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Heteroglossia and persuasive discourses for student writers and teachers: Intersections between out-of-school writing and the teaching of English

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HETEROGLOSSIA AND PERSUASIVE DISCOURSES FOR STUDENT WRITERS AND TEACHERS: INTERSECTIONS BETWEEN OUT-OF-SCHOOL WRITING AND THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

by

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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PH.D. THESIS

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This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

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To My Family

For all serious daring starts from within.

Eudora Welty
One Writer's Beginnings

Adelante, siempre adelante. [Onward, always onward.]

Judy Richardson
paraphrasing Don Quixote of
Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra
The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha

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ABSTRACT

Researchers have investigated issues in the teaching of writing, particularly at the elementary and university levels, and studies of out-of-school writing done by adolescents have focused on digital contexts and social media. What is missing in the literature, however, is a focused look at the heteroglossic discourses of the figured worlds of high school student writers and their writing teachers. This case study examines the intersections of the out-of-school and in-school writing worlds of three high school writers, a poet, a novelist, and a contest essay writer. Research questions focused on how notions of student writers and the teaching of high school English might be informed by the ways student writers described their out-of-class writing and motivation for writing, how their teachers developed and implemented their philosophies and practices in teaching writing, and how the student writers developed their internally persuasive discourses about writing. I use data gathered over seven years from the student writers and four of their English language arts teachers. To analyze this data, I used constant comparison analysis and narrative inquiry analysis, drawing upon theories of persuasive discourses, figured worlds, and writer identity.

My findings show that teachers dialogue with authoritative discourses and create cornerstone practices, including asking questions about their practice. In the intersections of out-of-school and in-school writing experiences, the students select some writing practices and discourses from their teachers to adopt or adapt, such as developing writing processes, participating in writing communities, and caring about writing. They complicate their definitions of writing, however, as they create figured worlds in which they establish a history of participation in writing where they explore identity, navigate

and negotiate complex emotions, and receive recognition. The students illustrate their dialogism with writing discourses in stories of improvisation in which they find power and enact resistance. I argue that writing teachers need encouragement, education, and agency to entertain more complex perceptions of student writers and teaching writing to support students for future personal, academic, career, and public discourse worlds.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Overview and Purpose

Roxie[1], an auburn-haired student, walks slowly to the front of the room and perches on the stool there. She takes a deep breath and starts to read the poem she has selected to share with the class. She is one of the last to share her poem; the room full of seniors in the AP Literature and Composition class has been required to bring a "favorite poem," "a poem someone has recommended to you," or "an interesting poem you find" to read aloud. I, the teacher of this course, have not encouraged poems by Shel Silverstein and Dr. Seuss, and I have discouraged sharing "The Road Not Taken." It has seemed, in years past, that those were some of the only poems students remembered, and the point of the assignment is to have students offer up a *variety* of poetry that resonates with them. This year, students have discovered or rediscovered Pablo Neruda, Gwendolyn Brooks, Maya Angelou, e. e. cummings. One or two have read poems written by family members. A couple have read the poems from funeral pamphlets and talk about remembering a favorite grandparent.

Roxie's voice is quiet as she reads, but the room becomes very still for another reason. It is a poem of pain, a poem of anger. The speaker of the poem is a girl whose father left when she was young, and she is remembering that loss in very vivid language. The end is an indictment: where will the father be on graduation day, a day when she

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[1] The names of the students, teachers, and school are all pseudonyms selected to ensure the anonymity of the participants.

will want and need him so badly? "I wrote this poem," Roxie says. "It's what I think about when I think about graduation."

Wow, I think. Powerful language. Powerful images. And in the back of my mind, I can still hear Roxie, as a ninth grader in my Language Arts 9 class three years previously whispering shyly to me, "Mrs. Aldrich, would you like to look at my book of poetry?" I wonder when she wrote the graduation poem. What has happened to her poetry life in the past several years? How does she think and feel about her poetry now?

In my mind, I also hear the voices of two other students from that ninth grade class and replay these scenes, as well….

"Oh, yes, I'm working on the National History Day project now" Kerianne says, in response to my questions about what was behind a picture I'd seen of her in the local newspaper. "I have an annotated bibliography of 25 sources that I got from various libraries and museums across the country and on the Internet. This is my fourth year in competing in the National History Day competition. I've gone to Nationals every time. When I was in sixth grade, my project made it to Nationals and it was displayed in the Smithsonian. It was pretty great for a 6th grader."

"Twenty-five sources?" I ask.

"Yes," she replies. "Eighteen pages worth, one time. They come from libraries around the country and from some sites my family has visited for my projects." She looks at me with a hint of amusement on her face. "I thought it was funny that you assigned the class to have at least five resources for our *Odyssey* research on gods and goddesses. That was nothing at all for me."

Hmm, I remember thinking. What is going to be new learning for Kerianne in this course? The ninth grade curriculum documents certainly don't say anything at all about advancing the learning for someone who already scours the Internet and the country for sources and who writes pages of annotated bibliography. And one who has already had her highly rewarded work displayed in the Smithsonian.

In addition to Roxie and Kerianne in this class, there is Carmen.

"Mrs. Aldrich?" this quiet student asks one day early in the term. "Do you think it would be okay if I did something with my fan fiction story for this assignment?" The assignment I have given the students, after several brainstorming activities, is to write what we are loosely labeling a personal essay, and which, in fact, is a piece of writing that they are personally invested in, be it a memoir episode or a philosophical piece on friendship or a depiction of an interesting relative. Carmen, in the midst of stuffing papers into her backpack at the end of class one day, has stopped to ask this question.

"What's fan fiction?" I ask, curious about the unfamiliar term.

She proceeds to give me a short summary of the genre, and ends with, "I write Harry Potter chapters," with a self-deprecating, rather nervous smile.

"Great," I respond. "Bring one in, and we'll take a look at it so I can tell if it will work."

The next day a Harry Potter chapter arrives--all seven single-spaced pages of it. "And how many of these have you written?" I inquire, surprised at the length and the attention to detail I notice as I skim the pages.

"Oh, probably five or six of them," Carmen responds. "Harry Potter is my favorite fan fiction site." And I decide that of course, this piece will work for our

personal essay--she certainly is invested in this writing. Even from just glancing at this piece, I notice that it is fluent and organized and makes use of a variety of sentence styles. It has depth and imagination. This piece, for the assignment I use to analyze the writing abilities of the class as a whole, tells me that Carmen is a highly capable writer in her preferred genre. Is she this skilled with other types of writing? How, I ponder, might I help her to grow as a writer?

What, I remember thinking to myself, should I teach these students? How should I go about teaching them writing? Now that I understand a little about the types and extent of the out-of-school writing being undertaken by these three students, I consider what I should do with the information. I wonder how I might learn from their engagement with and passion for their personal writing. As I think through what they have told and shown me, I consider what will be new learning for them this ninth grade year, their first year of high school. I think about how their comments and experiences fit in with the curriculum I'm supposed to teach, the expectations of the school, and the things I'm reading about in my professional journals. And, now, even though it has been almost eight years since I had these students in my ninth grade language arts class, I wonder how, today, might their experiences and those of similar current and future students be interpreted and impacted by the current state and national conversations and mandates?

Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne were not the only students I had taught up to this point who were avid writers outside of my classroom. Because they were three students in one class who brought my attention to their non-classroom writing, though, they made a big impact on me. They happily brought in their work for me to look at, and their collection of out-of-class writing was large and deep. While I usually consider myself to

be interested in my students and am interested in building a rapport with them, I was surprised by how astonished I was at the work they shared with me. Their work was more extensive and more complex than I had even begun to consider. I still remember being surprised and reflecting about why I had never been so amazed about my students' writing interests before.

My ninth grade classes typically consist of students with a range of interests and skills in class-directed writing. Usually there are those who are able to start right away and work steadily when in-class work time is given, while others sit and stare at the paper awhile before getting started, while still others seem to be frozen in place while desperately trying to come up with something to say. When I first met Carmen, Roxie, and Kerianne, rarely had other students talked with me about other writing they were doing, and no one had brought in a large collection of personal writing that he or she had been working on over the course of several years. I typically base my teaching of writing for ninth grade on what I see of students' work done for class. Until Roxie, interested in poetry; Carmen, interested in fiction writing, especially novel writing; and Kerianne, an accomplished contest writer; talked with me about their out-of-school writing that year, I was going to teach what and how I had usually taught writing in ninth grade language arts the past several years. These three students caused me to rethink my plans. The required curriculum didn't appear to me to serve them well, and their interests were varied enough to impact all parts of the writing curriculum.

These initial portraits of Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne and their writing stayed with me throughout their ninth grade year. In the spring of that year, I wrote an informal piece for a university class about them. After that year, I found myself thinking about

them again as my new students entered my classroom each year. While I only saw Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne in the halls now and again in the following years, I still thought about them often. Were they still writing their poems, stories, and poems? During their senior year, one of them, Roxie, returned briefly in another of my classes, and I learned that she still was writing poetry. How had she fared throughout high school with her poetry writing outside of school? And how had the others fared? I had talked with colleagues at the University about these student writers and others like them. They suggested that these students possibly would have had to abandon their "non-academic" writing efforts, as high school students tend to become increasingly busy with activities and jobs and school work as the high school years go by.

In 2009, at the end of these three students' senior year, three years after they had finished their ninth grade class with me, and because I was still curious about what these students were doing with their writing and what they were thinking about it, I applied for an IRB-approved study. In this formal study I interviewed all three students and two teachers each student had recommended, because I was interested in finding out if their writing lives had survived and if so, how these students had progressed. How had their private writing lives intersected with their school writing experiences? How had their teachers reacted when or if they learned about the students' out-of-school writing lives? How might this intense look at student writing, student writers, writing classrooms, and writing teachers inform how we might view this case against the larger background and contexts of the discourse of English language arts? Three years later, in 2012, I re-contacted them and their teachers for follow-up questions. Kerianne was unable to

participate in that portion of the study, but Carmen and Roxie were able to respond to interview questions, as were all four teacher participants.

As I talked with these three students and thought about their comments on their writing lives, I came to understand that their concept of writing included several different, yet overlapping arenas. What I called "out-of-school writing," to them was writing that was not assigned in class or writing that they chose to do freely, on their own time or under their own self-determined parameters. It was not necessarily non-academic writing, as Kerianne wrote very academic, well-researched pieces, and Carmen used factual background information for her novels and stories from her academics, primarily from her social studies classes and own research. Their out-of-school writing was the writing that they cared intensely about, derived great enjoyment from, and worked on with passion and energy. It was the writing that most engaged them. On occasion, they were able to share this writing within school contexts, but for the most part, it was writing that occurred and was shared (or not) outside of school. Because these students were doing what I considered to be the goal for language arts teachers – they were writing for personal purposes and self-chosen audiences and pursuing lives of literacy – I wanted to know more about how these young people had come to these practices and how we teachers might learn from them.

Although I had written an informal piece about these student writers for a class earlier, and I have written a piece on Roxie as a senior for another course which incorporated a portion of the data I collected, in this dissertation I formally examine the comments and work of all three students and the four teachers, individually and collectively, to understand their perspectives and that of their teachers. I examine their

comments on writing and investigate the writing activities of the three focal students over the course of their high school years and beyond.

Why is it important to look at student writers like these at this moment? At the national level, professional conversations are currently taking place about the state of the writing curriculum and achievement, including input from the National Writing Project (www.nwp.org*),* the Common Core State Standards Initiative (National Governor's Association, 2010), the National Council of Teachers of English (Yancey, 2009; NCTE Members Open Forum, 2011), and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (Salahu-Din, Persky, & Miller, 2007). On the local level, in a recent district meeting, English language arts colleagues and I were asked to begin the alignment of our curriculum with state standards, including the writing curriculum. We worked through a document crafted by the local area education agency in which the Iowa Core Standards were listed; teachers were to indicate how those standards were included in lessons, formative assessments, and summative assessments. At another meeting, language arts teachers dissected the standards and sub-standards, and created multiple documents detailing the scaffolding that needed to occur for students to reach mastery of the standards. All of these discussions about writing and standards and assessments would be better informed if they included rich studies of writers like Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne.

Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne in a Theoretical Context

Out-of-school Writing

Several questions about out-of-school writing initiated my study. Where do students write beyond class assignments? Why is this writing important to them? Should

teachers know more about their out-of- school writing? The contexts of writing are central to my theoretical understanding of the issues presented in my research. Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Caine (1998) present a framework of "figured worlds" (p. 41), the cultural worlds of school and home and the other spaces learners find and develop for themselves, which the focal students explore in their pursuit of creating writing lives. Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne all write for school assignments, but the writing that matters most to them occurs outside of school walls. To look at their writing outside of school, I call upon the work of theorists who investigate community literacies, adolescent literacies, and literacies which overlap personal and school boundaries. Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development underpins my understanding of studies by out-of-school researchers. Hull and Schultz (2002a, 2002b), Gee (2003), Finders (1997), and Street (1983) present studies that contextualize out-of-school writing in a variety of ages and settings, concluding that perhaps the most important arenas for learning about writing and doing the work of composing do not take place inside school walls. Additionally, a PEW study in 2008, co-authored by Lenhart, Arafeh, Smith, and Macgill, provides a lens for considering "intense writers" such as Carmen, Roxie, and Kerrianne.

Heteroglossic Discourses on the Teaching of Writing

To frame my study within the context of the school environment, I present an overview of the history of teaching writing, considering theoretical perspectives ranging from Plato's questions about art and form to multi-modal, digital 21st Century calls to re-conceptualize literacy practices in schools. Bahktin's (1975/1981) theories of heteroglossia, authoritative discourses, and internally persuasive discourses are instructive in understanding decisions teachers negotiate when forming philosophies of

teaching writing and pedagogical choices. Bakhtin's theories are extended in the work of scholars like Bazerman (2004) and Wells (2000) which I use to understand my observations of how teachers dialogue with a variety of discourses, externally imposed and personally selected, as they shape their understandings of teaching writing.

Identity and Agency

It is also important to look at these students' writing identities, as performed in their in-school and out-of-school experiences and their comments about these experiences. As these students write, what identities do they enact? How do they want to be recognized as writers? How do they use writing to transform identity? To frame my understanding of these issues of identity and agency, I call upon work by (1975/1981); Moje and Lewis (2007); and Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Caine (1998), and Gee (2004), who consider agency as the deliberate construction and reconstruction of "selves, identities, activities, relationships, cultural tools and resources, and histories" (Moje & Lewis, 2007, p. 18). Understanding that identity is always in formation is useful when examining the data of the study. In addition, published writers inform my thinking about student writer identity, and I turn to the words of authors like Murray (1990), and Atwood (2003), who describe becoming a writer and writing for multiple purposes and identities in terms similar to the words and practices of writers Kerianne, Roxie, and Carmen.

What is missing in the literature, however, is a focused look at the intersections of out-of-school high school writers and the world of school, including that professional teaching world which exists beyond the door of a specific classroom. My study focuses on how students and teachers understand writing discourses and describe the overlap of

practices and identities in multiple contexts. What options do teachers and students have in their thoughts and practices surrounding writing? What do they wish to have? How might teachers and students consider integrating the richness of student experiences with the language of standards? My research project considers these questions with the goal of understanding student writers and the English Language Arts world with more complexity.

Research Questions

In this study I examine what three students who write for personal purposes beyond class assignments have come to understand about writing. I also examine a part of the context of their school experiences from the perspectives of four teachers recommended by the students. My purpose is to consider how teachers and students might together inform more meaningful and purposeful writing experiences and learning in high school. I address the following overarching research question: How do the intersections of what students say and do in their figured worlds of writing and what teachers say and do in teaching writing inform our notions of student writers and of teaching writing?

Specifically, I am interested in these questions:

- How do the focal students describe their in-school and out-of-school writing?
- Who and what motivate the students to write beyond class?
- How do teachers develop and implement internally persuasive discourses about writing?
- How do students develop and perform internally persuasive discourses about writing?

As I reflect on these questions, an additional issue becomes: Because teachers and students are guided by state standards and other mandates, what kind of room is there for them and their teachers and the work they all must do and want to do? These questions and theoretical frames guide my study.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter I review the theories that relate closely to the contexts in which the student participants are asked to write and/or choose to write. These theories underpin my understanding of the discourses the teachers and students hear about writing and inform my exploration of what they say about writing and the practices they take up as teachers of writing and as student writers. Poet Roxie and novelist Carmen spoke with me about their writing informally as ninth graders and subsequently in two interviews over the course of seven years. Contestant Kerianne chatted with me about her contest essays as a ninth grader and three years later in an interview when she was a senior. I interviewed the teacher participants twice in a three-year span. I kept their comments and questions in mind during the in-between years, as I read and studied research in the teaching of writing and theoretical perspectives on literacy. I read to pursue questions I had about the data throughout my analysis and as I wrote this dissertation. The theoretical framework that follows allows me to analyze the intersections between the teaching of writing and what the students select to incorporate into their internalized discourses about what writing is and what it means to be a writer.

In the next sections, I provide an overview of two important environments of my study: the figured worlds of classroom writing and out-of-class writing. In addition, I present theoretical concepts of persuasive discourses and identity, fundamental concepts that frame my exploration and analysis. Additional clarification and application of these theories follow in this chapter and in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. In the studies I reference in

this chapter, the researchers include writing as part of their definitions of literacy, and so I, too, use the word *literacy* to denote writing.

The Figured Worlds of Three High School Writers

Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) use the phrase *figured worlds* to describe contexts of learning and identity formation. I describe it briefly here and in more detail in a later chapter of this dissertation. In the words of Holland, *et al*., a figured world is a "socially produced, culturally constructed" space (pp. 40-1). In this space, the environment, people, and discourse – overt and hidden -- shape learning. It may be a world that is inviting and the learner joins freely, or it may be a world of authority and power and mandated participation. It may be an environment with a combination of these factors. In participating and acting in the figured world, the individual learns how to become a member of the figured world and performs as such. As the learner participates in the figured world, he is formed by that world and helps to form the figured world. In looking at a figured world, a researcher looks at the "culture and subject position" (p. 16); in other words, the researcher looks at how the subject is positioned by the culture and how the subject positions himself in the culture of the figured world. The subject may conform or resist (or conform and resist) the discourse of the figured world, and in conforming and/or resisting, forms and reforms his learning and his identity. Being recognized as a member of this figured world is important to promoting further participation and learning.

A high school classroom is a figured world within the larger figured world of the school itself as well as the district, state, and country in which it is located. The teacher is herself a participant within and in response to the figured worlds in which she has

participated. She brings to the figured world of her classroom her background and education and on-site learning. Her own high school education, her teacher training, the professional development of the district, and state and national mandates all contribute to the discourse she presents in the figured world of her classroom. This classroom is a figured world of learning for the student. Like the teacher, the student acts, interacts and learns within this context, although often with less agency in choosing what he studies and how he learns it.

Other spaces operate in ways similar to figured worlds for learners. Vygotsky (1978) describes a learning world as a zone of proximal development (ZPD) where children learn, with the assistance of an adult or "more capable peers" (p. 86). Wells (2000) extends this basic definition and explains that he and others now see the ZPD as "a way of conceptualizing the many ways in which an individual's development may be assisted by other members of the culture, both in fact-to-face interaction and through the legacy of the artifacts that they have created" (p. 57). Shared learning is an important focus for neo-Vygotskian researchers.

Figured worlds of learning occur within schools and outside them, and while many students many find the learning environments of school engaging and growing opportunities, others do not. Luttrell and Parker (2001) describe a student who enjoys reading and writing for her own learning outside of school and who struggles with the learning opportunities afforded her inside school. They describe her figured worlds of learning as a disconnect, saying, "she writes, both literally and metaphorically, outside the lines that have been scripted for her, including aspirations for college" (p. 242).

The notion of figured worlds informs the circumstances, conditions, and discourses for both the teachers and student participants of my study. The student participants, Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne, participate in the figured world of school, and in addition, they design and welcome other learning spaces for themselves. They create worlds of learning on their own or with a few selected others about writing poetry, novels, and contest pieces. Exploring how figured worlds present learning opportunities and contributes to identity formation is central to understanding important issues of my research.

Intersections of Writing Figured Worlds

According to Resnick (1990), for many students, school is not the principal site of literacy experience and skill for many students. This is the case with my research participants. However, it is not in looking at one site (the school) or another (beyond the classroom) but, rather, in the intersections of sites that we may learn quite a lot about students and writing. Dewey (1990/1900) asserts that schools do not take advantage of a student's experiences outside of school and that in-school learning is not applied in out-of-school life: "We can get only artificial unity so long as we confine our gaze to the school system itself" he says (p. 72). The goal, according to Dewey, is to work to achieve a unity between school and outside life. Drawing upon this, Hull and Schultz (2002b) argue that rather than set up binaries of academic and non-academic learning, "we might do well to look for overlap or complementarity or perhaps a respectful division of labor" (p. 3).

Gee (2012)) suggests that discourses may create or be carried out in borderland spaces for some students. These discourses are created by peers, and are not of home or

school, but somewhere in-between. Students do not at times want to embrace the discourses of school, which may be an antagonistic place, but using some of school discourse enables them negotiate school. Speaking of figured worlds as borderland spaces or as intersections complicates the dichotomous language of the terms *out-of-school* and *in-school* when I speak of adolescent literacies. However, as the literature on adolescent literacies uses these terms, I will also use that vocabulary

Historical Perspectives on Out-of-school Literacy

A body of research exists on literacy learning outside of school, and I focus here on studies on writing pertinent to my research. The themes in scholarly work which inform my understanding include:

- critiques of the isolation of literacy practices in school,
- roles of school literacy studies as highlighted by studies of community literacies,
- calls to re-imagine adolescent literacies, and
- caveats about out-of-school literacies.

Isolation of School Literacy Practices

Street (1983), in explaining "the new literacies studies" (p. 1) at the time, describes what he names *autonomous* and *ideological* models of literacy to explain two perspectives of thinking about writing study. The autonomous model is the model of school, he suggests, in that literacy is learned "independent of social context" (p. 5), meaning that studying writing is isolated and learning to write means learning what are presented as innate features. He calls this type of literacy learning "neutral" and "literacy-in-itself" (p. 7). He contrasts the autonomous model with the ideological model

of literacy learning, which takes into consideration the issues of power inherent in literacy and acknowledges that there are many social and cultural practices connected to reading and writing. He argues there is a need for cross-cultural understanding of reading and writing as "literacy practices" (p. 7), which encompasses a wider conceptualization of writing to include contexts and behaviors and events not traditionally included in an isolated study of writing in school. Barton and Hamilton (1998) delineate literacy practices as "embedded" and influenced by "social institutions and power relationships" (p. 7) in their study of the literacy history of Lancaster, England. They find a network of literacies interacting with home, history, leisure, politics, and school and suggest that social interactions give literacy practices meaning in contrast to studied school literacy of "disembedded skills" (p. 282). By understanding this distinction, readers and writers would come to value the complexity of literacy and look for literacy practices in other contexts.

Hull and Schultz (2002a) report that school literacies appear to be "narrowed and narrowed and narrowed still more" (p. 52), causing concern that narrowly-defined and traditional literacies, whether teachers agree or not, will continue to be firmly entrenched in classrooms. Tatum (2006) advises that by ignoring the literacies that students are familiar with outside of school, educators allow an "uncritical approach to literacy" which permits a traditional approach to literacy "unchallenged and unchanged" (p. 78) in his research of adolescents and how it is presented in teacher professional development.

School literacy, in these studies, is presented in opposition to more fully understood notions of literacy. Mandates and traditional practices inform teaching practices, and I examine these features of teacher's lives in Chapter 4.

Community Literacies

Scribner and Cole (1981), in their ethnographic study of Vai people in Liberia, West Africa, investigated the roles of formal schooling and out-of school learning in literacy practices of the community. Their findings reveal that even in a culture that relies primarily on oral language for communication, reading and writing are also critical literacy skills. While "school has a very special status" (p. 135), they report, out-of-school learning challenges the belief that school is the only site of learning about writing, as writing is required in many social practices and is taught through experience with specific tasks to accomplish.

Heath (1983), in a 10-year ethnographic study of social groups in the Piedmont Carolinas, examined how children learned literacy in their family and local communities, juxtaposing the Trackton and Roadville children. She observes that both communities were rich in literacy practices, and children learned to use language based on family and religious belief systems of their communities. These children raised in distinctive contexts come to school differently prepared for school. Schools, she says, need to reconceptionlize their standard expectations of students and families and work to connect with the cultures and literacy that students bring with them so students may move to full social, literate participation in their adult lives. Other examples of cross-cultural studies, very briefly mentioned here, include those by Kulick and Stroud (1983) of literacy practices in Papua New Guinea, showing that writing is actively shaped by the culture in which it is used, in contrast to the isolated expository writing of the school and religious communities. The Bledsoe and Robey (1983) study of Arabic literacy in Sierra Leone, taught in a community group and which promotes secrecy, magic, and social and

religious influence, is another example of powerful writing literacy learned outside of school.

Although research in literacy has spanned decades, Hull and Schultz (2002b) contend that "most of the conceptual advances in thinking about literacy in the last two decades have come from research on out-of-school literacy" (p. 4). And Schultz and Hull (2002) suggest that in understanding the resources and backgrounds students bring with them to school, educators have opportunities to think about "changing their pedagogy" (p. 16), rather than assuming that only the students need to adapt to the school's literacy practices. Reading and writing projects done both within and outside of school in activities need to "serve larger goals and life purposes" (p. 20), rather than as a unit of study just for school. Educators need to reconceptualize what is taught in school and reconsider "what we count as literate practices" (p. 27). They recommend that teachers should acknowledge and prepare for learning that transfers from a school context to a non-school context and vice versa..

Analyzing the recursive nature of people's lives and the learning options they partake in, Barton, Ivanic, Appleby, Hodge, and Tusting (2007) describe socially developed literacy as a part of life experiences, in addition to school experiences. They find that literacy is negotiated in such diverse settings as a drug rehabilitation center, a domestic violence center, a homeless shelter, as well as a community college.

This body of research is helpful in understanding a larger picture of literacy that challenges beliefs of traditional school practices. This conceptual framework sets a stage for my closer examination of high school student literacy.

Re-imagining Adolescent Literacies

The studies previously mentioned examine literacies in the community to inform school perspectives on literacy or describe school and out-of-school literacies in general terms. Other researchers focus more specifically on adolescent practices in reading and writing, with participants similar in age to the students of my study. Camitta's (1993) research on the "vernacular" writing of high school students in homes, before and after school settings, and classrooms, finds that for adolescents, "almost any time or place can be an opportunity for writing" (p. 232) for social and personal purposes. Students willingly engage in writing to change experiences and relationships in notes, poems, songs, and letters. Finders' (1997) investigates Midwestern junior high school girls whose literacy practices include reading 'zines in groups, writing notes at school, and writing poetry and other pieces that matter at home. Finders describes these literacy activities as a literacy "underlife" (p. 24) and as acts of resistance by successful students to the intended student-centered curriculum, which includes pedagogical strategies of writing and sharing writing in class.

Mahiri (1998), examining literacies of African American students at the beginning of college, observes that a pedagogy and curriculum that are flexible can transform student writers who are allowed to draw upon youth culture and new technologies. Phelps (2006) notes that "the full range of adolescent literacies is much more complex, dynamic, and sophisticated" (p. 4) than what schools offer in literacy study. He urges educators to reconsider the literacies students bring with them to school, including their abilities and needs to negotiate in multiple text types, calling for an

"expanded concept of 'text' . . . to . . . also include various electronic media and adolescents' own cultural and social understandings" (p. 4).

Gee's (2003) work in studying the design of video games, identifies 36 "learning principles" and suggests that educators can learn much from games and teenagers that might be applied to reading and writing. He asks how learning in school might capitalize on what video games can do so well: convince people to buy and play them, even though they are "long and hard" (p. 6) and take hours to master. He concludes that the principles of learning embedded in video games are better than many teaching practices schools utilize to help students learn.

DiPardo and Schnack (2004), observe junior high students sharing reading, writing, and conversation with elderly volunteers. In this program, the students and adult partners develop engage in thought-provoking discussions and writing and they develop relationships with one another. The researchers discover the importance of emotion, thought, and connection in meaningful literacy events and argue that learners need opportunities for challenge combined with pleasurable engagement, in contrast to the literacy demands of high stakes testing. In a look at the literacies of adolescents afforded in digital and technological contexts, Schultz, Vasudevan, and Throop (2007) argue that educators should suspend the division of out-of-school and inside-school borders. In a world of global communication, they visualize students as members of a world community, creating their own identities, and raise questions about global citizenship. Re-imagined literacy practices to encompass the local and international in multi-modal texts and to cross time and space barriers are needed to adapt to new notions of global citizenship, they say. While the research of Mahiri, Phelps, Gee, and Schultz and her

colleagues focuses on intersections in student writing in digital contexts, the writing practices of my participants are not primarily practiced in online communities or social networks. They do, however, represent a range of complex literacies of multiple text types, in a high school version of the writing underlife.

Two studies come to similar conclusions about new conceptions of teaching literacy: Obidah and Marsh (2006), in a study of African American students' literacy practices observed in a program offering creative writing opportunities, suggest that "the only viable option for educational transformation is allowing students' realities" to be included in classrooms (p. 126), and Hinchman and Chandler-Olcott (2006) agree that beginning with the "existing literacies" of students is a key first step in assisting students to engage with school, help teachers learn from students, and allow them all to extend and develop multiple literacies.

Data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) includes results from a questionnaire asking students about their writing habits and reveals a slice of the existing literacies of the students it tested. NAEP reports that students who write outside of school tend to receive higher scores on their writing assessments (Salahu-Din *et al*., 2007). The student self-reported category for writing stories or poems outside of class and the category for "writing behavior outside of school" show a strong correlation for improved scores from these two out-of-school writing experiences on the timed essay writing required in the test. National public school average scale scores improved for secondary students when students wrote stories or poems one to two times a week or who wrote "a lot" outside of school.

Also relevant to my research is the 2008 PEW study of teens and writing authored by Lenhart, Arafeh, Smith, and Macgill (2008), which finds 93% of students have "written something for themselves or just for fun" over the course of the year studied. This study finds one-fourth of the teens studied have written a type of creative writing, such as "plays, poetry, fiction or short stories" (p. 11) in that year and describes a small group of "intense writers" who write frequently, some preferring to use longhand rather than computers for their writing. The PEW study finds that teenagers enjoy their out-of-school writing more than their in-school writing, and those writers of the study use their personal writing to "work through their emotions" (p. 61).

Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne are thus placed within a context of other intense writers who also choose to write beyond academic requirements. They are among the adolescents who bring their out-of-school literacies with them to school and meet the school pedagogies and literacy expectations of their teachers. My study explores how three students and their teachers perceive and describe the intersections between writing discourses, identities, and practices in school and out of school. My purpose is to illustrate how teachers and researchers might better understand the connections between these writing activities and the context of the world of school.

Caveats about Out-of-school Literacies

Educators concerned with understanding out-of-school literacies and their inclusion in school learning environments, also realize that care needs to be taken in making changes. Alvermann (1998) cautions that positioning non-school literacies as the "other" and as less desirable or as unacceptable, results in enduring negative consequences. But Hull and Schultz (2002a) warn of romanticizing out-of-school

literacies in our attempts to honor the learning that takes place outside of the formal educational setting. Hull and Schultz (2002a) recognize that in examining out-of-school literacies, researchers come to understand the "permeability" in the divide between what is learned beyond classrooms and what is studied inside them. They advise that in acknowledging out-of-school literacy learning, educators should still maximize learning opportunities that schools can provide. Their suggestion is that teachers "reexamine the way in which those opportunities are provided" and to balance interests in out-of school literacies at the same time giving school literacies "their due" (p. 45).

Research on the teaching of writing also reflects considerations for schools to become more inclusive of out-of-school literacies, although the body of research on teaching writing has a much longer history. In the next section I examine the roots of the debates on teaching writing, which eventually merge with debates on out-of-school literacies studies in the last part of the 20th century.

Historical Perspectives on the Teaching of Writing

At the heart of thinking about the intersections of in-school and out-or-school writing are questions that have been long debated: what is writing? What constitutes good writing? What should or shouldn't be included in the teaching of writing? The conversation about what good writing is and isn't and what should and shouldn't be included in the teaching of writing has a long history, unlike the history of studying out-of-school writing. As will become apparent, early historical literature on the teaching of writing highlights a debate about the importance of knowing *about* rules and structures of writing versus focusing on what the intent of the message is and what the author brings to the writing task. In the *Phaedrus* of the fourth century BCE, Plato (1988) acknowledges

the central argument of form versus content, when he says that just knowing about rhetoric is not the same as creating art. It cannot be art without truth. Rhetoric is fine if it is based on truth from dialectic discourse, in the give and take of constructing a response or an argument. Isocrates (1988), also in the fourth century BCE, argued that the Sophists had no interest in truth, but were more concerned with concrete rules of discourse to influence political argument. Montaigne (1987), siding with Plato as he wrote in the late 16th century, also thought that "all the fine colours of rhetoric" were "eclipsed by the light of pure and naïve truth" (p. 64). The rules vs. author's role and content dialectic had early beginnings and remains important to my study.

Teaching Writing in the 18th, 19th, and Early 20th Centuries

Clifford (1989) reports that in 1749 the teaching of writing consisted primarily of teaching penmanship and Judy (1979) says the early 1800s emphasized grammar rules. He observes that in the mid-1800s students practiced writing essays, and that writing was assigned, not taught. Teachers were vigilant in marking errors on student papers (Newkirk, 2009). During this same time period, however, Barrett Wendell, of Harvard University, assigned his students daily writing for sharing with the members of the class and one-on-one conferences with Wendell (Newkirk, 1994). While this pedagogy seems rather familiar to us, it was not prevalent at that time. Douglas (1979) writes that in the first two-thirds of the 20th century, composition studies continued to be rules-based. In the 1950s the emphasis was on expository writing which applied classic modes of writing, and in the 1960s teacher marks on papers were mainly noting proofreading errors (Clifford, 1989); Warriner's (1977) grammar book was ubiquitous (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1986). So, while progressing from teaching handwriting to having students

compose pieces of writing, the emphasis was still on rules of rhetoric and grammar in high schools. According to Glass (1979), "real writing" (p. 35) would occur at another point in time, in college and beyond. The teacher participants of my research draw upon traditions of teaching writing, and a question I consider is where writing for authentic audiences and for real-life purposes occurs.

Teaching Writing Practices in the Late 20th Century

Several seminal moments in the past fifty years highlight recent directions in writing pedagogy and inform my research. In 1966 a group of British and American scholars met at the Dartmouth Conference, discussing issues in composition studies, eventually arriving at the important agreement that students brought their own "language, experience, [and] knowledge," that the compositions they wrote could become the "literature of the classroom," and that writing was learned by doing it and sharing it with real audiences (Glass, 1979, p. 36). This recognition created a turning point, and an explosion of writing theories and discussions over pedagogy followed in the 70s. Emig (1971) conducted a landmark case study studying the writing processes of senior students, recognizing the very personal strategies writers utilize in forming a composition, and some teachers embraced the position of Murray (Murray 1972/2003), a journalist, who argued that writing should be taught as a process, not a product. Emig (1977) claimed that in writing the writer is making meaning, and thus writing might be utilized in writing to learn or discover what one thinks about a topic. Discussing expressive writing became part of the discourse of teaching composition (Clifford, 1989). Considering how writing process theory shapes the practices of both teachers and students is a focus in my study.

In 1973 a group of California high school teachers and college professors met to talk about teaching writing, leading to the formation of the Bay Area Writing Project, which in turn led to the development of the National Writing Project (Clifford, 1989; Gray, 2000). Teaching writing teachers how to teach writing was not common then, nor was sharing successful strategies. The departure from primarily teaching rules and modes of writing to ways of getting students involved in the topics of their compositions and learning processes which might help them express their ideas was also novel.

Flower and Hayes (1977) call the 70s the "composition renaissance," but note that teachers were still teaching writing by "dissecting" it (p. 449). They make a note, though, that beyond the classroom, writing was not generally produced to be dissected: "outside of school, in private life and professions, writing is a highly goal-oriented, intellectual performance. It is both a strategic action and a thinking problem" (p. 449). While it was easier to teach the knowledge about writing when it was considered a product, it was much more "messy and mysterious" to think about writing as "an act of thinking" (p. 449). Still, most of the professional conversation was about helping students become involved in the writing of school; there was little focus on studying the writing students were doing outside of school on their own, which is important to my research.

In the early 80s, "theoretical classification schemas" were developed by Moffett (1968), Kinneavy (1969/2003), and Britton (1982/2003), all emphasizing the importance of a writer's purpose in completing a writing task, as opposed to a focus on which mode to use in writing, which had been the subject of high school writing classrooms for a century (Connors, 1981). Macrorie (1980) advocated using personal experiences in

writing an "I-Search" paper, and in the late 80s Kirby and Liner (1988) espoused using writing journals. Calkins (1986) declared, "We write because we want to understand our lives" (p. 3) and called upon teachers to build writing classrooms that invited students to write for their own purposes supported with conferences and mini-lessons. While her book was mainly directed at elementary classroom teachers, the message was clearly on the side of placing the student, not rules and modes of writing, at the center of the writing curriculum and was adopted by high school teachers, as well. Atwell (1987) contributed a middle-school perspective for creating a reading-writing workshop, and Linda Reif (1992) added a high school iteration of the reading-writing workshop in the early 90s.

Calling upon the writer to care about what she wrote and also to share, revise, and conference, were dramatic differences from focusing on teaching the rules of writing a comparison/contrast paper. However, the focus on student writing still remained in the classroom, as opposed to the other contexts where students created their writing. In my research, I explore what the teachers of the study have decided to do in "composing a culture" (Sunstein, 1994) in their writing classrooms. Where is there opportunity for teachers to challenge their own philosophies on teaching writing to better address teaching writing? What cultures have they created? I examine evidence of process and purpose in teacher-assigned and self-assigned writing work.

Early 21st Century Concerns

In the 90s and the early part of the 21st century, discussion has turned to post-process and socio-cultural theory. Post-process theorists emphasize that the writing process is not a linear, step-by-step process, some even arguing that writing cannot really be taught (Breuch 2003). Bruech cites Kent in defining post-process writing as being

"public . . . interpretive . . . and situational" (p. 110). She says post-process theorists suggest working with writing through interactions in "one-to-one" instructional dialogues and suggests giving up the "foundations" on which we may have been relying. Embracing this pedagogy, she says, "enhances our sensitivity as teachers, our knowledge and expertise, and the way we communicate with students to help them learn" (p. 122).

Ivanic (2004) details a shift in writing theory from process to genre to social practices to sociopolitical discourse. In these shifts, the writer moves focus from writing as "mental processes" to writing as an event to writing as occurring within a "sociocultural and political context" (p. 225). Genre theory provides the perspective that writing accomplishes real social purposes for real contexts, and that writers learn "to adapt writing to situations" which repeatedly occur (Dean, 2008, p. 5). In genre discourse, writing is about specific text-types for a particular setting and is directly taught, according to Ivanic (2004). The focus is on the purpose of writing for a particular social context and is learned to accomplish "socially-defined goals" (p. 237). These sociocultural notions of writing stand in direct contrast to decontextualized assessment and formulistic teaching also common in the early 21st century world of high school writing environments (Ivanic, 2004; Hillocks 2002; Applebee 2013; Applebee and Langer 2009, 2011). These theories espoused by researchers and practicioners shed light on the discourses the teacher participants use when talking about their philosophies and practices as writing teachers.

