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Yours, mine, and ours : confronting the originality burden through remix and intertextuality.

Barrie Olson Harvey
University of Louisville

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YOURS, MINE, AND, OURS: CONFRONTING THE ORIGINALITY BURDEN
THROUGH REMIX AND INTERTEXTUALITY

By

Barrie Olson Harvey
B.A., University of Nevada, Reno, 2007
M.A., University of Nevada, Reno, 2009

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of the
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University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

August 2014

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A Dissertation Approved on

August 6, 2014

by the following Dissertation Committee:

Debra Journet, Dissertation Director

Bronwyn Williams

Mary P. Sheridan

Paul Griner

Lee Nickoson

For my family, for getting me there

and

for Mike, for getting me through.

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ABSTRACT

YOURS, MINE, AND OURS: CONFRONTING THE ORIGINALITY THROUGH REMIX AND INTERTEXTUALITY

Barrie Olson Harvey

August 6, 2014

This dissertation contributes to ongoing conversations regarding the goal of composition instructors “to empower students to take responsibility for their ideas and their texts while developing their curiosity and persistence in the pursuit of knowledge” (Carpenter, 2014, par. 4). In particular, this dissertation, a classroom ethnography, examines how the originality burden—an encumbrance wherein students feel overwhelmed by the need to write an “original” paper—operates in one second-semester first-year composition course dedicated to relieving students from feeling like they must write “original” texts. More specifically, this study examines the potential of two concepts, remix and intertextuality, to help show students that writing, and language more generally, always builds on what came before, therefore reducing the possibility that any text is truly original.

This dissertation begins with an overview and literature review of what a term like *originality* means within the context of a first-year writing course, acknowledging the cultural history that influences how students understand originality (including the development of the solitary author, copyright law, and plagiarism) and the way that

digital media has come to change what it means to author an “original text.” Chapter 2 outlines the methodology of the study, describing how the study site was selected, the data collection procedures used, and the data sources.

Chapters 3 and 4 report the results of my research. In Chapter 3, I focus on how the instructor of the course used the term *remix* to explain to her students the ways in which language and writing are intertextual. This chapter describes how students used the term *remix* as a qualifier for the kind of writing they produced, rather than as what all writing could be labeled. That is, Chapter 3 discusses why students felt that their academic texts were remixed texts but that texts produced by more experienced writers, such as their professors, were original. In Chapter 4, I examine how an intertextual practice many students were familiar with *before* entering the composition classroom, the digital remix, helped alleviate the originality burden while at the same time creating a greater disconnect between digital remixed writing and more traditional academic remixed writing. Finally, Chapter 5 describes the theoretical and pedagogical implications of my findings, the limitations of this research project, and areas for future research.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: THE ORIGINALITY BURDEN IN FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION

But everything has been written up, you may remonstrate. Not so! New fields of knowledge are opening up daily. When such a new area becomes the object of curiosity, writers deal with it like sparrows a chunk of bread. Each bird breaks off a beakful and concentrates temporarily on that. Similarly, each writer devotes an article to a tiny aspect of a big subject. When a number of articles have appeared, along comes another investigator who sifts, combines, evaluates, and so produces a book. Your paper will stand a better chance of being original if you select a subject on which that first book has not yet been written. (Steel, 1950, p. 209)

You can't be original. (Landon, First-Year Composition Student)

In his 1950 textbook, *Readable Writing*, Eric Steel admonishes students that originality in their writing is not just possible but a veritable virtue. “Your paper will stand a better chance of being original,” he says, “if you select a subject on which the first book has not yet been written” (p. 209). Steel’s composition textbook, like many others past and present, imposes on students the notion that what they write should be new, original, unique. Steel’s position is especially extreme given its suggestion that students can and should write on a “subject on which the first book has yet been written” (p. 209). It’s a daunting premise for new college students who rarely feel qualified as experts to write a paper, much less a book, on anything. Still, while Steel’s suggestion might seem a bit far-fetched—even old-fashioned—it nonetheless appears, in one form or another, in countless other textbooks, assignment sheets, and handbooks within composition classrooms today.

First-year composition students such as Landon, however, question their abilities to produce original academic writing¹. In the present study, Landon was one of several students to remark, on multiple occasions, that one simply “can’t be original.” In the last two decades, studies that have considered students’ opinions on originality have generated similar results (Ballenger, 1999; Profozich, 2003). In many ways, these results are unsurprising. Students writing in the Internet age are exposed to a variety of practices and arguments that would suggest that originality, if it was ever possible, is an idea of the past. Much of the material they encounter online and in other digital spaces, for example, is the result of remixing, wherein new content is made by recycling older content. In their courses, often at both the high school and college level, students have often been asked to write research reports, wherein they use outside sources to expound on a topic and don’t necessarily generate any kind of original argument on that topic (Schwegler and Shamoon, 1982). Thus, without any practice on writing original content, and lacking exposure to what original content might actually mean, it is no wonder that students like Landon question whether originality is even possible.

