 129)."

Conclusion

This study confirms what other writing researchers have claimed--that the peer as audience has an important effect on in-school writing. But this study went beyond previous research to investigate the nature of that important effect. The data showed that when participants felt open to peer feedback, writing in or outside of school was facilitated, but when peer disapproval was feared emotion linked with such disapproval or even possible disapproval precipitated

struggle with writing. The effect of peers' response on the participants' motivation to write was strong both inside and outside of school. In fact, the quantity of writing done out of school, especially by females, was seen as considerable and most likely has an important effect on acquisition of written expression.

Teacher Interaction with Writing

In reviewing the experience Davy, Lisa, and Chris had with writing, it is clear that their teachers had a significant effect not only on the way they viewed themselves as writers and the way they went about writing, but on the way they viewed themselves as people and the possibilities that they saw in their lives. This section will explore the ways teachers interacted with participants' writing that affected their lives and affected the ways that writing has served them.

Of all the aspects of the context of developing writers which affected their writing process, it was the teacher to whom the participants assigned the most credit or blame for the amount of progress they made in writing. From the sheer quantity of interview material that involved teachers, it is clear that the participants in this study viewed teachers as making an important difference in their writing. Fair or unfair, the teacher took the blame or the applause.

It is no wonder that participants viewed teachers as making a difference, for in the classroom it was the teacher who created situations which facilitated or hindered the writing process for each student. They made a difference in three ways. First teachers contributed to the view that the participants had of themselves and their writing by their very response to the participants and their work. With similar result teachers shaped the writing experience so

that the view that the participants had of themselves was affected by parents and peers. Hence teachers fashioned a response to work and a view of it for the writer that originated outside the writer, extrinsic to the writer. The second way the teacher interacted with the participants and their writing was by shaping experiences which did or did not allow an intrinsic satisfaction from writing . When success, meaning, and power in their world were linked with writing, participants wanted to engage in it again. Third, teachers sometimes stepped in and affected the participants' lives and their possibilities beyond their connection with writing, a process I will call teacher advocacy.

When participants told of their experience with teachers, they told of either their distress with the experience or their success. It is important to point out that the memory of distress and success is heightened and that much happened to the participants that was someplace in between distress and success. Nevertheless, it is an organization organic to the data to look for connections and then understanding in not only the upsetting experiences but also with the encouraging experiences. For what is clear from the data is that how teachers act with developing writers can facilitate or hinder their progress in making writing an important mode of expression for them. Following a close view at distressing and encouraging experiences with teachers, this section will focus on grading procedures, and finally turn to yet another way that teachers affected the quality of some of the participants lives--teacher advocacy.

Distressing Experiences with Teachers

Distressing experiences with teachers affected writing for the participants by limiting the motivation they had for written expression. Teacher behavior that participants found distressing seemed to be behavior that caused them to change or defend their view of themselves as writers and/or to struggle with writing. When teachers continually criticized the participants' work or exposed their work to unwelcome scrutiny of peers, extrinsic motivation to participate in the work decreased. When teachers were seen as having vague, unfair, or unmeetable expectations, participants' perception of writing as undoable or unsatisfying decreased their intrinsic motivation to engage in it.

Distressing Extrinsic Response to Young Writers. Though middle-school years seemed to evidence the most vivid memory of distress, early experience with teachers' response to writing may have had the greatest effect on their view of themselves as writers. For it is the younger years when the groundwork for self-esteem and confidence in a particular skill is laid. It was significant that Sonia, Lilia, Orion, and Zac, all participants from basic classes, were the only students to report criticism from teachers at a young age. They were the students who reported teachers being dissatisfied with their writing. In each case it was with penmanship. "We'd have to get out letters all perfect and everything. I didn't like it too

much. I never could get anything right," said Orion.

For these writers in early elementary school, there was frustration in not being skilled in penmanship and in defining their poor ability at handwriting as poor ability at writing. Lilia said, "We would write it over to get perfect letters on how they supposed to go. It was difficult for me cause I was just writing big. The teacher didn't like that." Already in kindergarten Davy was disatisfied with his ability to write his own name and crumpled up paper and threw it in the garbage. "I hated writing," Davy said of kindergarten. Sonia said, "I can't remember her name, but everytime one of my A's would just miss the line, she'd make me do it all over again...and I hated it." Concern for neatness lived with Sonia even in her eleventh grade year when she said, "When it looks a mess, I keep tryin and tryin and tryin until it comes out right." Whereas Sonia kept trying to please the teacher, Zac had a different reaction. Perhaps he had the most dramatic story to tell,

I don't remember the first thing I did with writing, but I remember in pre-school we had to do triangles and squares and stuff. And then in second grade I had Ms. Candle. She was the meanest. Like if I was bad, she would make me sit under her desk, and if I would do something there, she would kick me. She was the first one that taught me how to handwrite. She used to always tell me that I couldn't write. Most of the time it was my name. I would write my name; she would tell me I was not writing my c's correctly. Ms. Candle kept on coming up during writing, and she kept saying you can't, you can't, you can't. Why should I do it if someone goin to criticize me? Why should I do it?

In each case a teacher's lack of acceptance of a child's early attempts at writing was a message. Zac developed a view of himself as

a writer through his interchange with Ms. Candle. His distress with writing was simply solved; he did not engage in it willingly and missed the opportunity of coming to it oblivious to a critical world, a stage that Graves (1982) sees as crucial when transcription is learned. Zac still struggled with transcription and a negative view of himself as a writer in his high school years. His distress with Ms. Candle had a long term effect.

The distress that writers from basic classes felt at continued teacher criticism in early elementary years was not reported by the participants in standard or advanced classes. Instead as Chris and Elana and Joel looked back on their early years they were amused with the positive attention they got for their first awkward attempts at writing.

Extrinsic Response to Adolescent Writers. Interestingly, participants at all levels reported teacher criticism that was distressing for them from fifth through eighth grades, and in each case this criticism affected their views of themselves as writers during those self-conscious years. They were more vulnerable to the power the teacher had to threaten the view that they wanted to maintain of themselves in front of peers. We have seen in a very specific way the effect that Lisa's sixth and seventh grade teachers' continued criticism had on Lisa's writing (She refused to do it) and the effect on her view of herself ("I felt stupid"). We have seen how Mr. Shultz's continued criticism of Chris's writing style intruded on the conscious attention he had available for the writing task, and

finally we have seen Davy's refusal to write in late grade school years ("The things I write was wrong....Why should I write when everything's always wrong?") But the effect of heavy correction and continued criticism in adolescent years was not distressing to only those writers who have been described in-depth. Only Elizabeth and Joel did not report being distressed by heavy correction or criticism.

Tracy's and Orion's stories are particularly compelling. When Tracy, the only minority student in an advanced class, moved and started school in a new junior high, she was put in the English class of a particularly demanding teacher, Mr. Howe. We have seen a glimpse of her predicament with this particular teacher in the section on peers when we saw how her peers validated her in the perception that he was picking on her. Here we see how Mr. Howe's critical, extrinsic response negated the intrinsic value Tracy felt in her work.

> I just hated going to that class...depressing. Go, just sit there and I didn't participate. We did philosophy; that was hard for me. We had to read their works and then interpret it. Some kids caught on, they (the philosophers) didn't talk the language we talked. We had to do a report; I was the first person he picked to read outloud. He picked on me a lot; he picked on me for everything. If I missed a word, he would have a fit. Another missed, he wouldn't say anything. I said no need of trying harder because he was just going to find something wrong with it. I thought he hated me, and I hated that class. I figured it out--not until the end of the year.

Mr. Howe's continual criticism of Tracy's work affected her performance. He became a threat to her view of herself as a good student. Tracy's perception that Mr. Howe had a negative view of her

abilities made Tracy feel badly about those abilities. Defensive strategies caused her to take an "I don't care" attitude and to hide herself as much as possible from his eyes so that she wouldn't be humiliated in her own eyes or in those of her peers.

Orion is another participant whose work was not improved with criticism. I asked Orion why he said Ms. Bothell didn't like him.

> The way I did things I guess. Everybody writes these big long, two page things, and I would give one and a half pages or one page. And she'd tell me to come back and write papers over and everything, after school cause of "not too neat." I used to write big letters and sloppy lines. She never liked me. I don't know what was so bad about it. Then I would write small, so small teachers couldn't read it, so they would give me 'B' or something like this, "Hey, can't read, B+, get outta here." She never liked me, ignored me, yelled at me, detention.

In detention Orion wrote; his punishment was writing. Under continual criticism, much of which was voiced in front of the class, Orion found a way to avoid criticism for his writing. He just wrote so small that it couldn't be read. Orion said vehemently that he didn't care what teachers thought of him. Orion was irritating to teachers. I saw that in my observations. Either it was the only avenue that could give vent to his hurt, or it was his way of playing out the redefinition that he had had to make of himself as a bad student. When I worked with his material, I was reminded of a comment by Connell and his colleagues:

> Injury comes out in the interviews with many of these kids....we noted how often they protest about uncivil and unfair treatment by teachers--getting yelled at is not an ego-building experience, and kids in working-class schools get yelled at a lot. (Connell et al.1982, p.197)

Unmeetable Expectations Reducing Intrinsic Motivation. Many of

the participants felt distress in writing when they believed that teacher expectations were unmeetable, vague, or unfair. Joel was distressed when the teacher expected him to write a longer paper than the resources permitted, "I could see everybody else was getting these great five page papers on Thor, and here I was with a page and a half on Prometheus. I think that was frustrating." Zac was extremely frustrated because he couldn't meet the teacher's expectations to write a research paper without help. He ended up refusing to write a paper because he was confused about how to use a library and too shy to ask a librarian. In contrast Tracy's teacher made this expectation meetable, "Ms. R. took us to the library and showed us all the things to help us in writing our term papers. That helps me a lot." Other participants reported anger or self-blame in response to the unmeetable expectations of teachers. Whether emotion was directed inward or outward, unmeetable expectations affected the way they carried out later written work.

Elana, as we have seen, wasn't allowed to change her topic when it became painful to write about Zionism; she struggled. Sonia was expected to copy notes off the board and to try to understand a lecture simultaneously; she grew to hate writing. Chris was expected to change a style he had used for years without a concrete understanding of how he might make the change, Chris struggled. And Davy was expected to write long papers for "Cinema" when he was having trouble writing short ones. Davy struggled and hated writing. Elana, Sonia, Chris, and Davy felt badly about themselves and their inability

to live up to what they perceived as unmeetable teacher expectations.

Most of these seemingly unmeetable expectations caused more than distress. The participants began to redefine their abilities, or in Sonia's case, to redefine the task, "I began to hate writing." This hatred developed over copying and influenced her decision to stay away from the written work that college prep classes would demand.

Unlike the others, unflappable, confident Elizabeth had minor distress, probably best described as frustration, at trying to understand what she viewed as Mr. Shultz's vague expectations. "Shultz says, 'Put yourself in the paper,' 'I don't see any of you.' Should you put, 'I think that,' or is it writing style? Or is it using words that not everybody would put in that place?"

Elizabeth had a strong enough sense of herself as an able writer simply to be irritated with Mr. Schultz until she finally understood what he wanted. She was not distressed with his criticism or vague expectation; it did not affect her confidence in writing.

Distress from perceived teacher criticism and with teacher expectations that were perceived as unmeetable forced the developing writers to redefine their views of themselves as writers. Participants suffered "loss of confidence" as Chris put it or defended themselves from criticism in a way that negatively affected their writing. In these cases the word "perceived" is important. To better understand the importance of participant "perception" of criticism, let us return to Tracy to hear the end of her story with Mr. Howe

At the beginning of the last marking period, Mr. Howe called me up to his desk, and he said, "Tracy, I think you're a very good student, and I think you can do better than what you are doing. I'm not trying to pick on you or anything. I just think you have good abilities, and I think you can do much better than what you are doing. So don't get up-tight when I call you up about a sentence. Just read over your work. Don't be in such a hurry to get it over with." After that he became a nice teacher.

It made me feel special because he thought I had good abilities. I thought he hated me. I just didn't care about the work, just did it to get it done. My work improved in there, and it turned out to be a good class. I liked the class a lot, and I started to get into the work and getting stuff done.

Mr. Howe had not changed his view of Tracy as a writer, but Tracy changed her sense of how he viewed her and how he viewed her writing. Her emotional response to the context of her writing affected the way she did her work. Hence, she went from hating the course to liking it, from putting minimal effort into her work to taking care with her work, and from perceiving Mr. Howes as hating her to seeing him as thinking her to have special abilities. Perhaps Tracy's story best talks of the power of the teacher, the power of perceptions, the power of teacher acceptance, and the power of emotion's effect on students' written work and attitude towards writing. This second part of Tracy's story leads us to how teachers interact with students to facilitate growth in writing.

If it is the parent who initially has an effect on the self-esteem of the student, it is the teacher who takes over and affects general self-esteem and writing confidence. Trust and acceptance, which were tools that parents used to allow children a

positive view of themselves in the past, become a less powerful, but still viable tool for teachers in the present. Continual criticism implies lack of trust and acceptance; positive response validates trust and acceptance. Hence teachers have the power to cut into writing confidence already established and, more positively, the power to contribute to the raw material from which writing confidence is fashioned.

Teacher Facilitation of Writing

Participants had a lot to say about how teachers interacted with them to facilitate their writing. Analysis of their comments shows that teachers had two basic avenues to provide support while developing writers grew in the writing process. Teachers structured the writing experience so that it might be a meaningful and successful experience for the participant, hence providing intrinsic motivation for them to continue to engage in the process. And teachers showed the writers reasons why they should feel good about themselves as writers, thus providing extrinsic motivation for them to continue feeling good about what they were doing.

Meaning and Success Enhancing Intrinsic Motivation. Participants especially remembered writing experiences when they allowed the writer to make meaning of their world and to act upon it, when they were successful, and when they felt special or had fun in the processs. Davy talked about the writing teacher who got him to

write again, "Write about the apple tree that died. Write down what
you can and what you know." And we can imagine a fifth grade Davy
trying to make meaning of the demise of an apple seedling that he had
been nurturing for months. Sonia described writing a description and
making an accompanying plan of her room at home. "I was really
creative then." Elana talked of the class recipe book, "I did
cinnamon toast. That was pretty advanced stuff." Elana wrote the
recipe and then her friends used it and she used theirs. Orion and
his classmates made a menu for stone soup and in the evening their
menu materialized into a soup supper for parents. Chris labeled
Christmas gifts for his parents with his name. Lisa and her
classmates wrote a scene from a play they had read in their own words
and acted it out. Elana said, "I wrote a letter to President Ford
when he lost the election, and I got a letter back. I was the only
one in the class, and I was so excited. Excitement reverbated in the
interviewing room as they remembered times when writing caused
something to happen for them, when they had power through writing.

When Tracy was quite young she was given special experiences that
made her feel good about herself as a student. "My mother was really
good friends with the library teacher. So she always used to pick me
to be in things cause she lived next door." And Tracy worked hard not
to dissappoint those who gave her special experiences. She was picked
to write and act in a play that explained the workings of the library,
to assist the school secretary, to appear in a weekly t.v. show, and
to do the scriptwriting for it. "I was picked for a gifted and

talented class, and we would go someplace every week and write about it." All these experiences were connected with writing; the writing produced meaningful results that allowed her to make sense of what she had experienced, or to provide an experience for an audience. Tracy began to make meaning of herself as a minority student and to expand on her view of what was possible in life, "I interviewed and wrote about the first black man to work in the school systems of this city." Even when Tracy was in eleventh grade, teachers were still fashioning writing experiences that made writing meaningful. Her "Writing Workshop" teacher took her class on trips to a Japanese Art Museum, and to a crematorium and gave her other experiences of which she was then asked to make personal meaning.

Each participant commented that they enjoyed writing when teachers gave them a choice of topic or freedom to choose whatever topic they wanted. This better enabled them to write about material of which they could make personal meaning. Empowered by their writing, making meaning of their world through writing, seeing writing work for them--all this became intrinsic motivation for them to engage in the writing process. Feeling success from writing and getting joy from it were also sources of intrinsic motivation, and teachers provided situations for most participants in which this was possible.

Success in writing also increased intrinsic motivation to engage in it. Elana, Chris, Joel, and Davy nostalgically remembered experiences when they were allowed success without worrying about error. Elana talked about writing her name "with backward E's, but it

was still my name." Chris described the joy he had in writing what he later knew was filled with immature modes of expression, every line beginning with "And the boy said." Joel recalled early writing, "Just to write it down, and know it was right, no questions asked." Elana said, "I don't remember ever being scolded at for bad writing, you know for mistakes in writing." Davy spoke nostalgically of his important third grade year with Ms. Hirsh. "It was fun putting sentences together...and they didn't mind run-on-sentences, but they got to that later." For Davy third grade and Ms. Hirsh, a teacher who almost became a surrogate parent, were very important. "I was learnin cursive, and I was, like, excited cause I was learnin something new." Feeling success, feeling that he was learning a lot through writing was important to the intrinsic value it had for him.

Participants also reported a joy in writing that they knew was good while they were doing it or in writing when they knew they were going about it just right. Writers appreciated teacher-structured activities in which they felt secure, when they were comfortable with the format and could involve themselves in the material. "I would like writin because I knew I had it." said Sonia. "That's when I got a joy, when I was writin something I knew I was goin to get an A for." Joel said, "There's this free feeling I get when I finish something and I knew that it was good; I knew I'd be getting a good grade on it." Freedom from extrinsic negative evaluation allowed joyful participation in the process.

Simple fun from writing projects that teachers fashioned was

another source of intrinsic motivation for developing writers. Joel speaks of the fun he and his friends had in thinking up "goofy titles for lab reports" and of articles for an Olympian newspaper in Greek mythology.

In these cases it was the teacher who created situations in which the particpants could find intrinsic gratification from their work. If students succeeded in their work, if writing allowed them to make meaning of their life, if it provided them a way to understand their world and the way they were in it more fully, writing was meaningful and meaning-driven. Finally, if writing allowed them to actually affect their world, they found power and hence gratification in the process.

Elana's report of enjoyment she had in writing up and illustrating an invention shows us how intrinsic and extrinsic motivation link. "I made an invention. It's something that you put on the steering wheel of your car, and it analyzes your breath, and if you're over the limit the car won't start. She hung it up." The joy Elana had in writing up her invention was one source of satisfaction in making writing something she would want to do again (intrinsic motivation), and having the implied praise and recognition of having it hung up was a second source of satisfaction. Intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction linked to make the writing process and the next topic a joyful and memorable experience. It is notable that reported writing experiences that enhanced intrinsic motivation occurred during elementary years and some in junior high years.

Though this kind of writing was continued by some of the particpants on their own, writing that tapped intrinsic motivation was not prevalent in the high school writing curriculum of the participants.

Forms of Extrinsic Motivation. Whereas intrinsic motivation made the act of writing valuable for participants, when their work was valued by others they felt extrinsic motivation to continue engaging in it. Participants reported the pride they felt when a teacher recognized their product as having special value. In early years in school, participants talked about receiving stars on their work. This was at once an accolade of their work from teachers and evidence of work-well-done that they could show to their parents.

Teachers hung up written work, and read writing aloud to the class. Each writer from standard and advanced classes reported such occurrences. Orion talked about a description he did--one of his few memories of an actual writing experience before high school. "She liked mine; she read it aloud to the class."

Midway through the term of "Exposition," Matt wrote a paper that was significantly better than those that had come before it. It very cleverly fulfilled a writing assignment by making a convincing clinical argument of why sexual intercourse was more valid physical exercise than gym class. Matt's teacher recognized that it was a significant breakthrough for him and allowed a way not only for other class members to read a good example of argumentation, but also for him to get extrinsic gratification from his work. She talked about his success at argumentation in class, hinted at the subject matter

and its controversial nature, and allowed that if Matt wanted a friend or two to read it, she couldn't stop him. As I sat observing, I saw the paper passed from cluster to cluster of students who upon reading Matt's paper congratulated him on his argumentation. Matt sat shyly puffed-up in the corner. With this success he renewed his efforts to find what he called the "trick" to writing.

Sometimes a product was valued beyond display to a class. "Mr. Shultz asked me to put it in a poetry contest." Joel felt good about himself as well as the poem; he began writing songs for a friend's rock group. Students identify with their products and valuing the product is valuing the person's ability at writing; enhancing their view of themselves as writers raises the confidence needed to take the risks necessary to grow in writing.

Teachers also demonstrated the value of the writer beyond the value of their product. These rare acts brought to the writers special recognition of themselves as writers, and as writers better than other writers. Only Tracy, Chris, and Davy reported such incidents. Davy said of the apple tree teacher, "She would put a sticker on top. The sticker meant credit. I was the one that had a lot of stars. So we both went out (of the Training School) and bought me a kite. Davy held on to the moment of the kite as a buffer against experiences with other Training School teachers- a sense perhaps that even though he was always wrong, he could be right if he wanted to try. In tenth grade a teacher took Tracy aside and said to her, "You should be a writer." And Chris was told more than once that he had

done outstanding work. Chris had had enough such comments so that the stature of the teacher who said it was what finally made it an important comment to him. "I was really proud of that because that was such a hard class." As discussed in the section on peer interaction with writing, comparison was inevitable, and though a few students like Tracy and Chris and Davy benefited from the comparison in the view they gained of themselves as the best writer in a group, others paled. But in the cases of Tracy, Chris, and Davy, confidence was engendered, and it is confidence from which writers take risks to try new strategies that provide growth in writing.

