Writing Programs and Pedagogies in a Globalized Landscape

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We have entered the brave new world of globalization, the argument goes, a radical new phase in the world economy characterized by "the ascendance of information technologies, the associated increase in the mobility and liquidity of capital, and resulting decline in the regulatory capacity of nation-states over key sectors of their economies" (Sassen 195). This new economic order depends on the transmigration not only of capital and cultural forms, but also of people—both the rich (the new transnational professional workforce) and the poor (often immigrant workers, women, and people of color) (Sassen xxxii). Shaped by the broader relations and antagonisms produced within history (Ahmed), globalization raises critical questions about corporate and civic life, technology and information, media, governance, markets, the increasing disparities "between the urban glamour zone and the urban war zone" (Sassen xxxiii), and, inevitably, writing pedagogies and programs.

As educators, we are forced to address this globalized landscape in which we and the students we teach are becoming global actors—as consumers, as workers, as producers. In this essay I want to provide my account of the changes going on in the required lower-division writing sequence in the writing program at Syracuse University (SU), and then to speculate about how we might better analyze these changes by embedding them more explicitly in the processes and effects of globalization. The site for this very initial exploration is *authorship,* starting from this fundamental claim: as writing teachers and as a discipline, we have shifted our thinking and our tropes—from a *domestic* classroom, focused on the creative moment of the student composing process, to a *globalized* classroom, engaged in multimedia and multimodal textual production, distribution, and consumption.

The Context at Syracuse

In the fall of 2000, Rebecca Moore Howard became the new director of the writing program at Syracuse University, and she charged me (as director of undergraduate studies) and the new lower division committee with conducting a critical review of the curriculum for the WRT 105 (first-year) and WRT 205 (second-year) required sequence and proposing revisions.

A large private school in upstate New York, Syracuse University has an independent writing program and a PhD program in Composition and Cultural Rhetoric. There are about 40 part-time writing instructors on multiple year contracts, 36 external TAs (mostly MA, PhD, and MFA students from English), 15 TAs from the Composition and Cultural Rhetoric program, and 10 full-time faculty members. We teach about 120 sections of WRT 105 in the fall and 100 sections of WRT 205 in the spring.

Historically all teachers in the program (except first-year TAs) have designed their own courses within the general guidelines of the spiral curriculum, a theoretical document produced by Louise Wetherbee Phelps in 1986 that provided a development trajectory for the two courses from writing-to-learn to writing-to-communicate, that encouraged an inquiry-driven approach to the teaching of writing, and that emphasized practices such as drafting, peer review, critical reading strategies, and a range of informal as well as formal writing (http://wrt.syr.edu/pub/spiral.html). Teachers became accustomed to designing their courses within these guidelines and according to their own interests and expertises. They chose topics of inquiry, put together their own course readers, picked out a handbook, designed assignments, and crafted their own grading policies.

The program's teachers worked within a relatively insulated context, hearing complaints now and then, waging war every so often, but mostly carrying on a committed, discipline-driven, process-informed approach to teaching writing within its own terms. Teachers developed imaginative and challenging courses, talked passionately about teaching, experimented with new ideas, wrote for our in-house journal, *Reflections in Writing*, and enjoyed a gratifying sense of professionalism, as evidenced by the significant presence of SU full- and part-time faculty at national conferences.

But pressures punctured that insularity from many directions—from powerful shifts in the discipline as well as potent shifts in leadership and direction within the university.

Rebecca Howard's charge to review the introductory writing sequence was a response to the shifts in disciplinary knowledge produced by the social turn in composition, by post-process theorizing, by the new technologies, and by the demands to address multiple literacies in the curriculum. With others, I too had worried that WRT 105 and WRT 205 had begun

to overemphasize process and reflection on writing and that we were not attentive enough to the demands and rewards of finished, well-edited, carefully crafted, and developed texts. There are lots of obvious reasons for that. It's immediately rewarding, for both students and teachers, to focus on the creative moment of textual production. It's also very important for teachers denied the security of tenure to get the positive course evaluations that such process- and expressivist-oriented courses tend to produce. And there are all the very real political worries about imposing academic discourse onto students and about silencing or distorting the many writing talents and language skills they bring to the course and to the academy.