And yet, while the term “originality” has long been critiqued by compositionists (Ballenger, 1999; Bazerman, 2004, Porter, 1986) for being difficult if not impossible to define, it has become almost ubiquitous in the context of academic writing. Johns (1997)

¹ In using the term “academic writing,” I draw from Thaiss and Zawacki’s (2006) definition, wherein they argue that academic writing is marked by three features: reason over emotion, evidence of being open-minded and disciplined, and a written product that assumes a rational reader. I find Thaiss and Zawacki’s definition of academic writing compelling because it can span multiple assignment types and designs, lending itself well to writing produced in a variety of first-year composition curriculums. It was also used multiple times by the instructor in the course I studied, both in interviews with me and in classroom lectures and discussions. Finally, Thaiss and Zawacki’s definition foregrounds the notion of originality as an expectation in academic writing. As they explain, “the frequency with which even the rubrics expect student ‘originality’—an expectation confirmed in the assessment workshops we observed—shows that academic writing, across all disciplinary contexts, is definitely not an exercise in filling in intellectual blanks” (p. 94).

offers a variety of discursive markers attached to academic writing and many of these either explicitly or implicitly evoke originality. One marker, knowledge transforming (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1989) explicitly calls for the use of sources to make new arguments (as opposed to simply knowledge-telling, or regurgitating what sources already convey). This marker emphasizes for students that they must produce something new with what has already been given. Swales and Feak (1994) argue that “citation may be the defining feature of academic discourses” (Johns, 1997, p. 510). Citation, like knowledge-transforming, immediately calls attention to the idea that there will be work from someone else in a student’s paper, as well as the work of the student him or herself. Citation explicitly calls for the demarcation between what someone else has thought or written and what belongs to the student him or herself. For many students, citation can become an exercise in establishing what is their original work and what is the original work of someone else.

Originality is also implied in academic writing through the language of critical thinking (another element many scholars suggest as vital to academic writing). In Paul and Elder’s (2010) *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking Concepts and Tools*, they argue that one of the critical intellectual traits of a well-cultivated critical thinker is the ability to “raise vital questions and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely” and to “come to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards.” Words such as *vital* imply the suggestion of newness. To raise a vital question might suggest to a student that he or she raise a question that hasn’t been raised before but that has significant importance. Similar critical thinking standards exist in other critical thinking models (Hullfish & Smith, 1961; Scriven, 1976; Hallet, 1984;

Kitchener, 1986; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Halpern, 1996; Paul & Elder, 2001; Holyoak & Morrison, 2005) and the language of critical thinking therefore implies the need for originality in academic writing even without explicitly stating it.

It is reasonable to assume, then, that even in classrooms where instructors and assignment sheets make no mention of expectations that students produce original arguments, there can be a perception on the part of students that originality is not only expected, but also a defining feature of that assignment. Thus, when a student like Landon is asked to produce original academic writing in a first-year composition classroom (either explicitly or implicitly), he is faced with a difficult dilemma. How does he produce what he thinks he is incapable of producing?

When students perceive that writing instructors are asking them to produce original writing, they face what I call *the originality burden*. I use the term originality burden because it seems fitting given the load students feel they must carry in a classroom asking (explicitly or implicitly) for original writing. Even for students who think originality is possible, authoring original work will be a burdensome task since these students believe that they are writing “for an expert audience” while they themselves are “novices pretending to be experts” (Schwegler and Shamon, 1982, p. 820). How can they know, when writing about foreign concepts, what is actually new and what has already been said before? They might fear that any supposedly original argument they put forth will have been made already in material they did not uncover during their research. For students like Landon, who don’t believe in originality at all, academic writing becomes all the more taxing. It becomes a kind of game students must play knowing they are doomed to lose. They put forth an argument under the auspices

that it is their original argument when, deep down, as a student in Thaiss and Zawacki's (2006) study explained, they "worry that [they are] not producing an original paper per se, that it is merely a thoughtful and organized submission of information [they] gathered and then properly cited" (p. 116). Rather than feeling like they are contributing original material, they can feel they are academic imposters, incapable of producing original work but nonetheless being asked to do so.

This dissertation takes as its starting point a concern that students become overburdened by the idea that they must produce original writing and, in so doing, lose sight of what academic writing can and should be. Yancey (2008) argues that research and, by extension, academic writing, "can be characterized this way—as a collagelike, intertextual, ongoing conversation" wherein the traits of academic writing, such as the incorporation of sources, should be seen as one of its great assets in forwarding original thought, rather than one of its biggest hindrances (p. 160). She goes on to suggest that, given the importance of this type of writing, "it's worth asking what are the practices that impede our work and what are the practices that assist it" (p. 160). This dissertation responds directly to Yancey's call and seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What assumptions about originality are operative in the first-year composition classroom? How do these assumptions change over the course of the semester?
2. How does intertextuality challenge the originality burden, and how do students understand and practice intertextuality in the first-year composition classroom?
3. What kinds of activities and assignments either further or relieve the originality burden in students?