In recent years, the National Council of Teachers of English and other professional organizations have addressed the need to look beyond the classroom for sites of literacy. Multi-modal, multi-literacy, out-of-school, and in-school literacies merge as

this professional organization looks at change. Multiple documents published and posted by NCTE in the years 2008 and 2009 point to the need for the profession to look to the literacy needed in the 21st century (NCTE, 2008, 2009a, 2009b; Yancey, 2009). Questions like "How is Literacy for the 21st Century Different?" (NCTE, 2009b) and phrases like "A Call to Support 21st Century Writing" (Yancey, 2009) ask teachers to reconsider their assumptions of what and how they teach. One premise of a 21st century paradigm of teaching writing is stated as "the beginning of a new era in literacy, . . . a period where composers become composers not through direct and formal instruction alone (if at all), but rather through what we might call an extracurricular social co-apprenticeship" (Yancey, 2009, p. 5). Many publications emphasize the need to recognize the importance of digital literacies, including the National Writing Project's *Because Digital Writing Matters* (National Writing Project, 2010). While my study does not focus on social co-apprenticeship in online venues, the recognition that direct and formal instruction may not be a major means for students to learn to write is an appropriate consideration in analyzing the teacher and student comments of my research.

Existing alongside potential conversations of one-to-one conferences with students, encouraging authentic writing for real social purposes, and the importance of addressing digital writing, are the classroom teacher's on-site discussions of standards, standardized testing, meeting benchmarks for No Child Left Behind (U.S. Department of Education, 2013), and implementing the Common Core State Standards Initiative (2010), often referred to as just the Common Core or the CCSS. At the time I am writing this dissertation, the focus of discussions during professional meetings among classroom teachers has shifted from meeting the requirements of the No Child Left Act of Behind of

2001 (U.S. Department of Education, 2013) to a concern with implementing the CCSS, also discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. These conversations are happening across the country, as evidenced by the plethora of materials touting ways to meet the Common Core in every brochure and catalog I have received in the last two years. The CCSS, a set of standards first promoted by the National Governor's Association (2010) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (2014), have been embraced by states for multiple reasons, one of which is that federal educational funding is tied to adopting the standards. The CCSS have 32 anchor standards for English language arts literacy. There are 10 anchor standards and 18 grade-specific standards for writing in the ninth and tenth grade band, or category. The writing standards privilege argument, informative/explanatory, and narrative (including "real or imagined") writing. Writing poetry, student participant Roxie's specialty, is not explicitly included, although analyzing poetry is included under the informative/explanatory anchor standard.

SAT (College Board, 2010) and ACT (2010) offer writing assessments as a part of their college-entrance testing battery. The timed, prompt-driven writing tests elicit essays on topics requiring persuasive and argumentative rhetorical stances, which, in turn, implicitly promote the teaching of traditional modes of writing (Hillocks, 2002, 2005). In addition, another writing assessment feature often sold with textbook packages offers online technologies that allow students to submit their writing to an electronic scoring system, which returns the work with a score in a matter of minutes (Vantage Learning, 2010; Pearson Education, 2010). This assessment is based on sentence structure, grammar, and paragraph length, among other characteristics that can be scored by a machine. The mixture of teacher-expertise, testing focus, mandates, professional

discourse, and time-savers make up a teacher's life. This research responds to the complexity that makes up school sites of writing and the influences on students who choose to write for school- and non-school purposes.

The students of my study do use technology as a part of their writing practices for research and as they compose or save their work. Two look at online sites for ideas and to share their writing. One creates multi-modal presentations. The main focus of their writing remains, however, out of the realm of social networks and digital worlds. In my study, I focus on how students and teachers perceive and describe the overlap between other types of writing discourses, identities, and practices in school and out of school.

Theoretical Framework: Bakhtin's Theories of Discourse

The theories of heteroglossia, authoritative discourse, and internally persuasive discourse by Mikhail Bakhtin (1975/1981) are important theoretical concepts in my study, and are additionally explained in Chapter 4. To Bakhtin, language has an "historical life" (p. 356). It contains interrelationships between current as well as "future and former languages" (p. 357) with contradictory perspectives co-existing from all the different points in time. Bakhtin calls this a *heteroglossia* of language, where "languages do not exclude each other, but rather intersect with each other in many different ways" (p. 291), forming new socially intended language. Words and language are not neutral. They are socially laden, or "socially charged" (p. 293), and contain a "belief system" (p. 356) of the times and places from which they come and in which they interact and are newly formed. The heteroglossia of discourses about writing surrounds the participants of my study. The discourses both the teachers and students hear about writing are packed with the beliefs of various people, times, and places, as evidenced by the history of

teaching writing just described. The heteroglossia of discourses encircling my subjects intersects in the teaching and writing philosophies and practices of the educators and learners of my research.

In Bakhtin's view, some language arrives with an authority attached to it that cannot be ignored. This authority comes from people and places that are hierarchically advantaged or from a distanced source that speaks from a position of power, such as a "political power, an institution, a person" (p. 343). It is a language that comes with its "authority already fused to it" (p. 342) and its authority "demands our unconditional allegiance" (p. 343). This authoritative discourse must be accepted; it is not only what should be, but also what must be. The voices of authority create what Bakhtin terms a *centripetal force* to sustain a hegemony of thinking, to force acceptance of the authoritative word and unify discourse and actions. However, through social use and with the historical perspectives also present in language, there are *centrifugal forces* that separate language and the ideas from hegemony. Bakhtin calls this a "stratifying" force of an utterance (p. 272). When one speaks, one is participating in the heteroglossia of language, the swirl of language present and past with all its centripetal and centrifugal elements. In my study I explore the voices of authority that force a centripetal acceptance of discourse and practice and look for centrifugal forces which separate common acceptance of ideas about writing.

Bakhtin writes that as a person encounters words and other individuals, he finds language already "overlain with qualifications, open to dispute, charged with value" and "entangled" with perspectives and emphases (p. 276). The person becomes a part of the

"living interaction," (p. 276) or the dialogism involved in discourse. Bakhtin describes the interaction – the dialogism -- as follows:

> The word, directed toward its object, enters a dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgments and accents, weaves in and out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet a third group: and all this may crucially shape discourse, may leave a trace in all its semantic layers, may complicate its expression and influence its entire stylistic profile. (p. 276)

In the Glossary of *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin* (1975/1981) translators Emerson and Holquist further explain Bakhtinian dialogism as:

> Everything means, is understood, as a part of a greater whole—there is a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others. Which will affect the other, how it will do so and in what degree is what is actually settled at the moment of utterance. (p. 426)

In the heteroglossia of language, efforts for the unitary language of imposing centripetal forces are complicated by, as Emerson and Holquist write, "the overpowering force of heteroglossia, and thus dialogism" (p. 426). The point of utterance, when words are spoken (or written), reveals the actual influence or impact of dialogism. In short, both language and speaker converse or interact with the other languages, people, and points of view when they meet. The conversation is a dialogue, or an exchange, back and forth between ideas and words. Dialogism influences ideas and meanings; dialogism impacts, influences, and changes self and others. For both teachers of writing and students who choose to write both in-class and elsewhere, opportunities for dialogism with accepted discourse occur publicly and privately, in spoken as well as written formats. A dialogic relationship with discourses and others is an important framework in exploring how teachers and students in my research come to their conclusions about important concepts in writing.

Elements of Bakhtin's theories of discourses appear in the works of more contemporary researchers. Bazerman (2004) comments that the term *intertextuality* itself does not appear in Baktin's work or that of Volosnov, Bakhtin's colleague. The concept of intertextuality is similar to Bakhtin's theory that texts do not exist in isolation, and Bazerman explains that in writing, "we write in response to prior writing, and as writers we use the resources provided by prior writers . . . . Our reading and writing are in dialogue with each other as we write in direct and indirect response" to what we have written and read previously (p. 63). read before. In our communication with others, Bazerman says, we are "inevitably caught up in the social drama of unfolding webs of utterances, to which we add only our next turn . . . how we draw ourselves close to or distance ourselves from those utterances" (p. 63). Using Bakhtin's theories of dialogism, teachers might help students learn to interact internally and with others.

Wells (2000) employs Bakhtinian language when he speaks of the interplay of classroom conversations: "knowledge is created and re-created between people as they bring their personal experience and information derived from other sources" in problem-solving activities or class discussions (p. 67). Lee (2004) finds Bakhtin's theories inform active classrooms where students are receptive to a dialogue with each other and are open to differing thoughts and opinions.

Bakhtin (1975/1981) says that when multiple discourses and languages with their heteroglossia of meanings interact, they *interanimate* with each other. The "ideological systems" of the many discourses that "in no way could live in peace and quiet with one another" must be addressed, resulting in "the necessity of actively choosing one's orientation among them" (p. 296). What the listener or reader accepts, adapts, or rejects

becomes a part of what Bakhtin calls the recipient's *internally persuasive discourse.* The individual becomes more independent, and separates authoritative discourse and the discourse of others to change language into his "own word" (p. 345). In separating authoritative discourse from that which is internally persuasive, the individual finds that language or, in Bakhtin's (1975/1981) vocabulary, *the word,* is "half-ours and half-someone else's" (p. 345). Internally persuasive discourse is a creation of the individual that "awakens new and independent words" (p. 345). Internally persuasive words are applied to new situations and interanimate with the language of the new contexts and discourses. Internally persuasive discourse is a part of what Bakhtin calls "our ideological development" (p. 346) or "ideological becoming (p. 424). In ideological becoming or development, we develop our own perspectives, philosophies, and actions. Making words our own, Bakhtin emphasizes, is a difficult task.

I use Bakthin's theories of heteroglossia to understand the multiple social discourses of the figured worlds for the teachers and student participants. I look at voices of external authority, including historical, political, and institutional discourse, that tell both teachers and students what to do in teaching writing and as writers. I examine strands of centripetal force, for the discourses that pull teachers and students to a particular way of doing things, and I explore the social contexts and language that separate the voices, or the centrifugal forces. In the coming chapters, I highlight intersections of teacher and student dialogism with discourses. As I look at responses to authoritative mandated discourses by the teachers and responses by the students to the discourses they hear from their teachers, I examine the words that the participants adopt, adapt, merge, or make new – what they make their own and what they find internally

persuasive. As I analyze the internally persuasive discourses of the student participants, I explore their ideological becoming, what they begin to believe and enact in their own writing practices.

Theoretical Framework: Identity and Writing

Authoring the Self and Writing

Bakhtin's theory of authoring identity in the social context of the writing classroom and the practices of out-of-class writers allows me to investigate how writing helps writers to form and reform identities as a writer. Clark and Holquist (1984) summarize Bakhtin's essay *The Architectonics* as saying, "human existence . . . is the building of a self" (p. 64). A dialogue between self and others contributes to the building of self, and this dialogue, or "utterance" happens "not only in words or texts but also in thought and deeds" (p. 64). While Bakhtin discusses his theory in relationship to authors and their novels, Clark and Holquist declare that the concept of authorship "is the master trope" of Bakhtin's work, paralleling authorship with "people's making selves" (p. 80). Bakhtin, they say, suggests that "the nature of human beings is dialogic"; anything that enhances communication "whether between self and self, self and other, different selves, or self and the world – is what Bakhtin calls 'architectonics,' the activity of forming connections" (p. 84). In developing identity, or consciousness, a person puts together different and distinct qualities of self as he dialogues with others through thoughts, words, and actions. He architecturally builds a self. Since a person may dialogue with others – and himself – through words, writing is an important means for an individual to make himself.

Bakhtin (1975/1981) claims opportunities of developing "individual consciousness" (p. 345) take place as we develop internally persuasive discourse and make ideas our own through dialogism with the discourse of others. As one looks at self through the words of others, one takes on those words that are internally persuasive about the self. A person becomes aware of those ideas that persuade him are true and with which he chooses to identify himself. Bakhtin considers discourse and creating identity a constant dialogism of meanings as a person wrestles with past, present, and future values, an "unfinished process" (Morris, p. 88). In forming an identity, a person interacts with current, previous, and prospective social conditions.

Tatum (2006) criticizes in-school literacy for neglecting to address identity issues for African American adolescent males, and for having an "in-school literacy underload" in comparison to the "out-of-school literacy overload" which affects how students see themselves and their futures; "academic performance and lives are shaped by the images of their communities and the associated possibilities they imagine for themselves" (p. 69). Tatum argues that in-school literacy does not adequately address identity issues of future life goals and that use of young adult literature and other culturally responsive pedagogical choices in teaching literacy are needed. Failing to recognize those potentially conflicting identities results in a stultified curriculum that does not give space for the experiences of young people's lives. Tatum advocates for professional development to assist teachers in reconsidering literacy teaching that would honor the identities students bring with them to school. This might begin to address achievement issues through a recognition of students "who are in desperate need of full human development" (p. 78).

Building the self--or authoring the self--is continuous; the self is ever-forming. As a writer puts words to paper, and as a writer writes in multiple texts over a span of years, a self is authored and re-authored in the discourse of the text and of what the writer says about composing texts. In my research I examine the selves the student writers author and how that authoring is accomplished over the years of their writing experiences. I study the spaces of authoring and the dialogism that occurs in intersections of the worlds of school writing and the worlds of self-selected writing for my student participants.

Improvisation, Agency, and Writing

Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Caine (1998) term Bakhtin's concept of identity development as *self-authoring.* They add the phrase *self-in-practice* to describe the process of identity formation. Holland, *et al*. write that self-in-practice refers to "the interface between intimate discourses, inner speaking, and bodily practices" of past and present (p. 32). Holland, *et al*. emphasize that self-in-practice is a process of social "co-development" (p. 38) between people and culture in specific contexts at particular moments in time. In other words, internal and external discourses and actions interact in dialogism in a moment in history, in a space that holds the history of that moment. The dialogism creates a space of practice for the self to develop.

Holland, *et al*. call these spaces of practice *figured worlds*, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. According to Holland, *et al*., figured worlds are:

> the context of meaning for actions, cultural productions, performances, disputes, for the understandings that people come to make of themselves, and for the capabilities that people develop to direct their own behavior in these worlds . . . . They also provide the loci in which people fashion senses of self – that is, develop identities. (p. 61)

The contexts of figured worlds allow those present to come to an understanding of themselves as they interact with the meanings and understandings of that space. In their interactions within that place, they shape selves. Holland, *et al*. say a figured world – or a "space of authoring" (p. 169ff) may "gather us up and give us form as our lives intersect them" (p. 41). Identity is formed as a person interacts with history, culture and social practices in a space of authoring.

Improvisation and Agency

In the view of Holland, *et al*., the individual is "always engaged" in identity development, and the conclusions that individuals come to influence future activities (p. 4). As individuals engage in identity formation and make decisions about potential actions, they take up agency to act, even in small ways, for themselves. Holland, *et al*. describe taking up agency in this way as *improvisation,* and suggest that "identities are improvised – persons . . . are caught in the tensions between past histories that have settled in them and the present discourses and images that attract them or somehow impinge upon them. In this continuous self-fashioning identities are hard-won standpoints" (p. 4). The process of fashioning an identity and moving to action within a figured world, the process of enacting improvisations, creates an "altered identity" (p. 18). The altered identity is formed through dialogism within the context and by taking up agency.

Hull and Katz (2006) focus on narrative and digital storytelling to unpack moments of agency in a case study of a child and a teenager who learned skills and knowledge to create an opportunity to change themselves and their lives. The participants wrote as "acts of control" (p. 70), illustrating that when given opportunity

and means to acquire the necessary writing skills, young writers were able to redirect selves to meaningful learning and new identities.

Moje and Dillon (2006), concerned about a school culture which emphasizes testing and test preparation, suggest that, instead, literacy practices are needed in which adolescents "try on, play with, and reconstruct a host of identities within and across disciplines and other social settings" (p. 105). With opportunities to learn skills and experiment with identities, adolescents will better be able to enact the identities they will need in the varied worlds they will encounter in school and outside of it.

Moore and Cunningham (2006) define agency as when people "decide how they will act . . . [and] are influenced and limited in their decisions . . . [as well as] contribute to contexts that influence and limit how they will act" (p. 135). In analyzing a young man whose self-reported encounter with the police caused him to choose to behave differently and identify with students who valued academics. In selecting this new identity, his academic involvement increased, including improvement in his literacy skills which included writing to "compare, contrast, and play" (p. 139) with new identities. Moore and Cunningham claim that "youth who enact agency readily affect their performance on writing assignments" (p. 139). In the identities they take up in writing, they may form or resist academic identities, which influence future learning, and future learning impacts future opportunities to learn.

Moje and Lewis also argue that learning involves agentic resistance to the skills and knowledge of "fixed discourses" (p. 18). In adapting or resisting the information and skills of a fixed discourse within a community, learners may disrupt and transform

discourse communities. In these instances, learners are acting as agentic participants in the histories of the contexts of learning, shaping selves and forming identities.

Like Moje and Lewis, Gee (2004) describes how taking up a "projective identity" develops capacity in learners. Comparing taking on an identity in a classroom to taking on a projective identity in a video game, Gee recognizes that game players know that they cannot become the characters they become in video games. They realize they have only the capacity to take on qualities of the video identity in real life. ln the classroom, however, learners realize they have "the capacity to be the sort of scientist (and person) they have wanted and built the 'character' in the classroom to be" (p. 114). They can actually become this character. This, he says, is "a magic" (p. 114) that doesn't take place in playing a game.

In the figured worlds of teaching writing in school and learning about writing there and elsewhere described by the participants of my study, I look for evidence of continuous self-fashioning, of self-in-practice in the words and actions of the participants. I examine the interactions with social conditions and the discourses of the various worlds in which the student writers find themselves. How do the students express their understandings about themselves and writing? What improvisations do they undertake in identity formation as they take up agency as writers? Figured worlds as spaces of authoring and contexts for dialogical responses are important theoretical constructs of my research.

Agency as History of Participation

Central to my understanding of agency for my participants will be their awareness of interpretation of, and reflection on their agentic moves in a given situation. Moje and

Lewis (2007) describe agency as "the strategic making and remaking of selves" (p. 18) and consider agency critical in allowing new identities and new learning to develop. Learning is more than acting or positioning oneself as a participant in a learning space of a particular time and place. Moje and Lewis borrow the phrase *history of participation* from Rogers (2002) to emphasize that "learning goes beyond the moment of participation to constitute a history and to shape a future act of participation" (p. 16). Not only do subjects participate in the learning of the moment, they construct learning and take up identities by drawing from the histories of their learning from and with others outside of the context of the moment of learning. In drawing upon past and present moments of participation, the learner is able to "shape a future act of participation" (p. 16). Shaping a future act is taking up agency to perform that act. Histories of participation help form and re-form identity, agency, and learning. In my study of student writers over a seven-year time period, I observe histories of participation in the making, which inform my understanding of the contexts and efforts of the student writers.

Opportunities to learn are influenced by recognitions of discourse communities. Moje and Lewis argue that learning requires "the identities one enacts be recognized and accepted as valid and worthwhile" (p. 20). Moje and Lewis say that recognition gives the power for agency to occur. In order to acquire knowledge and skills, learners need to have "space and support for agentic action" and to form and reform identities as they dialogue with the discourse of the learning space (p. 20). In taking up the identity of the community and interacting with the discourse of the community, the person acquires the

agency and power to define himself and as well as the community itself. Recognition, too, "shapes how people see themselves (p. 20).

To restate this as it relates to a high school student writer, the writer comes to a writing classroom carrying a history of writing with him. In this classroom, he positions himself or is positioned by others (possibly recognized as a writer of a certain skill level) within the discourse community of that class, a space of learning. This space is in dialogue with the cultural discourses of the school, among other curricular, political, and social aspects of that educational environment. The student learns about writing in that classroom, and also how to think and act like a writer. Perhaps at times he resists the standard discourse of the classroom. When the student adapts or resists the curriculum or the way the teacher teaches writing, he takes up agency for how he wishes to act as a writer in the future, or he may alter how the teacher talks about writing, possibly transforming the classroom community discourse. These same sorts of positions, learning, and agency apply as well to figured worlds of writing discourse that occur outside of writing classrooms.

My observations and analysis of the data my participants provide are informed by understanding the role of recognition by others, the lack of recognition by others, or the role of self-recognition. In viewing the writing teachers and the student writers as participants in shaping histories and selves, I am able to examine agentic moves by the instructors and the students. I also consider acts of resistance by the participants of my study to the discourses of the communities in which they are positioned.

Identity as a Writer

Another central theoretical concept for my research is the more specific notion of

claiming or developing a writer identity. Halasek (1999) quotes a student asking this very question: "Just because I write, can I call myself a writer?" (p. 46). She acknowledges that textbooks, writing teachers, and composition scholars overwhelmingly consider students in writing classes to have an identity of being a writer and that classrooms are "communities of writers" (p. 46). She argues, however, that with a Bahkinian perspective of "sociological dialogism," writer identity should be also included in a dialogical construction of identity. She questions whether by asking students to take on a writer identity, teachers select identities for students that "students themselves are often unwilling or unable to imagine (or choose) for themselves" (p. 46). Rather than have students claim a writer identity, Halasek suggests it is more important for student writers to find their voices as they write about their experiences and beliefs. Williams (2006), however, argues, "Identity is always present in writing" (p. 712), and Ivanic (1997) claims that writing itself is "an act of identity" (p. 33).

The research of Halasek, Williams, and Ivanic is of college or university-level academic writing. In this context of post-secondary education, Williams (2006) acknowledges that many think identity in writing resides in the realm of personal writing, though he contends, "There is no writing, not a scholarly article, a newspaper editorial, or a technical manual, that does not carry with it an identity of the author" (p. 712). Williams argues that by removing the author, and thus authorial identity, the reader and writer both lose the opportunity of "connecting passion, point of view, experience and identity with research, evidence, and analysis" (p. 714). In his view, identity is present when who and what the author is shapes the academic piece. Ivanic (1997) calls this writer identity a *discoural self*. This is the particular self a writer creates as he interacts

with the academic text he writes. Williams and Ivanic speak of college-level classes when they comment that frequently students in academic writing courses are taught to remove themselves as authors, such as by not using the pronoun *I*. That practice is often followed in high school, as well.

Another academic writer identity Ivanic (1997) identifies is *self as author*, referring to how the writer presents himself as an author or as an authority on the subject at hand. This identity is one that writers trying to enter a new discourse community, such as in the areas they study in college, often have trouble assuming, as they do not consider themselves experts in the field of the discourse they are attempting to acquire. Ivanic (1997) recognizes a third writer identity, the *autobiographical self*. This is the identity a writer brings with him to the writing situation. This includes the person's history as a writer as well as the social self that has been constructed up to that point. This self changes as time and writing experiences increase. Like Moje and Lewis and Ivanic, Worthington finds histories of participation inform high school writer identities, which Worthington terms "turning point experiences" (p. 56); for high school students, taking up an identity may occur as they begin to perceive themselves as writers. The students of my research comment on academic writing, or school essay writing, and how it compares with their personally-chosen writing and their histories with both personal and class-assigned writing. Several of my participants identify themselves as writers, although others do not. These concepts of writer identity provide a lens for analysis.

Ivanic (1997) considers "Writer identity . . . a central concern for any theory of writing in two senses: what writers bring to the act of writing, and how they construct their identities through the act of writing itself" (pp. 93-94). Yagelski (2009), too,

focuses on the identities formed in act of writing and extends thinking of writing to considering identity through writing as a "way of being" (p. 7). He describes writing as "an ontological act" (p. 7):

> When we write, we enact a sense of ourselves as beings in the world. In this regard, writing both shapes and reflects our sense of who we are in relation to each other and the world around us. Therein lies the transformative power of writing, for when writing is practiced as an act of being, it opens up possibilities for individual and collective change that are undermined by conventional writing instruction, which is often characterized by an obsession with textual form and adherence to convention. (pp. 7-8)

Yagelski urges composition teachers to "consider the *experience* of an act of writing as separate from – and as valuable as—the text produced as a result of that act of writing" (p. 7). Thinking of writing as ontology is a way to complicate the discourse of the writing classroom. I explore Yagelski's (2012) theories of writing and transformation "of self and world" (p. 190) more fully in Chapter 6.

Identity formation also appears in the literature of teaching writing as a response to becoming, performing in, or resisting a writing discourse community. Ivanic (1997, 2004) describes writer identity formation through recognition in a manner similar to that described by Moje and Lewis when she explains that writers participate in discourses as they identify with the actions, views, and purposes of the discourse community. A writer responds to the genres that are privileged and the socio-politically discourse that is accepted. Ivanic (2004) describes writers acting with agency when they feel free to create "nonconformist texts and practices which challenge and subvert norms and conventions. In this way, individual writers can play their part in resisting and contesting the status quo, and ultimately in contributing to the discoursal and social change" (p. 238).

Gee (2012) defines Discourses (written with a capital D), as the unique ways of communicating, including writing, that are connected with definitive ways of "acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, dressing, thinking, . . . so as to enact specific socially recognizable identities engaged in specific socially recognizable activities." (p. 152). Discourses communicate "who I am" in a specific social context and "what I am doing" in the action at hand (p. 152). Gee categorizes Discourses into "primary Discourses," acquired often as a first social community, such as home; "lifeworld Discourses," to be an ordinary person; and "secondary Discourses," learned in institutions such as school, political, or religious contexts (pp. 153-154). The complicated nature and interactions between the various Discourses affects the new Discourses people learn, and "resistance, opposition, . . . alliance and complicity" are among the Discourses they may acquire (p. 155). In using various Discourses in writing, identities are called upon, tried out and taken up, or perhaps questioned, modified, or rejected. "We are all multiple kinds of people," Gee says (p. 153), and writing is a way to enact and present identities.

Like Moje and Lewis, Ivanic (1997) claims that as a writer takes up, adapts, adopts, or disrupts the discourse of the writing community, the writer contributes to modifying and reforming social spaces, and in the process finds, changes, and transforms self. Ivanic calls these newly formed and continuously forming identities *social identities* where the writers position themselves for "possibilities for self-hood" (p. 27). However, Ivanic (2004) warns that choices of language used in writing have "consequences" for a writer's identity when a writer constructs a "social reality" (p. 238) for others to see. These consequences are not only found in the college world that Ivanic describes, but are also evident in the high school context Pratt (2011) studies. Pratt observes that secondary

writers claim an identity as a writer based on "how writers see themselves" and "how writers hope to been seen by readers" (p. 233). The social realities in high school of taking a position as a writer and having that identity seen by readers is, in my experience, one that is not taken lightly. As indicated by Pratt, at times a high school writer identity is one that a writer bestows on himself in a less socially visible world.

These concepts of self are helpful in perceiving writer identity in the analysis of my data. Concerns with issues of developing or claiming a writer identity and acting with agency as a writer are important in my research and appear in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. High school writers are members of the discourse communities of their writing classrooms, and I investigate the complexities involved in responding and interacting with that figured world and the contexts of their personal writing spaces, looking for evidence of participation and resistance, identity formation and experimentation.

Conclusion

Poet Roxie, story-teller Carmen, and contestant Kerianne entered my ninth grade classroom with a writing history largely created outside of the classroom. This history, which I develop more fully in Chapter 5, was important to them. They were also, unknown to them, a part of a larger history. They were part of the history of composition studies – what should and shouldn't be taught, how it should or shouldn't be taught, and what role the author's purpose might play. They were part of the history of the studies of out-of-school literacy practices and even a recent history of calls for a reconsideration of the importance of their out-of-school experiences. They and their teachers were a part of authoritative discourses on the role external social, cultural, and literacy practices should play in writing classrooms.

Over the course of seven years, they described to me what their in-school and out-of-school writing experiences meant to them, what was engaging for them in this writing, and what this writing accomplished for them, evidence of internally persuasive discourses on writing they found in figured worlds of writing discourses. Central to my study is an understanding of the heteroglot of discourses surrounding these students and their teachers. Authoritative discourses and those that become internally persuasive illuminate what shapes the teaching practices by the instructors and the choices made by the students as they wrote in-school and out-of-school. In the course of my research, I investigate notions of self-constructed identity and improvised agency for the three student writers as they participate in and navigate through discourses and figured worlds of writing.

What might we learn from these three writers and their multiple writing contexts that would inform our practices in the teaching of writing? Stories like those of Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne provide a more nuanced view for the future. I explore the heteroglossia of discourses surrounding the teachers and their decisions to implement specific cornerstone practices in their teaching of composition in Chapter 4. In Chapters 5 and 6, I examine the comments and stories presented by the three student writers.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this phenomenological case study (van Maanen, 1990) I closely examine the lived experiences of three students who were writing for personal, non-academic purposes in their ninth grade year and who continued to write for personal reasons out of school throughout their high school careers. I record how two of these students discuss their writing in high school and beyond high school, as I continued to study the ways they describe their writing practices. This is a generative study that unfolded over time. The overall purpose of my study is to document the contexts for the students' in-school writing, their writing experiences out of school, their constructed identities as writers, their stories about writing, and the intersections between the writers, their writing, their teachers' professional discourse about writing. I intend to draw attention to the teaching of writing in high school and to student writers who write for their own purposes. I aim to contribute to professional discussions about the purposes, practices, and conditions of teaching writing at the secondary level by advocating that we teachers need to complicate our thinking about what we teach about writing and how and why we teach writing in high school. I contend that we need to think through student writers, the teaching of writing, current mandates, and contexts of teaching writing in more complex ways.

I do not suggest that these teachers and students are typical of all teachers or students, and I do not generalize their thoughts and experiences to all high school writing sites. I do, however, examine and analyze the participants' words and stories in the light of the discourses that surround both teachers and students, and present the persuasive understandings these discourses come to express and enact.

The Research Site: School and Department

Franklin High School

In 2009, at the beginning of the study, Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne attended Franklin High School, a Midwestern high school noted for its success in a number of arenas. At Franklin High the principal is often teased about running the list of all the awards and accolades the school and its students and staff have received in every speech and presentation she gives and at the opening of all the faculty meetings; her monologue often lasts for 15 minutes or more each time. No one who is listening should be in any doubt that the test scores, the numbers of Advanced Placement (AP) students, the AP scores of those students, and the success in competitions of all sorts are among the best or highest in the state and district. At graduation, numerous students "clank" through the arena, because they are wearing various medals for academic achievements, such as the Math, Science, World Language, Language Arts, and Social Studies Scholar Awards. These medals, appearing impressive, are given to students who have taken four or five years of the various subjects, thus significantly rewarding years of seat time. The walls of the main office are decorated with copies of articles from *U.S. News and World Reports* and various state newspapers, one of which declares that the school is "simply one of the best," which then is printed on the staff shirts distributed the following years.

The school's 2008-2009 Data Book reports a total enrollment of 1800, with a graduating class of 363 students. Enrollment of underrepresented students is 15.2%, and 19% of the students participate in the free and reduced lunch program, a number often touted to represent issues of class in school districts. Two hundred sixty-eight of the 1800 students receive special education services. The average daily attendance rate is

similar that of the preceding ten years at 95.18%. The 11th grade Iowa Tests of Educational Development scores for Roxie's, Carmen's, and Kerianne's class are at the 88th percentile rank nationally (seniors are excused from taking the test their last year of high school). It is a school with a large number of middle to upper class students, a stable teaching staff of around 100, many with Master's degrees. After a number of years of turnover with building principals, the current principal has been in the position for 12 years. Her leadership is considered to be strong, according to most faculty members, and has focused on encouraging all students to attempt least one AP course during their high school years, which might contribute to a continuous rise in AP enrollment.

The Language Arts Department

There are 16 language arts teachers in the department, some of whom are part time LA teachers, as they teach other subject areas at the school or are working on advanced degrees at a nearby university. The membership of the department has remained about the same for the past several years and represents a variety of views about the teaching of language arts. A number of years ago, the language arts faculty, guided by issues of social justice and equity of learning opportunities, opted for heterogeneous grouping in the ninth and tenth grades, a step that ran counter to their peer high schools in the district. The current principal was not there at the time and disagreed with the decision, but respected the language arts faculty and allowed the practice to continue. Consequently, all students take LA9 and LA10. During the junior and senior year there is a small menu of year-long courses to choose from, including two AP courses. Students are also encouraged to take elective courses, including journalism classes to produce the school newspaper and the literary magazine. Roxie, Carmen, and

Kerianne, therefore, are not sorted into ability-leveled classes, and they have equal access to the learning opportunities offered in the general language arts classes in LA9 and LA10. In addition, Roxie and Carmen elect to take Creative Writing.

Of the 16 language arts teachers, five of them have taken various Institutes through the Iowa Writing Project and others have taken university courses in the teaching of writing. As a department, there is a diversity of philosophies and practices in the teaching of writing, ranging from insisting on five-paragraph themes and correct answers on worksheets, to encouraging students to work through multiple drafts of papers following a writing workshop model to requiring students to create and maintain blogs, to assigning students to post weekly comments on the teacher's web site forum. The variation of teaching philosophies has led, at times, to frustration with how another teacher has or has not asked students to work in a particular way, but generally, most of the teachers agree that everyone doing the same thing the same way would not encourage students to stretch their thinking and skills. Members of the department are a successful, cooperative group with enough camaraderie to weather difficult issues that arise. The Department Chair has held her position for nearly ten years, and believes it a priority to help all in the department, negotiate with the administration for equitable teaching loads, and bring concerns to the leadership team.

The Student Participants: Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne

In this section I present brief portraits of the student participants, drawn from their interviews and from observing them or hearing about them throughout the course of their years at Franklin. Additional extended descriptions of each student appear in Chapter 5.

Poet Roxie[1]

In the environment of Franklin High, Roxie, a poet, is a student who has taken one term of an Advanced Placement (AP) language arts course and then decides that AP isn't for her. Roxie does not clank at graduation because she is only wearing one medal, for taking four years of math. Her report card indicates mostly Cs, with some As, Bs and Ds, as well, and with a few Fs sprinkled in, and her ITED test scores show she is above the 40th percentile in reading, math, and science and has met the state level of proficiency. During her senior year, Roxie, unlike most of her classmates, has moved with her boyfriend into a house that his aunt owns, and she becomes what the school calls an unofficial "emancipated senior," meaning she is totally self-sufficient. By the end of the school year she is working two jobs to help make rent payments and buy food. In a school environment that continuously emphasizes the value of AP and the stories of academic achievement and extra-curricular success, Roxie remains in the on the margins, academically, economically, and socially. When I finally locate Roxie three years later, I discover she has joined the Army and is married, busy, and happy in her new life. When she finds a few minutes of free time from training, she emails me with answers to my interview questions, and we correspond several times over the course of four months. Roxie still expresses strong feelings about what writing has meant to her, especially in high school.

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[1] For the purpose of making it easier for readers to recall which student participant I am discussing, I will typically refer to Roxie as a poet, Carmen as a novelist, and Kerianne as a contest writer, with the understanding that their work is more varied than a single genre per student.

Novelist Carmen and Contest-Writer Kerianne

Unlike Roxie, Carmen, the novelist, and Kerianne, the contest writer, clank quite a lot at high school graduation, as they wear a number of medals; they also sit on the stage where the valedictorians and salutatorians are seated at the beginning of the ceremony. Of the two, Kerianne is the most decorated, with cords and medals draped around her neck in a display of vivid colors. She is one of the top students in the graduating class, with a grade point well above the 4-point scale, due to the number of AP courses she has taken over the past four years and her motivation to get only As or A+s in all of her classes. Carmen, too, has earned high grades and has also participated in several activities over the course of her years at the school, even going out for the bowling team at one point. Kerianne has been active in orchestra. They, like Roxie, have submitted work to *The Key,* the school-based literary magazine published once a year. All three have their work published at least once over the course of the four years. At Franklin, a school that emphasizes participation in activities and enrollment in AP courses, Carmen and Kerianne can be considered emblematic of school success. Participant interviews reveal Kerianne's responses tinged with an undertone of disgust with the school for not publicizing her accomplishments more. Carmen, on the other hand, deliberately chooses to participate in activities that are less main-stream and thus less publicly recognized. As successful as they both appear to be, the work that seems to matter most to them is invisible to the school. When I contact the focal students three years after their high school graduation, Kerianne is unable to continue with the study, but Carmen participates in an interview, full of excitement over being recently published in an undergraduate research journal, and she tells stories of the college writing that she

has come to love. In Chapters 5 and 6, I provide more details in my analysis of the focal participants' comments and stories.

The Teacher Participants: Amy, Mason, Tony, and Karen

In high school, these three students recommend several teachers for me to interview so I can learn more about who they are as students and writers. They narrow their suggested choices to two preferred teachers per student. Kerianne, Carmen, and Roxie conclude that their language arts teachers are the best sources for information on their writing. Kerianne and Carmen both suggest Amy Brandt, their AP Literature teacher, as one source of information, since they have recently completed her class and have engaged in many writing opportunities in the class. Carmen and Roxie both suggest Mason Markt, the Creative Writing teacher, as a good source for talking about the ways their in-school and out-of-school writing might intersect, because his course is most like what they prefer to write. With the overlap of these two teachers, I also interview two other teachers, one for Kerianne and one for Roxie. See Table 1.

Table 1. Teachers for Each Participant Student

Participants	Teacher 1, Course Taught	Teacher 2, Course Taught
Roxie	Mason Markt, Creative Writing	Karen Reynolds, Cultural Perspectives
Carmen	Mason Markt, Creative Writing	Amy Brandt, AP Literature
Kerianne	Amy Brandt, AP Literature	Tony Barnett, Independent Study

I offer brief portraits of the teachers here to present context for the students' in-school writing environments. These portraits and the more detailed descriptions of the teacher participants that appear in Chapter 4 are constructed based on interview data and my knowledge of them as colleagues at Franklin.

Carmen and Kerianne's Teacher: Amy Brandt

Amy Brandt, a teacher recommended by both Carmen and Kerianne, is in her fifth year of teaching in 2009. She became an AP Literature teacher the year prior to having Kerianne and Carmen in her class and is still working on establishing her course and her comfort level with the kind of work needed in AP courses. A passionate writer herself who works on a memoir during the summer, she is a teacher who is growing into teaching writing by taking courses in the summer and asking other teachers in the department for advice. The classroom space that a teacher creates is often indicative of her professional identity, and Amy's room is filled with copies of the books she teaches, and, in keeping with the practice of many in the department, an ever-growing classroom library along one wall. Another wall is dominated by an "Our Space" bulletin board, and all the students in her classroom have contributed something to that display. The front board has very specific class assignments and daily agendas written on it, and the chairs are angled to allow students to look at the board as well as see most of the others in the room during discussions.

Roxie and Carmen's Teacher: Mason Markt

Mason Markt, recommended by both Roxie and Carmen, is a 10-year veteran teacher who has taught the Creative Writing courses for many of those years. About

three years prior to conducting this study, he asked for and received permission from the department and school administrators to sort the curriculum of Creative Writing into three genres, one for each term of the year: fiction, screen writing, and poetry. He is a writer and a musician as well as a teacher. Several of his stories have been published, and one of his plays has been performed in Europe. On Fridays, as often as he is able to fit it in, he brings his guitar to school and plays some of his songs for his classes. On those days, he also takes his guitar across the hall during his prep hour and plays for the class with the students who are severely and profoundly handicapped. Roxie and Carmen both like him as a teacher; Carmen has taken two terms of Creative Writing with him, and Roxie has taken the term of fiction writing with Mason.

Roxie's Teacher: Karen Reynolds

Karen Reynolds, Roxie's Cultural Perspectives teacher, has taught for over 20 years, four at this high school. She is a part-time teacher with a .8 FTE (she teaches four of five class periods), and is a Spanish teacher, in addition to her language arts responsibilities. Because she is a part-time teacher, Karen does not have a classroom of her own, so she travels from classroom to classroom for each of the courses she teaches. She often arrives about the same time as the bell is ringing for the start of the class hour. "This makes it hard to get to know the students in a more informal way," she tells me (KR, Interview 2009). Roxie is currently taking Karen's Cultural Perspectives course at the end of her senior year. This course is relatively new to Karen, and she admits she is still struggling to figure out the curriculum. As Karen tells me some details about Roxie's life circumstances, her voice is full of concern.

