Doctoral Dissertations

Dissertations and Theses

Interactive Audience and the Internet

John R. Gallagher
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Recommended Citation

INTERACTIVE AUDIENCE AND THE INTERNET

A Dissertation Presented

by

JOHN R. GALLAGHER

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

September 2014

English

INTERACTIVE AUDIENCE AND THE INTERNET

A Dissertation Presented

by

JOHN R. GALLAGHER

Approved as to style and content by:

_____
Donna LeCourt, Chair

_____
Anne Herrington, Member

_____
Jon Olsen, Member

_____
Jenny Spencer, Department Head
Department of English

DEDICATION

To every little weird kid who can't focus and was called stupid. You're not weird or stupid.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Donna LeCourt for her guidance, patience, and presence throughout this project. You have graciously given your time and energy in ways I hope to someday emulate. I will always have a lens for "Reading like Donna" especially when I'm organizing my writing.

Thank you to Anne Herrington. You never gave up on me, even when I sometimes gave up on myself. Your questions and thoughts have made me think precisely. I will always have a lens for "Reading like Anne." Thank you to Jon Olsen, for reading my dissertation and offering me inspiration and reigniting the passion that sometimes fades during a long, arduous process like this one. Thank you to Leslie, Emma, Anna Rita, Linh, and Sarah. Our group is something I will never forget. Your feedback was incalculably important. Christian, you prevented me from getting caught up in binaries. Travis, your thoughts on genre will never be forgotten.

Thank you to Mike, for your patience (re: the obsessive email checking) and companionship during our adjunct days. Without an office and teaching eight courses a semester, you are a truly gifted teacher. I will repay your thoughtfulness in any way I can. Thank you to Greg. Our long commutes to work and our friendship were instrumental in providing me with freedom to try out new ideas.

The irony of a single-authored print dissertation about participation and interaction in Web 2.0 is not lost on me. I am indebted to the participants of this study. They graciously volunteered their time for this study. Kelly, Tracy, and StickleyMan—thank you.

Thank you to my mother, who taught me not to give up. Thank you to my dad who never gave up on me.

And now the final two.

Thank you, Triton, my furry friend. I appreciated our walks throughout Montague. You knew when I sat in that kitchen chair, it was time to leave me alone.

And lastly, to Shelby. Patience can't begin to describe you. And thanking you is certainly inadequate (but thank you nonetheless). You've made me the person I am today.

ABSTRACT

INTERACTIVE AUDIENCE AND THE INTERNET

SEPTEMBER 2014

JOHN R. GALLAGHER, B.A., BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY

M.A., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Ph.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Donna LeCourt

This dissertation takes up a question posed by Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford in 2009: "In a world of participatory media—of Facebook, MySpace, Wikipedia, Twitter, and Del.icio.us—what relevance does the term audience hold?" Using a case study methodology (e.g., Dyson and Genishi; Stake; Yin), I examine how three popular internet writers—all writers who engage with political issues in different venues—conceptualize their audiences and respond to audience feedback. Using established scholarship about audience, including Ede and Lunsford's work, as well as newer digital scholarship (e.g., Arola, Carnegie, Edbauer Rice), I extend the existing conversation on audience to the context of digital textual production. Rather than understanding participatory audiences as monolithic, my dissertation breaks up the concept of participation in order to represent its dynamic effects on the broader notion of audience. Audience becomes more real, a literal interaction rather than the traditional imaginary one, which compels us to create new understandings of audience and their effect on textual production.

My findings indicate that we do not, in fact, have adequate models of audience for composing digital media in all cases. Drawing upon my case studies of current web writers, I introduce three important concepts: audience *emerging*, audience *managed*, and audience *oriented*. The first, audience emerging, shows us the unexplored relationship between Ede and Lunsford's canonical terms, addressed and invoked. Understanding the nature of this oscillating relationship situates writer awareness of audience as an emerging, recursive process, much like other elements in the contemporary understanding of the writing process. Audience managed illuminates ways that a web-writer can marshal members into a community and initiate discursive norms. Her writing in this community, funneled through the template, then creates the community's expectations and conventions. Audience oriented shows the ways in which a writer can guide their audience toward the formation of a public. Overall, this research highlights the way writers imagine and experience their audience in ongoing, continuous ways.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

ANSWERING THE CALL FOR INVESTIGATING AUDIENCE AND WEB-WRITING

In "Among the Audience: On Audience in an Age of New Literacies," the

second follow-up to the pivotal "Audience Addressed/Audience Invoked: The Role

of Audience in Composition Theory and Pedagogy," (AA/AI) Lisa Ede and Andrea

Lunsford posit three questions about how *audience* might be changing:

1) In a world of participatory media—of Facebook, MySpace, Wikipedia, Twitter, and Del.icio.us—what relevance does the term audience hold?

2) How can we best understand the relationships between text, author, medium, context, and audience today? How can we usefully describe the dynamic of this relationship?

3) To what extent do the invoked and addressed audiences that we describe in our 1984 essay need to be revised and expanded? What other terms, metaphors, or images might prove productive? What differences might answers to these questions make to twenty-first-century teachers and students? (43-4)

This project is a response to these questions, specifically designed to examine how

the concept of audience might need to be revised for *interactive websites and web-*

texts. These texts, such as blogs, social networking sites, and general call-and-

response web-writing, dramatically revise Ede and Lunsford's AA/AI because such

texts undercut the idea that "It is the writer who, as writer and reader of his or her

own text, one guided by a sense of purpose and by the particularities of a specific

rhetorical situation, establishes the range of potential roles an audience may play"

(166). Writers may be guided by a sense of their audience for these web-texts, but

they also may be *literally* guided by their audience. For instance, a blogger may

write or revise web-posts based not only on audience expectations or the writer's imagination but also through direct communication, via a comment function. In fact, in many instances, writers and readers are more connected to each other when communicating through interactive web-texts than in print texts. While the concept of interactive audience is not new or unique to these technologies[1], I contend that interactive websites are different enough from print texts to warrant a reconceptualization of audience for such spaces and texts because writers and readers directly interact, something that print texts do not necessarily allow or encourage.

The guiding question for this project is as follows: how does "audience" function for web-writers and, subsequently, their interactive web-based texts? This question condenses Ede and Lunsford's three concerns while also revising them for direct application to interactive internet writing. Put another way, what relevance does the audience have when it plays an *active* and *literal* role in shaping the text?

In order to help answer this question, this chapter lays out three models our field has used to describe audience. The three models are the rhetorical model, the discourse community model, and the public model. By laying out these models, I can develop a language for discussing audience as well as providing context for the interactive and participatory models I set up in chapters three, four, and five. After setting up these models, I also discuss the ways "audience" is interactive and participatory on the internet. I do so to highlight the complexity of interactivity and

---

[1] Interaction with traditional media, like books for instance, is often *naturalized*, meaning that the medium is ubiquitous enough to make that interaction appear instinctive and normalized.

participation in regards to Web 2.0. This chapter also, in an attempt to avoid

isolating the writer-audience relationship from the social world in which it occurs,

addresses the way interface, through the form of templated web-design, is

important for the interactive and participatory nature of these web-texts. I use

genre theory as a way to understand audience in regards to the templated space of

Web 2.0.

The Print Models of Audience

I lay out three models of audience in order to develop a robust language for

discussing audience to help explain the ways that my case study participants

negotiate with interactive and participatory audiences. While these models are

designed to illustrate the way our notions of audience function for print texts, I

believe they provide an effective framework with which to approach the models I

set up in chapters three, four, and five. I wish to point to three caveats, however.

First, these models are somewhat reductive in regards to the individual theorists I

name. Each model presents a coherent way of presenting larger trends in

composition and rhetoric in regards to audience. Therefore, in the scope of this

project, such reductivity is useful for discussing and conceptualizing audience-

theory. Second, while these models are presented as discrete, they overlap at times

and can be recursive, especially as noted with Jenny Edbauer's "Unframing Models

of Public Distribution: From Rhetorical Situation to Rhetorical Ecologies." Still, I

believe enough significant differences exist to distinguish each model. Third, while

these models may appear as somewhat of a chronology, they are not. They are not

linear progressions (i.e. the discourse model does not evolve from the rhetorical

model). The models of audience occur either simultaneously with one another or in response to epistemological changes in the field of composition and rhetoric.

The Rhetorical Model of Audience

I begin with the "rhetorical model," or the model that sees audience as designed to be acted upon. This model sees the rhetor, in many cases a speaker or writer, as acting on an audience to induce change or a type of action. In this model, the writer must account for the needs and wants of the audience. Important to this model is that it emerges from the rhetorical situation, with an addressed and invoked audience. The rhetorical model of audience sees audience within the *confluence* of the rhetorical situation, in which the audience is the receiver of rhetorical discourse. The model presents audience as active consumers of the rhetor. While the rhetor may or may not be *obliged by the situation*,[2] he or she is the primary source of moving the audience to action. The audience is not a *passive* receiver of the message, however. The audience must be moved to action to fit in this rhetorical model. The audience does not produce rhetorical discourse, but it does act on it, which implies that the rhetor must take the audience into account in some way. This relationship is a crucial component of the rhetorical model because the audience is a recipient of the message and acts from the rhetor's discourse, although the audience does not play a role in the production of rhetorical discourse, except in the mind of the writer. In this sense, while the rhetorical situation obliges rhetors, rhetors have the authority with which to influence their audiences and lead them to action or cause change. The rhetor may derive the rhetorical discourse from

---

[2] See Lloyd Bitzer's "The Rhetorical Situation"

the situation or from the rhetor's aims based on what they perceive the audience needs or desires.

Thus, I will argue that the following are the primary characteristics of the rhetorical model of audience:

1) The rhetor is the producer of rhetorical discourse that aims to effect change, which means the audience is the active receiver and mediator of those effects.

2) The situation obliges the rhetor to create rhetorical discourse.

3) Audience can be understood, in this model, as part of a fluid rhetorical triangle.

In this model, the rhetor is the producer of rhetorical discourse. In the pivotal AA/AI, Ede and Lunsford craft a well-known and often-used writing model that seeks to balance addressing an audience with invoking an audience. Ede and Lunsford define addressed as "Those who envision audience as addressed emphasize the concrete reality of the writer's audience; they also share the assumption that knowledge of this audience's attitudes, beliefs, and expectations is not only possible (via observation and analysis) but essential" (156). On the other hand, invoked can imply that "...the writer uses the semantic and syntactic resources of language to provide cues for the reader—cues which help to define the role or roles the writer wishes the reader to adopt in responding to the text" (160). They define these constructs not to create a binary between the two aspects of their model, but instead to show that a fully elaborated view of audience "...must account for a wide and shifting range of roles for both addressed and invoked audiences" (169). Throughout their discussion, however, the crucial component for audience is

to have a role in *receiving*, *consuming*, and *transmitting* the piece of writing or rhetorical discourse. In fact, Bitzer is very clear about the audience's role when he writes, "It is clear also that a rhetorical audience must be distinguished from a body of mere hearers or readers: properly speaking, a rhetorical audience consists only of those persons who are capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change" (8). Further, "…the rhetorical audience must be capable of serving as mediator of the change which the discourse functions to produce" (Bitzer 8). The audience members are not producers of the rhetorical discourse; the writer is. The audience passively receives the message but actively shapes the discourse from which the writer chooses. Ede and Lunsford's model leaves the writer in a powerful position: the writer has the opportunity to influence the audience, move them to action, or enact a certain kind of change in them.

In regards to the rhetorical model of audience I am presenting, however, the rhetorical situation inscribes the writer's power. The writer is *not* an all-powerful rhetor, whimsically free. Granted, the writer occupies a powerful position, but at least in regards to audience, the writer is bounded by the complex rhetorical situation. In fact, "any discussion of audience which isolates it from the rest of the rhetorical situation or which radically overemphasizes or underemphasizes its function in relation to other rhetorical constraints is likely to oversimplify" (Ede and Lunsford 169). This rhetorical model seeks to avoid presenting audience as solely passive and the writer as replete with agency. The rhetorical situation, of which the audience is a crucial part, guides the writer to create rhetorical discourse, which "comes into existence as a response to situation, in the same sense that an answer

comes into existence in response to a question, or a solution in response to a problem" (Bitzer 5). Thus, while the rhetorical model of audience sees the writer as producing rhetorical discourse for the audience, the ability of the writer to do so is circumscribed by the rhetorical situation.

While Bitzer's conception of the rhetorical situation and Ede and Lunsford's idea of addressing an audience are both accurate in regards to this circumscription, invoking an audience sees the *writer* as circumscribing the rhetorical situation. Ede and Lunsford recognize the complexity of their address/invoke model when they write, "One of the factors that makes writing so difficult, as we know, is that we have no recipes: each rhetorical situation is unique and thus requires the writer, catalyzed and guided by a strong sense of purpose, to reanalyze and reinvent solutions" (164). In regards to invoking an audience, the writer is tasked with reanalyzing and reinventing solutions. The writer is influenced by the audience and, as I shall show in my discussion of Barbara Biesecker's essay, the very act of crafting and developing rhetorical discourse. Yet, in regards to audience invoked, the writer determines much of the rhetorical situation and that situation's discourse.

What then determines rhetorical discourse? Part of the intricacy of the rhetorical model of audience is to address the debate about the origins of rhetorical discourse, or namely to determine whether the rhetorical situation is inherent and objective or determined by the writer. This debate is crucial because it investigates to what extent the writer's power is inscribed by the rhetorical situation. Let me first set up this debate. Bitzer demonstrates the importance of audience to the rhetorical situation when he claims, "Prior to the creation and presentation of

discourse, there are three constituents of any rhetorical situation: the first is the *exigence*; the second and third are elements of the complex, namely the *audience* to be constrained in decision and action, and the *constraints* which influence the rhetor and can be brought to bear upon the audience" (6). Bitzer argues the situation is rhetoric's defining quality. A rhetorical situation is *rhetorical* when these three factors, exigence, audience, and constraint, are at play in the situation. In this way, an objective rhetorical situation exists that calls for rhetorical analysis. Bitzer clings to objectivism, for rhetorical situations exist as inherently rhetorical, at least for him. On the other hand, in "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," Richard Vatz advocates for a social construction of the rhetorical situation in that it is managed by individuals' dispositions for a particular situation. He claims, "The very choice of what facts or events are relevant is a matter of pure arbitration" (157). Vatz writes, "To the audience, events become meaningful only through their linguistic depiction," which implies "...meaning is not discovered in situations, but created by rhetors" (157). Rhetoric is thus defined by the rhetor; the rhetor decides which situations become rhetorical, and ultimately receive attention. According to Vatz, the writer creates the rhetorical situation and is the origin of rhetorical discourse. Thus the following question arises: does the situation create rhetorical discourse or does the rhetor?

To resolve this "origin story," Barbara Biesecker turns to Derrida's *différance* in "Rethinking the Rhetorical Situation from Within: the Thematic of *Différance*." *Différance* is not a concept or a word, but an idea that implies both difference and deference, to differ and to defer. Derrida claims signs make meaning from an

endless chain of signifiers. Textually, words and ideas can never fully account for their meaning and are, therefore, incomplete without different words, and still always incomplete as a result. This continually defers meaning. Biesecker turns to Derrida's *différance* in order to flesh out an account "for the production of rhetorical texts" (115). Her account claims the following:

> The deconstructive displacement of questions of origin into questions of process frees rhetorical theorists and critics from reading rhetorical discourses and their 'founding principles' as either the determined outcome of an objectively identifiable and discrete situation or an interpreting and intending subject. (121)

Biesecker frees rhetorical theorists from the Bitzer-Vatz debate because, conceptually, the rhetorical situation and the rhetor are no longer static, but parts of a now in-process, moving rhetorical triangle (writer, message, and audience). The debate is not solved, but rather resolved because the situation and rhetor move, no longer static, reified, or homogenous terms or ideas.

For the rhetorical model of audience, though, Biesecker's argument shows that audience is a destabilized idea, which has implications for the power relations between writer and audience I previously set up. She certainly, if indirectly, answers Ede and Lunsford's AA/AI call for more elaborated views of audience-related discourse and theory. Biesecker criticizes Bitzer's systematic devaluing of audience when she states, "one is expected to catch the meaning of Bitzer's question 'What is a rhetorical audience?' because one is trained, at least in terms of the theoretical/critical lexicon, to think of audience as a self-evident, if not altogether banal, category" (122). She applies *différance* to audience, coming to the conclusion that "*Différance* obliges us to read rhetorical discourses as processes entailing the

discursive production of audiences, and enables us to decipher rhetorical events as sites that make visible the historically articulated emergence of the category 'audience'" (126). Biesecker argues that audience is a complicated term because the term is also a process from which audiences emerge, produced and distributed by—and also an influence on the very production of—rhetorical discourse.

This demonstrates, for my purposes, that audience is part of a complex network of rhetorical constraints and considerations that is nevertheless the consumer, receiver, and transmitter of rhetorical discourse. Biesecker's destabilization of the rhetorical triangle shows that, within *différance* and what I call the rhetorical model of audience, audience is an element of the rhetorical situation through which identities and social categories are produced via rhetorical discourse. Biesecker writes the following:

> From within the thematic of *différance* we would see the rhetorical situation neither as an event that merely induces audiences to act one way or another nor as an incident that, in representing the interests of a particular collectivity, merely wrestles the probable within the realm of the actualizable. Rather, we would see the rhetorical situation as an event that makes possible the production of identities and social relations. That is to say, if rhetorical events are analysed from within the thematic of *différance,* it becomes possible to read discursive practices neither as rhetorics directed to preconstituted and known audiences nor as rhetorics 'in search of' objectively identifiable but yet undiscovered audiences. (126)

She goes on to conclude, "…a reading of the rhetorical situation that presumes a text whose meaning is the effect of *différance* and a subject whose identity is produced and reproduced in discursive practices, resituates the rhetorical situation on a trajectory of becoming rather than Being" (127). The power of the writer, and more broadly rhetor, is a power of *becoming*. While Biesecker still sees the writer as the

producer of rhetorical discourse, she argues that the process of creating rhetorical discourse also creates the writer or rhetor, as well as audiences. As a result, the power of the writer, in the rhetorical model of audience, is circumscribed in the process of becoming—within the *movement* of the rhetorical triangle in which the terms of the rhetorical triangle continually need the others, and to defer their own meaning, to have provisional meaning. I will use this idea of movement in my development of "audience emerging" in chapter three.

This writer-audience relationship is influenced by other factors and elements that include more material and ideological issues. For instance, Lunsford and Ede's "Representing Audience: 'Successful' Discourse and Disciplinary Critique," revises the addressed/invoked paradigm from AA/AI in order to account for the influences[3] outside the writer and audience. They offer an active critique of the pivotal essay from 1984, directly addressing the ways that the piece did not account for the influence beyond a simple sender-receiver model.

> ...we do not pursue [in AA/AI] the multiple ways in which the student writer's agency and identity may be shaped and constrained not only by immediate audiences but also, and even more forcefully, by the ways in which both she and those audiences are positioned within larger *institutional* and *discursive* frameworks. Nor do we consider the powerful effects of *ideology* working through genres, such as those inscribed in academic essayist literacy, to call forth and thus to control and constrain writers and audiences. (170-1; my emphasis).

They use the term textual to imply invoked and material to imply addressed. Their argument aims to address the influences, contexts, and indirect forces of rhetorical discourse that are crucial to the production and reception of rhetorical discourse. As

---

[3] One might also place their first follow-up to "AA/AI" in the discourse community model of audience.

such, in more complex versions of the rhetorical model, the situation is somewhat unpredictable and fluid, while also still material and ideological.

Ecological approaches account for this fluidity of situation, notably Marilyn Cooper's "The Ecology of Writing" and Jenny Edbauer's "Unframing Models of Public Distribution: From Rhetorical Situation to Rhetorical Ecologies." Both argue that an ecological approach offers a holistic way to understand writing. In terms of audience, Cooper posits that audience must be viewed in terms of lived audiences with whom communication occurs in the context of "social encounters (372). For her, "…the perspective of the ecological model offers a salutary correction of vision on the question of audience. By focusing our attention on the real social context of writing, it enables us to see that writers not only analyze or invent audiences, they, more significantly, communicate with and know their audiences" (371). On the other hand, Edbauer, whose model also fits into the public model of audience, uses the notion of ecological somewhat differently. Edbauer picks up Biesecker's criticism[4] that much of the rhetorical situation is deeply rooted in "elemental conglomerations" or the idea that "rhetoric is a totality of discrete elements" (7). Instead, she proposes that "…we might also say that rhetorical situation is better conceptualized as a mixture of processes and encounters; it should become a verb, rather than a fixed noun…" (13). For audience, this disrupts sender-receiver models because "rather than replacing the rhetorical situation models that we have found so useful, however, an ecological augmentation adopts a view toward the processes

---

[4] Edbauer also picks up the rhetorical accounts of Louise Weatherbee Phelps, as well as Smith and Lybarger, on the same grounds (8-9).

and events that extend beyond the limited boundaries of elements" (20). Edbauer's model accounts for the "effects" and "concatenations" (22) of local ecologies. This focus addresses audience because it views the audience within a given rhetorical situation *and* a variety of other situations that may arise from changing contexts. The situation "bleeds" into other situations; a rhetorical situation is a part of a variety of other rhetorical situations. As such, the writer and audience become elements in not a static situation, but in a moving and living process that simultaneously engenders other processes, and prevents certain encounters from taking place. I will pick up on this in-process, ongoing cycle in chapter three with my notion of "audience emerging."

The rhetorical model of audience is rhetorical because the audience is part of the rhetorical situation, moved to action by a writer, or rhetor, who is also part of that situation. But neither the writer nor audience is pre-formed before the creation of the rhetorical discourse. They are in constant movement before and after the initial situation; the rhetorical elements are constantly in movement, only coming together, congealing in a way, for particular situations or circumstances. The audience in more traditional rhetorical approaches is the receiver of rhetorical discourse and the writer is the producer, no matter what *obliges* the rhetor. In more complex approaches, the writer and audience are in flux, obliging one another. The complexity of the rhetorical model is that its elements are constantly creating and recreating rhetorical discourse. Still, in this model, the writer exerts a great amount of influence on the audience. Further, because the writer possesses the rhetorical

means to influence the audience, the rhetorical discourse that emerges is somewhat

unpredictable.

The Discourse Community Model of Audience

The discourse community model of audience views the audience and writer

as co-creating a text in a very broad sense; the way they "think-act-be" is influenced

by a broader community (Gee 142). In this model, the audience and writer often

share common expectations and worldviews. The writer in this model does not

completely control the production of rhetorical language and action.

In this model, I use discourse as a way of "(writing)-doing-being-valuing-

believing combinations" (Gee 142). While not directly related to audience, discourse

can be connected to the concept of audience in that both the audience and the writer

partake in a series of historical contingencies that place the writer and audience into

a larger conversation with one another.

> A Discourse is a sort of 'identity kit' which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognize. Imagine what an identity kit to play the role of Sherlock Holmes would involve: certain clothes, certain ways of using language (oral language and print), certain attitudes and beliefs, allegiance to a certain life style, and certain ways of interacting with others. We can call all these factors together, as they are integrated around the identity of 'Sherlock Holmes, Master Detective' the 'Sherlock Holmes Discourse'. This example also makes clear that 'Discourse', as I am using the term, does not involve just talk or just language. (Gee 142)

Furthermore, discourses are not individualistic, but rather community-based, in

official (institutional frameworks) capacities, unofficial (social groups) capacities, or

both. Specifically, "Discourses are always embedded in a medley of social

institutions, and often involve various 'props' like books and magazines of various

sorts, laboratories, classrooms, buildings of various sorts, various technologies, and a myriad of other objects from sewing needles (for sewing circles) through birds (for bird watchers) to basketball courts and basketballs (for basketball players)" (143). Drawing on this meaning of discourse demonstrates that the discourse community model of audience is theoretically robust. The following points characterize the discourse community model:

1) The audience is more active in producing rhetorical language than in the previous model because the audience can be viewed as participating in the discourse community of the writer.

2) The audience and writer influence each other through the discourse community; the writer still has power but the audience and discourse community have a greater amount of influence on the writer's rhetorical choices than in the rhetorical model.

3) The model itself uses community in a problematic way: community is too bounded for discourse but still a useful term for the model.

In "Audience Involved: Toward a Participatory Model of Writing," Robert Johnson shows that texts can be co-produced through audience involvement. For him, Ede and Lunsford's model of audience in AA/AI sees audience as too passive. While numerous authors critique AA/AI along this line (e.g. Kirsch and Roen; Reiff; Selzer), Johnson's critique "challenges the role (and power) of writers as it encourages a reciprocal and participatory model of writing unlike that usually explained in general composition and rhetoric studies: a refashioned model of writing that has implications for writing processes, notions of community, and even agency" (362). Because of this reciprocity, addressing or invoking an audience is not adequate because the audience is actually involved; "the involved audience is an actual participant in the writing process who creates knowledge and determines

15

much of the content of the discourse" (363). Johnson's line of thinking shows that

involved audiences are literally part of the discourse community because they play a

role in the production of texts, which in turn determines power relations between

writer and audience. Writers and readers *participate with one another*, typically in

the context of a discourse community, which thereby situates the audience as

actively shaping the rhetorical language and conventions in the writer's mind. The

discourse community may even literally shape the rhetorical language and

conventions of the writer.

I place the above theorists in this model because, for this co-creation to take

place, there must be shared connections between the writer and audience. These

shared connections, in my view, can be understood as a discourse community. The

language that is co-produced is the product of a host of ideological, historical factors

and a certain world view—the discourse community. This discourse community acts

as the bridge between the writer and audience. In "What Happens When Basic

Writers Come to College," Patricia Bizzell points out that the discourse community is

exceptionally powerful and can overtly influence the writer. She uses the example of

basic writers grappling with the discourse community of academia in context of

language communities.

> ...the academic community uses a preferred dialect (so-called
> "Standard" English) in a convention-bound discourse (academic
> discourse) that creates and organizes the knowledge that constitutes
> the community's world view. If we see the relation between dialect,
> discourse conventions, and ways of thinking as constituting a
> language community, then we can no longer see dialects or discourse
> conventions as mere conveyances of thoughts generated prior to their
> embodiment in language. Rather, dialect and discourse generate
> thoughts, constitute world view. It would not be correct, however, to

16

say that a language community's world view is determined by its language, because that would imply that the world, view could not change as a result of interaction by the community with the material world, and we know that such changes do occur. In order to participate in the community and its changes, however, one must first master its language-using practices (297).

This passage provides the discourse community model of audience with three crucial points. First, it reiterates the point that discourse is more than dialect or language; discourse is more akin to a way of talking, thinking, and being simultaneously. Second, discourses transmit and produce ideas; discourses speak *through* writers. They can *produce* language and social actions, including rhetorical actions employed by both writers and audiences. They shape ontological, epistemological, and semiotic perspectives. Third, discourses are changeable and evolving. They are not set in stone. A discourse community that uses a particular discourse shapes and modifies other discourses. Thus, in this model, both the writer and audience, while having a role in the production of texts, must contend with the expectations and affordances provided by a discourse community.

A corollary of this notion is the discourse community *structures* the available choices to the writer or audience. The discourse community structures insiders' ideas, epistemologies, and ontologies while systemically ignoring or denying other values[5]. The discourse community exerts a profound influence on the cognitive capabilities of insiders. David Bartholomae, in "Inventing the University," illustrates that the discourse community implicitly guides the rhetorical decisions of those in that community.

---

[5] For further discussion of the way that discourses demarcate values, see Gee, p. 143-5.

> …when I think of "knowledge" I think of it as situated in the discourse that constitutes "knowledge" in a particular discourse community, rather than as situated in mental "knowledge sites." One can remember a discourse, just as one can remember an essay or the movement of a professor's lecture; but this discourse, in effect, also has a memory of its own, its own rich network of structures and connections beyond the deliberate control of any individual imagination. (145)

Bartholomae demonstrates that insiders *think* differently than outsiders. Their cognition and ability to communicate is bounded by the discourse community, a crucial aspect to the concept of "audience managed" I establish in chapter four. This notion is crucial to audience because the audience and writer are tied together (or not) through a (or many) discourse community. The writer, then, must navigate the discourse community of *insiders*. The audience, in the mind of the writer, has certain expectations, which are shaped by a discourse community. Consequently, in this model, the writer must understand and account for the shared practices of audiences.

Discourse community, in this model, is not without its problems. Part of the model's weakness is that both discourse and community are blurry concepts. In *Audience and Rhetoric*, for instance, James Porter uses this term somewhat problematically in his extensive discussion of audience in rhetorical theory. He writes, "The notion of 'discourse community' is one way to describe the influence of the audience during the composing process. The term 'discourse community' refers vaguely to discursive practices *out of which* the writer operates. The term calls attention to the discursive field that influences writers—or constrains them, depending on your attitude about the forcefulness of this field" (84; my emphasis).

In other words to ask "'What exactly is a discourse community?' is a badly phrased

question" (85) because "discourse communities establish boundaries and power

relationships that include and exclude. This is inevitable. But it is also inevitable that

those boundaries are interrupted and redrawn" (95). Further, Porter is less

concerned with defining a discourse community and more focused on entering it.

For him, "The goal of the writer is socialization into the discourse community"

(109). Consequently, he concludes the following about audience:

> Audience analysis is not...strictly a scientific, detached process. The
> writer is not a lab technician standing apart from the object of study,
> peering at it through a microscope. (We should not, perhaps, be
> calling it audience analysis.) The first goal of the writer is
> "socialization" into the community, which requires an understanding
> of the community's unstated assumptions as well as its explicit
> conventions and intertextuality....the writer's job is to understand the
> community and adopt an appropriate *ethos* within it. (112)

Porter believes writers, and rhetors more broadly, do not write to audiences but

within the discourse community of which they are a part. The writer can effect

change within the community because the community is the nexus of various

identities, of which the writer is a part. The writer achieves success in relation to the

discourse community.

In light of Porter's use of discourse community, what does this term mean? In

fact, Joseph Harris has called the discourse community "little more than a metaphor"

(15). Porter has been critiqued for his use of this discourse community; Mary Jo

Reiff claims that "Despite Porter's attempt to define discourse communities as

dynamic and flexible, the readers and writers who are members of the community

are portrayed as a fairly homogenous group" (109). One broader problem with the

term, then, is that a "discourse community" cannot be clearly defined. It would be difficult to point to a concrete discourse community because the boundaries of that community are constantly overlapping and interwoven with other discourse communities. Further, using the term "community" implies a sense of cohesion that may not exist. While a community generally has boundaries, a "discourse community" is far more fluid and permeable. It can also change over the course of time.

However, this model might be more useful if "discourse community" remains somewhat vague. If it remains fluid, the discourse community model of audience acts as a parallel counterweight to the rhetorical model of audience. If the rhetorical model finds much of its basis in the rhetorical situation, then the basis for this model remains entrenched in the discourse community. Likewise, discourse communities bleed into one another, as rhetorical situations bleed into one another. What sets this model apart from the rhetorical model of audience is the presence of the discourse community structures available means of persuasion, identification, and change. The rhetorical model explicitly calls attention to the ways the rhetor can command all available means of persuasion and possible effects. In the discourse community model, the writer shares and understands the practices of that community's various audiences, aware of those shared expectations during the composing process. The writer must address the concerns that arise from such expectations by using the means of persuasion that the discourse community allows, permits, and, in some cases, tolerates. The discourse community in many ways obliges the rhetor because the community provides the means of persuasion the

rhetor draws upon. In this model, a great deal of power resides in the community. When compared to the rhetorical model, then, the discourse community model places the writer in a position of less power. The discourse in this model is also more predicable in comparison to the rhetorical model.

The Public Model of Audience

The public model of audience asks in what ways the term "public" could be substituted for, as well as related to, audience. While the rhetorical model is a model situated in the public, this model directly addresses issues of a public or publics. This model partly sees public as a substitute for audience because it is expansive enough to account for actual people who could, but not necessarily would, read a text. It accounts for invisible but nevertheless real audiences. It also understands that these actual people are difficult to define as a discrete community because a public can be composed of competing and even contradicting discourses that may or may not understand, or be open to, the writer's rhetorical context. For these reasons, this model also explores the meaning of rhetorical discourse in the context of a public or publics.

In this model, audience is not entirely a cognitive construct of the writer or rhetor, even though the writer must still contend with invoked audiences within a public. Yet, invoke here takes on a slightly different connotation than I used in the rhetorical model of audience. A public is more difficult to wrangle and invoke than a specific audience or member of a discourse community. Using textual cues to invoke an audience may actually cause some parts of that public not to read—invoking an audience may disinvoke other parts of that same public. Writers must contend with

a public as a broad set of multiple, composite audiences. The term "composite audience" here picks up and revises Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's use of the term. In *The New Rhetoric*, they define "composite audience" as "people differing in character, loyalties, and functions" (21). For them, the orator makes use of a "multiplicity of arguments" that take into account the "constituent elements" that are "readily discernible" (22). They are clear that a few people or even a single individual can be a composite audience with competing ideologies. In "Polemical Ambiguity and the Composite Audience," Mike Duncan revises their definition to mean "an addressed audience with more than two discernible factions, possessing potential divisions that run as deep as, or deeper, than the possible identifications" (456). A public, as I am using it, will mean an audience that is an ensemble and a concatenation of possible readers, viewers, and listeners with multiple divisions, some of which are discernible whereas others are invisible or unannounced. This model focuses on situations where a writer typically aims to address a broad audience, although that broad audience may distill itself into a variety of individuals who compose that audience. The following points characterize the public model of audience:

1) Writers must contend with a variety of discourse communities and particular rhetorical situations *simultaneously*.

2) The term public is a set of ongoing discursive relations in which writers must contend with competing, composite audiences.

3) The public model of audience is somewhat of a middle ground between the first pair of models. It has characteristics of both while also incorporating the notion of multiple audiences overlaid on each other.

In order to discuss the term "public" coherently, I buttress my discussion with two texts: Rosa Eberly's *Citizen Critics* and Michael Warner's *Publics and Counterpublics*. Eberly's text helps to move my discussion of audience to a less bounded term than "rhetorical situation" or "discourse community" by situating writers in a public domain. For instance, Eberly defines the term *citizen critic*:

> By *citizen critic* I mean a person who produces discourses about issues of common concern from an ethos [sic] of citizen first and foremost—not as expert or spokesperson for a workplace or as a member of a club or organization. Citizen critic is thus as much normative as it is empirical: it is as much hope as it is reality. (1)

Eberly moves the term *critics* beyond and outside bounded communities. In fact, this term *critics* can be generalized to *writers* because Eberly often discusses how written texts circulate in social practices. Specifically, she looks at literary texts and the way they are received by *citizen critics*. I posit that the term can expand to encompass the ways writers receive texts and the circulation of texts. The term *citizen critics* allows us to see that writers produce texts about issues—about identity, about politics, and so forth—primarily from an *ethos* of a public persona. *Citizen writers* address a specific issue in their texts as an individual in a public community beyond a *bounded* community.

Because a *citizen writer* produces rhetorical discourse from a position of public persona, this kind of writer navigates several discourse communities and rhetorical situations simultaneously. A writer might use specialized language or employ textual cues from a particular discourse community, but the writer must also take into consideration how a public receives a text. While the production of rhetorical discourse is shaped by the writer, a public is pre-formed only in the mind

23

of the writer. It is not stable. The general public is so vast and general that citizen writers must contend with a variety of publics while enacting change to their desired audience, if they have one. They may have certain smaller audiences they directly seek to influence, but they may also simultaneously desire to influence a public generally. In this way, citizen writers in the public model of audience can see a public as a symphony and cacophony of competing rhetorical situations and discourse communities with fluid, shifting boundaries.

      Crucial to the development of my term citizen writers is that writers are familiar with the discourses of a *shifting* public. Edbauer's "affective ecologies" is useful here: "we are speaking about the ways in which rhetorical processes operate within a viral economy. The intensity, force, and circulatory range of a rhetoric are always expanding through the mutations and new exposures attached to that given rhetoric, much like a virus. An ecological, or *affective,* rhetorical model is one that reads rhetoric both as a process of distributed emergence and as an ongoing circulation process" (13; italics in original). She goes on to note, "This public scene forces us into a rather fluid framework of exchanges—a fluidity that bleeds the elements of rhetorical situation. Indeed, the (neo)Bitzerian models cannot account for the amalgamations and transformations—the *viral spread*—of this rhetoric within its wider ecology" (19). Once a text is produced, for Edbauer, it can take on new meaning depending on its context. When the text enters a public, the text is therefore imbued with characteristics of the previous models I established, depending on context. A text cannot be contained by situation or community; the term "public" encompasses that fluidity. The public model of audience, I believe,

sees the production of rhetorical discourse as an unbounded, fluid process in which the writer must imagine an audience but whose actual readers are varied and multiple.

In this model, then, citizen writers do not necessarily participate in a specific discourse community or discrete rhetorical situation. Rather, they draw upon a variety of discourses and rhetorical situations, and apply them to a wider public. That language or text then enters into a public, effectively becoming a part of that public. A unique part of this model, then, is that the variety of discourses a writer draws upon calls into being particular kinds of audiences for that text.

The term "public" needs further explication in order to clarify the way texts enter a public imaginary. Michael Warner's Habermasian-based *Publics and Counterpublics*, claims that "…the notion of public enables a reflexivity in the circulation of texts among strangers who become, by virtue of their reflexively circulating discourse, a social entity" (12). This notion of public allows texts to circulate among strangers, accounting for them as an unknown audience while the strangers, in their act of circulating the text, create the social entity that is a public. Essentially, a public is a self-reflexive idea particularly because "[t]he manner in which [a public] is understood by participants is…not merely epiphenomenal, not mere variation on a form whose essence can be grasped independently" (12). For a public to exist, a text must circulate among strangers who paradoxically become a social entity based upon the text itself. In this way, a public simultaneously is "an ongoing space of encounter" and "the social space created by the reflexive circulation of discourse" (90). I see a public as an ongoing discursive space with

evolving formations that are outside the writer's own cognition; the language of the

writer creates a public by calling it into being through its consumption and

circulation. This idea of calling a public into being can be seen in chapter five.

Writers seek to influence this public by straddling their own concepts of the

general public and the reception of the writer's intended message. But the general

public is not homogenous or unified. A public actually represents a nexus of a

variety of audiences. In this way, the pluralized term "publics" is useful to examine.

Publics can contain subaltern "sub-publics" or as Warner calls them,

"counterpublics." He claims the subaltern notion of a counterpublic "…maintains at

some level, conscious or not, an awareness of its subordinate status" (119). But a

counterpublic is not the opposite of a public, but rather a *contingent* part of public

always subordinate but dependent on a public. Both publics and counterpublics

contain personal traits of those individuals part of a publics or counterpublics.

Warner writes the following:

> There are any number of ways to describe this moment of public
> subjectivity: as a universalizing transcendence, as ideological
> repression as utopian wish, as schizocapitalist vertigo, or simply as a
> routine difference of register. No matter what its character for the
> individual subjects who come to public discourse, however, the
> rhetorical contexts of publicity in the modern Western nations must
> always mediate a self-relation different from that of personal life
> (160).

Publics are not reflective of personal life, thereby removing publics and

counterpublics from the binary "public vs. private" debates. Warner makes clear

that publics and counterpublics demonstrate that people enter into a larger,

evolving space that has personal traits, which paradoxically are not private. A public

contains personal-public characteristics that are created by the individuals of a public who are called into being by the writer's text. Thus, a public is realized in circulating the text, as well as responding or answering the call of a public. In this way, it is not a discourse community: there are no "insiders" or community in regards to a public. Instead a set of strangers come together during the moments of a text's circulation.

The public model of audience is somewhat of a balance between the other models. Writers produce rhetorical discourse in this model and even craft their own identities during the production of this rhetorical discourse, much like in the rhetorical model of audience. But writers see themselves as part of this public in order to anticipate the variety of norms of a public, much like the shared expectations in the discourse community model of audience. Yet, the writer cannot entirely navigate these practices because there is no particular discourse community in which to participate. In fact, a public does not even exist until an audience responds or further circulates the discourse. Therefore, this model views texts as having a power beyond the writer as they circulate.

Interactive and Participatory Web Texts

While these models of audience are intended for print, they should not be discarded in regards to interactive web-texts. Nevertheless, these models should not be simply overlaid on interactive web-texts because these models do not account for the audience's *textual participation*, an issue that affects production, distribution, and circulation of texts. The audience, in regards to these texts, is no longer part of the product or relegated to the composing process. This difference, for me, raises an

interesting question: what choices does a writer make when the audience can textually participate with the writer, even after the initial production process has ended? This question unearths an implicit concern with interactive web-texts: unlike in print models, the audience no longer remains hidden from the writer. In fact, in her argument that academics should look to the internet for innovative publishing strategies, Kathleen Fitzpatrick has noted that much of electronic publishing shifts the focus of texts from "final, closed product to open-ended processes" (75). They are no longer "static, discrete textual forms" (90) but *interactive* and *participatory* texts, two concepts that are mutually intertwined but nevertheless not interchangeable.