More locally, the new vice chancellor of academic affairs and provost, Deborah A. Freund, singled out the writing courses (and only the writing courses) as not rigorous enough in her first version of Academic Plan 2001. At the same time, she identified "elegant writing" as one of the proposed four signature experiences for Syracuse students:

> "Signature Experience Four—An Emphasis on Elegant Writing
>
> We have a strong commitment to writing and effective communication on this campus—from Newhouse to the Writing Program, Speech Communication, and the Creative Writing Program. Taken together, these constitute a potentially powerful curricular force in the University—one that should be more nationally recognized for the kind of students we produce. In terms of scholarship, professional expertise, and creative output, we have more nationally and internationally recognized areas than virtually any university—large or small. If we were to get organized—by examining our University-wide programs, identifying those courses that focus on discipline-specific writing, and forming partnerships to break down the barriers that divide us by schools and colleges—our students could come to be among the most polished communicators on average of any major research university in the country. This "signature," in turn, could attract the world's most famous communicators and writers to our campus to join our already distinguished faculty in key areas. [. . .] We must work across department lines to enhance the role of writing and clear expression in the Syracuse University curriculum. Foremost, we must reconceptualize our student experience to let it clearly be known that this is a university deeply committed to successful writing and communication, in college and in

> the workplace. Key individuals on campus across the various schools and colleges will be empowered to lead us in developing the best writing program in the country (10-11 of 14).

As I know from talking with the vice chancellor, she intended this to be a boost to writing and to the writing program as well as a corrective to complaints she had heard with apparent frequency during her town meetings with faculty and students. We expressed our eagerness to have writing across the curriculum (WAC) and the writing center and writing more generally valued in these ways (and hoped there would be funding to realize these goals), and we raised questions: Who will be these "key individuals"? Why is "elegance" the main descriptor? What does this mean for our program's curriculum and autonomy?

In an email response to the vice chancellor, Rebecca Howard acknowledged that there are always criticisms of writing programs "because none can accomplish the heartfelt goals that university faculty have for their students' writing" and that we ourselves have criticisms and plans for improvement. But she challenged wholesale criticism based on "anecdotal or factionalized criticisms." She also critiqued the use of "elegant" and "polished" writing as "belletristic ideals for writing that are not shared across the curriculum and that are not endorsed as the top priorities of composition and rhetoric specialists today."

Charles Watson, a professor from English, also challenged the term "elegant" as the "featured goal of writing instruction for our students." Turning to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Watson demonstrates the class-codedness of "elegance," as it reflects "the historical confine of high culture to the Anglo-American upper class (e.g., 'Of modes of life, dwellings and their appointments, etc.: Characterized by refined luxury')." He emphasizes too that "elegant" implies language as the mere clothing of thought, "the adornment of ideas," which is of course a long-discredited view of language use. The vice chancellor now jokes edgily about "elegance" but the label somehow sticks—and signifies how little influence we as composition teachers and scholars have in this campus-wide initiative.[1]

The next jolt came from a report by Undergraduates for a Better Education which reported that students bitterly critiqued their writing courses in less than gratifying ways ("the course sucks," "it's a waste of time," "worse than high school," etc.), and in particular complained loudly about inconsistency across the many sections of each course—different assignments, different grading schemes, different work loads, different topics.

The final and perhaps most important disruption came from the college of arts and sciences. First, the college did a study of grade inflation, and we risked becoming its poster child. Then Dean Cathryn Newton let all departments know that by 2003 every course had to have measurable

learning outcomes. And lastly she convened an arts and sciences committee to advise her on writing within the college. She, too, expressed her dismay over the frequency of student complaints about their writing courses, and turned to a story about a wonderful writing experience someone somewhere had had in an intimate workshop setting with a professional writer. The committee's charge is vague—to study and advise. So far, there has been hot debate about what teaching writing means or should mean along perhaps unsurprising lines, and speculative discussion about possible changes (a pilot assessment project to evaluate the writing skills of entering students, WAC initiatives, postdoctoral students replacing TAs, changes in the requirements). On this committee Rebecca Howard, as the only faculty member from the writing program, is an ex officio member. It's hard to say what the final effect will be on our curriculum and staffing.