Kerianne's Teacher: Tony Barnett

Tony Barnett, recommended by Kerianne, is the only teacher I interview who has not had one of the students in a regular term- or year-long course. Kerianne recommends him because she has taken an independent study with him the last half of her senior year, and she has been able to use some of her out-of-school contest writing to meet his assignments. Always conscious of her transcript and resume, she wants to have an additional course to finish her 5-year Language Arts award, and Tony agrees to take her as an independent study student, even though he is not fond of the course she wants to do, Cultural Perspectives. Tony, who is in his 24th year of teaching in 2009, is extroverted and a dramatic speaker, and in his classroom he has a fake fireplace and a mannequin that students dress in the period attire of the characters in the play or novel they're reading in his U.S. Literature class. A man of many talents himself, he describes Kerianne as one of the most scholarly students he has known, and he is one of the few teachers she communicates with after graduation.

In this study, I investigate how three student participants describe their writing, both in school and beyond class assignments. I want to understand where intersections between in-school and out-of-school writing exist for them and how their understanding of writing reflects and contrasts with how their teachers describe their teaching of writing. My purpose in this study is to consider how students and teachers together might inform our notions of student writing, student writers, and teaching writing.

Data Sources

In 2009, near the end of their senior year, I applied for IRB approval to formally study Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne, their writing, and their teachers, and final approval

was granted in May 2009.[2] I conducted and recorded private hour-long interviews at the end of that school year with all three students, seeking to learn more about their writing activities since ninth grade. I was interested to learn whether and how they continued with their writing, and if so, how they developed as writers. Had their private writing lives intersected with their school writing experiences in any way? I also asked the students, if they were comfortable doing so, to share pieces of their writing with me. By mid-June I also individually interviewed and recorded the teachers recommended by the students to discover how the teachers described the in-school and out-of-school writing of these students. I was curious to understand the teachers' reactions when they learned of the students' out-of-school writing lives. How might the teachers describe connections between the classroom writing they required and the writing the students did on their own? After each interview of the students and the teachers, I jotted down notes and questions in my field notes.

In 2012, I again applied for and received a modification to my original IRB proposal because I had thought about Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne frequently over the years, and wished to know how their writing lives were continuing or if they had been abandoned. Were they currently writing for school or their jobs? How might they describe the writing they did in high school from their perspectives three years later? I was fortunate to be able to connect with both Roxie and Carmen. Roxie emailed me from her Army base in Texas, and Carmen came to my classroom for an interview, which I

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[2] I had originally intended to interview the parents of the focal students, but Beth Newhart, Kerianne's mother was the only parent with whom I was able to speak. She was often present at the school, chatting frequently with Kerianne's teachers, and as I had previously had Kerianne in class, she stopped to talk with me on occasion. Kerianne called her "my manager" (K, Interview June 2009).

recorded. Carmen also brought samples of her college writing to share. I also re-interviewed and recorded the four teachers again to learn more about their philosophies about and approaches to teaching writing. Because of comments the students made in their interviews, I wanted to learn whether the teachers' philosophies changed over time and what they consider indicators of quality writing. What questions might they entertain about the teaching of writing? (For a complete list of all interview questions from 2009 and 2012, see Appendix A and Appendix B) Once again, after each interview, I maintained in my field notes direct quotes that caught my attention and paraphrases of the comments the participants made. I noted thoughts I had about those comments and questions I continued to ponder.

Research Questions and Data Sources

The data I have generated appears in Table 2 and aligns data sources with the research questions.

Table 2. Research Questions and Data Sources

Research Question	Data Sources
• How do the intersections of what students say and do in their figured worlds of writing and what teachers say and do in teaching writing inform our notions of student writers and of teaching writing?	• 2009, 2012 student interviews • 2009, 2012 teacher interviews • 2009, 2012 student writing artifacts
• How do the focal students describe their in-school and out-of-school writing?	• 2009, 2012 student interviews • 2009, 2012 student writing artifacts
• Who and what motivate the students to write beyond class assignments?	• 2009, 2012 student interviews
• How do teachers develop and implement internally persuasive discourses about writing?	• 2009, 2012 teacher interviews
• How do students develop and perform internally persuasive discourses about writing?	• 2009, 2012 student interviews • 2009, 2012 student writing artifacts

Table 3, which follows, includes a complete list of all the data sources from both the 2009 interviews and the 2012 interviews, as well as artifacts I collected throughout the process of data gathering. I include information on transcription and coding.

Table 3. Data Sets 2009 and 2012

Participants	Interviews 2009	Artifacts 2009	Interviews and email 2012
Roxie	70 minutes, transcribed and coded	*23 poems on separate sheets of copy paper:* 9 on relationships, 7 in assigned poetry formats, 2 with playful images, 1 on self-image, 2 on school observations, 2 on observations about life; *8 poems written 2003 – 2006 from her poetry journal:* 1 about a father, 1 about forgiveness, 1 about a mother, 5 about relationships (all with explanatory notes on topics and/or revisions planned) 4 short stories, 1 poem published in *The Key* Coding notes range from topic notes for many poems to quite a few on theme, content, and style for 21 key poems; theme and style coding for 4 short stories	3 emails answering interview questions, coded

Table 3 continued

Carmen	60 minutes, transcribed	1 partially finished novel, 1 short story, one piece published in *The Key* All coded	45 minute interview, transcribed and coded
Kerianne	60 minutes, transcribed and coded	1 National History Day Project introduction, 3 photographs of the Project exhibit, 1 24-page annotated bibliography of the Project 1 list of exhibit photograph credits, 1 piece published in *The Key* All coded	Local news report
Amy Brandt	20 minutes, transcribed and coded		30 minute interview, transcribed and coded
Mason Markt	30 minutes, transcribed and coded		25 minute interview, transcribed and coded
Karen Reynolds	15 minutes, transcribed and coded		15 minute interview, transcribed and coded
Tony Barnett	20 minutes, transcribed and coded		25 minute interview, transcribed and coded
Beth Newhart, Kerianne's mother	20 minutes, transcribed and coded		None

Data Analysis

Transcribing and Coding

I transcribed all interviews with the students and teachers, continuing to add to my field notes at the end of each period of transcribing. I documented new insights that emerged as a result of transcribing the interviews. When the transcriptions were completed, I printed each interview transcription and the entire set of field notes and made copies of all written work shared by the students. I then made several passes through all the data, beginning with reading through each data set with different purposes in mind with each pass through the data. With the initial passes, I focused on understanding the data as a whole. Subsequent passes through the data allowed me to make notes on topics and themes. Charmaz (2006) defines one approach to coding as open coding; the purpose of open coding is to allow the researcher to look at larger portions of material and to make decisions about it. In my open coding, I noted the essence of a segment of data. In my final passes, I used gerunds, for action coding (Charmaz, 2002; Glasser, as cited in Charmaz, 2006). In making notes next to lines of the transcriptions, such as "losing poetry" or "breaking the rules" as I looked at Roxie's comments, I was viewing the "data as action" (Charmaz, 2002, p. 685), keeping the codes close to Roxie's perspectives and actions. I also coded as I examined the data line by line or sentence by sentence (Charmaz, 2006). After I completed these coding passes, I noted in my field notes that I had accumulated a list of "140+" preliminary codes (Field notes, June 21, 2012). Following this sequence, I used axial coding (Charmaz, 2006) to organize and relate categories and sub-categories. For example, I had a general category

for definitions of writing with eight sub-categories listed that all three students mentioned, plus other categories unique to each student.

Constant Comparison Analysis

Throughout all phases of data analysis, I used constant comparison analysis (Glaser, 1965), juxtaposing units of data with each other to note common topics and emerging themes. In a fourth, extensive pass through the data, I made new copies of the entire data set on different colors of paper; for example, I used peach-colored paper for the transcript from Carmen's interviews and marked stripes of different colors on the paper to indicate which year the comments on that sheet came from. I used green paper for Amy Brandt's interview, and yellow for Mason Markt's comments. I then cut the papers into small strips of data units, looked at each data strip, and placed it in a stack with strips of paper that had similar ideas, sometimes making several copies of one statement and placing it in different stacks, as this one idea or thought may have had several implications. Some stacks had colored paper from all the participants in Carmen's data sub-set (consisting of Carmen, her two teachers, her writing, and my field notes), while others had only one or two colors. As I stacked and restacked the strips of paper, I began to form tentative categories for each stack, labeling each stack, revising the label or adding to it as I progressed. After I had completed the entire data sub-set for Carmen, I put it aside and then sorted and stacked each data sub-set for the other students and a did a separate sort for the teachers by each teacher and then together as a group. Finally, I combined the data sub-sets for the three groups of participants and the teachers and looked for how the themes emerged across the data sets.

At the end of each period of data processing and analysis, I recorded in my field notes possible themes, italicizing those that were becoming more important as I sorted the data, finally underlining and highlighting those that were most important or most frequent. I revised and narrowed my list as I progressed, finally paring my list to 45 (Field notes, June 21, 2012). I made notes on which themes were most data-saturated and had larger piles, more colored strips per stack, or more variations of the theme in the stack. For example, the theme of developing writing process had comments from all students and teacher participants with 16 sub-categories. I looked for themes with strong evidence, shown in data stacks with multiple colors, indicating that three or more people, writing pieces, or field-note comments were included, thus representing triangulation of data (Merriam, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). For the theme of describing writer identity, I noted comments made by a combination of the three students, two teachers, and comments and questions I posed in my field notes, a rich cross-section of data.

From a list of 24 themes with triangulated data, I narrowed my focus to the following 16 themes that emerged as important in this research. These themes were most often discussed or emphasized by the teacher and student participants in their interviews or I mentioned often throughout the field notes I wrote after each interview and as I transcribed and analyzed the data:

Important in the teacher data:

- teacher backgrounds – learning to teach writing, being a writer
- teacher philosophies on teaching writing – changing, not changing
- teacher pedagogical choices – outside mandates, favorite lessons, other choices

Important in the student data:

- student writing identity – being a writer, being recognized as a writer, being unique
- student writing history – acting as a writer over a period of time, being independent, using writing to achieve goals, writing large quantities of writing
- student emotions and writing – enjoying writing, being proud of the writing, using writing to explore emotions, passion
- student perceptions of crossovers in writing – in-school and out-of-school, creative and academic writing

Important in both sets of data:

- writing processes – teacher taught, student enacted
- writing community – being a member, not being a member
- evaluation of writing – by students and teachers, craft
- definitions of writing – complex and formulistic
- teacher feedback – what teachers do, what students pay attention to
- events in writing – telling stories about writing and teaching writing

As I pondered the topics, their contents, and the research questions, I made further notes in my field journal of possible connections, my questions, and other analytical thoughts that aided in drawing conclusions about the entire data set. In my field notes, I mulled over and over some participant phrases and linked a phrase mentioned by one with a question asked by another. I also returned to relevant theory and research that addressed the themes I found. As I wrote field notes and composed the dissertation, I

continued to revisit my data and previous field notes. I worked recursively through the data and the writing and the literature.

I used the data and analysis process to compose case studies of my student and teacher participants. The purpose of my study is to understand the complexities involved when student writers describe their writing experiences and teachers describe their teaching of writing. I seek to understand how the intersections of student writers and the teaching of writing might inform how teaching writing might be more meaningful to both teachers and students. As I took notes during the sets of interviews, listened to the interviews as I transcribed them, read the writing the students shared, and studied my field notes, I noticed the multiplicity of voices informing the context for each participant. This layering of data strips and stories highlighted several emerging themes in what Bakhtin (1975/1981) calls a heteroglossia of voices in the teachers' backgrounds and in the students' writing lives, which influenced the participants' practices and their development of internally persuasive voices, which informed my analysis and findings.

Case Study Analysis

My case study is of three focal students and their four teachers, analyzing the significant factors in the phenomenon of learning about writing and to be a writer, featuring how this occurs inside and beyond classes in a public high school. I include "thick description" (Merriam, 1989, p. 29) to create life-like accounts of these writers, teachers, and their environments. This descriptive case study is based on grounded theory (Dey, 1999), the connections between themes arising from the data itself.

Merriam (1998) concludes that "the single most defining characteristic of case study research lies in delimiting the object of study, the case" and indicates that a case

can be "a thing, a single entity" such as "a student, a teacher, a principal; a class, a school" among other things (p. 27). A case has a focus and is limited in terms of who or what the researcher studies. In a case study, she explains, one discovers the "interaction of significant factors characteristic of the phenomenon" (p. 29). A phenomenological case study highlights the "essence or structure of an experience" (Merriam, 1998, p. 15). In other words, my case study is limited to a specific number of students and teachers, and I focus on the essence of how students write and describe their learning to write in a particular context.

Narrative Inquiry Analysis

In the course of their interviews, the students relate stories of writing experiences. Connelly and Clandinin (2006) call a narrative inquiry study that relies on interviews and the stories told within them a "telling inquiry," a part of an "interview study" (p. 483). The subjects in an interview study tell some of the stories of their "storied lives" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). I use a narrative inquiry analysis approach to understand the experiences of the writing stories my participants tell. As the participants tell their stories, Connelly and Clandinin (1990, 2000, 2006) say that they are living, telling, retelling, and reliving their stories. To apply this frame to my study, Connelly and Clandnin suggest that my participants are living a storied lives--the life they have created through their stories over time. As they tell a story, they are retelling a part of that storied life. In the questions I ask, and in how I frame my summaries of their stories to them and in my writing, I am retelling their stories, too. In the questions I ask and in their responses, we construct a story together; they may reframe their stories and relive their stories in a different way, based on how the conversation progresses.

In looking at the stories told by my participants, I look for "a sense of the whole" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 7), for what the storyteller is trying to express overall. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) claim that stories subjects tell reveal "something essentially human" (p. 8) as a researcher looks at a life and that which surrounds the life. In this research, my analysis looks at the lives of the students and teachers in context, in the community of their school and classrooms. In selecting from among the various stories the students tell, I look for those that seem to "ring true" (p. 8). Finally, I look through the lens of what Connelly and Clandinin (1990) call "burrowing," which focuses on "the event's emotional, moral, and aesthetic qualities . . . [and] why the event is associated with these feelings and what their origins might be" (p. 11). I analyze the emotions and beliefs the participants include in their storytelling, and consider why they bring these feelings and thoughts to the story they select to tell.

I began my data analysis using the methods described above as I interviewed and recorded notes in my field notes and continued analysis throughout the writing of this dissertation. I use in-text citations to reference the participant, and date of interview or email with the following types of notations: (R, Email, October 2012) or (MM, Interview, June 2009). The first example attributes the information to student participant Roxie, from her email in 2012, and the second indicates Mason Markt's comments were in his interview in 2009. I use the following abbreviations in my citations: R (Roxie), C (Carmen), K (Kerianne), MM (Mason Markt), KR (Karen Reynolds), AB (Amy Brandt), TB (Tony Barrett). As an additional note: since my student participants are all female, in other instances when I refer to a student in the singular, I often use a male pronoun to balance the reference to gender.

Positioning Myself

As I worked through the data, I consciously was aware of the need to bracket my subjectivities (van Manen, 1990) and set aside my beliefs about the students, the teachers, the teaching of writing, and the general environment of the school in order to make "explicit what is implicit" (Spindler, 1982, p. 7). Because I was the students' ninth grade teacher and because the study took place in my district, I am familiar with the students, the teachers, and the school setting. Talking with the participants three years later from the beginning of the study allowed me to look at the data with a more distanced perspective.

I conducted this study as a participant observer (Merriam, 1998), and I am fully aware that my position as a teacher in her 39th year has implications in how I view at the participants and their words. For 35 of my 39 years in education, I have been a teacher of English language arts and/or Spanish; the other four years I served as the district facilitator for Language Arts and Foreign Language courses, overseeing major curricula review. I am aware that my years of teaching experience and my experience as a curriculum coordinator may influence my thinking about what the students and teachers in the study say and do and the conditions under which the curriculum I helped develop is taught and learned.

I also recognize a need to bracket or understand my background knowledge and philosophical leanings as a writing teacher. In the beginning of my career I was not familiar with theories of writing as process and taught writing as a product that needed to follow very specific organizational rules. Then I took a summer institute with the Iowa Writing Project, and it was during this experience that I listened to conversations about

how writing is a process, a new concept for me. I came to understand that working through various stages of drafting was as important as the end product. I gained new insight from the Writing Project that meeting all the rules was not as important as meeting the needs of the audience and writer. My philosophic approach as a writing teacher is to help writers understand the recursive nature of writing processes and strategies that might help them express their ideas clearly; I guide students to produce pieces that express a personal commitment to purposeful ideas that are skillfully written and comprehensible to others.

I write this dissertation as a board member of the Iowa Writing Project and a member of the National Writing Project. I have enrolled and participated in a half dozen or more Iowa Writing Project seminars, have attended many sessions on writing at the National Council of Teachers of English and the state Council of Teachers of English fall conferences, and have shelves of books on teaching writing. I have read Atwell, Graves, Calkins, Fulweiler, Smagorinsky, Elbow, Emig, Hillocks, Sunstein, and Christensen, to mention a few. I have taught in-service meetings on how to help students with writing for our district and for my school. I was one of four trainers in the long-running district writing assessment holistic scoring sessions, and I was involved in beginning efforts to assess portfolios district-wide for our secondary students, working with Dick Koch, of Adrian College and of the Michigan Writing Project. Although I am drawn to writing workshop methods described by Rief (1991), Atwell (1998), and Graves and Kittle (2005), I realize that understanding different positions and strategies in the teaching of writing is a necessity in the course of my research, although my perspectives no doubt are influential in the analyses of my data. I am a teacher who has spent years trying to

understand how to best teach writing. Writing theory intrigues me and, as my study indicates, I want to learn more about students who are writers both in and outside of school.

In 2014, as I finish writing this dissertation, two years after I conducted the last interviews of the study, my school district is in the midst of incorporating the Common Core State Standards, or the CCSS (www.corestandards.org). Every professional development meeting I have attended for the past three years, whether at the building level or at the district level, is concerned with the CCSS. I use language in this document that we have encountered in professional development tasks: we have selected priority standards, unpacked the standards, filled out curriculum maps about what we do to help students meet the standards, and made formative assessments to find out if students are meeting the standards. We have filled out charts and charts in the process of making official documents about implementation of the standards. I have attended seminars supported by the district for a specific, direct instruction, formulated program to teach writing that is supposed to enable students to meet the writing standards. We do not have much opportunity in our meetings to talk about writing theory or the individuals in our rooms who write for their own personal purposes. There is no time allotted for discussing curiosities about teaching writing or alternative ways to teach writing. This environment about teaching writing and learning to write contrasts significantly with the words of the students of the study.

Finally, I write as a colleague to the teachers in the study, and I also write as the ninth grade year-long language arts teacher for these three students and as Roxie's AP Lit teacher for one term of 12 weeks. I occasionally saw Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne in the

halls throughout their four years at the high school, and we exchanged pleasant greetings. Until I interview them at the end of their senior year in the 2009 IRB-approved study, however, I had not talked with any of them for a long time. I had not talked with any of them since their graduation until I contacted them again for the 2012 study.

This study reflects my curiosity about high school student writers. In this research, I closely examine the words and writing of three students who describe for us what it is like to be a self-motivated writer in high school. I examine the context of their in-school writing and the writing they do beyond the expectations of classroom-assigned writing. Throughout the study, I consider how we English language arts teachers might see our students and ourselves differently and explore how we in the profession might serve teachers and students like these well. In this research, I intend to invite a reconsideration of the ways teachers might construct a thoughtful, supportive future for student writers and teachers of writing.

In the chapters that follow, I organize the results of my data analysis and begin first in Chapter 4 with the heteroglossic and persuasive discourses with which the teachers engage. I examine externally-imposed authoritative discourses and discourses of choice which inform the teacher's internally persuasive voices as evidenced in their cornerstone practices in teaching writing. In Chapters 5 and 6, I analyze the intersections of out-of school writing discourses and in-school discourses that emerge from student interviews and narratives, and explore how students participate in figured worlds as they learn about writing and to be a writer. Chapter 7 presents conclusions and implications of this study and offers directions for further research.

CHAPTER 4

AUTHORITATIVE AND INTERNALLY PERSUASIVE DISCOURSES IN THE TEACHING OF WRITING

This case study is of three student writers and their writing contexts. I study these writers and contexts to better understand how students who write for their own purposes outside of school describe their writing experiences, both in school and outside of their classes. My purpose in examining the intersections of personally-chosen writing experiences and school discourses is to better understand a particular slice of student writing in order to inform more meaningful composition instruction and learning in high school. In this chapter, I focus on the four teachers recommended by the three students and analyze the portion of the school context the teacher participants contribute.

Important to this chapter is Bakhtin's (1975/1981) theory of heteroglossia, authoritative discourse, and internally persuasive discourse, which I mention in Chapter 2 and develop more fully here. I will use this theory to frame the broader conversations teachers hear and participate in concerning the teaching of writing. Bakhtin's theories illuminate my understanding of the dialogic nature of the teachers' comments in their interviews with those they perceive as authorities on how they should teach writing.

In this chapter, then, I use a Bakhtinian lens as I share my analysis of the transcribed teacher interviews and discuss the themes that emerge from my analysis. I also describe the dialogue the teachers have with the authoritative discourses, as they adopt or talk back (hooks, 1989) to the discourses they hear. I then discuss the themes found in the cornerstone pieces of the teachers' internally persuasive discourses. These discourses the teachers hear and which become internally persuasive to them become part of the authoritative discourses the students hear, providing an important writing context

for the student writers. In my analysis, I highlight the themes important to the student cases that I will discuss in Chapter 5.

What Teacher Participants Say about Writing

"Teaching writing is something you learn by doing." (AB, Interview, May 2012)

"I am a writer . . . and I try to . . . ." (MM, Interview, May 2012)

"I've never been taught to teach writing." (KR, Interview, May 2012)

"[In] my grad program . . . a professor . . . had several really good strategies that I . . . still use today." (TB, Interview, May 2012)

These statements about learning to teach writing come from the four teacher participants, Amy Brandt, Mason Markt, Karen Reynolds, and Tony Barnett, respectively, and the comments show the range of their learning to teach writing. As mentioned in Chapter 3, each student participant recommended two teachers for me to talk with about that student's writing:

- poet Roxie had recommended Karen and Mason
- novelist Carmen had recommended Mason and Amy
- contestant Kerianne had recommended Amy and Tony

These teachers provide context for some of the writing discourses the three focal students hear in their classes, although they are not the only writing teachers Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne have in the course of their studies on writing, nor their only sources of information about writing.

However, because the students identify these teachers as important in their school writing experiences, and because these teachers provide some school context for student comments about writing in school, I explore the perspectives of the four teacher

participants about their teaching of writing. I particularly note the multiple and competing influences that inform their teaching of writing. From these influences, what practices do these teachers select for teaching writing to their students? Why do these teachers select the practices that they do? Have their choices changed over time? In Chapter 5 I explore how the teacher practices influence the student writers. As a reminder, the data I analyze comes from two interviews per teacher, each lasting about an hour. I interviewed all four teachers in 2009 and again in 2012 and then transcribed the interviews and coded for themes. Five themes emerge in the discourses that the teacher participants enter. These themes are:

- Externally-Imposed Authoritative Discourses:

1. District and State mandates for teaching writing
2. Professional discourses

- Discourses of choice (external and internal)

3. Teacher preparation classes
4. Personal writing experiences
5. Teaching experiences

All four teachers mention these general themes, although to varying degrees of importance. I end this analysis section by examining four themes that emerge from the teachers' statements about their pedagogical choices. I call these the cornerstones of their teaching practices; these are practices they describe in detail or repeat in the interviews. These themes include belief in a traditional model of writing development, emphasizing structure and correctness, dividing creative writing and school essay writing, considering passion and thoughtfulness, and questioning authoritative discourses as well as their own

practice. Although all four teachers mention most of these cornerstone themes, the degree of emphasis again varies considerably from teacher to teacher. These themes are significant and indicate what are internally persuasive discourses for the teachers; these themes shape how the teacher participants teach writing. I take up these four themes in my final chapter and discuss their impact on the future of teaching writing.

Bakhtin's Theories of Heteroglossia and Discourse

Bakhtin (1975/1981) says that language contains many social voices with links and interrelationships (p. 263), including the language of professional groups and of generations (p. 272). In Bakhtin's theory, words and the ideas expressed in them have a unifying aspect, a "centripetal" force from the voices of authority and times past and a "centrifugal" force, or a separating or layering force from social use (p. 272). Language, and the ideas expressed in it, then, has a tug-and-pull to it; ideas being expressed may, at the same time, be forces to create or sustain a hegemony of thinking or to unmake those hegemonic ideas. In hearing language, the listener participates in the heteroglossia of meanings, in that all the past conversations and understandings, including their social and political and cultural meanings, are present in the specific words and the discourse as a whole. Words and ideas may be a part of an authoritative discourse, which, according to Bakhtin, is the language of what should be or must be. Additionally, authoritative discourse is not necessarily "information, directions, rules, models and so forth," but rather attempts to form our beliefs and behaviors (p. 342). This authoritative discourse comes with the power to make others accept or take up those meanings and actions for their own: "we encounter it with its authority already fused to it. The authoritative word is located in a distanced zone, organically connected with a past that is felt to be

hierarchically higher" (p. 342). Bakhtin suggests we also may find an internally persuasive discourse when we change a discourse into "one's own word," when we "interanimate," or engage with the discourse by applying it to new situations and circumstances (pp. 345-6). When we engage with discourse and apply it to new situations, the discourse becomes our own; it becomes our internally persuasive discourse. Words, language, and discourse, then, are active and changeable. With internally persuasive discourse, we are retelling or remaking an idea into our own idea.

Applying internally persuasive discourse notions to the writing teacher participants allows us to see that the teachers learn to teach writing, develop a philosophy of teaching writing, and create practices in the teaching of writing in the midst of a heteroglossia of voices with which the teacher dialogues, or interacts. These voices come from the past and present, from authorities both near and far. The teacher enters the dialogue with thoughts and questions of her own and decides what to adopt and apply for herself and for her own internally persuasive discourse. Bakhtin's theories are relevant to my study when these concepts are applied to understanding how the teacher participants hear and question the many, heteroglossic authoritative voices they encounter and what they select to carry out in their teaching of writing.

My analysis suggests that the writing teachers participate in a heteroglossia of discourses, including those imposed from the District's Central Office, the State Department of Education, as well as those selected from professional organizations, college and university courses, and personal experiences. The District discourse is a voice of authority that acts as a centripetal force when it mandates a specific curriculum and when it offers specific professional development courses for teachers to learn how to

teach writing. It is a discourse that asks teachers to teach certain genres of writing, primarily expository writing, suggesting a specific vocabulary from the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2013). A centrifugal, or a separating force, comes from the discourse teachers hear from courses they self-select or from their own personal writing practices or from what they learn from their teaching experiences. These experiences allow the teachers to question the imposed District or other authoritative discourses, and/or to be in dialogue with those discourses. These self-selected experiences work to layer the teachers' understanding of teaching writing from the District discourse, including acting as a centrifugal or dividing force. Data from the teacher interviews indicate the teachers develop internally persuasive discourses about the teaching of writing which are reflected in their stated philosophies on teaching writing and in the pedagogical choices they make. They remain open to additional learning and further refinement of their internally persuasive discourses through the questions they continue to ask about teaching writing.

With Bakhtin's theories in mind, I turn to describe the both the authoritative discourses and internally persuasive discourses that most influence the teacher participants evident in the teacher interviews. I begin with portraits of the teacher participants and then explain the discourses that are external and in some way imposed; I follow up with the external discourses the teachers more freely choose. Finally, I explain the cornerstone practices the teachers describe, evidence of their internally persuasive discourses, and contemplate why these practices are selected. I consider how their teaching practices and questions about writing might inform our understanding of

the writing context for the focal students. These data speak to how we might consider teaching writing in the future.

Descriptions of the Teachers

The students recommend the four teacher participants as teachers who might know something about them as writers, as mentioned in Chapter 3. What follows are portraits of the four teachers informed by my professional experiences with each and my field notes maintained during this study. I introduce these detailed descriptions beginning with the newest teacher of the group and move to those teachers with more teaching experiences. These teachers range from early teacher practitioners to long-time professionals; two are part-time world language teachers and two are published writers. (Please see Table 3.) All are teachers with whom the students have enjoyed a positive relationship, and all are required to teach writing. I was the District Language Arts Facilitator when Karen, Mason, and Tony were hired, so I met them first at district meetings and then later came to know them as department colleagues; I was a classroom teacher on the hiring committee when Amy was interviewed and have worked with her as a colleague throughout her entire career in the language arts department. My positions as District Facilitator, colleague, and researcher allow me to draw upon professional experiences with each of the four teachers and offer me a unique view into their comments on their philosophies and practices in teaching writing.

Table 4. Brief Summary of Teacher Participants

Name	Amy Brandt	Mason Markt	Tony Barnett	Karen Reynolds
Years Taught (in 2009)	5	10	24	20+ (taught part-time some years with gaps between other years)
Student participants	Carmen Kerianne	Roxie Carmen	Kerianne	Roxie
Course Taught to Student Participant	AP Literature	Creative Writing	Independent Study	Cultural Perspectives
Teaching Writing Philosophy	Learn by doing Sandwich method	Flow Passion Writing workshop	Parts of Speech first Use technology	Five-paragraph theme Correctness
Teacher Preparation Course on Writing?	Yes – MA program	Yes – MA program	Yes – MA program	None
Published Writer?	No	Yes	No	Yes
Questions about Teaching Writing	What is important to teach about writing? Is there a structured approach to teaching writing? How does one teach writing to large numbers of students?	How does one help the student who doesn't care? What did we do that influenced the student participants?	How does one motivate students to revise? What might we learn from Kerianne's process?	How do we help students understand the importance of brainstorming? Is content perhaps more important than structure?

New Teacher Amy Brandt

Amy, the newest to the profession, had been a student teacher at Franklin High, and when a position opened in the language arts department, her cooperating teacher encouraged her to apply. A personal writing project near to her heart is the memoir she crafts during the summers that highlights her relationship with her brother who has special needs. She became an AP Literature teacher very early in her career, the course in which she has Carmen and Kerianne as students. As her colleague, I appreciate her organization – she can always find the handouts and files I cannot – and her work with her AP writing students through multiple conferences during the year. Amy also views her teaching of writing through the lens of what works with her three large classes of sophomores. She has attended the District's course on the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing, but is critical of the amount of information this program promotes that can be realistically handled. She has taken a college course in teaching writing, but also wants to know more about how to teach her numerous tenth grade students. Of the four teachers, Amy is the only one to also voice concern about the approaching implementation of the Common Core Standards. She is an aware teacher, juggling multiple demands and foreseeing more demands, wondering how to negotiate all that is required of her.

Amy comments that she doesn't think her philosophy on teaching writing has changed over the years she has been teaching thus far. She favors direct teaching of various strategies for paragraph development, including "the sandwich method" (AB, Interview, June 2009) for writing body paragraphs, which she believes her tenth grade students need in order to write clearly. She feels the feedback she gives her seniors in their conferences makes a difference because what they talk about is "not abstract, it's

very concrete, . . . it's what matters right now" (AB, Interview, May 2012). She feels her written comments for her sophomores, however, are less effective. She also believes that she should provide challenging learning opportunities for her very capable students, such as Kerianne, who appears in her AP Lit class with many writing experiences outside of school, and who, Amy feels, is doing assignments "just . . . to be doing them" (AB, Interview, June2009). My field notes comment, "She understands what works and doesn't work for her teaching . . . . Of the . . . practices she's studied, . . . [none] is a perfect fit, so she's still looking for a better way" (Field notes, July 18, 2012). Although her teaching has its moments of what appears to be solidified practice, she also voices concerns with strategies that don't seem effective, but she isn't sure of what else to do.

Creative Writing Teacher Mason Markt

Mason Markt, a more experienced teacher of ten years, teaches Creative Writing, an elective, and a variety of other courses, and is the go-to teacher whenever there is an overflow of a particular course in the department. This Creative Writing course and opportunities for students to do creative writing proves significant in District authoritative discourse and among Mason's peers, issues I will discuss at length later. In his interviews, he talks primarily of Creative Writing, as this is the course both Roxie and Carmen have taken with him. While many of his comments separate creative writing from informational writing, there are a few overlaps, one of which is the importance of exhibiting passion in writing. As a published and practicing writer, he draws heavily upon what works for himself and to other sources for authoritative discourse on teaching creative writing as the District does not offer professional development on how to teach creative writing, nor are there meetings with other Creative Writing teachers to decide

curriculum. My field notes observe that Mason "sees his role as recognizing a 'spark' and then encouraging it 'on the side' or, if it's a student in another class, he 'directs' them to Creative Writing" (Field notes, June 7, 2012).

Because I had just talked with both Roxie and Carmen who think Mason will know something about them as writers, I am somewhat surprised when he admits that he can't remember the work from either one, although he does know who they are. He references his grade book and deduces what Carmen has done to earn the grades she receives, and he remembers general writing behaviors for Roxie. He mentions, as I know, that he has three terms of Creative Writing every year with mostly different students every term, and I agree that this might affect how well a teacher remembers an individual's work from two years ago. Even though he is highly devoted to the Creative Writing course and is quite confident in how he wants to teach writing, he still entertains several questions about how to work with the students who are less invested in writing. He is frustrated with students who don't care: "How do you help the student care enough to find something interesting [to write about]? . . . They want to know what the point is, and what I want them to do is, well, what do you care about? And if they don't know, then I get lost" (MM, Interview, May 2012).

Part of Mason's philosophy in teaching writing involves helping students find a process that works, which requires discipline and producing a quantity of text to work with: "I make sure students write. A lot. On a regular basis" (MM, Interview, June 2009). He experiments with his writing workshop, and describes a new approach to emphasize more positive peer feedback. Mason surrounds his students with published writers, having books of poetry in his room for students to browse through; it is in

Mason's class that Roxie finds Sylvia Plath, a poet with whom she identifies. Mason has his students in his other classes look at professional writers, as well: "Let's read through some *Time* magazine articles and see what the pros are doing . . . . On a smaller scale, you need to do something similar" (MM, Interview, May 2012).

Clever and Witty Tony Barnett

Tony Barnett, fond of joking with pithy comments, is the only teacher who has worked with one of the students, Kerianne, in an independent study, not a regular school-day course. She has selected him to be the teacher for this independent study because she has known and liked him as her Spanish teacher and thinks he might have the time to work with her; he, in turn, describes her as "an avid scholar" (TB, Interview, June 2009). As part of the independent study, he requires Kerianne to complete readings and discuss them with him approximately every other week and to write a variety of pieces for a portfolio; he allows her to include some of her contest essays in it. Tony thinks Kerianne is "an absolutely superb tech writer . . . . If you need to know how to assemble a blender, she's your girl, but to understand the importance of modern kitchen equipment in the lives of women who no longer have to beat things on a rock, that was a step" (TB, Interview, June 2009). Tony surprises me by saying his MA had a specialization area in expository writing, as he rarely positions himself as a writing teacher. He is far more likely to talk about the dramatic way he teaches *Great Expectations* (Dickens, 1961 version), which I envy, or to make caustic comments about school policies that make a teacher's life more difficult. In my field notes I write that while Tony is nostalgic about how things "used to be," he is also is concerned with "how things are going now . . . and how things might be in the future. He is aware of how it all changes" (Field notes, July

16, 2012). In his approach to teaching writing he borrows from teachers he admires, including his own "old school" high school teacher (TB, Interview, 2012).

Underneath Tony's jokes and funny comments, he indicates he cares about students becoming comfortable with writing and especially the options computer software offer to make revisions easier. He, like Amy, starts his school year with direct instruction of smaller bits of writing – his ninth grade classes begin with parts of speech and work on adjusting sentence length to audience: "Are you writing for the 9th grade? Short sentences. Or are you writing for your teacher? Long sentences" (TB, Interview, May 2012). Like Amy, he places emphasis on the importance of revision, and requires at least two drafts for a paper; for students wishing additional help, though, he welcomes more drafts. Helping students become motivated to write is important to him: "Sometimes we just kill the motivation by being too constrained by what we will accept as writing," he says (TB, Interview, May 2012). He wishes to find "a cookie" (TB, Interview, May 2012) for students to want to revise with the easy technology available, compared to the laborious efforts he used to have to undergo prior to using computers.

Spanish Teacher Karen Reynolds

Karen Reynolds usually describes herself as a Spanish teacher, but has certification in English, and so is called upon by the Franklin administration to teach some language arts classes over the years, which is how Roxie meets her during Roxie's senior year after Roxie drops out of AP Literature. As a part-time teacher, Karen does not have a classroom of her own, so she can often be seen rolling a cart with materials on it through the hallways of the school, arriving at her next classroom just as the bell is ringing. Karen's career began in the 60s, but she had opted out of teaching off and on,

due to raising children or moves around the country. Her training in teaching writing is equally spotty, learned on the job at various school districts and comes from district initiatives at the time or from the curriculum demanded. As her education and teaching background come from teaching Spanish, where she helps students learn vocabulary and grammatical rules to build sentences, I wonder if her very traditional and structural approach to teaching writing is partly a result of that training and practice. However, while Karen very definitely privileges the five-paragraph essay, as she talks, she entertains questions about how valid that structural approach is for students who already are clear and thoughtful writers, thus questioning her own practice in the process. When I ask Karen if she writes in this formulated way herself, her answer is "It depends" (KR Interview, May 2012), prompting me to ponder "How often do . . . [teachers] say 'it depends . . .' when discussing writing structure with students?" especially if like Karen, they are fond of teaching structures like the five-paragraph theme (Field notes, June 18, 2012). I am surprised to learn, late in our second interview in 2012, that Karen has been published in a fishing newspaper, writing a "how to" for little kids; she also admits she writes poetry. Other than these few comments, Karen does not position herself as a writer beyond a school setting in the interviews, nor in other contexts in which we talked. Karen's is a complicated portrait, and I will return to her later.

A part of Karen's teaching philosophy is to teach the required curriculum conscientiously, which she spends a long time figuring out, mentioning that even after three years of teaching Cultural Perspectives, she is still analyzing the curriculum. She believes modeling is important in teaching writing, and in addition to emphasizing the

five-paragraph theme, she teaches the précis and "clear or well-written sentences, very concise sentences" (KR, Interview, May 2012).

The four teacher participants are only a sample of high school writing teachers, as this case study is not intended to represent the world of secondary writing teachers. These four teachers do, though, represent an important part of the school context for the student writers of the study. As such, they are teachers who make decisions about how to teach writing, and they are teachers who, in this research, reflect upon what they do and why they do it. They exhibit an openness to talk about their practice by consenting to be interviewed, and they exhibit an openness to ask questions of themselves in the course of their interview comments. The teachers' responses to authoritative discourses, both imposed and chosen, and their internally persuasive discourses as evidenced in their teaching philosophies and practices also inform our discussions of the influences on teacher choices in the teaching of writing and how these influences might be addressed.

Authoritative Discourse: A Heteroglossia of Discourses for Four Teachers of Writing

Externally-Imposed Authoritative Discourses

Authoritative discourses are those discourses that carry the weight of position, time, and experience and come from multiple, competing sources for teachers in general. Authoritative sources for what to teach in writing are no less numerous. Several compelling sources of authoritative discourse for the teacher participants of the study emerged as I reviewed and analyzed my data. These discourses are important, as in Chapter 5, I detail the ways the three focal students also enter the heteroglossic world of authoritative discourses by participating in the writing courses as taught by their teachers. I share evidence of the ways the students take up and reject the authoritative discourses in

their classrooms, discourses the teachers both adopted and questioned. In the next section, I examine the authoritative discourses imposed on the teachers from district, state, and professional groups. The analysis in this section is organized in the following way: I begin with the multiple imposed authoritative discourses the teachers hear and explain how the teachers question these voices. Finally, I describe how the teachers, in fact, select other discourses to which they pay more attention.