Interactivity and Participation

For my purposes, the term "interactivity" applies when writers experience exchanges with and through technological mediums, platforms, and templates, whereas the term "participation" can be used to describe exchanges between writer and audience. Interaction and participation, as concepts, overlap but for the purpose of my discussion, I need to separate them in order to clarify my object of study for this project. My distinction draws on Henry Jenkins' *Convergence Culture*, which uses the idea of "convergence" to lay out the differences between interaction and participation. Convergence culture rests on the idea of convergence, or "flow of content across multiple media platforms" (2). This convergence, in relation to the term "audience," allows users to become participants, active shapers of activities, conversations, and discussion. Interactions, however, are mediated by some sort of technology. This distinction between interactivity and participation, for him, boils

down to an issue between technological applications and social norms. He writes, "Interactivity refers to the ways that new technologies have been designed to be more responsive to consumer feedback…. The constraints on interactivity are technological….what you can do in an interactive environment is pre-structured by the designer" (137). Participation, conversely, "is shaped by the cultural and social protocols. Participation is more open-ended, less under the control of media producers and more under the control of media consumers" (137).

Interactivity refers to the actions that occur through the websites' various templates and programming. Participation implies that users shape content and the culture of that content, which in Jenkins' case can be corporate participation or unauthorized grass-roots participation. Writers must account for not only addressed and invoked audiences but also for the possibility of textual participation from those audiences. While *Convergence Culture* focuses on consumerist models, deeply entrenched in either participation with or resistance to such models, it still provides a useful way for distinguishing the terms interactivity and participation from each other in order to demonstrate that web-writers must contend with different cognitive, textual, and material differences from print writers. Understanding these two terms allows writing scholars to highlight the problems that might arise by trying to map print models of audience onto models of audience for web-writing.

In terms of audience, when interactivity is less dynamic and audiences are limited to the role of reader, web-based writing is not significantly different from print-based writing because little to no textual interaction exists. But as the levels of

interactivity increase and become more dynamic, especially as various forms of

participation emerge, the writer must account for the audience's response and

audience-produced texts. This interactivity and participation is dramatically

different than print texts. James Porter picks up on this idea in "Recovering Delivery

for Digital Rhetoric," when he employs a heuristic for differentiating the various

ways that writers and readers function in response (or not) to each other. I have

added parentheses for clarification.

least   most

access/accessibility   usability   critical   co-production
                                                  engagement

        (passive   (active participation
        consumerism)   in design)
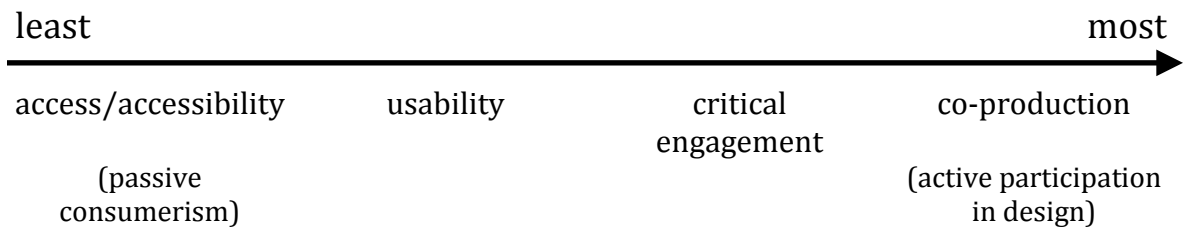
Figure 1.1: Level of interactivity

This heuristic reveals the crucial connection to audience and web-writing: "Defining

interactivity in terms of potential for audience involvement can help us imagine a

broader range of human interactions with machines, systems, interfaces, and with

other humans" (217). Interactivity is bound to the notion of audience because

audience, in part, encourages and allows for the circulation of texts thereby affecting

purpose and exigency. But for Porter, "interactivity refers to how users engage

interfaces and each other in digital environments" (217). He views the way users 1)

interact with interfaces and 2) other users under the broader term of interactivity.

In light of Jenkins' distinctions, Porter's heuristic can be revised to show that a

second continuum, beginning with critical engagement, could be helpful for

30

distinguishing between interaction with interfaces and interaction with other

people, while seeing those interactions as a fluid spectrum:

least   most

critical   co-production
engagement
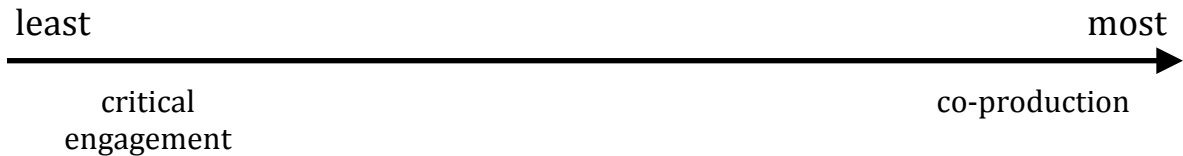
Figure 1.2: Level of interaction between users

For critical engagement, users begin to interact with one another, no longer just

with interfaces. For co-production, users interact with one another to the point

where they may in fact alter the layout or design of a text. In this scale, users have

the opportunity to not only use an interface but interact with other individuals.

Porter would seemingly agree with this revision when he writes, "The true

revolution of the Internet lies at the right end of the interactivity spectrum—when

users can critically engage what they read (e.g., by commenting on a published

editorial posted on a blog) or further to the right, when they co-produce and become

writers, when the distinction between audience and writer blurs" (218).

Studying this type of activity allows for a more dynamic understanding of

audience than the previous models because the writers must literally adjust their

texts based on audience participation. This heuristic can assist in developing

potential sites of study based on the level of interactivity *and* participation. Further,

web-writers experience varying degrees of interactivity and participation, based on

the website's structure. The platform of web-writing plays a vital role in establishing

the differences between print texts and web-texts. If a web-page is static, then the

writing process is extremely similar to print texts, although differences in the

circulation of the text clearly exist. For static and some low-level interactive web-pages, the previous print models are adequate.

As the level of interactivity develops into critical engagement and co-production, towards a dynamic type of participation, print models may be less useful. In "Beyond Star Flashes: The Elements of Web 2.0 Style," Bradley Dilger picks up on the dynamism because "Web 2.0 style understands that both 'reader' and 'writer' are in many senses plural, layered, and complex" (19). Although Dilger presents an extensive list of "writerly roles," I quote four to provide a truncated but focused summary. For web-writing, writerly roles can include users "contributing content to their accounts on the site," "connecting their content to other users' content," "allowing their content to be aggregated," and "communicating with other users and/or site designers about content, aggregations, or other communication" (20). The four activities in these roles are contributing, connecting, allowing, and communicating. Such roles are interactive and participatory, to varying degrees. In other words, each of these actions is part of an amalgam of the template and technology of the website as well as the users' cultural and social protocols. Further, these activities are different types of participation. For instance, contributing and communicating have a sense of *collaboration*, whereas connecting and allowing seem different because they are a more *conjunctive* type of writing. Additionally, connecting and allowing seem geared towards a technologically-related role while contributing and communicating are significantly more social. In this way, interactivity and participation are not separate from one another, nor are they interchangeable.

Dilger's roles point towards this *conflation*. "Contributing" seems like writers are adding their texts to a larger site where their texts become changed in relation to the website. "Connecting" implies writers enable their texts to circulate more broadly. "Allowing" entails that writers are allowing their work to be used but not as actively as connecting. "Communicating" engenders a sense of camaraderie that is not present in the other activities. While confusing, these notions are important to highlight because they demonstrate that participation is a largely homogenized term that is useful to break up. Understanding the ways writers view their participation and what roles they inhabit is important to developing a rhetorical notion of audience for interactive web-texts. One crucial investigative question will be the following: how do writers compose, adjust, and change their web-texts based on the roles that they see themselves inhabiting, as well as the roles they see their audience inhabiting? Additionally, it is helpful to delineate the way writers may oscillate between these various roles. This oscillation is crucial to developing a rhetorical notion of audience because it illustrates that the concept of audience is multiple and polyvocal. Members of an audience are much more like the nodes in a network, constantly "making and breaking connections" between activities, groups, paradigms, and even disciplines (Bolter and Grusin 232). The print models of audience do not account for the oscillation a writer may experience between being a producer and consumer of a text. Thus, an important issue my project takes up is to understand how writers oscillate between being writer of a text and consumer of a text. Further, how do writers move into the position of audience for their own texts?

Terms for Interactive Web-Texts

Specifying roles for web-writing requires some new (or revised) terminology because web-texts—with audiences that are textually participatory—can involve a variety of changing writer-like positions. These terms are initial writer, secondary writer, circulator, invisible audience, and designer. While not a complete list, these terms will assist compositionists in exploring these texts.

An "initial writer" is a writer who begins an interactive web-text. The term "original writer" is not an adequate substitute because such a term implies the writer is producing a text that is somehow new and has a unique exigence. Rather, "initial writers" are writers who begin the production of a rhetorical act, whether typified or not, within a mediated discursive space that allows for textual participation from the audience. For instance, the founder of a blog who instigates it may be considered an initial writer. The blog itself may be a response to another exigence, but the blog posts are the initial posts in a space initiated by that writer. Another example is a journalist who writes a column on an organization's website which allows for reader participation. Often times, we use the phrase "post" to mean initial writing.

A "secondary writer" is a writer who responds to the rhetorical discourse of an initial writer. These writers may also create it and even change the exigency of the initial writer's text. Secondary writers may have less power because of their position as responder. Secondary writers may be a producer of rhetorical discourse and create exigencies from their text. Numerous stages of secondary writers may exist, either responding to other secondary writers or the initial writer or both.

Writers who comment, or commenters, on a blogger's texts or a commenter on an online newspaper are secondary writers. While there may not necessarily be any secondary writers, one of the features of Web 2.0 is that secondary writers have a role in the actual production of the text and are consequently a sought-after feature for interactive web-texts. From this, initial writers may respond to secondary writers. They remain "initial" writers, even though they are responding because they initiated the text. Studying secondary writers' texts are crucial to gathering a robust case study of the interactive web-texts and the situation of the initial writer. Often times, we use the phrase "comment" to mean secondary writing, regardless of the writer.

Circulator is a term independent of the writing itself. By circulator, I mean individuals or groups that transmit a text. For print, a circulator is a publisher or people exchanging their physical texts with one another. However, for interactive web-texts, the role of circulator is more important because circulation occurs much faster than print and requires little cost if the circulator is already reading or consuming the text. Circulators may repost the text's web address to another site, including their own. Circulators can also act as the way in which a text creates attention[6] for the initial writer's text, which in many ways has become the way a web-text accrues value. In many instances, secondary writers become circulators when they decide the text has enough value to re-post elsewhere. Hyperlinks are the most common way of circulating web-texts.

---

[6] For an extensive discussion of the importance of attention, see Richard Lanham's *The Economics of Attention*.

Readers only become secondary writers and circulators once they have made the decision to create some sort of text or transmit the initial text. Before they create or transmit this text, they are invisible audiences. Invisible audiences encompass a large swath of possible publics or audiences. For interactive web-texts, they can be people who are active readers of the text but who have not commented: people who stumbled across the text, or lurkers/trolls—active readers who seek to undermine the text or not comment at all. This project will not attempt to account for these invisible audiences, as doing so effectively is difficult due to current technological and social restrictions.

In light of these terms, the digital space partially designates the categorization of writers and audiences. The format of Web 2.0 texts can determine the initial writer because of the template's design. In this way, the *designer* of a template is also crucial when discussing the production of rhetorical discourse for interactive web-texts. In "Sustainability as a Design Principle for Composition: Situational Creativity as a Habit of Mind," Matthew Newcomb discusses design in the context of sustainability studies, though his discussion is applicable to the design of interactive web-texts. He takes a rhetorical view of design that emphasizes social relations and human activities.

> ...design is a rhetorical process that creates relationships and environments of its own. By rhetorical, I mean that design work is always in relationship with a situation full of constraints, competing possibilities, audience factors, and purposes (often to influence behavior); design is a process in terms of having to try out different designs and reshape previous ideas, so it is more about thoughts and activities than about products. (594)

He notes that it is important to see design as a relationship with "thoughts and activities," as opposed to being about visuals and other product-oriented features. While he joins a long-line of new media and multimodal scholarship, he redirects his focus: "Design has a similarity with writing studies in the debate between focusing on the product or on the situation that brought about the product, but design can be about changing the way we consider situations, too" (595). Design, for Newcomb, is about the "objects' relationships to its environment" (597).

While most interactive web-texts have a designer, Newcomb's comments afford that designer a more fluid role in regards to audience. When thought of as a complex set of relationships between a product's environment and the product itself, design gains a social, historical, and material dynamic that new media and multimodal conversations have not yet fully appreciated. While Newcomb uses design to encourage a long-term outlook about writing's relationship towards a sustainable society, his argument about design is nevertheless useful for emerging technologies because it moves the audience into the position of users of a design who also have an active, comprehensive relationship with past, current, and future designs, as well as designers. I will return to the idea of designer and design in my discussion of interface and genre.

Crucial Differences between Web-Texts and Print Texts

In light of interactivity and participation, as well as the terms I defined for web-texts, I suggest that interactive and participatory web texts are different than print texts in regards to audience in in the sense that the audience has a role in the textual product. Interactive web-texts like blogs, social networking sites, and call-

and-response websites are often *textually* participatory. The audience has a space

purposely designed, in terms of layout and content, for the audience to offer

feedback, critique, and other forms of textual participation. Readers are no longer

just part of the process; they may be part of the product—the actual text.

Furthermore, because Web 2.0 enables instantaneous response, writers must

contend with their texts circulating at rapid speeds, as well as extended responses (I

think here of texts in which the audience makes a comment months or years after a

textual was first produced). In these scenarios, the writer becomes a reader of her

own text. In this light, the models I established do not account for constant

oscillation of writer-reader roles or the textual exchange that occurs between initial

writer and secondary writer. They simply are not equipped to account for textual

participation as response (i.e. response that is not considered feedback for the

composing process). One question this project foregrounds, then, is as follows: what

are the ways writers account for this oscillation and how we can build this into our

audience models?

This oscillation between writer-reader roles means that for interactive and

participatory web-texts, in which distribution becomes part of production,

circulation can no longer refer only to how a text moves after it is completed and/or

published. To help illustrate this more integrated concept of circulation, I, like John

Trimbur, turn to *The Grundrisse*. Marx writes, "Circulation itself [is] merely a specific

moment of exchange, or [it is] also exchange regarded in its totality. In so far as

exchange is merely a mediating moment between production with its production-

determined distribution on one side and consumption on the other, but in so far as

the latter itself appears as a moment of production, to that extent is exchange obviously also included as a moment within the latter" (235). He goes on to claim, "The conclusion we reach is not that production, distribution, exchange and consumption are identical, but that they all form the members of a totality, distinctions within a unity" (236). Circulation is the unification of all these aspects[7]. The audience plays a role in these aspects, demonstrating that audience members are co-producers and co-consumers (terms chosen deliberately to highlight the Marxian lens adopted in this segment) of such texts. This view fundamentally alters the way web-writers must account for the circulation, production, and distribution of their texts because their texts continually reformulate rhetorical discourse, much like Edbauer proposes with rhetorical ecologies.

Circulation is inextricably tied to audience, but the term does not often appear in scholarship devoted to audience. In fact, circulation and its associated term, delivery, are frequently "neglected" in regards to writing theory generally. Numerous composition scholars, including Lunsford, Prior et al, Porter, Trimbur, and Yancey have noted that delivery, as a canon of rhetoric, has been neglected. This neglect is in part due to the process of writing being a more private act than speaking. The production of writing often occurs in a different time and space than its distribution and exchange, whereas the production, distribution, and exchange of speaking occur simultaneously or close together in terms of time and space. This

---

[7] Marx defines these aspects as, "…in production the members of society appropriate (create, shape) the products of nature in accord with human needs; distribution determines the proportion in which the individual shares in the product; exchange delivers the particular products into which the individual desires to convert the portion which distribution has assigned to him; and finally, in consumption, the products become objects of gratification, of individual appropriation" (227).

complex relationship is one of the key differences of web writing: distribution and consumption are compressed in time in comparison to print. As a result, reception is visible and can affect textual production than in the case of imagined distribution and reception. Circulation and delivery are the veins through which rhetorical discourse—and the power that arises from its effects—travels.

The way circulation and delivery "hide" in print may account for audience models that give too much control to the writer to explain interactive web texts. While delivery and circulation are often problematically used as interchangeable, Trimbur argues delivery is a crucial part of the circulation's extensive meaning: "…neglecting delivery has led writing teachers to equate the activity of composing with writing itself and to miss altogether the complex delivery systems through which writing circulates. By privileging composing as the main site of instruction, the teaching of writing has taken up what Karl Marx calls a 'one-sided' view of production and thereby has largely erased the cycle that links the production, distribution, exchange, and consumption of writing" (189-90). In *Practices of Value: a Materialist View of Going Public with Student Writing*, Denise Paster underscores that understanding circulation for composition is to grasp the large, encompassing moment of exchange that includes production, distribution, and consumption of textual material. She writes, "Circulation is what brings these steps together, stressing the interconnectedness of production and distribution," which demonstrate that circulation is a nexus of elements in flux, often inseparable from each other in any discrete or discernible way (24). Paster's larger point about circulation is that a Marxian notion of circulation prevents any one moment of

40

production, distribution, consumption, and exchange from being privileged during the composing process.

> While Marx's point is clearly that we must see production in light of distribution etc., and that to look at production in isolation results in an abstract and therefore incomplete understanding of labor, this statement can also provide insight to the field of composition. In many cases, we, as a field, look only at process or product without considering their interconnectedness. Production, and the Marxist notion of the interconnectedness of the moments of production, can help prevent the divorce of process and product; instead, it highlights the ways in which they are intrinsically connected (23).

By taking up the term circulation, I aim to avoid taking a one-sided view of audience for interactive web-texts. Each model I previously presented privileges one without emphasizing the interconnectedness of these processes. The rhetorical model privileges the production (i.e., the writers), the discourse community model privileges the consumption (i.e., the discourse community), and the public model privileges the exchange (i.e., a public as a moment of exchange). By taking up this broader notion of circulation, my project can account for the audience's textual participation throughout the moments of distribution, consumption, and exchange.

Rhetorical Constraints on Writers: The Template

Up to this point, I have only briefly mentioned how to interpret and understand the *designs* of interactive web-texts in regards to audience. This section approaches those designs through the perspective of interface because interface structures web-writing. Such a view of interface, however, is not new. Our behavior, writing, and communication have always been guided, structured, and influenced by the presence of others and conventional forms. As scholars such as Edbauer Rice, Faigley, and Porter are quick to point out, examining interface is not a new idea.

Rather, new media studies frame interface as new because the "new" is the attention new media interfaces draw to the medium itself. For most interactive web-texts, the interface is not yet as naturalized as it is in print and oral communication. Let me use an example from more traditional writing to highlight my meaning of interface, in the context of audience, more clearly.

In traditional print writing, the book, as an interface, often acts as the meeting point between writer and audience. The book structures the way a reader understands the text: in a linear progression, one that relies on a structured Enlightenment-informed type of logic. An audience member has certain expectations about how to read the book, as well as the demarcations of the book's beginning and end. While the language informs the book, the very structure of the pages act as fields, guiding the way a reader comprehends the text. This linear view of the book, however, can be disrupted by footnotes, endnotes, hypertexts, and postmodern novels that question the structure provided by a seemingly constricted linear progression of the page. The book provides a discursive framework that structures the understanding of a text, mediating the communication that occurs between writer and audience.

The kind of interface focused upon in this project, however, is the template because it is, according to Arola, a prominent feature of Web 2.0 that acts as the meeting point between writer and audience. Many interactive web-texts are influenced by a template—a series of prefabricated designs or forms by another individual, group, company, corporation, robot, or even algorithm. A template, in this light, can be seen as a constraint of the rhetorical situation of web writing

42

because it imposes a form on the writer. The template mediates what is possible between audience and writer while also guiding and influencing the interactions between audience and writer, particularly for initial writers, secondary writers, and circulators.

I suggest that by understanding templating through genre theory, we can better understand the ways that audience and writer potentially achieve a mutually recognized purpose with an intended social outcome that is mediated by a prestructured interaction. Also, while templates constrain choices, many web templates are sufficiently open to allow for more than one genre to be performed using them. Using genre theory allows us to understand what work templates do and how this work affects the relationship between writer and audience. For instance, how does a template shape a writer's choices they make when encountering and negotiating textual participation from the audience?

Genre theory can assist researchers in answering this question because it positions writers' rhetorical actions socially and historically. As Miller argues, "…genre study is valuable not because it might permit the creation of some kind or taxonomy, but because it emphasizes some social and historical aspects or rhetoric that other perspectives do not" (Miller 152). Using genre theory to examine templates would allow the social and historical perspectives of templates greater emphasis, thereby accounting for the typified rhetorical action of interactive web-texts. (157). Templates standardize the choices available to writers, as well as the behavior that arises from those choices. In this context, writers and their audiences share similar choices for textual production and consumption. If an interactive web-

text is templated, participation is also subsequently templated. For instance, respondents to Facebook posts must contend with the way the template controls the appearance of texts. In particular, the template only displays a set number of comments to an initial writer's text. Facebook collapses large comment threads, with only the most recent five comments available without clicking to reveal the entire comment thread. When secondary writers decide to post, they may not immediately be aware of the entire comment thread; they would have to be aware of the template's layout in order to expand it. But the initial writer must also contend with the same design structure. Therefore in order for participation to occur, writers and their audiences share this constraint. In this Facebook scenario, they share in the linear presentation of comments to an initial web-text, replete with the implicit ideology that the most recent comments are the ones that need to be first. The template does not encourage specific rhetorical action; instead, it creates an underlying structure, a platform from which rhetorical discourse can emerge *depending on how the template is used*.

However, templates themselves are not rhetorical action in that they are constraining prefabricated forms. They are coercive in this sense. While genres may be recurring rhetorical action and writers participate in that recurrence, writers do not participate in constructing the template itself; that is the work of the designer. The writer's work is to compose within a given template to accomplish their own purposes, drawing on their understanding of the genres afforded by a website's given template. Using a template fosters recurring rhetorical action in that "[r]ecurrence is an intersubjective phenomenon, a social occurrence, and cannot be

understood on materialist terms" (156). While the writer partakes in a typified

situation when filling in a template, that rhetorical action continually changes

because the template allows for fluidity within the prestructured design. To return

to my example of Facebook comments, the way writers comment in the designated

field is not strict and absolute. Initial posts and comments can be up to 63,206

characters (a marked increase from 500 for both posts and comments in 2007, as

well as 5,000 for initial posts and 8,000 for comments in 2011) but writers and their

audience decide on the appropriate length in the context of the written

conversation. Even more specifically, when commenters post, they can use

appropriated semiotic designs, such as arrows, to aide their textual meaning.

Considering the prevalence of the template in Web 2.0, this fluidity can

provide an explanation to Miller and Shepherd's quandary that "Given the

proliferation of change that the internet represents and makes possible, it's

remarkable as anything as stable as a genre has risen there at all" (265). Templates

are clearly not genres. However, in regards to web-writing, such as social

networking, blogging, and other websites that do not require an ability to program

computer code, templates play a significant role in shaping social norms and

expectations for writing. Thus, when Miller and Shepherd conclude, "That aesthetic

power [of the blogging medium] produces a situated decorum that helps stabilize

the churning volatility of the internet—if only briefly—thus making genres

possible," I would add that templates create a context out of which the blogging

medium emerges (286). If the blogging medium produces decorum for genres to

emerge, then templates play a coercive role in shaping that medium. Accordingly,

templates enable and disable certain kinds of decorum to emerge, with a range of choices available to the writer depending on the format of the template.

Templates are therefore somewhat fluid and stable simultaneously, which parallels the idea that genres are stable only in their historical and temporal contexts. For instance, Catherine Schryer's "The Lab versus the Clinic: Sites of Competing Genres" posits genres as "stabilised-for-now or stabilised-enough" (107). In *Genre*, John Frow picks up Schryer's notion of contextualized stability and coherency, noting "Texts and genres exist in an unstable relation, but at any *one moment* this relation is 'stabilised-for-now' or 'stabilised-enough'" (28; my emphasis). Similarly, templates, like print text structures, consistently and constantly change in regards to historical and temporal contexts. The designer of a template makes rhetorical choices based on and in response to situation and circumstance. Templates may be changed to the needs or wants of a designer, programmer, or even algorithm. An individual may fill in the template in creative ways to manipulate it for his or her own purposes. In this way, because its *uses* can be flexible in certain cases, the structure of a template can be viewed as somewhat fluid. Further, designers can make changes to templates and users of these templates can adjust their strategies for appropriating the template for personal use. In both cases, the structure is stabilized-for-now. While templates are somewhat more concrete in their layout and design than generic forms, templates and genres are fluid but stable-for-now because both adapt and change over time.

For the purposes of connecting templates to audience, I believe we can extend Anne Freadman's (2002) notion of "uptake" to templates. I believe the

46

concept of uptake can be applied to templates in order to demonstrate the way

templates mediate participation and interaction between writer and audience.

Freadman uses the term "uptake"

> ...to name the bidirectional relation that holds between this pair; that
> is, between a text and what Pierce would call its 'interpretant': the text
> is contrived to secure a certain class of uptakes and the interpretant,
> or the uptake text, confirms its generic status by conforming itself to
> this contrivance....By the same token, however, the uptake text has the
> power not to so confirm this generic status, which it may modify
> minimally, or even utterly, by taking its object as some other kind.
> (40)

In "Uptake and Biomedical Subject," Kimberly K. Emmons clarifies Freadman's use

of "uptake" when she writes, "'uptake' is the linkage between *and* the process of

linking genres within and across systems of social action. In [Freadman's] analysis,

uptake naturalizes the connection of two (or more) generic texts in order to create a

coherent sequence of activity" (135). Here, uptake makes the transition between

two texts coherent. It naturalizes a pair of texts, one being an interpretant of the

other, conforming to the other in order to produce understanding between the pair.

The interpretant is free to change its own signified shape and this change can have

an effect on the text that is taken up. For instance, in the context of this study, a

secondary writer could take up the genre of the initial writer or conceivably resist

or change it by reframing the text, even within a given template.

Uptake, in this sense, is the process through which texts are created to enable

relationships between similar classes of texts. Uptake may alter the exigence of a

text but not in a way that is irrelevant to the uptake of an original text. Emmons

furthers and expands "uptake" to make it more about the way subjects react to the

genres connected. In other words, when Emmons writes, "If we are to account for the power, particularly the intimate, embodied power, of uptake, we must redefine uptake not as the relation between two (or more) genres, but as the disposition of subjects that results from that relation. Genres as social actions are most powerful when they direct or forestall human interaction," she makes the effort to expand uptake to be more active in the world: the disposition[8] that texts create in subjects (137).

In the context of interactive web-texts, Freadman's and Emmons' view of uptake encourages a breakdown between audience and writer. It enhances the ways scholars in composition and rhetoric might use the terms interactivity and participation. In light of uptake, when writers are interacting and participating with their audiences, they are not *merely* using technological choices or understanding social protocols to communicate. They are of course doing this, but the writer uses a template to produce rhetorical discourse and the audience can respond within that template. The response is shaped by the template, which, once filled out, is an amalgam of rhetorical discourse originating from the template structure and the choices the writer makes within that structure. In this way, templates can create elaborate patterns of interaction and participation between writer and audience. Further, writers can call audiences to participate in their texts but may not specify

---

[8] In "Rhetorical Agency as Emergent and Enacted," Marilyn Cooper uses the term "disposition" to refer to personality in order to emphasize the biological sense of "disposition." I see Emmons' use of Freadman's "uptake" as an attempt to situate genre theory in a complex systems theory that also accounts for subjects' material and physical lives as well as their texts.

what response would be appropriate— or the writer may not have a specific desired response.

In this project, I therefore consider the template's layout and design as instrumental in evaluating the ways an audience responds because the layout and design could influence the type of interaction or participation from both initial and secondary writers. The writer may call for particular kinds of responses that audiences pick up. Or audiences may not pick up the writer's response; the website may in fact have certain rules or guidelines for dictating what responses are appropriate or acceptable. Conceptually, then, "uptake" is useful for understanding the reasons certain texts are formulated in the way they are. Consequently, this project asks two important questions about templates. First, in what ways do initial writers use the template to imagine or address their audience? Second, in what ways do initial writers use the template to circulate their texts to the audience?

<div align="center">**Considering Participation**</div>

These three models of audience help me build the concepts of audience in chapters three, four, and five. While there is not a one-to-one correlation between each model and my concepts of audience, I have found, unintentionally through the course of this study, each data chapter echoes a model established in this first chapter. In chapter three, for instance, audience emerging has close links to the rhetorical model of audience. In chapter four, audience managed draws loosely on the discourse community of audience. Of my three data chapters, however, chapter four has the weakest of connections to its respective model. In chapter five, audience oriented draws upon the ideas I use in the public model of audience,

particularly Warner's concept of strangers. Before I turn to those chapters, though, I

explain how I constructed this study in chapter two.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

The guiding goal for this project is to investigate in what ways audience

functions for initial web-writers and their interactive web-texts. This study aims, as

discussed in the previous chapter, to understand the ways a writer considers

audience when that audience can interact and participate with a writer in Web 2.0.

Unpacking these considerations requires an understanding of the writer's role with

respect to their audience, recognizing if, how, and why the initial writer alters their

texts based on textual feedback from that audience. Given these gaps in our current

understanding of interactive web-text production, I utilized the following three

primary research questions.

1) How do initial writers compose and change their web-texts based on the roles that they see themselves inhabiting, as well as the roles they see their audience inhabiting?

2) How do initial writers change their texts based on the feedback they receive from their audience?

3) In what ways do initial writers use the template of their chosen site to imagine or address their audience?

Within these three avenues of inquiry, I have posed several significant and more

specific secondary questions further help the interrogation. The aim of these

secondary questions, listed in Table 2.1, is to probe the ways that initial web-writers

perceive audience participation in their texts.

Table 2.1: Primary research questions

Primary Research Questions	Key Clarifications
1. **How do initial writers compose and change their web-texts based on the roles that they see themselves inhabiting, as well as the roles they see their audience inhabiting?**	a) How do initial web-writers imagine their audiences? b) How do initial writers compose their texts based on the ways in which they imagine their audience? c) How do initial writers situate and circulate their texts to reach the audience they imagine?
2. **How do initial writers change their texts based on the feedback they receive from their audience?**	a) How do initial writers make changes to their future texts based on previous audience feedback? b) In what ways do initial writers edit, revise, or qualify their previous writings based on audience feedback?
3. **In what ways do initial writers use the template of their chosen site to imagine or address their audience?**	a) How do initial writers use the template to guide or shape the audience perception of a text? b) What limits and possibilities does the template provide to achieve these goals from the previous question? c) In what ways do initial and secondary writers use the template to circulate their texts to the audience?

Rationale for Using Case Studies

In this dissertation, I used a case study approach. I used this methodology

because it attempts to represent each case's complexity in its entirety and does not

seek to reduce or homogenize data. Case studies are able to account for such complexity by viewing their object of study as a bounded system. The idea of a bounded system is important for my project because it creates a coherent way of looking at objects of inquiry, which helps to account for features in my cases that may get overlooked due to a plethora of information. Case studies are thus beneficial to my study because they help to limit its scope of inquiry, through a system bounded by my principles of selection, while retaining a depth of inquiry. Such a methodology helped me to eliminate many excess texts and interview responses that were not relevant to this study about audience, such as texts that were less participatory.

Also, this methodology reminded me that each case was distinct from one another with a different sort of interaction and participation. This approach allows me to examine my three cases in meticulous specificity, thereby enabling me "...to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" (Yin 4). The holistic approach of case studies is crucial for studying the way audience shifts for web-writing because case studies seek to represent and analyze the entire object of study, the case. Because case studies specifically emphasize the "multiple-realities" of subjects, I believe they are uniquely suited to capture the complexity of interactive and participatory web-texts in that these texts have multiple subjects that create and revise those texts (Dyson and Genishi 18; Stake 43; Yin 18).

Five Principles of Selection

The following principles were used to narrow the scope of this study to a meaningful and coherent set of case-studies.

Single Initial Writer

While there are a variety of possible writers that may fall under the category "initial writer," I look at *single* initial writers because texts that have multiple initial writers raise issues of collaboration, which is beyond the scope of this dissertation. I also do not delve into the writer's personal life, unless it is explicitly necessary to inform the writer's role as *initial writer*.

Level of Reader Access

I am not interested in the audience's view of the writer, but rather the writer's view of the audience, as well as the ways that audiences influence the writer's process. The kind of access that the audience has to an initial writer's web-texts, I believe, is an effective way to categorize the type of texts appropriate for this study. Level of reader access determines the possible readers for a web-text. At one end is a completely open, publicly accessible text, such as a non-monetized news website or blog. At the other is a completely closed text, which exists solely for a single reader or set of known readers. I note, however, that no website can exist as completely closed because websites by design exist on the Internet, which is not totally closed. On the other hand, certain texts on websites can be limited to extremely small groups or even the individual writer on the site. Figure 2.1 illustrates this concept of reader access as a continuum between these extremes.

closed   open

⬅━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━➡

Closed-server chatrooms   Limited audience   Publicly accessible
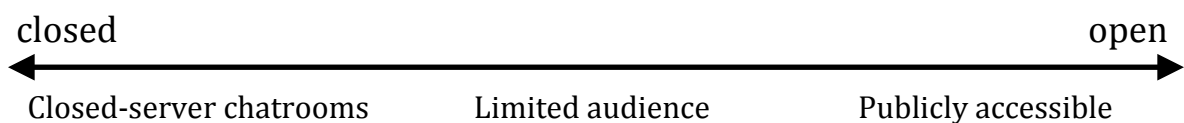
Figure 2.1: Level of reader access

I purposely avoid using the term "level of privacy" because this implies a focus slightly different than that of this dissertation. The term "privacy" carries connotations of ethics-related issues that are not a principle of selection. "Level of reader access" emphasizes the focus on audience, making it more relevant to this study of participation and interaction. The term also specifies "reader access" to avoid confusion with the general term of access, a subject I develop later in this methods section.

This principle of selection is crucial to addressing the range of the type of audiences that initial writers encounter in this project. For instance, if a blog is open, it is accessible to those with an internet connection. An initial writer in this case would have a different expectation of audience than a semi-restricted Facebook or Twitter account that has an announced audience via user connection—labeled as "friend" or "follower" in these two cases respectively. This study identifies two types of reader access as relevant: 1) limited and 2) open. "Limited" implies that initial writers can control who reads the initial texts. "Open" implies that anyone who has internet access can read and comment. I do not examine sites with closed reader access because these would severely limit the interaction and participation between writer and audience.

Levels of Interaction

Having restricted my site selection to web-texts produced by a single writer and texts that can be either limited or open, I now address the *type* of interaction and participation. I use James Porter's scale of interactivity (2009) as a principle of selection. Porter highlights four levels of interaction: access-accessibility, usability,

critical engagement, and co-production. While he visualizes these as a linear model,
moving left to right for each term, I nest them in the following diagram in order to
show that the levels build on one another, thus enabling the kinds of participation I
established in chapter one.

Access-Accessibilty
Usability
Critical
Engagement
Co-
production
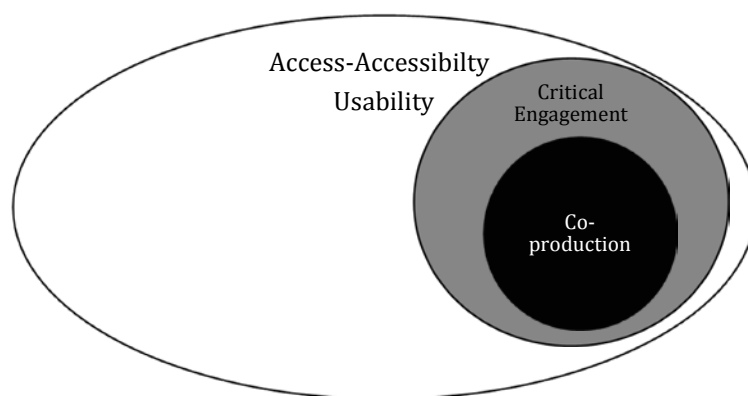
Figure 2.2: Levels of interaction

The above diagram illustrates that only some of the websites on the internet are
useful for a study, like mine, about interactive and participatory audiences. The two
levels of interactions that are not useful for my study are access-accessibility and
usability. If an audience can only read the text on the internet, then participation
and interaction would most likely not differ radically from more traditional print
texts. Furthermore, usability connotes that writers may in some way change the
context for a text, but not the content itself. While changing the context many
insinuate a different meaning, the text itself may not change. Circulators of a text are
most important to usability because they move the text, thereby creating a different
context and situation for it. Although these texts may have functions for users to re-
post the text in its totality, they do not allow for commenting or participation and

are thus outside the scope of this study. All web-texts with a stable URL could fall under this category due to hyperlinking.

Critical engagement and co-production are effective categories for studying interaction and participation because initial writers and secondary writers commingle, thereby creating a dynamic web-text. Critical engagement allows for some sort of expansion of the web-text or even a change in the meaning of the original text due to the position of additional interaction and participation. Secondary writers are typically positioned in a way that is derived from the initial writer and determined by the layout and design of the site. A broad swath of current websites and web-texts fall into this category by allowing for the possibility of commenting. While the comment function does not guarantee critical engagement, it creates such a possibility. Most blogs and social news websites allow for this type of interactivity and participation.

The most complex form of interaction and participation is that of co-production, which requires the site and the users to act together to create a text. Co-produced web-texts often collapse the initial text to highlight the possibility of future interaction and participation. Wikis are co-produced because there are many initial writers but this dissertation will not focus on wikis because multiple initial writers raise issues of collaboration, which is, again, not part of this dissertation's scope. On the other hand, sites such as Reddit, where web-texts are organized by audience approval/interest or disapproval/disinterest, are co-produced with only a single initial writer, and are thus part of this dissertation's focus.

The Template

I do not attempt to control for the template in this study. Instead, I examine the way participants' use (or not) the templates when accounting for audience participation. Each writer used a different template, which is determined by the platform, e.g. the company that owns the website. These ended up being WordPress, Facebook, and Reddit. I looked for moments in a writer's text when there was some sort of interactive function enabled by a template that a writer used.

Access to Initial Writer

The last and most pragmatic principle of selection is access to the initial writer. Examining a writer's notion of audience as completely as possible requires questioning initial writers about their rhetorical decision-making processes and potential adjustments to such audiences, as well as reading their texts. While I did not interview any participants in person, I interviewed them all over the phone and/or through video-chat and had extensive email correspondence. Additionally, in the case of Tracy Monroe, whose texts were restricted to a limited audience, I acquired access to those texts by asking her for permission to use those texts.

I received approval for this project from the institutional review board (IRB) at the University of Massachusetts. Part of this approval process was the creation of permission forms that each participant was asked to fill out. In these consent forms, I offered each participant the opportunity to use their real name, to choose a pseudonym, or for me to choose a pseudonym for them. Salasin chose to use her real name, Monroe chose her pseudonym, and StickleyMan chose to use his screen name.

Proposed Sites of Study

The above principles of selection result in four categories of single-writer sites. I illustrate these categories graphically in Figure 2.2. This representation demonstrates that the case studies selected span the range of possibilities for web-writing that fall within the scope of this work. I do not study a limited, co-produced site because the members of such a site are likely to be aware of each other as writers, thereby breaking down an initial author's autonomy.

Table 2.2: Initial writers studied in this dissertation within their respective categories.

	Critical Engagement	Co-produced
Limited	Tracy Monroe (Facebook)	n/a
Open	Kelly Salasin (WordPress)	StickleyMan (Reddit)

This study began by interviewing several initial writers that did not make it into this dissertation. For each of the three categories, I interviewed two initial writers. These subjects were selected from a convenience sample, a non-probability type of sample in which I drew on writers I knew I would most likely grant me access. In other words, I was familiar with the three participants' writing before the study. While I did not participate in Salasin's or StickleyMan's texts prior to my study, I was aware of their writing before the project began. I was "friends" (e.g., connected) with Monroe on Facebook before the study but became a member of her limited group with the stated intention of studying the group.

Openly Accessible, Critically Engaged Site

My openly accessible, critically engaged site is WordPress blog, one of the most common websites that people use to set up a blog. This study is motivated to choose WordPress for two reasons. First, because it is so popular, studying a writer on this site would help shed light on the blog's template. Second, WordPress is openly accessible, thus making all its writers fall within the scope of this project.

The participant I focus upon for this category is Kelly Salasin. Her WordPress site, www.kellysalasin.com, is openly accessible and receives a fair amount of attention (over 100,000 hits) that generates interaction and participation. While her site consists of a blog ring, I chose only to study two of them, *This Vermont Life* and *Two Owls Calling*, because they were directly about social/political issues. *This Vermont Life* discusses social and political topics relevant to Vermonters and *Two Owls Calling* addresses women's issues.

Limited, Critically Engaged Site

My site of study for a limited, critically engaged site is Facebook. This study is motivated to choose Facebook for three reasons. First, Facebook is the most popular social networking site on the internet and examining the way initial writers interact would aim a critical lens at Facebook's template, thereby looking at an interface that might be already naturalized for many users of the site. Second, since Facebook is so popular, it is simply easier to gain access to these types of forums because there are more of them.

My participant for this category is Tracy Monroe, a journalist. She runs the closed group called *Fresh Heated Politics*, which expressly states that it "is a group to

discuss various social, cultural, political, and religious topics. Have fun and be civil!"

While anyone in this group can act as initial writer, Monroe is the group's

administrator, creator, and most prominent initial writer. She is therefore my

primary object of study and participant. The group often focuses on civil liberties

issues as well as political legislation.