There was no way to judge whether extrinsic motivation or intrinsic motivation had the most effect on the participants' work. But it is clear that extrinsic motivation for continuing writing ceases when schooling is complete, when the teahers' evaluative eye is no longer available. In order for writing to continue to benefit the writer as a means of meaningful expression, a classroom structure that encourages paths for intrinsic motivation or that provides a range of sources of extrinsic motivation may be the most important gift a teacher can give to the developing writer.

In analysis of positive and negative experiences that participants had in their interaction with teachers over writing, I became aware that participants who were in basic writing classes reported a large number of the negative experiences and that reports of negative experiences at a young age came primarily from their interview sequences. Conversely, tales of the positive experiences at

a young age were strikingly those of advanced writers and tales of positive experiences through the years resided mostly in the interview material of standard and advanced writers.

As in the in-depth studies, participants' distressing or encouraging experiences were seen to have long range effects on their ability and comfort in engaging in written expression.

Effect of Extrinsic Evaluation on Intrinsic Motivation

Unless collaboration between student and teacher is a part of evaluation, the process takes place entirely outside writers-extrinsic to them. Participants in this study viewed grading as either a form of criticism or praise. In that respect it had more effect on writing-confidence than on the development of writing ability. If the grading was perceived as praise, it reflected self worth, enhancing the participant's view of self as writer. The participant valued corrections and suggestions, and grading became a form of extrinsic motivation to tackle further compexities in the process. However, if extrinsic motivation was the only source of motivation, the participants often ceased to enjoy the process and saw it as a task.

If the evaluation was perceived as criticism, participants with high confidence would work harder to write the way the teacher wanted or would be angry and disregard the comments and corrections (and perhaps be a bit more vulnerable to future criticism). For participants with less self-confidence, criticism was damaging to

their self view, brought forth defensive strategies that included ignoring corrections and refusing to write, or decreased confidence which often caused difficulty with a forthcoming assignment.

While intrinsic motivation might be primed by a good grade, it could be killed by a poor grade. Writers whose confidence had been increased by prior positive feedback allowed writing to he more a relationship between the material and themselves and had more room in conscious attention for the process. Interest in shaping the material engaged the writer. But when Chris was worried about Mr. Shultz's response to his work, it inhibited intrinsic motivation to write. Chris blocked; his conscious attention was interrupted by emotional links to a critical audience, and working with the material was frustrating. "I still have to do the work, but I don't have the confidence to do it." A closer look at how the act of grading affects intrinsic motivation is important.

Elana described a time when something that was intrinsically pleasing to her was criticized.

> I had an excellent teacher, but a witch. I just knew from day one that there was no way that I was going to get better than a C from her--no matter how much energy I put into an assignment. I wrote a biography of my grandfather which was a great biography, and she gave me a C-. I wanted to kill her. I worked so hard on that and he had sent me all these photographs and report cards, and letters he had written to my grandmother and my father when he was off, and all kinds of things. I worked so hard. I learned so much, and I thought I wrote a good paper. She had all these criticisms that were primarily for mechanical things, like a two page paragraph and a five line sentence. They were all justified things, but like, my God. It was the ideas that were the important thing. I was very angry that she and given me a poor grade. It was demoralizing....well, what the Hell, if I'm not going to get anything out of this, I might as well

not put any energy into what I write. At first sight when I see a C-, believe me I don't go Yea! But if I truthfully think that the paper was good, I don't care. I will look at it and say, "I wish I had done better. I'm going to try to think of what the teacher wants from me mext time and try to get better." Sometimes if a teacher says to put this and this and this in a paper. I try my best to put this and this and this in the paper. I try to do what they want and I resent it when I am writing for a teacher and not for me because I like it even though they are going to be grading it. I'm the one who is supposed to be learning from it.

Like other advanced writers Elana found herself writing to please the teacher; unlike other advanced participants, she fought that urge. On the surface she and her writing teachers maintained good relationships; underneath she seethed.

It has always bothered me that when you think you have written a very sound, complete, solid paper and they take an icicle and (she makes swords slashing noises) and they just chop it all down...they turn it into little bitty pieces, and take a little oil and put it in a salad, and they can do whatever they want to it.

If writing was to remain for Elana a pleasing activity, a relationship between herself and her material must be of her own making. Feisty Elana needed to be able to reframe writing for herself to maintain intrinsic motivation. First draft writing became at once her solace and her revenge.

Once I've written it, I know I have some control of what the teacher will read. They can change it, whatever way they want to, but I wrote what I wrote. When you are reading a book, the next word that you read is not up to you, it is wrtten right there. Writing is a sense of having control over my own life. It feels good. "I did that now someone else is going to read this and they aren't going to have control over what they're going to read next. Revenge!"

Elana seemed to slip back and forth between keeping control of

her writing and feeling good about it, and being demoralized and writing the way the teachers wanted her to. The quality of her work changed with her will to do it.

> I mean if I'm given an assignment, and I think the assignment stinks, I'm not creative. I couldn't care less about what we are writing about. If the teacher says you have to make three pages, and you have to have this and this and this and this, I want to go, "You know where you can fit that piece of paper." It doesn't make me want to write it. It doesn't make me want to do the assignment at all, and so what happens is that when I do the writing, it is not my strongest work.

Tracy and Elizabeth, two other advanced students, prided themselves in being able to "psych out" the teacher and write the way the teacher will want it. Perhaps consistent teacher praise made extrinsic teacher evaluation more satisfying than their own intrinsic motivation. Tracy said,

> When I do a paper for a specific teacher I always try to figure out what they want. That seemed like the most trouble throughout school, living up to what they expect out of your writing and stuff. And I think that's what made writing feel more like work than fun, than pleasure, because each teacher. Each year the work would get harder and harder. And now in eleventh grade, it's more and more, and you have to learn how certain teacher wants it done a certain way. I think I know what my teachers want from me now. I hope another teacher doesn't come along and change things again. I don't get excited about it. I do it because I know it has to be done.

One senses Tracy received more gratification from being a good student than from being a good writer.

Elizabeth said, "I guess I cater a lot to what the teacher wants. If the teacher makes a list of important points, I be sure to include those. If a teacher mentions writing style or something to do with

the topic, I'll make sure it's there."

Writing for Elizabeth and Tracy was not a relationship between themselves and the material. Intrinsic motivation seemed to slip away as they admitted the teacher as a third party in the relationship. They wrote to impress the teacher, not to express their understanding of the material. They saw writing as a chore--a task dependent on extrinsic motivation. "Writing's never been really awful. It's like brushing your teeth. It's something you do."

Like Elizabeth and Tracy, Chris had been very successful at pleasing the teacher--until recently. His style and language were so acceptable that he could write to please himself and please the teacher in the process. Now Mr. Shultz intruded on his conscious attention while writing, and a process that used to be engaging, almost a pastime, became dissatisfying "work."

Perhaps Tracy, Chris, and Elizabeth were trapped by their own success. When they received more extrinsic than intrinsic satisfaction from writing, it became more a task that is rewarded than rewarding in and of itself. For college-bound students, writing to please teachers was relevent to their later life. These students saw that pleasing the teacher would enable them later.

Whether participants used teacher evaluation as a benefit to further writing seemed to be a function of the form the evaluation took and how the writers viewed themselves. When two students in standard classes got bad grades on work that was intrinsically pleasing to them their tendency was not to buckle under and try harder

to please the teacher, but rather to get angry or to use defensive measures. As Matt described getting a graded paper back, there was a violent tinge to the intensity of his anger at a remembered event. His violence at the memory itself seemed to upset him. His way to deal with this anger was to decide he didn't care. If he didn't engage himself in the work or identify with it, he wouldn't get so angry or hurt at it being criticized.

> If I put a lot of effort into a paper, this was when I was in ninth grade, if I do what I think is a good paper, and I get an F, I feel like kicking the teacher in the face, that's the way it is. I spent all my time on it and this is what I get, this is the result? The Hell with it, no use looking at it. I don't like writing papers--just like some task I have to perform, something I want to get over with after awhile. It's like your mother gives you some chores to do, like scrubbing the bathroom floors, exactly like that.

To keep his anger under control, Matt had stopped committting himself or involving himself in his writing for two years. If he cut himself off from intrinsic pleasure in the work, cut himself out of the work, then a bad grade was not really a reflection on him. He hadn't put anything of himself into it to begin with. Perhaps this is why Ms. M. perceived the physical exercise paper to be a turning point for him.

As we've seen, poor grades did nothing for intrinsic motivation except to dampen it. And good grades became seductive so that extrinsic motivation became more important than intrinsic gratification. We've seen this from advanced writers, but basic writer Sonia also fell prey to the seduction of grades.

> Ah, history, that's when I liked it (writing)...Okay..the
> tests, that's when I would like writin. Because I knew I
> had studied it and I knew that I was goin to get an A and I
> knew I was right, so you know that's when I got a joy when I
> was writin something I knew, that I was going to get an A
> for.

But good grades can also prime the process by helping writing
become an enjoyable enough act so that intrinsic motivation might
surface. Positive extrinsic evaluation seemed most important for the
less confident participants.

Lisa's improvement in grades had brought her to a place where she
could actually find satisfaction in writing again. Since the
criticism of her sea poem and subsequent D-, rediscovery of intinsic
motivation had been a slow process. Ms. M. was there to ease her
along the way.

> I started getting A's and B's on my papers, so as a result I
> started liking the class. Ms. M. was interesting (Lisa
> began to get interested in content) so I said "Well, I'll
> just get into writing," and it was exciting. I'd pass in a
> paper and I'd want to see what I got for a grade, and I
> didn't start dreading it when teachers would assign a paper,
> so it was easy for me to write. I remember one time when
> Ms. M. assigned a paper and I wanted to write it! I mean I
> really wanted to write it. I've wanted to write because I
> want to see my grade.

For Lisa getting some A's and B's on papers allowed her to view
herself as an able writer, and with that resurgence of confidence, she
began to enjoy the act of writing and to endeavor untried formats with
a sense of challenge, not of dread. Ms. M. was effective with Lisa
and Matt because by not being overly critical of their work, and by
commenting on content and progress, she imbued them with the trust

that they could do it and with acceptance of it that raised their confidence. Ms. M. also talked with them about content, showed interest in the meaning they were making through their writing. She fostered intrinsic motivation through interest, while offering extrinsic through evaluation.

For the participants who were enrolled in basic classes, evaluation had mostly been the correction of errors at the sentence level. For Zac, Sonia, Lilia, Orion, and until recently Davy, corrections proved over and over that they were inadequate at the job of writing.

Students in the inner-city school liked Mr. Fog. He listened to what they said to him and joked around with them. I watched Mr. Fog work with Zac's, Sonia's, and Lilia's writing. They wrote a paragraph twice a week. They did a first draft and handed it in. Mr. Fog worked on the surface of their endeavors. Corrections were made of syntax and spelling; if a topic sentence was missing that was noted. The paper was handed back with only a rare word about content. They copied it over making corrections.

For these students what they wrote was of little consequence; it was how they wrote it that was attended to. Orion said of paper corrections, "Doesn't bother me, nothing really bothers me, I could care less what other people think about it, to Hell with them, I don't care." Davy said, "I didn't know how to write the story cause it was too short. I knew I'd be getting it wrong. I stopped writing." Meaning making in writing wasn't encouraged. These basic writers

lived on the surface of their writing as did the teachers. There was little motivation, intrinsic or extrinsic, to involve themselves in the task.

In Orion's eleventh grade year I watched him in conference with Mr. O'Neill. Mr O'Neill started by joking around with Orion and Jason. He then crouched down next to the desk at eye level with Orion and talked about what he'd written. He started with content and engaged Orion in talk about the subject matter. (Zac received a paper handed to him with corrections.) They talked over next steps; Orion had a few ideas. At the end of the three minute discussion, they looked at a few sentence level concerns and Mr. O'Neill was on to another student. Orion looked the written comments over more carefully (Zac threw them away) chatted with Jason about changes, and began to redraft. "Mr. O'Neill likes reading my little fantasy stories. He said in that little caption that he liked my writing." Interest, approval, trust that it can be good were shown. And when it was , and when Orion agreed, Mr. O'Neill typed it up and handed it out to everyone in the class. Evaluation ceased to be a thoroughly extrinsic process, and hence Orion started to engage in the process from intrinsic motivation again.

Evaluation was a primary and powerful way that teachers interacted with students' writing. When evaluation was used to prime intrinsic motivation, or when, as in Mr. O'Neill's conference, it was done in collaboration with the writer, it fostered writing as a meaningful mode of expression that would continue after school years.

In most cases positive evaluation kept intrinsic motivation for writing from developing. When students were focussed on what would please the teachers they were less engaged in their own interest in the material. Negative evaluation was seen to foster progress in writing with only the most confident of writers and then its effect seemed to cause the participant to renew efforts to please the teacher.

Teacher Advocacy

It would be tempting to say, "Find a success , especially one whose origins were in the working class, and you will find a teacher or a series of teachers who acted as an advocate for that student--an enabler of upward mobility." This would be a colossal generalization, but for a small number of participants in this study, teachers became advocates and this advocacy opened for those students a change in the way they viewed themselves as writers and students, a change in the way they perceived writing as working for them in their lives, and a change in the amount of power they perceived themselves as having to act upon their world. This is an important difference that teachers can and did make for students. Davy and Tracy were freed to some extent from class restrictions. The class system wouldn't be changed. The other "basic" students that they started school with, and probably the children of those students, will probably keep on being basic students, but individual teachers in their schools have acted within

that system to loosen some of the bonds to allow Davy and Tracy the possibility of a middle class future.

Davy had a stream of teacher advocates in his experience as a student. His first and second grade teachers kept contact with him after he entered Training School, and Ms. Hirsch, his third grade teacher, became almost a surrogate parent for him while he was there, letting him know the value of written expression every time a letter arrived giving him news, support, or announcing a bi-monthly visit. The apple-plant teacher continued briefly in this teacher-advocate tradition before she left the training school. Later in high school his teachers had taken initiative on his behalf in promoting upward mobility. His tutor even arranged with authorities that he might live with her family when things were rough for Davy at home. His drama coach urged him to be the only non-advanced student in a Shakespearean production. Davy became an English Department advocacy project. They arranged his participation in the Upward Bound Program, found a permanent place for him to live so that he wouldn't have to return to the city with his mother, managed to find a tutor to work with him daily on his writing, and thus managed to give him important opportunities for upward mobility. Most important his teachers had told him that he was not dumb and that he could write. They trusted in his ability and approved of his endeavors.

Tracy started school in an elementary school where her mother's friend was librarian. She was continually picked for special writing experiences and for the gifted class. Teachers said, "You should be a

writer." Mr. Howe explained his picking on her as picking her out for her "special abilities."

Rist (1969) cites ease of interaction with the teacher as one of the criteria by which one teacher of the kindergarten class he studied seated children at the table for "fast learners." It is possible that Davy and Tracy were chosen for teacher advocacy at a young age because they were attractive, positive, and warmly open to interaction with teachers. Whatever the reason, and however family and peers have fit into the dynamic, Davy and Tracy had been slotted for special attention by a series of teachers.

At the time of this study, Zac was on the fulcrum of possible upward mobility. He went from teacher to guidance counselor to try to sign into college preparatory classes.

> Cause this is Career English. I guess that is a lower English class, cause I was talking to my counselor, and I told him I wanted to be in the regular group class. Mr. Fog got to recommend me. So I asked Mr. Fog about that. He said you have to be on some list or something. He said if my name is on the list, he will recommend me.

Zac didn't know how to insure that his name would be on the list. Either Mr. Fog or the counselor could have facilitated the process, but Zac was too shy to seek clarification. Even though his mother worked full time and couldn't get to school to implement change, she might have used the telephone but didn't. Zac's history teacher praised his abilities, but instead of cultivating a possible teacher advocate, Zac didn't want to make himself prominent in front of peers.

Tracy's and Davy's teacher advocates have probably made a difference in their lives. For whatever reason, Zac lacked such an advocate. His future upward mobility was less likely.

Conclusion

This section has focussed on how teachers make a difference in whether written expression becomes a meaningful mode of expression for developing writers. Teachers were seen to make a difference when they created writing situations in which writing was a meaningful and successful activity--enhancing intrinsic motivation. They also made a difference when their response to the developing writer's work provided an extrinsic motivation to continue to engage in it. The balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation was seen as important as to whether writing was seen as a task or something to be participated in with enthusiasm. Teachers were also seen to make an important difference to certain student writers for whom they became advocates--sponsors who not only worked to change the student's view of self as student and writer, but helped change the view of what was possible in life and fashioned opportunities that made a difference possible.

CHAPTER VI

THE WRITING PROCESS AND ITS INTERACTION WITH SCHOOL AND SOCIETY

While the previous chapter has reported how writers have been affected by response to the people beyond the end of their pen (their family, peers, and teachers), this chapter strives for an understanding of how institutions and social factors affect writers' relationship with the written word. To do this I will consider the individual participant, the participant as a member of a group, and the social institutions that surround both individual and group.

The participants in this study were members of previously existing groups of writers. Each participant had been categorized by school criteria and circumstance and placed in a writing class. I sought to understand the reasons for that placement and the effect it had on their writing process and their futures. Thus, instead of categorizing students, I focused my inquiry on them as an already categorized group to study the nature and effect of that categorization.

The first group will be termed advanced writers. They have distinguished themselves in their school systems by finding their way into advanced writing classes. Elana, Tracy, Elizabeth, and Chris were the advanced writers in my study, and there were connections among these individual participants, their ways of going about writing, and the ways they were handled by the educational institutions in which they were enrolled.

The second group of writers will be termed standard writers. They were neither in an advanced writing classes nor were they in the lowest or remedial writing class. The participants in this standard category, Matt, Lisa, and Joel, saw college as a next step, though some of their fellow classmates from standard writing classes had not made that choice.

The third and last group are those from basic writing classes. "Basic" is a term used by Shaughnessy and other researchers for writers who were found in the lowest or remedial writing class and who were considered to be less skilled than the majority of other students in written expression. Davy, Sonia, Orion, Lilia, and Zachary were the participants who fell in this basic writer group.

That these students were so categorized is a function of the grouping by "ability" level (variously termed tracking, streaming, or, most recently, phasing) which has long been characteristic of American schooling. The large majority of schools have such performance grouping systems. Indeed the rural/suburban school district from which some of my participants came had such groupings within the school, while the inner-city school actually had a whole school for each category until a few years ago. Now there is a college-bound component in most but not all of their city schools.

In this chapter I will look at my participants in the categories in which they have been placed by their educational institutions. The retention of these categories is purposeful because I explore the reasons for such categorization and its effect on the participants,

their writing process, and the quality of their lives. If as this dissertation asserts, every human being has the innate ability to learn to write so that writing can become a meaningful form of expression, then how does it come about that some writers take up writing as a tool to understand their world and their place in it, to act upon that world, and to insure the possibility of economic success if they want it--and other writers do not. This chapter, then, will investigate why student placement in the categories both reflects and perpetuates an inequitable class system. It will describe the writing process of each group and analyze the effect of the school and larger social factors on the lives of the participants and their writing process. After a brief passage about the writing process, the chapter will begin with the advanced participants, then turn to the standard participants and finally to the basic participants.

The Writing Process

The writing process can be divided into five components: idea generation, organization (making writing plans), transcription (putting thoughts into words or drafting), editing, and redrafting. Of these components of the process of writing, I will consider only transcription and redrafting as time bound. Organization, idea generation, and editing may go on from the time the student has an inkling that writing will take place until the paper leaves the writer's hand. For example, in analysis of the protocols and from

comments made in interviews, it was clear that idea generation, though the bulk of it occurred before transcription, was reported during transcription ("popping in my head" as Lilia would say), and before and even during redrafting. In some cases idea generation continued on even when participants thought their papers were complete; they felt compelled to return to that work to integrate new ideas.

Because the words "editing" and "redrafting" are often used interchangeably, I should make distinctions between the two. In the way that I use the word, editing may take place at any time in the writing process. The internal editor of the writer interrupts the process and says, "This isn't what you want; this other thing is better." This can take place during idea generation, during organization, during transcription, and during redrafting.

Transcription occurs when the writer puts ideas and plans into words on the page. The bulk of this work is normally done during drafting. Though transcription could and optimally should be a part of redrafting, it rarely was. Redrafting in almost all cases was not a rethinking and new transcription of selected plans and ideas, but, rather, focal polishing for the teacher.

As well as looking at what the participants have done during writing, this study also looked at what has hindered their writing process. Influenced by Janet Emig's seminal work, The Composing Processes of Eleventh Graders, I have taken seriously the concerns and worries that the participants had during writing. Emig (1971) was attentive to "worries" as vestiges of past pedagogy. Smith (1982)

noted that writers concern themselves during writing most closely with "those aspects of writing that are most likely to be evaluated" (Smith 1982, 23). Both Smith's and Emig's observations were validated by the written protocols and interview material of the twelve participants in that those things in the conscious attention of the writer during writing were reflective of past and present teacher evaluation emphases.

It seems that a valuable distinction may be made between writers' concerns and their worries. When a writer is concerned, that concern can be productive. If the writer concentrates on a few concerns during writing, then new skills can be acquired. When the concern is changed into an automatic skill, it no longer requires conscious attention (Flower and Hayes 1980). Then there is room in the conscious attention for the next, more sophisticated concern. The twelve participants showed in their interview and protocol material how worry hindered and how concern facilitated their writing process.