Before discussing the answers to these questions, this first chapter will set up my study by exploring the possible roots of the originality burden and certain methods scholars have suggested for discussing and promoting originality in student work. While there are any number of reasons for the originality burden, my research suggests that the most compelling are related to the cultural notion of the solitary author, plagiarism statements, and ambiguity about what “original” actually means. Following discussion of these contributions to the “originality burden,” I will review research that suggests how digital media practices may have the potential to disrupt the originality burden and will conclude with a particular focus on the concept of “remix.”

The Solitary Author, Copyright Law, and Intertextuality

To understand the originality burden, it is important to first understand developments in the United States that forwarded the belief that individuals could produce original work. Though manuscripts attributed to specific authors can be traced back many centuries, in the United States, the nineteenth century saw a confluence of factors—affordable, mass printing; specific philosophical outlooks; and the proliferation of copyright law—that would help create a culture that believed in original work that could and should be owned.

By the nineteenth century, the printing press had already gone through several iterations, each version making printing easier and more affordable than the version before. Developments in printing press technology, however, and the ease with which materials could be printed and mass distributed were limited based on other cost factors—namely, paper. In the United States, it wasn’t until 1817 that paper could be made by machine rather than by hand (Hunter, 1978). Machine-made paper was

significantly cheaper to produce than hand-made paper and in turn, publishing costs were reduced. Costs were cut even further when, in 1844, papermakers discovered how to make paper from wood-based pulp rather than rag-based pulp. Wood-based pulp was both cheaper and more accessible to papermakers. These innovations led to a major boom in publication, with newspapers and books reaching populations for whom these items were once cost-prohibitive. Individual Americans could now own copies of various authors' works.

That ownership, combined with Romantic and Enlightenment assumptions operative at the time, increased an inclination among consumers that authored work *originated from* and was *owned by* the author. Philosophers such as Kant and Fichte emphasized “the relation of dependence between the author and his work” (Larochelle, 1999, p. 122). Fichte in particular forwarded the cultural notion of authors producing original work. As Larochelle (1999) argues, quoting Fichte, “that which is absolutely no one appropriate [...] since it is physically impossible, is the form of these thoughts, the linking of ideas and of the signs within which their ideas are exposed” (p. 124). Fichte, like Kant, argued that a work, once written, was the result of the writer's own genius and that that genius was specifically tied and bound by its physical manifestation (such as a book). As Swearingen (1999) explains, “Romantic and Enlightenment emphasis on originality and unique individual geniuses advanced the belief that great ideas and knowledge are human creations; once made they become the property of their authors” (p. 20).

The Romantic and Enlightenment emphasis was also coupled with a shift in how education was understood and promoted at American universities. Whereas before

American university classrooms were a place where “students were initiated in received truths, which were to be memorized, not questioned,” the nineteenth century saw a shift to classrooms following the German model, where “truth was to be *discovered* through rigorous investigation” (Ballenger, 1999, p. 42). In this model of education, the purpose of research “was for its authors to create new universal knowledge,” further shifting how the American public understood how ideas were created (Moulton and Holmes, 2003, p. 368).

This understanding of originality continues to occupy the American cultural imagination in part due to another product of the nineteenth century: copyright law. American copyright law can be traced to 1783, wherein minutes from the meetings of the Constitutional Convention show that American copyright law aligned itself well with Romantic and Enlightenment beliefs. Patry (1997), quoting the minutes, explains that the framers argued that “nothing is more properly a man’s own than the fruit of his study, and [that] protection and security of literary property would greatly tend to encourage genius Under copyright law.” Copyright law therefore both encouraged a philosophical outlook towards ordinary genius and also made that outlook legally binding. The original Copyright Act of 1790 granted authors fourteen years of copyright protection and the right of renewal for another fourteen years (Yu, 2006).

The nineteenth century was significant to copyright because it featured a number of prominent authors petitioning for indefinite copyright protection (and therefore ownership) of their work. Noah Webster (of Webster’s *American Dictionary*) and his son-in-law, William W. Ellsworth, were among the most famous petitioners. Webster, as quoted in Yu (2006), argued that “an author has, by common law, or natural justice, the

sole and *permanent* right to make profit by his own labor” (p. 144). Words such as *law*, *natural*, and *own* all speak to the philosophical outlooks of intellectuals like Kant and Fichte. While Webster and Ellsworth were unable to persuade Congress to adapt perpetual ownership for authors, the Copyright Act of 1831 did significantly extend the period of copyright from fourteen years with the possibility of renewal to twenty-eight years with a renewal option of fourteen years.