Openly Accessible, Co-Produced Site

I chose Reddit for my openly accessible, co-produce site. Reddit is a social

news site, which is a deliberate term used to indicate when a website allows users to

upload content in some way, in this case a registered user. The difference between

these types of sites and less dynamic ones is that audience members can adjust the

layout and design, thus making it co-produced. Audience members can do so

through the use of an interactive template that helps to determine content. On

Reddit, texts are *shaped* by the amount of attention they receive. This attention

model determines which texts become subordinate or dominant through a voting

system. I chose Reddit because it retains an initial writer's autonomy while still

managing to be a co-produced site.

My participant in this category is StickleyMan, the fourth ranked Reddit

member in terms of karma, a kind of currency that denotes popularity through

"upvotes" on the site. StickleyMan produces many texts, some of which are on

"AskReddit" a sub-thread where initial writers can propose a question to the Reddit

community. He also creates numerous GIFs (Graphic Interchange Format) and

communicates most often with these types of texts. By turning to Reddit,

StickleyMan uses a forum deliberately created for interaction and participation with

61

readers whose input can adjust the layout of StickleyMan's texts. StickleyMan's texts reveal a complex rhetorical situation with moving elements in the template itself; the questions and answers are not organized solely by time. They are organized by popularity, which grows out of time and the attention of the Reddit community, thereby becoming co-produced.

Data Collection

My data includes three sources: 1) web-texts, 2) interviews with initial writers, and 3) template designs. Web-texts as a source of data consist of the initial and secondary texts, whereas template designs consist of the larger layout and design of the template's visuals and interfaces, including the spatial relations of the initial and secondary texts. All of these are accounted for via screenshots. Data about template design includes the ways that the template itself evolves, when those changes are significant. My data collection period was from February 2013 to January 2014. I will specify more about how I decided which texts I collected in the section titled "Collection of Texts."

Field Notes

My field notes initially looked at the entirety of a participant's web-texts within the bounded system of their sites beginning when the participant started writing on each site. For Salasin, I went back four years to the summer of 2011, taking notes on two of her WordPress blogs, *This Vermont Life* and *Two Owls Calling*. For Monroe, I went back to August 2012, the start of her Facebook group *Fresh Heated Politics*. For StickleyMan, I went back to the winter of 2013, when he joined Reddit. I took notes only on his activity within Reddit using a function that enables a

reader to see all of a user's activity. I looked for places where interaction and participation seemed paramount, such as when the initial writer explicitly or implicitly responded to an audience member's comment. These field notes thus helped determine which texts to focus upon. The purpose of the field notes was not to track the entire web-text but to document and note instances in which interaction and participation occur.

Collection of Texts

Defining a Text

Screenshots included a variety of web-texts, including initial texts, pictures, videos, and embedded links. Screenshots determined to what extent the template changed the initial writer's perception about circulation. Screenshots were crucial to these case studies, taking the place of the term "online artifacts." Consequently, in terms of template design, screenshots assisted with recording, observing, and understanding the following: the placement and layout of initial and secondary texts, the layout and design of visuals, the interface and interactions through which participation occurs, and settings of the template.

Overall Rationale for Selecting Texts

Because each participant dealt with different templates, I collected different kinds of texts respective to each case. Furthermore, because I went back to the start of each participant's activity, the scope of each case, in terms of time, is also different, which results in a different number of texts collected for each case. Therefore, I began by examining texts that garnered the most attention in terms of comments from the audience. In my view, this would lead a writer to consider

audience participation in more dynamic ways than texts without such attention. Attention, then, is a characteristic that may lead a writer to more explicitly deal with issues of participation from the audience.

Thus, rather than using time or template as an overall rationale for collecting texts, the selection criteria used to conduct the study were 1) attention from the audience via comments, 2) writer consideration of audience in the text itself, 3) writer consideration of audience in our interviews, and 4) texts explicitly important to the writer, as determined from my interviews. This criterion of sufficient audience attention eliminated a large number of the texts possible for study. Once I found texts with a suitable amount of participation—suitable is defined on a case-by-case basis in the next three sections—I looked for places where the writer appeared to consider the audience in the text itself. Such consideration included quoting the audience, addressing questions or comments from the audience, and producing new texts that mentioned comments, or issues commenters brought up, in prior texts.

Simultaneously, I allowed for the participants viewpoints to guide my selection. In my initial and participant interviews, if the participant mentioned a particular text already in my pool of texts having a large amount of attention, I marked it for additional analysis. Furthermore, if a writer mentioned a text in multiple interviews or multiple times in one interview, I would mark it for analysis if it fell within my pool of texts with attention, or in some cases if the text exemplified a unique perspective the writer had of her audience.

Kelly Salasin

For Kelly Salasin, I analyzed the blog posts from *This Vermont Life* and *Two Owls Calling* because they addressed political/social issues. Then I looked for two suitable characteristics of attention. First I looked for texts with more than fifteen comments because this number, in my view, implied the texts received enough attention that the audience's textual participation might be influential in regards to Salasin's process. Second, I looked for places where Salasin used audience comments from previous texts. This led me to a pool of the following texts from Salasin: "A First Love & Abortion Story," "Feminism or Make-Believe," "Resenting Motherhood," "The Price of Blogging," "UnTribute to My Alma Mater," and its sequel "UnTribute, Part 2." I also analyzed all twenty-one texts about Michael Martin's murder in Brattleboro food cooperative because while only seven of these texts met my criteria, I believed it was important to analyze the texts as a series because they all addressed the same issue.

While initially interviewing Salasin, she repeatedly mentioned, without prompting, the Brattleboro food cooperative series as well as the pair of "UnTribute" texts as her most successful texts with a large audience. During the participant interviews, she also mentioned that "Feminism or Make-Believe" was important to her because she edited it in regards to an audience member's comment. During our discourse-based interviews, I asked about "A First Love & Abortion Story" and "The Price of Blogging," but Salasin considered these texts more for herself than an audience and was therefore not able to articulate her perception of audience as clearly as she did with the other texts I mentioned. During all three

interviews, while Salasin consistently mentioned the Brattleboro food cooperative series, she mentioned only the first three, "Even the Potatoes are Sad, "Dear Richard," and "The Last Time I Saw Richard," by name. Salasin was also able to answer questions explicitly about these three texts whereas with the other texts she tended to make generalizations about the series as whole. I believe she was able to answer my questions about these first three texts because she wrote these texts when the murder was very recent and thus the process was etched in her mind vividly. The texts that thus made it into this study were 1) "Feminism or Make-Believe," 2) "UnTribute to My Alma Mater," 3) its sequel "UnTribute, Part 2," and the first three texts of the Brattleboro food cooperative series, which are 4) "Even the Potatoes are Sad, 5) "Dear Richard," and 6) "The Last Time I Saw Richard."

<u>Tracy Monroe</u>

For Tracy Monroe, I examined texts, which do not have names, going back to *Fresh Heated Politic's* formation in August 2012. I went back to this date because it was the start of the group. I collected texts until August 2013 for a one-year collection period. Then I looked for two suitable characteristics of attention. First I looked for texts with more than fifteen comments because this number, in my view, implied the texts received enough attention that the audience's textual participation might be influential in regards to Monroe's process. Second, I looked for texts in which Monroe addressed group behavior and members as a whole or groups of members. I looked for these kinds of texts due to the group's limited audience membership, which meant that Monroe could directly address members in a way that Salasin's texts could not. These two characteristics led me to twenty-nine texts,

including two texts that explicitly set the rules and guidelines of the group (they appear in chapter four).

During our initial interviews, Monroe repeatedly mentioned a text she copy and pasted to direct a conversation[9], as well as the group's rules and guidelines, demonstrating these texts were important to her concept of audience. Moreover, when I inquired about them during our discourse-based interviews, she was able to talk about these texts with specificity in regards to her writing process. Thus, I included them in the study. While she did not mention, without my prompting, any particular texts in which she asked the group questions or mentioned members, she was able to recall and discuss each text's context when I brought up a text during our discourse-based interviews. For these reasons, I include fifteen texts that address these issues in the study. I do not explicitly discuss the seven longer texts in this study because Monroe did not address them during our interviews without my prompting, nor did she quote the audience in the texts themselves. I also believe that these seven texts were represented in both theme and purpose in the other fifteen texts.

Additionally, because Facebook contains an application programming interface, which specifies the ways that different software components interact, I was able to data mine the limited, critically engaged group for my collection period. I found and replaced all members' identification numbers with their Facebook names, including Monroe's. This produced a massive spreadsheet with all of the initial texts, hyperlinks, and comments for the collection period. I then ran the

---

[9] This lengthy text appears in chapter four in my discussion on Monroe's authority.

spreadsheet through a search function to identify Monroe's level of participation.

These numbers appear in chapter four.

StickleyMan

For StickleyMan, text collection was somewhat more automated than with

the other two participants due to Reddit's interactive template. I was able to filter

StickleyMan's texts with the template and therefore looked up StickleyMan's activity

through two characteristics of suitable attention: the number of "upvotes,"

essentially a vote for liking the text and the number of comments. The two Reddit

categories in which he produced the most initial texts, in terms of these attention

metrics, were GIFs and AskReddit. I started with only the top ten texts, in terms of

"upvotes," from the sub-Reddits GIFs and AskReddit because these were most likely

to have textual participation a writer would consider during the writing process. I

used StickleyMan's top three GIFs because they were paradigmatic of StickleyMan's

GIFs overall. Although StickleyMan did not mention any AskReddit texts without

prompting, he was able to discuss two of his top ten AskReddit texts: the first about

intellectual jokes and the second about the way Americans are taught the Vietnam

War. I chose to analyze the text about the Vietnam War because it more explicitly

addressed political issues than the text about intellectual jokes, keeping the theme

of my study consistent.

Initial Interviews

During my initial data collection phase, I conducted six preliminary screening

interviews. Suitable participants were selected based on their awareness of

audience and offer me insights that would help me answer my research questions. I

narrowed my scope to three initial writers, Salasin, Monroe, and StickleyMan

because they discussed political/social issues, seemed well aware of their audiences,

and were able to answer my questions most directly. These responses also helped

with data analysis, in particular allowing me to identify a participant's perception of

audience and the theme they considered important. I was able to use participant

responses—in which participants repeated phrases or pointed to specific moments

of a text—to help guide my open coding process. I asked participants the following

questions:

1. What are your goals when you write, post, or create online texts?

2. What brings you to the internet? What are your goals for turning to the internet?

3. What is the purpose of the site in general? What is the writing supposed to look like on this site?

4. What is your purpose for maintaining the sites that you do, continuing to update them? How does this relate to your original, stated purpose?

5. Why did you choose this particular site or digital space for your writing? What drew you to it? How has the site's formatting been influential for your online writings and postings?

6. How has the site's formatting or layout altered your writings and postings? In what ways has the layout and formatting been useful or not useful?

7. How have other users of the site influenced the way you write or post?

8. Please describe your ideal audience. Do you ever encounter this ideal audience? Can you describe your reaction when you encounter this audience?

9. What kinds of audience are you trying to avoid?

10. When you don't encounter your ideal audience, what are some strategies you use to get them to read your texts? How do you react to an audience that isn't ideal?

11. How important is your audience when writing initially?

12. Does the audience ever interfere with your writing goals?

13. How important is audience feedback for what you write in the future?

14. How important is audience feedback or participation?

15. How often do you revise your writing based on audience feedback?

These questions, and the responses from my participants, helped me decide to focus on Salasin, Monroe, and StickleyMan. For Salasin and Monroe, these interviews were conducted via video conference on Google Hangout. For StickleyMan, we conducted the initial interview over text chat on Gmail. I then transcribed these interviews.

Participant Interviews

After determining my three participants, I performed a textual analysis of their web-texts. I will talk about this analysis in the next section of this chapter. After that textual analysis, I conducted follow-up interviews. These interviews shaped my preliminary analysis of the initial writer's texts because the responses could help confirm or deny my open coding sequences. This open coding also helped to focus my improvised thinking when talking with participants during this interview. The purpose of these interviews was to understand, in depth, the ways writers view their audiences. Additionally, these interviews guided my field note analysis, enabling me to determine which web-texts to examine more closely. The follow-up questions for the participant interviews were as follows:

1. In general, what is your reaction when people post or comment on your online writings? Can you describe this process for responding? What makes you decide not to respond?

2. Do commenters (secondary writers) ever post, discuss, or converse about your texts with each other? How do you react to this conversation? Describe your process for joining this conversation. If not, describe your rationale for not joining this conversation.

3. Do you ever revise your posts or writings based on your audience's comments or responses? How do their posts, comments, writings, or interaction shape your future posts or writings?

4. Are there any consistent commenters? Do you have a special, unique, or different sort of relationship with these consistent commenters?

5. What kind of situation do you encourage or not encourage to create participation and garner attention?

6. In what ways do you ever comment or post on your own writings? What is your purpose for commenting or not?

7. What is your reaction when there aren't any commenters (secondary writers)? How do you adjust your text, if you do?

8. In what ways does your audience(s) shape your future posts?

9. If there are any privacy settings, what is your rationale for setting them the way you do?

10. In what ways do you circulate your writing? In what ways does your audience circulate your writing? How do you know or not know?

11. How does the layout and design encourage or not encourage the circulation of your texts?

12. In what way does circulation intersect with your writing goals?

Discourse-Based Interviews

This project used discourse-based interviews so that I could provide a rhetorical reading of the way an initial writer perceives audience interaction and participation. They helped to confirm or disaffirm some of my own textual analysis for all three participants. I used comments in the web-texts to develop these interviews, particularly in places where the web-writers reacted strongly to comments/feedback. I asked questions of each text I mentioned previously in my "Collection of Texts" section. Those questions can be found in the appendices (For

Salasin see Appendix A, for Monroe see Appendix B, and for StickleyMan see

Appendix C).

Each interview followed a general structure. First, I opened up with a few

general questions from my prepared questions and then introduced each

participant to the texts I had selected for the interview. I asked the purpose of each

text, as well as the writer's perception of who was the audience. I did not attempt to

control the flow of the conversation during these interviews and most of them ran

over the allotted sixty minutes. With some difficulty, I aimed to guide the

conversation by keeping my research questions in front of me during the interviews.

I made notes during the interviews about phrases the participants used repeatedly

or with a tone of emphasis; I would then follow up with improvised questions

regarding these notes.

Data Analysis

The models from the first chapter gave me a theoretical framework and a

language with which I approached the data. While I did not attempt to overlay any

of the models onto my cases, I noticed that as the project progressed, I saw

relationships emerge: Salasin's case had similarities to the rhetorical model;

Monroe's case had similarities to the discourse community model; and

StickleyMan's case had similarities to a public model. The three models from chapter

one, therefore, helped guide my thoughts about initial analysis.

I performed qualitative inductive analysis of my screens shots and interview

transcripts, noting emerging patterns in audience-related concepts, references, and

rhetorical strategies that involved participation. While participation can be a

difficult concept to identify—after all examining what participation looks like in

Web 2.0 is part of my project's overall aim—I initially approached my participant's

text by looking for places where the writer considered an audience's comment

explicitly or implicitly. By explicit, I mean when a writer used a commenter's screen

name or used pronouns with a direct referent. By implicit, I mean when a writer

addressed a theme or idea from a commenter, even if the writer did not directly use

the commenter's screen name. However, I remained open to what the data told me

and took a recursive approach, meaning my later analysis constantly informed prior

interpretations, revising earlier analysis when appropriate.

In the following section, I describe the way I analyzed my data. First, I

describe my research memos, of which there two kinds: initial and secondary. I then

describe my process for textual analysis. A recursive process, textual analysis both

informed my research memos and was informed by the research memos. After this

textual analysis, I describe my open coding processes. Finally, I layout the way in

which the memos, textual analysis, and coding led to the creation of a chapter.

Ongoing Research Memos

My research memos helped me understand the complexity of interactivity

and participation as it related to my participants' perception of audience. In this

case, memos were both visual and textual in order to account for the multimodal

nature of web-texts. I used Joseph A. Maxwell's approach to memos:

> ...displays and memos are valuable analytic techniques for the same
> reasons that they are useful for other purposes: They facilitate your
> thinking about relationships in your data and make your ideas and
> analyses visible and retrievable. You should write memos frequently

> while you are doing data analysis, in order to stimulate and capture your ideas about your data. (239)

I used this concept to generate initial memos and secondary memos. Writing the memos allowed me to further my thoughts, particularly the initial ones.

Initial Memos

Initial memos helped me sort through my own perceptions of the field notes. In these memos, I identified the following instances: 1) when the audience textually participated, 2) when the participant addressed the audience's comments, 3) when the participant produced a text that appeared to be answering the audience's questions or responding to audience concerns, and 4) repeated phrases, themes, sentence constructions, and syntactic patterns. I then wrote out more general themes I saw emerging from the data, often labeling them with a broad idea that may or may have been important. The following figure is part of an initial memo from my study of Monroe. It is not written in complete sentences.

Tracy's ethos: I am currently trying to get a grasp on Tracy's role as a writer before I interview her a second time on Sunday. She posts frequently (generally three times a week) and is more receptive to dialogue than other members, which emphasizes her role as initial writer because she begins written exchanges aimed at developing a conversation. She seeks out the FHP audience to vent, share information, while seeking solidarity in a group dedicated to anti-religious zealotry, at least in terms of governmental policy. General public policy—and specifically political policy—is an important part of Tracy's ethos as a journalist; she reports on it frequently, which might play into her FHP role. She reports on reporting; she gives her opinion of the journalist's take, creating a critique of a critique. In this way, when she presents links to her audience, she's treating the links as evidence of her outrage and dissatisfaction. This double-level of reporting strikes me as important to understanding her relationship to the audience because it produces an attempt to distance herself from the audience while also remaining a participant in her own forums. She inhabits two separate roles; one as the initial writer and then as the "secondary" initial writer. In terms of FHP, she switches roles in order to accommodate her audience. The audience moves her to change her role; it shapes her rhetorical role in that it makes them roles. This seems part of the discourse community model but with the member of the

community taking on difference personas because of the way the template produces the text.

<u>Tracy's authoritative role</u>: While the secondary writers may be "equal" in terms of participation on Tracy's comments, the hierarchy of Tracy's writing reinforces itself at the dominate model for response (although the template constructs this hierarchy). People frequently post links back to her and imitate her style of comment—although she also tends to follow their writing as well. She holds a lot of sway and power; but she isn't dictatorial in the sense of demanding a response. Instead, she flips the traditional power structure of a writer by soliciting feedback from a variety of individuals, albeit in a prodding and deliberate way; she typically writes more in the comment sections than as an initial writer. Her authority, in the initial text, is to develop that conversation and coax it into existence.

<u>The role of hyperlinks</u>: Posting news articles is a crucial part of Tracy's initial writing. While it does not guarantee that people read these articles, it is a demonstration that Tracy seeks to start a discussion that people can join by having a common reading experience. Also, secondary writers frequently use hyperlinks; does this mean they are mimicking Tracy? Do the links function as evidence for their claims (this rings true from their posts)? How does the use of links continue to expand the sense of community and foster FHP's outrage (in this case, it brings more ideas from the outside world to be outraged at, even if they weren't part of the original discussion)? Links may also reflect this community's sense of scientific evidence...perhaps?

Figure 2.3: Example initial memo from May 12, 2013.

Secondary Memos

As I progressed in my data collection phase, after I coded the first two interviews, I developed a more directed research memo strategy. Specifically, I attempted to answer my research questions using the field notes and initial memos as guides for writing these secondary memos. I show a sample later memo from Salasin below. It is not written in complete sentences. Research questions are numbered and lettered according to Table 2.1.

1) How do initial writers compose and change their web-texts based on the roles that they see themselves inhabiting, as well as the roles they see their audience inhabiting?

Kelly sees herself as inhabiting a role of informer; she hesitates to use the word "minister" (because it is "probably" too strong) in her interviews, but her texts "minister" people around a topic (Second Interview). She doesn't see herself in the role of minister, however. Instead, she sees herself as a model and inquirer about the topics she examines. In this way, she describes herself as an "educator and seeker." Her audience is the open public and she sees them as relatively passive until they announce themselves; she put "something out

there" and sees if it gets any readership (First Interview). Once her audience announces itself and the readership increases (which she can track through WordPress), she will give her texts more attention. She says the following about revising her posts:

> …any time my blog hits a hotspot and it's getting more readership then, just like I would take a look at an article because it's getting more reading, I'll take a look at my blog and see if it can be presented in any better way. Do I need to update anything? You know, should I change the subtitle? Is the "about me" part good? You know, I'll play around with some things sometimes if the readership spikes. It just brings my attention to it. It's like if you're going to have company at your house, you know, and you straighten up the guest bedroom. (First Interview)

In this metaphor, Kelly sees her audience as a guest who deserves attention. The texts, if they garner a larger numbers of readers, deserve attention. In this way, readership leads to revision for Kelly. As her audience forms, then she begins to revise and write. This seems important to me. It strikes me that the revision process occurs after an audience has read the work; while I don't think this is typical is seems like the audience presence makes her revise her texts. She looks at spelling and grammar, plus other things like word choice.

a) How do initial web-writers imagine their audiences?

Kelly imagines her audience as the general public while also imagining "conglomerations" of people with whom she has talked with online (Second Interview). She struggled with trying to come up with this word in the interview, which seems significant.

b) How do initial writers compose their texts based on the ways in which they imagine their audience?

The presence of an audience inspires and calls Kelly to revise her texts. She tries to avoid sound too confrontational but also providing space for voices to be heard. During her series on the Brattleboro Food Co-op murder, she said the following:

> KELLY: …in that instance I began to feel, like I said, a little bit of a responsibility. Like everybody else, I was kind of weary of the topic because it was so upsetting but I realized that my voice was pretty unique and that people were relying on it and it was presenting a side of the issue that nobody typically talks about, which was the humanity of the person that committed the crime. So the comments, whether they were positive or negative, just let me know that it was an important voice to be heard. And I didn't take it personally. In a way I was a lightning rod for people that were angry and that was okay to me because I felt like what I had to offer was worth taking that heat. (First Interview)

In this instance, she describes herself as a writer feeling a responsibility for her community, even though she also admitted during this interview that most of her audience on her blog is relatively unknown. Only during this series did it become more local and therefore more known. She described herself as a local celebrity during this series, with people asking her, "Are you Kelly Salasin." This series, then, distinguishes itself from other series because the audience changes for her; I find this to be particularly fascinating because Kelly experienced going from the wider public to a narrower (more known) public.

c) How do initial writers situate and circulate their texts to gain an audience or the audience they imagine?

> Kelly posts her texts on Facebook and puts links to her texts in the comment section of larger "popular" news sites such as *The Huffing Post* (Second Interview). The comment function is serving as circulation in the broader social sphere of the internet. Is this worth exploring?

Figure 2.4: Example secondary memo from June 20, 2013.

Textual analysis

I wanted both a macro-view and micro-view of my texts in order to see large trends while also identifying small, crucial details about the texts I collected. Thus, I employed two primary methods for textual analysis that informed the research memos I just described. The first quantified and labeled general trends identified from my initial research memos (e.g., repeated ideas and writing characteristics) through a tagging function in EverNote. EverNote is a note-taking system designed to keep track of a large number of documents. I saved my participants' texts as screenshots and then uploaded them into my EverNote system. I used EverNote to get a large impressionistic idea of my participants' texts. Once I tagged each text, I could then search for texts with the same tags, which allowed me to compare texts with similar characteristics quickly and efficiently. The second method answered a series of four questions designed to examine the texts with respect to which research questions a particular text could answer, the role of the audience's textual participation within a given text, and the role of the participant in that particular text. These charts were created after I tagged the texts using Excel with the rows corresponding to the specific text and the columns corresponding to each of the four questions. I used Excel to take a micro-view of my participants' texts and interviews, looking at small pieces of data.

EverNote Tags

       I created a list of tags, which are characteristics I observed in texts as noted in my early memos. I clarify the meaning of some characteristics in the parenthetical additions. These tags are different for each participant because each case examines a different kind of participation. However, in general, I looked for content shifts from the participant, rhetorical positioning on part of the participant, and the way each participant employed links. The tags are as follows:

Salasin:

1. Quoted audience comment

2. Paraphrased audience comment

3. Rhetorical question

4. Direct address to audience comment

5. Mention of civility

6. Mentioned of women's rights

7. Mention of traveling

8. Mention of mourning

9. Mention of clarification

10. Mention of Martin as victim

11. Mention of Gagnon as murderer

12. Mention of cooperative (including the use of pronouns "we" and "us")

13. Mention of women (including the use of pronouns "we" and "us")

Monroe:

1. Direct address to group member

2. Direct address to multiple group members

3. Call for response (tone implies a response, but not an explicit question)

4. Open question to group

5. Limited question (a question to a particular group member)

6. Audience behavior define

7. Reaction to audience behavior

8. Hyperlink—social article

9. Hyperlink—medical article

10. Hyperlink—science article

11. Hyperlink—political article

12. Hyperlink—academic article

13. Template significance—tagging audience

14. Template significance—design/layout importance

15. Mentioned "civility"

16. Tone of disgust

17. Tone of impatience

18. Tone of excitement

19. Use of pronouns "we" and "us"

StickleyMan:

1. Initial text mentions thank

2. Comment mentions thanks

3. Comment addresses a secondary writer's comment explicitly

4. Comment addresses a secondary writer's comment implicitly

5. Comment disagrees with a secondary writer's comment

6. Comment agrees with a secondary writer's comment

7. GIFs mention politics

8. GIFs mention sports

9. GIFs mention a person

10. GIFs mention physical feat

11. GIFs use/designed for humor

General Trends

I developed more general categories for each participant from the above tags. Developing categories in this way, from the detailed text to the abstract, allowed me to capture the complexity of each case without subjecting the cases to any preconceived theories and without trying to compare them to each other. However, I attempted to keep the number of trends the same for each participant in order to avoid an overload of information or a weighting of the results more heavily toward one participant. I also kept track of which texts were successful or unsuccessful, according to each participant. I developed the following general trends in which a participant responded in some way to textual participation:

Salasin

1. Quotes commenters from blog

2. Quotes commenters not from blog

3. Response to civil commenters

4. Response to non-civil commenters

5. Address members of Brattleboro Food Cooperative

6. Address member of cooperatives in general

7. Successful text (according to participant)

8. Unsuccessful text (according to participant)

80

9. Edited a text

Monroe

1. Direct question to group

2. Direct question to individual member

3. Direct question to more than one member

4. Establish group behavior (rules and guidelines)

5. Administrative role (punishment for violation of rules and guidelines)

6. Hyperlink significance

7. Successful text (according to participant)

8. Unsuccessful text (according to participant)

9. Edited a text

StickleyMan

1. Highly commented GIF

2. Highly upvoted GIF

3. Highly commented AskReddit

4. Highly upvoted AskReddit

5. Heavy StickleyMan participation in text (via comments)

6. Little StickleyMan participant in text (via comments)

7. Successful text (according to participant)

8. Unsuccessful text (according to participant)

9. Edited a text

Charts Mapping Trends and Research Questions

Using the general trends I just described, I created charts for each

participant's texts in order to understand the participant's texts together and

visualize roles I saw repeated. These charts also assisted in my opening coding

process, which I discuss in the next section, in that they formed the initial criteria for

coding interview transcriptions. I provide a paradigmatic example with a chart

about Salasin's texts below. The numbers in the category "Which Research Question

might it answer?" correspond to the research questions in Table 2.1.

Table 2.3: Sample chart for mapping Salasin's texts

Text(s)	General Trend	Which Research Question might it answer?	Who is the audience?	Does she use the audience's textual participation? How?	What is her role?
"Feminism or Make-Believe"	Edited a text	1b 2a 2b	Women who do not believe Feminism has helped them	No, but she changes the text in response to the participation	Editor
"Un-Tribute, Part I"	n/a	1a 2a 2b	Graduates of Wildwood High School	No, but this text is crucial to understanding its sequel	Contrarian
"Un-Tribute, Part II"	Quotes commenters from blog	1b 1c 2a 2b	Audience of Un-Tribute	Yes. Direct quoting	Responder
"Even the Potatoes are Sad"	Quotes commenters not from blog	1a 1b 1c 2a 2b	Address local Vermont community members	Yes. Words from Co-op's Facebook page	Unifying the community
"Dear Richard"	Quotes commenters from blog	1a 1b 1c 2a 2b	Brattleboro community, its cooperative and cooperative more generally	Yes. Reuses the comments from "Even the Potatoes are Sad"	Mourner of both murdered and murderer
"The Last Time I saw Richard"	Address member of cooperatives in general	1a 1b 1c 2a 2b	Brattleboro community, its cooperative and cooperative more generally	Yes. Create a role for the audience based on a prior comment from "Dear Richard"	Mourner of murderer
"Price of Blogging"*	n/a	1a 1b 1c	Positions her audience as the object of her apology	No	Public Apology
"First Love & Abortion Story"*	n/a	1a 1c	Narrative with an opening note that situates the text	No	Circulator (moves a print text to an online venue)
"Resenting Motherhood"*	n/a	n/a	Abstract audience (her father?)	No	Mother

*Text not included in Salasin's chapter

Open Coding for Interviews

After each interview, I coded the transcriptions line-by-line. I used the general trends from my EverNote tags to assist my inductive analysis and active interpretation of the transcriptions. However, I also allowed for new additional concepts to emerge from the data that were not included in my general trends. I used Microsoft Excel to code by concept I saw emerging from the data. I used coding process for all participants.

In general terms, I coded each interview by looking for repeated ideas or closely-related concepts that I could group together. I have included a sample of my initial coding from Kelly Salasin's second interview to demonstrate this process during my questioning concerning the text "Feminism or Make-Believe" (Figure 2.5). I broke the lines into short segments, which broke down my participants' responses into manageable themes. This detailed process is beneficial because it gave me a micro-view of the data and when combined with the analysis my participants' texts, I was able to understand themes and trends between various texts more effectively.

Interview Passage second interview	Abstract Concept
KELLY: I constantly revise my posts based on the fact that people comment. But not necessarily on what they comment…[trails off] Because they've said something, I think I said it to you the last time, it was like company is coming. So, you tidy up your house. So, if I get a comment on a piece especially I maybe haven't read in a while or I want to make or one just written, it inspires me go back and look at it and see if I can make it even stronger you know, clearer, tidy up any editing, I'm pretty, I don't want to say careless, I'm pretty carefree with worrying about it being excellent writing. I'm more interested in conveying the idea and the consciousness. But, if someone has visited, then I feel a little more inspired to go on and look at it again and see if I can tell the truth even stronger or can I catch if there is a part that I didn't really capture, can I capture that even better, if I, you know, pay attention to it. JOHN: And when you say you tidy up the house…Can you tell me a little more about that metaphor? KELLY: It's usually, you know, punctuation and word choice, but sometimes, even without comments, you know, I'll be thinking about that post for a while. And more content will come through just my consciousness. Or somebody will make a comment that, like, "Yeah, that's right," that made me think about another aspect. Or that developed what I was trying to capture even further, so I'll go back and flesh something out more. There's, I think there's been one time where somebody was really offended that I referenced a conversation. I didn't use anyone's name, and I really was just using her as a, I don't know, a conglomerate? An amalgam? What's the word that means a bunch of different conversations with different people? JOHN: A conglomeration? KELLY: Yeah, I was speaking as if it was with one person, but the truth, it was with a bunch of different people that I had the conversation. It was about women's rights. But I wrote the article to be more personal, as if it was a conversation with one friend. Well, one of the people that I was having these conversations with about women's rights was very offended, took it very personally. And so I went back in and made it more generic, less personal. Even though it really wasn't her, but I went ahead and shifted that.	Ongoing form of revision Attention as a general concept makes her revise Metaphor of house cleaning Editing as house cleaning Time-space issue; not compressed but expanded Her articles get comments in an ongoing sense Comments matter because they help her address Final editing process occurs after an initial draft (2a) Ongoing attention leads to ongoing editing Second use of consciousness; ask in next interview Abstract audience internalized Editing by expanding, clarifying What text is this? Conglomerate I used her own words here in order not to lead her She changed her approach; clarified her purpose? Text is Feminism or Make Believe Changed her invocation because of the comment Comment lead to a change in the actual text Changed the invocation Edited after she'd already "published"; ongoing editing

Figure 2.5: Sample of open coding from second Salasin interview

Selecting Concepts

Because my three cases were intentionally constructed with different kinds of interactive audiences in mind, I selected concepts on a case by case basis. Once I split the interviews up and took notes on the line-by-line coding, I used the concepts that emerged to develop a hypothesis to confirm the trends and ideas from my opening coding process. Using the previous example, for instance, I focused on three concepts from my open code because I saw them repeated. These concepts ended up being crucial to a section in my chapter "Audience Emerging." Those concepts were (1) an altered invocation based on a participatory audience, (2) editing is an ongoing process, and (3) the idea of a conglomeration, or in my view an abstraction, of the audience. I have identified these concepts with numbers below in the example in Figure 2.6.

Interview Passage second interview	Selected Concepts (1) Altered invocation due to audience participation (2) Editing as an ongoing process (3) Conglomeration or abstraction of audience
KELLY: I constantly revise my posts based on the fact that people comment.	(2)
But not necessarily on what they comment…[trails off]	
Because they've said something, I think I said it to you the last time,	(2)
it was like company is coming.	
So, you tidy up your house.	(3)
So, if I get a comment on a piece especially I maybe haven't read in a while	
or I want to make or one just written,	(2)
it inspires me go back and look at it and	
see if I can make it even stronger	(2)
you know, clearer, tidy up any editing,	(2)
I'm pretty, I don't want to say careless,	(2)
I'm pretty carefree with worrying about it being excellent writing.	
I'm more interested in conveying the idea and the consciousness.	
But, if someone has visited, then I feel a little more inspired to go on and	
look at it again and see if I can tell the truth even stronger	(2)
or can I catch if there is a part that I didn't really capture,	(2)
can I capture that even better, if I, you know, pay attention to it.	(1)
JOHN: And when you say you tidy up the house…Can you tell me a little more about that metaphor?	(3) I used her own word here in order not to lead her
KELLY: It's usually, you know, punctuation and word choice, but sometimes,	(2)
even without comments, you know, I'll be thinking about that post for a while.	(1)
And more content will come through just my consciousness.	(1)
Or somebody will make a comment that, like, "Yeah, that's right,"	(3)
that made me think about another aspect.	
Or that developed what I was trying to capture even further,	
so I'll go back and flesh something out more.	(2)
There's, I think there's been one time	(2)
where somebody was really offended that I referenced a conversation.	(1)
I didn't use anyone's name, and	
I really was just using her as a, I don't know, a conglomerate?	(3)
An amalgam?	(3)
What's the word that means a bunch of different conversations with different people?	(3)
JOHN: A conglomeration?	
KELLY: Yeah, I was speaking as if it was with one person,	(1)
but the truth, it was with a bunch of different people that I had the conversation.	
It was about women's rights.	(1)
But I wrote the article to be more personal,	
as if it was a conversation with one friend.	(1)
Well, one of the people that I was having these conversations with about women's rights was very offended, took it very personally.	(2)
And so I went back in and made it more generic, less personal.	(3)
Even though it really wasn't her, but I went ahead and shifted that.	

Figure 2.6: Sample concept selection for second Salasin interview

<u>Using Selected Concepts</u>

I used these concepts as a guideline for advanced analysis of the texts I had already selected for study, revisiting texts based on interview analysis. I also used these concepts from the first two interviews as initial open coding for the discourse-based interviews. Overall, this selection process assisted in composing outlines for chapters by corralling interview passages, textual selections, and analyses into workable themes. Most importantly, selecting these concepts allowed me to look at the data conceptually based on empirical trends within that data in a bottom-up way rather than applying my own top-down assumptions and fitting the data into those preconceptions. In other words, this process helped me to develop the concepts in the texts that resulted in the next three chapters.

CHAPTER 3

AUDIENCE EMERGING

In the 2009 collection *Engaging Audience: Writing in an Age of New Literacies*, several authors rely on Ede and Lunsford's address/invoke paradigm to analyze participatory and interactive audiences. This reliance is not unexpected in the context of the book. In addition to reprinting the pair's 1984 and 1996 texts, the collection contains their exclusive essay, "Among the Audience: On Audience in an Age of New Literacies." This inclusion is indicative that the entire collection is based on Ede and Lunsford's address/invoke scholarship. Throughout the collection, the address/invoke paradigm is employed in accounting for *ethos* (Dayton), the meaning of the phrase "interactive" (Beard), and service learning (Ryder), among a variety of other topics. But the authors of the collection do not question what happens to this paradigm *after* writers publish their texts or after those texts enter circulation. The issue here is that the address/invoke paradigm, while present throughout the writing process, ceases after the text reaches the audience because Ede and Lunsford's "Audience Addressed/Audience Invoked: The Role of Audience in Composition" (AA/AI) was written for print texts. Through the lens of one particular web-writer, Kelly Salasin, this chapter extends these considerations to a type of participatory audience commonly encountered in internet writing, publicly accessible and critically engaged. Consideration of this kind of audience enables an exploration of the *ongoing* ways that internet writers "address" and "invoke" audience because internet texts are both more malleable than print texts and can

include instantaneous responses from audiences. Understanding the shifting

address/invoke paradigm as moving *forward* situates awareness of audience as an

emerging process, much like other elements in the writing process. I propose that

this idea of "emerging" illustrates that web-writers can and do revise the way they

address[10] and invoke[11] audiences. This idea of emergence helps to inform our

theories of audience for 21st century writers by showing that web-writers have an

ongoing, recursive relationship with their audiences.

Audience Emerging

Audience emerging illuminates the temporal evolution of a writer's

perception of address and invoke, and the ways those concepts shift. In particular,

this case study shows us how participatory audiences function more dynamically

than audiences of print texts because such audiences frequently offer textual

responses to the writer, typically through comment functions. Through an analysis

of Salasin's case study, I expand on Ede and Lunsford's implicit conclusion in AA/AI:

"A fully elaborated view of audience, then, must balance the creativity of the writer

with the different, but equally important, creativity of the reader. It must account for

a wide and shifting range of roles for both addressed and invoked audiences" (169).

That is, in this case study, invoking and addressing occur over time and process; our

field has generally not recognized the complexity of this movement in regards to

---

[10]I use the term address in the same way Ede and Lunsford define the term: "Those who envision audience as addressed emphasize the concrete reality of the writer's audience; they also share the assumption that knowledge of this audience's attitudes, beliefs, and expectations is not only possible (via observation and analysis) but essential" (156).

[11]Ede and Lunsford define invoking an audience as when "...the writer uses the semantic and syntactic resources of language to provide cues for the reader—cues which help to define the role or roles the writer wishes the reader to adopt in responding to the text" (160). I use invocation to mean the rhetorical role a writer wishes the audience to adopt.

audience because Ede and Lunsford do not expand on what they mean by "wide and shifting roles."

Audience emerging structures a writer's sense of addressing and invoking by re-positioning the subject position a writer crafts because that writer is able to read textual reactions, i.e., those not designed to help with drafting and editing. For instance, once received, some comments serve to guide the invocation of the audience by serving to re-structure Salasin's understanding of audience addressed, e.g., by illuminating which "cues for the reader" are necessary for the revised "audience addressed" (160). To this end, Salasin frequently addresses comments from readers who disagree with her because they do not take up the subject position she created for them, namely her invocation. This helps Salasin *revise and/or clarify* for herself the ways she constructs her addressed audience, demonstrating that audience emerging is more revisionary than the paradigm of address/invoke.

In this sense, the comments re-shape her perception of her readers' reality. She extrapolates from this sense of reality in order to revise what kind of role she wants the audience to take up and how better to communicate that role. The comments allow her to gauge to what extent some audience members successfully inhabited the role she created. If they do not inhabit this role effectively, she is driven to make some sort of change, either through direct revision or through creating a follow-up in which she cites audience comments. In regards to follow-ups, Salasin quotes the comments of her audience in the production of further texts, which is direct textual evidence that these comments inform Salasin's process for

91

addressing and invoking audiences *after* she initially publishes her texts to the web. The comments accomplish this by supplying her perceptions with concrete responses from the audience; the comments function to stabilize her sense of audience addressed. Important here is that audience emerging stresses that while the comments inform a writer's sense of audience, it is not a *complete* understanding of the audience. This ambiguity allows for additional addressing/invoking to continue; otherwise, the process would be similar to consulting with an audience. Audience emerging therefore crucially assists in adjusting Salasin's exigence because the comments let Salasin know to what extent her texts—and by extension her strategies for addressing/invoking—succeeded. The comments supply her sense of address/invoke strategies with a lived, embodied sense of response from her audience.

Salasin's Purpose and Role in Relation to Audience

Salasin has a particular idea about the audience she wants to address, a civil audience, and aims to invoke that audience, in part, through her own persona and role. Salasin constructs her role as a writer by inviting an open readership while simultaneously including herself as an implicit participant. She produces texts based on the direct textual participation of her audience and openly seeks that participation/engagement from her audience. Salasin imagines her audience as a broad range of individual readers willing to wrestle mentally with her texts.