The Process of the Advanced Students

Each of the advanced writers have been highlighted to some extent in previous chapters. Chris was studied in-depth with a profile and analysis to understand his eleventh-grade struggle with writing and with Mr. Shultz after a smooth and award-winning career before that. Tracy was the only black advanced writer. Her first language was not pure standard English, and her parents were not college-educated. It

was Tracy whose perception of Mr. Howe's "picking" on her made such a difference in the way she felt about herself and her writing. Elana was highlighted when we viewed her irritation at having to write for a teacher's whims, the resultant view of her first draft as revenge against the teacher who had to read what she wrote, and the struggle she had with satirizing Zionism when the very subject was upsetting to her. And finally we have talked, too, about Elizabeth, the confident advanced writer, who saw writing as similar to brushing her teeth, who was adept at figuring out what the teacher wanted, and who cared more about what her father thought of her writing than about what teachers thought.

Idea Generation

What was most notable about the idea generation of advanced writers was that not only was it a part of the process that took priority, but it was considered to be the hardest part of that process. They took time to do preliminary idea generation before they sat down to write, and when they sat down, each collected their thoughts in their own way before they began transcription.

The first stage of idea generation for these writers was a process of both probing in their own long term memory for material and seeking aid from outside resources. Elizabeth said, "I read course materials, listen in class when our teacher will bring up the most important aspects of it, or ask my Dad about it." Elana talked to her

mother and went "through books trying to get factual information." Chris checked books, talked to teachers, and friends, and occasionally his Dad. Tracy did not ask her parents to help, but took careful book notes.

The ease of idea generation, however, was not just dependent on the participant's probing of the long term memory and the wealth of outside resources. It was highly affected by both the teacher's method of assigning the task and by the power the teacher in the role of evaluator had over the participant's plans.

The advanced participant mentioned that the way the teacher assigned writing made a big difference to them in whether or not ideas came easily. In each case they felt that having some choice facilitated the idea generation process. Elizabeth said, "I could choose what would be easiest for me, and it seemed like the most interesting. If I've got a strong opinion on something, it's real easy for me to write." One would suppose that finding interest in the material they were to write about allowed them some intrinsic motivation for the task. Struggle ensued when there was very limited choice (Tracy: "We were limited; you couldn't pick any topic you wanted and getting my topic was the hardest part for me") or complete freedom of choice (Elana: "Most kids, I think me, would have an incredible amount of difficulty if we could write about anything... stare at the blank page for hours") Elizabeth summed up what other advanced writers said about teacher direction in assignments.

I think I prefer the choice of three, you know, one out of three. Because that gives me a little bit of leeway.

Writing about anything you want, it doesn't tell me what
the teacher wants. It's just too vague, and I'm almost
timid when I have to write those type of things. When I've
got a choice, I can, you know. I know what the teacher
expects.

This data further supports the previous observation of the effect
of teacher interaction on writing. Advanced writers began to make
writing a relationship between themselves, the material, and what
would please the teacher.

Applying Smith's previously quoted statement that students attend
in writing to what teachers have previously paid attention to, I
observed that teachers of the advanced classes both paid attention to
and were interested in the ideas of the participants. The ideas were
valued in and of themselves, and were also seen as an important
component in the work. These teachers' questions about ideas often
pushed the participants to further thought. There was no observed
pressure for students to adopt teachers' ideas. Teachers' attention
to ideas had the positive result of causing students to feel valued
for communicating their ideas through writing, and the negative result
of having students try to find ideas that pleased the teacher, thus
lessening their own intrinsic motivation in the process.

A second more formal stage to the idea generation process
occurred when participants sat down to begin the writing of the paper.
Advanced participants had found their own way to go about this;
nevertheless, it so integrated with planning and organization that it
is best described under that heading. Writers from advanced classes
did not sit down to write without having some ideas intact for their

work, nor were those ideas in a final form.

Planning and Organization

Once preliminary ideas were in mind for a piece of writing, a second stage of idea generation and planning and organization took place in a more formalized way--by writing. Of all three groups, it was the advanced participants who gave the most priority to planning and organization. Elana spent more than half of her writing time in her two protocols in this process. Both she and Chris used brainstorming, writing down many and divergent ideas before settling on ones to use. Since Chris worried a lot about original ideas, he wouldn't sit down until a basic approach and idea were in place. Then he would brainstorm sub-ideas and examples. Following this he would begin a detailed outline, but part of the way through the construction of an outline, he would begin transcription of the remainder of the paper and return afterward to write the beginning in complete sentences.

The brainstorming which enriched Elana's and Chris's process was not a part of Tracy's and Elizabeth's formal planning process. Their process showed more convergent thinking. Tracy said, "When a teacher gives an assignment I usually think it over you know, try to take notes, and jot down my thoughts in order before I just write it." In her composing aloud and in observed writing sessions, Tracy took one-half of her time after she sat down to write in this stage of the

process.

Elizabeth didn't rely on outlines or notes, but she wouldn't sit down until her plans were pretty completely generated in her mind. Her next step was the lengthy task of getting down the first sentence. This first sentence consolidated her ideas and gave shape to the rest of her paper. Then she would type out the first and often final draft by using the plans in her mind, new ideas that those plans elicited during writng, details from the books that were spread around her, and, as she said, "regurgitation of the class notes." Each participant from the advanced classes had found a method of idea generation that was an integral part of their planning and which was a substantial component of the writing process.

Just as the teacher provided stipulations about content that were necessarily attended to by these advanced students before idea generation, so organizational guidelines were handed down. Whereas Tracy and Elizabeth said they had no trouble with this ("You just organize it as they say you should," said Tracy), Chris and Elana found more dissonance between what they wanted to do and what the teacher had assigned. (Chris: "I worried about trying to make what I was saying apply to the guidelines of the paper") (Elana: "When you get an assignment that the teacher has very definite guidelines about, I resent that") Chris had an ongoing debate with his law teacher about organization of arguments in law cases, and Elana's resentment caused her to refuse to do outlines because the two times she was required to do them, she had to reconstruct them after writing so that

they would reflect the organization of her paper. "I like organization, but I'm not organized. I have trouble making organization comfortable."

What was remarkable about the advanced writers' organization and planning was that it was a conscious process. It became a discipline and hard work.

> If it's a position paper, I usually do it by the strength of arguments. Like, some of the weaker ones first and then, maybe, like a strong one in the middle and definitely a strong one at the end, and then bring my point across. If there's something I want to use that's totally irrelevant, I do something else--I can't put it in the paper.

Elizabeth had the capacity to be quite automatic about organization during transcription. She worked quickly from the original plan that she had in her head when she sat down. Unlike the other advanced writers, she only occasionally rethought her original organizational strategy. The other writers were conscious of organization during transcription and changed plans more often as they went along.

The types of organization that the rural/suburban school advanced writers were asked to use in their "Exposition" classes were complex compared to those Tracy was asked to use in her inner-city school. And at the end of the term they were asked to do a "Doubleton" which was an exercise in overlaying two organizational strategies, for instance argumentation through a comparison and contrast format or interpretation overlaid with an advantage and disadvantage format. These students were pushed to further complexity of thought through

teacher assignments.

Transcription and Editing

For advanced writers transcription was a quite intense yet untroubled process except (as Chris and Elana have demonstrated) when emotion redirected thought during the process and disrupted that process. Unless that happened the conscious attention during writing was mostly directed to implementing the planned ideas and organization. This became a period of intense concentration. Elana said,

> When I'm upset, my relationships with my family and my
> friends, sometimes the littlest thing will distract my
> attention. I'll go on a tangent. But sometimes when my
> ideas are flowing, they are going from my brain, to my hand,
> to the paper, I mean (if there was) a twenty-eight hour
> nuclear holocaust, I'm still going to write.

Examination of the chart of what was in the conscious attention of the writers from advanced classes during transcription (Figure 6-see Appendix), shows that only rare attention was cast to spelling, aesthetics, syntax, punctuation, and textual conventions--with the exception of Tracy who still attended to getting the right verb tense. Tracy probably needed to consciously substitute standard English verb forms for the Black English forms that would be more automatic for her. Most notably the advanced participants, with the exception of Tracy, did not usually vocalize words as they applied them to the page. The process of transcription, thought to word, was relatively

automatic and their minds were free of transcription concerns and available for more important tasks. They were not text-bound.

Even "decentering" (Graves' word for making sure that the written word would be understandable to an audience) was quite automatic except for Chris who in one protocol was very aware of his teacher as a critical audience. Recursion, returning to read earlier text, occurred infrequently; it was normally used as a way of reviewing what was already written before starting a new section or after blocking occurred. Other considerations during transcription were (1) editing of thoughts and plans when the inner critic of the writer figured out that initial plans wouldn't work, and (2) concern with passive voice and word choice. A later section will be devoted to these last two concerns that interrupted what at other times seemed a deep concentration on transcription of ideas and organizational plans--the conceptual level of their task.

Redrafting

Redrafting seemed to be a similar process for each of the writers from advanced writing clases. Elana summed it up for most of them, "I read it over, maybe change three words, chop out some stuff to get my point across, occasionally shift a sentence from say the top of the paragraph to the bottom and copy it over to make it a lot neater." Redrafting fulfilled three functions for teacher readiness (1) correcting mistakes made in the rush to get ideas down as they were

coming during transcription, (2) moving an occasional misordered sentence, and (3) making a draft neat enough to be handed in.

I asked every writer how they knew what was wrong. They all said that they read it over to see if they could catch anything wrong. Elizabeth got a little irritated with my question at first, "I don't know. I mean, that's the way I learned it. I just know it's not right." But when she started to think about it, she noted that she did make corrections on the basis of what she learned in English classes. "I can pick out almost any grammatical mistake. I'll notice that I have a dangling preposition on the end. I'll just cross out the preposition and put, like "of which." She continued, "Or, if I've used a subject pronoun instead of an object pronoun like 'between you and I' instead of 'between you and me.' Let's see, misplaced adverbs, verbs that are separated like 'have not even been.' I don't like that." Elizabeth, Chris, and Tracy mentioned that they used grammar lesson material consciously to improve writing. Certain constructions would send up a red flag, then they analyzed the language according to rules they had learned, and finally they would correct it.

Elizabeth was even conscious of the difference between oral and written expression.

> Words usually come into my mind how I would be speaking, not how I'm writing. So I'll just write it down as I think it. It's not always right--that's what I've learned. I mean, you don't see that kind of thing in formal writing, and you shouldn't see it in school essays; misplaced adverbs shouldn't be there.

The advanced writers did what the teachers of advanced writing

classes expected of them--focal revision. More global redrafting was not expected of them. Elizabeth explained why students didn't do extensive redrafting. "Too much homework, other responsibilities, other priorities." Then with deeper consideration she added an amendment, "I ...a desire to do as little work as possible. Also I don't feel I need another draft. I can get by with the first one. I'm not saying my writing is great, but it gets me by with A's. I can't complain." Elizabeth had no intrinsic motivation for redrafting, and with A's there was little extrinsic motivation either. Redrafting was a very conscious attempt to make work teacher-acceptable; hers already was.

Concerns and Worries of Advanced Writers-Struggle vs. Progress

Advanced writers evidenced productive concerns and non-productive worries during their writing process. The sources of the concerns and worries that surfaced in their written protocols were often explained by the advanced participants in their interviews. They were quite conscious of what was bothering them and why it was bothering them.

Concern over passive voice by all the writers from advanced classes was an interesting phenomenon. They seemed to have a deep sense of what formal writing should be like and passive voice to them was a characteristic of their well-trained ear for formal tone. But Mr. Schultz wouldn't accept it. Both Chris and Elizabeth complained that passive voice was a feature of all their textbook writing.

Another explanation for why passive voice needed to be a teacher induced concern for them may be that they felt separated from, unengaged in, the writing that they did and naturally adopted a passive voice and attitude toward the material. Chris said,

> Most teachers are really unconcerned about passive voice, even English teachers in literary courses. The only things I consciously do for Mr. Schultz is , of course, have some shorter sentences, less wordy, less "archaic"--and if you have a thought that's in the passive, you have to restructure it. That causes me trouble sometimes.

During Chris's protocol, he declared himself as having a "passive thought," and he restructured it into active voice. It was over and done with. Passive voice was a productive concern that sat in the corner of his conscious attention, was flagged, and then attended to. It will probably continue to require such conscious treatment until it disappears from his writing (until active voice structure becomes automatic) or until he has another teacher who doesn't care about it.

Passive voice was a concern, but the other thing Chris did "consciously for Mr. Shultz" was a worry. He worried about his "archaic" style, which he understood to be his language, his wordiness, and colloquialism. When these worries intruded into his conscious attention, they blocked his progress as we have seen in the in-depth study of Chris.

For Tracy concern over syntax was important. She was the only advanced writer who consistently said words out loud as she put them on the page. Attention to syntax may have necessitated subvocalization of words. It may have been the process by which she

routed out the vestiges of her Black English. This did not completely monopolize her conscious attention. She also attended to planning, idea generation, and word choice, as is evident from the chart, but it may have affected the concentration with which she could approach these tasks. Tracy reported that she worried about having her written assignments long enough. Though this was not evident in her protocols of in-class writing, she did report that it distressed her in longer assignments. Tracy talked about a junior high teacher.

> He always commented and would say, "a little too lengthy" or "You could use a little more," but I think that's why I worry about it now. Because I think it's important to have the right amount for a specific theme. (This year) when I did type my term paper, I was so mad because it was six and one half pages and it was supposed to be eight. I just had to do a whole little bunch of extra stuff in the end. I got an eighty-six, the highest, but he said he would rather have had me turn it in shorter than spoil it at the end by adding. I was going to turn it in at six and one half, but sometimes he can be so strict.

Tracy worried about teacher expectations, in this case about length, and that worry was counter-productive.

In Elana's first protocol productive concerns surfaced. She was concerned about organization, her topic, and had a fleeting concern about punctuation of a quote. Elana, however, spent a lot of time trying to choose the right words. I asked her about why she blocked twice over finding a word. She responded that she was thinking about what Mr. Schultz would think about a choice. Indeed colloquialism and repeated words were things that worried her. I left Elana to do her second protocol in privacy and returned to find her upset and having accomplished only a few lines. She couldn't get words out. We

examined her distress.

> I was thinking about this evil, this evil head, you know,
> that's going to be angry at me, and not so much that he
> really, he doesn't yell, he doesn't call you, "Well, you
> stupid, irresponsible adolescent brat." You know, he doesn't
> do that, but I just really feel like (when) he looks at me,
> he's saying those words to me with his eyes.

When Elana made an appointment to talk with Mr. Shultz about the satire paper that she hadn't been able to do, he looked at her with what she perceived to be a rather disgusted response. One might surmise that with that meeting with Mr. Schultz on her mind, Elana's field of perception narrowed to the threat that Mr. Shultz represented to her view of herself as a competent writer, and that the emotion attached to finding words for him redirected her conscious attention from the task at hand.

Word choice was of concern to every advanced writer. The usually confident Elizabeth exhibited concern over two things, the first of which was word choice. "A lot of times I want to come across a lot stronger than I have. And I can't. And I only can pick out, you know, neutral words. I can't --like when I'm put under pressure, I can't think of any good vocabulary words." Striving to put "good vocabulary words" into her writing was perhaps a symptom endemic to advanced writers' please-the-teacher syndrome. Elizabeth described her second concern which borders on worry. "Why I'm afraid to write is just because I don't know what the teacher wants. I don't know if the teacher is going to like it."

Clearly the worries and concerns of all these advanced

participants were connected with maintaining a positive view of themselves as reflected from their teachers' reaction to their work. Teacher appraisal of their work remained very important to advanced writers and affected the way they went about their writing.

Coping Strategies Used to Maintain a Positive Self View

What was notable about the strategies that advanced writers used to maintain a positive view of themselves was that they were very conscious. Not only were they conscious about what they did when writing became difficult, but they consciously attempted to understand the roots of their struggle and sought strategies to deal with it.

For Elizabeth and Tracy writing was a relatively unemotional process and a process in which they viewed themselves as being skilled and untroubled. They adopted strategies described by Flower and Hayes (1980, 41) as those used by skilled writers to deal with the complexity of writing. They were very aware of the process they used to make writing untroubled. Elizabeth did what Flower and Hayes call throwing away constraints. She eliminated all but the most important demand on conscious attention (organizing her ideas into an expository format) until she had gotten a complete draft. "When I type something out, I'm not really concentrating on how words are spelled. I don't really think about it. I can't really see the mistake right away anyway. Usually I'm not thinking about anything; I'm all connected with my writing."

When it was all out Elizabeth waited until the next day and edited it for "spelling and grammar", making changes right on the typed draft that she handed in.

Tracy dealt with the demands on conscious attention which could have caused difficulty by doing meticulous idea generation and organization of ideas before she began transcription. This left her freer to concentrate on syntax during transcription.

Even though Elana and Chris were struggling with writing during this study, they were still conscious about how they dealt with that struggle. In the struggle that Chris went through during my work with him, he experimented with throwing way the audience constraint. "I was kind of writing as fast as I could and not considering exactly what was there. Because I thought--this would get the ideas and then I could refine them later." This strategy worked well for him until he had to revise it with Mr. Schultz in mind. Then the struggle returned. Chris and Elana were conscious of procrastination which became a strategy with both a productive and non-productive bent to it. Leaving something unpleasant to the last minute minimized the amount of time that Chris and Elana had to spend with it. Elana said,

> I am the best procrastinator. I'm sure everyone you meet will tell you that, but I'd say that ninety percent of the kids in school leave their work to the last minute. I could start it three hours earlier, three days earlier, but I choose not to. I know ahead of time that I'm not going to do it until the last minute, and I create this kind of pressure. Knowing I have to finish this tonight makes me do it. The logical thing is that I do a little on Wednesday, a little bit on Thursday, but sometimes I think my paper wouldn't be good without that pressure.

Elana seemed able to suspend concern about the last-minute approach until the last minute. Chris wasn't so lucky. Though he was conscious about procrastinating, he was also conscious about the price he paid. He called it avoidance instead of procrastination.

> When it gets built up to an extent where you can't stand it anymore, then you confront it finally. Then you feel much better. But there's that time when you're sort of caught between anger at where you are and guilt.

The non-productive aspect of procrastination was that getting it done was the thrust. The posibility of enjoying the process and the possibility of doing revision were usually obviated by the time factor. The pervasiveness of procrastination for advanced participants was indicative that intrinsic motivation to engage in the process of writing had not been cultivated. The productive end of procrastination was that, at least for Elana, the unpleasantness of writing was minimized and the "pressure" described necessitated her throwing away trivial concerns during the process.

Elana used ingenuity to diminish the pressure that procrastination had brought when that pressure stopped working positively for her.

> I remember it was getting later and later, and I am building up this tension. "Okay, don't worry about it because you know you are handing this paper in tomorrow." I would picture myself in my mind. I'd know what I was wearing to school that (next) day, and I'd close my eyes and see myself in whatever I was wearing, putting the paper on Mr. O'Neill's desk. That would always give me some assurance because I realized I was going to finish the paper.

Both Chris and Elana consciously tried to understand their

struggle with writing, trusting that if they could understand it; the conscious understanding would lessen the intensity of the struggle. Given time and understanding they felt they could end it. In our interviews Chris consciously looked for the roots of struggle. "I think part of the reason that my writing is so cluttered up, too wordy, too many thoughts in one line was because I got a lot of attention for turning out this 'high class' stuff when I was young." An example follows of how Elana went the next step and used her conscious understanding of her anger at Mr. Schultz to get her writing again.

> If something takes hours and hours and it shouldn't, it is a struggling thing. If it really needed that time, that doesn't bother me. But a paper for Mr. Schultz shouldn't take more than two to three hours to write, and if I find I'm in pain while writing it, I realize it, get angry, and just get it done.

Chris and Elana think, confront, and make conscious decisions to make writing less of a struggle for them. Like Elizabeth and Tracy, their coping strategies are highly conscious and productive.

Social Factors Affecting Process and Success
of Advanced Particpants

In the past chapters I have analyzed some of the social factors that allowed Elana, Chris, Elizabeth, and even Tracy to end up in advanced classes and which will allow them to maintain or attain high status in a class society in their future years. We have seen how parents' and teachers' interaction with these students allowed them to

view themselves as able to succeed, how high parent expectations implied trust in that success, how their family upbringing allowed them to acquire an acceptable language (or almost acceptable in Tracy's case) how they observed in their homes or in their neighbor's homes (as in Tracy's librarian neighbor) ways that they might go about writing and how it might serve them in the future, and finally we have seen how parents (and in Tracy's case teachers) acted as advocates for them in the school system. Further we have seen how these participants got into a track in which peer pressure pushed them towards success by their school's standard. (Tracy was put into a gifted and talented program early enough not to suffer the humiliation of good grades that Zac described.)

In this section, I will look beyond the living people who affected the success of the advanced participants, to the social institutions of tracking and to the function of language in tracking. A quote from Elana lends a living voice to these issues.

> With advanced students I am about average. With other students I am above average. Their whole standard, basic, and advanced system in High School really stinks. It causes distance between kids in school. You rarely see advanced students hanging around with basic. Most of my friends are advanced students. I do have some friends that have some basic classes, but not many. But I do feel that when I am with them, that I am ahead of them. There are certain ways that they express themselves. They certainly are not stupid. I don't choose my friends over how well they can write a paper, but there is something about how well they can write connected with whether they are in basic, or standard, or advanced.

> If I got put in a standard class, I'd be humiliated. I'd feel as if I really let myself down, I'd probably be more worried about what would happen to me than "Oh, my God, I have let my parents down. What are they going to think?"

It would lessen my expectations, like self-confidence in being a good student. I did go down from advanced chemistry to standard chemistry. When I went down, I was like hiding, but that faded away after a lot of other people from the advanced class were drifting into the standard class. Those people that were moving in there were intelligent. A lot of it depends upon your head set. Cause I really think that it depends more on your head set whether you are in advanced or standard, or basic. It just sort of determines how you are going to do in those classes. I get angry about this, and I would try to change it, but I really don't have a solution.