Yikes! New composition theories, university and college committees, mostly anecdotal student complaints (though serious ones), learning outcomes, major institutional reevaluation and redefinition—along with all the everyday challenges of administering a large, multi-staffed writing program!

We went to work.

Some things were declared. Rebecca Howard and I wrote a grading policy that said, among other things, that at least 70% of the final course grade was to be based on polished writing (http://wrt.syr.edu/pub/grading.html). We re-articulated the focus of the lower-division sequence to more explicitly and directly address what we hypothesized as central intellectual and literacy practices across the university: analysis and argument in WRT 105, critical inquiry and research in WRT 205. We insisted on longer and more challenging final written projects. We proposed a common handbook, and we developed our own program course reader, *Critical Convergences*, which we highly encouraged all teachers to adopt and required for all new TAs.

Some things were developed. The lower-division committee drafted, discussed with others, and redrafted learning outcomes for WRT 105 and WRT 205—outcomes that outlined in much more specific detail than ever before the goals, assignments, uses of theory, and technology that all teachers had to work with/in. Traces of these many program-wide discussions may (and may not) be visible in the final, densely-coded document we produced, which can be read at http://wrt.syr.edu/pub/handbook.html.

Some things continue to be energetically debated by the teachers in the program, who have taken up these new challenges with imagination and commitment. Over the year we have addressed a large number of questions: What is analysis? How does it differ from argument? What do we have to teach students about using the Internet for research? What kinds of readings work best with these new goals? To what degree should assignments

across sections share similarities—and not? What kinds of assessment works best —and for whom? How do we assess curriculum as well as individual teachers and courses? What is the value or role of student self-report? How might we use a modified portfolio system to assess student writing across sections? In all of these changes, we ask, what are we gaining and what are we losing? Teachers are hard at work in multiple sites—at weekly coordinating groups, in the new TA workshops, through professional development activities like Theory Day,[2] on the program listserv, among teachers in the hallways, and in *Reflections in Writing*.

Enlarging the Textual Economy

Neither contemplative nor linear, neither accommodating jolts and pressures nor pursing disciplinary purity—this curricular revision process has been complex, conflictual, and very challenging. Different projects converged (and did not) with other projects. Different constituencies communicated (and did not) with others. Different documents articulated (and did not) with others. It has not always been easy to find coherence in all these activities and debates, but over time I have come to see some fundamental patterns in the work. To illustrate, I'll focus on one of the learning outcomes for WRT 105 by the lower-division committee: *Students will develop a working understanding of contemporary theories of authorship.* I can't recapitulate the history of the discussion on the committee (and elsewhere) that led to this outcome. I recall that we invoked the political turn in composition theory. 'Postmodern' was a key term. Writing as 'social process' was another. Thoughts about new textual possibilities produced by the new technologies also played a role.

But mostly we started from the fundamental claim that what distinguishes us from most other courses at the university is that *we teach courses in the production of texts* and that we define students as *writers* or *'authors.'* And so we staked our claim there. We asked ourselves:

- What is "contemporary" about these theories of authorship?
- What factors have produced them?
- How do they refigure the student writer and the writing classroom?

My genealogical take on the development of this particular learning goal is that in retrospect (and only in retrospect) there has been a significant tropic move in our curricular work during the last two years—from *conversation* to *circulation*.

Critical Convergences, for example, deploys the friendly trope of conversation to invite students into the university as newcomers with something to add, as participants and potential knowledge-makers themselves. It's a

familiar move. Lots of writing teachers over the years have turned to Kenneth Burke's metaphor of the academy as a kind of parlor, where there's a conversation always already going on. We encourage students to listen for a while, pick up threads and claims, get their bearings, and make a contribution.

In this trope, the writing classroom is figured as a bounded and privatized space, even a domestic space, enacting a micro-version of the scholarly, knowledge-making practices of the university in a kinder, gentler way. The collection of course readings functions as a kind of mini-disciplinary canon, which students have to understand, analyze, and respond to in some kind of critical or original way. Sometimes students have to 'invent' the university (and be invented by it). Sometimes the politics of difference determine whose knowledge contributions count and why. Sometimes the conversation turns nasty or just falls apart.