District and State Discourses

The District discourse figures most prominently as an imposed authoritative discourse the teachers tend to adopt. Because the District is the teachers' employer, the District discourse, as Bakhtin explains, comes with its authority already fused to it. Because this discourse has been developed over the course of years, it has also the power of a decades-long discussion, which suggests the curriculum and decisions have been professionally honed over time, from the past that is felt to be hierarchically higher, adding more authoritative support to the requirements. This authoritative word is also the language that provides, as Bakhtin terms it, the information, directions, and rules of the District's expectations to control the very basis of the teacher behavior by mandating types of expository essay writing to be taught in specific courses. In offering a 6 + 1 Traits of Writing professional development course, it supports a particular approach to teaching writing in an effort to supply common language in the teaching of writing, or, as Bakhtin describes, to create a unitary, centripetal language.

History of District Writing Discourses

The teacher participants are members of a district that has spent considerable time on an evolving district conversation about how to teach writing that has become the

district authoritative discourse on what and how to teach writing. As a long-time member of that district, I am aware of the many contested district in-service discussions and debates on process and product teachers engaged in during curriculum meetings in the seventies and eighties, similar to discussions occurring across the country (Clifford, 1989). Teachers who had learned about process theory, which emphasizes the importance of students proceeding through various steps of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and finalizing a writing product (see Murray, 1972/2003; Atwell, 1998; Calkins, 1986), attempted to convince those who had not heard of it to adopt process approaches in writing courses and assessments; process pedagogy remains a part of teaching writing in the district even now. Authoritative discourse about writing also manifested itself in course organization over the years.

When I first started teaching in the district in 1975, separate term-long writing courses were taught in the high schools for juniors and seniors, but in early 2000, when I was Facilitator for the district, writing was integrated into year-long courses for each grade level. A few specific types of papers or writing experiences were delineated in course guidelines, leaving other choices to teachers. After I returned to the classroom, the district began to focus on standards and benchmarks and district-required student learning expectations in response to requirements for No Child Left Behind (U.S. Department of Education). By 2009, at the beginning of this study, students in the district are expected to write primarily expository writing pieces in their language arts classes, and researched writing pieces are required in all non-elective courses through all years of high school, an indication of the degree to which informational writing is privileged. Also in the three or four years previous to 2009, District Facilitators have

offered training sessions on the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing, which one teacher, Amy Brandt, takes. The District authoritative discourse carries the weight and authority of a discourse created over a span of years, and it borrows and imposes the authority of a nationally prominent program.

An additional component of the District discourse is the separation of creative writing from the primarily expository-based curriculum. A separate Creative Writing course has been offered in the high schools for several decades. The District discourse also designated Creative Writing as an elective; this authoritative discourse speaks to teachers and students alike that it is not essential, although important enough to be offered as a course. This becomes more significant as I look at comments by Roxie and Carmen, both of whom prefer creative writing to what they call "school" writing, by which they mean school essay writing (R, Interview, May 2009; C, Interview, May 2012). In addition, they attribute important personal understanding and academic success to their creative writing efforts over the years. Although students may take this elective course multiple years, this division of writing genres may create an uneven balance with the more privileged writing, expository writing. Separating creative writing and school essay writing also becomes a cornerstone piece for the teacher participants, as I will explain later.

State Department of Education and District Discourses

By 2009, the State Department of Education had been working through discussions of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the nationally designed standards which claim to "provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn" (National Governor's Association, 2010). Increasingly, the discourses

at the state level and district level merge throughout the course of the study. The CCSS emphasize three writing text types for grades nine through twelve: arguments, informative/explanatory, and narratives of "real or imaginary experiences or events" (National Governor's Association, 2010). Specific standards for how this is to be accomplished are outlined in sub-standards from K-12, which delineates nuances of skill development changes from year to year, which the State officially adopts. Once the state standards have aligned with the national standards, the district begins the work of aligning student learning expectations with the state standards. In this instance, the District authoritative voice carries the authority and import of a state and nationally imposed set of standards.

Amy's Response to District and State Authoritative Discourses

Overall, the teachers adopt the most basic of the authoritative discourses they hear: they teach the requirements in their courses. While there is a common understanding that the District Facilitator has no power to dismiss teachers if they don't teach the mandated writing curriculum, the teachers do consider it a professional duty to carry out the job as required. Tony, Amy and Karen all reference curricular expectations when talking about the writing they teach, evidence that these teachers understand district curriculum mandates as authoritative and persuasive. Amy also refers to the AP test writing her students need to be able to complete successfully, another authoritative discourse she feels compelled to understand and carry out. I highlight Amy in the next sections, as she represents comments made by the other teachers and expresses clearly her questions about the discourses she hears.

Amy has taken the series of classes on the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing offered through the district as a professional development course. While she thinks it is a "structured approach to teaching" writing, which she is seeking, she feels free to question this approach suggested by the District, thinking there is "not time to do that kind of intense focus on those 6 Traits while trying to meet all the other standards in teaching in a year" (AB, Interview, May 2012). Amy recognizes and respects Carmen's efforts in her novel writing and also thinks students are not given enough opportunities to "be creative" (AB 2012). She questions what effect the CCSS might have on opportunities for writing creatively, asking how a teacher might "teach all of that [the standards] within the span of even two years . . . and still work in creative writing, especially with the emphasis now on informational text" (AB, Interview, May 2012). Amy's questioning of the CCSS is a departure from her acceptance of previous District mandates.

Why does Amy respond so differently to the CCSS than the District requirements she is currently carrying out? The CCSS standards require similar types of writing to what Amy and the other teachers are already teaching. Because the District adopts the state CCSS discourse, this discourse would arguably carry the same importance and weight as the District requirements. The expectations of the CCSS, however, can be considered more onerous and less acceptable because they come from a position of power (state government, which adopted a national set of standards) and thus from outside and an even more distanced zone. The district expectations, in contrast, are fewer in number and have the appearance of having been discussed by those in-house – other teachers in her building to whom she has access -- before decisions are made, making the District mandates more palatable. My analysis suggests that proximity or access to the power to

engage with creating authoritative discourses is a contributing factor to those discourses that teachers accept or feel free to question or reject. In the case of my study, the teachers accept the nearer District authority, although they question the authority and mandates they perceive the District adopts.

Historical and Other Professional Discourses

As a teacher steps into her classroom, she actually – perhaps unrealized to her – is stepping into the philosophy and practices that are represented in the history of teaching writing. According to Bakhtin, she joins in the conversations of the generations of teachers and theorists who have preceded her. Today's teachers are members of the rich and, at times, contentious discussions on form and truth, process and product. A teacher may call upon Plato's (1988) emphasis on truth, something central to Mason's philosophy, or Warriner's (1977) emphasis on rules, a tenet of Karen and Amy's philosophy. A teacher may emphasize Kajder's (2007) suggestions on the new writing of the 21st Century with its simple and complex technologies, an area Tony valued, or Emig's (1977) insistence that writing is thinking, a belief that no teacher in my study mentioned. Writing teachers are members of a profession that has debated the importance of in-school and out-of-school writing (Schultz & Hull, 2002; Hull & Schultz 2002a, 2002b). The National Council of Teachers of Teachers of English and the National Writing Project, as explained in Chapter 2, also offer authoritative discourses for writing teachers. These organizations offer position papers and articles that embrace a wide lens on the teaching of writing. A teacher may feel obliged to choose some of these authoritative ideas, none of these, or all of them.

A teacher who teaches writing now is one of the participants in the heteroglossia of voices past and present offering perspectives on what to think and do as a writing teacher. A teacher may take up or argue with discourses that tell her what to do or what to include when she teaches writing, even if she doesn't know where or how this discourse came into being. When I analyze the pedagogical choices of the teacher participants, the following questions become important: what choices do the teacher participants make? Why do they adopt these particular discourses? If the practices from these discourses don't work, what other options are available? In what ways are the teachers aware that their practices come from an unseen or unrecognized authoritative discourse telling them what and how to teach?

Response: Teaching a Reified Writing Pedagogy

While the history of teaching writing, as described in Chapter 2 and referenced here, includes a wide variety of discourses about how to teach writing, the teacher participants of the study select practices from a reified writing pedagogy discourse that has been dominant for many decades (Applebee & Langer, 2009). Applebee and Langer observe that, as in their 1980 study, teachers' instruction is "process-oriented" in utilizing pre-writing and requiring revision and relies on using models; it incorporates "after the fact" teaching by writing comments on final drafts as well as makes use of word-processing, and includes "formulaic writing" (p. 17-25). This indicates an authoritative discourse that has pervaded the teaching of writing for over thirty years. I find evidence of the authoritative voices about these practices in the comments of the four teacher participants from Franklin High. Tony and Amy illustrate this best, as they require multiple drafts and revisions, and both bemoan the fact that their comments on final

drafts are ineffective when students just look at the grades and throw their work away or don't continue revision work. Tony, in particular, emphasizes to his students the use of a computer for ease in revision. Amy, as previously described, privileges a specific structure for paragraphs.

My analysis suggests that these teachers do not necessarily know that the discourses they adopted are from generational or historical authoritative discourses. They do not reference any of the authorities mentioned above in describing their work. However, they speak with confidence about their teaching practices, which are from the authoritative discourse of the reified practice Applebee and Langer describe. Amy speaks of the way she "usually" starts the year with direct instruction of "organized body paragraph with topic sentences, details, ties to thesis, all of that" (AB, Interview, May 2012). Karen refers to having her students write a "five-paragraph," "a basic five-paragraph essay," and "five paragraph papers" in a tone of voice as if teaching this type of paper is a commonly understood and good practice (KR, Interview, May 2012). Amy does question the amount to be done in the CCSS and the 6 + 1 Traits, but she doesn't question that what is being asked is not a good way to teach writing or what should be taught in writing.

Although none of the teachers mention reading specific publications from NCTE or NWP, I find evidence that they are aware of the authoritative discourses of professional organizations, as they do talk about digital and multi-modal writing, a current topic and relates to Carmen's and Kerianne's writing. Mason is aware of the National Novel Writing Month online site Carmen uses, and both Amy and Tony mention the multi-modal projects Kerianne produces in the course of some of her competitive

work. Amy allows Carmen to use her creative writing portfolio for one of Amy's assignments, and Tony permits Kerianne to include contest work in her portfolio for her study with him, as suggested in studies about out-of-class writing (Alvermann 1998, 2007; Hull & Schultz 2002a, 2002b).

Why do the four teachers select the practices and discourses they adopt? Is it because District, state, and other personally-chosen writing discourses available to them emphasize the same practices with which they are familiar? Or are they unaware of other practices or unable to adopt them? The voices about teaching writing from both inside and outside the district surround the teachers of the study. These discourses are particularly positioned, as Bakhtin points out, to produce a hegemony of thinking and to regulate behavior, as I explained earlier. What the teacher participants pay attention to and carry out from the authoritative discourses imposed upon them is a limited range of practice. This range of practice comes from an authoritative District discourse with some aspects borrowed from insistent voices about technology and including out-of-class work as discussed in professional circles. During their interviews, the teachers provide comments that demonstrate the power of authoritative discourses in their lives. They do not reject or resist the dictate to teach students to write expository essays, but rather manage and accommodate the authoritative discourses they hear. Amy, Mason, Karen, and Tony are not unaware teachers, and in their interviews, they present themselves as reflective teachers about these authoritative discourses.

These discourses, however, are not the only authoritative voices to which the teachers attend. Although the teacher participants adopt a number of the reified and authoritative discourses on teaching writing, the various authorities don't seem to cover

all their teaching questions and situations. As I analyzed the data, themes emerged of other major influences on the teachers' development of their teaching philosophies and practices. In the next section I describe the authoritative discourses the teachers find and select to make their own: their own writing experiences, their teacher preparation courses, and their teaching experiences, the most important of the three.

Discourses of Choice

Bakhtin says authoritative discourse comes with the power to make others accept or take up a discourse for their own. He also says that an authoritative discourse cannot be divided: "One cannot divide it up – agree with one part, accept but not completely another part, reject utterly a third part" and asserts that "The one perceiving and understanding this discourse is a distant descendent; there can be no arguing with him [the authority]"; authoritative discourse is "only transmitted" (p. 344). However, he also argues that "both the authority of discourse and its internal persuasiveness may be united in a single word – one that is simultaneously authoritative and internally persuasive – despite the profound differences between these two categories of alien discourse," although he acknowledges that this is less common and that more often there is a "sharp gap between these two categories" (p. 342). In other words, authoritative discourse, while it seems to have the final word, also may have some element of being internally persuasive. When an idea, a word, or a discourse is internally persuasive, it becomes "half-ours and half-someone else's . . . . It is not so much interpreted by us as it is further, that is freely, developed, applied to new material, new conditions; it enters into new interanimating relationships with new contexts. More than that, it enters into an intense interaction, a *struggle* with other internally persuasive discourses" (pp. 343-344).

How might we understand the uneasy unification of authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse in a single word or discourse? My analysis suggests that the teacher participants illuminate this concept when they describe where they find authority – what should be -- with what they also choose to accept as authority – in discourses of choice. Bakhtin helps us understand how the teachers negotiate these issues of authority for the teacher participants. The teachers, as well, illuminate Bakhtin's theories; it is theoretical heteroglossia, whether they understand this or not. The teachers are entering a conversation on a theoretical level as well as a practical level. The comments of the teachers, the questions they do and don't ask, and the gaps and links they make as they navigate issues of authority emerge in the themes of unification in my data.

Three themes which emerge from my analysis offer support for a unification of authoritative and internally persuasive discourse for the teacher participants: the authoritative discourse of teacher preparation courses, the discourse of personal writing experiences, and the discourse of teaching experiences. These are self-selected authoritative discourses. The teachers are participants in other discourses in their various communities of teacher-talk: daily email pops into in-boxes with invitations to learn about new or improved approaches to teaching, the news on education reform permeates the media and offers opinions on what makes good teaching, and the teachers have colleagues and friends in the department with whom they discuss their teaching situations. The authoritative discourses I describe in this section, however, are those that emerge as important to the four teacher participants. These discourses additionally provide some of the school context for the student participants.

The Authoritative Discourse of Teacher Preparation Courses and Teacher Responses

The role of teacher preparation courses in developing – or not -- the philosophies and practices of the teachers of the study emerge as a key theme in my analysis. The authority of this discourse comes from the sanctioned college or university course itself, similar to the authority of the District and state discourses described previously. The authority comes from distanced space and even more history, arguably even hierarchically higher than the authority of the District. This sanctioned authority, however, comes from choice, the choice of taking a program in which the student who is preparing to become a teacher is interested. The authority also comes through how the information is either useful (to Amy) or resonates on an emotional level (for Tony). Both respond by incorporating something from those experiences into their own teaching practices, Bakhtin's new condition. What they incorporate is a small portion of their overall pedagogical choices, as it does not satisfy other needs and teaching situations. Karen, however, didn't have access to this discourse and had to seek out additional resources. Even though Tony and Amy learn key components for their own teaching, they, too, look for additional information and authoritative sources.

Karen, the teacher who has been teaching over the longest time span, explains that when she began teaching in the late sixties, "there wasn't any instruction whatsoever" in how to teach writing (KR, 2012). She comments she learned to teach writing on the job. Amy, however, the newest teacher of the group and in her seventh year of teaching in 2012, describes a specific university course devoted to the teaching writing:

> We had to write our own papers and go through a revision process and . . . mark what we changed and made big changes, . . . and . . . so we had to think about our own writing process, and how we went about revising and writing our own work, to be able to explain that to our future students.

The teacher education professor's emphasis on "making the invisible visible" (AB, Interview, May 2012) informs Amy's teaching philosophy in general. Amy describes this course as "an individualized" approach (AB, Interview, May 2012) and incorporates a version of this process with her senior AP Literature students by requiring them each to attend a writing conference mid-process over all major papers for the course. Amy, however, feels she needs a systematic approach to teach a whole class of tenth graders to write, who are both more numerous and less experienced as writers.

Tony, a businessman-turned-teacher mid-career, has a different teacher preparation experience in the years between Karen's and Amy's experiences. One of his courses for his MA in English education involved working in a writing center for students struggling with writing at the university and he highly respected his professor: "I still have some of her writing prompts in my writing collection . . . that I use with the ninth graders even now. She had a wonderful collection . . . [in] one of her books, and I used a lot of stuff out of that" (TB, Interview, May 2012). Tony describes another professor as "a wonderful, wonderful woman" and that he "loved every minute" of her class. Both of these women, he concludes, influence his teaching of writing through his desire to develop a community of writers, a portion of what he considers important in his teaching of writing. Like Amy, Tony appropriates part of the authoritative discourse of university professors in teacher education courses to his new teaching situations, and like Amy, these choices, while useful, supply only a part of his internally persuasive discourse about teaching writing.

The Authoritative Discourse of Personal Writing Experiences

Bakhtin describes authoritative discourse as that which should be, as the discourse that tries to influence beliefs and behaviors. It is the discourse that comes from elsewhere with power from a position that is above those it tries to persuade or from that of the conversations of generations. When I ask the teacher participants how they learned to teach writing, Tony, Karen, and Amy first turn to a description of classes they took in their teacher preparation courses, which fits Bakhtin's theory of authoritative discourse, as described above. Mason, however, chooses an authority in a closer source: his own writing experiences and his identity as a writer. This is particularly important, as the three student writers also take up an authoritative identity as a writer, which I will describe in Chapter 5. Why does Mason choose this kind of authority? Why do the other teachers not describe themselves as writers and cite that as a source of where and how they learned to teach writing? In looking at the comments of the four teachers juxtaposed with each other, my analysis shows that recognition of being a writer and of that person's writing by authorities outside the classroom contributes to that recognition becoming an authority the teacher will accept as an authentic and authoritative source for how to teach writing. Lack of that kind of recognition or lack of a quantity of that kind of recognition also influences the weight of authority of personal writing experience.

Two Published Writers

"I write," Mason Markt, Roxie and Carmen's Creative Writing teacher, promptly tells me in 2012 to my question, "How did you learn to teach writing?" He is a published writer; his plays have been performed in local and international venues. He describes himself as "very cognizant" of how he approaches his own writing projects, "so more

than anything else I want them [the Creative Writing students] to understand . . . at least one writer's process to get things going" (MM, Interview, June 2009). He asks his Creative Writing students to write often and to write a lot, as he did when he was writing a novel, getting up at 4:00 a.m. every day for a year to get a good quantity of material, a story he often tells his students. He also highlights "what the professionals" do when teaching non-fiction writing (MM, Interview, May 2012), and he takes up this professional identity himself.

Karen also is a published writer and writes for personal pleasure in her spare time. In contrast to Mason, though, she describes her own writing as "just little things," saying she writes "a little poetry" and explains late in the interview that she has written a children's section for a fishing newspaper (KR, Interview, May 2012). Because she had no coursework on how to teach writing, she drew initially drew upon the experiences she had in high school, saying, "you carry that with you, how to write;" she pulled ideas for how to teach writing from her "own strengths" until she later realized there were other approaches to teaching writing, which she then began to adopt (KR, Interview, May 2012).

What influences the difference between Mason's and Karen's descriptions of themselves as writers and in using that positionality or identity to inform their writing instruction? Mason, the teacher who writes the most outside of school and job-based writing is the only one who identifies himself as a writer – as a writer of creative writing. To find an answer to these questions, I look also at the responses of the student participants, who readily identify themselves as writers. In comparing the responses of the students and the teachers, my analysis considers the idea that freely chosen writing –

that writing without numerous rules and a teacher standing by with the threat of a grade lends more freedom to say, "I am a writer." My analysis suggests that frequent, freely-chosen writing satisfies an emotional need and creates a context for an identity as a writer to be taken up, and when that identity is recognized – either from personal recognition or public recognition – one comes to identify oneself as a writer. This seems to be true for the students, as I will describe more fully in Chapter 5, as well as for the teacher participants.

However, for the teachers, quantity of experience and degree of success in published work is a factor in accepting the authoritative discourse of personal experience. Also, the kind of publication that Mason accomplishes compared to being published in a fishing newspaper may not have seemed as hierarchically important to Karen as having his play performed in Europe was for Mason. The recognition of his work by outside professionals in multiple instances becomes an authority, as Bakhtin points out, that carries persuasive power. For him, the authority comes from the fact of publication, decided upon by a distanced, professional world of writers. He then takes up that identity and accepts that authoritative discourse and applies it to his teaching. These instances of recognition and publication, missing from their comments in their interviews, may be a reason why Tony and Amy do not describe themselves as writers. All four teachers do all sorts of writing – they write assignments for students and handouts of explanations and emails to parents, among other pieces. Three of these teachers do not identify themselves as writers, however.

The authority gained from personal writing experiences and the authoritative discourse of the teacher preparation courses become selected discourses that are both

authoritative and internally persuasive. These discourses combine the authority of a distant discourse, one that the teachers don't have control over (the University, the professionals who judged Mason's work) and intertwine with the discourses chosen by the teachers, Bakhtin's new circumstances. These discourses are a part of the heteroglossia of competing discourses emphasizing what and how to teach writing. From the District discourse to the state and other professional discourses, the teachers have many sources of authority; however, these discourses do not address or answer the whole of the experiences and questions the teacher participants encounter when teaching writing. The four teachers participants also find authoritative answers in the closest authority of all, their own teaching experiences.

The Authoritative Discourse of Teaching Experiences

Bakhtin's theories on authoritative discourses – those discourses which teachers must listen to and are required to accept, plus those discourses which unify authoritative and internally persuasive discourse and which struggle with other internally persuasive discourses -- help us to understand that the four teacher participants are not only subject to top-down mandates on how to teach writing. These teachers also seek out what may be termed authoritative discourses of their own choosing, including affirmation about how to teach writing from their own teaching experiences. While the authority of their teaching experiences may not have had a distanced authority or the authority of the ages, the authority comes from a sense of rightness or of the fact that it seems to work, if only for a little while. It also comes from students saying that what a teacher has taught makes a difference in their understanding or skills. These personally chosen authorities seem to the teacher participants as important as the mandates that come from entities like the

District; however, these personally chosen authoritative discourses are also less stable and more subject to change or to elicit feelings of discomfort. This seems to be an authoritative discourse that is more fluid. An additional discourse that informs their teaching is that of their own teaching experiences, the third theme. Amy's comments particularly illustrate this understanding of authoritative discourse.

Amy's Reflections on Teaching Experiences

Amy, a fifth year teacher when she has Carmen and Kerianne in class in 2009, describes learning to teach writing as something a teacher has to learn by doing. One portion of the authoritative discourse of Amy's experiences comes from the success of the required individual conferences with her seniors. Meeting with her seniors is "the favorite part" of her job (AB, Interview, May 2012). Her students understand her comments, and their writing improves after the conferences. Amy also considers the positive responses from some of her tenth grade students after her teaching them the sandwich method of paragraph construction as a positive authority that this is a practice to continue: "I've had kids say, oh, I wish somebody would have explained it to me that way years ago" (AB, Interview, May 2012). While Amy does not mention how many students say this paragraph-writing procedure helps, she continues the practice based on the comments of those she does receive.

The authoritative discourse of what to teach in writing which comes from teaching experience, also informs Amy about what doesn't work, as well. Even though the mid-process conferences work with her senior students, Amy thinks she doesn't have the time to do the same with her 125 tenth graders. She elects, instead, to write comments on the final drafts of papers for those classes of students. However, she feels

the comments end up "meaning nothing" because not many take her up on her offer for a further revision, and requiring another revision would make it twice as long to get them graded (AB, Interview, May 2012). In addition, Amy finds herself re-teaching the sandwich method mid-year because students are not using it in their papers the way she is expecting. While Amy has not solved all the teaching dilemmas of teaching writing to her sophomores, she does consider the authority of the fact that what she has done is not effective and is considering trying something else. She just doesn't know what to try next at the time of our interview.

This authoritative discourse of what does and doesn't work reinforces Amy's practice or causes her to begin rethinking what she should do. The fact that she isn't sure what to do next, raises questions about what kinds of resources and support a questioning teacher has to explore other discourses on the teaching of writing. What other options does Amy think she has or does she know about for how to respond to student writing to help the students revise their work? My analysis suggests that since the authoritative discourse of teaching experiences is an important one for these four teachers, they need the time, resources, and opportunities to reflect on their effective and ineffective practices and to continue to learn about teaching writing. Are there, perhaps, other authoritative discourses about writing that these teachers haven't asked themselves? Are the teachers prepared to deeply question the authoritative discourses they embrace in their internally persuasive discourse about teaching writing?

Not Teaching Writing as a Way of Thinking

In the conversations we have about writing in the 2009 and 2012 interviews, the teachers do not dwell on an aspect which has been included in many of the discussions of

the teaching of writing over the years: teaching writing as an "act of thinking" (Flower & Hayes 1977; see also LaBrant, 1957; Calkins 1986; National Writing Project & Nagin, 2003; Applebee & Langer, 2009, 2011). While this may have been a part of their teaching philosophies or rationales for their instruction and assignments, it does not specifically surface during the interviews. In general, the teachers center their comments on their teaching of writing, types of writing, strategies for writing, assignments to complete, and elements of essay writing. While considering this perspective on writing pedagogy that is not mentioned, two additional questions emerge: is teaching writing as a way of thinking or as a way to understand lives a part of any of the authoritative discourses which come to the teachers or which they consult? All of the above questions are important when considering the case of Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne, who write for a variety of purposes and a mix of audiences, and who define writing in very complex ways, including the notion of writing as a way of thinking and of understanding their own lives and the lives of others.

Figure 1 illustrates the authoritative discourses the teachers hear and participate in, as described above. In the upper left of the drawn figure (Benjamin, n.d.) depicting a teacher, the circles represent the externally imposed authoritative discourses, the distantly situated discourses the teachers are required to heed through mandate. The discourses of the State and the District overlap, indicating that these two discourses merge as the years of the study progress. The authoritative discourses to which the teachers choose to attend are the circles located in the upper right. These discourses, while also authoritative in that they contain elements of the hierarchy found in the university or from

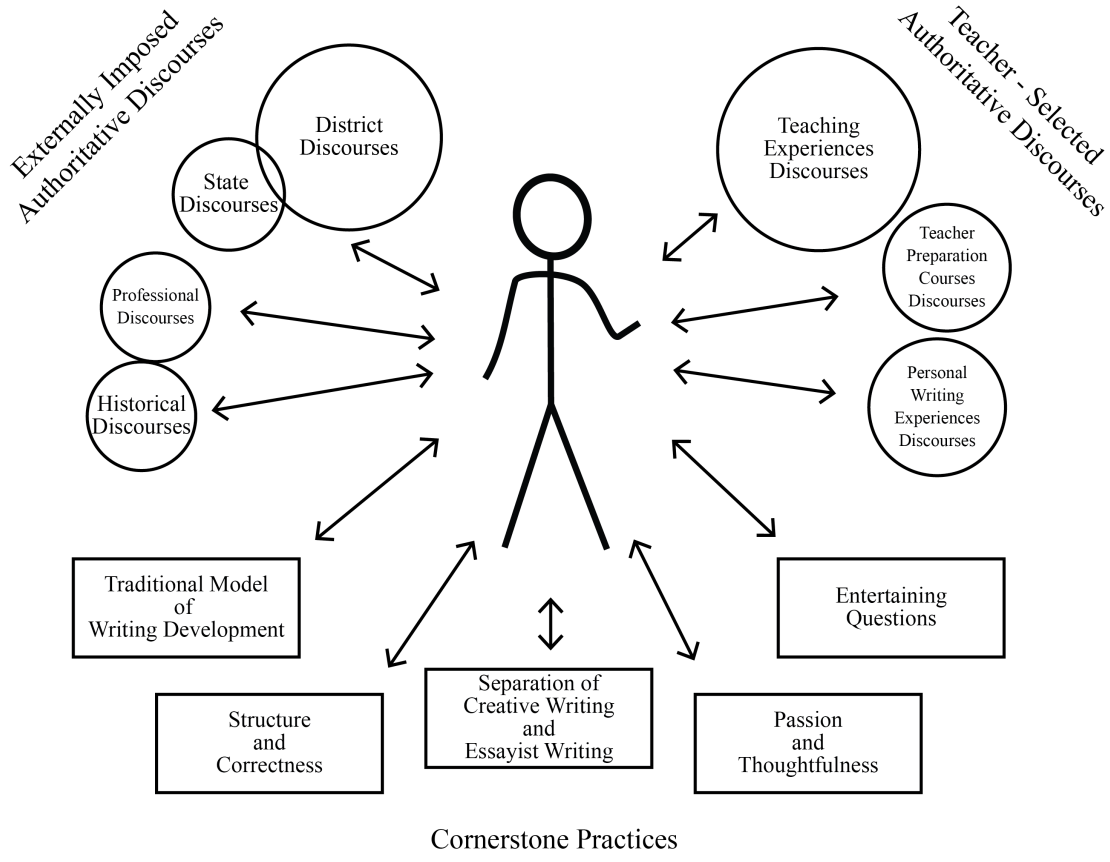

Figure 1. Authoritative Discourses Informing Teacher Internally Persuasive Discourses

professional development, also include the personal and professional discourses the teachers elect to consider. Two circles, District Discourses and Teaching Experiences Discourses, are larger, indicating that these two discourses are more influential in teacher decisions when teaching writing. The cornerstone practices of the teachers are located below the figure of the teacher, as these are the practices the teacher figuratively stands upon in enacting the beliefs the teachers of this study have come to understand as important in their teaching of writing. These are practices they repeat, describe with energy, or insist upon in instructing composition.

In the next section, I describe some of the key pedagogical choices the teachers describe as cornerstone pieces of their internally persuasive discourse, the elements from the authoritative discourses that they make their own.

Internally Persuasive Voices: Cornerstone Practices in Teaching Writing

The four teachers of the study do not hesitate when I ask them if I may interview them about the students of the study and their teaching of writing. They act as if it is perfectly natural for them to talk with me as a researcher and their colleague about their students and practices in teaching writing. My field notes observe that all the teachers assume "that writing is important and are trying to figure out how to do it and do well or better. These teachers are thinking, revising professionals, caring teachers" (Field notes, July 18, 2012). As I look at the interview comments through the lens of Bakhtin's theory of authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse, I notice that each teacher focuses on a few ideas that seem to be cornerstones to his or her philosophy or practice. These cornerstone practices are ones the teachers talk about at length or with more enthusiasm or emphasis in their voices in the course of the interviews. Amy, for instance, talks about teaching the sandwich method and explains in detail how she teaches it, discovers the students have forgotten the method mid-year, reteaches it, revises her teaching schedule to allow more practice, and notes the positive results but the negative consequences of having to take the time to reteach the method. This emphasis on structure, like the other cornerstone practices I explain below, seem to be key indicators of internally persuasive discourse. Bakhtin (1975/1981) explains "internally persuasive discourse . . . is affirmed through assimilation, tightly interwoven with 'one's own word.' . . . Its creativity and productiveness consist precisely in the fact that such a word

awakens new and independent words . . . . It . . . is freely, developed, applied to new material, new conditions; it enters into interanimating relationships with new contexts (p. 345). My analysis suggests that the degree of emphasis and explanation of these practices by the teachers illustrates what Bakhtin describes as "an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available . . . points of view, approaches, directions, and values" (p. 346). These cornerstone practices of the teachers have been affirmed by the teachers, have become their own words, and their questions of their teaching choices, another cornerstone practice, show evidence of interanimation with new contexts as a part of that struggle.

A teacher's professional philosophy and practices develop over time, and as I explain in the teacher portraits earlier in this chapter, the four teacher participants have come to their own teaching philosophies on writing. No two teachers have the exact same philosophy underpinning their pedagogical choices for their practice, although several of these cornerstone practices overlap from teacher to teacher. These teachers do not merely assign writing; they try to teach writing. In this next section I will explain the cornerstone ideas favored across the group which emerge as indicators of the teacher participants' internally persuasive discourses: a belief in a traditional model of writing development, an emphasis on structure and correctness, a separation of creative writing and school essay writing, an emphasis on passion and thoughtfulness, and a habit of asking questions.

Belief in a Traditional Model of Writing Development

Applebee (2000) analyzes writing development models as taught in U.S. schools in terms of writing purposes, language fluency and control, knowledge of structures, and

knowledge of writing strategies, commenting that school textbooks often privilege structural knowledge, even though the structures often emphasized are not found in published writing (2000). He suggests a "broader model" of writing development, as "writing achievement varies with topic and type of writing: vocabulary, syntactical patterns, fluency, patterns of errors, organizing structures, and even writing processes will all vary from one topic or type of writing to another" and from one subject to another; this conception of a "richer developmental model for writing" (Applebee 2013, p. 29) is not one that is mentioned or enacted by the teacher participants of my study. My analysis of the comments by the four teachers indicates that they believe learning to write well is a sequential task.

In my data, it is clear that the four teachers believe that students grow developmentally in learning to write expository or informational text. That development entails learning an essential structure in writing and that younger students or less skilled students need to learn it before they may move on to other types of writing. The teachers are committed to the ideas that ninth and tenth grade students, students in non-creative writing courses, and students of "lower ability" need more direct teaching and emphasis on specific sequential skills and structures of writing. AP students and Creative Writing students and "higher ability" students are allowed more latitude in the kinds of structures or pieces they are expected to compose. I note this set of beliefs across the data from all four teachers.

Amy, as also indicated by the other three teachers, feels there is a sequence to learning how to write well. She remarks she doesn't know "what tenth grade writing should look like," indicating her belief that student writing should have certain qualities

or characteristics from grade level to grade level. She wants to know a "scope" and sequence for writing skills so she can raise the "level of challenge or difficulty in tenth grade from where they're at in ninth or eighth or seventh" (AB, Interview, May 2012). However, her students' writing have "huge differences" in the range of the quality of writing, or, as she describes it, "between my A and D or C papers" (AB, Interview, May 2012). She isn't sure what to do about that. Karen expresses surprise that many of her seniors do not have a good "lead-in sentence for each paragraph . . . and . . . I just assumed they would have it by the time they were seniors, and they don't" (KR, Interview, May 2012). Mason reflects that some of his students need to understand structure before they can move on. Tony wants his students to identify nouns and verbs at the beginning of the year.

Scribner and Cole (1981) refer to this widely-held academic belief in steps or stages of development as a "monolithic model" which does not "give full justice to the multiplicity of values, uses, and consequences which characterize writing as social practice" (p. 137) and conclude, "a functional approach appears more appropriate than a developmental one. The loose generalization of developmental models developed for work with children to instructional programs with adolescents and adults is certainly questionable" (p. 135). Moffett (1989) agrees, categorizing writing into functions, not genres: "noting down," "looking back," "thinking up," "looking into," and "thinking over/thinking through." Because the teachers assume that certain skills are necessary before others, they teach writing with specific structures in mind and with assessments geared towards making sure students master those structures, evidence of their internally persuasive discourse about the importance of a particular writing development model.

My analysis suggests that the power of school tradition is a likely source of the information for these practices, as I explain next.

An Emphasis on Structure and Correctness

One interview question I ask is, "what do you look at as the indicators of quality writing?" All four teachers talk about the emphasis they place on correctness of expression and the structure of school essay writing, although Tony, Amy, and Karen privilege this more than Mason. Unlike Mason, the other three teachers look for formulas and accuracy before they consider other aspects of writing. My analysis shows the four teachers believe that students in general, and weaker-skilled students in particular, need to learn structure in order to write school essay writing well. By directly teaching the five-paragraph theme and the sandwich method of developing a paragraph and evaluating writing with an emphasis on structure and correctness, Mason, Karen, Amy, and Tony adopt, as part of their internally-persuasive discourse, a philosophical belief that teaching writing involves teaching repeatedly and insisting upon very specific elements of structure and correctness.

Karen Reynolds comments very specifically on these points: "First I look at sentence construction. Just being able to produce a sentence. And I look for, well, obviously, at first spelling and grammatical errors, the mechanics, . . . paragraph construction" (KR, Interview, May 2012), mentioning that poet Roxie did well organizationally but poorly with mechanics. Karen had participated in school-wide scoring of student essays--"a basic five-paragraph essay"--when she taught in California (KR, Interview, May 2012). She felt that because of these efforts, writing did improve, and she continues to teach what she learned about evaluating writing from the training

she received to score those papers. Karen repeats "five paragraph" theme structure five times in one twenty-minute interview, evidence of a cornerstone practice in her internally persuasive discourse.

As Karen talks, however, she shifts her comments to include how she thinks that more skilled writers perhaps don't need the kind of structure she is talking about originally, and hedges on how she might look at the work of those students differently. As we will see in the section on questioning practices, in her interview Karen reconsiders her practices in evaluating formulistic writing structures. She concludes she hasn't quite decided what she thinks about the role of structure in student writing. Up until that point, however, she sounds quite certain that the five-paragraph theme she has taught for so long is standard and sound writing pedagogy.

Mason, however, starts talking about quality writing with the idea of flow: "If I get caught up in the story, I think it's a big indicator" (MM, Interview, May 2012). He does consider what he calls "little things": "if they take care of presentation, if they take care of grammar, . . . if they understand that paragraphing works not just in terms of clarity, but also in terms of rhythm, that's neat, you know" (MM, Interview, May 2012). He is more enthusiastic, however, about other aspects of a student's work than correctness. This is mostly for his creative writing class, although he considers passion or sincerity key to a good piece of writing in any class. When talking about his non-elective classes, he believes "the good students have no problem filling something in, . . . with the others, they need more than anything else . . . to understand how the structure works" (MM, Interview, May 2012). When describing structure, Mason talks less about topic sentences and five-paragraph themes. He instead explains structure more globally,

describing it as: “an intriguing opening” and then maintaining that interest level throughout, with finally, “how do you make sure everything’s clear, and how do you wrap it all up at the end?” (MM, Interview, May 2012). As for the actual grading, though, he notes, “when I rubric it all out, it’s all structural kinds of things” (MM, Interview, May 2012).

It is certainly easier to check off whether there are topic sentences and several supporting details than the quality of thinking or a presentation of truth a la Plato and Montaigne when evaluating an essay. Ease of assessment may be one reason why the emphasis on structure and correctness has survived over the years, because these beliefs in a particular kind of correctness and structure are not new beliefs. Johnson, Smagorinsky, Thompson and Fry (2003) review the history of the emphasis on the five-paragraph theme, finding references to this form in the 16th Century and particularly in the textbooks used in secondary schools for decades in the 20th Century. Why it has survived over the years, Johnson, *et al*., say, has been attributed to school traditions, working conditions with too many students per teacher, and pressures on teachers for students to score well on high stakes writing assessments, among other reasons. Amy, too, speaks of the frustration of working with 125 sophomore writers. The power of school traditions is strong for both Tony and Karen, who mention high school writing experiences as influential on their teaching of writing.

Separating Creative Writing and School Essay Writing

Kelly Cherry (2009), fiction and poet and non-fiction writer, contends that “art and reality are in cahoots, each serving the other” (p. 169) and Francine Du Plessix Gray (2003), another novelist and non-fiction writer, declares “the phrase ‘Creative Writing’

and the very institution of 'Creative Writing' departments uphold a myth that . . . there are certain genres of writing that are more 'creative' than others and that fiction is the most 'creative' of prose genres" (p. 5). The teachers at Franklin, in the midst of the heteroglossia of voices about how to teach writing, appear to believe as their District mandates or encourages – they separate the genres, privileging school essay writing in their core classes of language arts as a part of their cornerstone practices derived from their internally persuasive discourses. School essays are defined in teacher participant comments as five-paragraph themes, academic writing, expository writing, informational writing, and/or non-fiction writing.

Mason very particularly divides his practices and philosophies on writing, even to describing his students in a binary fashion: "if they're in creative writing, then they're . . . usually there because they want to be, they want to actually develop" which he says he typically doesn't find in his other classes (MM, Interview, May 2012). Mason's description of his teaching choices in Creative Writing is full of extended examples, and his comments on the writing done in his other classes is far more restrained.