The spirit of copyright law, especially as it was campaigned for in the nineteenth century, upholds Enlightenment understandings of authorship by suggesting that a work can be “independently created” (Stearns, 1999, p. 8). In the United States, a country that has become increasingly litigious, especially as it relates to copyright (Horovitz, 2008; Latchaw and Galin, 1998; McKee, 2008; Reyman, 2010; Rife, 2007), it could be difficult to think of authorship in any other way. As Latchaw and Galin (1998) explain, “terms such as copyright, intellectual property rights, and fair use suggest that knowledge is legalistic and capitalistic tender belonging to creators/authors and disseminators/publishers” (p. 146).

This kind of single author resonates with most students’ understandings of authorship and originality (particularly in written work); however, it is complicated when they enter classrooms that ask them to create something original, while at the same time depend on the work of others. Students, in these moments, might find comfort in more postmodern conceptions of authorship, which argue for a more intertextual understanding of language, though such a concept is rarely available or familiar to them.

Kristeva (1986), the first to propose the term *intertextuality*, used it to explain that “any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and

transformation of another” (p. 37). In defining intertextuality, Kristeva is drawing on the work of Bakhtin (1981), who argues that “the word in language is half someone else’s” (p. 293). No utterance, no word “can exist in a neutral and impersonal language” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 294). In making such arguments, both Kristeva and Bakhtin are suggesting that words and utterances are defined as much by the speaker or writer as they are by the reader or listener, and vice versa. Words are defined by how they have been used before and the contexts in which they have been previously found (Volonisov, 1987; Saussure, 1986; Vygotsky, 1987). In this way, language is never truly one’s own because “language is in a constant state of negotiation” (Bakhtin, 1982, p. 270). Barthes (1977) offers a similar argument:

A text does not consist of a line of words, releasing a single “theological” meaning (the “message” of the Author-God), but is a space of many dimensions, in which are wedded and contested various kinds of writing, no one of which is original. (p. 4).

Thus, like Kristeva and Bakhtin, Barthes is arguing for an intertextual view of language. Moreover, he is aligning himself with a view of language that is highly rhetorical, wherein meaning and understanding are contextual and wherein originality and newness depend not solely on what is said but also on how it is said (Riffaterre, 1984; Genette, 1997; Bazerman, 2004; Linell, 1998).

This view of authorship is a more accurate reflection of what many instructors are asking when they suggest they want original scholarship from their students. Sadly, for students who grew up in the shadow of copyright legislation (and as I will suggest below, plagiarism statements and cultural assumptions about “originality”), the modern author is

still how they understand authorship. Unfortunately, the modern author—“the romantic image of writer as a free, uninhibited spirit, as independent, creative genius”—downplays the intertextual nature of language (Porter, 1986, p. 88). The disparity between the two views of authorship led Foucault (1987) to suggest that “even when an individual has been accepted as an author, we must still ask whether everything he wrote, said, or left behind is part of his work” (p. 103). Foucault’s suggestion permeates FYC classrooms, especially as students consider whether their own writing (especially in the context of research papers, for example) makes them originary authors themselves.

Despite the possibilities postmodern theory offers students, first-year composition continues to be a place where students encounter the “modern” rather than the “postmodern” author. Bazerman (2004) argues that one reason why the modern notion of authorship continues to dominate the FYC classroom is because the postmodern theory of authorship is rooted in literary studies and not in composition. Bazerman argues that “we need to recover a definition and understanding of intertextuality that fits the needs of literacy practitioners, researchers, and educators, and then use that field appropriate definition to refine practice” (p. 1). The single author’s dominance in composition might also relate to the previous training students received during high school. Ballenger (1999) found in a study of high school teachers that the majority of teachers focused on “many elements of the ‘research ideal’: an emphasis on originality, objectivity, detachment, and topics removed from the ‘everyday world’” (p. 52). Words such as originality, objectivity, and detachment all correspond to the modern author, rather than the more contextualized postmodern author. Faigley (1992) makes a similar observation, suggesting that “college writing teachers have been heavily invested in the stability of the

self and the attendant beliefs that writing can be a means of self-discovery and intellectual self-realization,” a notion that is likewise more modern than postmodern (p. 15). Importantly, Faigley suggests that the positioning of many compositionists in this way is not the result of a disinterest in postmodern theory but rather composition’s relationship to a larger cultural debate on literacy, including the back-to-basics movement.