There are various critiques that might be made, but I want to turn to John Trimbur. He opens his essay "Composition and the Circulation of Writing" with an anecdote about late papers. It was the end of the fall semester, and the computer cluster had closed because of a virus, and no one could print. His typical—"I don't care, I just want the paper"—response didn't work, and he started to rethink how much that typical response erases the materiality of writing:

> To say, as I have, "I just want the paper," suggests that the student's words alone are what count and to identify writing with the creative moment of composing, thereby isolating *an education in writing* from the means of production and delivery. (189, emphasis added)

He casts this kind of writing classroom as "a middle class family drama," where the student writes for the approval of the teacher as parental figure—the permissive father in the case of Peter Elbow, the demanding father in the case of David Bartholomae. He concludes:

> It is no accident that writing teachers frequently contrast the first-year course, in which the teacher knows each student's name and calls on everyone to speak, to the impersonality and anonymity of other courses. If anything, writing teachers like to justify composition classes as places where a kind of domestic intimacy provides some of the comforts of home, a haven in what many students find to be an otherwise alien or hostile environment. (194)

Instead Trimbur is interested in looking at the entire *cycle of circulation* that links production, distribution, and consumption. By focusing primarily on the student writer at the point of production, he says, we risk short-circuit-

ing that cycle and reducing the cultural value and worldly force of the writing (194; see too McComiskey).

That is, the textual economy remains within the classroom, and the larger questions of textual circulation are not always addressed. For example, what are the differences between the review and publishing processes for a university press and a tabloid? Why do some websites get hundreds of hits a day and others so few? What happens rhetorically to an academic text as it is summarized in various newspapers? How might a real live TV producer respond to a cultural critique of his or her show? What does the director of a local non-profit organization think about the written work of service learning students? How has the definition of literacy expanded?

I came to realize that in different ways many teachers in the SU program are in fact busy enlarging the textual economy in their classrooms and in their course designs.

In Henry Jankiewicz's research course students are formed into editing boards for class magazines and learn a great deal about the publishing cycle, from selecting a topic for the issue to final editing work with writers.

In Maureen Fitzsimmon's service learning version of WRT 307 (professional and technical writing), students produce brochures and websites for non-profits, negotiating the give and take of that process to a great extent on their own.

Molly Voorheis requires student in her WRT 301 (civic writing) class to research a topic, develop position papers, and produce information sheets and other documents directed toward actual audiences and events.

In the library module designed for the new TA version of WRT 205, students had to learn about the publishing cycle for sources of information found in databases and online, analyze the differences in texts such as the *Nation* and the *National Review*, and deconstruct the fact/bias binary.

Trimbur himself talks about the final assignment in his "Writing About Disease and Public Health" course, in which students produce public health publicity on teen or college-age sexuality in any medium they choose (e.g., brochures, pamphlets, flyers, radio announcements, skits). They have read and critically analyzed journalistic versions of the moral panic over teen pregnancy, an ethnographic study of a failed public health project in a working class neighborhood in Boston, a history of sexually transmitted diseases, etc. He notes that this is not meant to be just 'real world' writing:

> What I am trying to do is amplify the students' sense of what
> constitutes the production of writing by tracing its circulation
> in order to raise questions about how professional expertise is
> articulated to the social formation, how it undergoes rhetori-

> cal transformations (or "passages of form"), and how it might produce not only individual careers but also socially useful knowledge. (214)

The examples go on and on, and reveal a fundamental shift in our thinking, if not always our language: we locate students (and our courses) within larger and more complex contexts (other courses, professional sites, civic arenas) and within more of the processes and material realities and effects of textual economies. For many teachers, as for Trimbur, what motivates this work is the possibility of a more democratic redistribution of the means of production and expertise.

I'm not simply suggesting that students write only for so-called "real world" audiences, which (along with Bruce Horner) I think demeans academic and critical work. I am suggesting, however, that our new curriculum plops students immediately into the broader complexities of the production, distribution, and circulation of texts to a greater degree than before, as a result of theory and technology—and, I will now suggest, globalization.