> I try and write in a way that will keep the person reading. I'm not trying to offend them. I'm trying to get them to listen. So a lot of times, like after Sandy Hook and [the issue of] guns, a lot of people commenting will think of something completely different than me that will hang in there and talk to me and then even come around

92

sometimes. So a lot of times I'm trying to write in a way that allows for a little bit larger audience, not just to one. You know, not just to the side that I'm preaching at. (First Interview)

This remark shows that Salasin sees her audience as willing to comment and even disagree with her in a civil manner. She specifically aims to avoid a narrow audience by not offending her readers. Salasin says, for instance, "I don't want people to be obnoxious to each other in my comments and whenever somebody's obnoxious to me, I always respond pretty respectfully and I actually hear other readers follow suit then" (First Interview). She seeks "to elevate the conversation" (Second Interview). Because her guiding purpose is to encourage civil interactions, I believe she revises her sense of address and invoke to show the audience that she too engages them in a civil way.

Because Salasin writes for a publicly-accessible audience in a way that seeks "respectful participation" (First Interview), she produces texts that address readers who have similar experiences as her. In this chapter, for instance, she addresses readers who are (1) women who are unaware of the benefits Feminism made for them but are willing to learn, (2) individuals who are or were in some way affiliated with Wildwood Catholic High School and exposed to an overly positive view of the school, and (3) members of the Brattleboro, VT community food cooperative as well as general members of community cooperatives, respectively. Overall, she seeks to place her reader in, or invoke, the position of a civil and respectful learner looking to broaden his or her perspective; she hopes readers will find her writing helpful or useful in some "small way" (Discourse-based Interview). In terms of audience, Salasin's address/invoke paradigm includes negotiation with some of the emerging

93

voices of her readers via comments. These comments shape the way Salasin

produces subsequent texts, as well as edits previous ones because she considers

them integral to the civil discourse of her online writing.

Editing in the Context of Audience Emerging

Literally rewriting a text introduces one element of audience emerging: the

writer's re-evaluation of audience addressed. In "Feminism or Make-Believe," (FMB)

a response from an audience member helped Salasin to clarify her text so that she

could achieve her purpose more effectively. In this case, her purpose was to bring an

awareness to Feminism's achievements. The response allowed her to see that her

invocation was not taken up because her address was misconstrued. Because

WordPress, like many other online venues, allows for initial texts to be edited,

Salasin clarified her address by *altering her approach* to the text, thereby enabling

readers to more readily take up the invoked role she created. In short, she literally

updated the text to make it more successful by changing the execution of her

address from a singular woman to women in general.

FMB centers on rights that women have achieved in Salasin's lifetime. FMB

addresses women who are unaware of Feminism's hard-fought victories but also

who are open to learning about those victories. Salasin invokes a role for those

women to realize all that Feminism has achieved for them. She discusses the many

advantages and benefits women have gained from Feminism, capitalized here

because Salasin refers to both the historical movement and the philosophical tenets

of that movement.

Originally[12], Salasin began the text as follows: "**I want to write about feminism but I don't know how**. I feel sad when <u>a friend</u> blames feminists for society's ills; when she says that the sexual revolution is responsible for the breakdown of the family" (FMB draft; underlining is mine). In our interviews, Salasin shared the following:

> I posted something about an issue, and through a conversation on Facebook with a lot of different people, [it became] really clear that some women had an attitude that if we went back to the 1950s or whatever, if we went back, that things would be better. And I really felt the need to talk about feminism from my perspective…and say that we really didn't want to go back. So…I used this woman…I used the idea that I was talking to one person throughout the article. (First Interview)

The conversation with other women allows Salasin the sense of address I previously mentioned. As this remark makes clear, Salasin's address is to multiple women. But in the original text, she only addressed one woman. The text did not match the address she intended.

The text's original tone, of a directed personal nature, did not go over well with a friend of Salasin's who interpreted the word choice of a singular woman as a challenge to their online conversations. The friend interpreted FMB to be a direct personal attack. Her friend voiced her displeasure in a comment that has since been deleted, which showed Salasin that her address was misconstrued. In direct response to this disdain, Salasin accommodated this reader "by shifting the language of the post from a conversation with a friend to an amalgam of many conversations" (First Interview). FMB now reads as in Figure 3.1.

---

[12] Although Salasin granted me access to previous drafts, I have no screenshot to use of this passage because those drafts are stored as text files.

Figure 3.1: Screenshot of edited beginning to "Feminism or Make-Believe" post.

The comment prodded Salasin to alter her sense of the addressed audience by providing evidence of the friend's perception of dissatisfaction. This response informs Salasin's strategies for editing the text because she revised based on audience response in order to better capture the address for which she aims: many women.

Thus, in reaction to the friend's dissatisfaction, Salasin pluralized, something she was explicit about in our interviews. She changed her method and execution of FMB's address, which was not clear when the text was initially put online.

> I was speaking as if it was with one person, but the truth, it was with a bunch of different people that I had the conversation. It was about women's rights. But I wrote the article to be more personal, as if it was a conversation with one friend. Well, one of the people that I was

having these conversations with about women's rights was very offended, took it very personally. And so I went back in and made it more generic, less personal. Even though it really wasn't her [addressed in the original text], but I went ahead and shifted that. (First Interview)

Salasin had wanted a more personal tone but the conflict with her friend made her reconsider this approach. She went with the less personal word choice because of the audience member's response. This instance shows us that some of the people who see themselves as addressed can have an influence on the way web-writers perceive a text, even after the text is considered finished. Subsequently, Salasin changes the way she addresses because she accounts for the comment by pluralizing her word choice. She accommodates readers, or at least clarifies to those readers not successfully invoked, after an initial distribution.

Remember that one of Salasin's main purposes is to create civil interactions on her blog through her invocations. Because the friend was offended, she made the changes to avoid additional offense, which implicitly revises the method and execution of her invocation. The changes are not made entirely because of her position as a web-writer. They are made because of her position as a web-writer who wants to garner and encourage respect. With this in mind, Salasin further edits FMB to allow women to more readily see all that Feminism achieved for them, i.e., her invocation. The following revision illustrates a different approach to the text's invocation. The initial question has the tone of shaming the audience member into the invoked role. The revision persuades the audience with a forceful, yet more civil, statement:

> Doesn't my friend know that families were always disintegrating? Even before birth control. And abortion. And casual sex. (Originally published version)

> Families were always disintegrating. Even before birth control. And abortion. And casual sex. (Currently published version)

In this way, audience emerging accounts for Salasin's revision of her texts in order to clarify the text's *exigence*.

Revision occurs in response to the audience, but with a twist: the text that was originally final can be updated. Because web-writers have the option to update a text, their perception of audience can be more fluid and dynamic than writers of print texts. Accordingly, revision can occur after a text's initial distribution, i.e., the text's publication. Salasin's FMB shows the way that audience emerging accounts for editing as a continuous production process that can occur during a text's distribution. More broadly, when textual revision/addition occurs after a text has been put into circulation, we see more fully that distribution processes intersect with production processes; we might even call these texts "editions" if we used the discourse of publication. FMB demonstrates, significantly in my view, an instance in which publication occurs over time. Edits are expected, if not encouraged in the social conventions of templated websites like WordPress. Even when a web-writer publishes and distributes a text online, the production process does not cease, so long as the code of the site allows for updating.

Textual Evidence for Audience Emerging: Stitching

In the previous example, Salasin changes her method of addressing and invoking the audience, clarifying but never outright changing the address or

invocation. The next two examples illustrate that Salasin's awareness of the

concrete reality of readers, audience addressed, can change over time as internet

comments accrue. This accumulation allows the writer to adjust her invocation

based on her perceptions of the audience's response. Such adjustments, I believe,

are displayed when Salasin literally uses the internet comments in the production of

a follow-up to an initial text, a strategy I call "stitching." Stitching demonstrates

Salasin considers the responses of the audience because it provides us with textual

evidence. In regards to my case study, these additional texts address the audience

members who did not take up Salasin's original invocation.

Specifically, I examine "An UnTribute to my Alma Mater" and the follow-up

text "UnTribute, Part II" to highlight the important role that textual comments play

in revising Salasin's process for considering audience. These two texts discuss

Wildwood Catholic High School (WCHS), Salasin's alma mater. The addressed and

invoked roles for "An UnTribute to my Alma Mater" are as follows: a) Salasin

addresses alumni who were being exposed to, in her opinion, an overly positive take

on her Catholic high school, which had recently closed. b) This text invoked readers

into a position that questions this positive take on the school, or at least the negative

outlook of the school's closing. While the text itself was not always antagonistic, the

title and several examples in the text question the positive portrayal Salasin

perceived in the media.

The first text intentionally challenges the mindset Salasin perceived as

typical: WCHS closed and many individuals bemoaned, lamented, or eulogized the

institution's closing. I inquired further about the purpose of the text:

GALLAGHER: What were you trying to represent to your audience with ["An UnTribute to my Alma Mater"]?

SALASIN: …I was trying to move them out of the typical reaction, which I saw in newspapers and [in the media in general].

GALLAGHER: Typical reaction?

SALASIN: I saw a lot of people lamenting the school.

Salasin at first tries to address people who had been exposed to this overly positive take on WCHS—or an overly negative take on its closing. She aimed to address those individuals and meant to provide a counterweight to the media depiction she perceived. She did not lament the school's closing. When considered together, her comment above and the following text reveal an implicit audience invoked: she seeks to move readers into a position of non-mourners of WCHS. The text is excerpted in Figure 3.2.

An "Un-Tribute" to My Alma Mater

Wildwood Catholic High

It occurs to me that this subtle sense of vindication isn't an entirely "appropriate" response to the news that my Alma Mater is closing. Which makes this piece, *part confessional/part research*, as I ask, *How can I hold animosity toward an institution I left 29 years ago?*

Which then begs the question, *How can I be that old*? No matter though, because all those years fade away when I think back on my days at Wildwood Catholic High. And there I am, 17, in a pink *Handi-Wipe* uniform. I wasn't even Catholic.

When it came to choosing my highschool, my parents disagreed. Neither wanted me to attend their respective Alma Maters. My father could not imagine sending his first daughter into the wilds of his own public high school experience (at Wildwood High), and my mother couldn't imagine inflicting her experience at *Catholic* on anyone else. (*She had abandoned her childhood faith when the Church refused to marry her, pregnant, to a Protestant/Jew.*)

But when it came to choosing my high school, my father–and the subject of *French*–prevailed. *Wildwood High* didn't offer *French III* and *Catholic* did. (Of course, what they failed to mention upon my registration at Catholic was that although they offered it, I wouldn't be able to take it as a sophomore which was the intention.)

Though it's come up briefly in other places, I've never written directly about my highschool before–and I'm a little nervous about it. Of course, it's easier to bash something or someone upon death. And personally, I think it's healthy to do so. A little *Razor's Edge* makes the separation simpler.

And to be fair, lots of "good" took place within those walls for me: I met my first love and had my first kiss. I summoned up the courage to try out for the school play. (*Thank you Peachy, FTT & the cast of Pippin.*) I excelled in the small art classes. I toyed with honors. I recited the *Canterbury Tales* in *Middle English* (*I still remember them!*) And most importantly, I met some of my dearest friends–with whom I am STILL friends. (*Take that, Mrs. Coughlin!*)

So what is it that leaves me strangely satisfied about the school's closing? Is it simply a case of *Alice Cooper's, "School's Out for Summer"* with a twisted emphasis on the line, "*Schools Out Forever!*" And who can resist the lyrics, "*School's been blown to pieces! No more pencils, no more books, no more teachers' dirty looks.*"

Or does this sense of smugness smack of something hidden, some "slight" left unresolved?

Was it *Sister Henrietta* standing at the top of the stairwell after lunch, confiscating each of our *illegal* cardigan sweaters and stowing the whole pile of them in her office?

Was it *Breslin* throwing chalk at my head for falling asleep in English? Or *Sister Paul Mary* for slapping me after I asked a "*stupid question*"? (*She was my mom's Biology teacher too.*)

Figure 3.2: Screenshot of the posting "An 'Un-Tribute' to My Alma Mater"

This selection illustrates the overall breadth and scope of "An UnTribute to my Alma Mater." The text balances both memorable and negative experiences, reaffirming Salasin's role as a respectful initial writer who seeks an audience that does not "shout" at one another (First Interview). The text, which Salasin refers to as an article, is successful for her because it was her "first experience of a kind of a large public response" (First Interview), although it did cause consternation among her audience, as noted when she stated, "So I made a lot of enemies with that article but again I think I was representing something that wasn't spoken and to me that was really important than if I feel really happy about it and have tons of positive involvement…" (Second Interview). She describes the text's invocation here: readers should avoid eulogizing WCHS.

This invocation caused resistance to "An UnTribute to my Alma Mater," as Salasin noted in our interviews: "some people were hurt and some people were offended by what I wrote and some people were angry and some people were disgusted and some people totally got it. I got all kinds…I got phone calls, I got emails, I got comments…" (First Interview). As a result of this conflict, Salasin created "UnTribute, Part II," a follow-up text that explicitly uses comments from "An UnTribute to my Alma Mater" in its body. "UnTribute, Part II" literally *emerges* from the comments of the first text because Salasin directly quotes comments from "An UnTribute to my Alma Mater."

The follow-up reveals a crucial shift in Salasin's conception of audience in that "UnTribute, Part II" addresses some readers of the first text who did not take up the invocation from "An UnTribute to my Alma Mater." She is able to do so because

of the participatory audience. The addressed and invoked audience for "UnTribute, Part II" are as follows: a) The addressed audience is the audience that announced itself as dissatisfied with the invocation from the first text. b) The sequel revises the original invocation of "An UnTribute to my Alma Mater" because she seeks, in an apologetic tone, to put the reader in a state of closure about WCHS, as opposed to encouraging the reader to question an overly positive view of WCHS—or the overly negative view of its closing. The screenshot from "UnTribute, Part II" in Figure 3.3 helps to illustrate this shift.

> Despite this extraction of sweetness from my years at WCHS, the news of its closing unearthed a range of emotions and memories that found their way into my first "assignment," *An Un-Tribute to my Alma Mater*. And by the slew of comments that I received (*better than any "A,"*) my perspective struck a chord with many– often harmonious– and occasionally sour. Of the latter, this one stirs the most:

> > *You were popular and well liked. I'm surprised you don't feel more disappointed at the loss of the school. You too must have had many good memories, there were many fun times. There are still pictures and banners of friend's records there that add to a sense of belonging to something bigger than us. It marks the success of completing a challenge, a place we became adults.*

> I was surprised about my own "negative" feelings too–which is exactly why I wrote that piece– as part confessional/part exploration. But *John Osborne* continued to put me in my place when he added this about the direct affect the closing had on his family,

> > *My son just got the news of the end of the school. I wish you could sit in our house and see how the wind gets sucked out of a family.*

> And while fellow alumni *Dan Rosenello* '86 shared that he heartily appreciated my "Un-tribute" , he closed with this "*on the mark*" sensitivity,

> > *...For good or bad , it was and is the school where I began my own trip into adulthood, and as such , I will miss it. Godspeed WCHS.*

> And thus, I'll close Part II of my *Un-Tribute* with the apropos sentiment of a fellow graduate, *Tracy O'Brien* '80.

> > *The most precious thing I took from Wildwood Catholic were my friends, I am still close with them today, and I love them all. I hope people read your letter in the spirit it was written, the truth isn't always pretty, and it isn't all ugly either.*

> With a special nod to *Trish DiAntonio,* also from the class of '80, who tipped the scale on this second homework assignment, with these words:

> > *I hope you write a follow up! I can't wait to read more.*

> Thank you **Wildwood Catholic**, new friends and old.

Figure 3.3: Screenshot from "UnTribute, Part II"

Salasin takes the tone here of a grateful writer, which alters the original invocation of "An UnTribute to my Alma Mater" by expressing humility, gratitude, and deference. She writes about the "range of emotions," and explicitly discusses her surprising feelings of negativity. She "closes" with an audience comment that

mentions "precious" friendship and directly thanks "Trish DiAntonio." In regards to these examples, she displays an appreciation for the readers who engaged with her.

I believe the audience comments from the first text demonstrated to Salasin that her original perception of the audience was not entirely accurate. Accordingly, she changed the tone to provide the reader with a different role to inhabit: a role that mourned the closing of WCHS in a way that the reader finds an appropriate balance between the "pretty" and the "ugly." This approach, produced through her conciliatory tone, reiterates her overall goal of creating civil dialogue with her online writing. Ultimately, comments of the first text provide Salasin with a new audience, i.e., those who did not take up her original invocation. The comments also helped Salasin reflect on her original purpose as well as to *re-think* that purpose and the rhetorical role she created for the audience to inhabit.

Most importantly, not all the comments play a role in Salasin's revision to her address and invocation. She is not pandering to her readers in the sense of seeking popularity: her exigence and purpose alter in the sequel, requiring a new sense of audience. Rather, a select few provide her with an impetus for such changes. In particular, John Osborne is the audience member that most persuades Salasin to reconsider her original invocation. His comment persuades her most because he engaged her in a respectful manner, which again highlights that audience emerging is not inclusive of all web-writers with a participatory audience, but instead can help when web-writers seek a respectful, rhetorical kind of interaction. I quote his single comment in its entirety because his comment is the "ideal" comment, according to Salasin (Discourse-based Interview).
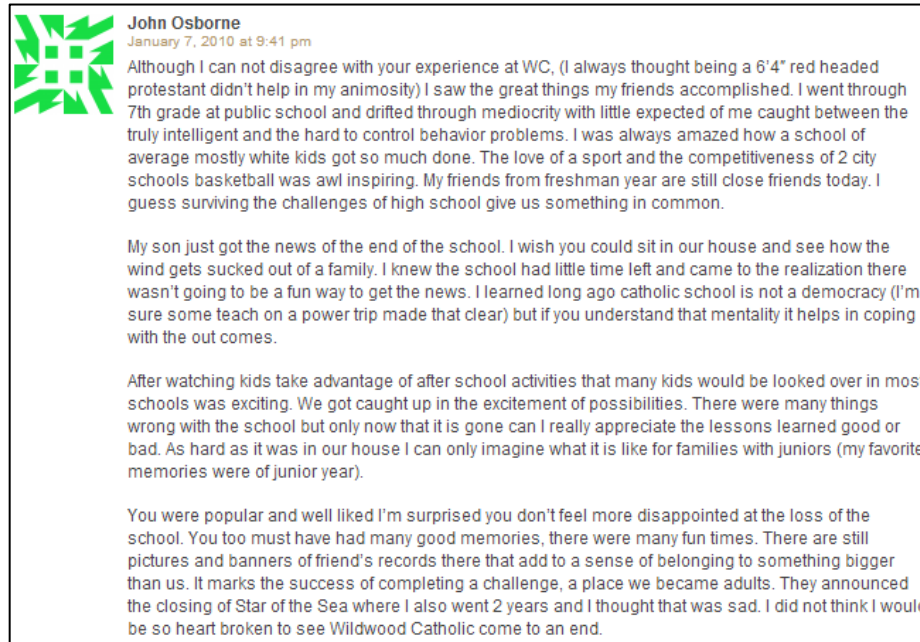
Figure 3.4: Screenshot of a sample ideal comment posted by John Osborne in response to "An 'Un-Tribute' to My Alma Mater."

Of Osborne and his comment, Salasin muses on the following:

> John Osborne, he is someone who… a reader who didn't feel the way I did, but he didn't feel the need to insult that or even go against [the text]. He actually said he understood it, then he very considerately shared how he experienced it, which is his son finding out he wasn't gonna be able to continue his education. And so that was, why I actually respond to him and quote him, "I wish you could sit in our house and see how the wind gets sucked out of a family." So again, that was kind of part of the maturation process as a blogger, you know, that I think I was expressing a really valid perception of the school… experience of the school that needed a forum, but I also understood that for some people the loss was really personal. (Discourse-based Interview)

Osborne's comment provides her with a particular audience—that did not take up her original invocation—to address in the follow-up through her "stitching" strategy. Osborne's comment functions as evidence of Salasin's textual process for adapting and using audience response because she can address audience members who did not take up her invocation but who might still be receptive to some of her

106

ideas from the original text. Osborne's civility moves her enough to reconsider the concrete reality of her readers. Salasin deems Osborne's comment, among others, valuable enough to warrant the production of "UnTribute, Part II." The original address of "An UnTribute to my Alma Mater" was individuals who experienced an overly positive portrayal of WCHS and her invocation was for the audience to question this portrayal. Osborne's comment showed her that there was a different audience to address: those who needed to mourn the closing of WCHS for reasons she had not considered. In turn, she adjusted her original invocation to provide space for the mourning of WCHS. Her original address was inaccurate, which resulted in a less successful text. So she produced the follow-up that had a more accurate address—but this follow-up possessed a new invocation.

Audience Emerging as an Expanding Address and Invocation

In addition to comments from her own site, Salasin "stitches" comments from other websites. Let me provide context and background due to the gravity of Salasin's purpose in this section. She constructed the Brattleboro Food Cooperative Series (BFCS), a collection of texts that examine the 2011 murder of Michael Martin. Covered by *The New York Times*, the murder brought national attention to Salasin's blog. On August 9th, 2011, Richard E. Gagnon walked into the Brattleboro food cooperative and shot Michael Martin in the head. Gagnon had been fired in the prior weeks from the cooperative, where he had worked in the store's wine department since 1992. For Salasin, however, this was not only a case of workplace violence. The murder became even more horrific because it violated the *ethos* of a cooperative,

which is a worker-owned business that sells food generally perceived to be local, sustainable, and *morally better* than larger corporate grocery stores.

The following address and invoke strategies emerge in the BFCS: a) the addressed audience for this series originally started only as Vermonters affected by Martin's murder. b) As the series progressed, her address expanded to address members of cooperatives in general. c) Likewise, initially Salasin invokes a mourning role for the reader to take on. d) As she encountered more audience comments that demonized Gagnon, she expanded the invocation, envisioning a more respectful mourning role for the reader to adopt. I argue that these changes and revisions arose from audience comments not only from Salasin's own site, but also from other websites of which she is an audience member, namely the Brattleboro Cooperative's Facebook page.

She began by moving comments from a more local site to her publicly-accessible blog; this movement provides her with a perspective that *expands* her address and invocation. She cobbled together comments of support from the Brattleboro cooperative's Facebook webpage and moved them to her openly accessible blog. What distinguishes this series of texts from Salasin's previous strategy of "stitching" is the recirculation of comments from a local website to a more open one, a movement which creates tension between Salasin's perception of local and global audiences. Using these off-blog comments in her blog leads to a tension that revises her conception of address and invoke in the BFCS because this recirculation infuses the comments with multiple purposes: their original purpose on Facebook and Salasin's purpose. By moving comments from the cooperative's

Facebook page to her own blog, via a standard copy and paste function, Salasin gives

those comments wider distribution because her website is publicly accessible. From

my perspective, she broadcasts the comments. Conversely, Salasin's use of the

comments localizes her audience by focusing her texts towards the Brattleboro

community, specifically members and customers of the Brattleboro cooperative.

Salasin remarked on this localization in our interviews:

> ...at the time [when the BFCS began], my writing as a blogger was
> pretty, well, limited to people I didn't know, and maybe Facebook
> friends that were far away, but not a whole lot of local readers. And
> then when this issue [of the Cooperative murder] came up, it really
> increased my local readership, so that was a really different
> experience. To the point where, you know, I would be walking in the
> co-op, I think I might have said this to you, and people would come up
> to me and say, "Are you Kelly Salasin?" Or I'd hear somebody say, "Is
> that her?" So, my voice became pretty prominent.

Because the BFCS attaches her writing to a community, the texts allow her to

consider her audience in a more stable fashion than if it were simply public.

Simultaneously addressing those affected by the murder and the internet public

produces a tension between a local, knowable audience and a global invisible one.

Her audience emerges, therefore, over the course of time in regards to the BFCS,

leading to an expanded sense of address and invoke.

The first three texts in the BFCS, "Even the Potatoes are Sad," "Dear Richard,"

and "The Last Time I saw Richard," demonstrate the way she expands her address

and invocation. In the immediate aftermath of Martin's death, Salasin produced the

text "Even the Potatoes are Sad" to document the outpouring of grief from local

Brattleboro community members, as well as express her own grief. The comments

become part of her own texts and she uses them to evoke a strong sense of *pathos*.

The opening of the text can be read in the screenshot in Figure 3.5.

Even the Potatoes are Sad

If there is any place in Vermont that represents the best qualities of our state – a place where the community comes together to buy local, laugh, make friends and celebrate what we cherish about our lives – it is the Brattleboro Food Co-op. (Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin)

That something like this could happen at our beloved Brattleboro Food Co-op is unfathomable.

That this act was intentional is confounding.

That the murderer was someone who lived and loved among us is heartbreaking.

That a life was stolen is devastating.

I write these words from vacation, 300 miles away from the Green Mountain State, knowing that I will miss tonight's vigil in Brattleboro. But even this far away, I am blessed by my community's response to this loss, as echoed by the outpouring of solidarity on the Co-op's Facebook page:

> *What a sad day for the coop and all of us in this community. (Ruth Wilmot)*

> *It is 2 AM and I'm staring at this computer, wondering how many other of us Co-op members are sleepless from worry, shock and grief – after this saddening event. (Nancy Burgeson Anderson)*

> *We are all feeling this. It is heartbreaking and horrible. Love to all of you close to the scene. No one is worrying about when the Coop will be open again. We *are* worrying about each of you. (Johnny Lee Lenhart)*

> *You guys are all very dear to us. We are helpless to do anything to make this better, but our thoughts are very much with you, and I hope you will let us know if there is any way we can help. (Ted Lemon)*

> *We are all so stunned by this news. Our thoughts are with you and the families involved as you work through this difficult time. (Gail Graham)*

I take heart that what is shared is supportive, and life serving, rather than filled with the rage or malice that takes lives:

> *This is a time to really appreciate facebook. Reading these comments heals me and hopefully others feel the same. Knowing how people from all over the country are holding our community and especially the staff of BFC in their hearts is so meaningful. (Bari Shamas)*

Figure 3.5: Screenshot excerpt from Salasin's post "Even the Potatoes are Sad"

Salasin's use of these comments highlights the circulation of textual mourning from the original venue, Facebook, to another, Salasin's blog titled *This Vermont Life*. The "our" in the text, according to my interviews with Salasin, was the Brattleboro cooperative and thus her addressed audience. When asked directly about stitching these comments together from a different website, Salasin said, "...that was a way that I entered this conversation, those words that really touched me. And then I thought other people might also be swayed by having them brought together." (BFCS Discourse-based Interview). The word "sway" here gives an indication of the invocation for which Salasin aims. By addressing the commenters of the cooperative's Facebook webpage, she places them into a mourning position while also understanding the range of people stricken with grief. She demonstrates membership of the community in order to verify herself as a person affected by the tragedy who wishes to share that tragedy with two larger audiences: the Brattleboro cooperative community and the internet generally.

Except this is not the entire story because Salasin found herself addressing members of cooperatives generally. According to my interviews, she found herself addressing the abstract idea of a community cooperative member.

> SALASIN: Well, you know, people have really high expectations of the cooperative because it's not a regular grocery store. It's a nonprofit. It's owned by its members. The money that is profit is poured back into staff wages and community initiatives, and it's different than a corporate store. So there's high expectations and high stakes, and of course, people kill their bosses in lots of places, but when someone kills their boss in a place that's built on cooperative values and on the democratic process... and I don't have all this language on the tip of my tongue, unfortunately...then it's more of a shock, just like it's more of a shock when you know, 20 first graders are killed as opposed to 20 college students, I mean it's always a shock, but depending on when,

how much, depending on location and what you expect of that location or that community.

GALLAGHER: So cooperatives in general are important here?

SALASIN: … the audience included other cooperatives, and I mean I know that it did because I got emails and things, but eventually I think it was probably more just cooperatives [than] our specific co-op community. (BFCS Discourse-based Interview)

Salasin's perception of audience displays a salient feature of audience emerging: a concatenation of voices, which expands her vision of the audience. In regards to the writer's sense of audience, a range of comments converge in Salasin's mind. Salasin is also very aware that most readers do not leave a comment, as she mentioned more than once in our interviews. She considers broad and local, as well as vocal and non-vocal, audiences. The presence of these various audiences initiates a broadcasting/localizing oscillation, a characteristic I believe is often present in an open, participatory internet audience. She opens her blog up to the Brattleboro community as a forum for its pain and grief, especially in her situating herself as part of the community—using the pronoun "my"—thereby signifying a communal tone, although the previous passage suggests she was unsure of the addressed audience.

Because Salasin was not quite sure of the initial addressed audience in "Even the Potatoes are Sad," the text is ripe for expanding the addressed audience. That she is unsure makes sense considering the impact of Martin's murder: Salasin was herself trying to cope with tragedy and she addressed the text to herself in addition to the readers of her blog. Salasin aims to invoke a sense of mourning in her texts, although this is still unclear to her at the beginning of the BFCS. However, as the

readers began to express themselves, which Salasin told me happened through comments, postcards, emails, and in-person interactions, her sense of audience addressed began to coalesce, implying that as she wrote, the responses provided her with insight into who was reading. Subsequent texts in the BFCS, therefore, emerge in part from Salasin's sense of audience addressed. These responses also assist in revising the invocation for which she aims. For instance, Figure 3.6 shows some comments from "Even the Potatoes are Sad."

Ed Liebfried
August 10, 2011 at 2:06 pm
You capture this so well. Thank you.

Reply

melaniecmadden
August 10, 2011 at 5:26 pm
Thank you for sharing your thoughts on this unfathomable horror. I've never been to Brattleboro, but I met Michael in March at a P6 meeting and though I didn't know him for very well or for very long, the loss feels much more like a death in the family than of just a business associate.

It's a beautiful thing about the Co-op community that when a tragedy affects one, it affects us all, and your words here are a testament to that. I think it's so important that we share our grieving to share in the healing– especially for those of us who are so geographically removed from the site of the tragedy, and unable to attend the vigil. Love and healing energy to Brattleboro from the community at the Davis Food Co-op in Davis, California.

Reply

Anne Hopkins
August 11, 2011 at 1:20 pm
This is a lyrical elegy for Brattleboro Food Co-op and all who are connected to it, either intimately or through the web. Every food co-op is affected by this sad and horrific act–the grief is truly universal. I know Alex Gyori well and met Mike this summer, and the pain and anguish is unimaginable. Thank you for writing. Anne Hopkins, Good Foods Co-op, Lexington KY

Reply

kellysalasin
August 17, 2011 at 3:05 pm
We are all so blessed by those who reach out from afar. Thank you Anne.

Reply

Nancy Burgeson Anderson
August 11, 2011 at 1:35 pm
Thank you for this moving, creative piece: a most appropriate healing balm for grieving souls.

Reply

Holly from Sevananda
August 12, 2011 at 8:33 pm
When the news went 'round the Co-op email listings and we got it in Atlanta there was just shock. I'd never met the people involved, but we're all a big wacky co-op family and this has been on my mind here.

The day we found out what happened, I asked out new GM, Tom if we could send some flowers for the vigil and he agreed. When I called the local shop (keepin' it local, even out of state) to order flowers I had a bit of a time talking about what was to go on the card. Many other co-ops across the country sent emails through the list-serv, but I wanted to take this moment to share what we said to our sister store so far north:

> **To our family at Brattleboro Food Co-op,**
> You have our deepest sympathies and condolences on the loss of your friend and coworker and the circumstances of this tragic event. Please know that many sister cooperatives and friends across the country are sharing in your sorrows. Perhaps this will help lift the burdens you share at this time.
>
> Peace be unto you all during the coming days,
>
> **Your friends at Sevananda Natural Foods Market**

Reply

kellysalasin
August 17, 2011 at 3:01 pm
Thank you for sharing this Holly. I know that BFC has been so well supported from their sister co-op's around the country. Emails from the list serve have been printed and displayed in the store.

Figure 3.6: Screenshot of comments from "Even the Potatoes are Sad"

115

These comments, especially from Holly from Sevananda, and my quoted exchange

with Salasin display the expanding sense of audience addressed. The commenter

Holly announces she is from Atlanta, far from Vermont. Important is that she has

never met anyone in the Brattleboro community. Yet, Holly believes she shares in

Salasin's pain, even going so far as to send the Brattleboro cooperative flowers

because they are "all a big wacky co-op family." For Holly, being part of a

cooperative unites them. In my view, Holly's comment shows Salasin a concrete

reality of the audience that she must in turn address.

Thus, unlike the previous texts about editing and stitching, Salasin *expands*

the actual address to include an abstract sense of the cooperative community. For

her, the BFCS evolves to include members of cooperatives more broadly, which

provokes Salasin to rethink the audience. Salasin affirmed this point during our

conversations about the BFCS.

> GALLAGHER: In "Even The Potatoes Are Sad," could you tell me about the rationale for how you decided what post, to quote, or how you decided to quote certain posts and leave other ones out?

> SALASIN: I was trying to hit all different places. Oh, yeah, like down toward the bottom there there's somebody from Thailand, somebody that's away on vacation in Vancouver, somebody that used to work here and is sending support from far away...someone that used to live there and work there. So kind of showing the breadth of response, both in content, but also in location and different businesses...

> GALLAGHER: The variety?

> SALASIN: ...the idea that even the potatoes are sad. It affected so many different people on so many different levels. It wasn't just that a man lost his life. It was that someone we know took someone's life. It was that someone we know took someone's life in a place that we trust and that we worked together and that we owned, that we worked

cooperatively, that we do things a little differently than other places...that we buy locally and are organic. All the values that are steeped in that store that are different than, you know, [the grocery stores] Price Chopper or Hanover. There was such desecration of so many things in everything that happened. (BFCS Discourse-based Interview)

The phrase "desecration of so many things" implies Salasin's purpose here was to represent accurately the community's sense of loss. To represent that loss most effectively, I believe she began to consider, in light of Holly's comment and others like it, the location of the murder as crucial to the event because the cooperative was a place where community members could work together in a civil manner. The murder violated this sense of community, a community that went beyond Brattleboro's borders. In my view, then, Salasin felt obligated to address not only those individuals directly affected by the murder, but also those indirectly affected.

Consequently, the next piece in the BFCS, "Dear Richard," (Figure 3.7) demonstrates this revised address. In this text, Salasin explicitly discusses the concatenation of voices she employed in "Even the Potatoes are Sad" by focusing on a fictionalized Gagnon, the murderer of Martin.

Dear Richard,

Dear Richard,

Despite the truth that you have stolen something precious from ALL of us, I grieve for YOU.

Though I have been wronged many times in my life, and never chosen murder, still–I ache for you.

You must have lost your mind and your heart and your soul to proceed the way you did.

No doubt "the issues" that provoked you triggered some unhealed trauma inside of you.

Your vision must have narrowed so tightly around an "enemy" that you did not see Michael's new wife Jennifer, or the rest of his family, or the rest of his days.

But what about your co-workers? What about Ian who spoke with you just before you entered Michael's office?

What of Diane who found you out back behind the Co-op after the shooting?

What about all your fellow staff members present that morning?

What about all of us who have ever worked at the Co-op, or shopped there?

Did you want to rob us all as well?

Did you know that your act would be felt as far away as Thailand, and in every co-op around the country?

Did you know that you would steal sleep from strangers, summer vacation days from children, romantic getaways from couples?

Did you want blood spilled in the place that has fed so many so well?

As I read the expressions of support on the Co-op's Facebook page, I am stunned by how many people have been affected by your choice. I don't think any of us, including you, could have imagined it so.

Because I don't know Michael, it is you for whom I grieve when I see you in the courtroom, locked in shackles, instead of on the tennis court at South Pond with a racket in your hand.

And what about Meg?

You must have considered your beloved.

Michael Martin lost his life, but you lost… everything.

Figure 3.7: Screenshot of Salasin's post "Dear Richard"

This open letter references the comments Salasin uses in "Even the Potatoes are Sad." She mentions Richard's actions having an effect as far as Thailand as well as people losing sleep. Very explicitly, Salasin discusses the Facebook page, even including a link for her audience to follow, thereby providing readers with a way to readily engage and sympathize with the far-reaching damage caused by the murder. The plethora of questions show that Salasin attempts to recognize the variety of people feelings those effects, which implicitly reveals that she is addressing this variety; in this sense, she expands her address.

Many of these comments come from her first piece, "Even the Potatoes are Sad." For instance, the person who loses sleep is Nancy Burgeson Anderson. Figure 3.8 shows evidence of other comments from "Even the Potatoes are Sad" that Salasin quotes in "Dear Richard."

Given my lack of intimacy, I question the depth of my grief, until I read how deeply others have been affected by this loss, not just in Brattleboro or Vermont, but all around the country, and even around the world:

Sending much love and healing prayers from Thailand. (Nathan Olmstead)

It's 3:30 in the morning in Vancouver. Neither Cliff (a former employee) nor I can sleep. We are thinking of all of you in the community and send our love. (Lynn Levine)

My heart is broken today. Please know I am sending you my support from afar. The co-op isn't just a place where I used to work; it is like a family home to me. (Wendy M. Levy)

It is a little crazy that i feel more connected to a store 200 miles away from my home than i do the stores right down the street- but i feel like i know you guys after 4+ years of stopping in for dinner once a week (sometimes more.) It's a neighborly, small town family feel, and familiar faces, and that is one of the reasons why i love coming to Brattleboro. (Stephanie Santoro)

Figure 3.8: Screenshot from "Dear Richard" illustrating comment incorporation

Salasin uses the quoted comments from "Even the Potatoes are Sad" to inform "Dear Richard." She positions herself as a writer addressing Gagnon. Through this address,

she recognizes the far-reaching effects of the murder, including those in Thailand (Olmstead), Vancouver (Levine), and 200 miles away (Santoro). When read in conjunction with "Even the Potatoes are Sad," "Dear Richard" appears to *expand* the address of the previous text in that it places the audience in a broader, more global context. It pushes her writing beyond the confines of the Brattleboro community. It addresses a range of readers to show that the murder not only affected those in the Brattleboro community but nationally and globally as well.

The comments in "Dear Richard" further help to broaden the address and to help Salasin produce a different invocation, namely a role of respectful mourner who understands the terrible sadness, angst, and rage of the situation—but who also retains their understanding of what it means to be human. The comments in "Dear Richard" are for the most part positive, expressing thanks to Salasin for the balanced, nuanced reaction to the thoughtfulness of writing an open letter to the murderer Gagnon. However, one commenter, "J Martin," wrote, "I'm disgusted with all who feel any empathy for Richard. He murdered an innocent man in our co-op. There is no way to way to humanize his actions. He is a monster." Salasin and two other commenters countered this sentiment. The exchange occurs in the comment section as shown in Figure 3.9.
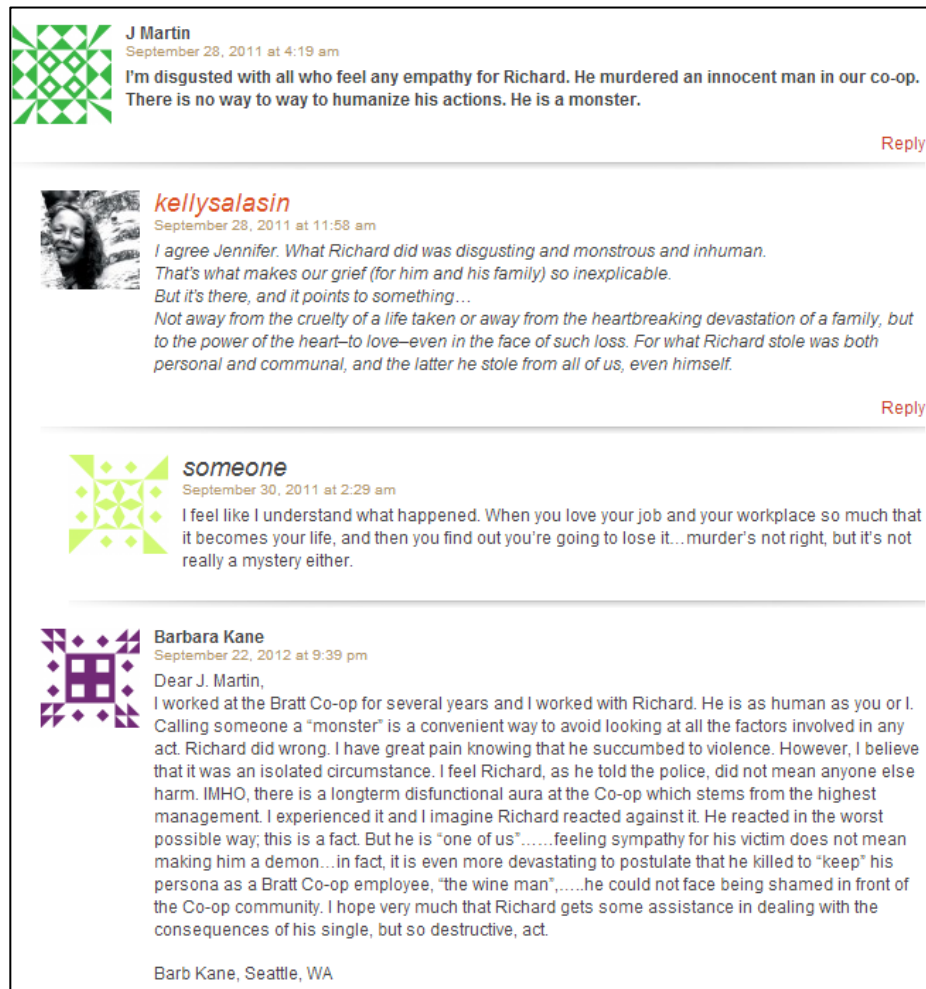
Figure 3.9: Screenshot of exchange between Salasin and commenters to "Dear Richard"

I want to point to two characteristics of this exchange to reiterate my point about address and invocation.