Plagiarism

Thus, culturally, and via their secondary education experience, many students arrive in their composition courses with an understanding that originality in their writing is both desirable and possible. This belief is quickly reinforced the first day of the semester, when composition instructors review their institution’s plagiarism policy. Plagiarism policies, like copyright law, serve the notion of the modern author rather than the postmodern one (Howard, 1992, 1995, 1999; McCabe and Trevino, 1997; Ritter, 2005; Robillard and Fortune, 2007; Valentine, 2006). Plagiarism statements, for example, perpetuate the modern notion that work can be singular and originary. Price (2002) criticizes plagiarism statements that tell students to cite anything that isn’t “common knowledge [or] original” (92). Her critique is rooted in plagiarism statements’ implicit message that common knowledge (or “facts” as some statements label it) is a stable notion. As Price argues, what counts as common knowledge differs considerably from one discourse community to another. As such, it is rhetorically constructed. Though plagiarism policies argue for students to differentiate between original and unoriginal work, such differentiation can be extremely difficult for students who aren’t thinking of originality from a rhetorical point of view. Students often believe that the language of

plagiarism policies means that they should be able to easily distinguish what is their presumably original writing or thoughts and what is someone else's.

For twenty-first century students, plagiarism is as much in the western cultural imagination as copyright. Eodice (2008), for example, examines the role that journalism plays in perpetuating the idea that ownership and originality is possible. According to Eodice, the media frequently engages in what she calls “the discourse of ‘gotcha’ journalism” wherein journalists seem to find pleasure in hurling accusations of plagiarism at writers. In outing a writer as a plagiarist, these media outlets fail to engage in productive and constructive conversations about plagiarism. Rather than open up conversations on the rhetorical nature, and even value, of plagiarism, the media instead “heightens anxiety about a monolithic plagiarism.” These types of reports instill fear in students, who have no doubt had experience seeing others—both fellow students and popular writers—brandished with the “the scarlet P” of plagiarism (Zwagerman, 2008). In these moments, anxiety related to the originality burden only grows. Now students must be concerned not only with whether or not what they write will be considered original but also with plagiarism. Should students fail to attribute as necessary, their work can be considered both unoriginal and they can get into serious trouble.

Media attention to plagiarism often leads to public outrage (especially since it is seen as a stain on morality and ethics) and as such, the methods for catching alleged plagiarists continue to grow. An increasing trend on university campuses, for example, is the use of plagiarism detection software (Gillis et al, 2009; Marsh, 2004; Purdy, 2005; Valentine, 2006; Zwagerman, 2008). Unfortunately, this software also serves to reify the modern version of the author to students. Plagiarism detection software implies to

students that it is easy to distinguish what is one's own from what belongs to someone else. After all, a computer algorithm can do it. Interestingly, studies have shown that in performing this kind of work, “in lieu of good pedagogy, the applications often penalize students for doing exactly what we want them to do: learn the basic language structures used by people who are writing about a common topic in a given discipline” (Gillis et al, 2009, p. 52). Thus, under certain conditions, plagiarism statements and the policies used to enforce them not only implicitly deny postmodern authorship theory but also explicitly punish students who engage in postmodern authorship practices. The originality burden is thus augmented.

Categories of Originality

With the threat of plagiarism hanging over their heads, and cultural suggestions that work can be singular and originary, students—especially university students—are likely to be frustrated when they realize that, within different disciplines, what counts as original can vary greatly. For example, in trying to understand what counts as original in the humanities versus the social sciences, Guetzkow, Lamont, and Mallard (2004) interviewed “peer-review panelists from five different multidisciplinary fellowship competitions” (190). Though only one fellowship competition listed originality as a major criterion, panelists from all five competitions stated that it played a significant role in their decision-making. The researchers found a total of seven generic types of originality: original approach, understudied area, original topic, original theory, original method, original data, and original results. Their categories for originality correspond with other categories identified in scholarship, which include original pursuits (Russell, 1991), breaking consensus (Kaufer & Geiseler, 1989), how a topic is “selected and

problematized” (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. 109), bisociation² (Hellqvist, 2010), what is produced by the student in his or her “interaction with the text in the process of writing” (Johnson & Clerehan, 2005, p. 44), and making something new from what already exists (Johnson-Eilola & Selber, 2007).

What makes Guetzkow, Lamont, and Mallard’s study particularly useful, however, is that it offers a numerical breakdown of originality by field. For example, in the humanities, approach (33%), data (21%), theory (18%), and topic (15%) were the most recognized forms of being original. Method, outcome, and understudied area each received less than 7%. History shared approach (43%) as the most popular means for achieving originality and theory (18%) as the second most popular. The other approaches all received 10% or less. The social sciences, on the other hand, favored new methods (27%) with topic (19%), theory (19%), and approach (18%) being the next most popular choices. Unfortunately, the hard sciences were beyond the scope of Guetzkow et al’s study but we can reasonably assume that just as there were differences between the humanities and social sciences, differences would exist between those fields and the hard sciences.