The Globalized Landscape

This account so far is limited by its use of theory as its main analytic, as if theory had sole or even primary currency in debates about writing, writing instruction, and writing programs in the university. As Jeanne Gunner reminds us, by their very existence, writing programs establish the value of writing and serve as ideological sites within the university in many ways "unrelated to their 'content'—their theoretical, curricular, and pedagogical work" (11). And of course the broader meaning of writing itself is also ideological, embedded in "convulsive changes in economic and social life, educational expectations, and communication technologies" (Brandt 2). As educators, we struggle in these borderlands[3] to make sense of these convulsive changes in order to anticipate pedagogies that will work for students in their personal, professional, and public or civic lives.

From this angle, I locate Rebecca Howard's charge to address post-process theory in composition scholarship in our curriculum, Vice Chancellor Freund's nineteenth-century call for elegance, Dean Newton's romantic story about the writing teacher as creative mentor, and the demand from committee members for more instruction in writing per se as disjunctive moments within that struggle. Add to the mix the desires of upper division students, who, when they have a choice, flock to our creative non-fiction and professional and technical writing courses. There are lots of strong opinions and theoretical differences and political investments in what WRT 105 and WRT 205 should be (and why) and who gets to say so (and why).

If we turn to the discourse of globalization, we hear another set of voices—ones that frame and articulate with the others.

In the manifesto that opens *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures*, for example, the New London Group lays out how globalization (or what they call "fast capitalism") is dramatically altering our working, civic, and personal lives (10). They point to the challenges we now face in literacy pedagogy as we try to account

> for the context of our culturally and linguistically diverse and increasingly globalised societies; to account for the multifarious cultures that interrelate and the plurality of texts that circulate [. . . and for] the burgeoning variety of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies. (9)

Centralized command systems have been displaced by distributed systems with flattened hierarchies and networked teams. "New business and new schools—fit for our 'new capitalism'—are progressively aligning themselves with each other and converging on such notions as 'communities of practice'" (Gee 43). Management theory uses educational discourse such as "knowledge worker," "learning organisation," "collaboration," "alternative assessments," and "communities of practice," and deploys such postmodern values as destroying hierarchies and honoring diversity. Old vertical chains of command (with written memos and supervisors' orders) have been replaced by the horizontal relationships of teamwork (with informal written forms such as email) (11-12). The division of labor into minute, deskilled components has morphed into multiskilled workers flexible and responsible enough to be able to do complex and integrated work (11). In fact, the New London Group argues (as others do), that the old command and control structure has itself become "relationships of pedagogy: mentoring, training, and the learning organisation" (11). It's obvious how much these discourses, values, and practices overlap with those in composition classrooms, with their attention to collaboration, process, decentered authority, difference, interdisciplinarity, and reflective practice.

Is this more informal, user-friendly discourse of management a more subtle form of enforcing assimilation to mainstream norms and hierarchy? Is it harder to enter than the older formal system? How do we understand a discourse of collaboration and shared values in a world economy driven by "the barely restrained market"(12)?

The New London Group asserts that "the twin goals of access and critical engagement" need not be incompatible—that we can teach people the skills and stances they need to succeed as well as the critical abilities they need to speak up for themselves and others, to challenge and engage critically with the conditions of their professional and public lives (13). They

conclude, with a sense of hopeful irony, that "economic efficiency may be an ally of social justice, though not always a staunch and reliable one" (13).

Jeanne Gunner, however, argues that a writing program's theory may gain significant agency *only* as it aligns itself with these more powerful discourses. She describes how the proposed professional writing program in her department, carefully designed according to rhetorical theory, depended finally on its link to the values of entrepreneurship and vocationalism that dominate in the Silicon Valley where her school is located (17). "Lessening the gap between master discourses and theoretical discourses is," she concludes, "one way to gain the power to enact theory in material ways" (15).

The only way?