During my research I was aware of how conscious the students from advanced classes were of the world in which they lived. I was reminded of Paulo Freire's use of the word "conscientizacao" which refers to "learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradiction and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire 1968, 19). Elana perceived the social contradictions in her world and wanted to take action, but she couldn't find a route to do so.

As Elana talked she brought up two issues, one of which has been and will continue to be been covered--Elana's term "head set"--and the other, the interaction between tracking and language, to which we will turn now.

The Language of Advanced Writers

In Elana's mind students in different tracks distinguish themselves from those in others by "certain ways that they express themselves." Rist's (1969) study described a kindergarten teacher who used language as one of four criteria for separating children into

groups of "fast learners" and "slow learners," showing that language is a social factor that affects tracking. The "fast learners" placed at the "first table" also displayed a greater use of standard American English within the classroom (Rist 1969, 420).

A child acquires a language from the family into which the child is born, and that language becomes the child's first language. All the advanced writers were born into standard-English speaking families except Tracy. In fact of the twelve participants in the study, seven spoke other than standard English. They were all in the basic writing classes except for Tracy and Matt. Tracy was the only writer from an advanced class, and it is significant that (1) her black parents spoke close to standard English, and (2) that it was she who spoke most openly about language. She was conscious of language and the effect that one's language had on being a student.

> My mother constantly corrects me. I really don't like to use slang, Black English because--uh--what can I say? It makes me different? My grandparents they used Black English, but my mother and father they don't really. And I think I pick up most of my language from them and from doing good in school. Standard English just came easy to me because it was in use at home.

In speech Tracy uses "good" as an adverb and makes mistakes in subject-verb agreement, but her writing is devoid of the mistakes in standard English that linger in her speech. Though Tracy is not painfully self-conscious of her use and misuse of standard English, she was conscious of its being a problem for her and conscious of the energy that it took her to present a standard English facade in the classroom.

Once in a while when I'm out with my friends, I'll switch to
slang. When I'm in school, I make sure, you know, I use
standard English. (It's) weighing in the back of my mind,
you know, "Correct that, it's not right." In these
interviews I've been just talking anyway, but once in a
while I say a word that I know is...."

Tracy didn't finish her sentence; she couldn't find the word.

When we got around to talking about language she was slightly

uncomfortable though nowhere near as uncomfortable as the other

participants who spoke Black English. She paid a price in her school

system where standard English was the only acceptable language. She

had learned that she must remain vigilant. And to do so she had to

think about the form as well as the content of her class

contributions, and she had to plan meticulously before transcription

so that she could attend to syntax during the transcription process.

Sometimes, if it's late at night and I'm doing a rough draft
of the paper, and then I do the last draft really quick, I
forget. I'll use the wrong word, the wrong tense or
something, rushing. But when I take my time, I usually get
it right. I can remember a few corrections about the wrong
tense, about singular when it should be plural. And it
(Black English) wasn't really a major problem for me, as I
see in lots of kids that is a major problem. I don't know
where it originated. Well, I think it originated from
slaves when they were brought over here from Africa.

Tracy understood that her mother's correction of her language had

been important to her success in school. There is a good chance that

Tracy was put at the equivalent of Rist's "first table", in the gifted

and talented group, as a result of that.

Tracking and Curriculum in Advanced Writing Classes

"Our basic argument is that there is a fundamental difference between working-class and ruling-class education" (Connell et al. 1982, 133). Connell and his colleagues were talking about Australia where class markers may be less subtle than those in the United States; nevertheless, this study supports a similar assertion: that there is a fundamental difference in the way middle class children (usually predominant in the standard and advanced tracks) and working-class children (probably those who most frequently populate the basic track) are taught to write, and that this difference in writing curriculum enhances the chances that writing for the advanced participants will be a meaningful and effective tool for procuring future economic success.

> In every grade at least five of us were higher than the other kids. We used to have these little writing assignments, and we used to do some creative writing. Like if we could be a witch what would your name be and what potions would you make.

In this very early assignment Tracy was asked to look at her world to see what she would like to change with magic potions. This is a step beyond recall of experience or description which is the usual mode of thinking required in writing in young years. Advanced students reported writing frequently in elementary school, writing reports in late elementary grades, pushed to comparison and contrast, even philosophy in junior high, working their way up what Moffett

(1981) calls the abstraction ladder. In high school their curriculum demanded practice in abstract thought, practice doing research and reporting it in term papers and in lab reports, practice in analysis of the life situations in the literature they read, and practice using high level thinking in expository writing. It is no wonder that this practice prepared them to be so conscious of the dynamics in their world, and in the third interview of our series to be adept in making sense of the experience that they had with writing.

Thus, with a view in mind of the advanced participants' curriculum and of how language worked for them, we can now turn to a view of the process and experience of standard and basic writers.

Writing Process of Participants from
Standard Writing Classes

The three participants in this study who attended standard writing classes were all from the rural/suburban school. The inner-city participant who was in a standard writing class dropped out before the final protocol. All three students were enrolled in a course entitled "Standard Exposition" while they participated in the study. We have already had an in-depth view of Lisa; she was important in the way she responded to peers (especially to her ex-best friend's new best friend) in her writing environment, and in the way she concerned herself with her less-than-perfect standard English. We have also met Joel, the published poet, who had seen his well-educated parents write in many ways and who noted with some competitive concern the recent school success of his younger sister. The third participant from a standard writing class, Matt, came from India where he had been a prize student in second grade. As an immigrant he acquired Black English in city streets. His attendance at the rural/suburban school is due to a program which transplants promising city youth to reputed schools. Matt was the student who was confident that he would learn what he viewed to be "the trick" of writing and had shown evidence that he was on his way to acquiring that trick since the breakthrough made on the "physical exercise" paper.

Idea Generation

All the participants from standard writing classes said they needed to have ideas for content before they began to write. They needed to have a complete picture of what they were going to write about before they began. It may well be that because transcription didn't seem to be fully automatic for them, and because in their "Exposition" class they were constantly changing the format in which they were writing, working with topic information that was familiar was important to their ease in writing. Hence if idea generation as a component of the writing process became difficult (and format and transcription were not yet fully automatic) too much would be in the conscious attention during writing and struggle would ensue. If ideas for writing weren't primed before transcription, Matt and Lisa had trouble writing. Joel always seemed to have plenty to say.

For the participants from standard writing classes, ideas were something that were taken to writing intact. Ideas were generated or enriched during and through the writing process. Lisa's words said what the others said in different ways.

> If I'm writing about something I knew a lot about, then I don't have to worry about it. I know how to form sentences. I know what I want to say, and "should this go here?" or things like that. Then I can write in almost any atmosphere. It's not like I have to have the quietest room. I understand what's goin on. But if I'm writing about something I don't really know, then I really have to think a long time what to put where and how to form a sentence or something.

After Matt's final protocol about Black Literature, which went very smoothly for him, I mentioned that it seemed as if he had "the trick." He replied, "There's times I can write and times I can't. I got the trick now when I write what I know about. I've still got six or seven more pages in me about that topic." On the first protocol he did not fare so well. He had to write a paragraph using fifteen vocabulary words. His struggle to find the topic took more than half his time and necessitated four different starts before he found a topic that would work for him. This was the beginning of that protocol:

> I want to make something funny...get these words now..what's that word...the itinerant... tinerant...hooker... Let's see if I can find another word that ...hooker looked at the innocent boy across 42nd street....Gee...um...(reads list of words that may be chosen ... intrepid... obfuscate.. uch!.... She tried to... she tried to... she tried... what word will fit that uncooth ... outlandish... lude... no it doesn't mean that...her what her enticement... What does perspicuity mean (reads words)... her circu...her trap...I can't ...I'm getting confused now...I want to make something good up..let's see...cherub what ...what can you do with a cherub.... The mad dog...lacerated the criminal into pieces..hm...a mad dog...I got to think up something... what the mad dog did... decrepit... What does decrepit mean aging... It doesn't mean gettin old...It does mean getting old....Oh..my God!...I'm messing up big time...Let's see, I've got to think up something of somebody... Albert Einsten ..nah... Madame Cure... descried radium in 1890...What was in 1912... Nobel prize venerated her...my mind all confused now...If I keep doing it like this... time be done... I need some serious time.. I have to go step by step....

When Matt glanced at the clock, his tone of voice took on panic which was not unlike what Lisa reported when she had limited time to get an idea.

The three participants said that when the topic was good for

them, they enjoyed writing. Joel said, "When it's something I enjoy, when it's a topic that I like, I find writing enjoyable." Both Lisa and Joel liked writing poetry because in poetry they had control over the topic. "You can just write about what you want and be creative in any way you want without being wrong," said Lisa. Ease and enjoyment of writing, then, were highly linked with an enjoyment of and knowledge of the material being written about.

It is important then to investigate how the standard writers gathered the material which was essential to their ease in writing. Lisa and Joel's ideas for writing had been drawn from interests that they had had for years. "I always wrote about animals a lot because of the way I was brought up." We have already seen how his family supported this interest of Joel's. And as we have seen Lisa used her topic of the sea at "Exposition's" beginning and felt comfortable with that writing until she had to share it with the class. In changing her topic she began to have difficulty finding something to write about. She found her mother or friends to be second-rate idea givers because, "she'll just be saying what she'll be intersted in, not what I am." Lisa had discovered how important it was to write about "what is interesting to me at the time." But she had found it helpful to identify those interests, research them a bit, and then talk about them to her mother, friends or even to the teacher when she was stuck at fitting the ideas to the assigned format.

Matt was more passive about idea generation. He didn't go out to look for ideas in discussion with others, he went inward (perhaps

because of his Eastern upbringing).

> I just lie on a bed, put the paper on my chest, and
> just leave it. I think for a while. I might see a picture
> that might give me a clue for my head. I thought about
> nuclear war and what was going to happen, and then I thought
> about this fantasy of mine. Then I picked this one idea and
> an approach.

Even though Matt searched differently for his ideas, he like the others needed to have them essentially in place before the hard work of transcription began.

Both advanced and standard writers valued having choice among several writing tasks. Whereas advanced writers valued choice of topic because of clues to what the teacher wanted, standard writers said they preferred to have choice of a topic as a way of limiting what they had to cope with during the writing process. It gave them some control over their subject matter (Lisa: "If they tell me you have to write on this then it's uncomfortable, but if they give you choice of topics that way you can pick the one that's easiest") and allowed them guidelines for format (Lisa: "He gave us two topics and laid out the format. It was easier"). Choice and guidelines made what could be a very complex task simpler, and the standard writers (as we will see in the section on transcription) still needed some simplicity during the writing task. Standard writers seemed to be still at a stage where they needed to know in order to write; whereas, advanced writers perhaps had enough writing skills automatic during the writing process so that their conscious attention was freed up to allow them to sometimes write in order to learn more about the

complexities of their subject, and incorporate that new thinking into the writing.

Organization and Planning

The participants from the standard writing classes seemed to want to deal with fewer decisions to make while writing. "When you have many different types of ways to write a paper and so many topics to choose from, it's really hard," said Lisa. The way their "Exposition" class was set up seemed to enhance their ability to go about writing. The teachers urged them to stick to a topic they already knew about and gave them further time for research as the term was beginning. Then the teachers presented, one by one, nine essay strategies by which to organize their material. This kept the amount that they had to concentrate on during the task manageable. This was perhaps the reason why each particpant liked the course. "I have more control over my format. Last year my Social Studies teacher told me I had to write a position paper. I didn't really understand what it meant, but now I do," said Lisa.

It is hard to know how these writers would have handled organization in another setting or how it would have rested in their conscious attention during transcription because the very structure of the class made organization take an important role in their work. Nevertheless, planning was not given the same priority before writing that it was given by the participants from advanced writing classes.

In each of the second protocols, the writer sat down to write having given some thought to the task at hand, but none spent time actually writing plans for the work they were to do. Matt waited thirty seconds before beginning his first draft. After the protocol I asked him why. "I guess it is just organization in my mind. I think my brain just does it by itself. I don't like writing things on paper." Each writer, however, took time between paragraphs to think about what was to come next. Again Lisa had the words for what the others did, "I usually finish a paragraph or something and then think about the next one, write the next one. Pretty much is off the top of my head." Whereas the advanced writers seemed to plan a complete paper out pretty fully before beginning and used that plan flexibly depending on what they learned from its actual execution (Flower's and Hayes's skilled writers operated in a similar manner [Flower and Hayes 1981]), protocols, observations, and interviews of the standard writers, indicated that, after they had their topic information, they were apt to plan how they would present it paragraph by paragraph.

Transcription and Editing

What happened in the minds of the standard participants while composing becomes clearer when one looks at what was in the conscious attention during transcription (see Figure 7 in the Appendix). Most consciously Joel and Lisa and Matt thought about the subject material and how to organize it. However, Lisa and Matt attended to spelling,

syntax, and word choice, editing as they went. Lisa described transcription. "When I was writing a paper today in class, I was saying in my mind what I'm writing. I find a word...it's hard to explain. I don't know if they come out in complete sentences or if I just form them. I haven't thought about that before." They were mostly unaware of what they did when they transcribed thought to word, and like Tracy, our advanced participant who vocalized the words she was putting down on the paper, Matt and Lisa also said most of the words that they applied to the page. It may have been that they had similar language concerns as they were writing, as none of them spoke pure standard English. This procedure may have allowed them to focus on language while writing. Joel did speak quite impeccable standard English, and as he was writing, he thought more often beyond the words he was putting on the page to material and organizational concerns. Though he still vocalized some of his words, he was not as text-bound as Lisa and Matt.

Of these three writers only Joel talked of editing his own work in progress though the others did it. Joel said, "I'll find things that I think need to be changed, so I'll change them right then. So if I notice the word "get", or if I notice passive voice, I'll change it." Like the advanced writers Joel saw red flags on certain constructions and corrected them on-the-spot, thinking of rules in order to do so. "I notice I'm a really good proofreader of others' papers. I try to say the words to myself, find out what's wrong in there." Perhaps because Joel's language was so close to acceptable,

he could be very conscious and methodical about correcting what he could correctly identify as mistakes in "proper English."

Matt and Lisa demonstrated more hesitancy, not knowing whether what they were saying was correct or not. This was an example of one of Lisa's hesitancies as she said aloud what was going through her mind while writing. "He pushed, yeah...he pushed him aside and strode into the house. That's a funny word when I spell it, I mean s-t-r-o-d-e,...s-t-r....s-t-r...strode into the house. Is that a word?" And in rereading the paragraph she said, "Okay..He pushed him into the house and strode...Is that right?" Participants' productivity in the editing process and level of concern or worry during that editing seemed linked to their proficiency in formal language.

Redrafting

Redrafting, when it was done by the three standard writers, was much the same as for the advanced writers; it was essentially re-reading the first draft to "catch" mistakes and then copying it into a teacher-acceptable form. Even this redrafting took low priority. Joel said, "I've started writing my rough draft in pens, so (if) I won't have enough time, I can bring the draft in pen, which is convenient. But that's a bad habit, and I want to stop it." Matt was only just beginning (since the success of the physical exercise paper) to redraft. "It was like I was in a rush to get it over with. I

didn't like to read it over. I'm getting better, you know. I'm reading my papers over--first time I'm reading my papers." Lisa had been more attentive to making her drafts teacher acceptable since she had felt good about her grades for writing. About her seventh grade teacher she said, "She used to criticize me or my writing, so...I didn't put much time into it." But by the time we were working together, she said, "It (redrafting) makes the paper better but harder. It takes longer cause you have to find the appropriate words, fit in the spellin, use correct words, and the grammar. I have to reread the paper and do it again."

The effort taken with redrafting seemed to be a function of how students felt about themselves as writers and how they felt about their writing and whether the grade was worth the effort. If writing was something which enhanced the view they had of themselves, they would give it priority. If they felt badly about themselves as writers, they would rather not engage in the activity and redrafting just prolonged the process. If mood linked to writing was positively marked (as Simon [1982] would say), then that would increase confidence and willingness to participate in it.

Worries and Concerns of the Participants in Standard Writing Classes

The standard writers were quite different from one another in the way worries and concerns affected their writing. Confident Joel reported one concern, contractions, and one worry, length, in his

interviews, but neither appeared to preoccupy him during transcription. In fact Joel seemed so free of concerns or worries during transcription that it might be that much of what he did was automatic. This could also explain the boredom that he reported in writing and the speed with which he accomplished it. The standard class may not have been pushing him to acquire new strategies for more sophisticated writing.

In contrast Lisa reported that she was concerned about spelling, grammar, using correct words, and punctuation. Lisa's conscious attention during writing was frequently directed to these concerns. Perfect standard English was not natural enough to her to make syntax and "correct words" come automatically to her. But as long as audience didn't become a worry for her, as it did when she was concerned about having to share her work, and as long as she understood the format, she seemed to attend to these concerns in a productive manner. When audience and format became concerns or worries, then she reached overload and couldn't write.

Matt said, "I don't want to worry anymore (about writing) because I don't like worrying about stuff, but I always do. I want to learn the trick." Matt didn't talk about specific concerns he had during writing, but his protocols showed that he attended to syntax and word choice, as well as the necessary attention-takers of topic information and organization. That Matt, Lisa, and Joel functioned fairly efficiently when writing may well be a tribute to the structure of their "Exposition" course and the manner of their teachers.

Coping Strategies Used to Maintain a Positive Self View

Though Matt, Lisa, and Joel all felt relatively positive about the writing that they were doing during the study, they hadn't always felt that way. They had found ways through the years to cope with writing, ways to defend a positive view of themselves when the process of writing and evaluation of it had made them feel badly about themselves as writers. Their coping strategies were both offensive and defensive.

The most current and the most conscious strategy used by these writers to deal with writing when it was not intrinsically gratifying to them was to avoid it through what they all termed "procrastination." Joel seemed to be the most conscious about this coping strategy which was his favorite. He claimed it was all a matter of "priorities." Like advanced writer Elana he even planned this form of avoidance to minimize guilt that might be linked with it. "I have a paper due on Tuesday. I know I'm not going to start it 'til Monday; I've even planned it." He explained the meaning he made of priorites connected with procrastination . He explained that washing dishes was his most hated task in life. "Sometimes I tell my parents, 'Let me finish this paragraph, then I'll do the dishes.'" Joel extended his avoidance of writing with another strategy. He rushed to get it done. "I put off getting started, but once I start, I really go to it."

Matt used this same strategy of procrastination and then rushing. "I didn't even think about it you know. 'Who cares you're probably going to get a C- anyway.' I'll wait till 4:00, and then I'll do it. It took me about five minutes after I got started.

Low priority for revision was linked with this low priority for writing. When Lisa was supposed to copy a paper over in pen, she short-cut that step. "I should have, but I was lazy. I don't want to go through this. I want to get outside and play."

Though Matt and Lisa had used less-than-conscious strategies to defend the view that they had of themselves as writers, they were at a point during the study where they were making more sense of what they had done in the past. Lisa said about her years when she coped with the negative view of herself as a writer by refusing to do it, "So whenever I got a bad grade, it wasn't anything big. I was going to get it. It didn't matter to me. So whenever I got a paper back that was proving I was a bad student. I didn't really like English, so I didn't try very hard." At the time of the study, Lisa was just beginning to make sense of her sixth through ninth grade years.

"I didn't like it, so I didn't try hard," or "It's boring, or "I'm lazy," or "I didn't care about it" are all phrases that Matt and Lisa sprinkled through their comments about past school writing. These are rather defensive gestures towards a process which didn't make them feel good about themselves.

These phrases still resided in Matt's rhetoric at the beginning

of our work together. "It's just like if you had to have hamburgers for two years straight, but you'd get tired of it. That's how writing is to me. I don't like writing at all. I'm not really good at writing. It 's pretty boring to me."

Later in our interviewing Matt began to make more sense of his past experience with writing. Matt developed a new coping strategy. Since his confidence had been raised a bit by extrinsic motivation, he saw a way to view himself as a writer. He saw himself as a writer on the brink of competence.

> See I believe that to everything there is a trick to it. You just have to get it; practice show you how to get it. Like I was telling you about breakdance. There is a trick to it, every little move there is a trick to it. I found that out by myself. Writing has a trick to it; some kind of a little thing. You just have to learn it. Once you learn that, you can write. It's hard to get up to that point. That's what I'm waiting for. It's a hard trick, but I'm going to get it. It's a matter of time. Yup."

Whereas his previous defensive strategies made him less inclined to engage in the process, this new coping strategy of viewing writing as a learnable trick, one that you can surely get with practice, changed the view he had of himself as a future writer. It was one which renewed intrinsic motivation for him to engage in it. As with Lisa, we see a redefinition of a participant's view of himself as a writer as a way to get out of a "stuck place." With this new view of his possibilites he can fulfill his prophecy.

Social Factors Affecting Process and Success

Just as we have viewed the social factors that allowed the advanced participants to be in advanced writing classes, so there are social factors that affected the placement of Lisa, Matt and Joel, the view they had of themselves as writers, the way they went about writing, and the effect that all had on whether writing would be for them a tool to understand their world, to act upon that world, and to ensure the possibility of economic well-being. Issues of language and tracking are important when considering the participants from standard writing classes.

Language. The fact that two of the standard writers grew up speaking nonstandard varieties of English had been for them a social factor that kept them from being in advanced classes. Matt and Lisa were just becoming aware that their language was a problem for them and that it was something that got in the way of their school success. Part of this awareness was just a clearer view that they were developing of their world with the perspective of age, and perhaps part was due to the reflection prompted by the interview process. They were developing a consciousness of the effect their language had on their writing, and that awareness made them feel better about themselves.