First, the commenter "Barbara Kane" provides additional evidence to Salasin that she must re-think her address. Kane situates herself a former member of the Brattleboro cooperative who has since moved to Washington. Kane's comment acts as a reminder that the Brattleboro cooperative has former members who Salasin ought to consider. The comment functions in a synchronicity with "Dear Richard" to demonstrate the global effects of Martin's murder. The address includes a larger

121

audience of the cooperative community, not only the Brattleboro one. Second, this comment exchange shows Salasin the possibility of a new invocation: readers should take on the role of respectful mourner for Martin *and* Gagnon. The commenter, "J Martin," labels Gagnon a monster, dehumanizing him. The commenter "Someone" disagrees with this portrayal, claiming that Gagnon's actions are not a mystery. Then Kane writes her comment. This exchange provides a stable example of the monster syndrome that permeates portrayals of murderers. Demonizing Richard Gagnon and seeing him as something not human allows us as readers of these texts to criticize Salasin for sympathizing with a monster. It allows us to use a non-civil tone and coarsens our word choice and style. Such demonizing provides us with intellectual room to disregard another human being.

The text that follows this one, "The Last Time I saw Richard," circumvents this intellectual move to demonize Gagnon. In it, Salasin humanizes Richard by retelling her last personal exchange with him. While she is quick to point out his despicable actions at the text's conclusion, she also readily discusses the way in which he, inconveniently to her, upheld the law. The full text is given in Figure 3.10.

The last time I saw Richard...

Although he wasn't the one to die, I find myself recalling the last time I saw Richard, as if he had.

That night my husband and I had stopped in at the Co-op to get a bite to eat before a movie at Latchis, and we were delighted to find a wine and cheese tasting going on. We dashed off to the bathroom first, where we waited in a painfully slow line, and then made our way eagerly around the corner toward the brie and crackers.

"What are you pouring Richard?" I asked giddily, looking up to him in his booth above the department. He quietly shook his head. The tasting had ended; even though I could clearly see wine remaining in the bottles.

Richard explained that he had to stop serving promptly at 6:30 as scheduled, due to liquor control regulations or something to that effect.

by Sweet Soul Sister, at DeviantArt

That was the last time that I distinctly remember connecting with Richard, a little over a week before the Co-op tragedy; but it's just as likely that I saw him again, at South Pond, as I often did throughout the summer, with a tennis racket in hand.

What strikes me now is how closely Richard observed rules--those on the court, and those of wine tastings-- only to break the cardinal rule so shortly after.

Richard Gagnon never looked like a man who would take a gun into the Co-op to shoot someone. He simply looked like Richard Gagnon, the wine guy, leaning against the frame of his slender office inside our community owned Co-op.

Richard was the guy who taught us about reds and whites, about the shape of a glass and how it enhances or detracts from flavor, about how to keep the wine fresh with a vacuum stopper. During the holidays, Richard pointed us to the bottles that would make the best gifts and offered us free wrap to adorn them.

Years ago, the Co-op suffered another loss--when Henry, the beloved cheese guy, passed away. The cheese department was never the same without him, but we embraced his passion for Vermont cheeses, and were soothed in our loss until we grew accustomed to it.

Now I can't imagine shopping for wine where Richard used to be. It's as if it's all been tainted. The grapes soured. The vines withered.

I think back to the last time I saw Richard and look for something different in his eyes.

Maybe he was a bit quieter.

Maybe not.

What I do know is that I can't get his face out of my mind. I return, again and again, to the last time I saw Richard. Now I even see him 300 miles away as I pass the shelves of wine accessories in a department store. I flinch when I hear the manager called over the loud speaker; and I mistakenly refer to an old friend as Richard.

My mind insists on reworking this tragedy, but there is no bending of the rule that Richard broke. (If only he would have poured me a glass of wine.)

Kelly Salasin, August 12, 2011

Figure 3.10: Screenshot of "The last time I saw Richard…"

It is my argument that this post marks a complex, expanded invocation.

Before this text, Salasin aimed at providing a forum for the grieving members of the

Brattleboro cooperative. This text grieves in its own right, but through a

sympathizing tone of voice that shows the humanness of Gagnon. He was a

temperamental man and rather brusque. But he was also a man who upheld the

governmental regulations of serving alcohol. He was a person with whom Salasin

had cursory interactions. He was a man capable of a heinous act, but still a person.

This text provides readers with insight into Gagnon a person. The new invocation

tries to convince us to take on a civil way of mourning not only the victim, but the

perpetrator too.

The BFCS, then, begins by addressing the members of the Brattleboro food

cooperative. When Salasin writes the next piece, "Dear Richard," she uses the

Facebook comments from the first text and contextualizes them, considering them

more in-depth. Writing this second text provides her with a wider perspective that

allows her to see that many people outside the Brattleboro cooperative were

impacted by Martin's murder. Because "Dear Richard" recognizes the extensive

impact of Gagnon's actions, it employs a sensitive tone towards even Gagnon

himself. Salasin recognizes the impact on the victim, the community, *and* the

murderer. I believe the comments of "Dear Richard," in particular that of "J Martin,"

lead Salasin to expand her invocation in the subsequent text, "The Last Time I Saw

Richard." After the first three texts of the BFCS, we are asked to mourn for Martin

and Gagnon, thereby recognizing the far-reaching and unexpected effects of the

murder. Also, the "we" has been expanded to include members of food cooperatives

more generally, no longer limited to the Brattleboro cooperative. Ultimately, unlike FMB, in which Salasin changes her approach to address and invoke, and unlike the "UnTribute" texts, in which Salasin changes her address and invocation, the BFCS shows us that Salasin's emerging audience allows her to *expand* the series' address and invocation.

Audience Emerging and Circulation: Destabilizing Audience

Salasin thus provides us with one way that people can write towards an internet audience. She is not co-constructing *with* the audience. Instead, part of the audience actually has a "voice" in her texts—in the latter two examples, through quotation. When Salasin creates subsequent texts, the addressing and invoking of an audience is related through this "voice" in her mind. While this does not radically revise Ede and Lunsford's address/invoked paradigm, it highlights the movement that web-writers may experience in their perception of audience in a stable way. This fuller view of audience illustrates that audience invoked and addressed are connected to one another through some sense of response; without this, there can be little relationship—and audience cannot be considered as carefully. In this chapter, I have argued that audience emerging shows us a process that relates the way writers re-consider the concrete reality of their readers, while also revising the invocation or the approach to that invocation. This process can be observed textually, at least in regards to Salasin's texts that involve stitching. Such stitching accounts for the dynamic interaction and participation from Salasin's audience. We can literally observe textual editing and the use of audience reactions to create further texts.

While I believe most Compositionists would say that writing is a process, producing a non-electronic text generally results in a text not *meant* to be updated. But even *during* our discourse-based interviews, Salasin added links and other ideas she had. Her texts were literally moving for her. They were, and still are, *becoming*— to draw upon Biesecker's notion from my rhetorical model. My diagram in Figure 3.11 attempts to capture that motion. It also shows that the audience is not completely in motion in the sense that Salasin's conception of audience is stable in some ways.

Address/ invoke

Comments

Address/ invoke (with stitching)

Re-invoke, re-situate address

Requires a sense of seeing the audience as moving
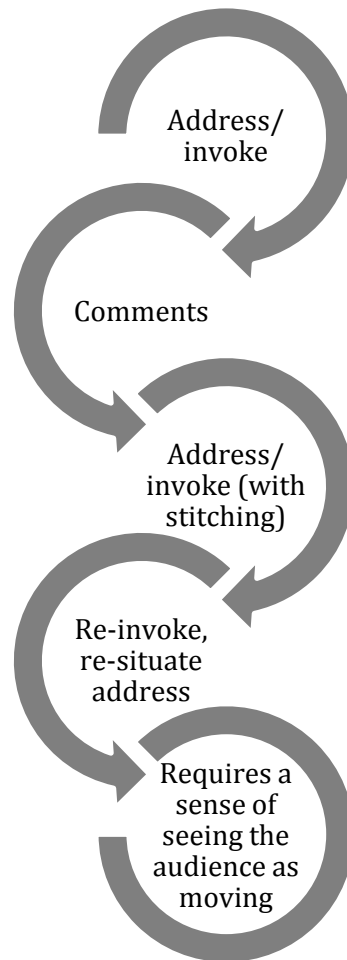
Figure 3.11: A simplified, visual representation of the dynamic process described by Audience Emerging

In my view, this movement is crucial because it shows that producing a text is a process that may yield a product requiring continuous updating and rethinking. In this way, participatory and interactive audiences may not just change the ways web-writers in Web 2.0 approach texts but also our very notions of the production process as a discrete concept. Circulation of web-writing with participatory audiences requires seeing production and distribution as continuous processes that do not possess discrete ending points. The reality of an audience, for these writers, shifts, as does the role the writer wishes the audience to inhabit. This view encourages writers, and those who study writing, to re-think audience not only as future readers to be considered at one point in composing, but as readers constantly shifting in an ongoing cycle of production and distribution.

CHAPTER 4

AUDIENCE MANAGED

The previous chapter posited "audience emerging" as a way of understanding

the shifting nature of audience addressed and invoked in a publicly-accessible Web

2.0 site. In the participatory landscape of Web 2.0, however, some writers may seek

to create a limited audience. This chapter investigates the way a site with a limited

kind of participation and interaction, shapes a web-writer's perception of audience.

The focus here is on writer Tracy Monroe who creates an electronic venue, *Fresh

Heated Politics* (abbreviated FHP hereafter), that she feels obligated to supervise. I

call this administration, which goes beyond simply setting guidelines, "audience

managed." Through observation of her interactions in FHP and her responses during

our interviews, I identify strategies for this management, as well as specific

conventions and expectations that lead to the formation of the group's discursive

norms. I believe these management strategies and discursive norms allow Monroe

to regulate her audience discursively, which in turn gives her the power to adopt the

rhetorical position she wants. In this way, audience managed highlights how a web-

writer can take up and/or create rhetorical positions of her choice.

A well-known online journalist, Tracy Monroe founded FHP because her

personal Web 2.0 space did not allow her the freedom to express herself

rhetorically. Initially disgusted with the lack of "civil dialogue" (Monroe's word

choice) leading up to the presidential elections in early 2012, Monroe created FHP

in August of 2012 when she found it "increasingly difficult to keep [her] mouth shut

128

on politics" (First Interview). However, Monroe also felt compelled to cater to the

variety of individuals she encountered on her personal Facebook page.

> ...among my list [of Facebook friends] are former professors, former
> colleagues, former high school teachers from when I was in high
> school, some of whom I then later worked with as a colleague, former
> high school students, former college students, former colleagues in
> college and grad school, former college friends when I was in college,
> former high school students, family members, my father's motorcycle
> club, Vietnam veterans friends that I would hang out with...when he
> would have biker days....People that I met while traveling
> internationally as a backpacker overseas. So, I have an incredible
> diversity among my Facebookers [sic]. My vaccine friends, all the pro-
> vaccine friends that I've met....I just have this huge diversity of people
> that range from true red-state, gun-owning, Vietnam vet, motorcycle-
> riding, hardcore guy all the way to my socialist friend who is like an
> Occupier organizer. So, that thread is very valuable to me both as a
> journalist and as a person, in terms of keeping my own, sort of,
> options open, in terms of keeping my mind open [to] everyone and
> who all is out there. But it also limits how I have to present myself in
> the sense that, you know, all of my roles are meshed into one role on
> Facebook. (First Interview)

This varied audience provided the impetus for Monroe to start FHP because she

needed the protection and freedom afforded by a limited group. She believed, and

still believes, her personal profile places expectations on her as a journalist,

educator, and professional. Thus, the *ethos* of her personal, public profile restricted

her ability to express opinions that may have hurt or disrupted this aforementioned

ethos. Consequently, FHP emerged with a purpose: it was meant for sharing articles

and expressing views that Monroe's wider audience would not accept or that

Monroe would not necessarily want to post or share with a broad audience because

they could damage her reputation as a well-known online journalist, possibly

costing her credibility and economic income. Because her personal activity placed

her into a restrained position, she thought to herself, "'Well, where can I have a place

that's sort of off my main page where I'm not sort of assaulted?'" (First Interview).

FHP arose from her *need* to have an outlet to express herself, in particular on political and religious issues (First Interview).

As the group's creator, Monroe acts as the administrator of FHP's digital space. All members must be approved by her. Individuals typically request membership because they have had conversations with other members. I joined in order to study the group because of its reputation as a place for intense political discussion with a high level of interaction. She almost always accepts new member requests; she has only rejected nine requests due to the fact that the requests did not have a referral from a current member. Monroe's lack of stringency about membership is further evidenced by the group's membership growth, which has increased from 80 in November 2012 to 129 as of January 2014. Nevertheless, while FHP is a large group it is still "intimate" (her word choice) for Monroe, who has over 1,500 Facebook friends.

In addition to being the administrator, laying out the group's code of conduct as I shall touch upon soon, Monroe is also the primary facilitator, i.e., writer. Her role as the most active participant reveals that much of her power rests in an ability to provide members with material to which they can respond. In addition to providing a great wealth of political topics and subjects for group members, she also responds extensively. Textually, Monroe is the most active member of the group, accounting for nearly a quarter of the group's activity as illustrated in the following statistics for the period of August 1st 2012-August 1st 2013.

Table 4.1: Activity in *Fresh Heated Politics*

Total Activity

Total initial posts and comments	5622
Total by Tracy	1468 (26.1%)

Tracy's Initial Texts

Total initial posts by entire group:	847
Total initial posts by Tracy:	238 (28.1%)

Tracy's Comments:

Total number of comments	4775
Total number of Tracy's comments	1230 (25.7%)

Tracy's Initial Texts:

Initial Texts	238
Total Comments	1568
Comments by other writers	1058
Comments by Tracy	509
Comments per post	6.6
Comments by other writers per post	4.4
Comments by Tracy per post	2.2

Average character length (ACL) of comments

ACL	282
ACL of Monroe's comments	377
ACL of other's comments	250

This activity is strong evidence for conscientious care of the group and it follows that audience members observe her more than any other member. Her heavy participation also implies that she values frequent participation and is willing to invest time in the group. This "role model" behavior becomes control and the concept of audience managed, as I will describe, and is intimately tied to her purpose in starting FHP: generating a particular group dialogue.

Audience Managed

I understand Monroe's sense of audience as "audience managed" in order to emphasize Monroe's nuanced sense of control that guides and regulates the conduct of FHP members. Unlike audience emerging, which is a model of audience in which the writer communicates with the audience in an attempt resolve disagreements or

misunderstandings in an ongoing cycle, audience managed allows writers to take on a rhetorical position of their choosing by establishing the discursive norms of FHP. Note that Monroe does not *have* to manage FHP, her limited audience. However, she *does* manage FHP because she wants the group to communicate with each other in a manner she prefers. Managing her audience, as I see it, allows her to carve out a particular way of discussing political issues. Audience managed enables Monroe to discursively regulate her audience; she sketches out the boundaries of the online communication that she finds palatable.

The concept of "audience managed" suggests that writers with an administrator-like position can have an inordinate amount of control over the formation of a venue. These writers/administrators marshal members to act in certain ways by embodying certain writerly roles and explicitly policing the writing of others in the venue. In Monroe's case, this embodiment takes form via question-posing and providing hyperlinking in order to achieve her goals of open, civil, and informed debate. She also tags other members, a way of notifying them respond to her texts. However, she does not force them to respond in a specific way: she only requests a particular way of responding (to put it less formally, she is concerned with how they respond, not what they respond with). It is for this reason that I use the term "manage" because it emphasizes that Monroe does not control the group but instead creates parameters for behaviors and initiates certain roles in the group. However, the audience members retain a sense of autonomy. Like a manager in the workplace, audience managed makes certain behaviors both possible and more rewarded than others but members still make choices on their own. Audience

managed, as I see it, describes the way a writer like Monroe may direct a community

so that she can (a) achieve her goals of having a particular kind of successful debate

and (b) retain a cooperative relationship with her audience.

I believe this concept of audience helps highlight Monroe's ability to choose a

rhetorical position for herself within the FHP community in a way that she felt she

could not on her personal Facebook page. On her personal Facebook profile, her

expectations of the audience limited what she could write. In regards to FHP, she

inherently decides on her own role in the community because she is the group's

creator. Likewise, because she creates parameters for the group's behaviors, those

behaviors are inherently acceptable to her. Therefore, by using the term audience

managed, I better capture the subtle benefits this model of audience has for the

writer herself.

Audience Managed: The Production of Expectations and Conventions

As the general administrator and main participant in FHP, Monroe has the

ability to shape the community's norms, conventions, and expectations. The most

crucial aspect of this discursive regulation is the production of rules and guidelines.

They enable her to communicate in ways that allow her to take up rhetorical

positions of her choosing. In Monroe's case, creating guidelines, an administrative

action, enables her to maintain a limited control over the expectations and

conventions of the group, as well as provides the means to expel members from the

group if they violate those guidelines.

Monroe lays out specific guidelines for participation in the same way a

discussion leader might set out rules of decorum for speaking, and thereby

establishes the foundation for the group's way of communicating. She sets up three

texts that define FHP's rules of conduct. The first, shown in Figure 4.1, greets

members when they access the group's home page: (I have not edited the text, so

any ellipses are Monroe's.)

This is a group to discuss various social, cultural, political, and religious topics. It is a diverse group: Republicans, Democrats, liberals, progressives, conservatives, libertarians, socialists and all shades in between; US residents and non-US residents; Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, atheists, agnostics... Knowing a bit about how the group operates will be helpful to new members, so here are a handful of tips...

1) Be as respectful as possible to other members in the group.

2) We do not put down others or use ad hominem here. If you want to argue a point with a member, follow the courtesies of rational debate and stick to the issue(s). (See "Ten Commandments of Rational Debate" image in Files.)

3) The best discussions are those in which members present their points as clearly as possible, without assuming others will follow obscure references, inside jokes or regional expressions. Keeping one's head and thoughts clear is helpful in this group.

4) "References" and "links" are never expected in a post, but if you are presenting unusual, unpopular, extreme or otherwise non-mainstream ideas or arguments, expect to be challenged on them and to be able to provide evidence, or you'll be likely to get quickly and unceremoniously shredded. When disagreeing with others' points, it's likely that they will expect evidence as well.

5) You are almost certain to get offended by someone or something in here at some point. Be prepared and have a thick skin -- and keep knee-jerk reactions to a minimum. Count to ten and breathe. Or close the computer/app.

6) Something you say is quite likely to offend someone else, so be kind about it. Be sensitive about issues that may be particularly personal to others. There is a wide range of experiences and backgrounds represented in this group. However, do not feel you must censor yourself in terms of whether to mention a particular issue. All issues are fair game.

7) You are almost certainly not the most intelligent or the most informed person in this group. You are also almost certainly not the least intelligent or least informed person in this group.

8) All members are entitled to their own opinions. No one is entitled to his or her own facts.

9) If you are here to pronounce your opinions without listening to and considering others' opinions (or reading the articles in the discussion before responding at length in a thread), you are unlikely to fit with the group.

Figure 4.1: Screenshot of rules from FHP's homepage

The "ten commandments" she mentioned in the second rule (Figure 4.2) are *not* written by Monroe. They link to a file taken from another website (Monroe was unable to recall where she had taken it from during interviews).

The Ten Commandments of Rational Debate

1. Thou shall **not** attack the person's character, but the **argument** itself. (*"Ad hominem"*)

2. Thou shall **not** misrepresent or **exaggerate** a person's argument In order to make them easier to **attack.** (*"Straw Man Fallacy"*)

3. Thou shall **not** use small numbers to represent the **whole.** (*"Hasty Generalization"*)

4. Thou shall **not** argue thy position by **assuming** one of its premises is **true.** (*"Begging the Question"*)

5. Thou shall **not** claim that because something occurred **before**, it must be the **cause.** (*"Post Hoc/False Cause"*)

6. Thou shall **not** reduce the argument down to two **possibilities.** (*"False Dichotomy"*)

7. Thou shall **not** argue that because of our **ignorance**, claim must be true or **false** (*"Ad Ignorantiam"*)

8. Thou shall **not** lay the burden of proof onto him that is **questioning** the **claim** (*"Burden of Proof Reversal"*)

9. Thou shall **not** assume **"this"** follows **"that,"** when **"it"** has no **logical** connection. (*"Non Sequitur"*)

10. Thou shall **not** claim that because a premises is **popular**, therefore, it **must** be true. (*"Bandwagon Fallacy"*)

Figure 4.2: The Ten Commandments of Rational Debate from FHP's group image files as referenced in Figure 4.1 (item 2)

With the "tips" and commandments, Monroe demonstrates a particular vision of "civil discourse." She created the group for freedom of expression and the kind of communication that she was unable to have on her personal-professional Facebook page. She clearly wants an Enlightenment-based, logic-centered form of argumentation and deemphasizes other kinds of argumentation, particularly claims that use *pathos* or *ethos.*

To me, her rules and "ten commandments of rational debate" illustrate that Monroe's idea of "civil" relies on a particular way of arguing and privileges a particular approach to debate. Her rules and "commandments" rely on knowing how to avoid philosophical fallacies. However, since neither the rules nor the "commandments" provide concrete examples—supplying only definitions—Monroe implicitly presupposes an audience familiar with this kind of language and argumentation. In other words, Monroe sets up the venue so that a certain kind of person can be successful: individuals who can distinguish and identify truth (the basis for this truth is never addressed) and can argue with a logical acumen while remaining emotionally controlled. Since Monroe created this group in order to freely express herself, I believe that this ideal FHP member is actually the rhetorical position that Monroe aims to adopt. The norms she creates are the ways of communicating that she values and desires to embody.

Since these rules can appear somewhat stark and coercive, Monroe provides a link to yet another text of guidelines and reminders (Figure 4.3) that attempt to entice members to write.

THIS IS LONG, BUT PLEASE READ IT (ALL GROUP MEMBERS):
A general statement about the group for everyone who is a member, including (perhaps especially) those who lurk but do not visit and/or participate much:

As with most communities/groups/threads online, there is a small percentage of people in the group who are very active, another small percentage who occasionally participate, and then a large number who lurk, perhaps reading posts but not joining in. That's fine. Anyone is obviously welcome to read and not participate.

That said, I hope that any of those who are not participating do at least feel welcome to jump in at any time, so I wanted to toss out a few notes/guidelines/reminders:

a) Please do not feel that you should not participate if you only have time to make a comment here or there and not continue in a lengthier conversation. There are several members in here who spend a lot of time on FB for various reasons, but you don't need to be in here all the time and/or commenting tons to participate. Feel free to leave "drive-by" comments even if you cannot come back and "defend" them or explain or continue participating. If nothing else, it offers another voice and may spur discussions among others, even if you do not have the time or inclination to continue participating yourself.

b) It's been discussed frequently in here that there is a strong liberal slant in the group. This is definitely true of those actively participating the most, whether it's socially liberal or broader than that. I'd also argue, though it has not been brought up as much, that there is an anti-religion slant among the most vocal in the group. However, the last thing I would like to see is for this group to become an echo chamber. The best way to prevent that is for others to join in, *especially* if they disagree with the general tone of a particular thread. I hope those current slants do not intimidate or dissuade others from participating. It's likely they do for at least some in the group, and I hope that others with differing opinions jumping in will help erode that.

c) Given what I just wrote above in (b), I want to remind everyone that this group does include people with a wide diversity of views, both political and religious. Please keep that in mind when you post things, and keep in mind that an overarching goal of this group involves remaining respectful toward others and their beliefs, even if those are beliefs you vehemently disagree with. I am not suggesting that you should never post/say something if there's the slightest possibility it will offend someone; in a group like this, that may be nearly impossible. However, I have noticed recently a trend of condescending or patronizing tones in some threads, and I've noticed some who make very strident remarks that run the risk of cutting off discussion entirely.

"Lecturing," being condescending or patronizing, blanketly dismissing a

138

whole ideology or religion, etc., are not constructive or beneficial to the group or to discussion and engagment. I don't feel it's appropriate to ban someone for doing those things -- many of us, myself included, have done those at different times. However, the group exists for engagement, discussion and exploration among others with differing ideologies and beliefs. If members belittle those or express an unwillingness to even consider understanding another's perspective, not much is accomplished.

d) Of course, everything I wrote in (c) is still going to happen. And people in here will get offended. In light of that, please remember to do your best not to take things personally and to brush off the condescension when you come across it. If a group member makes you particularly angry or frustrated, then avoid their posts. Or, ignore what they say and engaged with others. I can't tell people not to become emotionally engaged in here -- I've done it myself many times and these are emotionally charged issues that we discuss. But do try to maintain perspective as much as possible and recognize that a person in here is very rarely (hopefully) trying intentionally to hurt or attack you. (And if the situation is otherwise, please PM me and let me know.)

e) Above all, try to learn from one another in here. That's really probably the most important point. The day we all stop listening to one another and just plugging up our ears is the day we're all really in trouble.

Figure 4.3: Final set of FHP guidelines intended to encourage participation

These reminders were not originally part of the group. After Monroe experienced the liberal slant of the group, as well as only a small segment of members actively participating, she decided to write out these reminders with the explicit goal of having "more members participate" (Discourse-based Interview). She perceived a need to have more conservative (or at least non-liberal) FHP members participate, as well as more members actively participate, which she does by making clear that participation in the group is not a large time-commitment. This text shows her commitment to multiple points of view, which reiterates that the members of FHP are still somewhat autonomous.

All three of these texts (rules, "commandments," and guidelines) highlight the civil tone for which Monroe aims and the normative *roles* she creates for members to take up. According to these texts, FHP members should produce articulate and well-reasoned responses. She accepts that some vitriolic language may be used during the group's discussion of heated and sometimes controversial issues (see point "d"). Monroe accepts such language as necessary in order to avoid an "echo chamber," something she repeated to me on numerous occasions across our three interviews. The expectation of an accepting yet evaluative approach is also mentioned (see point "c"). Nevertheless, her aim is to encourage a kind of exchange where audience members fruitfully argue over a variety of issues through active participation. The tone of these particular texts further illustrates the implicit norms Monroe uses in order to generate civil communication. Monroe refers to FHP's communication with metaphors of discussing, talking, and other terms related to openness and dialogue, meaning FHP members should expect a less formal, though still thoughtful, tone and approach from other members. As I previously noted, I believe that Monroe is attempting to provide discursive norms that she wishes to adopt and roles that she believes she can successfully inhabit.

These rules and guidelines also establish effective practices and motivations for participation, which in turn shape the epistemology of members. As I see it, Monroe is attempting to prescribe a particular way of thinking-acting-being for members, an idea closely related to the way I define discourse in my first chapter. Monroe is clearly not initiating a discourse or a discourse community (discourses are not initiated by an individual), but she produces and initiates discursive norms

that other individuals can take up once they have read the previous texts. Those

discursive norms reflect a civil, democratic exchange between audience members,

much like Salasin's writing from the previous chapter. Civility, as a guideline, is thus

a role that Monroe wishes for FHP members to adopt in their written exchanges and

to internalize during their composing process for texts in FHP. For her then, having

openness and valuing multiple viewpoints is part of her management strategy to

encourage the kind of community she desires. Part of this civility, then, allows a FHP

member to personally determine their exact response within Monroe's set of

expectations and conventions.

More generally, a writer exhibiting "audience managed" views herself as the

source of normativity and initiator of discursive norms. Monroe is such a source

because she produces the expectations and conventions that members ought to

adopt in order to become successful members of FHP. While these rules and

guidelines are meant to generate civil participation, they also reflect Monroe's

internal perception of the group and her role in it. In our interviews, she often

discussed FHP using "we" or "us." At one point, I asked her who she meant when she

referred to "we." She replied, "The group as a whole which mostly means me telling

the group as a whole" (Discourse-based Interview). In conjunction with the rules

and guidelines, this statement demonstrates that Monroe has produced an image of

the general FHP audience in her mind that she can instruct and guide. In these two

previous texts, Monroe positions herself as the group's authority figure and can

speak for it. The rules and guidelines set the forum into motion, producing initial

expectations and conventions of the community, and are subsequently enacted by

Monroe in order to further instill discursive norms in FHP. But as I have noted, there are not concrete examples in these rules and guidelines. Monroe provides those examples by enacting the rules and guidelines.

Audience Managed: The Enactment of Expectations and Conventions

As an initial writer, Monroe's writing implicitly provides FHP members with examples of her desired behavior. She enacts the expectations and conventions she established for the group using two strategies: question-posing and hyperlinking to news articles. Together, these two strategies enact the majority of her rules and, perhaps because of this, are the predominant ways in which Monroe initiates a text in FHP.

Question-Posing

By frequently asking questions of FHP members, both as a group and individuals, Monroe *performs* civility, a key characteristic of her rules and guidelines. In question-posing, she models several of the rules discussed in the last section, e.g., showing respect (rule #1), avoiding putting down others (rule #2), and, most explicitly, illustrating openness to other members' opinions (rules #7 and #9). The openness of question-posing also shows that she is willing to be offended (rule #5). In this way, question-posing enacts five of the nine rules. When she addresses the group at-large, she uses the phrases "What say you?" or "What say you, FHP?" Paradigmatic examples of this strategy are shown in Figure 4. 4.

Figure 4.4: Screenshots of two examples of question-posing by Monroe

Posing these short questions often leads to lengthy exchanges between members,

including Monroe herself. As I see it, questioning the audience aligns with the role

she sees herself inhabiting, a role that creates a community where individuals can

discuss heated issues in a passionate, intelligent manner. The examples shown are

typical of Monroe's question-posing and are designed to "get people involved in the

conversation, to pull them into the conversation" (Second Interview). When I asked

her directly about the second example, she responded, "That kind of goes back to

what I do as a teacher. As a journalist and as a teacher both, you always consider

your audience. That's kind of the first rule of everything" (Second Interview).

Notice that question-posing seems to fit her idea of considering the audience.

If considering her audience is the first rule of everything, then questioning-posing is

for her the most effective way to consider this particular audience. We can see that

she believes that she ought not to explicitly voice her own opinions because it might

discourage the openness her rules work toward establishing. But she still manages

the audience by providing the group links to only political issues (she has never, for

instance, posted anything about her personal life), and reiterating the point of the

group: to discuss political issues she was unable to discuss on her personal-

professional Facebook page.

Hyperlinking to News Articles

In addition to posing questions, nearly all[13] of Monroe's posts contain a

hyperlink to a journalistic article, a characteristic that supplies the audience with

material to discuss. Hyperlinking to news articles enacts clarity (rule #3) because it

provides readers with shared issues, thereby assisting members with a starting

point for word choice, tone, and vernacular in which to write. Hyperlinking to news

articles also provides evidence and facts (rule #4 and #8). The hyperlinked articles

are supposed to provide an egalitarian form of debate via equal access to

knowledge, which is in-step with her larger goals of open, civil, and informed

debate. This civil and informed kind of debate is precisely the kind of discursive

norm she desires. In part, Monroe's hyperlinking addresses the multitude of

education levels in FHP, although she readily admits that the group is full of highly

educated individuals. The hyperlinking also explicitly serves to circulate the writing

Monroe finds interesting and worth discussing, which subtly enables her own

opinions and thoughts to become privileged. Accordingly, hyperlinking also shows

---

[13] The only posts in my data that do not have links are the ones where she addresses
group behavior or explicitly acts as the group's moderator.

us that Monroe is concerned with moving her audience into a particular subject position.

By choosing a topic of interest to the audience, and providing them easy access through the hyperlink, Monroe displays careful consideration of her audience. In essence, FHP makes claims on her as a group because she has internalized the members' interests. She is explicit that this kind of consideration is part of her personality *and* persona as FHP's moderator.

> All my life, if I see something that reminds me of person X [sic], or I think person Y [sic] would appreciate it, I pass it along to the person. I do that in my everyday life. I e-mail people things randomly out of the blue and say "hey this might be of interest to you".... So I do that all the time anyway, in my everyday life. And I think when I do that in [*Fresh Heated Politics*] it's an extension of that. There is another element to it though. I think on the one hand, I think that person will sincerely find it interesting, so I think that's part of it. The other part is I know that person holds certain views and opinions that relate to whatever that I'm posting, and I'm either sincerely curious about how they interpret it, or I think will get the conversation going with other people, or I think challenge something that they currently hold. (Second Interview)

Here, she demonstrates a detailed awareness of others. Even in my interactions with her, Monroe has sent me links to conversations in FHP or links about writing she thought I would be interested in on four separate occasions during my collection phase and three times the week after I stopped collecting data. In fact, she *still* sends me messages on Facebook, fully aware I have stopped collecting data, about emerging conversations in FHP simply because she recognizes my interest.

Moreover, in the previous passage, the phrase "pass it along" is significant because Monroe passes information to members as hyperlinks, which enables a shared focal point for debate. While Monroe cannot control how members will react,

her extensive experience with individual members informs the links she chooses in order to generate the kind of participation FHP is meant to inculcate. I consider the hyperlink as a way of specifically communicating with an online group: it is a convention through which the community shares information. The hyperlinks are ways that conventions and expectations become shared. They are topics she wishes to discuss, which again demonstrates that audience managed is a strategy that can help a writer achieve a rhetorical role of their choosing. In this case, Monroe can discuss the political issues she desires in a way she desires.

<div align="center">**Calling Out: Tagging and Textual Invocation**</div>

Posing questions and hyperlinking enact the expectations and conventions of the group. From Monroe's perspective, FHP members know their abstract role(s) and are encouraged to participate from the viewpoint of a FHP member. Therefore, to cull and instigate *specific* member participation, Monroe uses a strategy I label "calling out." Calling out is akin to a textual invocation that guides FHP members in that it explicitly places specific individuals in a role Monroe imagines for them, the role of participant.

This textual invocation is made possible by a feature of Facebook's template called "tagging." When a Facebook user writes out members' names, these names are recognized and highlighted by Facebook's template and made into a hyperlink. When a member is "tagged" in this way, they receive notification of the text in which they are named. (Note that this is an option for the writer, but Monroe chooses to take this option in every instance rather than referring to a member with a simple textual, non-hyperlinked name.) The interactive template does not guarantee

Monroe will be read, but she does know that Facebook will notify tagged members.

Facebook describes its tagging system as follows:

> When you tag someone, you create a link to their Timeline. The post you tag the person in may also be added to that person's Timeline... If you tag a friend in your status update, anyone who sees that update can click on your friend's name and go to their Timeline. Your status update may also show up on that friend's Timeline. When you tag someone, they'll be notified. Also, if you or a friend tags someone in your post and the post is set to Friends or more, the post could be visible to the audience you selected plus friends of the tagged person. (Facebook Policy)

An example of tagged names is shown in Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Screenshot illustrating tagged names as indicated by arrows

The text itself demonstrates openness because it attempts to prompt participation without advocating for a particular viewpoint. It is an invitation to participate in a certain kind of discourse (open, civil, and informed). Monroe sets up the text in a way that helps people discuss the issue and directly avoids advocating for a specific perception of gun control in the text that introduces the article. In that text, Monroe's "pragmatic considerations" are intended to be salient points that members discussing the issue might utilize. Monroe's text, then, adheres to her own

guidelines, while also calling out individual FHP members to add their perspectives.

According to Monroe, tagging does not rely on the specific audience member

responding to her invocation. FHP members for her "don't have to respond to [a

tagged post] but [she] tags them because [she] wants them to see that post"

(Discourse-based Interview). Rather, tagging is a part of her process for creating

openness and, for her, is not necessarily inextricably tied the tagged audience

members themselves.

By calling out, which is a strategy other FHP members do not employ, I mean

she tags four people in this text as indicated by the arrows I added to the above

screenshot. Tagged names are emphasized with blue text, enabling other members

to click on the name, like a hyperlink, to take a user to that member's personal

profile webpage. Since each member exhibits some information describing

themselves in their profile, the audience for her is not abstract in the same way that

a typical writer's may be. Rather, she uses names in the text, much like a speaker

would address a physically-present audience member. For her, the audience is

present, a notion which Facebook's interactive template encourages by designing

such a tagging convention.

Let me turn to another similar example to emphasize my point. In bringing

up the issue of rape culture and victim-blaming, Monroe revealed the nuanced, non-

hierarchal sense of power behind calling out. (I have typed out the text in order to

keep the participants anonymous because Monroe used their full names) The text

reads as follows:

I'm surprised no one has mentioned the case in here yet, so I'll get the ball rolling with this piece because it touches on stuff in the post a while back that [Member X], [Member Y], [Member Z], and I all discussed. This is why we still need to be much more concerned with the culture of rape than false accusations.

The members' names—above denoted as X, Y, Z—were all tagged in the original post on this same topic. Here she enacts a cooperative relation. When I asked her about the referencing process of this text, we had the following exchange:

GALLAGHER: Why did you choose to tag those three members?

MONROE: They were the most active one on a previous post [Member A] had posted.

GALLAGHER: What is your reaction when a tagged member responds to a post?

MONROE: Not anything, okay they responded. I don't know how to answer that. I don't have a response. It is not a huge deal to me if someone chooses not to respond or does respond. Everyone is busy and has their own things going on. I am not offended or excited.

GALLAGHER: What is the distinction if someone who is tagged responds?

MONROE: It doesn't matter to me.

GALLAGHER: And so, is this particular post successful…for you?

MONROE: Yeah. I think so. I was actually really surprised that [Member W] joined in on this one. I was pleasantly surprised. He doesn't participate much. I didn't even know he was really paying attention anymore.

GALLAGHER: What was your reaction then? You said you were pleasantly surprised?

MONROE: Yeah. I'm sure that when he posted initially I was glad that he posted because he's an interesting guy who has got a lot of good experience to bring to light on issues like this because of what he does…. (Discourse-based Interview)

149

Crucial to this text is only one of three mentioned members replied and Monroe *still believed the text a success*. The named audience is not critical for success. In this sense, Monroe does not seek out a particular response *even if she explicitly names someone*. The naming functions as a convention for her, used to fashion together her audience in order to generate civil communication. The power functioning behind Monroe's naming convention is not to control the way FHP members respond but rather it can serve to position members into roles they ought to take up. The members are positioned as individuals who ought to respond. She creates an opportunity for civil debate and conversation, but not the specifics of that conversation. Finally, by producing this kind of debate, she in turn positions herself in a civil and encouraging *role*.

Respectful and Disciplinary Exertion of Direct Authority

While tagging helps to illuminate one way that Monroe builds discursive norms in FHP, as of yet I have not discussed the way Monroe literally manages texts in the group or manages the behavior of members *after* they have participated. This literal kind of management demonstrates the complicated role of authority-figure/audience-member she must balance. Monroe's position as the creator of the venue places her in the position of policing the group, but occupying solely that role might reduce the openness of participation and discussion she seeks in the group. How then does she go about managing texts while still maintaining the openness she seeks? What happens when the audience does not adhere to her rules and guidelines? Sometimes, Monroe encounters a recalcitrant audience member that she will exercise control over. But she does not exercise totalizing control. She exercises

two kinds of nuanced control: respectful exertion of direct authority and disciplinary exertion of direct authority.

Respectful Exertion of Direct Authority

In the most prominent demonstration of textual control, Monroe *moves* a text to maintain control over *her* thread, via retyping it, revealing a respectful exertion of direct authority. In the way she moves the text, she attempts to replicate the template's layout and design. This text originated from a conversation in which Monroe discussed her miscarriage. It is the only time she moved a text. Exasperated with unrelated comments on her thread by the libertarian 'Pete,' a group member who has since left FHP of his own accord, Monroe decided to move Pete's off-topic comments, along with her comments to Pete's unrelated posts, to a new thread via copy and paste. Then she deleted his off-topic comments from the original thread. The result was her original thread, centered on discussion of her miscarriage, plus a new thread on Pete's discussion topic, trust in business vs. trust in government. I have redacted and anonymized the text so it can be read in Figure 4.6.

Tracy Monroe

Here is the new thread I alluded to in my one about trust in gov't vs. trust in business. The issue can be continued to be discussed with the relevant libertarian perspectives here if anyone wishes to continue it.

I've copied/pasted the relevant comment below, including my own initial parenthetical which EXPRESSLY was an attempt NOT for the thread to be hijacked in that direction:

Tracy: (I do understand why some libertarians would be against it if they believe any/all taxes for ALL safety net programs should be eliminated. I would find that morally repugnant, but it is consistent with their logic if that is their starting stance. (Let's leave charities/businesses out of it for the moment - this is all a whole different debate.) However, it's hard for me to grasp how any moral person would believe that a person needing emergency health care should not have some kind of recourse if they sincerely through no choice of their own have NO other options. In general, this libertarian idea is a whole different discussion I'm not wanting to go off on, but I felt I had to mention it for my above argument. BARRING that purist libertarian argument of no-tax-money-for-any-form-of-any-healthcare-whatsoever, who would be against free birth control for anyone of any age anywhere if we knew those four outcomes above were a GUARANTEE?)

==

PETE : "who could possibly be against it?"

raises hand

Aside from the moral issues of forcing someone to pay for something they think is equivalent to murder, my issue is with paying for something in a private transaction whatsoever.

But as for my stance being morally repugnant, you realize the bulk of the opposition on this issue feel they would be funding murder right? That's what you're asking them to do.

Continued below

Like · Comment · Follow Post · December 2, 2012 at 10:25pm near Peoria, IL.