Karen and Amy also separate what they called creative writing from the other writing they teach, and they don't think they actually do anything to teach creative writing. Karen, upon hearing of Roxie's interest in writing poetry, comments that she thinks creative writing may have been "a good outlet" for a student like Roxie, but adds that creative writing isn't really included in her Cultural Perspectives curriculum (KR, Interview, June 2009). Amy, reflecting on the novel writing Carmen is most interested in, thinks perhaps there is not enough room in the curriculum to allow students to be creative: "I don't think we give them enough opportunities to be creative. And those

particular girls [Carmen and another two students Amy taught] . . . found an outlet for their creativity outside of I think what we provide them in the curriculum" (AB, Interview, May 2012).

The separation of writing into genres and the importance of learning structures first before writing in other ways is important to notice as Carmen, whose excitement about and success in her writing will become evident in Chapter 5. Carmen does not attribute her passion to learning structures and by sorting out creative from non-creative writing. She credits, instead, her interest and success in college academic writing to her hours spent writing creatively. Carmen's progression to her success in writing is not the model of writing development the teachers of the study embrace. Her success is likely not due to a separation of genres. She combines it all.

Karen, as a Spanish teacher, teaches her world language classes through a grammarian approach – she spends a lot of time teaching students how to conjugate verbs and build sentences. Her background, coupled with a lack of instruction in teaching writing in another way and followed up with all-school scoring experiences of five paragraph themes to talk about what constituted successful writing, may have led her to understand teaching and evaluating writing in a structural way. But in considering the other teachers, my questions again become about the issues of having time to learn about other practices, to have time and support to question practices.

Passion: Important, and Emphasized Less

With the exception of Mason, the teachers of the study speak less often and with less specificity about their teaching of passion, sincerity, flow, or thoughtfulness, than of strategies for producing correctness or specific school essay structures. Thomas (2011)

asserts that recent mandates draw teachers to "prompt-driven and formulaic writing," in their classes as opposed to "authentic writing," or the writing of a "purposeful writer" (p. 104). Applebee and Langer (2009, 2011) and Hillocks (2002, 2005) also share concerns with standards and writing assessments that limit writing instruction to formulaic writing types. Mason, in contrast, privileges passion and caring in his students' writing. While in his rubric for his non-creative writing classes emphasizes structural features, he amends that with "except for something that I've recently added to the rubric which is a sense of passion or sincerity towards the work" (MM, Interview, May 2012). He concludes, "quality writing comes down to . . . a sense of passion, a sense of sincerity toward the topic, and knowing what it is they actually want to talk about" (MM, Interview, May 2012).

Tony, Amy, and Karen do not include passion or sincerity in their comments about indicators of quality writing, unlike Mason, who sees them as important in both creative writing and non-fiction prose. Is this difference because they think passion and thoughtfulness will arrive once the structure and correctness issues are resolved for a writer? That it will follow in revised drafts? These questions are not answered in the comments the teachers make. However, the issue of passion and earnestness is important as the three student writers describe great passion and intensity for their writing projects, a primary theme that emerges from the data of their interviews.

The four participant teachers are kind and caring professionals, as I note above and in my field notes. Although they teach like the many teachers of the study by Applebee and Langer (2009) in a manner similar to what English teachers have been teaching for the past thirty years, all indicate a willingness to alter their practices as

indicated in the final theme of their cornerstone practices, the habit of entertaining questions about their teaching.

Entertaining Questions

Even though the teachers have developed a sense of an internally persuasive discourse about teaching writing through the teacher training, coursework, and years of experience, a last theme emerges which may have implications for their future revision of the cornerstone practices evident from their internally persuasive discourses: their own questions about how and what to teach students about writing. All four participants entertain questions about their practices, although their questions are different. Tony asks how to better help students revise, wishing there were some sort of "cookie" to motivate them to do this important work and wonders what Kerianne's "system" is, so teachers may learn from this student he considers a high school scholar (TB, Interview, May 2012). Karen questions if a teacher should be more flexible for some students, while reconsidering her emphasis on the five paragraph theme: "I think sometimes you have to kind of let some of that slip and look at what they're saying," concluding that her usual reliance on structure has become "wishy-washy" as she talks with me about her practice (KR, Interview, May 2012).

Amy is full of questions. What is important to teach and how does a teacher go about deciding what to teach, she asks. What structured approach to teaching writing would be more effective than the approaches she already knows about? She also wonders how one teacher can manage to teach writing well to the large quantity of students she faces in her numerous big classes. She wants to know how to teach students like Kerianne who come to class with so many writing experiences causing Amy to suspect

Kerianne is doing assignments just to be doing them. She wonders how to teach "what matters" to students. In pondering Amy's statements, my field notes observe that Amy raises interesting questions for all of us: "what's important to do, how does one decide what to do?" (Field notes, June 19, 2012)

Mason has two questions that I ponder:

> How do you help the . . . student . . . care enough to find something interesting? . . . That's hard with some of them, because you ask them what they care about and they'll shrug . . . . How do you get them to understand that they need to care about something? And that whatever they do care about, it matters. (MM, Interview, May 2012)

Mason, who feels that passion is an important part of any piece of writing isn't sure how to teach to get that passion, to get kids to care. I also ponder Mason's question about "what difference you [he] . . . actually made," when we talk about his students Carmen and Roxie. As I think of the impact teachers want to make on students, I extend his question to ask it of all of us at Franklin High specifically and to English teachers in general: what do we do? What do we do to help students in general earn to write enthusiastically and well? Or are we busy teaching what we think is important curriculum through what we consider good pedagogy, only to find out, as I do when I interview the three student participants that what we are teaching is rather inconsequential to them and that they teach themselves more about writing than we do? These questions I consider again in Chapter 5.

The teacher participants represent professionals who question their practice. We in the profession as a whole should continue to address the critical issues of teaching writing. Why do we teaching writing? How do we choose to teach writing? How might we revise how we teach it? In considering these questions, we should also consider if

writing teachers have the time, opportunity, support, and curiosity to explore a rich variety of teaching practices during a teaching life that is jam-packed with students and ever-changing expectations of all aspects of teaching. The teacher participants of this case study ask important questions, suggesting that perhaps this is the most important cornerstone practice and the one that will make the most difference in their teaching of writing.

Conclusion

Bakhtin (1975/1981) reminds us that the creation of an internally persuasive discourse is not an easy task:

> All words have the 'taste' of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour . . . . It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention . . . . Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own. . . . Language . . . is populated – overpopulated – with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process. (p. 293-294)

The teachers of this study look at the words -- at the discourses -- articulated by others and expropriate them, through the difficult and complicated process that is teaching writing in today's public schools. In my work analyzing the comments of the teachers, I suggest that by not knowing the rich history of the discourse of teaching writing – those discourses which have been imposed locally or from more distant points – certain discourses are allowed to become reified and that that reification narrows the options a teacher might consider. The teacher participants continue to negotiate the difficult and complicated process of making the discourses they encounter their own through asking

themselves questions about their decisions and practices. When we understand the complex authoritative discourses that surround teachers and the practices they enact, including the questions teachers pose about their practices, we gain insight into individual teacher practices. We may prompt ourselves to ask profession-wide questions about types of writing being taught, developmental models of writing being practiced, and future expectations brought on by mandates of narrowly-defined writing standards.

What effect does the thoughtful practice of the teacher participants have on the students of the study? We turn next to hear what the students had to say. They also speak about the importance of writing and being passionate about it. They consider structure and creativity. They mention correctness and thoughtfulness. And they create their own indicators of quality. They, too, develop their own internally persuasive voices, which emerge in complex and complicated ways – both similar and different -- from their teachers. What the teachers describe as internally persuasive discourses become some of the authoritative discourses for the students of the study. While the teachers attempt to provide meaningful and practical writing experiences for the students, the students select their own internally persuasive voices. They choose to take up writing identities both inside and outside of school, and as they do, they acquire what school may only partially provide for them or what they do not wish to access at school: identity, recognition, resistance, and power.

CHAPTER 5

INTERNALLY PERSUASIVE DISCOURSES: THREE FIGURED WORLDS OF WRITING

In Chapter 4, my analysis reveals that the teacher participants carry out the curriculum mandates from the District, which they enhance with pedagogical choices from other authoritative discourses in their own educational, writing, and classroom experiences. Their engagement with these authoritative discourses is evident in the internally persuasive discourses reflected in their cornerstone teaching practices. These teaching decisions and practices, and those of the other writing teachers the student participants learn from, become the authoritative discourses the student writers hear. In this chapter I describe that like the teachers, the students also are in dialogue and interact with the authoritative discourses they hear. My analysis reveals the focal students learn about writing in a mix of in-school and out-of-school learning experiences and develop their own internally persuasive discourses about writing. The intersections of these learning experiences in school and what the students discover on their own become the students' own figured worlds of writing.

The Figured Worlds of Internally Persuasive Discourses

Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) call spaces for learning a figured world, an "historical phenomena, to which we are recruited or into which we enter, which themselves develop through the works of their participants" (p. 41). Figured worlds are "processes or traditions of apprehension which gather us up and give us form as our lives intersect them" (p. 41). In other words, these socially-situated contexts are sites where identities are formed and participants interact and learn ways of carrying out particular

tasks. In the case of a student writer, figured worlds are the spaces where and how she learns to write and become a writer. The interaction, or dialogism (Bakhtin, 1975/1981), in these processes allows a student writer to participate in and shape a figured world of learning about writing. In this chapter I show how the three student writers participate in the figured world of high school more or less willingly, but the figured worlds which appear to matter more, and the ones in which they take up important writing identities for themselves and persuasive internal discourses, are their own figured worlds of writing outside of their high school classes.

Later in this chapter, I unpack the student figured worlds of writing and show they understand writing to be more that just the act of putting words on paper or adhering to a formula of a certain type of theme. Their complex definitions of writing encompass the entire context surrounding them as they put words on paper. Even so, the figured world Roxie creates is a writing world that is isolated from others, both in school and out of school. The figured world Carmen develops takes shifts and turns into a hybrid world in which Carmen, the enthusiastic novelist, becomes Carmen, the accomplished academic researcher. Kerianne's figured world draws on a community outside of school constituted of family members who help her succeed in contests. Theories from Bakhtin and Holland, *et al.*, and Moje and Lewis (2007) inform how these writers construct identities and shape their learning, and reveal how their writing lives develop and evolve over time. I complicate the understandings of students' internally persuasive discourses about writing by documenting their growth and change.

The following brief portraits reintroduce the student participants (refer also to Chapter 3); I include verbatim their words from interviews or emails from the two data

sets of 2009 and 2012, and I will expand and develop the complex cases of these students throughout this chapter. My goal is to treat each focal student equally; however, often there are themes that are more fully illustrated by highlighting one particular student. In this chapter I use a number of comments made by Mason Markt, Creative Writing teacher and teacher for two of the students, Carmen and Roxie. Mason's words illustrate in more detail comments the other teachers might express less fully or his comments may be more pertinent to themes I discuss. Following the student descriptions, I present the seven themes of the data analysis.

Descriptions of the Student Participants

Roxie, a Poet

"Dear Mrs. Aldrich," Roxie's email to me in 2012 begins. "Yes, the Army! I applied for Cabot Community College, but the debt that it would have put me in was just so overwhelming." So she joined the Army, became a medic, married a fellow soldier, and planned to become "a Vet Tech" (R, Email, June 2012) when she returned to civilian life. Because of her responsibilities and irregular schedule, we correspond through email as she answers my interview questions to follow-up with her comments from 2009 about her writing.

"I still write very personal things," she writes:

> I don't know if you remember, but I wrote a poem senior year about my father. That was one of the most personal things I have ever written, which I am proud of . . . . I believe that if you can write about your own experiences, . . . happy, sad, traumatic, exciting, silly, or even a little out there, then that is the best writing someone can do." (R, Email, June 2012)

Although she doesn't think I will remember that poem, I do, having written the opening anecdote of this dissertation long before she writes to me.

Roxie's journey as a poet begins in eighth grade, writing poems for a class booklet. She describes discovering "a knack" for writing poetry--"I never knew that [I could write poetry] before" (R, Interview, May 2009)--and continues writing poems on her own. Roxie mentions few high school experiences that connect to her love of writing poetry. She describes one moment when she shyly shares her poems with me in ninth grade; also the same year, a piece she writes is published in the school's literary magazine. In tenth grade she tries to start a Poetry Club at Franklin, although it is short-lived, as the members spend more time squabbling over friendships. In her junior year, her creative efforts mostly shift to short stories, when she takes Creative Writing.

One highlight is in her senior year when her teacher Karen Reynolds says to her, "Where did you come from?" after reading a poem Roxie had turned in for a part of a portfolio assignment. This delights Roxie. However, in twelfth grade, with two jobs and rent to pay, on top of going to school, she hasn't written many poems, although she composes pieces that she considers some of her best. Her major poetry project that year is poetry preservation. As she has no computer at home, she takes advantage of the school's technology resources when her class is in a computer lab. She types up her poems from previous years and saves them on a flash drive, as she has lost some her work in the process of moving. I ask Roxie to walk me through her poetry writing year-by-year, beginning with eighth grade. She mentions only three class assignments: writing a poetry booklet in eighth grade, sharing her poem titled "Daddy" with a class as a senior, and a response to a sonnet as a senior. Otherwise, the poems she describes are ones she writes out of class.

When talking about writing her poetry, she tells stories of how her poems come into being. For example, her poem "Daddy" is produced after talking with her grandmother. She revises her poems as she thinks through them and as she writes them. Roxie describes reflecting and evaluating her poetry, listening for flow and sound. She changes words and moves stanzas to make a poem "like a song" or "more mature" (R, Interview, May 2009). She relies on her own sense of poetry and does not seek feedback from teachers; she shares her poems with only one or two friends. Her poetry writing life exists, after that initial eighth grade class experience, primarily outside of assignments and school walls.

Carmen, a Novelist-Turned-Academic-Researcher

During the spring semester of her junior year in college, Carmen sits at the table in my classroom and unwraps a copy of the journal that includes her newly-published research article. In this article for a class in Religious Studies, Carmen analyzes the characters of Sarah, Abraham, and God in the story of God's promise to Abraham that he would sire the nation of Israel. She has explored translations of the Hebrew story, historical texts, and analyses of the role of women of the time to construct an interpretation. She smiles as she talks about doing the research and taking the initiative to send in the revision of a class paper to the journal. She also describes her writing life the past three years, pulling out papers from a variety of her college courses, showing multiple and extensive "lovely, lovey comments" (C, Interview, May 2012) her teachers provided throughout the essays. Carmen, the writer who expressed little enjoyment in her high school academic writing and who described the intense pleasure she found in her

fiction writing beyond the school walls, has transformed into an excited academic researcher and writer.

Carmen describes herself as a storywriter at an early age who continues to write fiction throughout middle school and high school. She submits writing to the literary magazines both at Franklin and in college, and is published in both. She, like Roxie, takes Creative Writing at Franklin, and is surrounded by the authoritative discourses of school about writing essays. Her passion in high school, however, centers on writing novels for National Novel Writing Month, which she refers to as NaNoWriMo, an online writing challenge (http://nanowrimo.org/). Participants in NaNoWriMo commit to writing a novel of 50,000 words during the month of November, a task that appeals to Carmen, the storyteller. She participates in NaNoWriMo four consecutive years, writing four different novels, including one during her first year of college. The first two novels are fantasy pieces, but the third is historical fiction, for which she researches details about World War II, a period in which she is particularly interested.

In her interview in 2009, Carmen describes in detail how she crafts Novel 2, titled *Caroline*, a story of an adventurous girl who moves back and forth between this world and another. That setting is a world populated with child-catchers, an idea inspired by music lyrics she likes. One chapter is called "To the Lighthouse," a nod to the novel by Virginia Woolf (1927/1989). She animatedly describes designing the structure of her novels in ways that will represent her creativity and uniqueness, and after the first novel-writing experience, she learns the value of planning out her plot line enough so she can move the narrative forward.

Carmen, like Roxie, uses some language of the authoritative discourses of school essay writing when describing her novel writing, but in general, she describes her school writing in high school as uninteresting and unenjoyable. That disinterest in academic writing takes a dramatic turn in college. As she was unhappy in her first college Creative Writing class, she tells me she enjoyed writing her papers for other courses more, and she develops an avid interest in researching and writing course papers, particularly for her history and religion classes. In those classes, she enjoys "taking what I liked about studying English" to do "literary analysis" of religious and historical texts (C, Interview, May 2012). Carmen the storyteller has taken up the identity of Carmen the story analyzer, along with other identities, including that of being an accomplished academic writer, perhaps because, in the end, she embraces the authoritative school discourses of her college professors.

Kerianne, the Contestant

Kerianne arrives in my room for a writing conference during her ninth grade year, accompanied by her mother and lugging a heavy backpack and her viola case covered with stickers urging "Vote Republican" and "W–04" (in support of George W. Bush during the 2004 election). We informally chat about some of her out-of-school writing projects, and a picture of her as a writer emerges: as a member of a self-described patriotic family, she follows in her sisters' footsteps, entering and winning essay competitions. A number of these contests are held by organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars or are contests held near Independence Day and have topics such as "what the flag means to me" (K, Interview, June 2009); Kerianne particularly loves working on projects for National History Day (http://www.nhd.org/). I interview

Kerianne formally at the end of her senior year, a few days after graduation. How has she fared since ninth grade? She is tired, due to flying around the country for weeks to receive awards for a number of scholarship contests. Talking for over an hour, she describes her years of writing numerous pieces not assigned by her teachers and how she produces winning projects.

Kerianne, like both Roxie and Carmen, talks about her out-of-school writing in terms of enjoyment and engagement. She especially loves contests involving American history, feeling that she is able to gain a "new perspective" (K, Interview, June 2009) in those projects. Kerianne also appreciates that competitions help "introduce . . . vocab and styles and techniques, . . . [and] really improved my writing as a whole . . . cuz obviously if your writing is not good, then you don't win!" (K, Interview, June 2009) She has been entering contests since sixth grade with stunning results. When I talk with her mom at the end of Kerianne's senior year, Beth Newhart rattles off, without taking a breath, thirteen competitions Kerianne has won over the past few years. Some of her projects have been displayed at the Smithsonian, the White House, and the National Gallery in Washington D.C. Kerianne describes as one highlight of these competitions a time she was able to speak in the presence of First Lady Laura Bush. Kerianne also loves the research she does prior to creating a writing project for some of her contests. She and her family go on "research trips" (K, Interview, June 2009), such as to the National Health Museum for a piece on the Tuskegee airmen and to the Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota, for a project on the Lakota Indians. In the course of researching, she meets, among others, a lawyer who helped represent Rosa Parks and a person affiliated with the Brown v. Board case.

There is an intensity, however, to some of her descriptions of her writing work, especially during her senior year: "you literally have to be preparing your entire life for senior year scholarships if you expect to win, and that is no joke" (K, Interview, June 2009). Her school writing includes frustrations and disappointments. One teacher didn't appreciate her long and detailed pieces. She feels she fell a bit short on the ten-page research paper in AP Literature, because, busy flying around the country, she misses a lot of school. In contrast to her out-of-school writing adventures, she describes her in-school writing in less glowing terms, which I will describe in more detail later. While the writing Kerianne does for competitions consists mostly of essays, more similar to school writing than the writing preferred by Roxie and Carmen, she feels the discourses of writing she hears at schools is less helpful than conversations she has with family members. Her sisters taught her how to write, she maintains, and she learns about writing through entering competitions and winning. Kerianne developed useful writing processes and evaluations for her writing, and as she describes her practices, she uses the language and formats her teachers also value when they describe their teaching of writing, an intersection I examine further later. Kerianne describes her in-school writing and her out-of-school writing as "totally a divide" (K, Interview, June 2009).

What do these descriptions reveal of the focal students? We see a poet, a novelist, and a contest writer--all students who write outside of class assignments. All are students who attend classes, listen to teachers in lessons on writing, and do school assignments. The three students hear many teachers over their years of high school talk about writing in general and the assignments to be completed for the particular course. And they choose to write beyond what is required, for purposes that appeal to them, in figured

worlds that allow them to perform, learn, transform, and create their love of writing. Bakhtin (1975/1981) points out there are dialogic qualities found in the intersections of authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse. This implies that student writers hear the authoritative discourses of their teachers and question or decide to accept these discourses as they try to figure out what writing means to them, especially if they are influenced by other writing experiences, as is the case with Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne. What student writers hear and the experiences they have had intersect and create space to be in dialogue with the various ideas present in the intersection. As a researcher, I look at the intersections of the words of the teachers and the comments of the students, as well, looking for evidence of dialogism and persuasive discourses.

Later in this chapter readers will see how the student participants develop internally persuasive discourses as they are in dialogue with the discourses found in the intersections of school and their independent learning about writing. The data will show Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne select from the authoritative school discourses a few key components to incorporate in their internally persuasive discourses. In the sections that follow, I describe the themes below that emerged from the interview and email data to show the authoritative discourses they adopt, display, or reproduce:

- Developing writing process
- Finding and developing writing community
- Caring about what is written

Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne add to their understanding of writing from school authoritative discourses by writing poetry, novels, and essays on their own in additional figured worlds. Following the discussion of the school discourses they take up, I move to

a discussion of themes that the focal participants incorporate into their internally persuasive discourses drawn from their own writing experiences:

- Learning to be a writer through developing a writing history of participation
- Learning about writing as finding identity
- Navigating and negotiating complex emotions
- Receiving recognition

Authoritative Discourses Present in the Student Interviews

My overarching research question asks how the intersections of what students say and do in their figured worlds of writing and what teachers say and do in teaching writing might inform our notions of student writers and of teaching writing. To address this question, I placed the statements from interview comments in data stacks comprised of statements or phrases on different colored paper strips for each participant. I laid the comments by the teachers alongside the statements by the students in order to trace intersections between the authoritative discourses of the teachers with the internally persuasive discourses of the students, evident in the students' writing practices and descriptions of what they thought about writing. To illustrate, one intersection I recorded for both teachers and students was the desire for creativity and space for creative work and traced how these ideas developed throughout the data analysis (for example, Field notes, July 13, 2012; Big Questions, Sept. 28, 2012).

In my analysis of intersections, I find the students are not fond of the writing curriculum adopted by the District, or at least the kind of writing they are asked to write by teachers. As I mention in Chapters 3 and 4, the District curriculum privileges expository writing in the requirements for all four years of high school English classes. I speculate that these students may resist the redundancy of the curriculum and that they

may be less engaged by the expository writing that they meet in language arts, which offers little variation from course to course. The students specifically describe a gap, a separation, between writing they are asked to do for class and the writing they care about. Carmen, for example, describes her out-of-school writing as "enjoyment" and her in-school writing as "technical" (C, Interview, May 2009). Roxie describes school writing as "restrictive" whereas her out-of-class writing is where she can be "free with myself" (R, Interview, May 2009). When there is a different genre or writing experience (i.e., the 10-page research paper with Amy Brandt in AP Literature, the poetry booklet in eighth grade), they describe being intrigued by learning something new. I explain these points more in a later section.

However, the students do adopt some practices taught in their English classes, such as developing processes to write. The teacher participants also emphasize this element of their instruction. The students, like teacher Mason Markt, listen most carefully to personal writing experiences, and take up a writer identity. While the focal students do not select topic sentences, the sandwich method, or five- paragraph essays as indicators of quality in their writing, they do find it important to construct their own structure to fit topics and points they are trying to convey: Kerianne emphasizes that it is important to have three main points in each contest piece, Roxie creates uniform stanzas and lines and poetic forms, and Carmen outlines story structure.

However, the students rarely mention correctness as a quality that guides their writing. The student writers reject a linear development approach to writing where they learn one concept first before they can write something else next, one of the cornerstone practices of the teacher participants. And in the end, Carmen learns to merge her

experiences in creative writing with her academic writing, instead of seeing the practices as rigidly separate. The student participants reveal evidence of being passionate about their writing, suggesting an answer to Mason's question, "How do you get kids to care?" There is evidence of intersections between teacher discourses and student internally persuasive discourses, although the follow-through is limited, indicating, that teachers and policy makers might want to consider how a richer, more engaging, more flexible approach to teaching writing may be accomplished. This is a discussion I pursue more fully in Chapter 7.

In the next section I explore the intersections and dialogism of school authoritative discourse and student internally persuasive discourse. My goal in this dialogic dimension is to understand what the students adopt and what they resist in the authoritative discourse they hear in classrooms from teachers. Three themes emerged from my data as important to both the teacher and student participants: processes, community, and caring. These themes represent practices the teachers teach or wish their students possess; the students also describe and include these themes in their own practices and figured worlds of writing. The first theme, developing writing processes, refers to recursive steps a writer uses in thinking, structuring, drafting, revising, and evaluating her writing. The second theme addresses the importance of finding, developing, or participating in a community of writers for feedback and discourse about writing. With the third theme, I discuss the caring a writer brings to her writing, part of the motivation to write and write effectively. The intersections I describe are evidence of student dialogism with authoritative discourses, and I find the students adopt these general themes and extend them in significant and complex ways.

Intersection – Developing Writing Processes

Like the instructors Applebee and Langer (2009) and Hillocks (2005) describe, the focal teachers of Franklin High School teach their students about and expect to see evidence of writing processes, particularly planning, drafting, revising, and evaluating written work, as I described in Chapter 4. As a reminder, one of Mason Markt's highest priorities in his Creative Writing class is to have students understand writers' processes, and he demonstrates his own. Karen Reynolds wishes students made better use of brainstorming and planning before writing. Tony Barnett and Amy Brandt require revision drafts. All three student participants use similar process language when describing how they find ideas and go about developing them. As I analyze the student comments, I find, in addition, that the students talk about writing processes in far more complex ways, reflecting a complicated understanding of writing process. While both Roxie and Kerianne make comparable comments about their writing processes, I highlight Carmen here, as she describes in detail the planning and recursive nature of her drafting process. In later themes, I highlight aspects of the processes Roxie and Kerianne use.

Carmen, like Roxie and Kerianne, becomes quite animated as she describers her work and processes when writing novels for NaNoWriMo. Once she has a topic, she describes taking into account "structural things" (C, Interview, May 2009): how to start a piece, establish characters and plot line, and create conflict and symbol. She doesn't plan the story for Novel 1, but for Novel 3 there is evidence of a plan when she makes a timeline and adds researching for realism. This shows not only a time commitment to planning out a piece, but also a commitment to deeply thinking through her story and a

commitment to producing a product that goes beyond tossing out a story as she thinks of it. She explains she writes for "hours" (C, Interview, May 2009). At times, she comments, she just "jumps ahead" (C, Interview, May 2009) to another section when she becomes stuck so she can continue with her narrative arc, but circles back to her previous thoughts and again weaves her story together. To revise, Carmen creates multiple open windows of various stages of the document on her computer, to not to lose parts that "might be valuable" (C, Interview, May 2009). In 2012 she describes a similar process for her college paper assignments, parking herself at a coffee shop "for . . . hours," again using the multiple windows approach. In both 2009 and 2012 she uses virtually the same sentence about her writing practice: "I feel like it works well for me." Carmen's strategies show a careful consideration of multiple strands of thought as she works through a piece, revealing an understanding that crafting writing involves thinking and rethinking ideas, recursively working through a piece, and making a commitment to writing that exactly conveys her thoughts. This is a mature, patient, and persistent approach to capturing the nuances of language and thought. Carmen performs an iteration of writing and writing process that adopts and exceeds the brainstorming and planning Karen Reynolds desired.

Carmen possesses an effective writing process, carrying out a thorough and complex system when composing her novels. She carries over this system from high school to complete her academic writing in college. This intersection suggests Carmen is in dialogue with and extends the school discourses about writing process for her own work and also applies it to academic work that becomes as important to her later on. Recognizing that students do hear and internalize aspects of the teacher's teaching and

lessons on the framework of using writing processes to create well-written work, perhaps teachers might ask if they give students a sufficiently complex enough picture of writing processes or if they ask students to explore their processes in multiple, recursive ways. Carmen, as well as Roxie and Kerianne, explore and adapt writing process school discourse that helps them to produce satisfying work.

Intersection: Participating in a Writing Community

Moje and Lewis (2007) say, "Learning is . . . not only participation in discourse communities, but is also the process by which people become members of discourse communities . . . . Such membership shapes opportunities to learn, and ultimately, learning" (p. 20). Developing and sustaining a community of writers – a way for students to participate in discourse communities which would help shape their opportunities to learn – while not a cornerstone practice for all of the teacher participants, is evident in comments from Mason, Tony, and Amy. Mason details asking his students to share their writing with each other as part of class routines to revise pieces and spends time developing new activities to help students share their work. Tony briefly mentions his desire to shape a writing community in his classes, and Amy Brandt creates a teacher-student writing community when she holds paper conferences in her AP Literature classes. Talking with others about writing is evident in other writing courses at Franklin High School. While not all in the department make time for students to share their work in writing discourse communities, it is a practice that is included in the general school philosophy of teaching writing and implemented in varying degrees.

Finding, developing, and participating in a writing community appears, too, in the student comments about their personally-chosen writing experiences, indicating an

overlap, an intersection, in teacher authoritative discourses and student internally persuasive discourses. This intersection illustrates the significance to both teachers and students for writers to seek others for feedback or affirmation. The writing community for each student participant varies considerably, as it does in the teacher practices in the department. The differences in community membership and the levels of external recognition and success suggest that opportunities to learn may be enhanced and inhibited by the access to a writing community, particularly since both teachers and students indicate that such a community is an important part of a writer's world.

Mason recalls that Roxie and Carmen actively participated in the regular Creative Writing group discussions of class-assigned student writing. However, Roxie mentions only one other friend with whom she shares her out-of-class writing, and she does that rarely. Since she attempts to launch a Poetry Club at Franklin, she seems to wish to have others with whom to share her poetry. Carmen similarly mentions just two peers with whom she infrequently shares her novels during high school. She has, however, also found a friend online, Megan, through NaNoWriMo. Megan provides feedback on some of Carmen's fiction writing, and Carmen describes emailing Megan a story for Megan to practice critique skills for a college assignment in one of Megan's courses. Carmen adopts Megan's suggestions when revising that piece. In college Carmen finds a group of friends associated with the College Writing Center as well as her professors with whom she discusses her academic writing. Kerianne, in contrast, has a ready-made community in her family. As mentioned earlier, she considers her sisters to be her writing teachers, and she mentions them, her family, or her mother 16 times in the course of her hour-long interview, describing the support she receives in her family community.

In addition, she chooses to share her contest work with a writing community of friends of the family as well as the contest organizers and judges.

This intersection of teacher discourses about developing writing community and student practice of seeking or making use of writing community indicates that both teachers and students consider that participating in a writing community would contribute in valuable ways to a writer's learning and work. While Roxie does not operate in a social vacuum, her writing community is very small, in comparison to the other two writers. When I consider her sparse community, my analysis suggests that Roxie's learning about and understanding of writing poetry is notably affected by a lack of a writing community, especially since there are few poetry assignments given in classes. Carmen and Kerianne benefit more from their writing communities, however. Carmen's college community supports her in submitting a piece for publication, and Kerianne's in-home critics and the past experiences of family members help her in her quest to write her many prize-winning essays. While Roxie pursues writing poetry on her own by trial and error, Carmen and Kerianne benefit from a helpful writing community.

Intersection: Caring about Writing

Mason Markt emphasizes the importance of passion, of the writer caring about what she writes, in his internally persuasive discourse about writing. The three focal students are quite invested in writing poetry, novels, and essays for competitions. They intentionally carve out time for writing and produce extensive amounts of writing. Roxie estimates that she has stored around 100 poems on her flash drive from all her school years. Kerianne's mother, Beth, lists five national competitions Kerianne has undertaken in her junior and senior years in which Kerianne places in the top ten, one requiring eight

essays; Kerianne has won a myriad of state and local contests since sixth grade. Carmen writes most of four novels in four years. The focal students demonstrate their passion for their writing by persistently allocating time, expressing intentionality, giving effort, and creating numerous writing products.

My data reveals that Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne all learn that writing is personally satisfying, and that "emotional investment" (Miller & Goodnow, 1995, p. 14) motivates their regular writing practices. As Miller and Goodnow (1995) explain, everyday engaged practices, "provide participants with repeated opportunities to invest in values, in ways of interpreting experience and in the practice itself . . . . Participation leaves its mark on the person through the production of affective stance, enthusiastic involvement, . . . playfulness," and this affective stance thus is "created and re-created in practice" (p. 14). In addition to the repeated practice that led to their enthusiastic involvement, the three students continue to learn and develop as they undertake an emotionally satisfying writing life. Vygotsky (1987) connects "emotions with the brain" and "emotional reactions and the . . . human mind," moving affect "from the periphery to the center," illustrating "the development of the emotions and the development of other aspects of mental life" (p. 332). Lewis, Enciso, and Moje (2007) also find "that we learn through both the cognitive and affective domains, that how we feel about what we are learning is as important as how we are learning" (p. xvii). The three student writers are enthusiastically involved in their writing, and their emotional investment helps them to create a figured world of writing.

It would be too easy to say that the caring and passion these three students feel for writing is in evidence only for their writing completed outside of classroom assignments.

Carmen vigorously declares that she doesn't enjoy school writing "at all" (C, 2009), Roxie emphasizes that her school writing is not "all me" (R, 2009), and Kerianne asserts that her out-of-school writing and in-school writing are totally different. Still, all three students find writing experiences and class assignments that are interesting and challenging and thus engaging, especially when an assignment explores a new genre. Roxie's new experience results in a packet of poetry from middle school that she still had as a senior, and she describes not realizing she could write poetry before that unit. Both Kerianne and Carmen mention being intrigued and challenged by writing a ten-page research paper in their AP Literature class. Carmen feels "pushed" as a writer to compose a piece that was "a different type of challenge . . . . It was fun" (C, Interview, May 2012) as she looks back at this high school writing assignment. Their comments provide evidence that they do resonate with some aspects of classroom writing discourses. Interest in new and challenging writing experiences becomes part of their internalized writing discourses.

A more substantial measure of passion stems from the writing the three student writers engage in beyond their classroom experiences. Carmen's comments best represent the personal satisfaction she, Roxie, and Kerianne find in their personally-chosen writing. She describes her out-of-school writing during high school in terms of "freedom" and "independence." I can just write," she told me.

> I'm not given something to write about, I don't have to write it in a certain way . . . . I'm not on a deadline, I don't have to turn it in, no one has to look at it . . . . I can do it any time of the year . . . . It's not something that someone's telling me to do, I just go ahead and do it. (C, Interview, May 2009).

This writing is, for her, "liberating" (C, Interview, May 2009). In college, Carmen successfully builds on the enjoyment that she finds in her high school out-of-school writing and continues to the required writing she experiences in college classrooms. While her college academic writing is structured with very specific formats--"I mastered the art of Chicago style," she declares (C, Interview, May 2012)--Carmen describes her academic writing with the words *enjoyment, cool, fun, lovely,* and *exciting* when talking about her research projects and her reactions to the comments her instructors write on her work. "I enjoy all of the learning," she says (C, Interview, May 2012). Carmen finds freedom and liberation in her fiction writing during high school, and she discovers the same freedom and liberation in learning about the topics she studies in college. Carmen's emotional investment in her novels is put into both the learning and writing she does in college.

Why do we want students to care about writing? What might students learn when offered emotionally satisfying opportunities with writing? The National Writing Project and Nagin (2003) assert that we want students to learn that "writing matters." The three focal students find writing that matters to them, which they pursue passionately, both in and out of school, two figured worlds of learning for these writers. How can teachers build upon these passions and interests so others may learn, too, that writing matters? While the authoritative discourses of essay writing in school tends not to be as interesting or compelling to these students as the writing they select for themselves, they manage to find aspects of writing to care about in school. As they engage in writing practices over the years, they appear to gain confidence in their writing and in themselves as writers; they learn the flexibility of trying new ideas, and they find

the playfulness Miller and Goodnow describe. Bakhtin suggests all words are in dialogue with others, and in this intersection of caring about writing, the student writers dialogue with the types of caring about writing they find in their figured worlds of writing. They find newness in at least some of their school writing, and they find excitement and satisfaction their personal writing. The challenge of being pushed and the challenge of trying something new in which the writer is successful help these students find writing that is engaging in school and out of school, as well. They reflectively answer interview questions on how they construct their experiences at school and find positive aspects to their writing in both the worlds of school writing a personal writing, even though they prefer their own special writing projects.

How do the intersections of these writers and their teachers' teaching of writing inform our notions of teaching writing and of student writers? The comments of Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne offer insights from their student perspective to address my research question. Throughout the school years, the three student participants had many teachers teach them about writing, and for years they have regularly completed writing assignments in their classes. According to my analysis, there are intersections between the teachers' authoritative discourses for writing and the internally persuasive writing discourses that the students possess. From the authoritative discourses their teachers use to frame the figured worlds of school, these students selected a few components to incorporate in their internally persuasive discourses; specifically, they note ideas on processes, community, and caring. However, other elements that make writing important and meaningful to them are not a large part of the authoritative discourses present in the data of this study, such as building a writing history, exploring identity, working through

complex emotions, and receiving recognition. While these students find the instruction composition teachers often prize important and useful beyond classroom doors, these learners suggest that this instruction may not be engaging or complete enough to meet the interests or needs of writing contexts that are important and necessary to students.

Figure 2 illustrates the figured world of the internally persuasive discourses the three student writers construct from the discourses of their writing experiences, both in-school and out. At the top, above the figure (Benjamin, n.d.) two circles represent the discourses students encounter at school and through their self-chosen learning experiences. The rectangles on the left represent the discourses the students hear in writing classes that they embrace. The connections from school discourses the student writers choose to note and take up in their internally persuasive discourses include developing useful writing processes, finding a writing community, and caring about writing. The rectangles on the right portray complexities about writing the students learn for themselves from their personally-chosen writing experiences. These inform their complex practices as they compose poetry, novels, and contest essays. The experiences and learning on the right of the diagram, which are important to these student writers, are likely to help them to understand writing in other, complicated ways as these students learn to be writers and about writing.

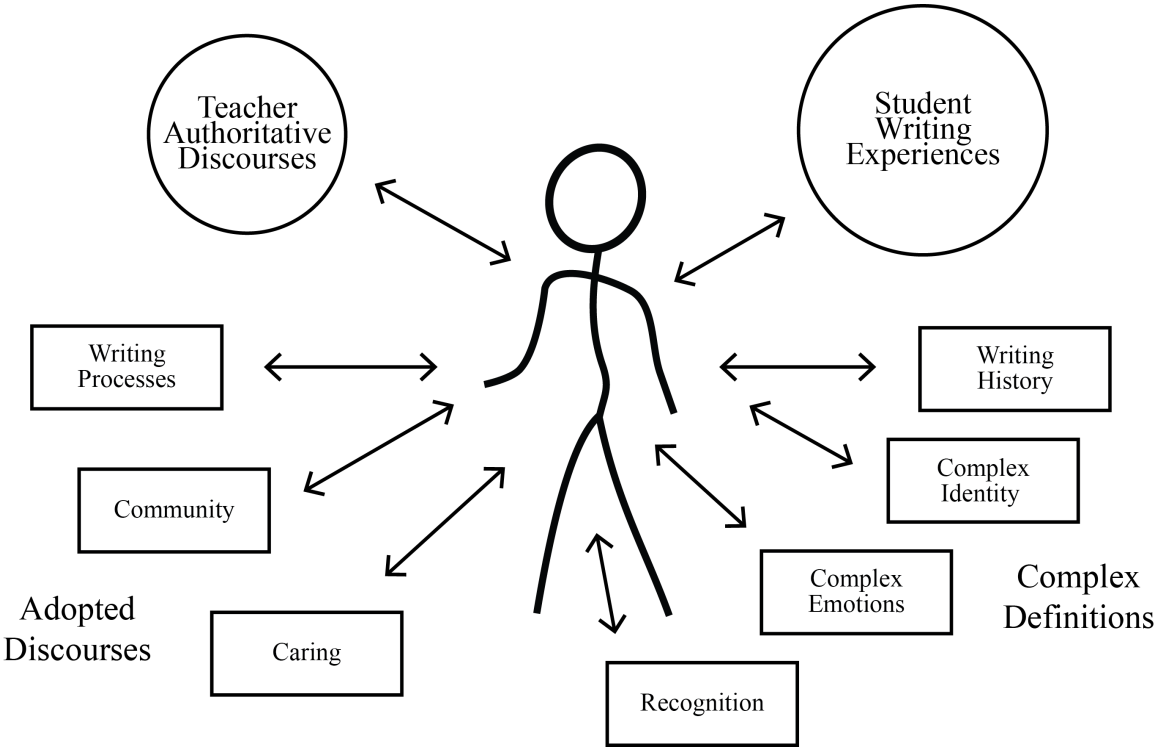

Figure 2. Internally Persuasive Discourses in the Student Writers' Figured Worlds

In the next section, I describe the development of the complex definitions of writing that the students discover in their personally-selected contexts for writing and that they also include in the figured worlds of writing they create for themselves.