When Lisa was younger, she recalled being "put practically in the lowest group, and she (the teacher) said because I didn't have good

sentence structure, so I remember that cause I could read just as fast as the people in <u>Dimensions</u>, but I couldn't write as well." Instead of seeing her languge as different, in fifth grade she saw herself as "stupid" and continued to feel badly about herself as a writer until tenth grade; she was locked into a counter-productive view of herself as a writer.

We have already seen how Lisa's growing consciousness of her "inferior" language in Student Council made her at once angry, and "reluctant to speak out again." But her growing awareness better informed her of how feeling dumb had affected her performance in school. "I guess it's when you feel dumb or illiterate that you don't want to let people know how you are doing in school--or talk." Prior response to her language had been misinterpreted as proof of her being "a bad student" or "stupid."

Matt too was growing in awareness about language and its effect on writing.

> I have this stereotypical person in my mind, like Alfred Hitchcock, Christopher Reeves, or that British man in <u>Magnum P.I.</u> You know, someone who speaks real good English, just born with the trick. Everytime I see a person I can tell whether he is a good writer. I could tell the way he speaks if he is a good writer. Big words, formal language. I want to get that good. I have to learn it. I just don't like writing you know. I have to learn it . I just don't like writing. Once in awhile I do for some reason. Just sit down, some idea come up, sometimes the stereotype person comes into mind. Wham! Yeah! Why don't I just do that, and the right words (come). If I had been brought up here, knowing English from an early age, I could write. All my ideas come up in my mind and stay there. I hate trying to say it in writing. I'm a person with ideas, and I can't write them. That's why I got to keep silent a lot. I don't feel comfortable. I'm Christian, Pentacostal ...thinking of something.... When I'm alone up here (away from New York

City), and if I have a problem I talk to God, if he's listening. He's just like an older brother. You don't have to worry about what languge you are talking to Him in. You don't have to write to Him either!"

(My language), that's fate. I was born like that. I could get angry about it, but this I can't do nothing about. I can only do one thing, that's to get like that person, that stereotype. I like literature by Charles Dickens. The stereotype is affected by my reading. I always picture the author who is writing. This is what gives me the stereotype. I got to get like that stereotype.

Matt excelled in first grade (in a British school) and second grade (in an Indian school) and had a tutor there as well, but he felt he did not speak English well enough to feel comfortable until he was in fifth grade. He had made great strides.

Tracking. While language might well have caused Lisa's and Matt's placement in a standard track, the view that they had of themselves and their ability as writers because they were thus placed, and the very curriculum that they encountered while in the standard track may have kept them there. Tracking for Joel might not be such a vastly different matter. Joel was more closed when I brought up the subject of tracking than either of the other two, so he too might share Lisa's (and Matt's) humiliation at being in a lower track than he normally views himself. He did say "I was in the standard class with a lot of not-so-bright people. It was almost like an insult really, having to do a lot of grammar I already knew in fourth grade." Joel was quick to tell me that most of his other classes were advanced, and he had stayed in a standard English class to maintain a high grade. His lack of willingness to expand on this topic may have

been a conscious or unconscious avoidance of talking about something that troubled him.

All three students, however, felt the stigma of not being in the highest group, and this, as we have seen, had affected their view of themselves as writers. "Yeah, I guess I felt really bad about writing because, cause when you're in a lower group than other people, I guess you naturally feel you're stupid." Thus began Lisa's fifth to tenth grade struggle with writing.

Connell and his colleagues support Lisa's new-found consciousness of social dynamics. "The streaming and selective structure of the school convinces lots of these kids, just as schooling convinced their parents, that they are dumb (Connell, 1982, p. 167)." Tracking in and of itself brings a clear message to those in "lower groups" about inferiority. Perhaps the self-consciousness, exaggerated focusing on the self, and on hiding an unsatisfying view of the self is generated by inferiority feelings. And perhaps getting beyond self-involvement and the emotion connected with it is necessary before one becomes conscious of one's place in the world and the dynamics one is caught in. To expand on Freire, feelings of inferiority are in effect facilitators of lowered consciousness and oppression. No matter how conscious Lisa was about the social dynamic that had played itself out, she still felt the wound, a mixture of anger and inferiority. Again, of the Student Council meeting she said, "I felt inferior," and "I felt reluctant to talk." The view of self that tracking generates can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Curriculum in standard writing classes adds to perpetuation of a writer's less-than-advanced performance. Curriculum for Matt in his New York City years explained why he didn't get to do what he had learned was the answer to learning the trick to writing--practice.

> The most writing I did I think was written questions and basic sentences. I remember copying, a passage here, a couple of sentences there. In those days it was mainly learning about grammar, "Identify the verbs." (He quotes his teacher.) Spelling, memorization; memorization for me is boring. I didn't start writing until I got like in seventh grade. Then I hardly did any writing. Eighty-five percent of the work I did was reading and the rest wasn't even writing. In eighth grade I learned how to write an outline."

It is no wonder that Matt still subvocalizes words while transcribing. He has only had a few years of practice at transcription. The city school did not provide it. Lisa and Joel reported a lot more writing through early years. Whereas Joel resented grammar, Lisa felt that it helped her with her sentence structure. Her feeling was congruent with that of many teachers who work with other than advanced students. Postman and Weingartner cite research that concludes that there is an inverse relationship between the amount of grammar studied and progress in writing (Postman and Weingartner 1966, 64, 86).

Curriculum, tracking, and language become important institutional and social factors in keeping students tracked at the same level through the years. For students who are not in an advanced writing class, placement itself not only maintains a view of self as a certain kind of writer but also generates writing skills that perpetuate that

placement.

Writing Process of Participants from Basic Writing Classes

Finally we turn to explore the process of the participants who were relegated to the basic writing classes and how their process was affected by social factors beyond the living people in their writing environment. There were five such participants: Zac, Lilia, Sonia, Orion, and Davy. Three were from a school in the inner-city school system. Perhaps we know the most about Zac. He was the student who cringed at being praised by Mr. A. in front of his peers and yet sought a way to get into a college preparatory track, and who was put under the desk by Ms. Candle for misforming his C's in third grade. Lilia was in the same writing class as Zac. It was Lilia whose Puerto Rican mother was waiting for her to be the first person in the family to graduate, so that she could return to Puerto Rico. It was Lilia who acted as the family scribe, and who wrote two-page notes to a friend even though she had trouble writing a paragraph in English class. Sonia was the young woman who told me, "There isn't nobody gonna tell you they're dumb," who defined writing as handwriting and who proceeded to copy over her paper until it satisfied her even though the teacher had already graded it.

The final two participants from basic writing classes were Davy and Orion; both attended the rural/suburban school. Though Davy and Orion had both been in basic English classes since they entered junior high, during the time of the study they were in heterogeneous classes,

Orion in Writing Lab with Mr. O'Neill and Davy in a class that combined writing and "Cinema" to make up its curriculum. Davy described vivdly for us how his English "crashes into" his Spanish. Orion was the young man who wrote "little fantasies" with his friend Jason, and who kept Ms. Bothell's criticism of his writing at a minimum by writing so small that she couldn't read it.

Although research on "basic writers" has been done by Shaughnessy, Perl, and others, the writers they studied were all beyond high school level. The process exhibited by these "basic" high school writers, the majority of whom will not make it to college, was quite different from that found by Shaughnessy and Perl. But before turning to the process of these participants, it is important to look at difficulties in the data analysis.

Understanding the links between the process of the basic participants and their experience was problematic. Midway through the study I began to have difficulty with conflicting data.

The first inconsistency was that these participants were in "basic" classes because they had not done well in the eyes of their schools. Whereas Davy was confused about whether he was "dumb" or not, the other participants in this group were defensive. Not only did it seem that they themselves didn't really feel dumb though their schools would have them believe so, but they were swallowed into ineffectiveness by the very defenses they created to explain their lack of success in school. "I'm lazy." "I don't care." "I'm shy."

And as a researcher, I was not satisfied with their explanations.

These students were not dumb, they had recounted in vivid detail their past experiences. I was always interested when I was with them. They engaged my intellect. If they were shy, or didn't care, their reports of early school experience didn't reflect either of those behaviors. They were not lazy. All five were energetic. Zac played basketball, worked a factory job, and received 80's on his History tests. Sonia related plans for what seemed an exhausting social schedule. Orion worked at a restaurant, farmed, spent hours roaming the woods. Davy worked when he could get "works," was in the school play, and had sessions with his math and English tutors. Lilia, because her parents were "strict" with her, had to be on "the projects" grounds after school; there she cooked, cleaned, and played basketball with her friends. I formulated a question, "Why don't they succeed in writing by school standards if they are not dumb or lazy."

The second inconsistency was that the basic writers' protocols resembled none that I had analyzed or read of except for that done by by my ten-year-old daughter. They were what is termed text-bound--constricted by their lack of automaticity in transcription. Another important question was set forth, "Why are they so far behind in the skill of transcription?"

There was a third inconsistency in the data. The basic writers had difficulty during the third interview (Davy was an exception) in making sense of their experience with school and writing even though they were able to recall and make sense of experience that they had with friends and relatives. I hesitated to accept lack of equity in

the interviewing process as a complete explanation. Though I was a white, middle class researcher, they had all talked about sensitive issues. Ironically, the only white participant, Orion, was the hardest for me to engage in talk about issues of language, schooling and tracking, and I had had the most interviewing experience when I talked with him. All basic participants seemed to want to participate in this last interview, and I had felt what it was like to work with a participant who was reluctant to share.

After explaining the subject of the last interview, I invariably got the response, "Ask me a question." I asked them what was important to them in their life. After their carefully considered responses, each of which contained reference to a job that paid "good money," I asked them how writing fit in with what was important to them. It seems to me that Sonia said what the others wanted to say, "You askin what was the most important thing in your life to me, and I told you. Now how would writin get in with what's important?"

Sonia made perfect sense. She and her basic-class colleagues saw letter writing and business matters to be the only reasons for future writing and added that their parents usually used the phone now for those purposes. From Sonia's perspective there was nothing that promised her that writing could work for her in her world--that any control over her world would result from her writing. The final question I formulated was, "Why do the participants from basic classes seem unconscious about writing, why do they make little sense of their experience in school, and why don't they see connections between "good

money" and "writing.?"

As the pieces of the puzzle of conflicting data came together, I developed explanations and found an analogy to dispel inconsistencies in the data of the participants from basic writing classes and to describe the oppression that was acting on the participants from basic writing classes. Connell et al. (1982) and Frye (1983) were the sources for the analogy; both used the image of a cage to describe the oppression of the populations about whom they were writing.

Connell et al. write about social inequity produced by school systems and about the kind of the working-class student.

> Our image of person and society becomes that of a flea freely hopping around inside a cage, and though that may produce fine dramas about fleas, it isn't very helpful if our concern is to do something about the cage....for the cage is composed of what people do. (Connell, et al. 1982, 78)

Marilyn Frye writes about women and oppression, but in this quote she talks of oppression in general.

> The experience of oppressed people is that the living of one's life is confined and shaped by forces and barriers which are not related to each other in such a way as to catch one between and among them and restrict or penalize motion in any direction. It is the experience of being caged in: all avenues, in every direction, are blocked or booby trapped.
> Cages. Consider a bird cage. If you look very closely at just one wire in the cage, you cannot see the other wires.... It is only when you step back, stop looking at the wires one by one, microscopically, and take a macroscopic view of the whole cage, that you can see why the bird does not go anywhere.... One can study the elements of an oppressive structure with great care and some good will without seeing the structure as a whole, and hence, without seeing or being able to understand that one is looking at a cage and that there are people there who are caged, whose motion and mobility are restricted, whose lives are shaped and reduced (Frye 1983, 4-5).

By looking both microscopically at what I will call bars and then macroscopically at their cage, we see the participants from basic writing classes come into focus as oppressed by a number of larger social factors. Seeming discrepancies in the data slip away, and the bars that keep these writers from gleaning the desired rewards that success in school and writing could hold for their future lives come into focus. The bars to their cage are "systematically related," and they "restrict" the positive view that they could have of themselves as writers and "reduce" their career choices and economic chances.

Many bars have already been identified and described in previous chapters:

1. Peer pressure not to be successful in school resulting from a sort of defensive solidarity to maintain dignity in the face of failure.

2. Lack of help on schoolwork from parents after early school years.

3. Lack of parental role models who use writing to serve them for employment purposes and who do writing of the school variety. (Basic participants have little sense of what power is available to them through written expression.)

4. Parent expectations are for the participants to pass in order to finish High School rather than to excel.

5. Parental role models who value neatness and correctness more than organization and content.

6. The non-standard English of the basic participants that is not accepted by the school as "correct."

7. Teacher response to these writers which keeps them more concerned with correctness than expression.

That these basic writers have been steeped in a writing

curriculum which focusses on remediation to the exclusion of writing, that their unacceptable language becomes a huge problem for them that often keeps them locked into remedial and concrete formats, that the unconscious defenses they develop to maintain a positive view of themselves keep their view of what is happening to them obstructed, that writing becomes for them something that holds no intrinsic or extrinsic motivation--these factors contribute more bars to the cage, to the oppression of the writer from the basic writing class. To understand how social factors, and hence oppression, affect the writing process, a closer look at at the writing process of the writers from basic classes is necessary.

Idea Generation

While observing Davy, I saw a characteristic sequence which I recorded in my field notes.

> Davy hits the palm of his hand against his forehead with much angst and after finishing a sentence, mutters, "What should I talk about?" He turns to his left where his book is open and looks to that for something more to write.

Later Davy reported, "Most of my writing comes from the book, not from my idea. I use my head, but I use the book; then I write." Davy gets information from books, tries to think what teachers would want, or asks friends. It is as if what he might think has little value or validity. "The things I write was wrong."

The other basic writers had much in common with Davy, but the

resources they used to help with idea generation included their own rich concrete experience, their imaginations, material from books that they could understand, and material generated through conversations with friends. But they valued their own rich experience for topic material less than that which they found in books or that which they expected the teacher might like. They spent time to find ideas for writing only if those ideas were attended to by the teacher.

Books were an important resource for writing material though their choice of books was limited by what they could easily read. Sonia said, "Mostly you have to just look over the book or put into your own words about that person, maybe like George Washington." Zac used a dictionary to help him come up with ideas for an essay about citizenship.

Each of the basic writers mentioned that they counted on friends to help them think of ideas. Orion spent a good portion of his writing lab with fellow fantasy writer, Jason, conjuring ideas. Lilia said that if she was in a "stuck place," "I catch on with somebody else. I have to like read somebody else's paper to get an idea, then I would put my own words into it." Sonia, who already had one foot out of the High School door, got ideas from her older friends. Davy too relied on friends, but, as we have already learned, he would only talk with certain friends, those who were in the basic track, as he feared that others would think he was dumb.

On rare occasions when the basic participants were assigned to write about something they did not know, they reported that they most

often sought the knowledge from friends or from books. This use for writing keeps them working with others' ideas and with those generally accessed from the long term memory before writing starts. Zac will go to the dictionary instead of thinking beyond what he has already learned from experience or from books. Writing for these basic writers is most often rehashing of available material. There comes from it none of the excitement of discovery.

Lilia, Zac, and Orion sometimes used their imaginations to get ideas for writing, and it was these occasions that they remembered with joy. "I just sort of visualize...that's what I do. See the person going through it." Orion wrote about skinning a rabbit by visualizing himself doing it as well as writing fantasies with Jason. Zac liked this kind of writing too; he laughed when he said, "In fifth grade we had to write a paragraph about what we did over the weekend. I just made one up about me and my cousin; nothing happened over the weekend I guess." These writers liked best the kind of writing where they were experts on their imaginations and their own experience, perhaps because it is one thing that can't get marked wrong.

Value or validity of ideas seems an important issue in discussing idea generation of basic writers because they seemed to give that component of the process priority according to how much teachers paid attention to their ideas. Mr. Fog from the inner-city school provided his students with whole-class pre-writing activities which facilitated their idea generation, but when the paragraphs came in, he only attnede to correctness.

Unless a specific pre-writing activity was assigned to the basic participants, it was most often less than a minute from the time the assignment was given until they began to write. Davy's and Orion's classroom atmosphere observed in the rural/surburban schcool was often conducive to interaction over ideas. But Lilia, Zac, and Sonia were often expected to write immediately upon receiving an assignment, not to talk in process, and to finish it before class was dismissed. Their conversations about ideas for writing in class seemed stolen and begrudged. Once they had used about thirty seconds to think about what to write, they either sought the friendly advice or the distractions that the classs had to offer--or they began to write. Before they put pen to page though, they had to know how to begin. This leads us to a consideration of the organizational aspect of their process.

Planning and Organization

Though the participants from basic writing classes gave little conscious attention to planning or organization, they seemed to rely on two formats for their work--chronology and listing. These were probably automatic for them and took little conscious attention away from what to them was the demanding process of transcription. At the same time these formats demanded little thinking of the writer beyond recall and a relatively simple and familiar form of ordering. Their level of thinking during the writing process was at a concrete level.

None of the basic writers except Davy offered information about how they organized their writing. Early in my research, I realized that the only mention of organization from a basic participant was in response to my question to Zac about whether he wrote "a list or anything" before he wrote. Zac responded negatively and said, "I just start writing." After that I asked Sonia, Lilia, and Orion how they knew what was going to come first when they wrote. Sonia responded, "By the topic, 'The Marriot Ball Room Dance'; I started at the time the party was, til the end...beginning to end." Orion said about a Daniel Boone paper, "When he was born and when he died." For four of these participants planning took little consideration. Unlike the others, Davy's assigned task demanded more sophisticated organization of ideas. As we have seen, he spent time in planning, but he didn't follow through on it.

Though participants only talked about planning using chronological order, I observed the inner-city school students doing writing assignments that also required listing. They wrote paragraphs giving reasons why something was so (listing) and telling what they would do if they were in a particular situation (using speculative chronological order). Aside from Davy, they may have either been asked only to write in those two modes, or teachers may have encouraged other formats but found students were unable to comply. As with Davy this may be because little in the process was automatic, and another format for their writing would require more attention than they could give to it. Atlas (1979) found that a writer who has

experienced lack of success in writing will become context-dependent, will stick to the materials and procedures that are immediately apparent. Experimenting with formats beyond chronology, for whatever reason, was not pushed by their inner-city school teacher who was glad to have them writing paragraphs for the first time in their writing career.

Orion and Davy were encouraged to take on more complex formats. We saw that Davy's response to that was enthusiastically to make very clever and quite complex plans and then slip back into the familiar patterns when transcription was hard for him. Orion was a bit different. There were eight requirements that he needed to meet in his Writing Lab that required other than chronological organization. These he resisited until he was pestered to do them, and he refused to allow me to do a protocol of anything other than one of his "little fantasies" which always took on a chronological framework. Orion was resistant to change from a comfortable writing format, yet by the end of the term, the products of these eight assignments became longer and more readily written.

The concreteness of chronology and listing is comfortable. Students need only tell what happened or list things already evident; there is no need to make any sense of their experiences. These formats do little to encourage writers to attend to that organization which is more abstract or less automatic. And with Davy a more complex organization could not be coped with if there was too much else for him to worry about in his writing. Clearly being automatic

at transcription seems an important skill for a writer, for if that skill is accomplished then attention is available for organization.

Transcription and Editing

When participants from basic writing classes talked about writing, they were usually talking about transcription--when their pen or pencil was moving across the page putting thoughts and plans into words. During the first drafts that were protocoled, all the basic writers except for Davy were generally 'text-bound.' Unlike community college "basic writers" (Perl, 1980) who edited continually during transcription, these high school writers had their minds on little else than getting topic information onto the page. Almost all the words that they used to "say what was in their mind during writing" were words that they were applying to the page. This indicates that the actual transcription process, putting words to page, was all-engrossing for these participants. This study suggests that they have not had enough practice at transcription to become automatic at it. Lilia reported healthy strategies that she used to allow concentration on transcription. She said, "But there is one thing I always do which is when I write, I don't put periods; I would like keep going." Orion said, "I just write.... I think of sentences...go in after and put periods and everything." Sonia, Lilia, and Orion used important strategies to keep the writing process manageable. At the same time it was unfortunate that they were not skilled enough to

give attention to concerns beyond getting thoughts on the page.

Protocols show that recursion, the act of backtracking and rereading that which is already written, rarely occurred. Davy remains the master of recursion among the participants from basic classes. In fact Davy much resembles Perl's (1979) "basic writer" when it comes to recursion. Zac, with his face four inches from the page, joins Davy in exhibiting more recursion and instances of in-process editing. Perhaps Zac and Davy have room in their conscious attention for a bit more than simple word-to-page considerations. Seemingly transcription is not yet automatic enough for the others to allow other concerns to enter their mind.

This does not necessarily indicate that other things do not concern them in writing. It seems that these other concerns are crowded out by concentration on transcription; they develop a tunnel vision that allows them to complete it. A chart which looks at what seems to be in the conscious attention of the basic writers follows (Figure 8-see Appendix). This chart records the different concerns that the writers had during transcription.

At first I conjectured that this text bound transcription might be due to attitudes that some reported connected with their writing. Zac and Lilia reported that they just wanted to pass. Orion reported that he didn't care. But in listening to the tapes of these text-bound protocols, an earnestness in the voice is discernible that suggests concentration, not ennui or a desultory approach. A question to ask is: Are these students in this track because they were bad at

transcription, or are they bad at transcription because they were always in basic classes where they have had little practice at it.?