The data presented by Guetzkow, Lamont, and Mallard are significant for two reasons. First, they illustrate that from one discipline to the next, what is prized as original can differ greatly. These differences suggest that the criteria for a successfully written and original research paper in history would not share criteria for a successfully written and original piece in the social sciences. Secondly, the data show that even within established fields, there is disagreement about what originality means. Mastering original

² Hellqvist (2010) defines bisociation as “connecting two seemingly separate phenomena” as a means towards achieving originality (p. 315). According to Hellqvist, bisociation is most common in the humanities and is often achieved by connecting two sources that were not previously connected.

writing in one social science classroom might not translate to having mastered original writing in another social science classroom. In reaction to these differences, students might begin to see originality as idiosyncratic to an individual instructor and feel overburdened by the need to “guess” what originality might mean for a given instructor.

The guessing game can prove to be an especially difficult challenge for students given the propensity of instructors to send mixed signals. For example, when students receive comments such as “use your own words” on their papers (common practice in composition courses in particular), students interpret these comments to mean that their own words are more valuable than the words from their sources (Johnson & Clerehan, 2005). Students assume that instructors want what the students write to be new.

Interestingly, however, instructors who admonish students to “use their own words” may in fact have an entirely different idea in mind. Johnson and Clerehan (2005), in a study of student papers that received the “use your own words” comment, found that in giving that suggestion, what instructors were really asking students to do was make original choices using citation “to organize the material, define and answer the question, or discuss the different possible answers” (p. 43). Thus, even the most well-meaning comments can give rise to the originality burden as students struggle to comprehend just what an instructor means when asking them to be original.

Digital Media

This isn't to say that there aren't moments in some composition classrooms where the notion of what counts as original and more postmodern conceptions of authorship aren't explicitly explored. When certain digital media practices, such as sampling, remixing, and assemblage, are brought into composition classrooms, teachers have the

opportunity to, if not expose, then at the very least complicate what originality means in FYC students' lives (Carobone, 2001; Dubisar and Palmeri, 2012; Hess, 2006; Johnson-Eilola and Selber, 2007; Lankshear and Knobel, 2008; Lundin, 2008; Yancey, 2004). As Hess (2006) explains, in these types of projects, an author "use[s] sources to create new meaning" with his or her goal being to "transform, critique, and respond to sources" (pp. 281-282). Such projects are explicitly intertextual and often involve no "original" work (that is, language written by the student). These projects are nonetheless "originally" authored by the students, who create intertextual works that are "deeply complex, weaving together multiple sources in order to make a coherent argument" (Dubisar and Palmeri, 2012, p. 84). Projects that involve sampling or remix complicate what originality and authorship mean because, as Johnson-Eilola and Selber (2007) explain, they "do not distinguish primarily between which parts are supposed to be original and which have been found and gathered from someplace else; [they] are interested in what works, what has social effects" (p. 380). It is possible then, that when students encounter digital media projects in first-year composition, the originality burden might be lessened.

There are multiple forms of digital media that complicate definitions of originality. Wikis, like sampling, remixing, and assemblage, also stress intertextuality rather than a singular author. As Lundin (2008) explains, "on wikis, collaborative authorship can be a given rather than an exception, and the relationship between participants in a wiki space can change accordingly" (p. 434). Wikis embrace an intertextual pedagogy not only because of the value placed on collaborative authorship but also on collaborative evaluation. In this way, wikis work towards the kind of rhetorical understanding both Bazerman (2004) and Porter (1986) stress as the important

contributing factor of intertextuality. Bruns (2008) explains that in addition to encouraging collaboration and collective knowledge, wikis emphasize “the principle of working with unfinished artifacts in a continuing process” (p. 110). This continuing process is the “ad infinitum” Barthes (1977) suggests as part of the ever evolving process of both the understanding and developing of language” (p. 5).

Remix

The classroom I observed for my study was particularly interested in digital media practices as a way to rid students of the originality burden. In this classroom, a specific digital media term, *remix*, became a catch-all for concerns and questions about originality. More importantly, it represented an intertextual understanding of language. Remix was a term first used in the 1980s to describe songs that had been modified from their original versions. Whereas before songs were primarily edited (for example, making them shorter for radio programs), technology now allowed songs to be remixed in ways not generally available before: specific vocals could be altered or removed, new beats could be superimposed, equalizers could be adjusted, and so on. Today, remix has come to represent alterations in mediums that extend far beyond music. Yancey (2009) defines remix more broadly as “the combining of ideas, narratives, sources” and suggests that it has been “a classical means of invention, even (perhaps especially) for canonical writers” (p. 5). For example, quoting a *Wikipedia* article on remix, Yancey explains that “Shakespeare arguably ‘remixed’ classical sources and Italian contemporary works to produce his plays, which were often modified for different audiences” (p. 5).