Creating Student Figured Worlds of Writing

Developing Complex Definitions of Writing

The three students writers learn how to be writers and learn about writing in complicated, individual, and wide-ranging ways, including what they learn from their teachers and what they learn on their own. As a counterpoint to their teachers, the three student writers do not place a premium on writing as bounded by: writing thesis

statements, having topic sentences at the beginning of each paragraph, emphasizing correctness, manufacturing formulaic themes, or understanding parts of speech. Writing, for Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne, becomes a history of participation, a performance, a transformation, and much practice. Writing involves complicated work, new experiences, complex emotions, choices and control, unique identities, and opportunities to grow in the love of writing. While these themes are true across the data, each student has her own set of definitions about writing. For Roxie, writing involves the whole of who she is, a way to explore thoughts and feelings, a way to make sense of herself and the world, something to be proud of, something that opens doors, and a release. For Carmen, writing is something to look forward to, a life-long project, a way of looking at life and ideas through the stories she and others tell and analyze and research, a site of creativity, a process honed over the years, a hybridity of identities, a project to return to and finish. For Kerianne, writing is competing for prizes, continuing what her family members did, winning often and big, being more mature, complicating the essay genre, receiving recognition, explaining and participating in the world, and finding a way to matter.

The lists of definitions of writing found in Roxie's, Carmen's, and Kerianne's comments and stories show there are many paths to learning to write and to write well; theirs is a counter-narrative of assumed pathways to success in writing and of narrow definitions of writing which schools and teachers teach or are asked–and required--to teach. I illustrate these expanded definitions of writing through the following themes from the data: developing a writing history, writing as finding identity, writing as navigating and negotiating complex emotions, and writing as receiving recognition.

A Student Figured World of Writing: Learning to *Be* a Writer

Developing a Writing History of Participation

Margaret Atwood (2003) describes unexpectedly discovering she was a writer: "I wrote a poem in my head and then I wrote it down, and after that, writing was the only thing I wanted to do"; while the poem she wrote "wasn't particularly good . . . it wasn't the result but the experience that had hooked me" (p. 9). Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne similarly experience moments of writing as impetus that support their desire to write while continuing to develop as a writer. Moje and Lewis (2007) describe the importance of these "histories of participation," saying that "learning goes beyond the moment of participation to constitute a history and to shape a future act of participating" (p. 16). Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne describe extensive histories of participation which shape their learning and motivates their practices.

In learning to be writers, Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne each take up opportunities over time to write personally meaningful pieces as a part of developing their histories of performance. These histories become foundations for their own figured worlds and, as in Atwood's case, these experiences hook them. The events of their writing performances are not the moments of participation school usually reifies, especially writing novels and writing competition pieces. For example, while including poetry study is typical, writing poetry frequently is less so. As I reviewed the data from Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne and their histories of participation in writing both in-school and out, I came to understand that these students value having the freedom to write and make their own decisions about writing over time. They want to challenge themselves; they prize writing for enjoyment and allowing themselves to take up the identity of being a writer. Roxie, Carmen, and

Kerianne find importance, playfulness, meaningfulness, and identity in their writing over time in their history of participation. The length of these histories varies: Roxie describes a writing history beginning in eighth grade; Kerianne and her mother describe Kerianne winning important contests beginning in sixth grade. I highlight Carmen's description of her history as a writer, as she describes enjoying writing since early elementary school, to illustrate a history of participation, important in learning to be a writer.

As a senior in 2009, Carmen declares, "I've always been a writer," and she describes a cat story she still remembers from elementary days. In middle school she hits a writing slump: "I wrote this . . . 121 page story . . . . I [thought] . . . ah, that's drained my creative energy for years" (C, Interview, May 2009). She describes herself as a person who continues "thinking of things in fiction" (C, Interview, May 2009). In high school Carmen discovers the online writing challenge of National Novel Writing Month, and for four years she attempts writing 50,000 words to produce a novel in November: "It's . . . one month where I can just be as writerly as I want to be" (C, Interview, May 2009). As Carmen explains her life as a storywriter and how she enjoys being writerly, she takes up an important identity evolved over time, starting at a young age and which still continues.

Carmen also develops a meaningful writing history in school, as well, taking two terms of Creative Writing and a journalism class, in addition to required language arts courses. She enjoys writing her junior-year blog for her AP Language class and her senior-year research paper about women during WWII. Her early college plans include a creative writing minor. Instead of shedding her identity as a writer, she follows the path Lewis and Moje outline as she moves from moments to a history to a future as a writer.

When Carmen returns in 2012 for a follow-up interview, she surprises me by saying she has turned "180 degrees" to finding a passion for academic research writing, with a highlight of being published, as I describe earlier. Carmen views her history of writing as important to her present and future involvement:

> I think the [high] school writing was helpful cuz it was in the same kind of genre, . . . but I think the writing I did outside just gave me so many hours of practice . . . building skills, building vocabulary, just all kinds of things . . . . It's probably hundreds of hours worth of extra writing . . . and it helped me enjoy writing a lot more to write for fun, cuz I don't mind writing, you know, 20-30 page research papers. I enjoy it. I just enjoy writing. (C, Interview, May 2012)

She continues to envision writing in the future, thinking about going to graduate school and muses, "I will probably do fiction writing again. I haven't written it out" (C, Interview, May 2012). Carmen's comments indicate that the enjoyment of writing beckons her to more participation, and thus to more practice. In her history of writing, Carmen learns about important elements of writing, such as the importance of diction that she mentions, but also to play with writing and to identify herself as a writer.

Roxie and Kerianne also plan futures with writing. In Kerianne's interview at the end of high school, she indicates she is looking forward to college writing, and Roxie considers finding venues for her poetry, such as a poetry slam. I suggest that comments about enjoying writing, continuing to write for personal purposes, and planning to write in the future are ones educators wish many more students would say.

A Student Figured World of Writing: Learning *About* Writing

Writing as Finding Identity

Williams (2006) claims that "identity is always present in writing" (p. 712). If we accept that notion, identity is a core issue that warrants a nuanced understanding. English

teachers want their students to read and write both inside and outside of the classroom; They want their students to be accomplished enough at reading and writing to communicate appropriately and successfully in their schooling, careers, and lives. Halasek (1999) comments that there is a widely-held view that students in writing classroom are expected to identify themselves as writers. How do writer identities evolve? What other kinds of identities are explored or undertaken in writing?

Worthington (2008) finds writer identities arise from "past histories; intellectual (cognitive) response; emotional (affective) response; turning point experiences; environmental factors (home and school); audience considerations; preferences for various types of writing; process habits; and their perceptions of themselves as writers" (p. 56). Pratt (2011) explains "writerly identities" are composed of "how writers see themselves as well as . . . how writers hope to been seen by readers" (p. 233). While these theories of writer identity suggest that the act of writing coupled with the history of writing may encourage a student to say "I am a writer," Ivanic (1998) suggests that writing not only helps one to describe oneself as a writer, writing changes who that person is; writing helps a person discover an identity that one wishes to take up. She states, "Writer identity is, surely, a central concern for any theory of writing in two senses: what writers bring to the act of writing, and how they construct their identities through the act of writing itself" (p. 93-94).

Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne value their writer identities out of school, and while they participate in school assignments more or less willingly, they do not label themselves as being a writer in school, perhaps due to the mismatch between what teachers promote as writing and how they want to engage with writing. While writing

and identity are inextricably linked, the decontextualized writing they experience in school is not necessarily where they learn that writing is finding, developing, performing, and transforming identity, which they do find in their figured worlds of writing. Bakhtin (1975/1981) uses the term *self-authoring* and Holland, *et al*. (1998) use the term *self-in-practice* to describe the complexities involved in developing identities. These phrases refer to the contexts of fashioning self that include issues of power, position, recognition, and agency which surround a person and which she creates within herself as she explores identities. In Bakhtin's words, the three focal students author themselves over time and in their own figured worlds of poetry writing, novel writing, and essay writing, and, in Kerianne's case, the larger figured world of competition.

I select Roxie's comments to illustrate self-authoring because she takes up these identities more on her own; Kerianne is assisted in self-authoring by her family community, and Carmen is later supported in her academic writing college by her professors. Roxie, however, experiences few opportunities and recognition for writing poetry in school, a place of power. She is hidden in many ways from the gaze of teachers. According to their comments, Roxie's teachers do not describe Roxie as a writer, in contrast to Carmen, who is described this way by both Amy and Mason. Yet Roxie perseveres and continues to write and explore self and the world, finding power in herself and her writing. In Chapter 6, I explore the dimension of power in more detail.

The beginnings of Roxie's identity as a poet occur in eighth grade, an experience that is a turning point. She proactively develops an identity as a poet, by continuing to write poetry throughout high school in personal journals. As evidence of her identity as a writer, she is compelled to gather and save her extensive poetry collection in electronic

formats her senior year. She is figuratively writing herself as a poet who desires to save an important part of herself, her work – she is a self-in-practice; she is authoring a part of herself that is a poet-self. She sees writing poetry as her way to show who she is: "All my poetry is *me*" (R, Interview, May 2009), she declares. Her words echo writer Flannery O'Connor, who says when she writes, "I am never more completely me" (in Murray, 1990). Roxie learns about poetry and poetry writing–the forms, rhymes, best words, flow, song-like expression--but Roxie also writes to learn about and explore her identity and to find agency in that learning and identity, similarly to professional writer Donald Murray's (1992) statements: "When I write, I create myself and that created self, through writing, may affect the world" (p. 2). Through her poetry, Roxie questions herself and the world around her, topics I address in Chapter 6 when I analyze the stories she tells about her writing. Roxie, like O'Connor, like Murray, writes to learn about writing, and also to find and take up multiple identities, including that of resistant student, angry daughter, and hurt lover.

Roxie learns, as Moje and Lewis (2007) describe, to "take on new identities along with new forms of knowledge and participation," and in this "deep, participatory learning" she learns "not only the stuff of a discipline . . . but also how to think and act something like" (p. 19) a poet. Although some of Roxie's favorite poems are ones that "just came out," she fusses with getting the words exactly right in others. For her poem "Ode to Reality" (see Appendix D), one of her favorite poems, she considers using the words "thanks to reality," but thinks that *ode* is more song-like as "it started getting me to think of Beethoven's . . . *Ode to Joy* . . . [but] his is a little happier . . . well, life isn't always happy . . . [and] it's reality that just hits you" (R, Interview, May 2009). So *ode*

becomes the better word. In her poems written near the end of high school, she reasons that, instead of saying, "I hate you, . . . I'm writing it in a way without saying I hate you . . . I work on that, and . . . it actually comes out better that way." Although Mason Markt thinks that Roxie doesn't quite "get the metaphor" (MM, Interview, May 2009) when she is a student in his class, she seems to have adopted that perspective in some of her poems. Like Sylvia Plath and Edgar Allen Poe, her favorite poets, she feels she writes dark poetry. In playing with words, in considering connections to other texts, in thinking metaphorically, and in envisioning herself in relation to other poets, Roxie emulates thinking and acting like a writer.

All three writers find self-in-practice or writerly identities through their history of participation, described above. They perceive themselves to be writers and identify their writing as self, as "me"--their identities and their writing are linked. "Writing is just what I do," Carmen repeats twice in her 2009 interview. Kerianne knows of no one "outside of my family" (K, Interview, June 2009) who competes with writing the way she and her family do. In their personally-chosen writing projects, they discover self-authoring, self-in-practice, and "selfhood" (Mead, 1934). They embrace agency as writers, but report receiving less assistance in fashioning self in classes or high school. As a whole, these cases illustrate student writers who independently shape their identities in figured worlds they have constructed.

They not only find identity as writers of particular genres, but also find identity in the act of writing itself. In Chapter 6, I share analyses of their stories of power and resistance. I suggest that the data from these students writers encourages us to think more

deeply about identity in writing and the ways students might be encouraged to self-author themselves as writers to write in many worlds, a core goal of English teachers.

Writing as Navigating and Negotiating Complex Emotions

Mason Markt wants his students to have passion, to care about what they write, and my analysis reveals the three student writers possess these qualities. However, Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne go beyond the emotion of caring about what they write, and they enter a deep level of emotional struggle and investment not evident in most high school assignments. My data in the form of student comments and stories underpin the importance of understanding the role of emotions in learning about writing, but also the significant complexity of that emotional engagement and work. The emotional work that is done in the actual act of writing, writing over an extended period of time, or writing long pieces (such as writing novels) or many pieces (such as collections of poems or numerous contest pieces), allows for exploring a broader and deeper range of emotions associated with writing. Writing a piece that takes an investment of time and engagement to complete is a different task than writing a typical short piece assigned for a class. Applebee and Langer (2009) find that secondary students are not often assigned "writing of any significant length or complexity" (p. 21). Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne take it upon themselves to write lengthy or numerous complex pieces. They describe experiencing a wide range of emotions while completing their work. The data show that the student writers come to define writing as navigating and negotiating complex emotions, which they add to their internally persuasive discourses. It is through an examination of emotion that we can understand the role of struggle in writing, the challenge of dealing with struggle and the satisfaction of working through struggle

successfully. Emotions draw them in and in their emotions, they have space to be themselves. I highlight some of these emotions for each of the students next.

Much of Roxie's poetry is framed with and about emotions, and she admits she has great emotional investment in her topics: "When I am feeling stressed or when something has made me sad, I find a way to express it in words" (R, Interview, May 2009). In her poems, she writes about being angry with her mom and being irritated with school. She describes her tenth grade year as a year of change and turmoil. Looking back at her poetry writing life three years after graduation, she recalls, "Writing was such a release for me" (R, Email, June 2012). The poems she shares with me in her high school interview have, as a whole, a central theme of relationships; a number contain a speaker who feels inferior, abandoned, or less-than-equal in a relationship. "People might not think I'm very happy" from looking at her poems, she tells me (R, Interview, May 2009). The darkness of the content of her poems is a direct contrast, however, to her enthusiasm when talking about writing poetry in general, making her practice of writing poetry emotionally complicated. Writing poetry serves multiple roles in her life. The process of exploring her feelings through writing provides relief, and she can express some of the darker or wounded parts of herself. Writing also affords her an opportunity to explore possibility. Roxie's poetry offers her opportunities for emotional engagement and negotiation on varying levels.

While Carmen delights in the decision-making part of writing her novels and in the anticipation of National Novel Writing Month during high school, her feelings about doing the actual writing are much more complex. She expresses frustrations with her writing that Roxie does not, talking about how she would "just feel bad" (C, 2009) when

she doesn't finish a story a friend asks about or when her online friend talks about a piece she is working on and Carmen is not working on anything. Her inner dialogue is at times self-deprecating: "I'm lazy . . . I wish I could finish things, and I always tell myself I will eventually, but I haven't yet" (C, Interview, May 2009). Comments like "I've opened it [Novel 1] . . . twice, . . . and I'm like oooooh, it's so badly written" (C, Interview, May 2009) show that Carmen struggles with her writing and her perception of herself as a writer. Her identity as a writer is in flux, as identities always are.

However, her frustrated comments are less emphatic and fewer than her comments of enjoyment about writing. Even though she wrestles with her self-talk of laziness and procrastination and poor writing ability, each year she thinks ahead to the next novel idea, already having one in mind for November of her freshman year in college when I talk with her at the end of her senior year in May. Carmen's difficult dialogue with herself about her writing shows a willingness to take on a complicated task and to do the necessary grappling that goes into any situation that is thorny and problematic. This emotional investment in her work and her identity as a writer shifts and changes, depending on multiple factors: where she is in her writing, connections with others, and her evaluation of her writing project.

Kerianne's emotional struggles come from different sources. As mentioned before, Kerianne is a quiet student in class and admits she is more at ease in her writing than volunteering in class. She comments that some of her middle school teachers suspected that she didn't write her own papers, which complicates her feelings about school and writing. Competitions, however, are more comfortable. Contest rules spell out what and how she is to write, and she becomes familiar with the routines and

expectations of National History Day and the local contests for the VFW. Kerianne appears to thrive amidst competitions with people she doesn't know well, and yet is uncomfortable with people she knows, particularly with teachers who question her writing. It is understandable that a student who feels she has been accused of cheating by not writing her class papers herself would be uncomfortable. Kerianne's emotional frustration with having her school writing challenged and yet receive high praise for her writing elsewhere, contributes to her conflicted writing identity which she negotiates by being more invested in her out-of-class writing where her identity is more positive and assured.

To further complicate the emerging portrait of Kerianne's emotional navigation through her figured world of writing, Kerianne displays ambivalence about her writing and the material she writes about. After listening to Kerianne describe for 47 lines of transcript how blessed and pleased she is to have had the experiences, accolades and prizes she has accumulated her senior year, I ask her if she has ever felt as if she could not compete. She responds with, "there's been lots of times where I want to just sit and not do this" (K, Interview, June 2009). She repeats a similar comment further into the interview.

Still, Kerianne appears to genuinely care about some of the topics she selects: she nominates a teacher for Teacher of the Year; she writes about her dog, the one to "keep me sane" (K, Interview, June 2009); she feels the US made terrible mistakes with the Tuskegee airmen. But a distance exists, too, in her interest in a topic and her writing. At times Kerianne explains issues, but fails to address and understand the individuals these issues affect. When she speaks with me about a project she created about the historical

significance of Little Big Horn, she doesn't talk about the Lakota women affected by the events of this site, even though that was the heart of the project. Instead of sympathizing with the hardships of the victims, she speaks, instead, of the parameters of the contest, which were difficult to meet. She doesn't talk about the flood victims her non-profit business assists or the patients she helps in her 750 hours of volunteer work at a hospital, included in applications. Much of what she describes, when speaking of her writing, is the chase involved in competing, in applying. Kerianne's writing is a means to an end, and that end is to win a competition. Writing creates pathways for her, and it is where she takes on an identity of a student leader, which she pursues with family support.

Other emotional complexities in Kerianne's writing world are the family and friend dynamics involved: "We [in the family] all love each other of course, but there's always the idea you want to push yourself and be better than the kid before you" (K, Interview, June 2009). While she relishes her family identity, it has its drawbacks: "A lot of people figure that since I'm a Newhart, I just got it [won], and that was the worst, . . . cuz no, I didn't just 'get it,' I had to write the paper, I had to put thought in it, I had to work" (K, Interview, June 2009). Friend issues are similarly complex. Kerianne admits that in middle school she didn't always see the "end-point" of all her competition work and found herself saying, "I have to do this paper for this national thing, sorry, I can't come" to movie invitations (K, Interview, June 2009). She eventually reconciles this tug between competition efforts and friends; as a senior she suspects she will not see high school friends much after graduation, so she chooses competition over friends, deciding that the end-goal is more important. This makes her writing easier to focus on. While

Kerianne says she is more comfortable in her writing than in participating in class, that comfort level also has undercurrents of unease and emotional distance.

In looking at my analyses of the data from the three student writers, I see significant points for discussion. Writing for the focal students is more than including five paragraphs that have to have a particular format. Writing for these participants is about the complications of human beings writing in historical and emotional contexts that are rarely included in talk about curriculum. A teacher making an assignment is only a small part of the whole act of writing for a student. A socio-cultural perspective acknowledges the pressures and circumstances that are part of the story of creating a piece of writing and recognizes that what teachers are asking students to do is far more than the surface event of putting words on a paper as quickly as possible. However, how can teachers possibly spend time learning all the background and surrounding circumstances that go into writing? If teachers don't spend that time, though, then does writing too often become just words on a paper, a disengaged piece of writing that is produced for a disengaged purpose? This is a conundrum difficult to resolve.

Writing as Receiving Recognition

Moje and Lewis (2007) say, "learning shapes subject formation, which shapes identity enactments that allow for different types of agency. But the power of that agency still depends on recognitions" (p. 20). They suggest that without recognition, agency is diminished. If students are to gain the power of acting for themselves, recognition is one dimension that might prompt agency. Recognitions "draw heavily from . . . the discourse community the person is trying to enter" Moje and Lewis (2007, p. 20) maintain. So the recognition by members of their discourse community is critical for engendering agency.

The stories and comments of Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne bear this out. As I noted and compared the recognition each student participant received, it seemed clear that the power of agency and opportunities for learning for Roxie contrasted significantly with that received by both Carmen and Kerianne. Roxie receives almost no public recognition for her poetry inside of school or out. Carmen receives some recognition for personal novel and fiction writing (primarily outside of school) and much recognition of academic writing in school, particularly in college. Kerianne receives small amounts of recognition in school for her contest writing and, as mentioned, substantial recognition outside of school. In addition, though, when recognition from a discourse community to which the writer wishes to belong is not received or is received in only small amounts, all three student writers demonstrate agency for learning and identity enactment through self-recognition. In laying the three cases side by side and examining each case individually, I document how external recognition makes a significant difference. When external recognition is limited, self-recognition also provides some satisfaction for these student writers.

As I consider the variety and amount of recognition the three students received, several questions come to mind. When recognition is not received, or the writer has to bestow her own recognition upon her work and identity, in what ways is learning inhibited or constrained? I propose that learning is shaped by recognition. The cases of Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne suggest writers need recognition to promote learning, especially broad or deep learning, but they each experience a different set of circumstances and contexts for recognition. Because Roxie receives less recognition and Kerianne receives a great amount, it appears the type and amount of recognition that each

student writer receives expands or restricts their learning about how writing works and what makes a piece a successful piece of communication. Further, the recognition they receive seems to have an impact on opportunities that follow that may also serve as a force or power to influence their learning. Because Carmen receives more recognition for her academic writing, it may be that the practice she receives as a writer in the school essay genre provides feedback and opportunities for her to learn more about writing essays in particular and writing in general. In examining the examples that I describe in the following paragraphs, I consider how recognitions occur and why recognitions are important for learning about writing.

Karen Reynolds and Roxie's middle school English teacher offer positive comments about specific poems, and Roxie receives public recognition from poems appearing in the school's literary magazine, but Roxie's primary recognition of herself as a poet comes from herself. "I like being different" (R, Interview, May 2009), she says as she shows me pages of poems created over five years. She posts a few poems online and imagines that "the whole world can see it and I'm one little person" at Franklin (R, Interview, May 2009). Roxie's teachers do not recognize her as a poet or acknowledge her poetry. Karen Reynolds, who has Roxie in class at the time of the interview, thinks Roxie is a "deep thinker," but primarily confines her comments to Roxie's use of topic sentences for organization and errors that "spell check could take care of" (KR, Interview, June 2009). Her view of Roxie as a writer is generally positive, but in a limited sort of way. I mention the story Roxie tells of Karen discovering Roxie's poem and Roxie's memory of the flattering comment. Karen remembers this incident, but not the vivid admiration that Roxie is so proud of. Karen merely passes it off with a nod and

a "right" without further elaboration. Neither of Roxie's teachers included in the study knows that Roxie frequently writes poetry outside of class. The focal teachers are unaware of the quantity of poems or how much her poetry means to her. They do not know she perceives herself to be a poet. Other than thinking these two teachers might know something about her poetry, which they do not, Roxie mentions sharing her poems with me in ninth grade, almost four years earlier and being published in the school literary magazine as her main poetry connections with school. Roxie's recognition as a poet and her interest in writing poetry, as perceived by the school community, is primarily a story of invisibility and silence. Roxie appears to be on her own to learn about how to write poetry.

In contrast to Roxie, Carmen receives more and positive recognition as a writer, both at home and in school. "My parents have just told me that I've always have . . . been really good with . . . words and stories," she tells me (C, Interview, May 2009). In high school, recognition comes for her in the form of good grades in Creative Writing and for her academic pieces, and through being published in the school's literary magazine. Amy Brandt, who has Carmen in class at the time of the interview and has worked with Carmen on a portfolio to submit for a college creative writing program, acknowledges, "Writing is a part of who she is . . . . I would definitely describe her as a writer" (AB, Interview, June 2009). However, little recognition comes in school for her novel writing, the writing she prizes most.

Out of school and beyond classes, Carmen receives minimal feedback on her novel writing, as well. A couple of friends tell her they like her pieces and her online writing friend gives her occasional advice on stories. Otherwise, Carmen finds personal

satisfaction from the pleasure she derives from thinking of story ideas and trying to carry them out, not from recognition of her novels. In college Carmen believes she receives much more recognition by her professors of her writing strengths in her "out-of-school writing for in-school assignments" (C, Interview, May 2012). This recognition results in comments that inspire her and encourages her to improve. She enjoys their recognition and feels challenged to rise to new levels of craft and composition. As mentioned before, she enjoys tremendously the recognition of being published in the research journal. Carmen is recognized throughout her school career, although not for the writing she is most passionate about until she shifts that passion to academic writing. Her learning about novel writing is an independent study, as well as a study in independence, but her learning about academic writing is helped and supported, to her great satisfaction.

Like Carmen and Roxie, Kerianne recognizes her writing ability on her own, by herself and for herself: "I do know when I'm putting it [a writing piece] together, I know, hey this is really good, this is just fine . . . I never turn in something that's bad . . . . That's not my reputation" (K, Interview, June 2009). As is evident from the events and descriptions mentioned previously, Kerianne receives, in addition, significant attention for her out-of-school writing work by people and institutions both in this country and internationally. This success results in binders full of awards, trips all over the country, introductions to famous people, articles in the press about her, scholarship money, and opportunities to attend leadership camps. Kerianne doesn't speak of these recognitions at school to her teachers, but she loves the fact that some of it makes its way into the local newspaper: "that stuff is always there . . . it's archived . . . . I want to be remembered (K, Interview, June 2009).

The most important recognition of all comes from winning a competition, when she sees her writing efforts pay off, something she does not always experience with school writing: "Sometimes with the school I feel like it doesn't have as much of a end-goal or a point? As my extra curricular? . . . I want to be able to put up my certificate at the end of the day and have the shiny medals. I like shiny things" (K, Interview, June 2009). She smiles as she says, "I like winning . . . . It's a good feeling when . . . you're the best and it just rewards all the hours and all the learning and time that you've spent." But school writing does not have this kind of "winning," or satisfaction. Kerianne compares the two: "winning versus a rubric" (K, Interview, June 2009).

Tony Barnett, Kerianne's teacher in her independent study, recognizes Kerianne as a "scholarly writer" (TB, Interview, June 2009); Amy describes her as "a very serious writer," who knows "what to change and how to change it . . . on her own" (AB, Interview, June 2009). While some of these assessments may have made their way to Kerianne through the teachers' written and verbal comments, Kerianne says she does not value teacher comments much, claiming to look at the grade on an assignment and not the comments, particularly if the grade is not one she agrees with.

The school at large, however, does not recognize Kerianne in ways she would have liked. When I ask her if she would have appreciated her teachers seeking her out to ask her about her writing and contest projects, she nods, and adds spiritedly,

> And from Franklin itself . . . . I understand that like I'm not asking everything I win to be showcased, but I would have loved, like Toyota and Coca-Cola, those are major scholarships, and like for Nestle Very Best in Youth, I won that when I was a sophomore and I was *the* first [in the state] . . . to win that award, and Franklin didn't say or do anything . . . . It would have been really really nice, . . . to have gotten a pat on the back or for Dr. Matthews [the principal] to . . . say, hey, . . . thanks. (K, Interview, June 2009)

Kerianne obviously receives recognition from many places and people, including recognition from at least two of her teachers. Carmen also treasures the recognition from her professors, and Roxie delights in comments from her teachers. It seems that there is a part of Kerianne, though, that desires more public recognition at the school. She responds to outside recognition by entering more contests and applying for scholarships as time goes on. Kerianne thinks the school recognition she receives, though, doesn't compare to the excitement of the next competition and possibility to win.

In Chapter 6, I discuss elements of power and agency in the stories the three student writers tell me about their writing experiences. These stories do depend on recognition by the writers themselves and others. Overall, though, the comments presented in this chapter illustrate that receiving recognition for their writing and their identities as writers proves powerful for all three writers, from Roxie's few instances to the wealth of recognition that Kerianne receives. Teachers are inundated with details, tasks, and students in the course of a day, and might not be aware of out-of-class writing projects students enjoy. The student writers of this study do not discuss widely their out-of-school writing. How might teachers reasonably help the Roxies in our classes who long to know more about poetry? How might teachers also recognize the Carmens and Keriannes? How might teachers expand and broaden spheres and instances of recognition, in general? I address these questions in Chapter 7.

Conclusion

In this research I am seeking to understand how the intersections of these writers and their teachers' teaching of writing might inform our notions of teaching writing and of student writers. The comments Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne and their teachers

provide suggest several responses to this over-arching question. The internally persuasive discourses of the student writers offer both adaptation of and counter-narrative to the authoritative discourses of their classes. While some of their learning emanates from what teachers taught, more pleasurable and significant learning appears to come from their own efforts and experimentation.

Street (1983), Heath (1983), Luttrell and Parker (2001), Hull and Schultz (2002a), Alvermann (1998), and Gee (2003, 2012) among others, portray out-of-school literacies as a disconnect with traditional school literacies and advise teachers to find areas of compatibility and connection. These researchers suggest that out-of-school literacies, which include writing as well as digital reading and web-based multi-modal composition, may be a primary venue for literacy and learning, not the school-site. Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne do describe their personal writing projects as being separate from their school-based learning about writing. However, upon closer examination, the students' discourses overlap with teacher discourses, although an uneven way, with the most interesting and greatest learning occurring outside of class assignments. In the dialogism which occurs as the students' writing experiences beyond school intersect with the authoritative discourses of their teachers, I find there is a modest "overlap or complementarity" (Hull and Schultz, 2002b, p. 3). Consciously or unconsciously, the students sort through all that their teachers throughout their school years have told them about writing, and they select those pieces of writing advice that will most impact them and their writing in ways that they wish to experiment with or utilize in their own personal practices. Dialogism occurs as authoritative discourses intersect with the students' writing experiences. This dialogism is evident in the internally persuasive

discourses in how the students define writing and use writing and results in authoritative discourses contributing to the student's conclusions about what it means to write and to be a writer. The internally persuasive discourses presented in this chapter illustrate discourses that embrace additional complexity to the conceptions of writing presented in the writing classrooms.

The intersections of developing writing processes, finding a writing community, and caring about writing are important to both teachers and students, and the students value the processes they use to be creative and successful. These elements of the authoritative discourses of their teachers resonate with the student participants, and the students expand them to fit their own purposes as they persistently wrestle with new genres, deep ideas, and creative expression. The internally persuasive discourses the students adopt, in addition, help them shape figured worlds of learning about writing, which include a complex web of purposes, emotions, and recognition. Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne remind us that learning to love writing needs time for experimentation and playing around and that the learning about writing prized and enacted in school may need to be more appealing.

Roxie's, Carmen's, and Kerianne's comments illustrate the importance for students to discover themselves as writers, for them to grow into saying, "I am a writer" through new experiences. In 2009, as high school seniors, they had already added to a history of writing and looked to extend that participation into the future. "I think I'll always write poems," Roxie says her senior year. Carmen describes herself as a person who "wants to broaden her horizons in terms of writing and experimentation . . . [and] is . . . looking forward to a career in writing in some form " (C, Interview, May 2009).

Kerianne looks forward to college writing. Three years later in 2012, soldier Roxie describes herself as writing some, but "longing to write" more (R, Email, October 2012). College junior Carmen describes an extended educational path that involves much of the writing she comes to enjoy. Kerianne, according to a news release of an award her junior year at her university, continues to excel in her writing adventures in and out of the school she attends. As they had envisioned their senior year of high school, writing continues to be important to them three years later.

Mason wonders what he may have taught to Carmen and Roxie in his Creative Writing class that may have made a difference to them and their writing outside of class. In my field notes I paraphrased his question from "what did I do?" into: what did we do? (Field notes, May 28, 2012; June 11, 2012; June 25, 2012; July 16, 2012; July 24, 2012; August 5, 2012) What did we at Franklin do for these student writers? What did we do for students writers like Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne? In the end, Mason's question is more appropriately posed as the question, "What did they do?" Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne integrated figured worlds of learning. We want all our students to become these kinds of agentic learners. There are many students, however, who need more assistance in becoming this kind of agent in their learning about writing.

In this research I show the ways these students find joy, contentment, and purpose in writing, which they use for multiple purposes: as a way of making sense of feelings and emotions, as a way to make sense of the world around them, and as a way to take up identity. Through their writing they are able to fashion identities of power and resistance. Viewing writing as power and as a story of resistance is not what these students discover in school-assigned writing. As I looked at specific stories embedded in the interview

data, I noted that in constructing their figured worlds of writing, Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne tell stories of "improvisation" (Holland, *et al*., 1998) that illustrate these identities and themes, which I examine in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

STORIES OF POWER AND RESISTANCE

In Chapter 4, I describe how the teacher participants, Amy Brandt, Mason Markt, Karen Reynolds, and Tony Barnett, encounter heteroglossic discourses on how to teach writing. Some of these discourses are the authoritative discourses of mandates, courses, and professional development, in addition to their personal writing practices and their observations from their classrooms. They are in dialogue with those discourses to create their own internally persuasive discourses, which appear in their teaching philosophies and practices. These internally persuasive discourses are not static and unchanging. In their interviews, the teachers pose questions about teaching writing and express interest in learning from the student participants, to further develop their internally persuasive discourses. Their philosophies and practices become the authoritative discourses of their classrooms for the student participants. In Chapter 5, I describe how Roxie (the poet), Carmen, (the novelist), and Kerianne (the contestant) select and adopt some of the teacher-taught language and processes. I show how these focal students include in their definitions of writing other complexities from their own practices and learning through their figured worlds of writing they create or participate in outside of their classes and assignments.

In this chapter, I focus on the student participants and share my analysis of their dialogue with authoritative discourses, evident in stories they tell about their pieces of writing and their writing experiences. My purpose is to show how these stories are illustrative of improvisations (Holland, *et al*., 1998) in which these writers find power and enact resistance as they further develop their internally persuasive discourses. While

the three writers all narrate stories of agency in resisting writing discourses and in taking up power to create internally persuasive discourses and figured worlds of learning for themselves, this chapter will illustrate differences in their narratives, identities, and definitions of writing success. In my analysis of Kerianne's stories, I find her resistance reflected in a conscious internal decision. Her story of being disappointed with a grade that she had considered a successful project shows her resisting school writing discourses and relying elsewhere for a an affirmation of her writer identity and a definition of writing success. Carmen's individual writing stories add up to an overarching story of resistance to a traditional developmental pathway of writing success, and she takes up personal power to create a hybrid writing identity that unifies creative and essay writing that eventually turns into the kind of academic success that schools prize and which she comes to value, as well. Roxie's acts of resistance are revealed through her writing, where she argues with class content and finds power and personal success as she names her perceptions of the realities of life with what Freire (2005) calls "true words" (p. 88). Kerianne's resistance and power comes from what she chooses not to do at school, Carmen's is through what she chooses to do over a long period of time almost in disregard for how things are supposed to go, and Roxie's is through the act of writing itself. I detail these differences in the sections of this chapter.

To analyze the stories the three student participants tell, I draw upon elements of narrative inquiry analysis. I recognize that the participants are telling stories from a moment in a life space (Connelly and Clandinin, 2006), as I analyze the plot and characters of the narration and explore the commonplaces of narrative inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin 2000, 2006; Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007): temporality, sociality, and place.

As I examine their stories, I use Connelly and Clandinin's (1990) process of burrowing to focus on the event and find meaning from the participant's perspective. In addition, I discuss the impact of the narrator and researcher relationship in the stories the students tell and in the narration I relay in telling their stories.

Narrative Inquiry Analysis

In the interviews of the student participants, the three students tell stories about creating their pieces of writing and of other experiences they have as writers, both in-school and elsewhere. Connelly and Clandinin (2006) call a study that relies on interviews and the stories contained within it an "interview study," a part of a "telling inquiry," where the storyteller and his stories are positioned "within a life space" (483). When telling stories during interviews, a participant is positioning himself within the continuum of his life, as well as the people, places, and events of the story itself. Connelly and Clandinin (1990, 2000, 2006) use the terms *living, telling, retelling, and reliving* as elements of "self-narration" (2006, p. 478) in this life space. The subject lives his life and tells stories about his life. The researcher retells (or interprets) the subject's life through asking questions and writing about that life, and a subject may retell his life by enacting the newly told and interpreted version of what he has said about his life. These tellings are not linear, but entertain a recursive relationship in the living and telling and retelling and reliving of a life and story as it is constructed by subject and researcher. In my case study, the three student participants tell stories about their lived experiences. As I ask questions of them, and restate their stories, I am retelling their stories. As they respond to my comments, they may relive their stories, adjusting what they say to the types of questions I ask.

In a story-telling context, subjects are individuals in "storied lives on storied landscapes" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000, p. 145). Connelly and Clandinin (1990) define story as a narration that takes place in a particular setting, with a definable plot and specific characters. Carter (1993) says researchers pay attention to the stories or narrations told by a subject because a story expresses understandings and thoughts that may capture "richness and the nuances of meaning" in a person's life (p. 6). Carter states that stories are constructed to explore how the storyteller has found meaning or made sense of an experience. In looking at narrations participants tell, Connelly and Clandinin (2000) warn that participants are not embodiments of theories or types, but are "people in all their complexity" (p. 145). They caution that researchers must look at subjects as "becoming" and "moving forward" (p. 145). In other words, in my study, I consider my student participants' stories as being a part of lives that are full of stories; the stories they tell me about their writing are only a portion of the stories they tell and stories they hear about writing. In the selection of their stories, they are constructing stories and selves that illustrate important meanings to them. These stories show them to be complex people who describe instances in time that are only moments of their becoming more complex people.

Connelly and Clandinin (2000, 2006) and Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) identify three "commonplaces" found in narrative inquiry: temporality, sociality, and place. The term *commonplaces* refers to characteristics typically found in the stories constructed in a narrative inquiry and in the inquiry as a whole. Temporality refers to the notion that people and stories carry the past, present, and future in themselves. A situation is dependent upon what has happened previously, what is occurring now in the present, and

what will happen in the future based on or influenced by the previous two elements of time. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) suggest the past "conveys significance," the present "conveys value," and the future "conveys intention" (p. 9). A narrative about a writing event or artifact of my study, for example, is understood by what has happened to the writer or the writing previously, the factors that are valued and affect it at the time it is written or shared, and the awareness of what will happen or is intended to happen in response to or because of the writing in the coming days.

Sociality denotes the importance of individual and social opinions, reflections, and beliefs of the people and places of the subject himself and with which the subject interacts. When analyzing a specific narrative or the narrative inquiry as a whole, attending to the sociality commonplace means noting the thoughts and understandings of the people involved and of the storyteller as they interact with each other at the time of the story or in the course of the inquiry. In my study, focusing on the commonplace of sociality means that when a writer narrates a story about writing, I observe the interplay of the individual with the context and all the social dimensions that are present in the individual and the context.