To speak about editing with the participants from basic classes will not take long. Expecting editing and recursion as evidenced by Perl's basic writer Tony (Perl 1979), I was surprised not to find it. Lilia stopped once during a protocol and said, "I goofed the words around," made some changes, and went on. She made two other changes during that protocol. Orion considered a few changes and made a few changes. He edited his ideas mid-paragraph once. Sonia showed no signs of editing in her two protocols. Zac seemed to have more attention for editing than the others though he needed it less. This minimal editing seen in the protocols of these participants is most likely connected again to their text-bound state. Editing for them became a part of the revision process. Davy, of course, is the exception. His internalized editor, the internalization of English teachers past, was omnipresent, making his transcription a troubled, stop-and-go process.

Redrafting

As with the standard and advanced class writers, participants from basic writing classes used redrafting as the step to please the teacher. Unlike the advanced writers, the standard writers, and Davy, this was the only part of the process when pleasing-the-teacher was really evident. Whether the basic participants did revision in the

first place depended on how willing they were to prolong the writing process for that purpose. While redrafting, these participants attended to what the teachers would evaluate. It is possible that they saved these concerns until redrafting, yet when they did so, most worked solely to eliminate error, not to make ideas clearer. And even their effort to eliminate error was often in vain. They often changed correct constructions to incorrect ones or changed incorrect ones to different but still incorrect ones. In response to Mr. Fog, Zac, Lilia, and Sonia made changes at the word and sometimes sentence level as previously described, but Orion in response to Mr. O'Neill's interest and suggestion about content, made more global revisions as well as word and sentence changes. Ironically these writers, none of whom spoke acceptable standard English, relied on "whether it sounds right," for redrafting and got no use from the grammatical exercises they had done.

There was congruence between the basic writers' accounts of their redrafting and what was observed in the classroom and in protocol analysis. Sonia, Orion, and Zac all said that they revised by reading their work over and seeing if it "sounded right." "Then I do the final draft, " said Sonia. "I'd read it over, I saw how it sounded, and if I made many mistakes," said Zac. "I change sentences around if they don't sound right," said Orion. The Puerto Rican students had a variation on this same theme. Lilia said, "I look it over, and if my ears tell me that it sounds right, inside my head." Lilia used both eyes and ears to review her work. Davy was even less trusting of his

senses to tell him what was right or wrong. "I don't know what sounds right, but then when another person does it...I gotta make a lotta corrections." Davy could see the words that were left out when his mind went faster than his pen. "I go over it to see if I left out any words."

The irony that is attached to the basic students' seeing and hearing if their work is correct is that it in no way capitalizes on the grammar which they report that they have been taught for years in English classes. They don't think about number, tense, or sentence construction in this process. They do add punctuation for a "pause or a stop." To revise they depend on what their own grammar, that which was inculcated into them as a child, tells them is correct. And in each case this grammar was not standard English.

Zac had some simple rules to get the "street language" out. He had figured out that, "'nobody' is like street language and 'anybody' is proper, 'ain't' and 'is not,' like that." There was no sign that he had made conscious linguistic sense of the double negative lessons, rather he had used inductive reasoning to make up some simple rules that served him well. Sonia had a similar method to rout out her "slang." They had learned that they had to rid their writing of their "bad grammar," of certain aspects of their spoken language, but they had come to their own way of doing it in a sort of inductive way. Redrafting became one more aspect of writing that they weren't very good at. Correct as they might, there were still errors. This did not add to a positive feeling towards writing, nor did it add to a

positive view of themselves as writers, nor did it increase their desire to engage in writing.

The basic writers varied in their willingness to make another draft, a final draft of their work. For Orion it depended on whether he felt like bothering. Davy hated doing it, but did it if there was time to do it and still get the paper in on time. Sonia would do it over again and again until it was neat although her concern was more neatness than correctness or grade. Lilia said, "He wouldn't collect my mistakes; I rewrite it." Zac said, "If I think it is really messed up, I do it over again, but if I think it's passing or at least a C, I keep it like that. But if I get a C, and they tell me to do it over for a better grade, I probably won't."

When I asked Zac, Lilia, and Orion what worried and concerned them when writing, this list wasn't long. Though Orion reported defiantly, "I don't worry about anything," the others reported worries and concerns that connected with issues of (1) language, and (2) neatness and handwriting. If concerns and worries reflect teacher concerns and expectations, it is probable that the concerns and expectations of the basic writing teachers for these participants centered on the concrete level of appearance and correctness. And if so the teacher was not alone in these concrete concerns. As we have already seen, parents supported these concerns. This section focusses on these two concerns of neatness and language.

Neatness. As interviews progressed I recognized a preoccupation that participants had with neatness and handwriting. Often I would

ask a question about writing, and they would answer making the assumption that I was talking not about content or syntax, but about handwriting. I asked Lilia what writing was like for her in Junior High. She responded, "Hm...let's see. I had still printed, but I had calmed down; it was smaller and neater, much neater."

I asked them all the same question, "If you had the choice of handing in a paper that was correct but messy, or incorrect but written neatly, which would you hand in." All basic writers except Davy answered, "the neat one" without hesitiation. Orion amended his original response with, "Mr. O'Neill, he'd accept a messy paper, cause he likes my writing, adventure and everything, imagination."

Zac (who was put under the desk because his C's weren't correct), Orion, and Lilia all remembered difficulty with learning to form letters. For Sonia, the process went well, but she described her frustration with learning to write. "I can't remember her name...but everytime one of my A's would just miss the line, she'd make me do it all over again, and I hated that. I said, "You know you can read what I'm sayin. What's the use of makin me touch every line, but it helped me in the long run, I guess. No, it was dumb." Even though she proclaimed it dumb, Sonia was concerned to the point of obsession with neatness.

This dislike of their own "messiness" lived on with them even though I could read their writing quite easily. When I asked Orion and Lilia how they felt about what they called messiness, they both responded in the same words, "But I'm not a messy person." And Sonia

said:

> But Mr. Fog can tell you. He was laughin because he thinks it's crazy. 'Oh no! I messed up that one.' He had marked it and everything, and I did it all over again. He said, 'I'm tired of marking your papers and having you do them over again.' But when it looks a mess, I keep on tryin and tryin and tryin until it comes out right.

As we have already seen, pride in handwriting is something valued by the families of these participants as well. This is a part of the view they have of what writing is all about.

If, as my study indicates, the basic participants were very concerned about the way their papers looked, it is no wonder that other, more complex aspects of writing took less of their conscious attention, and that they were again focussed on the concreteness of their task.

Language. None of the participants from basic writing classes, nor any of their basic classmates spoke standard English, or "proper English" as Zac called it. If I had been told that the prime criterion for formulating a basic track had been language, I wouldn't have been surprised. Each of these students started out in school with an incomplete knowledge of standard English and with less confidence in it. And yet the whole school inculcates in the student the view that language skills (in particular writing) "are linked with morality, good character, and/or 'success'" (Heath 1981,39)" Much of the basic participants' lack of success by school criteria comes from the wide gulf between the child's sense of language gleaned from pre-school years (and continued social-class influence) and the

teacher's standard of language. There is inequity in America's school system that values only one subculture's language characteristics.

This creates the gulf into which my basic participants fell. In this gulf the participants took up feelings of shame and of stupidity, and had to follow a remedial curriculum that fostered concrete expression. What was most notable about the interview material from the basic participants, was that the participants did not see clearly that diffficulty with writing was linked with the discrepancy between their first language, be it Black English (Zac and Sonia), Spanish (Lilia and Davy) or working class English (Orion), and standard, middle class English. When I showed Davy on paper what was happening, he said, "I didn't know I had Spanish grammar." He was not conscious of one of the basic causes for his being "behind," and this lack of consciousness caused him to interpret his mistakes as stupidity. Davy was tied up in confusing messages, the vocalized one: "Work hard and you'll be a success in life," and the unsaid one: "but you must learn to express yourself in this one way which you haven't been socialized to learn."

When I first asked Sonia about her language, I sensed she didn't want to talk about it. I pushed on a little and talked about two different langauages with different, though complete, grammar systems but with overlapping vocabulary, "One's called standard English and the other's called Black English. Tell me about that and how it affects you in school." Sonia said, "Hm...it doesn't affect me....it doesn't affect me." She fidgeted, "How do you want me to.....I'm

trying to think how that would affect me in school." I waited and then asked, "In your writing?" Sonia responded, "I don't know because I never really thought about it." Sonia glanced at her watch and reminded me that she had to leave by 3:00. The topic of conversation was awkward; she changed it. Sonia's continually animated way of being drooped. I had already had a similar interaction with Matt. I decided to ask advanced Black student Tracy who had been open in talking about language, for advice. She told me, "Ask them about street language, jive." I did and that worked much better with Zac. He told me how he extricated "street language" from his writing.

Davy and Lilia were open about difficulties of language. Both had trouble with both English and Spanish, and they both talked of the shame they felt at doing well in neither. Both talked about their mothers. Davy said, "My mom says I should be ashamed because I don't know how to speak Spanish." Lilia said, "My mother and her friend laugh at me when I try to speak Spanish." Davy's Spanish friend said to him, "Please don't try to speak because you can't." Self-expression in either language became difficult for them. "I just come out of my mouth wrong," said Davy. Davy's profile illustrates the mixture of shame and feelings of stupidity that feeling inept in language have brought on. Remarkably, none of the five expressed anger or even irritation at the unfairness of their situation. Lilia said, "No my mother never sat down and read with me cause I started school down here. Well, one thing my mother can't read in English (sighs, pauses). How about some good questions about what I've been

doing over the weekend." I pursued asking her if she ever thought it wasn't fair. "No. I have to keep going."

Zac came closest to being irritated, but it might well have been with me for pushing the subject by asking if he ever tried to change his language. "I guess I would talk that way that I would regularly talk instead of usin proper English. I talk the way I talk; they can keep sayin it, and I will probably talk the way they want me to talk once and a while, just the way I talk, I guess." Matt seemed to sum it up for all speakers of non-standard English when he sang a song title for me, "That's the way it is."

Because these five participants had difficulty with the accepted language of the school, they were put into learning situations where they had to do language exercises instead of doing school work that would push them to abstract thought. In the next section we will see how they had spent hours doing remedial work which held little intrisic motivation and finally in eleventh grade wrote paragraphs; whereas, their standard and advanced schoolmates wrote and discussed literature and philosophy.

Lilia and Davy both found themselves groping for self-expression in their interviews and in their writing. They both described and displayed frustration. Davy spoke concretely, "That's how I explain things; I use objects, and it takes a long time, examples, takes a lotta examples."

There is an important distinction to be made here. To say that the basic writers used concrete language is not to say that that

language wasn't used both eloquently and abstractly. When Davy said in describing how he felt as a language speaker, he said, "I feel like a plant." We know how he felt more accurately than if he had found the abstract words for his situation. Other participants make sense of their world through concrete language.

> Zac: We used to have oatmeal and cream of wheat and stuff like that, and I used never to like that. My mother make me stay until I'd eat all of it, like if I didn't eat it, she say, "Go ahead, cause you going to be late for school." And then I would come back home, and she would still have it waiting for me, so I'd have to eat it. She'll be mad at us one minute and then she'll say she love us the next.

> Lilia: My mother is always watching over me, and I keep telling her I know what I'm doing. I know what to do if anybody come around and try to start trouble, if a guy try to come and mess wid you. I have me a switchblade. My sister used to carry a gun, a little small one, big bullets though. They know not to mess with Lilia.

> Sonia: In elementary school girls used to pick with me all the time. I never used to fight back. Glorina used to pick with me every single day. Ma got tired of my comin home cryin. In Junior High I pick the fight. I got into a fight with this girl; I messed her up bad. I made a deep nail cut around her eye. I felt bad. It was from one extreme to the other. First my mother would tell me to fight, then she (told me) not to. Now I just observe people and stay away from the trouble makers.

As eloquent and useful as their language was, it was not that which is valued by most teachers in school. Participants from both standard and advanced writing classes sought for "megabuck words," and Davy said, "That's how I explain things,....takes a lotta examples." More importantly the meaning they make, the abstractions they come to from making connections between concrete events in their life with their concrete words has to do with their relationships with friends and family. It has nothing to do with making sense of the issues of

race, class, and schooling that touch their lives. With me they were silent on those issues or confused--and as always Davy is the exception who slips the generalization.

But to return to concerns during writing. Zac, Lilia, Sonia, and especially Davy's concerns were highly linked with language though they weren't necessarily conscious about thinking of them as language-linked. Sonia worried about, "If I use the word the teacher would want." Zac lived with a worry common to the speakers of Black English--verb construction. Lilia who had grasped the difference between written and oral expression worried, "about if I write the way I speak."

These concerns may be productive in that they will eventually bring the basic writer closer to using standard English, but they are unproductive in that they keep that writer from finding the intrinsic motivation or extrinsic motivation to write. If one is always wrong, if one feels stupid because "I write it wrong," there can be no good feeling that comes from the endeavor. Their view of themselves as writers pushed them to coping strategies that were much less conscious than those exhibited by other eleventh graders. But before we turn to coping strategies that these writers used to maintain a positive view of themselves, we shall look at the writing that the basic participants had done in school and the effect of that curriculum on their way of thinking and their process.

The Writing Basic Writers Remembered Doing

The writing that basic writers remembered doing was interesting for two reasons. First, their usually clear memory of events in their lives failed when they tried to remember writing they had done. Second, the writing curriculum they did remember was very different than that of standard and advanced students in that it had given them little practice in transcription, that aspect of the writing process where they all seemed mired. This discussion will begin with the issue of memory and then take a look at the writing curriculum.

Orion told me, "People remember more bad stuff that happens to 'em than good stuff." He remembered only glimpses of whole years of his schooling, and yet other events he related with clarity down to the locker number. He did remember a lot of "bad stuff," and I wonder how much more went unremembered. Orion's comment and my understanding of repression and selective memory cautioned me to be aware that I didn't have a complete picture of the writing they had done. This did not mean that their memory (or even the absence of memory) was insignificant. Even writing experiences that the writers reported that were left undone (like Davy's unwritten story about the city dogs) were important.

During elementary school years these participants reported writing during penmanship time, to complete exercises, and to write spelling words. Only Davy and Sonia remembered writing stories. In Junior High "exercises" and spelling continued, a little time was spent with book reports and history reports, but "copying" seemed to

have been the major source of writing experience.

Spunky Sonia made it her personal mission to convince me "that there is entirely too much writing in this school." It took me awhile to understand what she was talking about because I already knew that there were kinds of writing that she liked. She was talking about copying, and she was concerned about the way it had affected her previously praised handwriting. Sonia blamed a deterioration of her handwriting that occurred in junior high on all the copying that she did. All the basic writers from the inner-city school reported that they had done a lot of copying, mostly copying pages of notes off the blackboard. Sonia said strongly,"...that's how I started hatin writin, cause it was just too much; it started to get on my nerves." Copying, though it might make handwriting more automatic, would have no benefit to the composing process, the transcription process that put thought to paper, and would not allow the intrinsic satisfaction brought through self-expression. It was another concrete task that took no thought. As reported in the section on peer interaction with writing, basic writers seemed to get more experience in transcription, more intrinsic motivation to keep writing from their contraband note-writing.

In high school again there was little transcription. Answers to textbook questions, short answer tests, vocabulary sentences, copying, notetaking, learning word processing from typing books were the modes of writing reported.

Davy reported that he never wrote much until his eleventh grade

year in "Cinema," a heterogeneous class where he wrote and even had to write a term paper. Zac said that his English classes had mostly "spelling type assignments and stuff like that." I asked, "And writing, did you have much writing?" He reponded, "I don't think so. Off the board (copying), yeah, I did some of that." This interchange was characteristic of many first interview sequences. These writers had vivid recall of many aspects of school and home life, but the memories of writing, especially before High School, were few and vague. This was characteristic of all but Davy. Did they not remember it because they never felt particularly good about it, or because they didn't do much of it?

I asked Zac when he couldn't remember his eighth grade teacher, "I wonder what makes a teacher someone who you can remember or not. Do you have any ideas about that?" Zac answered "No, in eighth grade I had Kenny, Donald, Calvin, like ah....I had basically the same stuff I had in seventh grade....What did I have in seventh grade? I don't remember. I remember math and stuff, but no written assignments." And as previously reported in the section on peers, Zac went on to tell me all the friends that were in his seventh grade class. Zac's memory was sharp when it came to friends, dim when it came to teachers and writing. It is clear which were most important to him.

Did Zac and Orion not have writing or didn't they remember it? There was no way to tell for sure. But in looking at the writing times that were vivid to these students from basic writing classes, two things stood out--relevance and success. They talked of times

when they were powerful with their writing and times when writing had meaning for them as reported in the chapter on teacher's interaction with writing.

Zac had no positive memories. No writing he remembered seemed to have had meaning for him. He remembered being put under the desk for sloppy C's, his ear being pulled, and uncompleted assignments, and E's. I didn't agree with Orion's, "People remember more bad stuff that happens to 'em than good stuff," and I can't interpret that lack of recall as lack of mental acuity. I can only suspect that they remembered little because they wrote infrequently, irregularly, that they remembered little because what they did do lacked meaning for them, and that they remembered little because they would rather not remember their lack of success in the eyes of the school.

Coping Strategies Used to Maintain A Positive View of Self

If we see the writer as an individual whose positive sense of self is important to maintain, I believe we can better understand the lack of memory and other behaviors that basic writers exhibit. Unlike most standard and advanced writers, the strategies that basic writers used to maintain a positive view of themselves were largely unconscious and non-productive. We have seen the coping strategies that Davy had developed to try to sustain a positive view of himself. These strategies hadn't worked well for him. Being perceived as stupid seemed to be the worst peril that awaited Davy and his fellow

students, and as they had been in a lower track all their lives, they had found ways of defending themselves from that view with various degrees of success. Perhaps one of the best defenses was forgetting. But other defensive behaviors were exhibited, and these very behaviors affected the success or lack of success of the students. They were emotional resposes that hindered progress in learning written expression.

Perhaps a coping strategy which gave quick relief from feeling badly about how one was doing in writing was refusal to do it. A large number of basic writers have dropped out of school where there aren't daily reminders of their inadequacy. Davy and Zac refused to engage in writing for periods of time as well, but had come back to it. The five basic writers in this study had found other defenses for the way they viewed themselves without the final defense of leaving school.

Sonia, my first basic participant enlightened me when I asked her whether she thought she was smart. She said, "There isn't nobody gonna tell you they're dumb." And no basic writer except for Davy, whose defenses were thin, did. They all had explanations for their lack of success. "I'm shy," said Zac as he explained why he "messes up" the first year in every school, why he was afraid to get up and get a second piece of paper to finish a test, why he wouldn't go back and ask the librarian for help so he could hand in a research paper. Zac was shy; therefore, he hadn't wanted to do particularly well in school--just passing. For Zac, appearing like everybody else was

important. Zac was shy. He started out interviews with yes and no answers, but when we knew one another better, he dropped his shy defense a bit and told me what he really thought was the source of his lack of success--laziness. But laziness is another defense. "Lazy...I coulda done it if I really wanted to, but I ain't going to do it, like that." Sonia had decided she was lazy as well.

> I don't like to do the things I used to do...stories I used to write. So I think I got cancer or something. She (her mother) says, "You're lying." She takes me to the doctor, and he tells me I'm healthy. From myself, I know it's laziness. I just don't want to admit. I just get to a point where I want to get out of school.

Lilia said, "I was like too lazy. I didn't want to do my work, like class work, homework." It was no wonder that school work (and its resultant frustration or lack of success they felt in it) had won low priority in their lives.

These students had developed a layer of defenses to keep them from feeling badly about themselves, as students and as writers. And those defenses were unconscious. "I am shy" and "I am lazy" were better than the other perception that they saw as being possible in the school teacher's eye, in the peer's eye--"That student is dumb."

Orion, since junior high, had used imaginary escape as a defense against dealing with reality. He spent full minutes staring out the window when he was writing. In Mr. O'Neill's class he could use this idea generation in his writing. He was perhaps the only one of these basic writers for whom some school writing (Sonia still enjoys writing at home) was intrinsically rewarding. "What I'm thinking about, I just write about." As he wrote his "little fantasies" and shared them

with Jason, he enjoyed himself. Another defense Orion used well was that he forgot about writing assignments with a sort of it's-not-my-fault-I-forget attitude. (L.C.: What is it that's going to make it late? Orion:I just don't do it before I should. L.C.: So you put it off? Orion: No, I forget about it [laughs])

Another way Orion kept from dealing with writing which was not pleasant for him was, "I just procrastinate too much...go outside and run around with the goats, watch t.v....or out in the wood runnin around....I'm out there, and I should be in there doing that." The writing he procrastinated about was the kind he didn't like to do; it had low priority in his life. Zac verbalized this low priority of written work. He finished his job before his transportation home was available. He said, "I had nothing to do, so I did the homework, answering the questions for American History. I sit at the bosses' desk in the back of the casing area."

Zac was the only basic writer who displayed a bit of anger which acted as defense. The anger was more conscious than the other defenses, and hence probably more healthy; however, with the anger was resignation. It was a defeated anger. He said about an assignment, "I write what I have to, that's about it. If I have to do it, I'll do it." We have heard what he said about his language. "I talk the way I talk; they can keep sayin it, and I probably talk the way they want once in awhile, just the (one) time, way I talk I guess." Perhaps Zac's anger stood him in good stead. It was a more conscious defense that struck outward, that was active unlike the others' defenses that

grew inward. Others' feelings might have been vocalized as, "I'm in this situation out of my control. It's the way I'm built."