In many composition classrooms, remix represents digital projects where students bring together multiple elements to create a new composition often in the form of music,

a video, or a multimodal piece. Remix then, which explicitly calls for the use of sources as a vehicle for originality, may help remove the originality burden students feel. Hazel, the instructor in the course I observed, thus designed her syllabus with remix in mind. One of the driving questions in her course, as she explained to me, was “What is originality?” Hazel recognized that originality had come to mean different things to different people and that the drive for students to be original could be overwhelming to students in a research-based course. She therefore designed her course to question the ideals of originality and, for her, one of the best ways to do this was through the lens of “remix,” which she felt would help students realize “how things are so interconnected.” If students could see everything as being interconnected, they might begin to see originality as a matter of arrangement or interaction with previous material, rather than as the need to develop something entirely new.

This method for disrupting how students understand the drive to be original is well-supported in recent composition scholarship. Hess (2006), for example, calls for sampling in composition: “Sampling, at its best, uses sources to create new meaning” (p. 281). Allowing students to critically examine sampled work (such as a hip-hop song) or create sampled material of their own, can help students see that “it is essentially through integrating ideas from sources with [students’] own ideas that writers of academic essays construct knowledge in the discipline” (Hendricks and Quinn, 2000, p. 451). Johnson-Eilola and Selber (2007) propose a slightly different technique for exposing students to the ways originality is often achieved through what already exists rather than through entirely new creations. They call their method assemblage, which they describe as “texts built primarily and explicitly from existing texts in order to solve a writing or

communication problem in a new context” (p. 381). Unlike sampling, which usually incorporates only some of its text from outside sources, the goal of assemblage is to use only outside sources to create a text. Assemblage then, more so than sampling, illustrates to students the ways in which originality can be accomplished using sources, especially since it requires that students use no ‘original’ material (material written by the student herself) to create original work. The goal of assemblage is for students to use sources for “what works, what has social effects” (Johnson-Eilola and Selber, 2007, p. 381). Thus, though both sampling and assemblage may not match many of the academic writing assignments students are given, they are exercises that expose students to the ways that using previously created material can contribute to original writing.

For Hazel, the methods of disruption described above fell under the umbrella term of “remix,” which, in this course, was understood both as a theoretical concept that would be synonymous with “intertextuality” and an actual “written” remixed product (such as sampled songs or assemblages). As Hazel’s syllabus suggests, the *concept* of “remix,” not just the *products* of remix, was central to the curriculum she designed. As she explained in her syllabus, the class “will use the idea of remix to delve into common issues around writing practice including but not limited to the following: authorship, ownership, using and crediting sources, revision, rhetorical community practices, the appropriate forms and genres for particular products, among others” (1). She further explained that “the term remix will be used broadly to consider a variety of products from video mash-ups to scholarly work” (1). Thus, from the beginning, the idea of remix in this course was a driving force for how students were to interpret both the class material they read or watched and the material they produced.

Hazel used remix as a lens that would help alleviate the originality burden, largely by challenging the cultural repertoire students arrived with. It sought to critique, question, and challenge issues of copyright, fair use, originality, and plagiarism. It likewise aimed to forward a postmodern, intertextual understanding of authorship. As such, it was positioned well in terms of further understanding the roots of the originality burden but also seeing if concepts like intertextuality or remix would be enough to disrupt it.

Outline of Chapters

In the chapters that follow, I argue that even in a classroom specifically designed to relieve students of the originality burden, the originality burden persisted. Though students wrote and read about originality, intertextuality, and remix frequently, they were unable to overcome the originality burden when they wrote. Interestingly, in composing digital remix projects (the final assignment of the course), students did seem to feel more comfortable with the idea that few, if any, works are original (in the traditional sense of the word). These feelings, however, did not transfer to their more standard written work. The following chapters will illustrate how the originality burden appeared and was negotiated through discussions, activities, and assignments.

Chapter 2 describes the method and methodology used for gathering data during the Spring 2013 semester. In gathering data for this study, I conducted a classroom ethnography in an English II: Composition II classroom at Midwestern Metropolitan University. The second chapter describes the institutional and programmatic contexts for the course I selected and describes the course-selection process. Additionally, I discuss and explore my role as participant-observer in the course. Information on the nineteen

student participants, as well as the course instructor, is also provided. Finally, I describe the method for data collection and analysis, as well as the data sources I used.

Chapter 3 analyzes how intertextual theory frequently hindered students in understanding writing as both social and intertextual. Because the course I observed used remix as a stand-in for the idea of “intertextuality,” it was important to analyze the ways this word came to be understood, defined, and used by the students in the study. In particular, I analyze how students understood and completed Assignments 1 and 3, where they made explicit use of the term “remix” itself or applied remix as a concept to their writing. My analysis reveals that students consistently revised their definitions of remix until it was no longer seen as a means of producing original work but rather a third category of originality: items could be original, unoriginal, or remixed. This is significant because in a course designed with the intention to replace originality with remix, students instead saw remix as a category in and of itself. More importantly, students saw remix as what they did in their writing, and originality as what professors and scholars did in theirs. Students therefore continued to believe that originality was possible, just not for them.