The third commonplace, place, signifies the actual physical location of the subject and the stories told. In looking at this commonplace in the narrations of the participants, I notice the impact a specific place has on the events, characters, and meanings of the story. This study includes writers and their stories about writing, and important places of the stories are classrooms and hallways, the high school itself—the physical places where the writers create personal figured worlds for writing. I explain and describe below the importance of these commonplaces in selected stories from each focal student to illustrate

my understanding of issues of identity, persuasive discourses, and figured worlds. In this chapter I offer an extended example of an analysis of a narrative by Kerianne to apply in detail the commonplaces of inquiry to a student story of writer identity, agency, power, and resistance, with less developed analyses of narratives by Roxie and Carmen.

Relationships with Participants and Stories as Truth

Both participant and researcher may construct the commonplaces of temporality, sociality and place in their interaction during the inquiry and interviewing. Connelly and Clandinin (2000) explain, "we [the researchers] learned to see ourselves as always *in the midst* -- located somewhere along the dimensions of time, place, the personal, and the social . . . . we see ourselves as in the middle of a nested set of stories – ours and theirs" (p. 63). Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) suggest, "Narrative inquirers are always in an inquiry relationship with participants' lives. They cannot subtract themselves from relationship" (p. 70). In this case study, I think of the stories the students tell me in terms of how these stories are part of a larger cache of stories of their lives as students and writers. I also consider how my relationships with the participants may have influenced what they told me.

The student participants are my former students, although I do not have a particularly close relationship with them. This was also true when they were in my classes. When I ask them to participate in my study, beginning with an interview, might this have an impact on what they tell me and how they tell their stories? Of course it does. They likely feel valued as writers, because I ask about their out-of-school writing lives, which are mostly hidden and unrecognized, especially for poet Roxie and novelist Carmen. While some know of Kerianne's successes due to either her mother acting as a

publicist or from reading the local newspaper, I suspect not many know the entire story of Kerianne's participation in her many contests. Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) say that as the researcher and subject are in relationship during a study, "both parties will learn and change in the encounter" (p. 9). So as I present these stories and analysis, I must ask myself: how do we interact? How do we change? What do we collectively learn? What has been constructed between us?

Connelly and Clandinin (2000) observe that "memory is selective, shaped, and retold in the continuum of one's experiences" (p. 142). In the stories the students tell me, I ask myself about the memories the stories contain and wonder what is true. What is fabricated or exaggerated in what the students tell me? Connelly and Clandinin remind us "the distinction between fact and fiction is muddled . . . . we may well wonder about the basis of the story. Did the events described actually happen? How do we know? How does the teller know?" (p. 179) Carter (1993) says, "stories exist within a social context and are motivated, that is, are told for a purpose" and one of those purposes is to present "a theory of something. What we tell and how we tell it is a revelation of what we believe" (p. 9). So in addition to understanding how the student storytellers interact with me in the role of researcher, it is also important to keep in mind that the stories I present here selectively construct a theory or belief the storytellers hold.

In this chapter I highlight stories from Kerianne, Roxie, and Carmen. I analyze their stories through *burrowing*, a term used by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), indicating a focus on "the event's emotional, moral, and aesthetic qualities . . . [and] why the event is associated with these feelings and what their origins might be" (p. 11). I explore the feelings involved, and the shades of good, bad, right, wrong, positive or

negative (among other evaluative scales) present. I examine the words selected and how these words are arranged. In studying the emotional, moral, and aesthetic qualities of the focal students' stories, I search for the complexities of the stories. As I coded the stories and analyzed the words and meanings in the multiple passes through the data, I noted that the students regularly told stories where they positioned themselves as writers with power and acting in resistance--two important themes that are evident across the stories and throughout the data set. In taking up these positions of power and resistance, the students improvised as writers (Holland, *et al*., 1998). I explain the concepts of commonplaces in more detail when I analyze a Keranne story, improvisation when I analyze Roxie's stories, and becoming when I analyze Carmen's overarching stories.

A Kerianne Story: Power and Internal Resistance

During Kerianne's interview in 2009 during the spring of her senior year, she narrates pieces of stories about writing contests she has won, the scholarships she has garnered, the prizes she has collected, and the traveling she has done in pursuit of information for writing contests. She also tells three more fully developed, detailed stories and commentary to provide reflections and context:

- a story about her senior AP Literature research paper and how it is difficult to complete because of all the traveling she is doing at the time,
- a story about what she does to write multiple winning essays for national contests and how she isn't recognized for winning them at school, and
- a story about receiving a poor grade on a paper she thinks was good but chooses not to challenge the grade the teacher gives.

While Kerianne comments positively that she likes her teachers and school in general, her stories of school writing experiences are more negative and critical than her contest experiences. The following story, of the disagreement with a grade, is representative of this type of story. The theme of resisting teachers' discourses on the quality of her writing appears in stories of other school writing. I am intrigued by this story because Kerianne is directly speaking of being in dialogue with writing discourses at school. In discussing school writing discourses, I draw from Ivanic's (2004) concept of writing discourses, which she defines as "constellations of beliefs about writing, beliefs about learning to write, ways of talking about writing, and the sorts of approaches to teaching and assessment which are likely to be associated with these beliefs" (p. 224). In Kerianne's story, she is particularly concerned about the assessment of her writing.

Her story is also a narration in which Kerianne includes multiple identities for herself. Representing herself as an accomplished writer is an important part of her writer identity and her internally persuasive discourse of writing. In this narration, Kerianne portrays herself as a ninth grade writer with agency and power, even this early in her high school career. This story suggests that as Kerianne takes up power to resist teacher discourses about writing, she both contributes to and restricts further development of her learning about writing and her internally persuasive discourses on writing.

Before Kerianne begins telling this story, I have asked her, as I have asked the other two students, for names of teachers who might be able to share with me their thoughts about Kerianne's writing. The names she mentions are all language arts teachers. I comment that it is interesting she hasn't mentioned a social studies teacher, since she is so interested in political issues and topics, usually studied in a social studies

class and which are often included in her contest pieces. She begins her story by attempting to recall the names of the social studies teachers she has had classes with:

> K – Well, I'm trying to think, . . . Miss Deetz, yeah, she (pause) I don't know, we didn't really click with my writing and stuff cuz I'd feel like I did a fantastic job and when I'd get it back it's like a C, and I'm like, what the heck? What's the issue with this? But I totally remember we had to do a final project on spatial analysis, I spent like a week on it working at . . . [my dad's] office cuz I did Kentucky Derby winners and where they came from and how it was relevant to how they won and their placings? So I had to look at every Kentucky Derby winner, where they placed, where they're from, who's their breeder, throughout the whole history. It's been going on for over a hundred years, and she gave me like a C on that, so, sorry, but I was like, no, that's not right . . . .
> D – Did you ever ask her about it?
> K – No, cuz I didn't feel it was worth it, cuz she, she was pretty spirited, and ah, whatever, I got a good enough, well not a good enough, whatever (laughs). I just, I don't like conflict with teachers, cuz I don't, I'm not really comfortable with it, it's awkward, so . . . . (K, Interview, June 2009)

Kerianne comes back to this story after several intervening questions, when she again explains disagreeing with teacher grades on her writing and explains why she just looks at her grade and not the rubric on her returned work:

> With the school, even if I don't get the grade I want, I feel like I can't challenge it simply because I've been brought up as the student can't [challenge] the teacher's authority . . . . So school can be really frustrating, cuz I feel like I have a really good piece of writing and sometimes they just, I don't know, . . . so that's another reason I just kind of look at the grade and throw it in my folder, cuz I feel like I can't really do anything about it if it's not what I like. (K, Interview, June 2009)

Kerianne attributes her frustration with this kind of writing situation to her conclusion that in "tenth grade and ninth grade two teachers I had didn't click with me" (K, Interview, June 2009). In looking at this story through narrative analysis, I unpack several focus points. I examine plot and characters to understand the basic story structure. I then consider the commonplaces of temporality, sociality, and place to explore how this story reveals the general themes of resistance and power, and

Kerianne's particular resistance to writing discourses in school, particularly how she has taken up the power to rely on herself to evaluate the quality of her writing. She adds to her internally persuasive discourses about writing the importance of a writer evaluating her own work and takes on the identity of a writer willing to research extensively to produce a good piece of writing. She defines a successful writing piece as one involving hard work, effort, and details that should result in a satisfying outcome. For Kerianne, the satisfying outcome is often a prize of some sort, and in this case that prize would be a good grade.

Plot and Characters

The plot of Kerianne's story of writing discourses and identity issues centers on an external conflict between student and teacher, where the teacher (an antagonist) has assigned a C to Kerianne's paper a low grade, and Kerianne (the protagonist) believes the paper deserves better. In Kerianne's construction of the narrative, she is positioned by the teacher as a student who turns in lower quality work. Kerianne positions herself, however, as a hard-working student who thoroughly researches a complex topic and who produces a high-quality project through much extra effort. As part of an internal conflict, Kerianne also identifies herself as a student who doesn't challenge teachers and so doesn't take up agency to right what she feels is wrong, which she contributes to her upbringing

In attending to this story with the commonplaces of temporality, sociality, and place, Kerianne emerges as a writer who dialogically resists school writing discourses and takes up power to reject this school writing experience. In rejecting the school assessment, she affirms her writing identity as one who is able to more accurately judge

the quality of her writing. In rejecting the teacher's assessment, she also restricts what she might have learned from the experience or from talking with the teacher about why she received the grade she did, perhaps also forgoing a dialogue which might have added to her internally persuasive discourses on writing. As Kerianne tells her story and is making meaning from it, it appears that even three years later she is not settled on what happened and how it still affects her emotionally.

Temporality: Past, Present, Future

In viewing Kerianne's story through the narrative analysis consideration of temporality, I look for elements of the past, present, and future. I take into account that this narration is one story of many Kerianne has lived in her life as a writer, or as Connelly and Clandinin (2000) say, this is one of her multiple plotlines. Kerianne is speaking of an event that took place three years previously when she was in ninth grade; she tells this story about a moment in her life space as a senior from a different moment in that life space as she reflects on a part of the continuum of all her writing experiences.

Kerianne refers to the effort she put into the project, which she felt deserved a better grade. In looking at her words with a temporality lens, I suspect that in previous situations she has done that kind of research work and it has been more successful, according to Kerianne's definition of writing success. Also appearing from the past in this story are her references to the fact that she was brought up to not challenge a teacher's authority. The authoritative discourses of her upbringing are factors in her decision not to say anything about her grade to her teacher. These two elements of the past, embedded in this story, inform her thoughts and feelings of the current moment, and those past elements contribute to her discomfort. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) explain

that the past conveys significance, and Kerianne's previous work and family standards signify that this is an incident she appears to believe she cannot brush away, but that she also has limited options on how to resolve the conflict.

In looking at the present time period of Kerianne's story, I consider the choices she has in the moment of the event. She portrays herself as being powerless, due to her upbringing and that she considers herself not a confrontational student. But she has a proactive choice: she can resist the teacher's decision and rely on her own evaluation of her effort and work. If she resists, she also resists the writing discourses of the teacher embedded in the assignment and the identity the teacher has bestowed on Kerianne, at least in reference to this final writing project. The present in Kerianne's story offers decisions about agency and power. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) say the present of a story conveys value. In this story, Kerianne values her independent evaluation of her work more than the teacher's decision about her writing. And she takes up agency to hold to the power of believing in the quality of her paper.

As Kerianne reflects on this event, she includes moments from the future. "So school can be really frustrating, . . . I feel like I have a really good piece of writing and sometimes they just, . . . so that's another reason I just kind of look at the grade and throw it in my folder." This narrative is apparently not the only time Kerianne doesn't agree with a grade, as she uses the present tense, which suggests it has occurred more than once. She also has come to a conclusion about school: it can be frustrating when she has judged a piece to be good and teachers don't concur with her assessment. Connelly and Clandinin say that the future conveys intention, and Kerianne's reflection suggests that she has incorporated the intention to trust her judgment of her work when she has

worked hard to produce a good piece of writing into her internally persuasive discourse about writing, along with the decision that school discourses about quality writing are not as accurate as her own. Bakhtin speaks of the dialogism that a person undertakes in identity formation as a constant struggle with past, present, and future selves, and in this story, it appears Kerianne is negotiating that conversation with herself.

Sociality and Place: Interactions with People and Context

Sociality in narrative analysis focuses on the thoughts and beliefs of the individuals involved in the context of a story and the interactions between the subject and others. In using the sociality commonplace with Kerianne's story, I look at how the characters of her story react to each other and the beliefs they bring to the situation. As I look at the elements of the story, I note that Kerianne is in dialogue with the teacher about her writing. Kerianne does not state what is wrong with the piece, other than the grade is undesirable, so the dialogue with the teacher's writing expectations is not clear. What is clear, though, is that Kerianne's thoughts and beliefs do not match the thoughts and beliefs of the teacher. Kerianne's dialogue is not external, and she is not arguing with the teacher. Kerianne disconnects from interaction with her teacher. Internally, she says: "What the heck?" "No." "That's not right." In contesting the grade with those words, she is also contesting the writer identity ascribed to the grade, an identity which does not match the identity in which Kerianne takes so much pride.

She is not, however, arguing with her family values, which could be another interaction with the thoughts and beliefs also present in this story. Not arguing with the family values forces her to take up agency in one way that is available. She stuffs her paper in her bag—and tells herself that she and the paper are better than that--and relates

this story three years later (and likely in-between, too). In this act of agency, she confirms the validity of her own assessment of her writing, and confirms a belief about school and writing, which suggests that in her internally persuasive discourses about writing, school writing is not as valued as her competition work.

Place is the third commonality in narrative analysis, and Connelly and Clandinin (2006) say a researcher needs to "acknowledge the qualities of place and the impact of place" in a study and when examining a narrative (p. 481). Two physical places are important in Kerianne's story, the social studies classroom and the school as a whole. A third place hovers in the background: Kerianne's contest world. In response to my question about why she doesn't include a social studies teacher in her list of instructors who might know about her writing, this story of a disputed grade in a ninth grade social studies class emerges. Because of the content, a social studies class presumably would be an engaging context for Kerianne, as her interests in writing, researching, and directing projects are focused on political and historical subjects.

Kerianne links the incident of this particular classroom with school in general, when she reflects that school is frustrating to her because of events like this one. The social studies class of her story is situated in a high school where quality and achievement are emphasized (see the description in Chapter 3), and Kerianne likely considers her work in general to be excellent and is proud of the accolades for her contest work. The narrative Kerianne shares is, as Connelly and Clandinin say, nested in the larger stories and places of Kerianne's writing life, where outside of school she is culturally and socially positioned as a success in the world of competitive writing, the world of her family, and the community of school at large. The social studies paper in

question is one artifact in a larger world reflected in Kerianne's binders full of awards and prizes. The place where Kerianne's work is valued and she is acknowledged as an accomplished writer is less in school than outside of it.

My analysis suggests that Kerianne relegates the impact of place found in this ninth grade classroom event to a shrug and a "whatever" when she tells the story as a senior. Because she describes it in detail with an uncomfortable laugh and an explanation of "we didn't click" three years later, these reactions indicate to me that the classroom and school places are more important than Kerianne is willing to admit. In a class that should be a site of success for Kerianne, in a school where excellence is celebrated, and in a context where her family insists upon respect, Kerianne apparently does not feel successful, excellent, or respected. So she appears to be compelled to take up power to resist the situation and resist the writer identity associated with it. She does not engage in overt conversation with the authoritative discourses of the classroom here. But she does take up agency in resisting and rejecting it internally and persuasively: she tosses her work in her bag without looking at a rubric or any comments. The space of authoring that Holland, *et al*. describe offers Kerianne the opportunity to develop a resistant self and to assume internal power when resisting.

Burrowing and Meanings

Kerianne narrates her story of the disputed grade from the vantage point of three years later. Why does this narrative still seem to resonate with her? What sense do I make of Kerianne's story and her motivations for telling it? By using Connelly and Clandinin's (1990) process of burrowing, I sought to tease out or understand the reasons why narrator Kerianne includes the emotions, morals, and aesthetics in the story she tells

and where these elements might have originated. Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) say people are "making sense of their experience" as they construct a story. To find the meaning, Connelly and Clandinin (2000) suggest looking at "patterns, narrative threads, tensions, and themes" (p. 131). Carter advises looking for motivations and purposes to find what the storyteller believes. In examining the patterns, threads, tensions of Kerianne's narrative, I came to understand that Kerianne may be motivated to tell this story because it represents a part of the pattern of tension with school and writing and a dissatisfaction with the school and its lack of recognition of her writer identity, threads and themes which are included in her other stories. This tension and dissatisfaction highlight Kerianne's desire to act with agency to resist school authoritative discourses, perhaps to the detriment of her learning about writing.

This is a story that Kerianne does not forget, emotionally. Her constructed memory of the event highlights her very specific thoughts and feelings of distress ("What the heck?" and "No, that's not right"). According to Connelly and Clandinin (2000), how Kerianne remembers this event is more important than what exactly may have occurred. Three years later, she still remembers this situation, and it continues to bother her. She appears to think hard work being rewarded with a poor grade is morally wrong and that this kind of detailed work should result in a positive reward. It is certainly discouraging to get a C on a paper when one is expecting an A. And the quality of Kerianne's work has been validated numerous times already by the time she is in ninth grade. In the midst of all her stories of successes that amaze me as she talks about them, why tell this negative story?

That she cannot let this story go may appear to be linked to previous experiences with instructors that also resulted in negative responses from the teachers. As I scroll through the transcript of Kerianne's entire interview again, I notice once more the disparaging comments she makes about her writing for school classes and the pattern of tension with school writing that emerges. She appears frustrated over middle school teachers thinking the vocabulary of her writing was too formal for it to be her own and a language arts teacher considering Kerianne's work too detailed her junior year. Kerianne, instead, describes as her writing for that junior class as "AP-level" for a non-AP course (K, Interview, May 2009). Some assignments stand in contrast to her vision for writing, as when she explains her distaste for one-pagers: "It's . . . just too much for too little," she says, when describing the constraints she feels when writing this type of short essay. "You literally cannot fit it all on one page . . . . I hate doing that" (K, Interview, June 2009). When I ask her what she thinks teachers might say about her writing, her first comments are negative: she writes too much, she's too structured. When I nudge her to think of something positive, she replies, "I don't think very well with that, I don't know, that's hard," although when I ask her what contest people might say, she immediately comes up with several positive comments. She tells me she doesn't tell her teachers about her contests because, she reports, "they either don't care" or they patronizingly tell her she wins everything (K, Interview, June 2009).

By telling this story of disagreeing with a teacher's assessment of her writing, Kerianne makes sense of the situation, as Carter (1993) suggests. Her theme becomes deciding that personal assessment trumps teacher assessment. She privately takes up agency in holding her own opinion. In this story, Kerianne is in the process of what

Bakhtin and Connelly and Clandinin call becoming and is assuming the identity of a writer who resists what she perceives as an unfair assessment of her work. She continues this resistance, as she does in the middle school story, in the ninth grade story, in the junior year story, and in her assessment of one-pagers. In these stories, Kerianne holds to her own assessment. Power in writing comes through her own satisfaction with her research and her own assessed value of the piece. Her power and agency arise in resisting the teacher's authoritative discourses.

Kerianne's internally persuasive discourses about writing, evidenced through her writing practices and comments she describes in her interview and affirmed by the awards she has won, includes careful researching and planning for writing, participating in political discourses, and receiving recognition for work well done, among other components. My analysis of this narrative indicates that she has also come to believe that a writer needs to be able to judge her own piece of writing and feel confident in that assessment. Carter suggests that one of the purposes in telling a story is to preset a theory or a belief. In Kerianne's story of the C paper, her belief seems to be that writers are capable of judging their own writing. In her larger story as a successful writer and contest winner, she internalizes that school is not the only site of learning to write; in fact, in her theory, it is not even the primary one, as Luttrell and Parker (2001), Hull and Schultz (2002a; 2002b), Schultz and Hull (2002), Alvermann (1998), and Resnick (1990) suggest.

As I consider this story of power and resistance, however, I also question what Kerianne might have gained had she not insisted that her own evaluation of her writing or her own assessment of writing tasks was better than her teachers'. Moje and Lewis

(2007) suggest that in constructing a history of participation, one shapes learning as well as identity. Kerianne has an extensive history of participation outside of school, and appears to have a less well-received one in school. In adopting resistant agency to school writing discourses, what does Kerianne also reject? Amy Brandt, her AP Literature teacher and Tony Barrett, her independent study teacher, both think that Kerianne should learn to be less regimented and technical in her writing. She tells me that in ninth grade she learned "what is expected of school-style writing" and that tenth and eleventh grade were more of the same; she comments she doesn't ask teachers for help because "I've always rolled well enough on my own" (K, Interview, June 2009). How open is she to learning from people she doesn't agree with and from teachers she says she doesn't click with along the way? What altered identities (Holland, *et al*., 1998) could she also entertain and adopt? My analysis of Kerianne's story, in considering the commonplaces of narrative analysis and theoretical lenses, concludes that as Kerianne takes up power to resist teacher discourses about writing, she also may be resisting an identity she could take up. She both increases (through assuming power to learn for herself) and hampers (through resistance) her in-school learning about writing and thus possible growth in her internally persuasive discourses on writing.

Relationship and Kerianne's Story of Resistance

How much of this story is constructed between the two of us? In our interview, she carefully words her responses by qualifying some of her statements with phrases like, "I don't want to be a snot" and "teachers have lives, too" and "understandably Miss B [Amy Brandt] is busy" (K, Interview, June 2009) when describing what she thinks about school, school assignments, and less successful school writing experiences. But in the

Kentucky Derby paper story, she doesn't make those conciliatory comments. She is thinking as she talks, as when she says about the grade, ""I got a good enough, well, not a good enough, whatever" – so while it may be a story she has told before, she tailors it for me, her former teacher. The relationship may impact the kinds of words she uses to tell the story, but she tells it anyway, evidence that she has decided to resist the student/teacher relationship she has been taught to honor, and she relates what she has constructed as the truth. Perhaps she relates the story because she considers me a sympathetic audience, having asked her questions about her out-of-school writing. If so, I ponder again what she might have opened herself to learning if she had felt more recognized at school in ways that she wanted to be known.

Carmen and Roxie also tell stories with themes of power and resistance, which differ from Kerianne's narrative. In the next section I highlight two of Roxie's stories that illustrate student writer improvisation and transformation as Roxie moves to use her writing in resistance of school authoritative discourses.

Improvisation, Transformation, and True Words in Student Stories

Murray (1996) quotes Anita Brookner, British novelist, as saying,

> I started writing because of a terrible feeling of powerlessness: I felt I was drifting and obscure, and I rebelled against that . . . . I wanted to control rather than be controlled, to ordain rather than be ordained, and to relegate rather than be relegated.
>
> Most of us feel invisible . . . . When we write we become visible, we are players in the game of life. (p. 2)

Like Brookner, Carmen, Kerianne, and Roxie each seek to find their own power in writing, to discover that they become visible through writing, and to become players in the game of life in their writing. They find this power in their personally chosen writing,

in the practices they develop in their own created figured worlds of writing, in the identities they take up as writers through these processes, and in the stories they tell about themselves as writers and the pieces they write.

It is obvious that writing and language have power. Nelson (2001), in his essay on non-test writing, references N. Scott Momaday's description of using words as moments of creation, and details the power of this creative word for several writers: Pablo Neruda, who describes his poetry as that which strikes his soul; Dimitri Kolesnikow, Russsian submarinist who writes to his wife as he lives his last hours on his sunken submarine; and Jimmy Santiago Baca, who, through writing during solitary confinement, finds reasons to continue living. Yagelski (2009) also focuses on the "transformative power of writing" when writing is "a way of being" (p. 7). He argues that writing is too often taught as a set of skills, or as "a procedure" (p. 189), but that "the *experience* of an act of writing . . . [is] as valuable as . . . the text produced as a result of that act of writing" (p. 7). He describes writing as "an ontological act: When we write, we enact a sense of ourselves as beings in the world" (p. 7-8) and that the "mind and body and self and world is encoded in the act of writing" (p. 14). It makes us more aware of "what it means to be human" (p. 193). Yagelski advocates for considering the very act of writing as worthy because as writers writes, they can change themselves. When writers write, writing is an act of them being themselves, including the selves that are part of the world and members of the human race.

My data show the three student writers find this power in writing, too. Carmen describes the power of the writing experience as *freedom*, *independence*, and *liberating* (C, Interview, May 2009). Kerianne, somewhat less enthusiastically, describes the

writing experience as "comfortable" and, in less glowing terms, as "work" (K, Interview, June 2009). Roxie's experiences the power of the act of writing in terms of delight when she begins writing "and then a poem will come out" and of relief: "I just write and I let everything out" (R, Interview, May 2009).

Freire (2005), too, focuses on the power of words to transform when he speaks of "the true word" and says, "to speak a true word is to transform the world" (p. 87). Yagelski (2012) in analyzing Freire's concept of writing power describes Freire's view of writing as "writing as praxis" (p. 188). Yagelski adopts Freire's notion of praxis as acting and reflecting on the world to change it, and concludes that writing as praxis is "an ongoing process of transformation–of both self and world" (p. 188). Put another way, the words a writer uses to explain or meditate on a personal or bigger landscape are words that will change the writer and that environment. In the context of my study, the words the student writers use to narrate their versions of the world are words that may transform themselves as well as the contexts in which or about which they write. This change may be an on-going transformation, similar to the notion of becoming described by Connelly and Clandinin's or Bakhtin.

Holland, *et al*. (1998) term personal transformation or becoming as *improvisation*. In describing transformation or improvisation, they look at "culture and subject position" (p. 16) in figured worlds, where individuals may resist culture and position and take up agency to alter them. In schools, students often occupy the cultural subject position of being the inexperienced or less knowledgeable learner who is taught by a more experienced or more knowledgeable teacher. Improvisations, when enacted in response to social or cultural positions, are "potential beginnings of an altered subjectivity, an

altered identity" (Holland, *et al*., 1998, p. 18). In the cases of Carmen, Kerianne, and Roxie, their improvisations are likely in response to traditional learner subject positions. They resist this positioning because of their engagement with writing outside the walls of school and because of the identities they have constructed as knowledgeable writers—poets, essay writers, and novelists.

Moje and Lewis (2007) say that as "people acquire, appropriate, resist, or reconceptualize skills and knowledge within and across discourse communities, they continue to be formed as acting subjects" (p. 19). In school settings, as students learn or resist the information or experiences of school, they become agentic beings who may challenge the discourses they encounter. These acts of resistance, these "acts of taking up, disrupting, and transforming discourses" affect identity and agency (p. 18). The resistance that Carmen, Kerianne, and Roxie enact, although not always consciously, allow them to learn and reconceptualize what writing is in their figured world of writing, forming definitions that are varied and wide-ranging, as I described in Chapter 5. In taking up their writing identities, they disrupt the school expectations for writing and find power for themselves by selecting the topics for their novels, competition pieces, and poetry. They become astute judges of their writing and seek the kind of quality that matters to them. They act as and consider themselves to be learning writers. Their improvisation, resistance, identity formation, and learning appear in their stories about their writing.

I highlight Roxie in the following section because she narrates a series of stories that construct a complex portrait of who she is as a writer. While Kerianne resists and assumes power over her identity and writing through not overtly contesting her grade but

seeking learning and affirmation in her contest world, Roxie resists and assumes power through the act of writing itself. I apply the commonplaces of narrative analysis to two examples of Roxie's stories and find that in Roxie's narratives she portrays herself as a writer who powerfully uses poetry to resist the people and social beliefs she encounters. By writing her poems of resistance, she argues with and transforms the discourses she encounters into what she describes as more realistic portrayals of subjects such as love, life, and relationships. In her acts of resistance, she is in dialogue with these discourses and appears to add to her internally persuasive discourse about writing the notion that writing is an instrument of protest in which one may rename a reality of life. In the example I highlight in the next section, her narration illustrates the concepts of improvisation described by Holland, *et al*. and shows evidence of Yagelski's concept of transformation and Freire's concept of the true word.

Roxie's Stories: Resistance through Writing

Roxie participates in interviews for this study at the end of her senior year of high school in 2009, a significant time in her life. She does not have the college plans that Carmen and Kerianne do, although she hopes to continue her schooling. When she arrives for the interview, she brings in a stack of some of her favorite poems and describes in detail how she went about writing several key pieces. In her comments, she looks back at what Connelly and Clandinin describe as the continuum of her history of writing and the multiple plot lines of her writing life in school and beyond class assignments, which I described in detail in Chapter 5. Roxie's writing narrative is of writing poetry as an act of resistance, as evidenced in the following story and in the larger narrative of her writing history. Roxie writes poems to talk back to (hooks, 1989) people

in her life, ideas introduced in her classes, and concepts about life in general. The following story is one in which she resists the content of a poem being studied in Karen Reynolds' class by responding with a poem of her own, which she titles "Love Is" (See Appendix D for a copy of this poem):

> R: I was reading a love poem, and it was a sonnet, in class, . . . and I was like seriously, this is going to make me sick (she laughs) . . . . It's in our LA book. I was . . . reading it and I was like, no I'm done with this (laughs again). No, love isn't always grand, people don't always like love. It kills you sometimes, too.
> D: Well, the very last line [of your poem] is very interesting: "Love is not your friend."
> R; Oh, I know. It was just weird, cuz I actually showed that to my boyfriend and he was, . . . um, did I do something? (laughing) I was . . . no, I'm just saying (giggling) . . . . This one took me awhile to write . . . . I did it in bits and pieces and I changed a couple different stanzas . . . I cut out some and I, ah, put some more back in . . . a couple times I actually repeat myself . . . . I think I was looking in the shadows and I think I did that more than twice at one point . . . . It didn't really fit in the poem for me, so I cut a couple of those out and, yeah, it took me awhile but I liked it, I liked the outcome of it. (R, Interview, May 2009)

In looking at her story through the commonplace of Connelly and Clandinin's notion of place, which focuses on the qualities of the context and the impact of where the narrative occurs, I note a discourse community of an English classroom in which the students are studying sonnets from the class textbook, an authoritative text. One would expect Roxie to be comfortable in the place of this class on this day, when poetry is the focus of study, but Karen Reynolds, the teacher of this class, recalls that Roxie "bristled" (KR, Interview, June 2009) when the class discussion centers on a particular sonnet. In her comments, Karen positions Roxie as a student who possibly does not like the rigid structure of this type of poem. In the 32 poems Roxie shares with me, though, I see that Roxie often writes poetry that follows a consistent form: a majority contain a rhyme scheme, the lines are of a uniform length, they often are in stanzas of similar length, or

they are of a traditional poetry format, such as a haiku. Roxie is not resisting the place of study, not the type of poetry, and not the textbook itself, but the content of the poem. In Roxie's narration, she positions herself as a resistant reader of the poet's concept of love, saying, "seriously, this is going to make me sick" and "no, I'm done with this, no, love isn't always grand. People don't always like love, it kills you sometimes, too." The impact of the place may be that this context where the class is studying something that Roxie loves—poetry—is compromised by the fact that the poem itself is troublesome to her.

In the narration of her story, the plot reveals that Roxie responds by writing a poem she titles "Love Is" with the last line of her poem offering a counter-theme: "Love is not your friend." In this act of writing and response, she positions herself as the defiant protagonist, taking up agency to argue a resistant stance. She peripherally argues with the teacher as a mild antagonist who presents a poem which, according to Roxie, does not portray a realistic representation of love, and she indirectly contests the school curriculum as found in the course textbook. Her main confrontation, though, is with the central antagonist in her story: the image of love in the content of the sonnet. She talks back to the images of the poem by writing; she takes up the act of resistance by composing a counter-narrative of love in the poem she writes. In addition, Roxie is arguing with another poet, and she feels competent enough to take up the agency to do this. As I examine Roxie's narration with the sociality commonplace, I notice Roxie interacting with the social opinions and beliefs of the participants involved, especially the poet and the poem as a participant. Roxie does not like the opinions about love the poet presents in his poem. Her interactions include her internal dialogue with herself as well

as the poem she composes to protest those beliefs. Roxie emerges as a writer who uses writing for social purposes to name the world of love with more true words.

I burrow into Roxie's story to understand the emotional and moral values of the story and where these feelings and beliefs might originate. The data show that Roxie's story centers on her act of creating a more realistic picture of love and she adds to the original story of her reactions to the class poem to include her boyfriend's response to her poem, her reply to him, and how she composed the piece. The concept of love is an important matter to her; the theme of love shows up in 15 of the 32 of the poems she shares with me, including several she describes as her favorites. She disagrees with what she sees as an uncomplicated treatment of love, and she feels morally obligated to speak to this issue. As Carter (1993) notes, she is motivated to tell this story to talk back to instruction in school, and she values and is advocating for a broader perspective of this emotion. Carter suggests that storytellers relate stories to convey a theory, and Roxie's theory of love is that it "isn't always grand, people don't always like love. It kills you sometimes, too."

The emotion of love is the topic of both of the poems in Roxie's narration, but Roxie's own emotions about the topic of love also emerge in the data. Karen, the teacher, says Roxie bristles at the poem. Roxie, however, laughs while telling me this story of her strong disagreement with the textbook poet's images of love, and she also laughs about her boyfriend's reaction to what she writes. Carter says that how we tell our stories also reveals our beliefs. Why does Roxie laugh? As I listen to the tape of her retelling this story, do I hear uncomfortable, self-conscious, or genuine laughter? I eventually decide that Roxie is amused by her word choice ("This is going to make me

sick") and her decisiveness ("No, I'm done with this"), but she also laughs in delight that her poem was powerful enough to cause an alarmed reaction from her boyfriend, particularly since she doesn't share her poetry often and has mentioned that he hasn't seen many of her poems. Roxie telling this story with laughter reveals her beliefs that as a student, she can dramatically draw the line at what a class or a text presents, and that writing poetry that elicits a strong reaction brings great pleasure to her. Her internally persuasive discourse on writing seems to encompass the concept that writing is tool of agency and resistance. Writers, she suggests, take it upon themselves to argue for truth and reality. Astutely, she resists a narrow perspective of love by composing her own responses in the same form—a poem, an act of arguing with a poet through another poem. She realizes that when a writer hits the mark, it is giddily satisfying.

This story of resistance illustrates a dialogic slice of Roxie's internally persuasive discourse. She is in dialogue with narrow concept of love she finds in the content of the poem, and she talks to the poem in class, with herself, and in the poem she writes. She writes back in kind – writing a poem in response to a poem is a literary sort of dialogue. Her internally persuasive discourse appears to encompass the concept that writing is a way to be in dialogue with other writers, and is in dialogue with herself before she takes on the task of writing. Writers, she implies, take it upon themselves to argue for truth and reality and they use writing as a tool of agency and resistance, as she does.

Improvisation as Praxis

Holland, *et al*. (1998), say that when a subject alters identity in response to a social situation, it is an act of improvisation. They offer the example of Nepalese women, usually positioned in subservient roles, singing and dancing and shouting,

enacting resistance to those subject positions during the Tij festival. The women improvise their subject positions from positions of subordinates to those of active, vocal protesters. Students, while not in such dramatically different positions, also may transform themselves from less-agentic to more agentic participants in school. The student writers of this study improvise and transform themselves into resistant agents, as well, improvising or transforming as they learn about writing. Carmen's portrait offers an example of a writer who improvises and transforms her identity from being a fiction writer to becoming an academic research writer, disrupting an often-assumed pathway, or plotline (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000) to success in academia, a point I described in Chapter 5. Kerianne disrupts internally the authoritative discourse of school and improvises a resistant identity, transforming her learning through finding her own teachers of writing and purposes for writing outside of school. Roxie, like Carmen, also improvises and transforms herself as a writer, taking up a less-privileged genre, poetry, in high school. In the story above, she also transforms herself into a resistant poet, writing to contest the ideas of others. And in her narration of another poem, Roxie writes to transform what she believes a generally imperfect view of high school reality into she considers truer words.

Roxie narrates the story of a poem she wrote as a response to snatches of conversations she heard as she walked through the hall at school. In observing the commonality of place, to note the impact of the space where the narration takes place, I observe that the hallway is the site of inspiration for the content of the poem. The place from which she gets her idea becomes a reimagined and improvised place in her poem:

> I was hearing some girl talking about how her sister got pregnant and how like her mom was mad at her and then it went from that to this other girl

> was fighting with her boyfriend, and then it went from a bunch of girls giggling about some inside joke or something, and . . . [the poem] just kind of came to me because it's like – to hear everybody's story, why not just put it into one? (R, Interview, May 2009)

In Chapter 5, I include Roxie's description of how she goes about deciding the wording of the title, "Ode to Reality" (this poem is included in Appendix D), looking for words to capture the messiness and complications of life. While the school is her setting, she isn't necessarily arguing with the concept of school, but is transforming a concept of life as being happy into another perspective of reality" (see Appendix D). "Life isn't always happy," she tells me. "You have downfalls, too" (R, Interview, May 2009).

The commonplace of sociality, which highlights the importance of the social conditions and the personal interactions of those in the story, shows Roxie interacting--and talking back to--a notion of the reality of high school. The social conditions of the conversations in the hallways are at odds with her beliefs of what others might think of high school life and what she personally believes. The commonplace of temporality reveals her story is nested in the stories of others in the halls. In the stories she hears are moments of the past (the pregnant girl), present (the inside joke), and future (implying these problems need to be resolved). Roxie also has her own past, present, and future in this story: she walked through the hall and heard stories around her in the past, the poem idea "comes to" her in the present, and "why not put it into one?" is an action of the future. Roxie interacts with place, as well. The hallway is a place where she not only gathers ideas for writing a poem, but where decides to weave the social realities of multiple people into one reality. In telling this story, Roxie constructs herself as a character in a world which is in dialogue, and she portrays herself as a student writer who

confronts and constructs the world and herself, or, as Holland, *et al.* say, is formed by that world and helps to form it.

My analysis of Roxie's larger narrative indicates that by looking at the narrative commonplaces in the writing stories Roxie tells, Roxie presents herself as desiring an identity as a legitimate writer with powerful ideas, and that she crafts her poems to express those ideas creatively. The origin of this identity has come from school experiences and been refined mostly on her own in non-school worlds of writing. Narrative analysis reveals elements of her Roxie's internally persuasive discourse on writing. I note Roxie reflects on the ideas of love and reality and attempts to say a "true word," as described by Freire. In her "Ode to Reality," and in writing "Love is not your friend" at the end of her poem on love, she gives the world "a new *naming*" (Freire, 2005, p. 88). In this naming of the world, she enters into a dialogue with the concept of love and a dialogue with high school life. Freire theorizes that the "essence of dialogue" (p. 87) is a true word. In speaking a true word, one is in dialogue with that which is being named with words. Roxie is dialoguing with the discourses of high school life, including the authoritative discourses of curriculum, naming life and love in new ways, transforming the world as she see it. Her work is improvised praxis. She alters her identity in the reflective practice of writing her poetry. In performing writing as praxis, she finds liberation for herself in the very act of writing, as Yagelski argues, and as I also describe in Chapter 5. Roxie's internally persuasive discourse, in dialogue with the words of school and the words of life, includes using writing to create the words to name what is true for her; these true words release her to explore self and emotions and to make sense of the world around her.

As Carter reminds us, memory is selective. How much of what Roxie remembers about her writing events has been selective and enhanced in the telling of her stories? How much has been augmented by the fact that I have asked her to participate in this study, and she hasn't had much attention paid to her poetry? In our conversations, Roxie is enthusiastic and excited, smiling and laughing. She offers to come in extra times for more interviews. When I email her in 2012, even though high school is three years in her past and she's in the Army and married, she still exhibits enthusiasm for talking about poetry in general and her high school poetry specifically. She reports remembering how she felt about writing her "Daddy" poem, and that writing it is still important to her. She mentions sharing an occasional poem with the same one friend with whom she sometimes had shared poetry in high school. As I analyze Roxie's comments from the two points in her writing history, I note that the emotional connection to writing is the same, some of the details are the same, and the internally persuasive discourse about the importance of writing to help a person discover herself and name her version of the world is the same. Those selected memory details have not changed. Have they become the same because she tells these stories over and over? I wonder how often Roxie is asked about being a poet now. I would suspect not all that often, which may speak to the resilience of her internally persuasive discourses of writing, or that she hasn't had much opportunity to learn more about writing which might offer her opportunity to revise her thoughts on writing discourses. Still evident, however, is that writing plays an important role in transformation of self and world.