A defense successfully used by Sonia and Orion to describe the way they're built was, "Writing bores me," and "I don't care." And though this may have started out as defense, it became reality. We heard what Orion said of paper corrections, "Doesn't bother me, nothing really bothers me, I could care less what other people think about me, to hell with them. I don't care." Did he protest too much? Whether he didn't care in the beginning is probably a moot point. If writing was not intrinsically satisfying, for the basic participants, and if there was no extrinsic satisfaction from good grades, it became a procedure that had no joy. Why should they engage in it? They did it to pass. They went back and forth a bit about whether they should do more than just pass depending upon the satisfaction they derived from it.

As with all people who use defenses to maintain a positive view of themselves, the participants from basic classes were largely unaware of the defenses that they used to maintain a positive view of themselves. These very defenses limited the consciousness they had of their interaction with their world. The emotion linked with defending themselves closed down a possible fuller view of their world.

Tracking

Advanced writer Elana said, "If I got put in a standard class, I'd be humiliated. I'd be worried about what would happen to me." Standard writer Lisa said, "I guess I felt really bad about my writing because, when you're in a lower group than other people, I guess you naturally feel you're stupid." Lisa and Elana felt the stigma attached to being in a lower track. Elana knew how it could make a difference to her future; Lisa knew how being in a lower group made her feel and how it affected her writing. Elana and Lisa were conscious of a social reality and saw the effect it had on their lives. The basic participants had varying levels of consciousness about tracking, how it made them feel, and the way it affected their lives. Their consciousness was affected by the defenses they adopted. Most conscious were Zac and Davy. As we have seen Zac had recently developed an awareness of the boredom he felt in Mr. Fog's basic writing class, saw a future for himself that wasn't congruent with his placement there, and looked for a way to break out of his cage. Davy questioned why he was where he had been and, with the help of teachers, had been active to change the course of his life. But he was just beginning to reflect on why he was where he was. "Why am I always behind ...cause I don't know how to write, that's why I think I'm behind. Because I was supposed to be a senior this year, and I should be higher on my level. And I notice that my family's in basic

and low. I don't know why."

Though Davy and Zac were rather conscious of tracking and its effect on their lives, Sonia, Lilia, and Orion didn't talk about it until I pushed them to talk about why they were in the track they were in. They were either oblivious to the difference tracking might make to their future possibilities in life, blocked the thought out because thinking about it would aggravate a well-hidden view of themselves as unsuccessful, or they simply didn't want to talk about what they thought would make them a lesser person in my eyes. My guess is that Connell and his colleagues' statement, "The streaming and selective structure of school convinces lots of these kids, just as schooling convinced their parents, that they are dumb," (Connell et al. 1982, 167) is simplistic. Perhaps these students were conflicted about the issue, not convinced. Perhaps a part of them didn't feel dumb, above all they couldn't consciously admit it, and yet the image reflected from teachers nurtured on the deficit theory and in meritocratic institutions gave them that view of themselves.

Though Sonia, Lilia, and Orion didn't evidence reflection on the effect of tracking on their lives, Sonia and Lilia answered a question about why they were in the tracks they were in. (Orion continued his silence on the issue.) Lilia said:

> I guess I'm one of the average, but I was chosen as secretary of the Junior High. Whatever class you had you would try to get out for the meetings. I went another level down. It wasn't picking the easy classes; I was pickin the teachers who you knew that would let you out. This year my teacher put me down lower. I was the only Spanish girl there. I didn't know myself. What I just figured was they changed me because it was overcrowded with people. They had

me for English 3C next year. So I don't know if it's the same level or one higher.

In junior high school the privilege of being class secretary and the positive view that gave Sonia overrode any considerations about what effect the tracking would have on her future. Whereas standard student Lisa knew exactly what group she was in from quite a young age, Lilia was confused about it. Sonia didn't see that the track she was in would make much difference to her either. "I was thinking about whether to take college prep, and I thought I might as well stay in business. It's too much work, too many books to bring home. I just didn't." Perhaps school did not offer enough to make any extra effort for a change of tracks worthwhile. Thus while Elana said, "If I got put in a standard class, I'd be humiliated. I'd be worried about what would happen to me," Sonia and Lilia were not aware of , or were unwilling to consider the possible consequences of their position, or didn't value those consequences.

Schooling, Abstraction, Consciousness, and Oppression

Michael Cole and Sylvia Scribner's (1979) work with the Vai Indians indicated that schooling rather than literacy affected ability at abstraction. That schooling is an important force in developing an ability at abstraction may be one component in understanding the complexity in the connections between literacy, abstraction, consciousness, and oppression evident in the participants of this study. The basic participants in this study would be considered

literate by many standards, but they were not schooled in a way that promoted an ability at the form of abstraction valued by school and by the white middle class society that offers, albeit controls, financial rewards and status.

Abstraction is a connection that happens between two concrete experiences. It allows us to make sense of the world around us. Paulo Freire said, "Abstraction is the escapee of the concreteness" (Seminar, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 25, February 1985). At the same time he talked about how abstractions can be made beautifully through concrete words. Through abstraction we come to an understanding of our world that allows us consciously to make decisions for our economic and social well-being. Without ability in abstraction we are tied down to a reactive stance in our world. "In this situation I'm out of my control. It's the way I'm built. I'm lazy. I'm not a good writer. I don't care." Those bound to a world order that sees them as object instead of subject are oppressed. While one is reactive, one has diminished free will. One is acted upon. When one becomes conscious of the dynamics in one's world, choice is possible.

Thus abstraction, connections among the concrete experiences of one's life, leads to consciousness of one's world. Consciousness of reality, seeing the macroscopic and microscopic view of the cage, arms one against oppression, allows one to act towards one's best interest. Zac and Davy were verging on consciousness. They were beginning to glimpse groups of bars where before they could only see single bars.

But as we have seen, the basic participants in the study have not had schooling that encouraged practice in abstraction, that encouraged consciousness of their circumstances in life. For whatever reason, encouragement of abstract thought has not been seen as part of most basic writing curricula. This may well be because it is near impossible because transcription is not yet automatic, and yet that too seems tied to the lower track curriculum. Writing researchers have decried the "basics" approach for "remedial" or "basic writers" for years, yet it has operated to keep Lilia, Zac, Orion, Davy, and Sonia (1) from being automatic at transcription at an early age through practice, (2) from being involved in writing through which they could make sense of their worlds, (3) from being engaged in their writing in a way that allows excitement and resultant intrinsic motivation for doing more, and (4) from having success as validated by school teachers for writing that allows them to feel good about themselves as writers (hence intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to do it).

There are other contributing factors that have kept these basic participants from activities which will add to increased practice in abstraction and use of it to understand their own lives. The school has somehow inculcated within them the tendency to value and trust ideas from books and sources outside themselves more than their own ideas. The feedback that most of them have received has kept them focussed at a word and sentence level. Dialogue about ideas within writing was rarely seen or reported. The exercises that they did to

"remediate" their inappropriate language kept them focussed at a concrete level. Time spent copying kept them from time they might have spent formulating ideas of their own. Unconscious defensive measures to maintain a positive view of themselves kept them from trying to make sense of uncomfortable lack of success in the school situation. All these aspects of writing for the basic participants have contributed to their lack of practice at abstraction, that act which could link concrete events in their school life to make meaning of that life. A writing curriculum that limits practice in abstraction contributes to lack of consciousness and oppression in those it should serve, creating yet another bar.

Bowles and Gintis see schools as "reproducing consciousness" (or using the word as I have, lack thereof) so that a continuing blue-collar work force is guaranteed (Bowles and Gintis 1976, 126-128).

Donaldson (1979) and Emig (1971) found that working class students had the most strength in writing when they wrote about their immediate context or about themselves, yet held that the mode of American schooling was to push away from immediate context into the realm of abstractions.

> One wonders at times if the shying away from reflexive writing is not an unconscious effort to keep the 'average' and 'less able' student from the kind of writing he can do best and, often far better than the 'able,' since there is so marvelous a democracy in the distribution of feeling and of imagination (Emig 1971, 100).

My interpretation of the experience that the eleventh grade writers from basic classes reported in writing was that they not only

had to write about content far from their immediate context, but that the content and format of their writing did not even push them to abstraction. When they did write about their experience, they recalled experience but were not encouraged to reflect on it. Connell et al. agree with Emig, Donaldson, and Bowles and Gintis about the "unconscious" effort that goes into keeping working-class students from schooling that will allow them other than a blue-collar future, but Connell et al. would further Emig's concern in a manner that is supported by the data from this study.

> Teachers have borne the brunt of the (working class) kids' reaction to academic curriculum, and many have, in consequence, looked for knowledge which their students will find relevant and meaningful.... Their content (of curricula) is often a matter of personal preference, reflecting the kids' immediate world rather than explaining and expanding it.

It is this "explaining...their immediate world" that seems the missing ingredient in the schooling of the students from basic writing classes with whom I worked, the missing link between the concrete and the abstract, and the missing requirement for consciousness. This void becomes an ingredient in oppression.

A return to the participants' experience makes this analysis clearer. Though Sonia, Lilia, and Orion were rarely prodded to reflection or explaining and expanding their world, certain dynamics were allowing this process to begin happening for Zac and Davy. I asked Zac where he got the idea of going on to college. "My basketball neighbor..friend, Vic, from the other school (college prep), he gave it to me. He say if they see that in tenth grade you

was messin up, but they say if you keep it goin in eleventh and twelfth, they see you improvin. I told him I was doin all right this year. I guess it might be better for me when I grow up to go to college."

Zac's confidence had been higher in eleventh grade. He was hailed as we walked down the hall by girls who asked when the next basketball game was and by boys who conferred over the same subject. Reflected self-worth from peers, friends like Vic, and teachers may have diminished his self-consciousness.

Zac's self-consciousness was an extension of his shyness. His accounts of "bumbling" his words in sixth grade, his not doing well in a new school or in a class where he was not relaxed with other students, and his statement, "Seem like the first year in every school I mess up, " were the product of some important self-reflection. And like Lisa , as his confidence rose , and as he came out of his self-consciousness, Zac began to reflect. This is all a far cry from, "I don't care." Zac was thinking about himself and how he reacted in new situations and about the effects that had upon his work. Zac seemed at a point where he was starting to think more about his past, his future, and why things were the way they were for him. If his defenses were higher, like Orion's, this kind of self-consciousness, self-reflection might not have been possible.

Self-consciousness was a way of thinking about oneself, a form of reflection about oneself. If Zac and Davy had had stronger defenses, perhaps they wouldn't have been self-conscious about their writing,

their school work. Like Orion they could have said, "I don't care" more easily. When I pointed out to Zac that he wasn't lazy about other things, there was a long pause. He then mumbled a startling self-realization, "I guess I'm my own worst critic." As previously discussed, Davy, like Zac, showed signs of a growing consciousness of what was going on in his world. Zac and Davy were both in a place where they could think about themselves and reflect on their interaction with school work in general, writing in particular.

Davy was just beginning to act upon his world. He took some initiative in arranging to return to the Upward Bound Program for the summer. He looked into possible alternatives for housing in the fall. There was still naivete. Yale seemed possible. But some of his dreams were realizable; he saw them as such and pursued them.

Zac, too, was taking steps to act for his future benefit; he saw a route and looked for a path to the next track up. "Well, I'm looking to college now," Zac said, "so I figure to myself they might give me a paper if I go. You got to do it, and I can't sit there and say 'I'm not going to do,' it because it's like a waste of money, so I do it, like that." Zac saw some of the realities of his world. "I don't care" or "I'm not going to do it," couldn't work. But even when Zac was showing signs of reflection, and direction based on that reflection, he missed what were to me glaring instances of oppression in his life. After telling me in detail what it was like being put underneath a desk for misforming the letter C in his name, the last thing he said in his third interview was, "Now I still can't make the

letters right, I don't know how it ever started." Events in his life remain isolated though connections on some planes are forming.

And though Davy received a lot of support for his ability, he swang back and forth between valuing himself and feeling his ideas and his abilities were somehow invalid. His and Zac's struggle was in many ways hidden. If Davy and Zac go on to college, their struggle has just begun. Struggle for the "basic" writer is in many ways less visible because they have either defended themselves against the barrage of negative emotions linked with their context for writing or they have quit. The next section will talk of the struggle of the participants in the study.

Interaction of Thought and Feeling and Its Effect on Writing Process

This dissertation has focussed on struggle, on how feeling connects with the writing process to make that process troubled. It has done so by connecting the experience of twelve eleventh grade writers with the process they go through in writing.

Whereas struggle for the advanced participants was something they actively sought to understand, struggle for the basic participants was something they used unconscious defensive strategies to keep from understanding. The only understanding that had been available to them requires a negative view of themselves as writers, as students and as people. For the participants from basic classes (and formerly for Lisa and Matt from the standard writing class), the struggle was

pushed down beneath layers of consciousness, a form of struggle which is just as real as Chris's or Elana's which was on the surface. But as in all oppression, lack of consciousness blunts the sting to a life-long bruise which Sennett and Cobb describe in their book The Hidden Injuries of Class. They described the "buried sense of inadequacy that one resents oneself for feeling" (Sennett and Cobb 1972, 58) that was present in their participants who had been long out of school.

As Davy began to emerge to a consciousness and a desire to improve his lot in life, he seemed to support both the bruise and the sting simultaneously. One can observe Davy's struggle with the writing process--the sting, and one can observe Davy's deep sense of inadequacy--the bruise.

But how then does this fit into writing for the other basic writers. One doesn't witness as much struggle in their work as one does in the "adept" writers. They concentrate so hard on transcription and give any other phase of the process such low priority that little struggle is apparent on the surface.

At the very end of this analysis of the data I feel it is important to return to the distinction between mood and emotion as it can affect a task. Emotion can interrupt and redirect attention away from a task. This dynamic was evident in the reports and work of many of the participants. Mood is a term for feelings which don't obviously interrupt conscious attention but affect it. It can be in place before the task begins or can be set off by the long term memory

connected with the task. Thus mood affects that activity without noticeably interfering. Though most of the participants from the basic tracks went through a period when emotion connected with criticism made them refuse to write, probably what happened more with their writing was that mood connected with how they felt about themselves as writers affected their willingness to engage themselves in the process. Along with a development of their view of themselves as writers (which were in part accumulated reflections from the writing environment) came a development of a mood linked to the writing process. It was primed when the process was considered and affected writing confidence which in turn affected the willingness to take the risks necessary to growth in writing. Mood is perhaps highly linked with intrinsic motivation for the process.

But in returning to Connell's analogy of people in society and fleas in a cage, impetus is provided to look at the implications that this study has for present and future writers in American school. There has been much consideration of the experience and struggle of eleventh grade writers and though that produces "fine dramas about fleas, it isn't very helpful if our concern is to do something about the cage...for the cage is composed of what people do."

The final chapter will turn to what can be done to dispel the struggle through which writers go.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this study I became a student, and eleventh grade writers taught me about their experiences with writing. Analysis of their experiences, linked to and grounded in other research, indicates changes that should be made in certain approaches to teaching writing and in certain aspects of the writing curriculum. In this chapter I will take what I learned from connections among the experiences of the twelve participants, and then, based on their collective and connected teachings, report changes implied for working with individual writers and changes implied for the writing curriculum of American schools. Working with these twelve writers has been motivated by a concern to improve writing pedagogy and curriculum and will culminate in suggesting ways to do so.

Implications for Working with Individual Writers

Causes and Amelioration of Struggle

Each of the writers reported struggle at one time or another in their writing experience. Writers were seen to struggle in four ways with writing. Though the symptoms of these struggles were often similar (not writing, feeling unable to write, groaning, swearing,

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late papers, sudden reversion to less sophisticated strategies or a lessened quality of work), the four maladies themselves were quite different. For teachers of writing to work well with developing writers, it is important to become sensitive to the variations of struggle in order to permit a writing environment that will ease the struggle itself rather than focus on curing the symptoms.

Struggle with the Writing Process. One form of struggle occurred when the writer's many worries and concerns during the writing process crowded the conscious attention so that struggle resulted. This was termed by Flower and Hayes as cognitive overload. This condition was seen especially in writers for whom transcription was not completely automatic, but not in writers who were text-bound by their attention to transcription. "It's hurting," Davy said as he struggled to juggle all the things he had to attend to while writing. But Davy was automatic enough in transcription to be able to struggle--to concern and worry himself with other aspects of the writing process. Zac, Lisa, and Matt also reported and evidenced this form of struggle. Unlike Davy, Lilia had to concentrate so hard on actually getting thought into word that she was unable to concern herself with much else. She was bound to her job of transcription. Emotion does not cause this form of struggle but panic and frustration from the struggle itself can cause loss of writing confidence and self-doubt which increase the struggle of overload, leading to other forms of struggle.

When this struggle occurs, the writing teacher's job is

threefold: (1) to fashion assignments in order to limit the amount that a writer need attend to until subsequently automated processes can be replaced with new concerns, (2) to teach the writer strategies by which they can juggle the concerns that they still have, and (3) to allow them to see consciously why writing has been difficult for them.

Preoccupation with Distressing Life Situation. A second form of writing struggle was seen when the writer's life situation was so distressing that there was little room in the conscious attention for thinking about anything else. Again emotion linked to life distress entered the conscious attention, interrupted the task that was being attended to and redirected attention to the distress--not once but continually as the writer tried to accomplish the task. This life-stress struggle was handled in very individual ways by different writers. When Elana was assigned to write in a way that worsened her distress, and consequently blocked on that writing, she knew what she needed to do to alleviate that distress--change the subject. Other writers found that private writing about the actual cause of distress, so that the distress was the subject for writing and could only feed the writing instead of interrupt it, helped them process that distress and put it in perspective. Women writers were particularly prone to take this route with life distress. Lisa approached writing in another way to deal with diminishing distress. She would play the radio, and do her homework, fill her conscious attention so full that she couldn't think about her troubles. She could only do this,

however, when that distress had passed the point when it was interruptive of her work. Most significant was that though writers knew how to reduce rather than increase distress, they weren't always allowed to follow their inclinations.

As teachers of writing, allowing (or even encouraging) the solutions that Elana and others found to diminish this type of struggle might allow continued practice to take place with writing, even while benefiting the stressful life situations. Better to keep the student writing, even though he or she isn't doing the exact task asked of others, than to have struggle begin. Privacy for writing or freedom for the writer to select the audience is a necessary addition to the solution for this sort of struggle. To say that a writing teacher should allow flexibility for a writer in distress is not to say that expectations should be diminished. Contracting with a writer will allow for changing the type rather than the rigor of expectations (i.e., raising quantity of writing when quality will not be monitored, changing format of written expression, etc.).

Threat to View of Self. A third form of struggle resulted when emotion linked with a significant person in the writing environment caused struggle with writing. The person (teacher, parent, or peer) became a threat to the self-view the writer wanted to maintain, and the writing process was interrupted and redirected toward the source of threat during the writing process causing struggle, what Chris called "blocking." Most of the threatening persons (Elizabeth's father, Chris's writing teacher, Lisa's "Exposition" classmates) were

unaware of the effect they had on the writer and in fact were sometimes in that position because the writers linked them with prior negative experience with people in the same role. Teachers of writing could probably limit this source of struggle by using methods to build self-esteem and writing confidence in writers (build success into the assignment), by adopting attitudes of acceptance (accepting the writer where they are) and trust (trusting that the student will improve) in the writing environment, and by allowing students, at least temporarily, to write for whatever audience they wanted (a peer, a teacher, or even only themselves).

Threat to View of Self: Refusal. The final form of struggle viewed in the participants of this study was perhaps the most difficult to identify because its result rather than its progress was more evident. This struggle resulted when the view of self that the writer wanted to maintain was not commensurate with that which parents, peers, and teachers reflected to the writer. Many participants reported being continually criticized for their product at some time in their writing career, and five reported that subsequent to that criticism they refused to write. The refusal was a solution to the struggle--non-struggle. What could be a simpler solution. But the struggle which lowered self-esteem or writing confidence came prior to the solution. It is likely that a threatening person or persons in the writing environment is the first step to this struggle. In this form of struggle, extrinsic evaluation of writing terminates intrinsic motivation to engage in the process,

and lack of success in the school's eyes gives the writer no extrinsic motivation to engage in the process.

There are social issues connected to this form of struggle. Whereas speakers of nonstandard English reported this struggle at an early age, writers who more closely approximated standard English did not evidence it until adolescence. At an early age this form of struggle may take place when the child's mode of expression, verbal or written, is not congruent with the school's accepted mode. Those who may be characterized by teachers as "slow learners" may often be students who no longer find any joy or success in the learning or writing process. The writing teacher working with students who have been pushed to the extremity of refusal or who just don't care anymore are called upon to look at refusal or "lack of motivation" as a symptom of a greater malady of lowered self-esteem and writing confidence. It is important that teachers (1) develop sensitivity to a student's perception of "criticism" in teacher feedback even when the feedback was intended as suggestion for improvement, (2) in some way turn the situation so that success and self-confidence are restored, and (3) reestablish intrinsic motivation for the process.

Conclusion. In analysis of struggle it becomes apparent that without what Herbert Simon terms "the bottleneck" of conscious attention, limited attention available to a task, each form of struggle might be alleviated. If there were enough attention available to dwell on life crises, to attend to and logically dismiss a threatening figure in the writing environment, and to still deal

with all the necessary writing concerns and ten other tasks simultaneously, writing might be a simple process. But the human mind has limited attention to give to the things that require it, and given that limitation, the human mind can be creative in dealing with its limitations.

Students were ingenious in finding ways of solving struggle with writing. In order to give herself the burst of confidence she needed to get a task done, Elana fantasized its future completion to assure herself she could do it. She would imagine herself in the clothes she had selected to wear the next day, imagine the teacher in characteristic garb, and then picture herself with the paper complete handing it to the teacher. Playing out the scenario allowed her to trust that completion was possible and then get down to doing it. Later, with another teacher, she knew that in order to get her satire paper done, she had to get away from satirizing something that was important to her and that she cared about. But the teacher maintained stringent standards, and Elana's grade went down every day as her "block" continued.