As educators, what stance *do* we take as we struggle to understand the practices and effects of globalization on us, on our programs, on the students we teach? Do we need to understand globalization better before we can develop effective discourses of critique, as Gee contends (44)? Is it possible to approach discussions with colleagues about the development of curriculum within the dual stance of "unambitous pragmatism" and "ambitious strategic possibility" (Kalantzis and Cope 132) that the New London Group advocates? Simple oppositions won't work, as transformations and possibilities are complexly intertwined and occur in the small and unexpected ways. Gunner offers a compelling example. Composition theory, she reminds us, has always insisted to very little avail that mechanical correctness and standard English should not be the primary goals of writing instruction. Now, ironically, current cultural pressures in high-demand fields such as engineering and technology mean that correctness often has to be demoted to a less privileged location. Email exchanges, as they cross geographical and cultural discourse, illustrate this new informality and de-norming of language because it is communication, not correctness, that matters. Gunner argues for using these moments of "ideological ambivalence" opportunistically to enact our theory and to create change in values and practices as best we can (16). Her claim resonates with feminist theorist Chela Sandoval's methodological call for a "differential mode of consciousness," one that functions "like the clutch of an automobile, the mechanism that permits the driver to select, engage, and disengage gears in a system for the transmission of power" (58).

THE WRITING SUBJECT

Let's return to the question of authorship: How might globalization refigure the student writer?

At an expensive private school like Syracuse, more centered on professional colleges than the liberal arts, are we producing what feminist theorist Sara Ahmed cites as the new "global nomads"? She is referring to people who are part of a highly skilled workforce, whose intercultural communication, linguistic competency, and management of diversity make them very useful in a globalized economy of difference: "The ability to travel clearly gives global nomads access to a set of privileges, a set of equipment, which makes them highly commodifiable as skilled workers on a global landscape of difference and cultural exchange" (85). Is this the purpose (or one of the purposes) that a multicultural reader, or an interdisciplinary research project, or a collaborative writing assignment fulfills? If indeed we produce mobile writers, adept at crossing disciplinary and professional and national boundaries, what might be the many results? Do students have to become comparative linguists as they make sense of the "plethora of dialects, accents, discourses and registers" they will inevitably encounter as English becomes *lingua mundi* (Kalantzis and Cope 140)? In what ways might this mobility affect corporate and civic life? For example, does flexibility, that great value of globalization, produce freedom or fragmentation and lack of temporal attachment—and what are the long term results on workers (Sennett 62)? What does it mean to live as a "portfolio person" (Gee 61)?

Globalization depends too on the circulation of texts, technology and e-space. Students need to acquire an understanding of "rhetorical economy" (Sidler 3), or the ways texts move through production, distribution, and circulation (McComiskey, Trimbur). What texts are read? By whom? In what ways and under what circumstances? What transformations do texts go through as they move through various spaces and across time? The question applies to print as well as online texts. The Web offers, seemingly, a much larger public sphere for students to participate in; indeed it offers a "dizzying array of available texts [. . .] a shopping mall of rhetorical choice—of ideas and options, words, and images" (Sidler 6), but "[a]s they undertake public participation, students need tools not only to write texts but also to understand how, why, and when they might be accessed and engaged (Sidler 6). How do we ourselves master the demands of the new technologies, multiple literacies, and modalities or engage with them critically? How does the rapid commercialization of the Web dilute, diminish, or destroy its original distributed and democratic potential? Is textuality becoming virtualized? Have the material realities of the publishing cycle become invisible or even irrelevant to students? And at what cost?

Digital electronic texts are "based on notions of hybridity and intertextuality (Luke 73), where "cyberspace navigators" (73) draw from multiple linguistic, audio and visual texts, as they click on hotlinks and move around in a textual and multimodal universe, reading and writing in hypertextual

or nonlinear ways. In this world, Luke argues, "relations among ideas is as important, if not more important than, mastery of the ideas themselves" (73). The expert is the one who sees connections among related ideas and knowledges. Social geographer David Harvey (cited in Luke 79) argues that these new communication technologies have altered our traditional categories of time and place. For example, through email one can 'be there' with someone across the globe within milliseconds. We can transfer vast amounts of material almost instantaneously. And the ability to access and download texts within seconds—as opposed to going to the library, checking out books, copying pages or taking notes—reorients our organization of time. It's not surprising that these new possibilities of hybridity and intertextuality have raised new questions and definitions of plagiarism.

And finally in what ways do we "internationalize" the topics of inquiry in our writing classes in order to keep up with these changes? Students can access information instantaneously from around the globe, and need the geopolitical knowledge to assess that information, to frame it, and to challenge and critique it. That is surely one of the great lessons of September 11, 2001, and the war on terrorism, including the war in Iraq, which consume us and all of our resources. As we would no longer plan a course without considering questions of gender and race, we need to consider questions of globalization.