In the next section, I examine a different improvisation that Carmen's story offers. Carmen does not actively seek to resist school discourses in the ways that Kerianne does

in challenging a teacher's writing discourses or that Roxie does to counter the writing of a poet studied in class. Carmen resists the traditional pathway of academic success in the manner that school often conceives of it through teaching academic essays for college preparedness. Carmen selects a different, hybrid and encompassing route to achieve the success story she tells.

A Carmen Story: Power in Taking Risks

In this chapter I will not go into depth to highlight a particular story Carmen tells, as parts of her stories appear in Chapter 5 to illustrate other analysis points. One more fully developed story she tells is of her process for thinking through and writing the piece which is published in the research journal her junior year of college, which I have mentioned previously. In that story, Carmen tells of how she reads, analyzes, thinks through, and writes a paper for one of her courses, which her friends and professor then encourage her to revise and send in to the research journal.

A temporal picture of this story, as I look at the past, present, and future carried in the events and people of a story, reveals Carmen at a moment when she has accomplished an important goal she set for herself in high school -- to pursue a career in writing or to further her writing accomplishments. She is in transition as she tells this story, talking of graduating from college and mentions she wants to continue her writing in graduate school, which involves more research and publication opportunities. As she tells this story, and talks about her writing and goals of the past and her new hopes for the future, Carmen is trying to envision where this current accomplishment might lead. She is, as Bakhtin says, continuously becoming. A study of the sociality commonplace of her publication story, where analysis examines the interplay of social conditions and

characters' beliefs with one another, shows that Carmen is influenced by the social context of her teacher and friends believing that her piece of writing is worth submitting to the journal, and she, too, believes enough in her academic writing and analytical thinking to revise the piece and send it in. As I consider the commonplace of place in this story, I observe the influence of the setting. Carmen's success is situated in an institution where scholarly work is valued. Carmen's personal belief in the power of writing and analyzing is encouraged in this context. In her story, Carmen presents herself as a writer who has reached an important achievement in writing, who takes it upon herself to attain this with encouragement from authoritative figures and friends, and who sees herself as an authentic researcher – which is endorsed by two academic discourse communities.

In burrowing into this story, as I retell her story and envision the emotions and the origins of the emotions from Carmen's perspective, I find that Carmen is revealing a part of her internally persuasive discourse about writing. She, who originally found pleasure in fiction writing and considered that a part of her future when in high school, now finds pleasure in other sorts of writing in addition to novel writing. Unlike her feelings about her unfinished (not completely revised and polished) novels she wrote in high school, she is happy with the research piece, likely due to the encouragement from peers and teacher, and looks for a way to share that writing. By sharing, she is taking a risk, and in telling her story, Carmen realizes the power of taking writing and personal risks.

Overall, Carmen's writing story is a story of an unexpected transformation and becoming. She improvises a different kind of writing life for herself and discovers that paths to writing well and successfully may also incorporate multiple branches and

circuitous routes. My analysis of Carmen's over-arching writing story suggests that too narrowly defining successful routes to academic and career writing may constrict writers who would thrive on an alternate pathway and who would arrive at the desired goal of accomplished writing as well. As Bakhtin (1975/1981) theorizes, individuals create "new and independent words" (p. 345) when encountering new circumstances, developing ever-evolving internally persuasive discourses. The voices of authority found in the traditional school discourses of academic writing as uniquely and primarily necessary for college and academic success are not the authorities Carmen accesses in her journey to college success. Instead of attending to the centripetal force of the traditional discourses, she participates in discourses of resistance by pursuing out-of-school writing experiences that give her fluency with words and independence in thinking on her path to becoming or taking up an identity she had desired – a hybrid identity more complex than what is usually promoted through the curriculum and mandates found in high schools.

Connelly & Clandinin (2000) and Clandinin & Rosiek (2007) emphasize that the relationship and interaction between researcher and participant impacts the stories being told. As I think through this contiguity of participant and researcher, I consider that Carmen and Roxie, and like Kerianne in high school, look for validation of their identities and contributions as writers. That is something I do for them by asking them to be a part of the study and by looking at their writing seriously, in a way that they may not have experienced before. Are they marvelous writers, unparalleled to other students? Perhaps not. But they want to be taken seriously. In their stories of writing and being writers, they position themselves as people who care about writing. And I, in listening to them and in writing this, validate that positioning. Teachers have many more students

than just three. How do we – individually and collectively – validate them all as writers in ways that matter to them? How might we do so differently?

Conclusion

In telling their narratives of specific writing moments in their life spaces from a different point in their continuum of writing experiences, Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne construct themselves as writers of power and resistance. Narrative analysis allows for noticing elements of temporality, sociality, and place as the three writers interact with time, others, and context. My analysis shows the three writers as becoming, nested in a web of stories, including nested in the story they create with me. They illustrate, across the data, an internally persuasive belief that writing is necessary for important, personal and public identity and as ways of narrating and naming the world. They arrive at this belief through improvisation of self and writing.

As Brookner's quote at the beginning of the chapter indicates, they become visible through their writing and are players in the game of life, transforming selves and disrupting notions of student writers. Carmen becomes visible in the publication of her research paper, and becomes a player in the academic research field, by an unconventional approach of writing fiction in high school through which she learns to love writing. Kerianne is a player in life, performing multiple pieces of writing in the competition discourse community, disrupting the notion that learning to write successfully occurs mostly in school and challenges school discourses as she progresses through high school. Roxie becomes a player in life by renaming the issues of love and reality as she sees them, improvising a challenge for herself to think about those ideas with more complexity. In their narratives, they construct selves that they bring into being

through the ontological act of writing: Carmen transforms into a writer interested in a completely new aspect of writing, Kerianne holds fast to her sense of quality and identification as a successful contest writer, Roxie finds release and liberation in writing her true words about her life and observations.

Why is it important to notice these aspects of high school student writing? Why is it important to notice student stories of taking risks and unexpected improvisations and resistance and agency and praxis? It is important because finding power, resistance, and words of truth are necessary for people to find the agency in their personal lives and public or community lives to solve problems and to improve the personal and public quality of life. We want our students to act proactively to improve their own lives and the lives of others. We want them to not only practice this in high school, but to actually *do* it. And we want all students to take up that agency, to say "I am a writer -- who can make a difference." Freire (2005) emphasizes that "saying the [true] word is not the privilege of some few persons, but the right of everyone" and that "no one can say a true word alone – nor can she say it *for* another" (p. 88). All students need to learn to say that creative word truthfully for themselves. Carmen, Roxie, and Kerianne, while not perfect writers and not perfect agentic beings, take it upon themselves to begin to discover true words for themselves. By understanding the complex stories of Carmen, Roxie, and Kerianne, we can have more complicated discussions about how might we help other students begin or continue this journey.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS: COMPLICATING THE TEACHING OF WRITING AND CONCEPTIONS OF STUDENT WRITERS

When I first met Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne as ninth graders, they were in my Language Arts 9 class. Carmen was the first to come to my attention as a writer who was invested in writing outside of the classroom when she asked if she could use a piece of fan fiction for an assignment early in the year. When we met for her paper conference, I was impressed–and surprised–at the fan fiction story she had written. It was a carefully composed, fun to read, and very long chapter about Harry Potter and his friends that she could post to a web site that welcomed non-official imaginative adventures written by fans of the Harry Potter series. Roxie also asked if I'd like to see her poetry that fall, not for an assignment, but just for me to read. Again, I was surprised at all the poems she had written and had so carefully put into a notebook. Kerianne's mother, Beth, kept me apprised of Kerianne's competitive efforts, and when I asked Kerianne herself, she shared a few stories of her essays written for various competitions. When she brought in pictures of a display she had prepared for one of them, again I was impressed--and surprised–at the depth and detail she included.

Why was I so surprised? Why was I surprised that I was surprised? Teachers know that students write outside of class; I knew that some of my students did so. What astonished me, I think in retrospect, was that the students were so serious about their writing and that they were persistently devoted to it. I was amazed at the sheer volume of what the students had composed beyond the boundaries of school. These students

weren't writing just for something to fill in an empty minute or two. They were dedicating much time and effort to writing.

When I decided to seek an IRB-approved study of high school writers three years later, these three students again came to mind. I had mentioned them in graduate classes I was taking, and other graduate students and a professor advised me that the students had probably given up their outside writing as their time might have been taken up by school and other important activities or with getting jobs. I decided to persist, and when I contacted Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne in their senior year of high school, each one agreed to participate in the study. When they came in for the individual interviews, they filled their hour with stories of continuing to pursue their writing interests; they brought in samples of their writing and detailed their histories with writing that I include in this dissertation. Another surprise. Three years after that, when Carmen was a junior in college and Roxie in the Army, I talked with those two writers again. They had changed and grown throughout the years–and they still wanted to talk about writing. Another pleasant surprise.

In this study, which unfolded over a seven-year time span, I explore the heteroglossic discourses of the figured worlds of high school student writers and their writing teachers. I examine the internally persuasive discourses about writing that these teachers and students came to understand. The practices the student writers adopted were a combination of school and personal experiences. They investigated more complex learning about writing on their own outside of class. They developed histories as writers, explored identities as writers, felt multiple emotions, and received recognition in their out-of-school writing. Carmen's investment in fiction writing which contributed to a

passion for research writing, Roxie's emotional release when writing poetry, and Kerianne's success in competition all contributed to a complex understanding of writing and the power of writing. While they may have learned some of this in school, their practice opportunities and investments in this kind of writing occurred often outside of the school.

I argue it is important for those of us in the field of English language arts to be aware of writers like Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne in classrooms like those of Amy, Tony, Mason, and Karen for several reasons. I contend that we need to have students realize that writing matters so that they can–and will–write for important purposes, whether they write for informational, persuasive, creative, exploratory, functional, enjoyment, work-related, or other purposes. Although some students may groan when teachers announce that the class is going to write, or students resist opportunities to write, or some report that they can't write or aren't good writers, the three focal students of my story offer a different perspective.

As I look at current conditions in teaching high school English, I am more convinced than ever that we need to keep the student writers of my dissertation in mind in our professional discussions. Recently I was in a meeting to work on scaffolding priority standards and establishing proficiency scales to meet those standards using a District-provided 4-point scale. There was nothing in our discussion about writing as an act of personal agency or other worlds where students learn about writing. We did not speak of student writing histories or different pathways to writing success. We did not talk of how we might recognize writers. We did not ask questions about how to teach writing for complex purposes. That was only one meeting in one district in one city in one state.

But I believe that no matter where we are, we need to bring substantive purposes and issues of writing into our conversations. We need to engage in important dialogue about writing at all possible opportunities, from lunch time conversations to district meetings to other more formal venues.

The participants in this dissertation case study are not representative of all students and teachers nor all classrooms, but they are significant members of the learning and professional communities of schools for the stories they have to tell. The students are illustrative of other student writers who adopt school discourses about writing and find additional figured writing worlds of their own. They are not perfect people, but individuals with strengths and the recognition that they have room to grow. The teachers are not perfect teachers, as no one is, but they are active and reflective professionals working in an environment that changes constantly with people—colleagues, students, parents, and administrators—who require or demand more than they can possibly provide. In this chapter I am going to talk across the data to describe the essence of the intersections of authoritative discourses, internally persuasive discourses, teachers, and students in dialogue about writing. My intention is not to generalize or to apply this context to all contexts. I seek to use the voices of the focal students and teachers to help readers understand the importance of particular writing contexts.

In this chapter, I return to the research questions and briefly summarize the findings of my study. I discuss the implications for those participating in discussions about high school writing. Finally, I recommend suggestions for research to further our understandings of high school writers and the teaching of writing.

Summary of Findings

As described in Chapter 1, I posed one over-arching question to guide my research and study: How do the intersections of what students say and do in their figured worlds of writing and what teachers say and do in teaching writing inform our notions of student writers and of teaching writing?

Specifically, I focus on the following:

- How do the focal students describe their in-school and out-of-school writing?
- Who and what motivate the students to write beyond class assignments?
- How do teachers develop and implement internally persuasive discourses about writing?
- How do students develop and perform internally persuasive discourses about writing?

To summarize the findings from my study and describe how I addressed these questions, I frame the following sections with these guiding questions.

Teachers Developing Internally Persuasive Discourses on Teaching Writing

The focal teachers encountered a heteroglossia of discourses on how to teach writing. Elements of the heteroglossic discourses included the discourse of the histories of English teachers who have come before, curricula and its histories, and researchers of decades past, the on-going conversation on teaching writing which they entered when they became English teachers. Other discourses included those of current local, state and national conversations. Local requirements and upcoming mandates formed part of the centripetal discourses that directed the teachers to teaching writing in specified methods

and stipulated genres. Still other authoritative discourses entered through teacher preparation courses, professional development meetings, or classes the teachers chose to take on their own. A final, most important discourse was the one they entered into through their own teaching experiences. In general, the teachers privileged their own writing and teaching experiences to guide their thinking. These authoritative discourses act on classroom teachers by tugging and pulling at their professional beliefs and by prompting the generation of a set of beliefs, some of which are open to change and others which remain rather firmly in place.

When the focal teachers talked with and talked back to these authoritative discourses, they created their own persuasive discourses, in evidence when they enacted their teaching philosophies through their pedagogical choices, particularly in what I have named their cornerstone practices. In these cornerstone practices, the teacher participants adopted, for the most part, a traditional model of writing development upon which to base their teaching practices, emphasizing that students needed to learn basic structures before other aspects of writing. They valued grammatical and structural correctness. In their comments, they articulated a separation between creative writing and school essay writing and elected to follow the District emphasis on expository writing. This is an example of authoritative discourse at work. As I have come to understand, Bakhtin (1975/1981) describes the shifting and dynamic movement between centripetal and centrifugal forces. Teachers may respond to authoritative discourse by internalizing these discourses by allowing themselves to be persuaded that what was once an authoritative discourse is now an internally persuasive discourse.

The teachers did not merely assign writing; they primarily utilized process theory when teaching their students, asking their students to brainstorm, draft, revise, edit, proofread, and finalize their writing. They provided feedback in writing conferences, written comments, or through peer response. The teachers also valued and promoted student engagement with writing. The teachers' internally persuasive discourses, informed by discourses both outside and inside the classrooms, continued to evolve as they asked questions of themselves, their students, and the mandates pressed upon them. Some elements of post-process writing theory (Breuch, 2003) and social practices writing theories (Ivanic 2004) were also evident in teachers' comments, as I noted one-to-one conferencing and writing situated in real contexts as strategies for helping students learn to write, and I observed growing concerns with new skill-based mandates.

Students Developing Internally Persuasive Discourses on Writing

The teachers' philosophies and practices became the authoritative discourses of their classrooms, a figured world of writing for the student participants of the study. The students were in dialogue with those discourses and other authoritative discourses, accepting or questioning grades and the importance placed on the technical aspects of writing they believed school emphasized. In talking about their writing and their writing experiences, they used the language of the school authoritative discourses they heard, incorporating talk of working through process, utilizing structure, and sharing writing with others. In addition, they encountered other discourses from their own writing practices and performances undertaken outside of the classroom, other figured worlds of writing study, in participating in the world of writing contests, producing novels during National Novel Writing Month (nanowrimo.org), and creating and preserving an

extensive poetry collection. The figured worlds of their own study included spaces of self-authoring, in which they revealed their histories of writing, taking up writerly identities. They engaged in personally satisfying work and, in varying degrees, they received recognition for their work. All of these elements became motivating factors for writers to continue to build writing histories and writer identities. In the performance of their writing histories, they also explored complex emotions as they produced pieces of writing and in living their lives as writers. Their ideological becoming as a writer is evidenced in their articulation of internally persuasive discourses of writing, their writing performances, and the complex definitions of writing.

The definitions of writing that emerged from writing experiences for Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne included an understanding that writing is complicated work performed for a variety of purposes and genres of writing. Among those purposes, not always found in school, were: to make sense of self and the world, to be creative, to have important end-goals, to participate and count in the world, and to enjoy the very act of writing. Roxie's poetry, Carmen's novels, and Kerianne's contest pieces were genres of writing that they explored seriously, and in which they became invested. They took pleasure in learning about their writing genres. Their work exhibited their growth in writing skill and understanding, and Roxie noted more maturity in her poems, Carmen saw the value in planning out a novel plot, and Kerianne observed that the work saved in her binders demonstrated increasing sophistication in her work from year to year.

The students in my study are examples of heteroglossia at work. They were in the midst of centripetal and centrifugal forces as writers. On the one hand, they experienced school writing instruction that reflects authoritative discourse of the District, the school,

and to some extent, the teachers. And these student writers were also informed by internally persuasive discourses they had acquired and developed through years of practice beyond the school. It is at this dialogic intersection of competing forces, that the student writers emerged willing to take risks and resisting (at times) the reified discourses of conventional pathways to academic success. As writers, they came to believe in and trust their own assessments of their writing and were able to talk back to classroom conceptions of who they should be as writers and worked toward transforming the self.

Complicating Notions of Teaching of Writing and Conceptions of Student Writers

I am interested in understanding how notions of teaching and of student writers may sit at the intersection of what teachers say and do in teaching writing and what students say and do in their figured worlds of writing. My analysis of the dialogic interactions between, teachers, students, and writing finds that both teachers and students engage in dialogues around the teaching of writing informed by authoritative discourses. It is in these dialogic engagements that both teachers and students develop internally persuasive discourses about writing, incorporating some authoritative discourses, with what they personally find true of writing in their own experiences. However, my data also suggest that the intersections between school and writer do not always include recognition of the depth and development of students' out of school writing experiences and their internally persuasive discourses. When recognition of these efforts is missing, students feel writing in general and their writing in particular is less valued, and teachers miss out on an opportunity to understand the valuable learning students bring with them to the classroom.

Why is it important to notice that students participate in dialogic interactions with authoritative discourses and develop their own internally persuasive discourses about writing? More specifically, I wonder why teachers should attend to the Roxies, Carmens, and Keriannes in our classrooms? I suggest that by listening to their stories and internalizing what they say, we understand and enter into valuable conversations of teaching writing that challenge, engage, and trouble our thinking in significant ways. When teachers engage in daily discussions with colleagues, in conversations held at district meetings, in opportunities for curriculum development, and in consideration of mandates in more complicated ways, the teaching of writing becomes importantly more complex. Our thinking reflects the heteroglossia that informs my study and that Bakhtin argues allow for complex thinking to become one's own.

I suggest that the authoritative discourse of school falls short of supporting the understanding that could occur to the benefit of both students and teachers and fails to capitalize on the student's enactment of writing history, identity, emotionality, power, and resistance. Recognizing a student's proactive internally persuasive discourses and writing practices grants students permission and furthers their opportunity to engage with other authoritative discourses. When students as writers are able to take up agency to solve problems, to improve their own lives and the lives of others, and to look for words of creative truth, they are able to embrace the full vision of what it is to be a writer. I echo Yancey's (2004/2011) call to the English teaching profession and wonder what would happen if we "alter what we think and what we do" to permit students "to become members of the writing public and to negotiate life" (p. 802). Teachers who could be

open to understanding the internally persuasive discourses of student writers like Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne might be able to envision altering practice and philosophy.

Implications for Teaching

When I interviewed Kerianne at the end of her senior year, she spoke in a very animated manner wishing for more recognition for her writing at her school, an important element of what she and Carmen and Roxie felt motivated them to write and enjoy writing. When I asked Carmen the same question her junior year of college, she suggested that teachers could understand that, as a strong student writer, she wished she had been "pushed . . . a little bit more," that teachers might consider how to "take a strong student and challenge them more" (C, Interview, May 2012). This, too, is part of recognition and has valuable ties to the emotionality of writing that was present for Carmen, as she liked feeling challenged from within (by writing a novel in a month every year) as well as by her college teachers. When I asked Roxie in 2012, when she was three years out of high school, to reflect on what high school teachers might learn about student writers and teaching writing from hearing her writing story, she replied, "just encourage them more. Kids are so creative, even the ones who don't know [it]. If it weren't for my 8th grade teacher pushing our class to do poetry, i don't know if i would have ever found my knitch [sic]" (R, Email, June 2012). The three students acknowledged teachers have a role to play in helping students navigate new writing experiences, building a writing history of multiple kinds of experiences in writing, and finding ways to explore identity.

Recognize. Challenge. Encourage. At first glance, these suggestions seem reasonable and simple implications for teaching. Who wouldn't want to do these? On

closer examination, however, the question for teachers might become one of how can these moments happen? And providing a response to this question requires a much more complicated answer.

Recognition

Kerianne was looking for larger, school-wide recognition, and this could be accomplished through clubs and academic awards. Given Roxie's obvious delight in hearing one comment by her classroom teacher, Karen, recognition on a small-scale classroom basis may be rewarding for some writers. One initial step for teachers might involve a concerted effort to discover conceptions of writer identity and student writing histories to recognize how students perceive themselves as writers and explore which student might be actively pursuing writing on their own. Teachers could follow up with inquiries and conversations designed to ascertain how student writers might be engaging in internal conversations with the authoritative discourses they have heard previously about academic and life writing. Teachers could understand how students might be constructing internally persuasive discourses based on these dialogues and their personal experiences with writing both inside and outside the classroom. Not only might this ferret out who is interested in writing a variety of genres, it could identify those students who do not currently consider themselves writers of any sort at all and lead to discussions on why this might be. Understanding the relationship between building writerly identities and recognition seems an important task for writing teachers.

Making a Strong Writer Stronger: Challenge

Closely aligned with recognition is the issue of challenge, especially when one looks within classrooms. How does a teacher go about challenging strong students? For

Carmen, one challenge came from the comments she received from her college professors. Kerianne, another writer awarded good grades for her coursework and who won awards from contests telling her that she performed as a strong writer, claimed she didn't look at teacher comments. Tailoring the feedback preferred by individual students is a complicated endeavor when considering the prospect of working with 150 students. And, as my research suggests, that individual feedback might also encompass addressing writer identity and a developing internally persuasive discourse as well as other elements that Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne came to understand as writers. Still, students like Carmen (and Roxie and Kerianne) cannot be ignored. An implication for teachers from my study concerning the important concept of challenge is that there is not one magic solution to suggest that would make responding to student writing easier or faster. The implication is that there are more elements of writing – more complex elements of writing – that might become part of that response repertoire. The complex understandings of writing that Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne bring with them suggest that teachers might respond to student writing by asking about how a piece makes sense of the world, how it reflects creativity, how it demonstrates maturity over time, and how it represents finding a way to matter.

Encouragement

Roxie expressed her indebtedness to her eighth grade English teacher for encouraging her to try poetry, as that is how she discovered a niche for herself. The writing her teacher encouraged her to try became a kind of transformational writing for her. While the types of poetry she wrote for that class were various types of structured poems, such as haiku and limericks, Roxie then expanded her poetry writing to other

types of lyric poetry, specializing in free verse as an example of personally transformational writing.

Another implication for teaching emerges from Roxie's story of poetry writing and Carmen's more unusual unconventional path to academic passion. Teachers might ask students to try entirely new genres, pieces with social goals or purposes that look beyond career and college readiness, or writing that embraces complex emotions. Taking the time to help students learn to love writing is not usually factored into conversations about writing success, and teachers may not be able to provide the hours and hours Carmen spent in learning to love writing through writing novels, but teachers could offer time in school, as is frequently done with reading, to nurture the seeds for students to come to say, "I can write; I am a writer; I like to write." Time and commitment to explore writing in its many forms may create greater opportunities for engagement.

Encouragement might also manifest itself in playing Peter Elbow's (1973) believing game. Newkirk (1997) describes this game as reading and responding to a piece of writing with the attitude of believing the piece is, in its rough way, on the path to something better and suggests that the believing game honors the "genuine heart" (p. 33). The believing game is a form of encouragement in that it imagines a piece of writing is on the way for it or the writer to other, better work. Borrowing Feedman, Delp, and Crawford's (2005) concept of "contemplation over time" (p. 108) teachers may see value in student learning and writing of the moment as only a point in time. Encouragement would entail teachers reminding themselves that high school students are only a fraction of the way through their learning and lives and that teachers can offer students the room to grow.

Looking at Reality – Further Implications

Mason wondered how his teaching might have influenced Roxie and Carmen. In my field notes I noted that the question might be better posed as "what did we do?" as I mentioned in Chapter 5. I also re-wrote the question as "what should we do?" (Field notes, June 18, June 19, June 25, 2012), asking how teachers might approach teaching writing in more complex and informed ways. My research suggests teachers need to continue to enter complex dialogic conversations related to writing with themselves and with colleagues to push against the heteroglossic forces at work to anchor in place one right way to teach writing.

The question "what should we do?" particularly resonated with me, because I know our teaching conversations are filled with lists of what we "must do" surrounded with plenty of suggestions for what we "should do." As I reflect on the implications above, an additional issue for consideration becomes: what kind of room is there in today's curriculum and teaching environments for students, their teachers, and the work they all *must* do, *should* do, and *want* to do? Just these few implications for teaching presuppose that teachers have agency to take up these suggestions; that teachers have the structural supports in place to teach writing differently and well; that students are allowed the agency to take risks, enter into conversations with authoritative discourse, and write in transformational ways; and that students are allowed in the conversations about how to learn and teach writing. Each of these complications is considered below.

Issues of Teacher Agency

One presupposition for the tensions listed above is that teachers are permitted the agency to implement these suggestions--that teachers have the power to offer new writing

experiences, fold in life-writing in their courses, or are invited to the conversation on how to teach writing. Are teachers, in fact, allowed this agency? Are teachers able to choose to have students write what Yagelski (2009) calls transformational writing or to find what Freire (2005) describes as true words? With the requirement that teachers are to ensure that students meet standards that define writing as only a few genres, this agency may not exist in the authoritative discourses teacher hear. Could it be the case that in today's world of standards and mandates, we no longer seek teachers who possess agency? Instead, is our goal to train teachers to submit to the larger powers of standards and mandates? However, in situations where teachers are permitted or encouraged to have a voice discussions on writing, well-informed teachers need to negotiate for more broadly defined and appropriate writing practices within English language arts departments, school districts, and other institutional agencies as they discuss, debate and decide literacy issues.

What forms might teacher agency take? Teachers who take up agency follow curiosities about teaching writing and look for multiple points of view or try new writing theories to find the best fit for the different skill-sets and writing histories of the students who populate their rooms in different ways every year. They ask questions and seek answers. They may even question what writing has come to mean, as Yancey (2004/2011) does, when she catalogues the following acts of writing. Writing, she says, is what is done

> by students who write words on papers, yes – *but* who *also* compose words and images and create audio files on Web logs (blogs), in word processors, with video editors and Web editors and in e-mail and on presentation software and in instant messaging and on listservs and on bulletin boards – and no doubt in whatever genre will emerge in the next ten minutes. (p. 792)

Well-informed, curious, and agentic teachers can influence how and what might change in teaching writing. If teachers are not encouraged to take up agency, they need to find the places where they can take up agency, by enrolling in courses exploring through reading, or talking with a trusted other or group. In short, they might well follow the same path that Kerianne, Carmen, and Roxie have taken.

A Need for Structural Support

Another presupposition in the tensions facing teachers is that teachers have the structural supports in place that allow them to teach writing in different ways and to teach writing well. Teachers may not be writers themselves. Teachers may be less aware and less experienced with other genres and purposes of writing. Support in learning more about teaching writing would be important in these cases. The National Council of Teachers of English (2014), in their 2014 NCTE Education Policy Platform, urges professionals and policy makers to recognize that continuous learning is critical for literacy educators:

> Professional learning of educators is necessary for high-quality literacy instruction and student learning at all academic levels. Professional learning depends upon tapping the substantial expertise that already exists and upon sharing constantly emerging knowledge about literacy teaching and learning. This kind of professional learning requires time.

How does a teacher find the time to learn? Collaborating with peers in analyzing student data is one type of learning; more time for sharing emerging knowledge with peers about literacy teaching also needs to be included.

Issues of class sizes and time to respond and time to reflect must also be addressed. While the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Writing Project, and other organizations concerned with student literacy offer guidelines on class

size and teacher time, none of their guidelines trump budget pressures on local school districts, especially when financial support is tied to those same limited standards on writing. Nevertheless, educators in all fields of literacy need to unite around the claim that students learning to write and teaching writing well cannot be accomplished if teachers do not have the supports to learn about, teach, respond, and assess it well.

A basic tenet of the Common Core State Standards (www.corestandards.org) is to make sure students are "college and career ready." Support is needed to open spaces for teachers to help students become life-ready, as well. Are we in the profession helping students to build a writing history? Are we helping them to see writing as important to them in their futures? I suggest we are overemphasizing meeting standards and preparing students for the next level of their academic lives so that we are unable to concentrate on the here and now of where they are emotionally.

Support is needed for teachers to ask difficult questions about the persistent practice of preparing students for a future that seems to envision primarily readiness for the next educational experience. Elementary students prepare for middle school. Middle school students prepare for high school. High school students prepare for college. When do students write for now? How do we balance, in high school and at other grade levels, the delicate dance between the now and the future? Support is needed for teachers to navigate the multiple personal, academic, and social writing purposes that a well-versed writing curriculum would ask students to encounter. Like Yancey, I argue for building a blend of writing experiences now so that students turn to writing in academic endeavors, in public discourse, and to navigate life.

Encouraging Student Agency

A third tension in the previous implications for teaching is that students are allowed and encouraged to take up agency in their writing, to take risks without being penalized. Figuring out how to encourage students to take positive risks without fear of a bad grade or to even take the time to take a risk is complicated. In the course of my reading for this dissertation, I came across other studies and literature on high school writing of teachers working with students who only wanted to know what had to be done to get the good grade (see Pratt, 2011, for example). Allowing students to take risks may enable them to take up the agency to actively engage with those authoritative discourses while they are putting in place their own internally persuasive discourse about writing. Giving students the opportunities to make mistakes and learn from them without grade ramifications involves time issues for both students and teachers, which often seem in short supply. Helping parents and students understand that not everything is graded, and that writing projects take a lot of time for learning to occur is a part of this challenging work.

Student Participation in Dialogism about Writing

A final tension that speaks to implications for teaching is that students are also encouraged to join in the conversations about how to learn and teach writing. Interacting with authoritative discourse and developing an internally persuasive discourse can be lengthy and hard work (for both teachers and students). Inviting students into these conversations can provide a productive beginning. Much has been written about shifting to paradigms of writing which incorporate digital, collaborative writing spaces. Those types of student-teacher collaborations with students acting as teachers as well as learners

apply to this study also. Intentionally including the students themselves in wider conversations may be less common, although helpful. In this study, I invited Roxie, Carmen, and Kerianne to participate in dialogues about writing in general and their writing, specifically. What they said informed my understanding that student participation in the discourse of writing and teaching writing is a viable and necessary course of action.

Directions for Future Research

This study focused on the stories of writing of three students and their very particular writing outside of class assignments. It included the classrooms and writing philosophies of four teachers in a Midwestern high school. Much remains to be learned about student writers, their teachers, and the contexts under which both students and teachers learn and teach. The following questions and research would further shape our considerations of the complicated undertaking in understanding high school writers so that we might teach them and learn from them more effectively.

High School Student Writer Identity

There is limited research on high school writer identity of any sort. In the rush to have students be prepared to meet a plethora of standards and to become ready for whatever the future holds, focus on what a student thinks of himself or herself as a writer is overlooked. In particular, those students who identify themselves with statements such as “I can’t write” or “I don’t write” are often met with formulas on how to write within very specific structures, an almost fill-in-the-blank approach to writing. Are these methods the best way to help these struggling student writers or are there other approaches which help these students shift their identities to ones in which they consider

themselves to be writers? More research needs to be conducted to study whether giving students the chance to write for enjoyment in secondary school--and especially in high school--may create space for more writers, like Carmen, who eventually extend their writing interests to academic writing. Do students who are allowed to write for personal enjoyment in school come to identify themselves as invested academic writers and as writers to committed public and a life of writing?

Non-academic Writing: The Career Choices of High School Graduates

The profession could benefit from research that illuminates the importance of multiple writing genres, particularly for those students who enter the workforce or military post-high school and whose career choices do not ask them to write in a school-privileged genre. More data would inform our teaching if we were aware of the percentage of students who do not go into academic settings. What are the writing needs of these students, both for their careers and their lives? How do former high school students describe their preparation for these kinds of writing needs? How do former high school students describe their preparation for non-school, non-job writing? More research with these writers might inform teachers of writing practices that should be included in classrooms.

Teacher Agency in Teaching Writing

How free are teachers to incorporate alternate writing genres, including transformational writing or life writing, in times where standards and accountability rule? There is obviously a large amount of time spent teaching writing, responding to writing, and assessing writing for high school students of a variety of degrees of comfort and skill

for timed written essay samples and for standardized multiple choice tests. Because teachers and students are guided by state standards and other mandates, what kind of space is there for students and their teachers to do the work they all must do and that which they want to do? More research is needed to tease out the room for teacher agency in the realities of classroom teaching life. This would help re-focus discussions to incorporate academic expectations as well as end-goals that would allow meaningful writing experiences and feedback for students.

Final Thoughts

To repeat Freire (2005), "saying the [true] word is not the privilege of some few persons, but the right of everyone" (p. 88). I submit that finding self and power and taking up positions of power and resistance are necessary for people to find agency in their personal lives and public or community lives to solve problems and improve personal and public quality of life. This necessity has a place--or needs to have a space--in schools, in the teaching of writing. We want our students, who are our future colleagues and caregivers and policy makers and family members, to act proactively to solve problems and to make life better in small ways and large. In one of Roxie's final emails to me in 2012, she reported that despite having little personal time available, she still tried to find time to write. She mused, in a hurriedly written email composed as she was awaiting the completion of her husband's chemo treatment:

> I love writing . . . I can hear a song, and sometimes my head will think of a line that sounds good, and i build a poem off of that. Or it can be a nice chilly day. Even my dreams, good or bad will have some sort of affect. I guess life in genral. You just have to have confidence in yourself and believe in yourself. Anyone can do it, it's amazing how much talent is out there unused. (R, October 19, 2012)

"It's amazing how much talent is out there unused." I would argue that we don't want to leave talent out there unused. I suggest that we barely begin to tap what our students are capable of doing and being as writers in the way our schools are designed and mandated to teach writing. I propose that it is time to consider our own internally persuasive discourses--including those that might be resistant discourses--and move in directions that take into account a more complex understanding of writing for high school writers who will move into always evolving, surprising, and unpredictable futures, and who will need to find and develop their true words for all the discourse communities they will encounter.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS, 2009 AND 2012

I conducted semi-structured interviews with the students in 2009, using the following questions as a guide. As the interviews unfolded, I skipped some questions and then returned to others as they became appropriate to our conversation.

1. How would you describe the out-of-school writing you did in 9th grade?
2. How would you describe the out-of-school writing you did in 10th grade?
3. How would you describe the out-of-school writing you did in 11th grade?
4. How would you describe the out-of-school writing you are doing or have done in 12th grade?
5. What makes you interested in writing outside-of-school assignments?
6. When you have done out-of-school writing, what routines do you follow?
7. What audiences do you have in mind when you write your out-of-school pieces?
8. Does anyone help you with your out-of-school writing? If so, how?
9. What kinds of feedback or recognition do you want for your out-of-school pieces?
10. What kinds of feedback or recognition have you received?
11. How would you describe your in-school writing during your high school career?
12. How does your out-of-school writing influence your in-school writing, if at all?
13. How does your in-school writing influence your out-of-school writing, if at all?
14. Select out-of-school pieces that are important to you and walk me through your thinking about these pieces.
15. Select in-school pieces that are important to you and walk me through your thinking about these pieces.
16. What do you want to learn about as a writer?
17. What are the most satisfying things for you about your writing?
18. When I write about you, what do you want me to say? How should I describe who you are as a writer?

I conducted semi-structured interviews with the students again in 2012, following the same procedure of using the questions below as a starting point. As before, I selected questions as they became pertinent to our conversation.

1. Have you continued writing for yourself after high school?
2. If so, how do you sustain your writing life?
3. Did or do you find a writing community with which to share your work and ideas?
4. What kind of academic or job-related or supervisor-assigned writing are you now required to do?
5. Do you see any intersections between your in-school/on-the-job/assigned writing and your personal writing now?
6. Do you see any intersections between your high school in-school/out of school writing and your current writing?
7. How has technology played a part in your writing life for your assigned writing and your personal writing?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS, 2009 AND 2012

I conducted semi-structured interviews with the teachers in 2009, using the following questions to begin our conversations. As the interviews progressed, I selected some questions and returned to others as they became important to our discussion.

1. How would you describe the out-of-school writing of this student while enrolled in your class in 9th/10th/11th/12th grade? [insert proper grade level – the teacher may not have had this student in one or more of the grades]
2. How would you describe the out-of-school writing this student chooses to share with you, if any?
3. Have you helped this student with her out-of-school writing? If so, how?
4. Have you helped this student with her in-school writing? If so, how?
5. What kinds of feedback or recognition has this student received?
6. How would you describe this student's in-school writing during her high school career?
7. How does her out-of-school writing influence her in-school writing, if at all?
8. How does her in-school writing influence her out-of-school writing, if at all?
9. What do you want this student to learn about as a writer?
10. When I write about this student, what do you want me to say? How should I describe who she is as a writer?

I conducted semi-structured interviews with the teachers again in 2012, using the questions below as a starting point. As with the other interviews, I selected questions appropriate to the flow of conversation.

1. How would you describe your philosophy/philosophies on teaching writing?
2. Have these philosophies changed over time?
3. If these philosophies have changed, what has been the impetus for any changes?
4. What dimensions signal quality of writing for you? What aspects would you consider quality of writing to have?
5. What questions, if any, do you entertain about the teaching of writing?

APPENDIX C

POEMS BY ROXIE

It's Love

Lurking in the shadows,
Living in your dreams.
Turning them into nightmares,
It's love that's found you now.

Watching you harshly
Putting a target on your heart.
Making you wonder
About all the possibilities.

Catching you when unexpected
Always at the last minute,
When you're praying it doesn't come,
It's love that's found you now.

You've seen the movies,
You've seen the lies.
People who cannot live without each other,
People wanting love in their life.

But in reality those are movie[s],
And you are not a princess
Dreaming of prince charming to save you,
You are human, wanting to be left alone.

Lurking in the shadows,
Target on your heart.
Cupid is not special,
He is a man in a diaper.

Heartbreak is not rare,
True love almost transparent.
Love is looking for victims,
Love is not your friend.

Ode to Reality

Here is an ode to reality.
Thank you so much
For your loving hands,
Cold to the touch.

Just when life is perfect,
You come back around.
You like to rip apart
And bring down what was found.

Here is an ode to reality.
With surprising scares,
And hurtful tears
From everyone's stares.

You were forgotten about,
Just for one night.
Then you came back,
For a nine month fright.

Here is an ode to reality.
True love is just a myth.
You make sure of it,
When they found who to be with.

Always and forever promised
But you like to stand by
And watch all the pretty girls
Get hurt, and forced to cry.

Here is an ode to reality.
Just a night out,
He can make it home.
The police aren't about.

It was only a few drinks,
A promise, he swears.
But into the back of the car he goes
Afraid this isn't just a scare.

Here is an ode to reality.
Living up to moms expectations
They aren't all that high,
But the brain has left the station.

Lets get stoned he said,
Math doesn't really count.
But when you're stoned,
A pop quiz is twice the amount.

Here is an ode to reality.
When begging for a promotion,
Or a spot on the squad,
You can raise quite the commotion.

You make people believe,
And you give them dreams.
Just so you can take them away,
And listen to their screams.

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