A teacher working with a struggling student might eliminate as much cause for struggle in the writing environment as possible and then allow enough flexibility for the student's ingenuity to take power in the situation. Negotiating and contracting are good strategies for the teachers to use so that they maintain high expectations while permitting conditions that allow the student to get on with learning to write.

Conditions Necessary for Ease in Writing

In the experience of all the participants, there were times of ease with writing, and for several participants ease in writing was even the norm rather than the exception in their writing careers. Connections were made to identify conditions that enabled certain "ease-ful" periods in the writing experience. Ease in writing was reported when no contextual circumstances prevented writers' natural inclination for self-expression (intrinsic motivation) through writing. Most important to ease in writing was writers' possession of a view of themselves as having skills commensurate to the task at hand. Thus ease became a balance among view of self, task requirements, and learning environment expectations. This did not necessarily mean that writers needed to see a task as easy and teachers' expectations as low in order for writing to be "ease-ful." But they did have to see the possibility of success and be invested in it. Conditions which brought this state of ease have been discussed before. When the significant others accepted the writers for where they were and trusted in success, when the writing task was viewed as possible (or the writers were skilled enough to make it possible), and when those writers' writing confidence was high enough to make feasible any effort or risk needed for the task, then there was ease in the writing process.

Excitement and Engagement in Writing and Its Origins

Sometimes writers reported joy in the product of writing. This was usually connected with extrinsic approval of it combined with the writer's own satisfaction with it. But their voices took on the most animation when they talked about excitement in the actual writing process. In these descriptions the intrinsic motivation for them to engage in the process was evident. This excitement seemed to come when writing was meaning driven, when the participants were learning something they wanted to know about their lives or world, when the writing itself was going to serve them in some way, or when they had an audience to whom they wanted to relate something important. Lilia's clandestine notes to Rosa, Orion's fantasies (and the imagined power he had in them), Tracy's magic potion assignment, Matt's physical education/sexual intercourse paper, Lisa's coral reef poem (before the teacher responded to it), Sonia's writing group, Elizabeth's junior high poetry journal, Davy's apple plant paper, Elana's letter to President Ford, Chris's 500-page "Note,"--these were all times of excitement in writing. Only Zac had no stories of joy to tell. Most of this writing excitement took place in the school, although not all of it was sanctioned by the writing curriculum. If a writing teacher asked students to write about a time when writing had been exciting for them, or best for them, she or he might see patterns that would provide the structure for a writing curriculum.

While conclusions about struggle, ease, and excitement in writing

based on the experience of the twelve participants allow us to formulate strategies for working with individual writers, they also form a framework with which to look at implications for the larger writing curriculum.

Implications for the Writing Curriculum

Process/Conference Approach to Teaching Writing

This study offers strong validation for an approach to teaching writing that has current support in the literature though minimal application at the secondary level in the nation's schools. When a product approach to teaching writing is used, the teacher assigns a task and guidelines usually to the whole class and corrects/grades the resulting products. At best writing becomes an endeavor to make the product presentable, to please the teacher, and to avoid correction and criticism while saying something the writer wants to say; at worst it becomes yet another example of the writer's incompetence, molding a negative view of self that at once decreases willingness to take risk and intrinsic motivation to engage in the process.

The process/conference approach to writing pedagogy (Murray 1982; Graves 1982) permits the teacher to encourage intrinsic motivation for writing that comes from the excitement of expressing things important to the self. It also allows the teacher to encourage conventional usage and syntax in a nonthreatening way. The teacher's job is to

help get the writer's interesting ideas into a representation that will be understood by others. The goal becomes publishable content, not a test of how correct a student can be. In the process/conference approach the teacher can spot struggle while it is happening and seek to understand its nature. The malady can be dealt with as it seldom can be in the product approach unless there are substantial after-school conferences. Teachers can help students with strategies to take on next steps and most importantly can focus on facilitation of the engagement of individuals in writing.

The Writing Task

To fashion a writing program so that students bring the most that they have to the task, it is important that they retain their natural inclination for self-expresssion. To nurture this intrinsic motivation it is important that students write about content that is compelling to them and that other concerns surrounding writing be kept manageable, and that success with a piece of writing be probable. When writing overwhelms, it is no longer as important or enjoyable. When writers feel stupid, ineffective or unsuccessful in the process, intrinsic motivation to engage in the process ebbs; hence, expectations for a given writing task must be balanced so that success is possible.

Each participant spoke about the importance that having choice over the content for writing held for them, and many displayed

distress when the only choices were ones that led to struggle. This study suggests that students should have control over the choice of content for their writing, or should have enough freedom of choice so that they can pick a topic that allows intrinsic motivation to facilitate the writing of it.

Misplaced Emphasis on Correctness

This study indicates that writing programs should begin to view adherence to the conventions of standard English as a necessary second step in the writing process. Instead of seeing striving for absence of error in standard English as one part or stage of the writing process, teachers often evaluate writing solely on their standard of correctness at an organizational, sentence, and/or word level. Emphasis on conventions of standard written English motivates the writer to concentrate on what another, usually the teacher, wants from writing--it stifles intrinsic motivation for writing. Participants who had gotten continual praise for being "correct" developed increased dependence on extrinsic motivation for writing and lost intrinsic motivation. They began to write not for themselves but for the teacher. Writing became a chore.

In contrast students whose first language was not acceptable in the eyes of the school had no extrinsic motivation to write. Their work was most often evaluated as "incorrect," and because that was uncomfortable for them, they quickly lost intrinsic motivation for the

process. Mr. Fog said, "Teachers tell me, 'How can I let them write a paragraph if they can't even write a sentence correctly?'" Hence these students spent their school writing time in language remediation which had little effect on their nonstandard English, and they lost valuable writing time that might have permitted transcription to become automatic. By eleventh grade, when three out of five of the basic writing class students finally were allowed to write paragraphs, they had to concentrate so hard on transcription that they had no room in their conscious attention to attend to the syntax that was continually the emphasis in correction. They were graded on something that they couldn't even concentrate on during writing. Students tended to throw "marked" papers away without looking at them unless they were requested to (mindlessly) copy the already "corrected" paper over. These students were caught in the bind of over-emphasis on correctness.

A lesson we can learn from studies on language acquisition is that, "Children are fairly impervious to the correction of their language by adults" (Moskowitz 1978, 94). This leads us to look more carefully at the effectiveness of "correction" even in secondary years. Clearly new ways are needed to deal with learning the conventions of standard English.

Grammar Instruction

For many years now researchers have told us that time spent

studying grammar is inversely proportionate to progress in writing (Postman and Weingartner 1966). But political and social issues of language teaching have made questions of how and whether to teach grammar difficult to resolve. While syntax is a continuing problem for students whose first language is not standard English, teaching conventional grammar rules hasn't alleviated their language problem, for as this study shows students edit their writing according to what "sounds right," which is often the form of English that was learned earliest.

This study suggests that two different approaches to grammar instruction are important for two different populations of students. Chris said, "I never had too much trouble with grammatical errors." And why should he? The rule systems for middle-class standard English were acquired by the time he was six. "In fourth and fifth grade we learned about nouns and things, but grammatical rules never really sunk in." Standard English rules are already unconsciously embedded in his mind. Perhaps that's why so many people say that they never learned grammar until they learned a foreign language when they had to consciously figure out a rule system by seeing how it was similar to or different from their own. Chris continued, "I didn't make many grammatical mistakes, maybe because I had done all this reading. I knew how it was supposed to read. I knew what punctuation to use and things like that."

For advanced student Chris there was little disparity between the language rules he acquired with speech acquisition and the language

standards of the school he attended and hence little need connected with writing to spend time learning grammar beyond learning terms for kinds of words and simple relationships between them, much as a mechanic can work more effectively with engines by giving labels to the parts and discussing the fine tuning of the machine with colleagues. Later when he is curious about language, linguistic study will lend him "a perspective on the nature of systems--the purposes of systems, the rules of systems, the underlying assumptions of systems" (Postman and Weingartner 1966, 86).

Chris had learned standard English grammar inductively (through language acquisition and later through reading) and punctuation inductively (through reading) and used both in his writing without thinking. But students like Davy, Zac, and Lisa agonized over grammar and punctuation, trying consciously to make their writing correct. Because their rule systems are not "correct" they are confused about the whole thing. They have not learned the accepted rule systems inductively, and they need to learn very consciously the difference between their own rule system and that of standard English; they need to understand that they are not stupid because they use a different variety of language.

Teaching Black English rule systems has been criticized because it is seen as allowing a student to think mistakenly that it is an accepted way of presenting oneself in the middle-class controlled, economic world. But in reality teaching the syntactical distinctions between standard English and Black English, working class English,

Spanish or any other language, would (1) raise the consciousness of the nonstandard English speaker, (2) alert that speaker to the fact that he or she wasn't inferior in intellect or in language but may be "behind" on standard English as Davy finally began to understand, and (3) demonstrate teacher acceptance of the student's language and culture. Student examination of patterns in standard English mistakes will probably necessitate teacher assistance and will make this comparative learning a personalized project.

Students would then be able to decide more consciously that they want to go for economic success and see a way to proceed (i.e. to master standard English), or they can consciously make another decision about their language and what life will be like for them with it. They can have more control of their world. Maximum consciousness of the disparity between one's own language and the accepted language would allow (1) learning of the new rule system as a foreign language student would, and (2) an understanding of the integrity of one's own language.

Actually these suggested changes in language instruction parallel a model that Zac had discovered: "If I make a mistake, I'd cross it out and put the right word...'Nobody' is like street language and 'anybody' is proper, 'ain't' and 'isn't', like that." Zac's simple but ingenious solution of his language problem was incomplete, but he seems to have found an answer that could be expanded and applied in the classroom. Frustration with trying to know what is right without having an awareness of what is wrong has been a symptom of the

obsessive and oppressive concern with "proper" English.

It is more important that this suggested comparative system of teaching grammar to nonstandard English speakers should not replace time with other language activities. If anything, time with writing and reading should be increased. If students are not fluent in transcription, they need hours of practice with intrinsically gratifying tasks to become automatic at it.

As with Davy we can see how his problems in reading interact with and impede his writing process. Practice in interesting reading both at an independent and an instructional level will not only permit him to become more adept in that process but will allow an inductive growth of a sense of written versus oral language. As Chris said, "I didn't make many grammatical mistakes, maybe because I had done all this reading. I knew how it was supposed to read." Davy said, "It just come out of my mouth wrong," in trying to explain his frustration and powerlessness in self-expression. If Davy wants to be successful in the eyes of the school, he needs to change his style of oral and written expression. He needs to become conscious of the differences between his language and standard English, and to read more to develop an intuitive sense of the accepted style. He needs to write more often to become fluent at transcription and to practice the accepted style. These are necessary ingredients to style-shifting. Davy was lucky to have what Labov describes as a sense of acceptance and a sense of belonging from teachers that allows him to want to talk like and live like those teachers who care about him. Before the

teacher can begin to be effective in changing the child's language, that teacher must know and accept the culture of the child (Labov 1972). Acceptance is again seen as a necessary precursor to change or growth.

Underestimated Effect of Peers on the Writing Process

It is a conclusion of this study that the effect of peers, both positive and negative, on the writing process has been underestimated. Britton (1975) and Applebee (1981) both reported that student audiences for student writing were rare. "The teacher in the role of judge or examiner is the prime audience for student writing, in all subject areas. Fewer than 10 percent of the teachers reported that student writing was regularly read by other students; even in English classes only 16 percent of the teachers reported such audiences" (Applebee 1981, 47). This study indicates that perhaps peer audience was less rare and more frequently sought after than has been previously expected. Much of the writing students did that was exciting for them (in and outside of school) was for student audiences. Participants also reported clandestine interaction with peers over writing when such interaction was not acceptable classroom convention. But, whereas peer interaction when it was sought was shown to have an important and positive effect on writing, when it was perceived as threatening by the student, or forced on the student, the effect could be devastating to the writing process. Interaction with

peers (as audience, as evaluators) was seen to have an important positive effect on writing when that interaction was voluntary, when the student trusted the peers or saw them as "friends."

Designing a writing program so that students could get peer help with writing when it was wanted, and encouraging but not forcing feedback from groups of peers, could have a positive effect on the writing process. This could have the added benefit of broadening the audience beyond the normal one person/teacher audience. Quiet writing classes are all but obviated by such interaction, but there is no reason why a moderately noisy classroom can't be redefined as busy and productive in the eyes of teachers, students, and supervising administrators.

Grading

This study indicates that grading procedures had an overall negative effect on writing and only occasionally a positive effect. As mentioned in the section on correctness, the better students, those who had felt pleasure from extrinsic evaluation, wanted to repeat pleasurable evaluation and developed an intense striving to please the teacher. They became so focussed on extrinsic motivation that they lost intrinsic enjoyment in the process. Writing became work, a chore, at best "like brushing my teeth," at worst, "like washing bathroom floors."

Grading for students who hadn't been successful in the eyes of

the school built defensive postures. Grades did not increase extrinsic motivation ("Why should I do it when it's always wrong") and they terminated intrinsic motivation for self expression through writing. "I don't care" "I'm lazy" "Writing's boring" are better explanations of their D's in writing than the only other possible explanation, "I am stupid."

Lisa said, "Now that I'm getting good grades, it makes me want to try harder and look to see what I get." This was one of the few positive remarks about grades. Good grades helped prime Lisa's writing confidence so that writing was a task she wanted to engage in again. But the irony is that if bad grades hadn't come first and killed both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for writing, she wouldn't need grade success to validate her progress now.

Ungraded writing courses seem an important consideration for school systems that truly want simultaneously to build skills and intrinsic motivation for written expression. Writing programs often provide students with skills so that future self-expression through writing is possible, but in the process destroy the intrinsic motivation to use writing, except out of necessity, when schooling is complete. Grading procedures for writing courses can be changed, given informed school leadership, but if Boards of Education or administrators aren't open to new perspectives, second best options are available to administrators or teachers: allowing students to assign their own grade (or less obviously asking the students what they think they deserve for the term), giving grades based on a few

student-selected pieces of writing, or giving grades based on how well a student lives up to a negotiated contract.

Building long-term intrinsic motivation to engage in the writing process accompanies skill building as another component in learning effective self-expression through writing; grading has a negative effect on both components.

Toward a More Democratic Writing Curriculum

In a utopian world where every language would have equal power and prestige, there might be no such thing as a lower track class filled with speakers of a "nonstandard" language. An untracked writing program from kindergarten to high school with teachers sensitive to the needs of students whose first language was not English would have solved many of the problems encountered by the five participants from basic writing classes. But given the realities of our world--the propensity of the American educational system to track, stream, or phase--aware and concerned teachers often cannot find an untracked class to teach. Nevertheless, steps can be taken to change writing curricula which perpetuate early tracking of students. The writing curriculum of advanced writers gets them writing at a young age and keeps them working toward more and more abstract thought as they progress through school. The writing curriculum of lower track students keeps the student focussed at a word and sentence level, gives them little time to practice transcription thus keeping them

text-bound, and makes them "feel stupid" about writing, which lessens their intrinsic motivation to engage in it. The writing curriculum for these students triggers defense mechanisms that limit their ability to view the reality of their situation in that world, limit their ability to make sense of their world, and cause them to remain unconscious of ways they might have to act upon their world. Finally because they are bound in a concrete world, bound at the word and sentence level, they have little practice in the abstract thought to which higher tracked students are pushed.

A writing curriculum for lower track students should get them writing at as young an age as possible and keep them writing with only minimal concern for standard English syntax and usage until they are fluent at transcription and have the conscious attention available to attend to concerns of convention. Writing curriculum for older students should provide extra practice time to compensate for any lack of ability at transcription. Writing curriculum for lower track students should insure that they practice making sense of their world through writing so that they retain intrinsic motivation for the process and so that they increase their consciousness of their position in the world and how they might have power in it. Methods of conscientization through writing are described by Faith and Finlay (1979) and by Schor (1980), who write about applications of Paulo Freire's work to the writer in higher education. In short, a writing curriculum should be changed to maximize every child's chances to become able at written expression, and to have skills in writing that

will be valued and financially rewarded.

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APPENDIX

Figure 1

Summary of Participant Selection

	Racial/Ethnic Background	School	Gender	Level Tracked	Parent Occupation and Education	
					Mother	Father
Chris	White	Rural/ Suburban	Male	Advanced	Teacher	Civil Servant
Davy	Puerto Rican	Rural/ Suburban	Male	Basic	Unemployed	Truck Driver
Elana	White	Rural/ Suburban	Female	Advanced	Administrator	Professor
Elizabeth	White	Rural/ Suburban	Female	Advanced	Lawyer	Professor
Joel	White	Rural/ Suburban	Male	Standard	Teacher	Health Administrator
Lilia	Puerto Rican	Inner- City	Female	Basic	Housewife	Unemployed Factory Worker
Lisa	White	Rural/ Suburban	Female	Standard	Civil Servant	Computer Programmer
Matt	Immigrant from India	Rural/ Suburban	Male	Standard	Housewife	Unemployed Accountant
Orion	White	Rural/ Suburban	Male	Basic	Food Services	Electrician
Sonia	Black	Inner- City	Female	Basic	Secretary	Factory Supervisor
Tracy	Black	Inner- City	Female	Advanced	Store Clerk	Factory Supervisor
Zac	Black	Inner- City	Male	Basic	Factory Supervisor	Machine Operator
	6 White	4 Inner-City	6 Male	5 Basic		
	3 Black	8 Rural/ Suburban	6 Female	3 Standard		
	2 Puerto Rican			4 Advanced		

Figure 2

What is in Conscious Attention

Davy

Spelling	16
Aesthetics	1
Syntax	9
Punctuation	3
Convention	1
Idea Generation	12
Word Choice	1
Planning	1
Recursion	10

Figure 3

What is in Conscious Attention

	Lisa
Spelling	7
Aesthetics	1
Syntax	5
Punctuation	3
Convention	2
Idea Generation	55
Word Choice	13
Planning	9
Recursion	10
Audience	1
Blocks	2
Environment	1

Figure 4

What Was in the Conscious Attention of the Participants

Sentences / Minutes	Davy 11/35	Sonia 6/10	Zac 7/15	Orion 27/35	Lilia 6/12	Lisa 20/40	Joel 16/25	Matt 15/12	Elizabeth 19/15	Chris 12/40	Tracy 15/20	Elana 8/40
Spelling	16		6		1	7		1				
Aesthetics	1					1				1		
Syntax	9	1				5		4		1	5	
Punctuation	3	1	1			3						
Convention	1					2	1					1
Idea Generation	12	3	3	2	1	55	10	13	15	22	15	28
Word Choice	1			1		13	1	3	2	8	4	13
Planning	1					9	8	5	6	30	20	18
Recursion	10	2				10	2	3	3	3	3	2
Outside Life									2			4
Audience						1	1			7	1	1
Blocks						2			1	5	2	2
Amusing Oneself									1	4		
Passive Voice									2	2		1
Colloquialism										3		
Inner Critic						1	1		2	3	1	5
Sexist Language						1				1		
Environment										2		
Self-Approval									4	1		
Style										3		1

occurrences in one protocol

Figure 5

What is in Conscious Attention

Chris

Aesthetics	1
Syntax	1
Idea Generation	22
Word Choice	8
Planning	30
Recursion	3
Audience	7
Blocks	5
Amusing Oneself	4
Passive Voice	2
Colloquialism	3
Inner Critic	3
Sexist Language	1
Environment	2
Style	3

Figure 6

What Was in the Conscious Attention
of Advanced Participants

Sentences	18	12	15	8
Minutes	15	40	20	40
	Elizabeth	Chris	Tracy	Elana
Spelling				
Aesthetics		1		
Syntax		1	5	
Punctuation				
Convention				1
Idea Generation	15	22	15	28
Word Choice	2	8	4	13
Planning	6	30	20	18
Recursion	3	3	3	2
Outside Life	2			4
Audience		7	1	1
Blocks	1	5	2	2
Amusing Oneself	1	4		
Passive Voice	2	2		1
Colloquialism		3		
Inner Critic	2	3	1	5
Sexist Lang.		1		
Environment		2		
Self-Approval	4	1		
Style		3		1

occurrences in one protocol

Figure 7

What Was in the Conscious Attention
of Standard Participants

| | Sentences | 20 | 16 | 15 |
| | Minutes | 40 | 25 | 12 |

	Lisa	Joel	Matt
Spelling	7		1
Aesthetics	1		
Syntax	5		4
Punctuation	3		
Convention	2	1	
Idea Generation	55	10	13
Word Choice	13	1	3
Planning	9	8	5
Recursion	10	2	3
Outside Life			
Audience	1	1	
Blocks	2		
Amusing Oneself			
Passive Voice			
Colloquialism			
Inner Critic		1	
Sexist Lang			
Environment	1		
Self Approval			
Style			

occurrences in one protocol

Figure 8

What Was in the Conscious Attention
of Basic Participants

	Davy	Sonia	Zac	Orion	Lilia
Sentences	11	6	7	27	6
Minutes	35	10	15	35	12
Spelling	16		6		1
Aesthetics	1				
Syntax	9	1			
Punctuation	3	1	1		
Convention	1				
Idea Generation	12	3	3	2	1
Word Choice	1			1	
Planning					
Recursion	10	2			
Outside Life					
Audience					
Blocks					
Amusing Oneself					
Passive Voice					
Colloquialism					
Inner Critic					
Sexist Language					
Environment					
Self Approval					
Style					

# of occurrences in one protocol