WORKING (WITH) CONTRADICTIONS: ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS, OR CONNECTING THE DOTS

So much to think about as writing program administrators and teachers of writing—and so difficult to figure out the terms of the conversation and contestations we need to have with students, other faculty, administrators, and ourselves. At such an historic (dis)juncture, amidst convulsive economic, social, and technological changes, with so many competing ideologies and investments, setting the terms for that discussion may be our most urgent job. Surely that is our main task at Syracuse right now.

As teachers of writing, we are talking about what it means to understand the classroom now as a global space—a placed and placeless space. At our annual spring conference (2003), entitled Globalization and the Teaching of Writing, we debated definitions of globalization, recognizing it as a deeply contested economic, social, and cultural concept, with panels on social justice, work, international rhetorics, and the American dream. We invited faculty from other departments to join us, to enlarge our perspective, to talk about the challenges we all face in responding to and within the complex relationship of the university to the processes and effects of globalization. More specifically, as Steve Thorley pointed out, how can the

writing program's required courses provide openings for educating citizens in addition to—or opposed to—educating emerging experts in the disciplines, future producers and consumers of a global economy?

For many, this question means deploying globalization as a topic of critical inquiry in our classes—e.g., the student anti-sweatshop movement, the changing nature of work, the effects of agribusiness, the McDonaldizing of the world, the emergence and effects of world Englishes, the anti-globalization movements, the feminization of poverty, representations of current events on mainstream and alternative and international Websites, the politics of sentence-level pedagogy and notions of correctness, the war on terrorism, and the war on Iraq. This spring's WRT 205 syllabus for new TAs, drafted by Anne Fitzsimmons, is called "Going Global":

> Going Global: A Research Essay Explaining a Concept
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> I have selected the genre or type of essay I would like you to write for your sustained research project this semester, an *explanation,* but I am inviting all of you to select the topic you would be most interested in researching and writing about. But why go global? you ask. Good question. And I'll respond with a question of my own: why *not* go global when the United States is on the verge of declaring war in the Middle East; when economic, political, and cultural developments blur national boundaries; when American college students can live and study in virtually any corner of the world; when so much of what we desire, purchase, use on a daily basis, and take for granted is produced outside of the United States. Even if we have never left the country, we remain logged into the global network. *That's* why we are going global this semester in WRT 205.
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> What Can I Write About?
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> Think of the kinds of global concepts, issues, and phenomena you are aware of from watching the news, listening to the radio, attending campus lectures and events. Consider what are you reading about and discussing in your other courses. Pay attention to what your roommates, friends, and dormmates are studying and talking about. We will devote good class time to brainstorming and exploring topics, but eventually I would like you to choose one specific to a discipline, or to a course you are taking, or to some professional or cultural arena you are invested in if possible. Some examples: One of my students from a year ago, a political science major, chose as

his topic *Kashmir*, the country bordering India and Pakistan and the source of much of the tension between the two powers over the last fifty five years. So a *geographical space* might be an appropriate topic, if it represents current or historical moments of importance, like North Korea's DMZ; Chiapas, Mexico; Jeser, Israel; or Derry, Northern Ireland. Another student, a nursing major from China, researched and wrote about the Chinese New Year, so a *cultural phenomenon* could be an appropriate topic. Think of the songlines of Australia, the practice of female circumcision among certain African and Middle Eastern peoples, soccer hooliganism in England, rubber bullets in Northern Ireland, or knee-capping within the IRA. David Byrne, of the now disbanded Talking Heads, has produced collections of Brazilian music, including samplings of *Bossa Nova,* a combination of traditional Brazilian pop music and the harmonies of American cool jazz, and *Tropicalismo,* a cultural/musical movement inspired by the imprisonment and exile of two beloved musicians, Caetano Veloso and Giberto Gil, after a military coup in 1964. You might choose as your topic a person, *a particular political*, *historical, cultural figure.* Who *is* Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, for example? Why is she important, worth knowing about? How about Margaret Thatcher, Imelda Marcos, Che Guevara, Frida Khalo, Diego Rivera, Artemesia Gentilesch, Gerry Adams?"