✔ Seen by 84

Tracy Monroe TRACY Pete my moral repugnance here is one of the core reasons I only engage with you on libertarian discussions to a point. As I stated above (twice), I'm speaking about the benefits of the hypothetical BC situation in economic terms.

If you are referring specifically to the morning-after pill, which I was not referring to, then it can't be discussed without considering the moral worth of a belief that is flat out inaccurate in science. There is still a belied among many that morn-after pills and some IUDs are abortifacients. If they WERE, that would be important to consider in the discussion and would involve a discussion of abortion in general. However, scientifically, there is no zygote/embryo/fertilized egg involved at ANY point in the process with these methods. Previously, scientists themselves thought there was. THEN, it was a moral aspect to be considered. We now understand the mechanism better and there is no abortion of any kind, even of a fertilized one-cell being. Hence, I cannot see how a belief in something scientifically guaranteed to be false would be required to take into account. Only if abortion were occurring would the faith-based beliefs on it be an important consideration in the discussion.

Tracy Monroe **PETE** : What I don't understand is why you need the government to address things you find morally repugnant. Why is it not enough to donate your own resources to those causes and to encourage others to do so? Ultimately what you're wanting is to force others into taking actions THEY find morally repugnant. That's my primary issue with the left on economic issues. It's not enough for you to help those causes, you want everyone to whether they choose to or not. And for the life of me I don't understand that mentality.

"then it can't be discussed without considering the moral worth of a belief that is flat out inaccurate in science."

Which puts one into a position of deciding which moral beliefs are valid and which are not by force of government instead of individual choice.

I don't get why I'm morally reprehensible for thinking people should be allowed on their own to decide which charitable causes they want to support.

December 2, 2012 at 10:25pm · Like · 👍 1

Tracy Monroe **TRACY** Also, **Pete** I specifically, in my long digression parenthetical above, said "aside" from the purist libertarian stance here. I specifically do not want to discuss that perspective in my overall point here, which relates to those who don't hold that view and who are working within the current structure (since employing that view would involve a major overhaul in fiscal and health policy that is currently not realistic to expect in the immediate future.)

I'm not against discussing that perspective overall - in a different thread. Feel free to start it. But I am limiting the focus of what I'm discussing to those who are non-purist-libertarian and generally fiscally conservative.

December 2, 2012 at 10:26pm · Like

Tracy Monroe **TRACY** **Pete** - stop. If you want to discuss that line of discussion, start a new thread.

I am not getting into those arguments here. They are off the topic of what I am exploring in this thread. Start a new thread.

December 2, 2012 at 10:27pm · Like

Does government regulate anything that isn't ultimately morals?

December 2, 2012 at 10:27pm · Like

Omg y'all need Christmas spirit lol. Go decorate a tree or something

December 2, 2012 at 10:27pm via mobile · Like

Tracy Monroe **PETE** Why? It's perfectly pertinent here.

PETE What are the rules on when we can and when we cannot discuss Libertarian viewpoints **Tracy**

December 2, 2012 at 10:27pm · Like

Tracy Monroe **TRACY** If you want to discuss it, start another thread. I will not indulge any answers to your questions on this thread. End of story. I started this thread to discuss one thing. I don't want it derailed by that discussion, which is sure to be long and involved.

December 2, 2012 at 10:28pm · Like

Tracy Monroe **PETE** Whatever, **Tracy**

December 2, 2012 at 10:28pm · Like

Tracy Monroe **TRACY** There are no rules about when to discuss them. You know that. I simply don't want this conversation derailed - as it already is right now - by a side discussion.

December 2, 2012 at 10:28pm · Like

Tracy Monroe **PETE** That can happen when you call someones views morally repugnant...

153

Tracy Monroe There, now we're right where we were, including all of my comments so that I'm not scrubbing what will surely appear as pettiness to others. We can get into the whys another day if you wish, but it is deeply important to me that the other discussion is not derailed by this one. So much so that my heart is racing, and I'm having a difficult time settling down. It's something I can talk to you or others about some other time, and I'm aware that I will come across as petty to others or simply overreacting. So be it. That's also why I included my own comments above so that others can draw their own conclusions about what I've just done, as odd and even social-media-inappropriate as it may be. For what I was trying to discuss and ask questions about, they ARE different discussions.

December 2, 2012 at 10:32pm · Edited · Like

Pete Might I advise stepping away from the computer then? It's just a political discussion.

But it's one in which you called a stance differing from your own morally repugnant. I don't get why. I am all about charity and helping out those in need. I wish I was in a position to be able to do so though I still find time to volunteer here and there when I can. But I don't understand why I'm repugnant for thinking I don't have the right to tell others they must fund those causes by threat of force. It's ESPECIALLY strange to me when we're discussing an issue where by forcing others to fund what you want funded you're making them take an action THEY find morally repugnant. You disagree that it is and can offer support for your view but so can they. So why is it acceptable to ignore their morals in pursuit of your own?

December 2, 2012 at 10:43pm · Like

Goodness I thought trying to decide the morality of trench warfare as depicted by Steven Spielberg in his film WarBiscuit was tough! You guys have taken on a Socratic Tums dilemma and we know how he ended up.

December 2, 2012 at 10:44pm · Like

Pete I've been doing research projects all week. Don't make me look stuff up. 🙂

December 2, 2012 at 10:45pm · Like

Pete Damnit now I'm reading up on the pedigree of a thoroughbred despite having absolutely no interest in horse breeding. 🙁

December 2, 2012 at 10:47pm · Like

Ha

December 2, 2012 at 10:52pm · Like

Tracy Monroe Now, I can clarify: When I said "morally repugnant," what I was referring to was a person who has no options in healthcare whatsoever going without them. That is all. I find it morally repugnant for anyone to believe in living in a society where there is not some option for every person to be provided for if they need emergency healthcare. How that is achieved is up for debate.

December 2, 2012 at 10:52pm · Like

Tracy Monroe (ie, for no safety net whatsoever to exist for individuals - THAT is what I find morally repugnant.)

December 2, 2012 at 10:53pm · Like

Pete And one need not invoke the government to achieve that end. (You did place your comment about moral repugnance in the context of government provided contraception, not charitably provided.)

I think you'll find very few who actually subscribe to Rand's nonsense about charity being evil. I've only encountered a few of them and quite frankly they fall into my category of "well read idiots." 🙂

December 2, 2012 at 10:56pm · Edited · Like · 👍 1

154
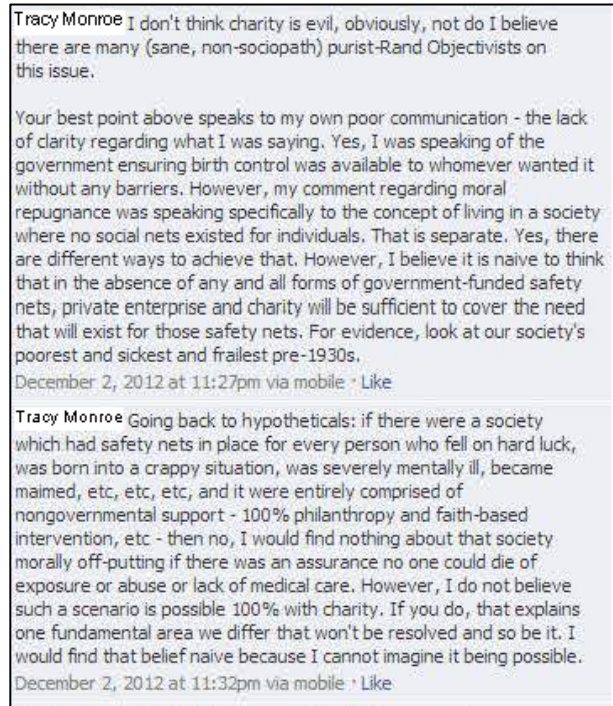
Figure 4.6: Screenshot of re-directed comment thread

The text itself collapses and compresses two days of comments into a single, readable text. It displays Monroe's diversity of rhetorical strategies, including quoting the audience, the invention of several hypothetical scenarios, separating arguments by their arrangement, and offering a stylistic, nuanced perspective rather than binary for/against arguments, in this case, about government control. Her method of quotation is distinct from the notion of "audience emerging" I set up in the previous chapter because the quotations are created synchronously with the comments of audience members, which positions the exchanges as more of a conversation and discussion than in Salasin's case; Monroe's case is less about an ongoing cycle of texts (audience emerging) and more about the exchange within a single text or within a group of texts (audience managed). Monroe has dialogic

relationships with her audience rather than in the hierarchal fashion that Salasin's case study exhibits.

The anger Monroe felt about this text is crucial when viewed in conjunction with the copy and paste method she employs. In our interviews, I asked her about this movement.

> GALLAGHER: ...why did you choose to copy and paste this thread?

> MONROE: Because he pissed me the fuck off. I was trying to have a conversation about something different and I suspected that [Pete] was going to jump in with his libertarian viewpoint and the libertarian viewpoint was going to interrupt my ability to know what people thought about what I was saying because it was literally--, it was like me saying, "Does this train go east or west?" and then someone jumping in and saying, "The train should only go north, you know?" And I'm like, "I don't give a flying fuck if you think the train should go north. I want to know right now whether people think it should go east or west."

> GALLAGHER: Gotcha...

> MONROE: ...so I was really annoyed. I actually anticipated that he was going to do that and I tried to word the post in such a way that would prevent [it] and I did not succeed, and then when I tried...I basically felt like he was high-jacking the post and he kept going.

Monroe moved the comments because Pete "pissed [her] the fuck off." She felt she had the authority to move the text because Pete was not respectful of the conversation illustrated by his attempted to "hijack" the thread, meaning change the subject.

While on the surface, moving the text might seem like an action that violates Monroe's rules, i.e., a lack of respect and being closed to the views of another FHP member, I view this textual movement as a show of respect to Pete's point of view because she kept the text's original design, as the previous screenshot illustrates.

She electronically pasted the comments from Pete and herself to demonstrate to the audience that she is an honest, forthright administrator. In this sense, her aim was to recreate the original thread as best she could (First Interview) because, in my view, Monroe perceives that the audience needs her to inhabit an honest, accurate, and respectful persona as the administrator of the group. This perception provides a rationale behind Monroe's efforts to replicate the conversation she "scrubbed" from the original thread (Discourse-based Interview). Additionally, she demonstrates an awareness of the way members read the comments, as discrete units of text. She does not copy and paste the comments together as one initial text. Instead, she uses the time-consuming process of copying each original comment and placing it as a new comment in the "comment" field. This direct yet respectful method indicates that Monroe's control is funneled through expectations of reading within Facebook's design.

What is crucial here is that Monroe, during our interviews, noted, "[Pete] doesn't seem to realize 'it's just a political discussion' is automatically going to contain all that emotion and values" (Discourse-based Interview). This implies that while she is after Enlightenment-based argumentation, she herself is still not immune from making other kinds of arguments or that logic-based statements fall short to some degree. This anomalous text, as I mentioned, emerged from a discussion of Monroe's miscarriage and when Pete attempted to detach emotion from the discussion, it was extremely difficult for Monroe to do so. However, notice that Monroe has done her best to make the text readable in a way that is similar to the original thread. She cut and pasted only her and Pete's comments. While she

became emotional, she still maintained a sense of propriety in terms of the layout and design of the text. She has protected her writing but in a respectful way.

In this thread, then, Monroe aims to protect her writing by moving the text. The way she goes about protecting her writing is guided by a sense of FHP's guidelines—guidelines that she established—and the expectations set up by Facebook's template. This example highlights the power of audience managed. Even though she is respectful in this type of control, Monroe still sees her texts as hers. While she told me in our interviews that she would not move another initial writer's text, she believed it acceptable in regards to her own writing. Again, this shows that Monroe's control allows her to take up a particular kind of rhetorical position. In this instance, she wants a critical debate without a libertarian viewpoint, a perspective she strongly dislikes. While she does not delete Pete's comments, she still succeeds in moving the libertarian perspective, literally.

Disciplinary Exertion of Direct Authority

Additionally, Monroe polices FHP and acts as the group's authority figure, enforcing rule-violations, revealing that consequences exist for not upholding the abstract boundaries of FHP. Controlling the audience when they flagrantly violate the group's (i.e., Monroe's) normative roles illustrates the real power Monroe possesses. For instance, she removed one member for threatening another. She announced this removal to the group in a post (Figure 4.7).

> Tracy Monroe
>
> Unfortunately, I have chosen to ban the first member from this group. I removed ~~Removed Member~~ from the group and if he requests re-entry, I will not approve it. His direct threats on one of the threads and other explicitly antagonistic comments previously are well past the line of "civil discourse," and I <u>can think of no excuse for his</u> repeated insults. It did not appear to me that he was interested in actually civil and reasonable discussion.
>
> As I stated when I started this group, there's no way to guard against intense passions when the whole point is to discuss "politics and religion," which go to the core of every person's beliefs and value systems. I have made my own missteps in the group, and two members have chosen to leave in part because of my own inability to keep my cool. I apologize for that and continue to try to keep my own genie in the bottle (thanks, . for the fun analogy). It's an imperfect group, but hopefully it still provides value to the members even when tensions run high.
>
> I apologize to those who have previously been the object of ~~Removed Member~~ s insults. Perhaps I should have taken this move sooner. ~~RM~~ is an old personal friend of mine, yet I will admit even I have been surprised to see some of what he has written because his ferocity and antagonism on here is not what I have ever seen of him in person during more than a decade of knowing him. Regardless, friendship is not a reason to allow a person viciously abuse others. If you have any questions, please message me.

Figure 4.7: Screenshot of posting in which Monroe bans a member of FHP

This text takes an even-handed, although unregretful, tone about removing a member. The first paragraph demonstrates that while Monroe possesses a willingness to accept some discord among members, threats will not be tolerated. Furthermore, Monroe indicates that the removed member's (RM's) vitriol was not a single instance but rather a *pattern* of non-civil discourse, implied from the underlined sentence (underline is mine). In the second paragraph, Monroe accounts for standard disagreement. She then proceeds to argue that RM's conduct went beyond the expectations and conventions of the group, crossing the barrier of acceptable language/writing. In the final paragraph, she apologizes to anyone hurt by RM's actions, which reaffirms her *ethos* as an impartial moderator. RM was her friend, but this friendship does not impede or recuse her from acting on her

responsibilities. Maintaining an *ethos* of impartiality is a strategy she uses to create the groups' discursive norms—and this ethos then obligates her to be bound to those same norms by disciplining (removing) the member.

This *disciplinary exertion of direct authority* was revealed during our interviews when I asked her about removing a member, she told me, "['Bob', another member] brought the threat to my attention, I think. Or I may have seen it and he said something? I don't remember. I know [Bob] blocked him and told me as much. I don't think [Bob] or anyone else asked me to kick him out. That was my decision. It's my group and my choice" (Discourse-based Interview). Monroe removed the member because she felt an obligation as the group's creator. I also find this reflection significant because she is unsure of how she found out about the threat, but is sure that it was her choice about how to deal with the threat. She is the group's only moderator and, therefore, certain she removed the member—but she is also confident that it was her *choice*. The phrase "It's my group and my choice," crystalizes audience managed. Her sense of ownership and responsibility for the group illustrate that even though the group allows her to take up a rhetorical position of her choice, she ends up with a sense of obligation because of the way she produced FHP's discursive norms.

Moreover, this text protects the integrity of the group, broadly protecting the expectations and conventions of FHP—or put another way, this text protects the integrity of the way Monroe wants her audience to communicate. She explicitly told me that part of the goal of this text was "to let people know what a ban-able [sic] offense was" (Discourse-based Interview). Monroe's role coerces her to write the

160

text, even though she could have simply removed RM from the group without notification. In fact, Monroe told me in interviews that she is still "friends," i.e., connected, with RM on Facebook and knows he did not actually mean to be as threatening as he came across (Discourse-based Interview).

I believe that Monroe felt obligated to produce this text because it definitively showed other FHP members that she would protect her (the group's) way of communicating. Monroe needs to eliminate the possibility of threats in order for her group's success—and her actions must be announced through her *writing* to reinforce this. In this regard, the comments from the audience indicate that Monroe is borne no ill-will as the result from her duty as moderator. The text serves to demonstrate that Monroe is aware of the challenges facing her as FHP's administrator and that she meets those challenges, thereby protecting the group's interests (e.g., her own interests).

The control exerted in both of these texts, the reposting of a text from Pete and the announcement of a member's removal, demonstrate that Monroe manages the venue as a disciplinarian in addition to an instigator. Leading the group requires her to produce a space that is perceived to be safe by the members. The control she exerts is not totalizing but strategic. Her version of "civil discourse" is encouraged not only in her texts but also through her authoritative position. Taken together, I believe these examples show us that a writer demonstrating what I call audience managed can police her writing. In this case, Monroe's writing establishes a community with norms that arise from her own habits and goals. Managing the audience, in this case, shows us the way that a writer can succeed in creating a

161

participatory space and negotiating a participatory audience because it gives the writer power to create roles for her audience—and herself.

Audience Managed and Creating Opportunity

The concept of audience managed, in my view, assists writers in navigating the inherent interaction and participation that occurs in Web 2.0 contexts. Unlike print texts, Web 2.0 spaces have an ongoing nature to them. In such environments, audience managed helps writers to imagine ways they might influence and shape an audience while also retaining the autonomy of the audience. By retaining this autonomy *and* the ability to set discursive norms, audience managed highlights the production of an ongoing dialogue and conversation undergirded by a writer's purposes.

CHAPTER 5

AUDIENCE ORIENTED

Critical engagement of an audience allows for a type of interaction in which a writer's audience can augment the initial text. I have examined strategies that a web-writer might use with a critically engaged audience in an open, publicly accessible venue (audience emerging) or in a limited venue with group members (audience managed). In Web 2.0, some writers desire an even more dynamic interaction in which the audience, in addition to extending the initial text, can also shift the layout and design of texts, e.g., co-production. This chapter investigates the way a site with this kind of publicly accessible, co-produced participation and interaction shapes a web-writer's perception of audience. In this case, the site Reddit, the social news outlet mentioned in chapter two, allows for co-production because it affords the audience the opportunity to shift the layout of texts.

My final participant, the fourth most popular Redditor[14] who calls himself StickleyMan, desires to turn the space of Reddit into an ongoing textual encounter composed of strangers willing to listen to one another. Unlike my previous two participants, StickleyMan does not seek to invoke readers into a particular role or manage them within a given role. Rather, he orients members of Reddit, a vast and generally anonymous community, toward taking an attitude of ongoing learning while aiming for a random but constructive experience to occur within his texts. His

---

[14] Writers on Reddit are called Redditors.

goals as a web-writer show us that the randomness of a public may be a sought-after

feature in Web 2.0. As such, StickleyMan wants to incite discussion, but is not after

controlling it or approaching it with a particular aim. The purpose of his

conversations/texts is fundamentally dialogic in the sense of give-and-take learning

exchanges: other Redditors help him learn and gain insight and he hopes that other

Redditors learn from him as well as from each other.

StickleyMan's Purpose: An Organic, Ongoing Public

Nurturing organic, ongoing conversations are a principle (but not sole) aim

for StickleyMan. By "organic" I mean that he uses Reddit for a sense of

unpredictability and randomness. Stated another way, he desires a natural

progression of topics that is often encountered in verbal conversations. This idea of

a naturally progressing, "organic" conversation is clarified in his answer to my

question about his ideal audience.

> STICKLEYMAN: Again, it depends on what I'm doing. If it's a GIF
> [graphics interchange format], I like people talking about the GIF. I
> like people being positive in general. In a positive, productive, more
> forward manner. That's what I love about Reddit. I can post a GIF
> about a guy on an exercise ball at the gym and it can spur a 300
> comment conversation about Christmas trees. It's just so organic
> about the way that happens. That's what I like. And certainly when I'm
> commenting, I like to incite some kind of discussion, some large shit. I
> can say something to someone to help me learn more about it or point
> me to a place where I can get some insight about it. That's what I
> really like. (Second Interview)

Here, he expresses the desire for a fluid conversation to occur on Reddit. He is not

after a specific kind of exchange, but an orientation that undergirds an exchange: an

organic conversation that involves learning, or "insight."

164

The previous passage demonstrates the way in which StickleyMan seeks a sense of exploration, or going astray, with *a public* he hopes to encourage. That public displays a key characteristic of Michael Warner's understanding that going astray is a "condition of possibility" for a public of a text (74). StickleyMan enjoys having a text about an exercise ball lead to an unanticipated exchange about Christmas trees, illustrating the way that web-writers may hold the "condition of possibility" for going "astray" as crucial to their purposes.

Because going astray is tied to StickleyMan's purpose, a self-reflexive stranger-relation undergirds the public for which he aims. For Warner, a public is a self-reflexive idea particularly because "[t]he manner in which [the public] is understood by participants is...not merely epiphenomenal, not mere variation on a form whose essence can be grasped independently" (12). This means that a public cannot be separated into individual actors, or in this case Redditors. Individual Redditors do not make up the public for which StickleyMan aims. Not even a group of Redditors would comprise the kind of public he desires. In order to form a public, individual Redditors, even those StickleyMan not might be familiar with, come together for each new text (or "thread) because "publics do not exist apart from the discourse that addresses them" (72). The self-organization that occurs for each new text (or "thread") suggests that even if Redditors do know one another, they are not unified through identity but through the discourse they take up—in this case, the discourse within StickleyMan's texts. Only during the moments in which the Redditors are actively writing does the organic, ongoing public actually emerge.

In order to generate the randomness for an organic, ongoing public, StickleyMan needs to have the potential for a large audience; implicit in this idea is to have strangers join his texts, thereby providing a nearly limitless kind of ongoing exchange. The randomness of strangers cannot be controlled; it can only be inculcated. StickleyMan therefore cannot invoke or manage his audience because that would disrupt his idea of a public. Instead, I believe, he orients his audience to encourage its *formation*. This kind of public allows writers on the web to encourage a discursive space in which individuals can partake in conversations and the exchange of ideas. Clearly, writers cannot accomplish this act alone. Reddit, with its co-produced interactions, affords the *possibility* of an organic, ongoing public, although it certainly does not guarantee it. StickleyMan, I believe, seeks to orient his audience towards this kind of public.

Audience Oriented

This chapter describes a third model of audience that allows for a particular type of public to come to fruition on the web in a co-produced venue. I label this model "audience oriented." Audience oriented has four crucial features. (1) First, it suggests that writers do not provide particular roles to an audience. Rather, this term assumes three characteristics about a public: a stranger-relation so that a limitless audience is possible; a personal/impersonal address; and the reflexive circulation discourse. In this case study, StickleyMan does not want specific Redditors to join his texts; he wants a new, organic conversation with each new text he produces. Reddit's interactive template helps to orient strangers toward this kind of conversation because it provides for the possibility of a nearly limitless audience,

a personal/impersonal address, and the reflexive circulation of discourse. (2) The

second aspect of audience oriented emphasizes that a writer initiates a particular

discussion within a larger network of other conversations. By recognizing this body

of conversations, the writer can be more rhetorical so that the audience takes up the

attitude for which the writer aims. This recognition gives the writer the power to

identify which conversations are and are not helpful for that writer's purpose. In

StickleyMan's case study, this larger network of conversations take the form of a

mental construct StickleyMan calls the "hive-minded composite Redditor." The

construct allows StickleyMan to minimize the negative conversations, predict

responses, and avoid clichés within the larger conversations on Reddit. To

encourage the kind of public he desires, StickleyMan constructs,

experiences/participates, and then separates from this "hive-minded composite

Redditor." (3) The third aspect of audience oriented captures the techniques that a

writer may use to encourage the formation of a public. Audiences that are oriented

are not managed or invoked; they are prodded, poked, or incited to take up an issue

but may change the exchange based on their own volition. In this case study,

StickleyMan uses a multifaceted technique that I label textual listening. It is

comprised of two key characteristics: acknowledging another writer's input and

ongoing questioning. Textual listening is the way that StickleyMan inculcates an

organic, ongoing public. (4) The last aspect of audience oriented emphasizes that

ownership of texts is less important than ongoing textual activity. StickleyMan does

not view his writing in terms of ownership. Because the site is co-produced, the

writing StickleyMan produces becomes inextricably connected to the writing of

other Redditors.

Reddit's Template Enables the Possibility of a Public

StickleyMan chose Reddit as a suitable place to inculcate a public because not

all Web 2.0 interfaces will afford this possibility. Through the "upvote" and

"downvote" system I will describe shortly, Reddit's interactive template allows for

nested and *moving* conversations to occur within texts, a feature that many Web 2.0

texts do not allow (and is certainly not afforded in printed texts). This unique

template allows for the possibility of a public to emerge, an assertion supported by

its possession of three crucial characteristics of Warner's concept of a public. First,

this interactive template provides the scaffolding for the stranger-relation of

audience oriented to occur because it provides the possibility of a limitless audience

united through their participation in any given Reddit discussion. Second, Reddit's

interactive template allows for a personal/impersonal address. And finally, the

reflexive circulation of discourse occurs through the site's re-positioning of

Redditors in relation to a text's dynamic discourse.

Warner's discussion of the stranger-relation is useful for explaining that the

template of Reddit affords the *possible* formation of a public: "A public sets its

boundaries and its organization by its own discourse, rather than by external

frameworks, only if it openly addresses people who are identified primarily through

their participation in the discourse and who therefore cannot be known in advance"

(74). He notes that we have "…become capable of recognizing ourselves as strangers

even when we know each other" (74). In other words, for Warner, "A public…unites

strangers through participation alone, at least in theory. Strangers come into relationships by its means, though the resulting social relationships might be peculiarly indirect and unspecifiable" (75). In regards to Reddit, this notion means that Redditors may know each other or have previous experience with one another, but still come to an individual discussion as strangers united solely by their participation with that particular discussion. The template of Reddit allows for innumerable strangers (in this case Redditors) to come together and have a discussion. They are, of course, united by being part of the Reddit community, but Reddit's template unites them solely through participation.

Because Reddit's template unites Redditors as strangers, it allows readers to see themselves as personal/impersonal addressees. Redditors continually encounter Reddit's texts in new ways depending on the audience's input over the course of time. This input can shift the possible layout of a text (as I show in Figure 5.2 and 5.3). By returning to texts in different ways, Redditors might see themselves as both addressed and not addressed with these kinds of text. This is a crucial feature of a public for Warner. He writes, "With public speech…we might recognize ourselves as addressees, but it is equally important that we remember that the speech was addressed to indefinite others, that in singling us out it does so not on the basis of our concrete identity but by virtue of our participation in the discourse alone and therefore in common with strangers" (77-8). Redditors can see the responses ("comments") of other Redditors ("strangers"). Because the template allows for responses to shift and expand, Redditors understand that a response can be meant for them *and* for any number of possible Redditors.

The shifting/expanding, i.e., moving, nature of the text creates a reflexive circulation of discourse. Redditors can encounter a text continuously and a text can be different depending on the various responses that emerge over time and with input from other Redditors. This idea is strikingly similar to Warner's assertion that a "public is the social space created by the reflexive circulation of discourse" (90). He claims the following:

> No single text can create a public. Nor can a single voice, a single genre, even a single medium. All are insufficient to create the kind of reflexivity that we call a public, since a public is understood to be an ongoing space of encounter for discourse. Not texts themselves create publics, but the concatenation of texts through time. Only when a previously existing discourse can be supposed, and when a responding discourse can be postulated, can a text address a public. (90)

Reddit's template allows for a previous discourse to be supposed as well as a responding discourse because it constantly re-positions Redditors as more comments are input, then filtered by the types of attention they receive. In the context of StickleyMan's case study, the possibility of a limitless audience, the personal/impersonal address, and reflexive circulation of discourse mean that the interactive template provides the framework for the kind of public he seeks to encourage.

Reddit's template filters texts and their comments via *types of attention* from the audience; it amalgamates the attention of (possible) strangers on Reddit. Types of attention on Reddit include "upvotes" or "downvotes" on individual comments, timeliness of comments, and 'Gold', a form of site currency purchased with US dollars. The most prominent form of attention is expressed through "upvotes" or

"downvotes," a voting system in which Redditors decide which texts they like or dislike and which leads to increasing the "karma" of writers who accrue votes. These types of attention are then organized into categories such as *hot* (numerous upvotes on a text that is recent), *new* (the most recent texts), *rising* (texts receiving upvotes at an increasing rate) *popularity* (texts with the most upvotes), *controversial* (again, voted by the audience), *top* (most activity of both upvotes and comments), and *gilded* (most gold) (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Screenshot of the navigation bar in Reddit showing the types of attention

These categories are visible to prospective audience members through a toolbar near the top of Reddit pages, which is reproduced in the figures below. Because a single writer or audience member is not in control of the texts, these types of attention provide StickleyMan with the opportunity to generate organic conversations. First, his texts cannot take on meaning until the audience decides to comment, at least for his purposes. Second, he lacks control over the order that a prospective audience member encounters his texts because the information within the template is categorized and sorted according to the aforementioned categories. These categories literally shape the way a reader perceives the text by ordering initial texts and comments. This is just one more way that the template mediates the interactions for reading texts on Reddit. Figures 5.2 and 5.3 demonstrate this mediation at both the site and individual thread level, respectively.
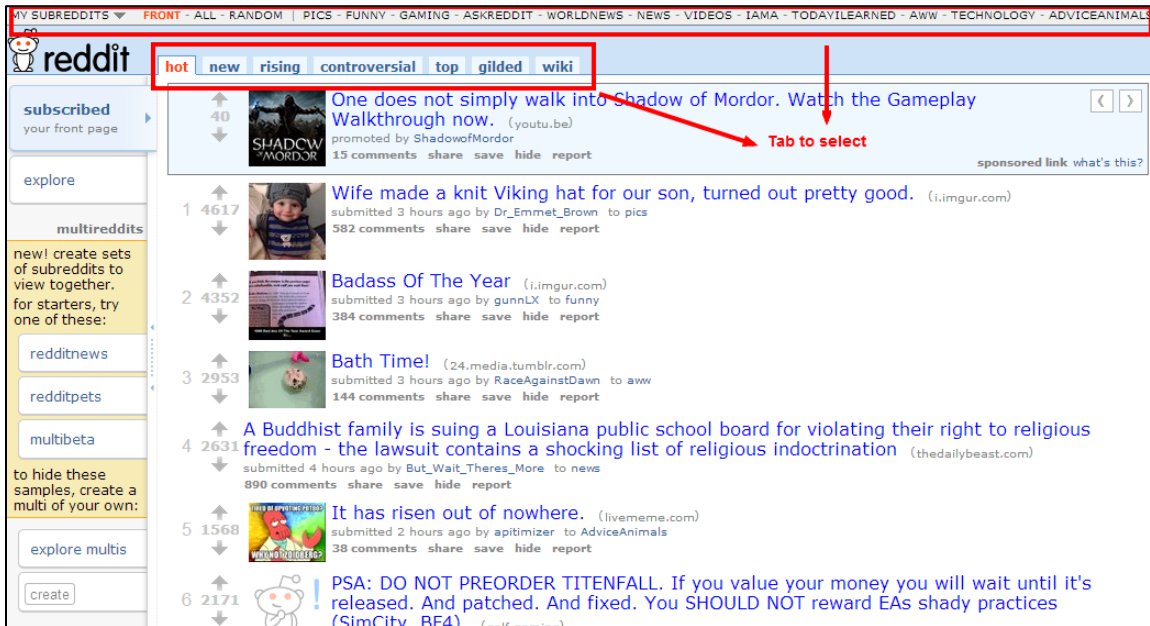
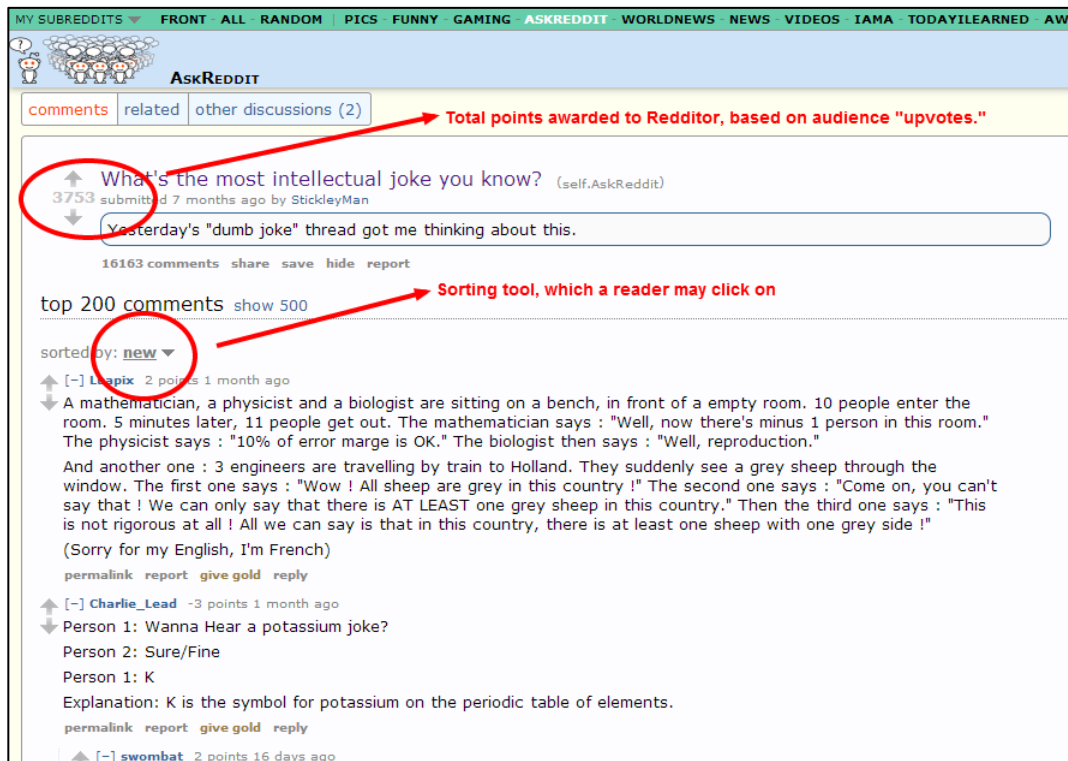**Figure 5.2: Screen capture of the main page of Reddit**

Figure 5.3: Screenshot from StickleyMan's "AskReddit" sub-Reddit entitled "What's the most intellectual joke you know?"

Participation is explicitly designed to shape a text by allowing Redditors to change

its layout, which means they can shape a text's purpose, at least in a limited sense. In

regards to StickleyMan then, purpose evolves over the course of time with the

emergence of comments. For this reason, StickleyMan's concept of audience calls

him to focus on texts as conversations. Due to this focus on conversational activity,

StickleyMan's case study shows us a model of audience in which the audience assists

the writer in changing purpose or developing a new purpose. The input from

Redditors, i.e., co-production, helps StickleyMan to achieve *his* purposes of an

organic conversation.

Unlike in Salasin's and Monroe's cases where the writer aims to invoke or

manage their audience, StickleyMan is not after that more constrained kind of

participation. For him, the templates of WordPress and Facebook are simply not

interactive enough. Co-production is interwoven into StickleyMan's purposes of

creating an organic, ongoing public within the community of Reddit. For this reason,

Reddit is an effective platform through which StickleyMan can achieve his goals.

Recall, however, that organic, ongoing exchanges with his audience are not

StickleyMan's only goal. He also aims for positivity, a trait that is neither supported

nor discouraged by the Reddit template itself. Precisely because Reddit's template

allows for the possibility of a limitless audience to occur, it also allows for negativity

to occur. While StickleyMan attempts to avoid the negative comments and the

"trolls" of Reddit, his goal of positivity is difficult to achieve because the members of

Reddit often use homophobic, racist, and sexist slurs. It is a community, according to

StickleyMan, of "over-privileged white men in their 20s" that often takes an issue

and discusses it *ad nauseam* (Second Interview). They are "elitist" and "arrogant" (Second Interview).

Reddit as a platform, then, is simultaneously effective and ineffective for StickleyMan's purposes. The template provides the structure for the *possibility* of a public and therefore enables StickleyMan to encourage an organic, ongoing public. Yet, at the same time, strangers can disrupt the formation of his desired public with crass language that can undermine those organic exchanges. For StickleyMan, the same feature that makes Reddit appealing also makes it problematic. Thus, Reddit at-large, is not perfectly suitable for the kind of public StickleyMan desires, which means that he must implement strategies to achieve those desires; he must orient his audience.

Understanding the Larger Body of Conversations on Reddit:

The Hive-Minded Composite Redditor

To orient his audience effectively, I believe StickleyMan needs to decide which conversations on Reddit are suitable to his purposes and which ones he must not encourage. He constructs a mental concept he labels the "hive-minded composite Redditor" in order to avoid orienting his audience to the negative conversations that permeate Reddit. He does so because he explicitly attempts to maintain a "positive decorum on Reddit" (Second Interview). He told me, "My ideal audience is a smart, curious, witty, fun-loving, *positive* one" (First Interview; my emphasis). This positivity is difficult to maintain because, according to StickleyMan, the "lack of individual accountability" yields negative comments (Discourse-based interview). This ideal positive audience is juxtaposed with the negativity he

174

encounters in the larger body of discussion and conversations on Reddit—the hive-

minded composite Redditor. This mental construct allows StickleyMan to

characterize the collective negativity so that he can more readily encourage an

organic, ongoing public.

Because it allows him to identify the impediments to creating a public,

imagining a negative but still fluid composite Redditor provides StickleyMan with a

subject position that helps him achieve his purposes of orienting a public. In other

words, StickleyMan imagines a negative Redditor who embodies all of the ideas he

believes are problems with Reddit. By doing so, he can write to achieve his purpose

of positivity more effectively and also avoid initiating discussions that will entice

this negative Redditor to join. StickleyMan speaks of Reddit in an abstracted and

generalized manner by explicitly using the term "composite" in the following

exchange:

> STICKLEYMAN: I kind of commit to being positive. I don't put people
> down when I comment. And I don't engage in negativity at all. So, it is
> difficult being, you know, I guess a prolific commenter with a lot of
> karma. The hate comes in all the time. And that's the difference I think.
> One of the differences between something like, Reddit and Facebook.
> Facebook, if you want to talk shit to the guy writing, you're
> accountable to it, right? Your face is right there.

> GALLAGHER: I can see that…

> STICKLEYMAN: Especially in the summer. And I'm not one of these, I
> hate teenager kids, but there's a marked difference in the audience
> and the replies on Reddit over the summer. You know, I get called a
> faggot at least three times a day. You know at this point what else can
> I do? And we talk about it. You know, there's this century club sub-
> Reddit, that's for only people with over 100,000 [karma]….it's
> interesting to get their insights. And kind of the, the prevailing
> approach [in the century club] is just never feed the trolls, right? No
> matter what I say in a thread, especially if it's one that I comment,

people are just going to jump on it. So, you know, it depends. And now that being said, let's say I'm just retelling a story or, or recounting something, and it's an AskReddit thread. I'm not just recounting in a silly way, how I would to my brother. I'll put some flair to it that I know the average Redditor doesn't. You know, *in my mind I have this composite of what the average Redditor is.* And, you know, if I'm making something there, I want them to enjoy it and get a laugh on it, and I want to get karma out of this one, right? (Second Interview; my emphasis)

Unlike Monroe who uses "we" and "us" when discussing FHP, StickleyMan never uses the first person plural when discussing Reddit in the previous passage. He refers to Redditors but does not seem to include himself in the larger category of "hive-minded" Redditors. Compositing in this way allows StickleyMan to distinguish himself from his idea of an average, negative Redditor.

Constructing this composite Redditor allows StickleyMan to characterize, and thereby identify, the variety of conversations on Reddit. In other words, he uses the composite as a way to explain the larger body of conversation to himself. StickleyMan seems to have an intimate knowledge of hive-minded Redditors. For instance, he spoke of Reddit with deft acumen in the following exchange:

> STICKLEYMAN: ...Reddit loves to reference itself.
>
> GALLAGHER: Reddit loves to talk about Reddit?
>
> STICKLEYMAN: Loves it. Loves to talk about how much it hates Reddit. Loves to talk about how much Reddit does this and that. There is a lot of self-loathing in that. But it's all what they love. Reddit likes to talk about Reddit. Reddit also hates Facebook. I'll tell you that.
>
> GALLAGHER: Why do you think it is?
>
> STICKLEYMAN: Because they look at [Facebook] as unintellectual. Because there is this massive ego and this elitism to Reddit that is, I think, manifested by the anonymity. Right? No one is accountable for anything. Everyone loves science, everyone reads 100 books here. Right? On Facebook, there is room for duck faces, and like this if you

want to fight cerebral palsy. Check out this meme that was on Reddit six months ago. Here [on Reddit] there is no tolerance for it. There's no gray. It's all black and white.

GALLAGHER: So do you think that Reddit is ahead of Facebook?