Other teachers are starting with the local—the clean-up of Onondaga Lake, the proposed development of Destiny USA (to be the largest mall-entertainment-hotel complex in the U.S.), or the Oneida Indian land claims—and pressing outward to the larger issues and debates these local projects are embedded in historically and economically. In both approaches, it is the complex interconnections of the local and the global that drive the inquiry.

Regardless of the topic of inquiry, we are teaching a kind of *archaeological analysis*, an intellectual process that works to excavate the many meanings of events, artifacts, and texts, as the critical practice of thinking and writing. This is a nonlinear process of framing and reframing the object of analysis in order to understand it from many perspectives and through many interconnections. We have learned a lot from David Rosenewasser and Jill Stephen's *Writing Analytically* about teaching the skills of analysis. Many of us have also turned to Wendy S. Hesford's "Memory Work" as a critical methodology for reading a family photograph within multiple layerings or frames of reference—autobiographical, historical, cultural, and economic:

> Family photographs are rich sources for analysis, as Wendy Hesford so powerfully illustrates in her essay "Memory Work," although you don't have to do a Hesfordian analysis in order for your own essay to be successful. Think of the sorts of questions you might ask of a family photograph: Who is present? Who is absent? How is the photo representing your lives? Is that representation accurate? What sorts of power relationships does the photo reveal or obscure? What key events— emotional, social, economic—link up to the period represented in the photograph? What scenarios are possible subject matter for your family's photo album? And conversely, what remains invisible in family archives? In what ways does the photo prompt you to reconsider your self-history? What social and cultural values and ideas shape the family's visual representation of itself? (WRT 205 Syllabus)

In this assignment (and others), we start with what students know and begin to ask questions about how that knowledge came to be formed, and then put those various analyses into conversation with other analyses—from other students as well as from course readings—in order to see the world and the self historically and from multiple perspectives, from peripheries as well as from positions of privilege. It is certainly our hope to locate student knowledges as knowledges, not as deficits, as ways of understanding the world that come out of particular histories, investments, values—in the same way we present and argue for/with our own knowledges.

This kind of analysis is a way of thinking and writing that is complex, that is more about networks than grids (Taylor), that recognizes how connected everything has become and how profoundly underlying tropes and paradigms have changed. It is a way of thinking and writing that recognizes what Eileen Schell calls "transnational linkages." It is a way of thinking and writing that locates us within emerging, ynamic and global economic, cultural, political, and social systems of meaning. It is a way of thinking that values the dynamic nexus of the "personal" and the "global" as interconnected and complex networks of discursive and material meaning-making and that locates us all as global citizens.

This kind of analysis also requires and rewards the critical research available to us through the new technologies as well as library and primary research. As we all learn how to cast researchable questions and develop the literacy skills necessary to access and assess the vast amount of material available electronically now, we can easily say, "How is Iraq responding to the pending threats of war?" and look at http://www.uruklink.net/iraqnews/eindex.htm and find pro-Iraq government news stories in English to complicate the perspectives available on mainstream TV news in the

U.S. We can—and we should—and we will—as more and more of our lives take place within this globalized landscape. And it is the kind of analysis that calls for new forms of design for textual and Web documents.

I would like to see the writing program join with other departments and disciplines in rethinking the first-year courses, in moving away from the fragmented set of distribution requirements and into an integrated and challenging course of study that makes visible the linkages among fields of knowledge. I hope we can initiate conversations with faculty, chairs, deans, and other administrators in order to do the same kind of archaeological analysis we're asking students (and ourselves) to do and with the same kinds of "simple" questions about how competing definitions of writing and writing pedagogies have come to be and what's at stake in one over another—and why.

Notes

[1] What has come of this signature so far is that the vice chancellor charged a university-wide committee to design a multi-disciplinary writing major. Rebecca Howard chairs this committee, and there seems to be grounds for some optimism about the major.

[2] Designed by Rebecca Howard, teachers were invited to participate in a day-long discussion of contemporary theories of authorship, based on readings they had to complete ahead of time. They were also compensated.

[3] A common and contested trope, my particular use of "borderlands" draws from the work of political economist Saskia Sassen, where "borderlands analytic" refers to historically produced spaces constituted in terms of overlapping systems and discontinuities, not to a dividing line (ff. 19, 102).

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