STICKLEYMAN: Absolutely, Reddit sees itself as more important, smarter, it's amazing how many people talk about how much they hate Facebook. Like it's the vogue thing to do. You delete your face book account and your life has never been better. And the fucking turn signal! [light-hearted outrage] You want to talk about hive-mind. In the Reddit, it comes up once a week, if you could put anything into law, what would it be? Put people in jail who don't use their turn signal. You would think [not using a turn signal] was an epidemic. That it was the biggest problem in North America. *It's a hive-mind, it's the same thing.* (Second Interview; my emphasis)

StickleyMan again illustrates an abstract perception of Reddit that is inherently negative. He even slips here, unbeknownst, I believe, to him, calling Reddit "the Reddit," which shows in this instance that he perceives Reddit as a mass or single entity. Reddit becomes anthropomorphized, delineated from individuals or groups in the sense that StickleyMan refers to the site itself. He sees the entire community as a single being, one that sees itself as intelligent, righteous, and elitist. The outraged and annoyed tone with which he delivered these lines during our interview told me he is intimately familiar with the hive-mind and believes it is a feature of Reddit at-large. Once he even remarked that the hive-mind is the reason for his position as the fourth most recognized Redditor (Discourse-based Interview). The indignation he experiences from the turn-signal "epidemic" (i.e., those who do not use a turn signal) expresses impatience and irritation.

StickleyMan constructs this hive-minded composite Redditor, I believe, because he needs it to achieve his goal of positive exchanges. It is a mental construct

177

(one which he is aware of as a construction) that allows him to identify and avoid

Redditors that interfere with positivity, have cliché ideas, and generally write in

platitudes. In other words, the "hive-mind" represents the conversations and

discussions that StickleyMan does not want his audience to take up. He aims to

orient his audience away from hive-minded activity and towards an organic,

ongoing public. In order to do so, he needs to separate himself from the

conversations of Reddit at-large. But before he does that, he must first experience

the hive-mind.

Experiencing the Hive-Mind through Participation

With his mental construct of the hive-minded composite Redditor as

negative, combined with a part of his stated purpose being to embody positivity, a

contradiction seems to appear: StickleyMan does not like the hive-mind but is still

the fourth most known Redditor. This means that StickleyMan has accumulated

enough karma—the currency of Reddit that measures attention through upvotes—

to have the fourth largest quantity on Reddit out of more than five million Reddit

members. He implicitly seems, according to his karma status, to be participating in

the hive-mind because he has accrued the community's form of capital. Rather than

view this as a contradiction, I believe that StickleyMan participates in the hive-mind

so that he can learn how to avoid hive-minded activity. This participation provides

StickleyMan with concrete examples from which he can characterize the hive-

minded composite Redditor in more general terms. Such experience allows him to

compress a variety of negative responses (the larger body of conversations he

wishes to avoid) into a more manageable and imaginary collective Redditor.

The primary way StickleyMan actively participates with the hive-mind is through the production of GIFs. He crafts these mini-videos with the purpose of being both humorous and "new"/"original" (Second Interview). Crucial here is that the purpose of his GIFs is different than the purpose of his alphabetic text, especially his AskReddit writing that I will turn to later in this chapter. Designed with a joking tone that would garner a large amount of attention, GIFs give him the reputation, through the accumulation of "karma," to be widely read. Simultaneously, the GIFs provide him with the *ethos* to challenge some of the hive-minded composite Redditor's negativity because his popularity gives him clout.

His most popular[15] GIF is titled "This woman is the worst" and features a woman at a baseball game snatching a ball from a young girl. His second most popular GIF, "Nice Finish," shows a basketball player dunking with such velocity that the player flips in the air, landing directly on his face. His third most popular GIF, "Muhammad Ali dodges 21 punches in 10 seconds," (the title is self-explanatory) went so viral it showed up on dozens of news sites, including NBC, Fox, ABC, and USA Today, and managed to ignite a sports debate about Ali's legacy as a boxer. The videos are designed to garner a large amount of karma. As of January 2014, he has over 1.5 million comment karma (upvotes in regards to comments) and over 660,000 link karma (upvotes in regards to a clickable link).

The negative comments on his GIFs, I believe, provide him with the understanding that the hive-mind ought to be avoided. Figure 5.4 shows a sample of the negative participation he has encountered from his most popular GIF. With this

---

[15] As of January 2014.

GIF, StickleyMan sets up the woman as negative and receives comments that position her as such.
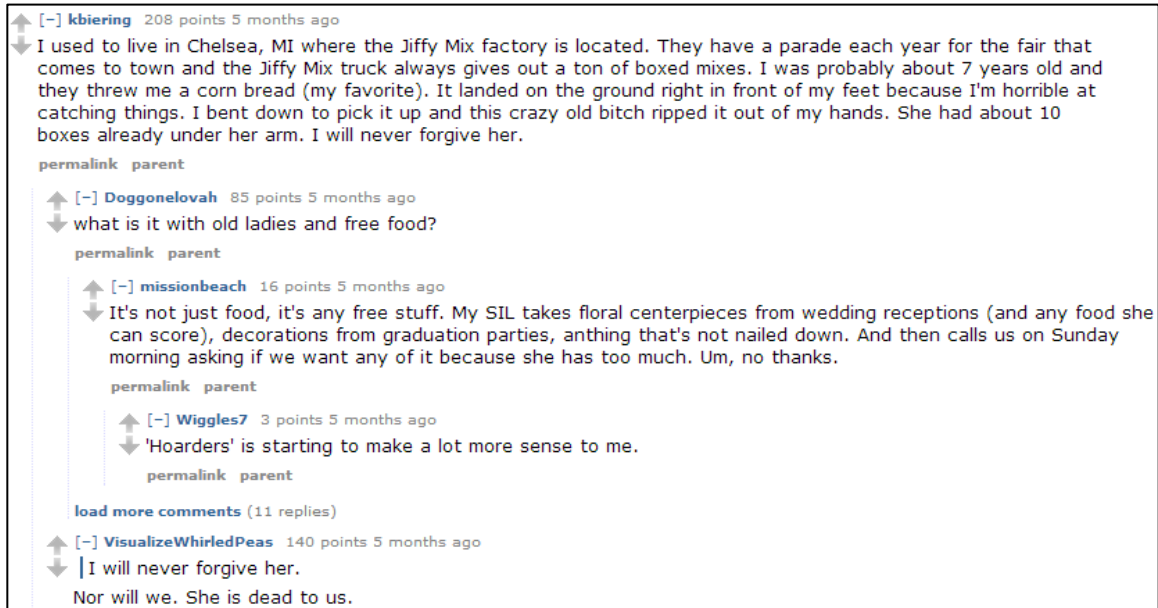
Figure 5.4: Screenshot exemplifying negative comments on "This woman is the worst" GIF

Here, commenters talk about their experiences with women stealing their food. What makes this insidious is the level of violence casually exchanged between commenters. They denigrate the women in their experiences with the phrase "crazy old bitch," "what is it with old ladies and free food?" and "She is dead to us." In another example (Figure 5.5), from the same GIF, the commenters use similar sexist language.
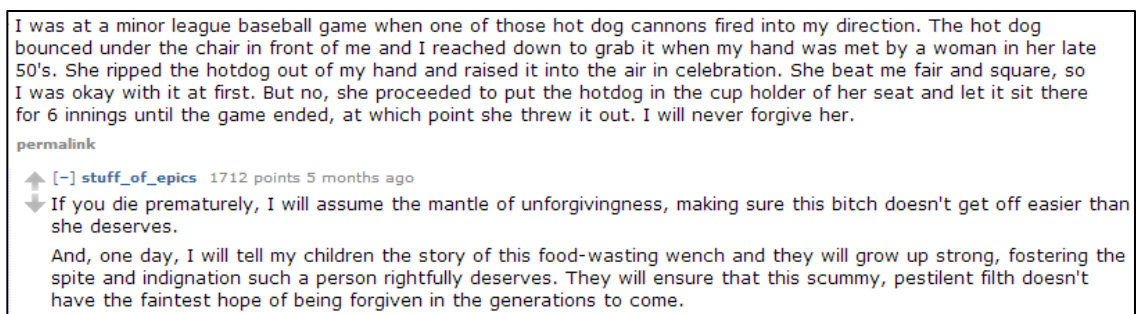
Figure 5.5: Example of further sexist comments on "This woman is the worst"

I could cite a plethora of examples from the comments on StickleyMan's GIFs, many

far more racist, sexist, and homophobic than the two I have included in this chapter.

These are a few examples in a host—literally thousands—of negative comments

(and possibly condoned and/or encouraged because StickleyMan titled the GIF "this

woman is the worst"). I simply aim to show with these examples that StickleyMan

has experienced the hive-minded Redditor on a frequent basis.

In my view, experiencing the hive-mind allows StickleyMan to compress the

broad spectrum of negative Redditors in his mind. Because he has actually

encountered the hive-mind innumerable times, his mental construct is not entirely

imaginary. The mental construct of "hive-minded composite Redditor" is based on

his lived experience with Reddit's negativity. With this construct, StickleyMan does

not have to deal with hundreds of insults directed at him. This experience allows

him to overcome repeat insults, such as being "called a faggot at least three a day."

He no longer has to imagine hundreds or thousands of negative Redditors. He only

has to imagine one. By doing so, he equips himself to handle a possibly

overwhelming number of negative comments because he has mentally compressed

the negativity that interferes with his goal of positivity.

Separating from the Hive-mind through GIF Selection

Because StickleyMan has compressed the negativity of the larger body of

conversations into a mental construct, he can minimize its influence on him by

separating from those experiences through prediction. He collectively identifies the

negativity he perceives so that he does not write in ways that reflect this perception,

which is the clear impediment to an organic, ongoing public. He knows what is not

appropriate when writing to achieve his goal of positivity. In other words, his

mental construct of the "hive-minded composite Redditor" provides him a basis of

comparison for how *not* to write. By not writing in hive-minded ways, he actively

chooses more positive ways of writing and communicating.

To achieve his overarching goal of positivity and encourage the ongoing

conversation for which he aims, StickleyMan separates from the hive-mind in

regards to his GIF selection process. StickleyMan seeks to challenge quietly and

implicitly what he perceives as the standard hive-mind of Reddit with his miniature

videos. He remarked to me:

> I won't post GIFs of fat people. I'm not fat myself, but the fat-shaming
> on Reddit pisses me off. I know that no matter what, a GIF with a fat
> person will end up with a shit-show of a comment section. I also will
> no longer post GIFs of any type of negative encounter involving black
> people. I've seen a lot of things on Reddit, but the comment section
> from [this post](#) completely turned me off from it. 7,000 comments, and
> at least 3,500 of them being blatantly racist. It bothered me, and I
> decided that was it for those. Karma be damned. (First Interview)

Here, StickleyMan demonstrates that he can predict the negativity of Reddit. Then,

through thoughtful choices in textual production, informed by his knowledge of the

hive-mind, he can minimize the possibility that hive-minded Redditors will

announce themselves as commenters. For instance, he used to post GIFs with "black

people," but will no longer because of the blatant racism present on Reddit. By

registering his displeasure using the phrase, "Karma be damned," StickleyMan

makes a bold proclamation by dismissing karma when it encourages racism. This is

an important proclamation that requires some context about the nature of karma

for StickleyMan. I asked him about what he believes karma means.

> GALLAGHER: What do you think karma represents to you?
>
> STICKLEYMAN: Well, a lot of things, right? You know, justification of my ideas or my joke. You know, if I make a joke and I get 3,000 upvotes on it, 3,000 people liked my joke. There's something kind of cool about that. I'm not the most social guy. I don't go out to bars. I don't have a big circle of friends that I hang out with every night. So there's something rewarding about that, definitely. If it's a serious comment, if it's somebody saying, "Hey, you know, I was going to kill myself and I saw this poem that you posted and it made me change my mind." I mean, nothing I did. It's coincidence because, you know, I post so much and, and blah, blah, blah. But that's really good. So, like, hey, look what I did. Right? That's pretty cool.
>
> GALLAGHER: That is cool.
>
> STICKLEYMAN: But then on the posting side, if I post a GIF and I see, you know, it, it's had something like 2.5 million views, I'm like, holy shit! Right? Something I made, I just sat down on my couch and did, 2.5 million people were entertained by that or saw that or whatever it is. I like that. I like that. (Second Interview)

Even though karma is supremely important in the world of Reddit, StickleyMan does

not seek out karma in hive-minded ways. While his GIFs have a joking purpose, that

purpose is secondary to his larger purpose of an ongoing, organic public, at least

from his perspective. He actively sacrifices the attention mechanism of Reddit in

order to achieve his purposes. For me, this is a crucial aspect to audience oriented

because it highlights the host of possibilities that StickleyMan considers. He is not

simply selecting GIFs; his experiences lead him to avoid certain topics, even though

they might enhance his Reddit persona because he can predict that they will garner

a negative response, which would discourage the organic, ongoing public he desires.

He only wants to accrue karma on terms that encourage a public dialogue that

avoids clichés and negativity. Separating from the hive-minded composite Redditor gives StickleyMan the agency to achieve his purposes in more careful and considered ways. In this sense, orienting an audience may not automatically benefit a writer's reputation. But his GIFs also serve that reputation further: they build an *ethos* that positions StickleyMan as someone who can engage strangers in an orienting way.

Keeping the Conversation Ongoing through Textual Listening

I believe StickleyMan seeks to change the attitude of Redditors by orienting his audience's attitude. StickleyMan orients other Redditors to engage in an organic, ongoing conversation using a technique I call textual listening. Textual listening allows StickleyMan to overcome the hive-mind and achieve the kind of public he desires. This orienting maneuver allows StickleyMan to achieve his goals because it prods the audience to respond in an organic, ongoing way that allows a public to form. It is a two-pronged approach. First, textual listening involves expressing sincerity and recognition of a Redditor's comment; it acknowledges another writer's input. Second, it involves a kind of questioning that continues a conversation while also accounting for audience members that have yet to announce themselves—strangers who have yet to take up a particular conversation. Textual listening, I believe, recasts StickleyMan's audience in a more civil orientation than the other spaces of Reddit.

This technique emerges primarily in the sub-Reddit known as AskReddit. AskReddit is essentially an opportunity to ask the community of Reddit a question

and let it respond. For StickleyMan, AskReddit has for the most part become trite

and cliché:

> I mean at this point the only time I think I'd ask a question on AskReddit is if it was a really creative original question. Everything has been asked. And I don't mean that in a bad way because sometimes it depends on the question. If it's "what's your favorite movie quote," then it's gonna be pretty hive-minded and people are gonna up vote all the same shit that they always do. But if it's something like you know what's the funniest thing that's ever happened to you on public transportation or something like you're gonna get different answers right? For instance, the question "Who made a difference in your life years ago that you think about often and they don't know you because it was in a passing moment?" The questions that lend themselves to more personal stories I like better.

This reflection notes that AskReddit is not safe from the hive-mind; in other words,

even though AskReddit is a different forum and possibly more open to non-hive-

minded responses, StickleyMan does not perceive this sub-Reddit as entirely

different from the sub-Reddit(s) of GIFs. The screen-shots I introduce in this section,

in my view, illustrate StickleyMan's attempts to try to avoid this hive-mind because

they are texts that StickleyMan sees as asking a "creative original question."

Nowhere is textual listening more salient and paradigmatic than in the

AskReddit thread on which StickleyMan posed the question, "Americans of reddit,

how is the Vietnam War taught in school?" The initial text for the thread is shown in

Figure 5.6.
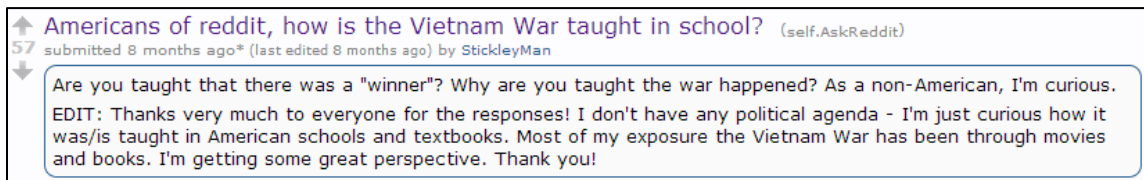
Figure 5.6: Screenshot of initial text of the Vietnam Thread

In this thread, which I will refer to as the "Vietnam Thread," StickleyMan comments eleven times. In ten of the eleven instances, he thanks readers and asks them questions. In the remaining instance, he makes a lengthier comment about his context and life. In addition to the "thanks" StickleyMan offers in the comments, this initial text is later edited to include a "thank you." Originally, the text read only as "Are you taught that there was a 'winner'? Why are you taught the war happened? As a non-American, I'm curious." The lines that follow it (e.g., "EDIT") in the previous screenshot were added after StickleyMan believed the thread to be ended. Important in this edit: there are two mentions of thanks, along with the use of two exclamation points. Moreover, in the text, StickleyMan denies any vested political interest, instead constructing his position as one of personal interest. He positions himself as a non-American, wanting to be informed by the strangers of AskReddit. The edit to the initial text is indicative of the sincerity and recognition of other Redditors that StickleyMan employs throughout the Vietnam Thread. StickleyMan, in this thread, recognizes the audience by thanking them, and uses an overtly excited tone, through exclamation points, to create a positive, sincere thread. Figure 5.7 illustrates the important of sincerely combined with the use of consistent thanks.

[–] **Cosmic-Katamari** 2 points 8 months ago* (last edited 8 months ago)

To be honest with you, my school year always ends up being cut short and its around that time where the Vietnam War is our subject. My professor had to cut it short and said that during the last leg of the war and how Kissinger "ended" it with diplomacy. He covered a lot of the basics ie: Splitting of Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, Tet offensive, and he briefed us on the Gulf of Tomkin. Not much else this year though...

I don't have a problem with any of that, I know all of that stuff and most of the events that occurred during the "war". I am Vietnamese and both of my parents "escaped" during the last years of the war (My Father actually serving IN the war on the southern side). So, I hear a lot of personal stories of their struggles through the Vietnam War itself. What I really would like to learn about, is more of Ngo Dinh Diem (The Leader of Southern Vietnam in 1963).

I hear a lot of biased information about him. My parents saying that he was a great leader and the people loved him but, I've had many teachers/professors who told me that the Vietnamese people hated him. When ever his name is brought up, I'm always putting myself in the middle of it all, trying to see which side makes sense. In the end, I never really get to choose one because the Vietnam War is usually rushed content anyways. I usually gear towards my parents stories about Diem's leadership but, politically, it's hard to see who the real bad guy is when I don't get enough information. In classes in America, I learn that Diem was a terrible leader and he was overthrown (given permission to by U.S to the people of Vietnam) and murdered. But in my parents perspective, they believe that America sent people in to kill him. They were most likely blinded by propaganda in Vietnam but, Diem's leadership is the one I find most interesting of the Vietnam War.

As of right now, in present time, I'd say that the Northerners have become the winners. If you look at Vietnam, economically, today, communism is slowly blanketing the country and whatever freedom South Vietnam has, they are losing it every day. There are tons of movements happening right now in both Southern Vietnam and U.S that are, to put it simply, trying to get the word out.

To the people of South Vietnam, my family, the "war" never ended, it is still going on... Just, America isn't, technically, involved anymore. I hope that helped a little, I could go on and on about the Vietnam War and what the current situation is, it's just that I am running on 2 hours of sleep and it's finals week here. But, if you have any questions, I'll do my best to answer them!

permalink

  ▲ [–] **StickleyMan** [S] 2 points 8 months ago
  Thanks so much for the answer! Where do you live now? You should sit your parents down and ask as much as possible to document it. I'd love to know more about the situation now. Good luck on your exams!!

  permalink parent

    ▲ [–] **Cosmic-Katamari** 2 points 8 months ago
    I am currently living in Upstate New York, quiet city and that's good enough for my family and I. My parents work all day to provide the opportunities they never had for me and I am usually over working myself (ironically) so I don't let that opportunity go to waste.
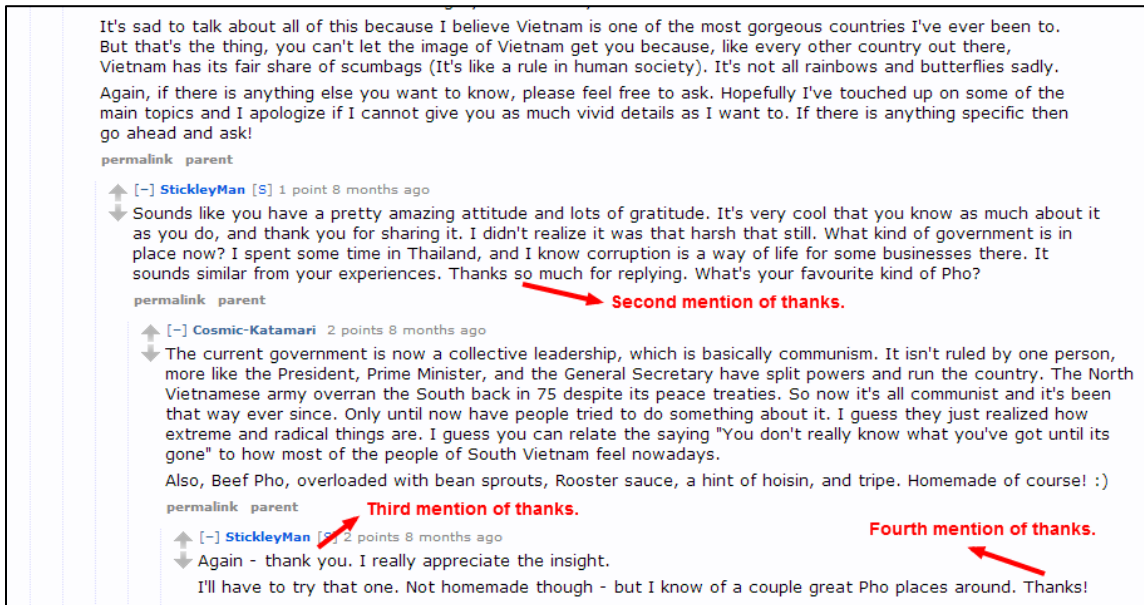
    I usually ask my parents, every now and then, about their past and I get incredible stories (Most of them I've already heard but I love hearing them again). They are getting really old and health problems are coming and going. They love talking about their life back in the 60's and they have no problem re-telling old tales for me to hear. I won't have any problem telling my children about their Grandparents and how they struggled to come here to live a better life.

    Currently, in Vietnam, my father has been trying to get some of his siblings to move over here because of how things have been changing economically. In a nutshell, the government wants to keep all the profit anyone makes who wants to leave the country with that money. To the government of Vietnam, whatever money is made in their country is their money and that's final. No one has a say in how much you can keep because if you stand up, they'll take away everything you have. My uncle has been telling us stories of how a lot of natives on the farmlands have been pushed out of their homes in order for foreigners (Chinese to be specific) to come in and build businesses/factories/anything that can give money to both Vietnamese and Chinese government.

    There was actually this Taiwanese fellow, a while back, who moved to Vietnam in order to make a business to make money to pay off some of his debt back in China. He made a lot of money and when he realized he had enough, he wanted to go back to China and pay it all off. But, turns out the government would not let him leave with this money because it was, technically, the money of Vietnam. Having nothing in his pockets to go back to his home in China, he committed suicide and that was that. The economy has been cruel these past few years and from what my uncles and aunts have been telling us, it's only getting worse.

    Fortunately, my aunt passed her interview for international travel in order to stay here in the states with us. But, here's the messed up part, when everything was finalized and things were set to go, there was still one piece of paper they needed and the government held it in their palms. With this paper, they pretty much said this to her "We will give you this paper if you pay us a little something (like a tip) but if you don't, you will not be able to leave" which is not a required standard at all.

    Also, here is some advice for you or anyone who wants to travel to Vietnam for vacation. Either don't or go with someone who knows the lay of the land. You won't make it by yourself there anymore, you use to be able to, but not anymore. They will charge you up the ass if they realize that you are not from their country. Hell, I remember visiting back in 09, where my father and I had a run in with a taxi driver who realized we were not from around there, ended up charging us around 200,000 Dong (Which is equivalent to $90) just for a ride from my Uncles house to the city, which, was not far at all. What's funny is that a week before that happened, on the day we arrived, my aunt called the taxi company to fetch us a ride to her place from the airport which only ended up costing us $15. So if you are planning to take a cab in Vietnam, please get someone native to call them because they have already clocked in the time and cannot over charge you when they arrive.

187

It's sad to talk about all of this because I believe Vietnam is one of the most gorgeous countries I've ever been to. But that's the thing, you can't let the image of Vietnam get you because, like every other country out there, Vietnam has its fair share of scumbags (It's like a rule in human society). It's not all rainbows and butterflies sadly.

Again, if there is anything else you want to know, please feel free to ask. Hopefully I've touched up on some of the main topics and I apologize if I cannot give you as much vivid details as I want to. If there is anything specific then go ahead and ask!

permalink   parent

[−] **StickleyMan** [S] 1 point 8 months ago
Sounds like you have a pretty amazing attitude and lots of gratitude. It's very cool that you know as much about it as you do, and thank you for sharing it. I didn't realize it was that harsh that still. What kind of government is in place now? I spent some time in Thailand, and I know corruption is a way of life for some businesses there. It sounds similar from your experiences. Thanks so much for replying. What's your favourite kind of Pho?

permalink   parent   **Second mention of thanks.**

[−] **Cosmic-Katamari** 2 points 8 months ago
The current government is now a collective leadership, which is basically communism. It isn't ruled by one person, more like the President, Prime Minister, and the General Secretary have split powers and run the country. The North Vietnamese army overran the South back in 75 despite its peace treaties. So now it's all communist and it's been that way ever since. Only until now have people tried to do something about it. I guess they just realized how extreme and radical things are. I guess you can relate the saying "You don't really know what you've got until its gone" to how most of the people of South Vietnam feel nowadays.

Also, Beef Pho, overloaded with bean sprouts, Rooster sauce, a hint of hoisin, and tripe. Homemade of course! :)

permalink   parent   **Third mention of thanks.**

Fourth mention of thanks.

[−] **StickleyMan** [S] 2 points 8 months ago
Again - thank you. I really appreciate the insight.

I'll have to try that one. Not homemade though - but I know of a couple great Pho places around. Thanks!

Figure 5.7: Screenshot of exchange in Vietnam thread between StickleyMan and Cosmic-Katamari. Multiple mentions of thanks are highlighted.

With four mentions of "thanks" or "thank you" and the words "cool" and "appreciate" to express an honest sense of gratitude for participating in the Vietnam Thread, StickleyMan creates a civil exchange with "Cosmic Katamari," the commenter in the previous thread. Sincerity accompanies StickleyMan's words of thanks in that StickleyMan appears genuinely to desire a type of educational experience with this thread; he demonstrates a form of textual listening in that he recognizes the audience's words textually in his response. He is not identifying with the audience but rather trying to entice the audience to participate on the audience's terms. He wishes to educate himself about the way the Vietnam War is/was taught in the United States because he is a non-American. By initiating the thread, we can extrapolate that StickleyMan believes AskReddit, as a community, can answer him.

Additionally, StickleyMan prods his audience with ongoing questioning to keep the Vietnam thread moving forward. By asking his commenters additional

questions, we can extrapolate that he believes engaging the audience in a truthful, earnest manner is the most effective way to receive an answer. Engaging the audience, in this way, requires not only one initial question, but recurring questioning to receive more information and context. The example in Figure 5.8 crystalizes my meaning.
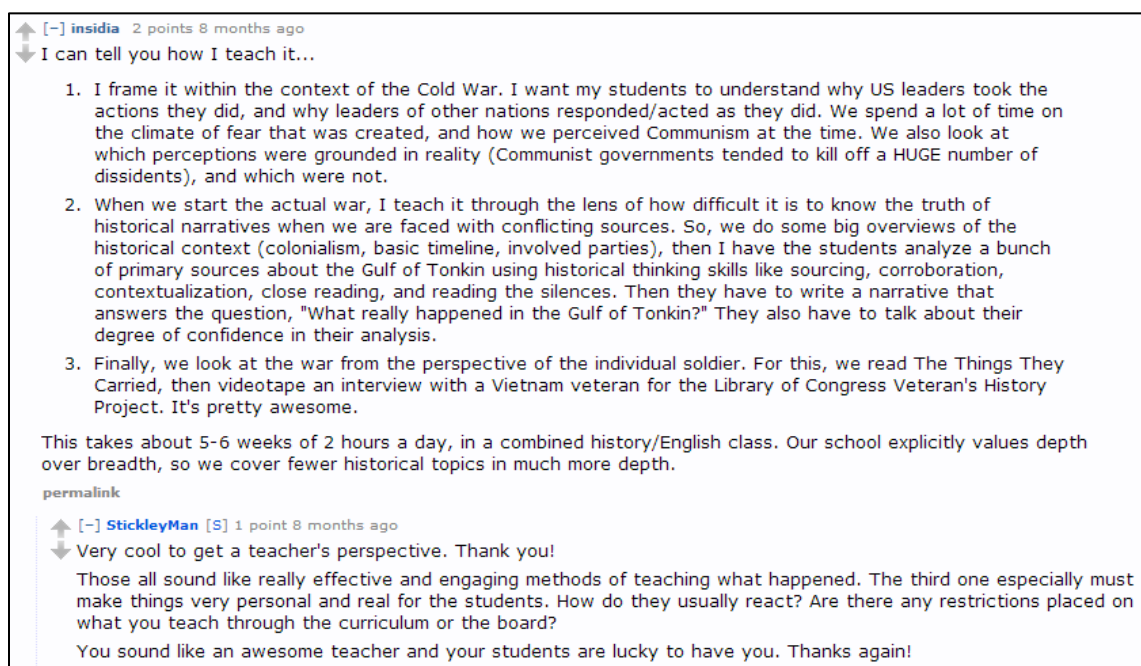
Figure 5.8: Screenshot from "Vietnam War" thread demonstrating StickleyMan's textual listening.

This exchange shows StickleyMan inciting participation in a knowledgeable manner that then dovetails into ongoing questioning, thereby forming textual listening. The member "insidia" provides an organized and coherent response, most likely because insidia claims to be a teacher. StickleyMan's response is indicative of separating from the hive-mind's negativity in three ways. First, he opens his response with the phrase "Very cool to get a teacher's perspective." I asked him about the word "cool" in regards to this thread because it is a word that appears often when he comments.

189

GALLAGHER: ...you also use the phrase "cool" a lot in your comments, especially when talking about what a previous commenter had said. Could you tell me for you, and this sounds like a very academic question, but what does the phrase "cool" mean to you?

STICKLEYMAN: Yeah it's funny you say that. I guess it's just kind of part of my vernacular. I think it's probably just a way of saying, "Hey yeah thanks. That was good information." Or perhaps it's just a way of acknowledging and recognizing somebody and their opinion, being like, "Yeah okay I digest what you're saying. That's cool. Here's my response to it." (Discourse-based Interview)

His reflection that the word "cool" operates as a way of "acknowledging and recognizing somebody and their opinion" seems to be what happens with this exchange. Because Reddit assumes a level of informal tone and word choice, StickleyMan must use a tone that can stand in for a formal level of positivity, while also encouraging a commenter who offers a cogent and engaged response. The phrase "Very cool to get a teacher's perspective" shows insidia that StickleyMan has read the comment and reflected upon it, while also understanding the appropriate word choice and tone to use in this community. Second, the two instances of thanking insidia demonstrate StickleyMan's encouragement of a positive tone in the thread, reiterating his goals through example. Lastly, he textually listens to insidia's comment; he affirms insidia's three teaching methods by asking questions that display concrete details from insidia's comment. StickleyMan does not just use tone and word choice to encourage an organic, ongoing conversation; he actually references insidia's text and then prods the Redditor with more questions in order to keep the conversation ongoing. In fact, the textual listening present in this exchange is strikingly similar to the exchange with Cosmic Katamari. Since

190

StickleyMan's purpose is to encourage an organic, ongoing public, he must keep the conversation going, responding to other Redditors regularly.

In this way, textual listening is a technique aimed at a specific reader *and* readers of the thread at-large, recasting the importance of participation so that more Redditors join the thread, which thereby creates the kind of public that StickleyMan desires. The exchange in Figure 5.9 shows that in the comments of a thread, StickleyMan can receive an answer from any number of unannounced commenters. It is important to remember, also, that this randomness is expected and even sought after in the Reddit community, especially by StickleyMan.
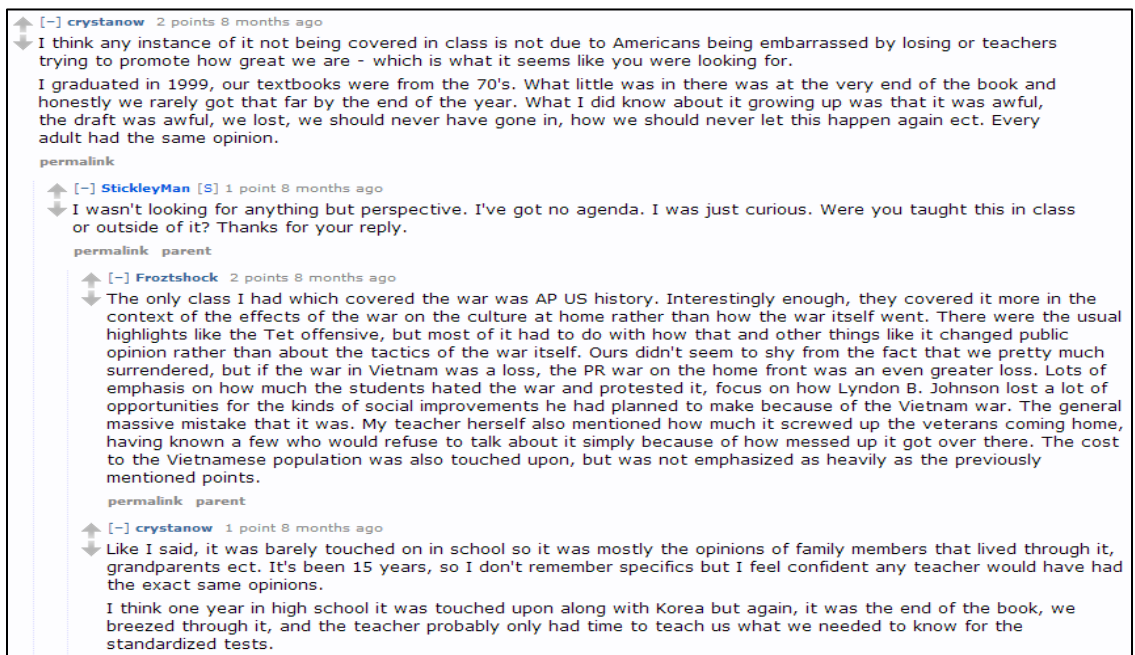
Figure 5.9: Screenshot from Vietnam Thread demonstrating development of the organic, random dialogue sought by StickleyMan.

Here, the commenter "crystanow" tells StickleyMan about school experiences. Before relaying the personal information, crystanow addresses and dismisses the notion that Americans are embarrassed about Vietnam. In this sense, crystanow interprets that a subtle critique of the US (or its educational system) was

191

StickleyMan's aim in starting the thread. StickleyMan then intervenes with a comment—the only comment that does not thank an audience member—to clarify his aim. For me, however, this exchange is crucial to demonstrating the organic randomness StickleyMan seeks because the comment from "Froztshock" appears somewhat randomly but *not unexpectedly*. StickleyMan and crystanow have an exchange in which an unannounced audience member, Froztshock, intercedes. While StickleyMan does not add a comment after either Froztshock's comment or crystanow's second comment, the tone of sincerity has already succeeded because it drew in another Redditor to answer a question seemingly posted to crystanow, although Froztshock took up that question.

Textual listening in this sense is important for being aware of unannounced or invisible audiences, or in Warner's terms, strangers. It enables StickleyMan to explicitly respond to one audience member while also encouraging unannounced readers to join the thread. Paradoxically, it enables StickleyMan to address an audience member that is yet to be an audience member. This idea means that StickleyMan is constantly trying to entice strangers, which creates the possibility for a limitless audience, to join an organic, ongoing public. For StickleyMan's public to emerge, then, both strangers and individually named commenters must be addressed at the same time.[16]

---

[16] As I discussed earlier, Warner describes a more abstract notion of this idea when he argues that the address of publics is both personal and impersonal (76-87).

Ongoing Textual Activity

From the overall perspective of StickleyMan, texts themselves are less important than the series of exchanges and interplays between Redditors. StickleyMan orients his audience so that an organic, ongoing exchange occurs. He does this without engaging the negativity of the hive-minded composite Redditor. StickleyMan seeks to avoid this kind of audience because he does not learn *from* the hive-mind. (Note that this is different from learning of the hive-mind and understanding the hive-mind. He feels he gains no new knowledge from the composite hive-minded Redditor.) He seeks a public because he sincerely wants to know something he does not already know. By orienting his audience away from negative responses, he is then able to learn from that audience. His texts are *meant* to be incomplete during his production process, filled up with writing from other Redditors.

The public for which he aims is incomplete without the audience and the inherent circulation that accompanies having an audience on Reddit. I return to Warner's notion of reflexive circulation: "No single text can create a public. Nor can a single voice, a single genre, even a single medium. All are insufficient to create the kind of reflexivity that we call a public, since a public is understood to be an *ongoing* space of encounter for discourse" (90; my emphasis). StickleyMan's desire for a public requires him to *continually* prod strangers to engage with his texts and also produce new texts—something he does on a daily and even hourly basis. One text is not enough to create a public and StickleyMan cannot by himself create a public. Neither can one response from the audience create a public. It is an ongoing process

that never truly ends. This process is the reason that orienting a public is not

possible. StickleyMan as a single writer or individual cannot form a public. He needs

other readers; a public is a relationship. But StickleyMan can orient an audience

towards the formation of a public.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

I opened this project by asking: what kinds of changes have interactive and participatory texts brought to our concepts of audience? Alternatively, what ideas about audience have remained unchanged? In regards to the latter question, my project affirms a connection between purpose and audience. This connection is my reason for opening each data chapter with that participant's purpose. Writers still have a purpose and that purpose shapes their perception of audience. My project also reaffirms Ede and Lunsford's 1984 claim that there is an "integrated, interdependent nature of reading and writing" (169). My participants not only read the comments from their audience but also constantly read their *own* texts. They consider the way their texts may be interpreted by a variety of readers (or in StickleyMan's case, generate a mental construct that represents a variety of readers).

In contrast to print texts, my Web 2.0 participants illustrate that once texts enter circulation, production and distribution processes become ongoing and continuous, which leads to an ongoing and shifting view of purpose. My participants do not see the rhetorical situation as static. They do not see the rhetorical situation in the sense of a singular rhetorical situation. Instead, they view their writing in terms of a forward-moving rhetorical situation in which elements of that rhetorical situation might "bleed" into other rhetorical situations and broader social processes (Edbauer 9). My participants do not understand their texts in terms of older models

that see rhetoric as "taking place" in the sense of visiting a rhetorical situation through a "mapping of various elements" (12). Instead, Salasin, Monroe, and StickleyMan write in contexts where a rhetorical situation can become an entirely or partly new rhetorical situation or where one rhetorical situation can become fractured into multiple rhetorical situations through audience response, affordances of a template, and previous (as well as future) texts. The rhetorical situation is constantly being defined for them. The audience, via textual participation, helps to make transitions between rhetorical situations and initiate new ones. For my participants, then, purpose is constantly being clarified or rethought. One consequence of this in-process purpose is that it is not always easily identifiable. In some cases, purpose may not be identifiable until after (or while) an audience encounters a text. This occurs when, for instance, the purpose might actually include having a conversation wherein distribution processes might be where purpose is created. Thus to produce texts like the ones I have studied, distribution processes become inextricably linked to production processes. To map rhetorical situations my participants encounter would require a sketch that can be updated and revised. These writers might not even be said to "encounter" rhetorical situations because those situations do not even emerge until both writer and audience have announced themselves. In order to study interactive audience on the internet more effectively, I believe we ought to remain conscious of the fact that Web 2.0 texts are not final products and, in some cases, reimagine these texts as less of a means to an end.

In my project's case studies, Salasin, Monroe, and StickleyMan are engaged in ongoing cycles of writing, although their purposes are clearly different.

Nevertheless, their purposes are all continuous. The ongoing, continuous cycle of production and distribution present in Web 2.0 aids in our consideration of where "audience" fits into larger theories of writing and rhetoric in both digital and print mediums. In this sense, my concepts of audience emerging, managed, and oriented are direct responses to a question of Ede and Lunsford's from "Among the Audience: On Audience in an Age of New Literacies" (2009) in that I have been implicitly affirming the "relevancy" of the term "audience" (43). Audience as a concept is still useful; it helps writers to think about their readers, both the announced ones and the invisible ones. Each concept of audience presented in this project helps writers to think about their readers as a fluid, continual process.

For audience emerging, because Ede and Lunsford's address/invoke paradigm is situated in static, non-electronic texts, "emerging" is a more *useful* way of thinking about the audience than the address/invoke paradigm. For Ede and Lunsford, the rhetorical situation is a single situation, as demonstrated by their statement, "It is the writer who, as writer and reader of his or her own text, one guided by a sense of purpose and by the particularities of a *specific* rhetorical situation" (165-6; my emphasis). My case studies help to identify two problems with this assertion. First, writers might be guided by the audience's sense of purpose and not their own purpose. Purpose, as I already mentioned, might not be understood in this way before a text is circulated. Second, Ede and Lunsford do not conceptualize the rhetorical situation in any dynamic way. Even in their visual of the address/invoke paradigm (Figure 6.1), the writer considers audience in an interrelated way but still reacting to a static rhetorical situation.
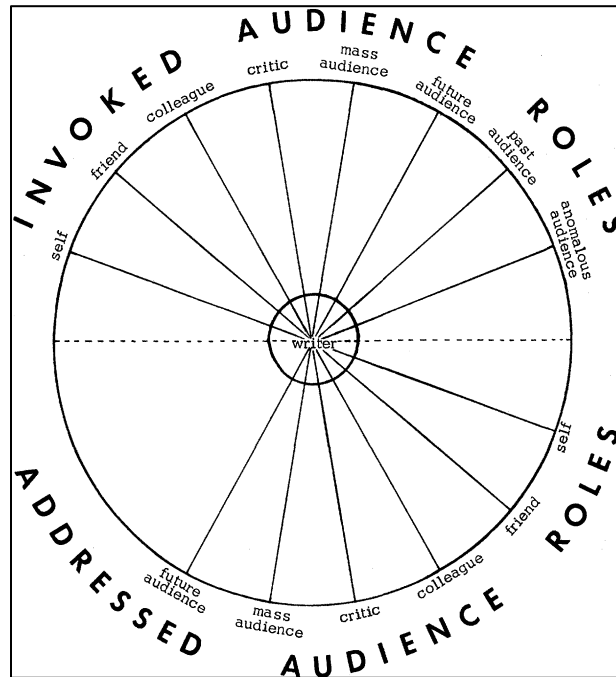
Figure 6.1: Ede and Lunsford's diagram for the concept of audience (166)

My own diagram that illustrates audience emerging (Figure 3.11) captures the lived,

moving processes that Salasin considers. She is still invoking and addressing, but

she is also constantly re-invoking and re-addressing based on responses (not

designed for revision) from the audience, i.e., she revises and shifts her

understanding through interaction and participation. The phrase "emerging" has the

connotation of seeing the audience as shifting. While print writers can and do see

their audiences as shifting, they cannot update their texts accordingly, which means

that the web-writer's concept of audience can affect production and distribution in a

more direct fashion. Simply put, web-writers can engage their texts again and again.

The term "emerging" makes this explicit.

Managing an audience is suitable for Web 2.0 contexts in limited venues.

Obviously, print texts do not afford the level of interactivity necessary for

management that Web 2.0 does. Thus, no parallel exists for audience managed in

print texts. This means the models of audience I developed for print texts in chapter one provide us with little insight in elaborating upon audience managed. Instead, audience managed is applicable to writing done at high volume and with nearly instantaneous delivery between members who are not physically present—like those in Web 2.0. In fact, the rapidity and impersonality of Facebook's template allowed Monroe to remove an FHP member using an option afforded to her as its administrator. She did not have to take the time or energy to physically remove a group member—or even obtain that member's consent as might be the case in in-person, limited venues.

Audience managed is also a useful concept for both writers and theorists attempting to understand the process those writers use in interacting with a finite number of participants in Web 2.0. Recall that "managing an audience" places the initial writer in a position of power that is not dictatorial; the writer/manager can guide their audience, having a strong sense of authority, but not in a domineering manner. In other words, they set boundaries and establish discursive norms. Thus, audience managed describes how a writer can take on the rhetorical position that they desire, a position in line with their purpose. As an everyday example, a PTA leader could manage an online forum in which they want to establish their leadership style, as well as limit conversation to accomplish a certain task, e.g., "here's a place for people to vent" or "this is not the place to vent." The way this leader approaches these goals utilizes audience managed. Additionally, audience managed emphasizes that the initial writer uses a type of argumentation and style that he or she desires. While this may limit the choice of styles available to the

writer's audience, being able to choose a type of argumentation and style can allow initial writers to gain agency on the internet.

Audience oriented, because a public is only possible when others join, implies that writers can only guide their audience toward the formation of a public. Writers alone cannot form a public or orient a public. StickleyMan's case study emphasizes this limit, which clarifies a possible misinterpretation of Warner's idea of a public. Warner develops his concept of a public in regards to "the kind of public that comes into being only in relation to *texts* and their circulation" (66; my emphasis). Because of the language Warner uses in his argument, it is possible to believe a public is something that writers could try to create. For instance, Warner makes claims such as, "From the concrete experience of a world in which available forms circulate, one projects a public" (91) or "[Public discourse] then goes in search of confirmation that such a public exists, with greater or lesser success— success being further attempts to cite, circulate, and realize the world understanding it articulates. Run it up the flagpole and see who salutes. Put on a show and see who shows up" (114). The language of these claims muddles the way publics form. Warner's language puts the onus on someone; "one" projects a public or, using an imperative sentence, "Put on a show and see who shows us." If these notions are based on text, then the implicit argument is that *writers* project a public or writers put on a show and see who shows us. By using language that makes writers responsible for the actions of these sentences, Warner obscures that notion that writers do not have the power to inculcate a public. Let me be clear: Warner makes the argument that writers do not have the power to form a public. For

example, when writers put on a show, that show does not have any meaning until an

audience shows up. Rather, I believe it is his language that makes it possible for

misinterpretations, especially because many of his examples (though not all of

them) are based on print texts.

Because I have based the notion of audience oriented in the interactivity, e.g.,

co-production, of Web 2.0, it emphasizes and clarifies that other people (strangers)

are integral to the formation of a public or publics. In this sense, audience oriented

captures symbiotic relationships between writer and audience that are easily

missed in Warner's argument. My discussion of StickleyMan and Reddit describes

more vibrantly the movement and circulation of a public that Warner puts forth in

Publics and Counterpublics. The necessity of strangers, for instance, is critical to a

print text's public. But it is easy to overlook that a public is a relationship. By basing

audience oriented off a co-produced level of interactivity, I can emphasize this

relationship while nevertheless stressing that a writer alone only guides the

audience *toward* the formation of a public. Only through necessary interaction,

which platforms like Reddit make integral to their purpose, can a textual public

emerge. Audience oriented, as a term, reminds us of the limits of a writer's agency in

Web 2.0.

Audience emerging, managed, and oriented are committed to a kind of

rhetoric that sees persuasion, identification, or change as an ongoing cycle. If writers

think of their audiences in this way, they consider their texts again and again, in

various ways, e.g., immediate readers vs. delayed readers, repeat readers, initial

readers who then become regulars such as in a blog, etc. No matter the situation

specifics, audiences in Web 2.0 are a process. This process adds a richness and complexity of thought to the platitude "consider your audience." It also allows us to see the timeliness of rhetoric. Rather than persuasion, identification, or change, with these concepts of audience, rhetoric might be seen as momentary instantiations of these ideas. Edbauer has gestured toward these ideas by urging us to recognize that "rhetorics are held together trans-situationally" (20). Edbauer recognizes that rhetorical situations "bleed" into another. I believe this perspective helps to avoid circumscribing the diffuse rhetoric that so often occurs in Web 2.0 within one situation. Rhetoric in my project is not limited by a particular situation. It can instead be viewed as ongoing interactions between a writer and audience.

Writers who illustrate—or seek to practice—these concepts of audience may understand the exchanges between participants in momentary ways. In regards to the concepts of audience in my project, rhetoric can be employed multiple times and revised in a repeated fashion. Rhetoric can be usefully described as momentary. Momentary rhetoric requires ongoing attention and effort, an important distinction from print texts that would require a longer time scale (several orders of magnitude, most likely) to achieve the same quantity of activity/interactions. This kind of rhetoric does not fit into our print models of writing because writers in Web 2.0 continuously circulate texts. But they are of course still *writing*. That is probably the reason momentary rhetoric seems so appealing: it asks writers to have a commitment to their craft, at speeds and in contexts never before imagined possible with writing.

Pedagogy

I believe the three concepts of audience presented here can help teachers and students conceptualize audience in an interactive and participatory environment or, to use a trite phrase, "consider their audience" in Web 2.0 contexts. Because the concepts all address the ongoing ways that web-writers interact, I believe they can prod students to consider audience in an ongoing fashion that breaks down discrete assignments with starting and ending points. Rather than "consider your audience," the phrase might be "considering your audience repeatedly" or "altering your approach to audience."

In Web 2.0 contexts, these concepts can teach students to consider audience in nuanced, creative ways that might lead to seeing rhetoric as ongoing. Rhetoric would not end with a single text. These models encourage an ongoing view of audience. This perspective is generally not currently adopted in our current pedagogical models, which privilege producing a single text. In Abby M. Dubisar and Jason Palmeri's "Palin/Pathos/Peter Griffin: Political Video Remix and Composition Pedagogy," which is indicative of larger pedagogical trends in the field of composition and rhetoric, production processes end with very little consideration of distribution and circulation processes. While Dubisar and Palmeri lay out a useful Web 2.0 pedagogy, my project suggests it is incomplete. Dubisar and Palmeri asked students to analyze a political speech and then remix it as a video for publication on YouTube (an online repository of videos). While Palmeri "hoped that some students might produce activist texts that circulated widely on the Web—that students might use remix as a way to intervene in the 2008 election," very little of the circulation

process was part of the explicit assignment (80). Their project, excluding the

reflection, reads as shown in Figure 6.2 below.

Most likely, your remix will pursue one or more of the following goals:
- persuading your audience to understand the source text(s) in a new way, noticing aspects of the text(s) that are usually overlooked.
- making the source text appealing to an audience different from the one for which it was intended.
- offering critical commentary about a political figure or issue.

Most likely, your remix will involve use of one or more of the following strategies:
- cutting and juxtaposing elements of audio or video files.
- repeating elements of audio or video files.
- layering a musical soundtrack underneath spoken words.
- adding still images to accompany spoken words and/or music.

The final product will likely be an audio file or video file that is somewhere between one minute and five minutes long. The format and length you use should be determined by your intended purpose and audience: video is not necessarily better than audio; longer is not necessarily better than shorter.

Figure 6.2: Student Web-writing project from Dubisar and Palmeri (90)

In theoretical terms, Dubisar and Palmeri's assignment, though it is designed for the

internet, is caught up in a print model of production in which production processes

cease after a text is published. This assignment views audience as integral only

during production processes, meaning that considerations of audience stop after a

text enters circulation on YouTube. Students are offered no way to determine

whether a source text successfully appealed to a different audience than the one for

which it was intended; considering audience ends with production. Audiences are

perceived to be unchanging; while there are different audiences, the concept of

audience is viewed as not being dynamic or shifting in the ways this project has

repeatedly illustrated throughout chapters three, four, and five. One preliminary

way to increase this assignment's effectiveness would be to ask students to read and

analyze comments on their work, which is a clear way for students to assess

circulation because students can more effectively evaluate to what extend they

persuaded an audience to understand the source text(s). Further, I would ask

students to consider the comments of a remix video (on a chosen platform)

strategically, through the lens of a student's purpose. They might also be asked to

produce follow-ups to that video (or even edit the original) which demonstrate

ways students have re-considered their audience in light of the responses they

received. Considering comments, even if we ultimately ignore them, is precisely the

reason my participants seem to be writing in their respective venues. Students

might also be encouraged to comment in ways that continue the conversation that

emerges from their videos. While there are certainly institutional barriers to this

idea, including the semester system that constrains time, I believe that to consider

audience in ongoing ways offers a more effective way of writing on the internet.

Purpose is also an important concept to reconsider in regards to Web 2.0. For

instance, Dubisar and Palmeri's project assumes the internet is an inherently

effective place to deliver arguments and does not consider purpose in any

meaningful way. They write, "…we should value political video remix assignments as

an important method for enabling students to reach wide public audiences. Such

videos are, right now, a significant vehicle for delivering arguments on the internet

and…an audience is available to our students in such spaces" (89). In the view

Dubisar and Palmeri present, reaching "wide public audiences" is an unquestioned

goal. Dubisar and Palmeri implicitly endorse a corporatized view of audience:

achieving numerous page views or a large amount of web-traffic is equated with

purpose. Alternatively, I advocate for asking students to consider their purpose

when writing for internet audiences, especially when audiences are interactive and participatory. Rather than simply seeking out "wide public audiences," as Dubisar and Palmeri promote, I endorse having students consider what *kinds* of internet audiences students want. All three of my participants have specific purposes and goals that influence their decisions for the particular kind of interactivity they desire. As I have learned from my participants, deciding on the platform is crucial to the development of meaningful web-writing; Dubisar and Palmeri's assignment does not allow for the choice of platform, which takes away student agency because it establishes a type of interaction specific to YouTube. Rather than deciding on YouTube as a platform for students, I would ask them to decide on an appropriate platform and write up a rationale for that platform's effectiveness, including the kinds of interaction that platform allows or disallows. Such a task would assist in more effective considerations of purpose when writing for the interactive audiences of the internet.

The three models of audience, separately, are also useful in their own right. They possess features that might be adapted for the classroom. I offer some initial ways that students might use these features in Table 6.1 below[17].

Table 6.1: Pedagogical suggestions for Audience Emerging, Managed, and Oriented

Feature of a Particular Model	Possible Uses Students
Editing in ongoing ways (AE)	• Students return to blogs and update previous blog posts • Students see initial blog posts as only one step in an ongoing process of revision that occurs in response to

---

[17] In parentheses, I have listed the corresponding audience model (AE for audience emerging, AM for audience managed, and AO for audience oriented).

	audience input
Stitching (AE)	• Students quote comments from their blog to clarify their meaning • Students quote comments to revise their address from previous blog posts
Expanding address and invocation (AE)	• Students use comments to produce a series of texts that is ongoing and responsive to the comments on their blogs • Students may alter the role they wish readers to adopt by using audience response as a guide
Production of conventions and expectations (AM)	• Students write out a variety guidelines in order to ensure commenters write in ways students find acceptable • Students consider the tone and style of argumentation they want their audiences to use • Students overcome the fear of not being (or being read by audiences they do not want or intend) by creating a limited venue
Enacting conventions and expectations: question-posing and hyperlinking (AM)	• Students practice enacting the guidelines they constructed throughout their online activity • Students prod their audience to take up those guidelines they have set
Respectful and disciplinary exertion of direct authority (AM)	• Students ensure conversations line up with the guidelines they have set
Choosing venue that encourages the formation of a public (AO)	• Students reflect rhetorically about the affordances of a website's template and the community that it encourages
Recognizing the larger body of conversations and understand one's purpose in relation to those conversations (AO)	• Students read the other conversations that occur in their chosen internet community

Textual listening (AO)	• Students question commenters with sincere language to encourage conversations that may help them learn about unfamiliar topics

Limits and Future Research

One of the main issues that other Compositionists may raise with this project is its isolation of the writer-audience relationship. I have isolated my participants from their ecological Web 2.0 contexts and focused only on individual writers. One way to address this issue for future projects is to study collaborative writing on the internet, including wikis and limited forums that are not run by a single individual, which would introduce multiple initial writers. Accounting for this vibrancy would require me to investigate issues of ownership and authorship, and may necessitate using materialist frameworks as a lens for analysis.

Another concern related to the construction of this project is its lack of usability. I did not study or interview audiences and therefore can make no concrete claims about the effectiveness of my participants' strategies. To determine the effectiveness of audience emerging, managed, or oriented, I would need to conduct additional research about the audience's perception of a writer's texts. Such research would be useful for making more substantial claims about the pedagogical implications of this project.

I envision undertaking three additional research projects that build upon the groundwork developed here. These are (a) to study the complementary case of multiple initial writers, (b) to investigate a larger range of templates in Web 2.0, and

(c) to conduct additional case studies in order to either generalize or enrich (or both) the models of audience constructed in this study.

In regards to this last issue, I will study additional political bloggers, especially those who engage with local political issues, other writers who facilitate group discussions in limited forums, and more well-known Redditors. By conducting additional case studies, I can address a crucial limitation of this project: the current lack of generalizability of these models of audience. Each model of audience is only based on a single case study. While each model clearly has its merits, the structure of this project is built around my *participants*. To develop my models of audience further, this structure is simply not suitable because my methodology ensured that each case speaks to different issues, contexts, and interactivity. I will be comparing multiple case studies in the future. However, to compare cases is outside the scope of this project. This project has built innovative, albeit preliminary, models of audience for Web 2.0. While these models are only in their infancy stage, they will motivate future research and additional case studies and lead to the development of a robust understanding of writing on the internet.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DISCOURSE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR KELLY SALASIN

1. General Questions
   a. What posts were most successful for the kind of audience you desire?
   b. Are there any posts you thought would generate traffic that did not?
   c. Are there any posts thought would not generate traffic that did?
   d. Does WordPress bold your opening line of each post or do you?
   e. Can you alter the font of the links or does WordPress control that?
   f. Writing
      i. Can you tell me about lines breaks a little?
      ii. What's your rationale for paragraph breaks?
      iii. You often ask open-ended questions. Can you tell me a little about your reasoning for asking questions like this?
2. The Price of Blogging
   a. What were some of your goals with this piece? Did you achieve them? Why or why not?
   b. Is the line "If she thought she lost her father at 19, just wait…" from your father? Or is it your own words trying to articulate what your father said?
   c. Throughout the piece, you ask questions. To whom are the questions directed?
      i. EXAMPLE: That's a good thing, right?
      ii. EXAMPLE: Why does it feel so bad?
   d. Are there any posts in particular your father has had reactions to?
   e. Are there comments you'd be willing to share from your father or the "old flame" referred to in the post's opening?
   f. Why did you add the "p.s. section?"
      i. Can you tell me about the line spacing?
      ii. Can you tell me a little about what kind of affect you want this section to have?
      iii. Was it successful in terms of the affects you wanted to have?
   g. What kind of audience are you trying to reach?
3. Resenting Motherhood
   a. What were some of your goals with this piece? Did you achieve them? Why or why not?
   b. Why splice in the lyrics to "Hallelujah"?
   c. Did you edit this piece at all?
   d. Why address Lloyd?
   e. Why address your father?
   f. What kind of audience are you trying to reach?
4. A First Love & Abortion Story

a. What were some of your goals with this piece? Did you achieve them? Why or why not?
b. Why did you decide to approach this topic from a personal standpoint?
c. Why did you decide to create sections (I, II, and III) to the post?
d. Why end the piece with a variety of questions?
e. When you end with the phrase "the word 'abortion' still chills and constricts me form the inside out," can you tell me why you used that wording?
f. Why did you create a link on the second to last line?
g. Who is "your" in the last line?
h. Do you consider this post political? Why or why not?
i. Use of pronouns; we, us, me, I
j. Use of bolding?
k. What kind of audience are you trying to reach?
5. Feminism or Make Believe
a. You mentioned that this post was written with a friend in mind. What parts of this text were in response to your friend? Why?
b. What were some of your goals with this piece? Did you achieve them? Why or why not?
c. Are the "friends" you refer to specific people you have in mind?
d. Are there particular instances to which you're referring?
e. What about family members?
f. Why the repetition?
    i. I'm glad a woman can walk away from a man who is beating her nowadays. I'm glad that a young girl can sue her father for a lifetime of sexual abuse. I'm glad my sisters and cousins are no longer morally obliged to stay married to men who are cheating on them.
    ii. I love the freedom that this "change" brought. I love that it allows me to celebrate sex and family. I love that I could play around when I was young and then marry the man I wanted and raise two boys with him; that I could choose "to stay home" and then choose to go back to work; while my friends were free to make completely different choices.
g. You mentioned you edited this post. What changed specifically?
h. This passage seems controversial; are you trying to elicit and response here? Also what about the use of the period. What kind tone are you attempting to convey?
    i. I don't want to go back, and I'm certain, it won't be better. It might "look" better, but it won't feel better. Unless you're a man. A white man. With money.
    ii. I've always said that if I could go back in time, I'd be a man in the 1950s. The reclining chair. The newspaper. The dinner on the table.

i. Who is the "you" in this passage?
    i. If you don't want your young ones having sex, talk to them about it. If you don't believe in abortion, work at a crisis pregnancy center. If you want families to stay intact, support them.
j. Who is the "we"?
    i. I think we all need to thank our lucky stars for what feminism gave us. Stop looking back. Face forward. Create what we want–within the freedom and permission that we each deserve–no matter what our sex or skin color or income.
k. Did you add the links at the end of the post?
l. What kind of audience are you trying to reach?
6. Un-Tribute, Part I
    a. Which comments struck you the most?
    b. Where does the opening question come from?
        i. "How can I hold animosity toward an institution I left 29 years ago?"
    c. What role did these texts play in the creation of this post?
        i. "Which then begs the question, How can I be that old? No matter though, because all those years fade away when I think back on my days at Wildwood Catholic High. And there I am, 17, in a pink Handi-Wipe uniform. I wasn't even Catholic. Which then begs the question, How can I be that old? No matter though, because all those years fade away when I think back on my days at Wildwood Catholic High. And there I am, 17, in a pink Handi-Wipe uniform. I wasn't even Catholic."
    d. What was your rationale for bolding throughout the piece?
    e. Can you tell me about your use of "our" in the piece?
        i. "Or what about our very own guidance counselor, who told some of our "lower tracked" friends that they weren't "college" material and that they shouldn't bother applying– even to a community school? (Does anyone else feel creepy about the tracking system?)"
        ii. "What about how cruelly we treated one of our kinder, but odder teachers? I didn't care to pay attention enough to understand Animal Farm, but I'll never forget the way the teasing made me feel inside. (The term "passive colluder" comes to mind.)"
    f. Can you tell me a little about your reaction to John Osbourne's comment?
    g. What kind of audience are you trying to reach?
7. Un-Tribute, Part II
    a. What is your rational for adding links to the opening of the post?
    b. When you say two assigned posts in the passage below, you can tell what you mean?

        i. "But 2 "assigned" posts is too much in one week of a (rebellious) blogger-mother's life."
- c. Tell me about the word "nudge"
  - i. "Yet, once I get the "nudge," it's almost impossible to resist.   Even if I don't put my fingers to the keys, the story starts writing itself–at the most inconvenient times. Like when I'm trying to sleep or make love or drive in the snow."
- d. What was your rationale for choosing the comments to which you responded?
8. Even the potatoes are sad (8/10/11)
   - a. What were your goals with this text?
   - b. Did you achieve these goals?
   - c. Why did you open with the governor's words?
   - d. Why did you bold some of lines?
   - e. Why did you quote from the Co-op's Facebook page?
   - f. Why did you quote the individual's names?
   - g. Why include a link to the Co-op's Facebook page?
   - h. What is your rationale for line breaks?
   - i. What is your rationale for when you quote others versus when you write?
   - j. What was "oddly moving" about the Baudelaire Soap's quotation?
   - k. Why did you end with "Today, even the potatoes are sad"
   - l. Was this text successful? Why or why not?
   - m. Did you ever revise this post? Why or why not?
   - n. What was your rationale for when to respond to commenters and when not to do so?
9. Dear Richard (8/11/11)
   - a. What were your goals with this text?
   - b. Did you achieve these goals?
   - c. What was your rationale for writing an open letter?
   - d. What was your rationale for asking the questions?
   - e. Who is Diane in the text? Why do you mention her?
   - f. Who is "us" in the text? Why do you mention "Even the Potatoes are Sad" and link to it"?
   - g. Who is Meg? Why do you mention her?
   - h. What is your rationale for mentioning your 11-year old at close of the text?
   - i. In the line, "Michael Martin lost his life, but you lost…everything," why do you use ellipses?
   - j. Was this text successful? Why or why not?
   - k. Did you ever revise this post? Why or why not?
   - l. What was your rationale for when to respond to commenters and when not to do so?
   - m. Can you tell me about the commenters in this text?
10. The time I saw Richard… (8/12/11)

a. What were your goals with this text?
b. Did you achieve these goals?
c. What was your rationale for including the picture in the opening of the text?
d. Why did you choose to write this text as a narrative?
e. What were your goals with the line, "Maybe he was a bit quieter. Maybe not."
f. What is your rationale for mentioning Henry, the "beloved cheese guy"?
g. What is your rationale for mentioning Richard pouring wine?
h. Was this text successful? Why or why not?
i. Did you ever revise this post? Why or why not?
j. What was your rationale for when to respond to commenters and when not to do so?
k. Can you tell me about the commenters in this text?

11. Which Wolf (8/15/11)
a. What were your goals with this text?
b. Did you achieve these goals?
c. What is your rationale for using a parable?
d. Was this text successful? Why or why not?
e. Did you ever revise this post? Why or why not?
f. What was your rationale for when to respond to commenters and when not to do so?
g. Can you tell me about the commenters in this text?

12. The Price of Pain (8/16/11)
a. What were your goals with this text?
b. Did you achieve these goals?
c. What was your rationale for including the picture in the opening of the text?
d. Why do you mention the "Which Wolf" post?
e. What is this post's relationship the "Which Wolf" post?
f. Did you ever revise this post? Why or why not?
g. What was your rationale for when to respond to commenters and when not to do so?
h. Can you tell me about the commenters in this text?
i. Was this text successful? Why or why not?

13. Blame and Hindsight to the rescue (8/20/11)
a. What were your goals with this text?
b. Did you achieve these goals?
c. What was your rationale for including the picture in the opening of the text?
d. Where do the opening four questions come from? Are they your words? Others?
e. Why do you "feel compelled"?
f. Why do you quote the reader? Where is this comment from?

g. Can you tell me a little about your decision to quote the commenters?

h. Why did you include the Southpark reference?

i. Did you ever revise this post? Why or why not?

j. What was your rationale for when to respond to commenters and when not to do so?

k. Can you tell me about the commenters in this text?

l. Was this text successful? Why or why not?

14. Tuesday again (8/24/11)

a. What were your goals with this text?

b. Did you achieve these goals?

c. Can you tell me about the line breaks?

d. Where does this post fit in with the BFC series?

e. Did you ever revise this post? Why or why not?

f. What was your rationale for when to respond to commenters and when not to do so?

g. Can you tell me about the commenters in this text?

h. Was this text successful? Why or why not?

15. The New York Times in Brattleboro (8/25/11)

a. What were your goals with this text?

b. Did you achieve these goals?

c. What was your rationale for including the picture in the opening of the text?

d. Why do you quote the newspapers and the headlines? Where you draw these from?

e. Did you ever revise this post? Why or why not?

f. What was your rationale for when to respond to commenters and when not to do so?

g. Can you tell me about the commenters in this text?

h. Was this text successful? Why or why not?

16. Should Richard smile? (10/27/11)

a. What were your goals with this text?

b. Did you achieve these goals?

c. What was your rationale for including the picture in the opening of the text?

d. Who is the "friend" you mention at the beginning of the text? Why do you mention this friend?

e. Why do you include the link "What about Norway"?

f. Were the underlined pieces links at one point?

g. What do you mean by "enlarge the context"?

h. Where does this post fit in with the BFC series?

i. Did you ever revise this post? Why or why not?

j. What was your rationale for when to respond to commenters and when not to do so?

k. Can you tell me about the commenters in this text?

l. Was this text successful? Why or why not?

17. Just when I thought it was safe to shop… (7/26/13)
   a. What were your goals with this text?
   b. Did you achieve these goals?
   c. What was your rationale for including the picture in the opening of the text?
   d. Where does this post fit in with the BFC series?
   e. Did you ever revise this post? Why or why not?
   f. Was this text successful? Why or why not?

DISCOURSE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TRACY MONROE

General Questions
- a. Do other members mimic your style of writing/posting?
- b. In our previous interview, you said your posts were more focused since you started the group. In regards to being focused, you said, "Like having a sense ahead of time of who probably is going to respond to it and who won't…"
    - i. Can you tell me a little more about that?
    - ii. How did you develop this sense of who is going to respond or not respond?
    - iii. Can you point me to any examples of a focused post?
- c. Tagging/Using the template
    - i. How do you get people's attention in Church and State?
    - ii. Why do you tag people in the following post:
        1. "Slate Math Report"?
        2. "Concerned with a Culture of Rape"?
    - iii. Why do you tag people in general?
2. General Statement about the Group
    - a. What was your goal with this post?
    - b. Have your goals been met?
    - c. When you write, "I hope that any of those who are not participating do at least feel welcome to jump in any time," do you have any particular person or type of person in mind? If so, who?
    - d. Why do you mention people's time in part A?
    - e. Why do you address the perceived liberal slant? What are some of your goals with this paragraph?
    - f. Can you tell me why you addressed the idea of "lecturing"?
    - g. Why do you mention PM in part E?
    - h. What do you mean by "lean on"?
3. New Members Introductions
    - a. What goals do you have when introducing people to the group?
    - b. Are these goals successful?
    - c. Clarification
        - i. What do you mean by extremism? Why is this in quotation marks?
        - ii. Why did you use the emoticon?
    - d. Introduction to Salyer, etc.
        - i. Why did you feel it necessary to add the reminder in parenthesis?
        - ii. Why did you address what could be perceived as, in your own words, a "threat"?

e.   Introduction to Woody
            i.   Why did you use an emoticon?
4.   Banned Member
    a.   Why did you write this post?
    b.   What were your goals?
    c.   Why did you tag Glenn?
    d.   Why did you ask for a private message?
5.   Liberal and Conservatives. Trusting Least
    a.   Why did you mention Ben in the post?
    b.   Why did you not tag Ben in the post?
    c.   What were your goals with this post?
    d.   Where your goals successful?
    e.   What kind of tone were you trying to establish and did you succeed in establishing it?
6.   Libertarian Conversation. Copy and Pasted
    a.   Why did you choose to copy and paste this thread?
    b.   You expressed in our second interview that you wanted to control this conversation and that Jason was not discussing what you wanted to discuss. Can you tell me what you mean by control?
    c.   Are there specific tones you strike to achieve this kind of control?
    d.   Why was it significant to control this conversation?
7.   Gay Scouts
    a.   Who was the target audience for the post?
    b.   What kinds of comments did you expect?
    c.   Why did you mention your son?
    d.   Why did you use the phrase "truly welcoming news"?
8.   War on Science
    a.   Who was the target audience for the post?
    b.   What kinds of comments did you expect?
    c.   COMMENTS
            i.   Why did you ask so many questions?
            ii. What kind of tone are you attempting to strike here?
9.   Mischaracterization of Groups
    a.   Who was the target audience for the post?
    b.   What kinds of comments did you expect?
    c.   Why did you section this post into three distinct parts with (A), (B), and (C)?
    d.   What kind of tone are you attempting to strike here?
    e.   Why asks three questions?
    f.   COMMENTS
            i.
10. Treating Violence Like a Disease
    a.   Why not ask specific people?
    b.   Why do you reference your own wall here?
    c.   Why did this piece end?

d. How do you know when a conversation ends?
    e. Do you take any steps to prevent the ending of a piece (or cause it to end earlier)?
11. Science's View of Control and Violent Crime
    a. Why did you post this to Church and State?
    b. Who are you referring to when you write "anyone" in this post?
    c. None of the three tagged members commented. What was your reaction to this?
    d. Is this a successful post?
12. Slate Math Report
    a. Can you tell me about the tags you used in this post?
    b. Does the "share" function hold significance for you?
    c. What do you mean by meta?
    d. Why post this in the group?
    e. Why did you decide to tag the person in the initial post? The comment section?
    f. Can you tell me a little about this post?
    g. Is this a successful post?
13. Torture/Bin Laden
    a. Why did you post a second link in the comment section?
    b. How did you decide to post first?
    c. What made you decide to include both these links in the same post?
14. Repostings—GMO
    a. Who are "those who have asked previously"?
    b. What made you decide to tag people in the comment section?
    c. Can you tell me a little about the background of this post?
15. Concerned with a Culture of Rape
    a. Why did you choose these particular people?
    b. What is your reaction when a tagged member responds/comments?
    c. Was this a successful post?
16. The Danger of Making Science Political
    a. What are the sacred cows you mention in the comments?
    b. Can you tell me a bit about this post?
    c. When you talk about "you" are you talking to Gerard?
    d. In the 3-point comment, why did you tag the members you're addressing? Can you tell me a little bit about each point?
    e. The conversation takes place over the course of 2 days
17. Long article to spur debate
    a. Can tell me about the questions you present to the group?
    b. What were your goals with this text?
    c. Where they achieved? Why or why not?
    d. Is this a successful post?
18. Direct address w/o a response
    a. Can tell me about the questions you present to the group?
    b. What were your goals with this text?

c. Where they achieved? Why or why not?
d. Is this a successful post?
19. Direct address for Matthew Shaw's benefit
    a. Can tell me about the questions you present to the group?
    b. What were your goals with this text?
    c. Where they achieved? Why or why not?
    d. Is this a successful post?
20. Some thoughts towards the group. Evangelical Life at Conception
    a. What were your goals with this text?
    b. Where they achieved? Why or why not?
    c. Is this a successful post?
21. Scalia Comments
    a. What were your goals with this text?
    b. Where they achieved? Why or why not?
    c. Is this a successful post?

APPENDIX C

DISCOURSE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STICKLEYMAN

<u>Interface</u>
1. What do you think of Reddit's interface? What are some of your thoughts about its layout and design?

<u>AskReddit Threads</u>
1. What motivates you to comment on your AskReddit threads? Are there any particular goals when you comment?
2. Is there any particular word choice or tone for which you're aiming? Why?
3. Can you tell me a little about the Vietnam thread?
    a. What were your goals with this post?
    b. How were you hoping people would respond?
    c. Why do you thank people? Can you tell me a little more about thanking people?
    d. You use the phrase "cool" a lot in your comments. Why use that phrase?
    e. How would your describe the way you respond to comments in this thread? Is this typical of the way you respond or does it stand out for any reason?
    f. Was this a successful post? Why or why not?
    g. Were there aspects that you considered less successful or non-ideal?
4. Can you tell me about the sex offender thread?
    a. What were your goals?
5. Can you tell me a little about the intelligent joke thread?
    a. What were some of your goals with this post?
    b. How were you hoping people would respond?
    c. Why did you add the joke about "Europe and poo"? What was your goal there?
    d. Was this a successful post? Why or why not?
    e. Were there aspects that you considered less successful or non-ideal?

<u>GIFs</u>
1. What do you see as standard expectations of GIFs on Reddit?
2. What expectations do you have of your own GIFs?
3. How do you see GIFs fitting into the overall conversation on Reddit?
4. Does anything make your GIFs stand out?
5. Do you see your GIF as fitting in or challenging the normal way that GIFs are posted on Reddit?
6. Ask about each top 5 GIFs.

AskReddit and GIFs
1. What are the differences between these two sub-Reddits?
2. How do you see the audiences of these two sub-Reddits differing from Reddit as a whole? Or intersecting with Reddit as a whole?

Hive Mind
1. I'd like to talk about the hive mind you mentioned in our last interview. Can you tell me a little more about that? What elements do you see as evidence of a hive mind?
2. Do you ever find yourself writing or making GIFs towards the hive mind? Counter to the hive mind?
3. Can you tell me a little about the way that your writing and GIFs fit into the hive mind? Do they contribute? Run counter?
4. Do you see yourself challenging the hive mind or changing it? If you do, what are some ways that you challenge the hive mind?
5. Do you ever find yourself fitting in with the hive mind?
6. How do you explain that you're the fourth most popular Redditor if you don't like the hive mind? ***VERY LAST QUESTION***

WORKS CITED

Arola, Kristin L. "The Design of Web 2.0: The Rise of the Template, the Fall of Design." *Computers and Composition* 27.1 (2010): 4-14. Print.

Bartholomae, David. "Inventing the University." *When a Writer Can't Write: Studies in Writer's Block and Other Composing-Process Problems.* New York: Guilford, 1985. 134-165. Print.

Biesecker, Barbara A. "Rethinking the Rhetorical Situation from within the Thematic of Différance." *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 22.2 (1989): 110-130. Print.

Bitzer, Lloyd. "The Rhetorical Situation." *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 1-14. Print.

Bizzell, Patricia. "What Happens when Basic Writers Come to College?." *College Composition and Communication* 37.3 (1986): 294-301.

Cooper, Marilyn M. "The Ecology of Writing." *College English* 48.4 (1986): 364-75. Print.

—. "Rhetorical Agency as Emergent and Enacted." *College Composition and Communication* 62.3 (2011): 420-449. Print.

Duncan, Mike. "Polemical Ambiguity and the Composite Audience: Bush's 20 September 2001 Speech to Congress and the Epistle of 1 John." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 41.5 (2011): 455-471. Print.

Dilger, Bradley. "Beyond Star Flashes: the Elements of Web 2.0 Style." *Computers and Composition* 27.1 (2010): 15-26.

Dubisar, Abby M. and Jason Palmeri. "Palin/Pathos/Peter Griffin: Political Video Remix and Composition Pedagogy." *Computers and Composition* 27.2 (2010): 77-93.

Dyson, A.H. and Genishi, Celia. *On the Case: Approaches to Language and Literacy Research*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2005. Print.

Edbauer, Jenny. "Unframing Models of Public Distribution: From Rhetorical Situation To Rhetorical Ecologies." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 35.4 (2005): 5-24. Print.

Ede, Lisa, and Andrea Lunsford. "Audience Addressed/Audience Invoked: The Role of Audience In Composition." *College Composition and Communication* 35.2 (1984): 155-71. Print.

Eberly, Rosa A. *Citizen Critics*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000. Print.

Emmons, Kimberly K. "Uptake and Biomedical Subject." *Genre in a Changing World*. Ed. Charles Bazerman, Adair Bonini, and Débora Figueiredo. Fort Collins; The WAC Clearinghouse, 2009. 134-157. Web.

Fitzpatrick, Kathleen. *Planned Obsolescence*. New York: New York University Press, 2011. Print.

Freadman, Anne. "Uptake." *The Rhetoric and Ideology of Genre: Strategies for Stability and Change*. 39-53. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton, 2002. Print.

Frow, John. *Genre*. New York: Routledge, 2006. Print.

Harris, Joseph. "The Idea of Community in the Study of Writing." *College Composition and Communication* 40.1 (1989): 11-22. Print.

Johnson, Robert. "Audience Involved: Towards a Participatory Model of Writing." *Computers and Composition* 14.4 (1997): 361-76. Print.

Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press, 2006. Print.

Gee, James Paul. *Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses, Critical Perspectives on Literacy and Education.* Routledge: New York, 1990. Print.

Kirsch, Gesa, and Duane H. Roen, ed. *A Sense of Audience in Written Communication*. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1990. Print.

Lanham, Richard A. *The Economics of Attention: Style and Substance in the Age of Information*. Chicago, M.I: The University of Chicago Press, 2006. Print.

Lunsford, Andrea. "Writing, Technologies, and the Fifth Canon." *Computers and Composition* 23 (2006): 169-177.

Lunsford, Andrea A., and Lisa Ede. "Representing Audience: 'Successful' Discourse and Disciplinary Critique." *College Composition and Communication* 47.2 (1996): 167-79. Print.

—. "'Among the audience': On audience in an age of new literacies." *Engaging Audience: Writing in an age of new literacies*. Eds. M. E. Weiser, B. M. Fehler, and A. M. Gonzalez. NCTE, 2009. 42-72. Print.

Marx, Karl*. "*The Grundrisse." *The Marx-Engels Reader*. 2nd ed. Ed. Robert Tucker. WW Norton and Company: New York, 1978. Print.

Maxwell, Joseph. *Qualitative Research Design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004. Print.

Miller, Carolyn R. "Genre as Social Action." *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70.2 (1984): 151-167. Print.

Miller, Carolyn R., and Dawn Shepherd. "Questions for Genre Theory from the Blogosphere." Genres in the Internet: Issues in the Theory of Genre. 263-290. Amsterdam, Netherlands: Benjamins, 2009. Web.

Newcomb, Matthew. "Sustainability as a Design Principle for Composition: Situational Creativity as a Habit of Mind." *College Composition And Communication* 63.4 (2012): 593-615. Print.

Paster, Denise. "Practices of Value: a Materialist View of Going Public with Student Writing." *Dissertation Abstracts International, Section A: The Humanities and Social Sciences* 71.12 (2011). Web.

Perelman, Chaïm, and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca. *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*. Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1969. Print.

Porter, James E. *Audience and Rhetoric: An Archaeological Composition of the Discourse Community*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice Hall, 1992. Print.

Porter, James E. "Recovering Delivery for Digital Rhetoric." *Computers And Composition* 26.4 (2009): 207-224. Web.

Prior, Paul, Janine Solberg, Patrick Berry, Hannah Bellwoar, Bill Chewning, Karen Lunsford, Liz Rohan, Kevin Roozen, Mary Sheridan-Rabideau, Jody Shipka, Derek Van Ittersum, and Joyce Walker. "Re-situating and Re-mediating the Canons: A Cultural-historical Remapping of Rhetorical Activity: A Collaborative Webtext." *Kairos* 11.3 (May 2007). Web.

Reiff, Mary Jo. "Rereading 'Invoked' and 'Addressed' Readers Through a Social Lens: Toward a Recognition of Multiple Audiences." *JAC: A Journal of Composition Theory* 16.3 (1996): 407-424. Print.

Schryer, Catherine. "The Lab Versus the Clinic: Sites of Competing Genres." Eds. Freedman, Aviva, and Peter Medway. *Genre and the New Rhetoric*. London: Taylor and Francis, 1994. 105-124. Print.

Selzer, Jack. "More Meanings of 'Audience.'" *A Rhetoric of Doing: Essays on Written Discourse in Honor of James L. Kinneavy.* Ed. Roger Cherry, Neil Nakadate, and Stephen Witte. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1992. 161-77. Print.

Stake, Robert E. *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1995. Print.

Strauss, Anselm and Juliet Corbin. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, Sage Publication, 1998. Print.

Trimbur, John. "Composition and the Circulation of Writing." *College Composition and Communication* 52.2 (2000): 188-219. Print.

Vatz, Richard E. "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation." *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 6 (1973): 154-61. Print.

Warner, Michael. *Publics and Protopublics*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2002. Print.

Yancey, Kathleen Blake. "Made Not Only In Words: Composition in a New Key." *College Composition And Communication* 56.2 (2004): 297-328. Print.

Yin, Robert K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 4th ed. Washington DC, Sage Publications, 2009. Print.