Chapter 4 describes the ways that remix, as a physical product (memes, videos, mash-ups, etc.) affected student understandings of originality and intertextuality. In particular, I analyze how students approached and completed Assignment 4, a digital remix of one of their previous papers. This assignment was meant to be a culmination of all the students had discussed with regard to authorship up to this point in the semester. The assignment asked them to consider ownership rules, regulation, and the ways that one “writes” in a digital medium. While, from a grading point of view, students were

largely successful in completing this assignment, interviews with students after the completion of the assignment reveal that remixing did little to help them understand how the rules that govern remixing in a digital medium might be applied to remixing in a more static, text-based medium, such as a written assignment. The lack of transfer indicates that digital projects meant to disrupt the originality burden may not be able to do so because students see them as far removed from more traditional academic writing.

In the final chapter, Chapter 5, I describe the theoretical and pedagogical implications of my findings. Specifically, I argue that citation instruction and discussions of plagiarism in particular seem to be the most serious contributing factors to the originality burden. As such, I make suggestions on how instructors might be able to discuss topics like citation and plagiarism in ways that are productive in helping students learn some of the moves of academic writing without encouraging the originality burden. I also discuss the limitations of this study and areas for future research based on the results of this study.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH SITE AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I outlined the importance of citation, authorship, and originality in first-year composition courses. Moreover, I highlighted the need for continued study of how students negotiate authorship in the tension-filled world where plagiarism policies and remix pedagogy seem to coexist. In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the methodology, approved as IRB 12.0579, used in this study as well as the theory that guided that methodology. This chapter will therefore include an overview of the institutional and programmatic contexts for the study, a description of the course selected and the course-selection criteria, a description of the student-participants in the study, the method and methodology used for data analysis, and a description of the data collection process and the data sources used.

Institutional Context

This study took place in an English 102: Composition II course at Midwestern Metropolitan University³ during the Spring 2013 semester. Midwestern Metropolitan University is a state-supported research university located in a major Midwestern city. As

³ Pseudonym

of Fall 2012 (the latest semester for which enrollment statistics were available), Midwestern Metropolitan University enrolled 22,293 students (15,893 undergraduates and 6,400 graduates). In-state residents accounted for approximately seventy-six percent of the student population. Approximately half of University students were from the county in which the University resides and roughly one-third of students came from other counties (primarily rural areas) in the state. Seventy-five percent of students identified as white, eleven percent as African-American, and just under ten percent as a minority other than African-American. The average ACT (American College Testing) score of incoming freshmen for the Fall 2012 semester was 25.0 (“Profile,” n.d.).

Programmatic Context

English 102 is offered through the Midwestern Metropolitan University Composition Program, which is housed in the English Department, which is in turn housed by the College of Arts and Sciences. The Composition Program is “committed to teaching students to become more creative and critical readers and writers” and aims to help “students develop their writing as a way of thinking, learning, and communicating in ways that will enrich their lives in the University community and beyond” (Composition, 2011, p. 6). All Midwestern Metropolitan University undergraduate students are required to either take the Composition Program’s two-course sequence of composition classes, English 101: Composition I and English 102: Composition II, or place out of these courses through portfolios, AP exam scores, or transfer credit. Students may be awarded course credit for English 101 and then allowed to enroll directly into English 102 if they receive a score of 3 on either the English Literature and Composition or the English Language and Composition Advanced Placement exam. Students are awarded course

credit for both English 101 and English 102 if they receive a score of 4 or 5 on either of the aforementioned exams. In addition, students may also elect to submit a portfolio of writing for evaluation prior to beginning courses at the University and possible course credit for English 101 and/or English 102. The majority of students, however, end up taking both composition courses in the sequence and English 101 must be successfully completed before a student is allowed to enroll in English 102.

Course Selection

This project involved looking at how students understood themselves as authors in a first-year composition classroom. Because I was especially interested in postmodern theories of authorship (particularly intertextuality), I sought to examine a composition course where the integration of outside sources was a mandatory component of student writing. I made this decision because, while intertextuality is not a concept that relies on the explicit inclusion of outside sources in one's work, I believed that for the purpose of seeing how students shift their understandings of authorship, it would be helpful to be in a classroom where intertextual moves were made explicit through source citation. For this reason, I chose to observe an English 102 course. English 102 is the second course in the two-semester required sequence of composition courses. Commonly referred to by both instructors and students as the "research course," the course generally emphasizes research methods, writing with sources, and writing longer papers. The official program-wide course description reads as follows:

The focus of English 102 is creating and answering questions through research and writing that draws upon written texts and other sources. A student in English 102 should expect to create research questions, find relevant information to

answer those questions, and write longer essays that use the information to create and support a clearly defined position on the topic involved. A student in English 102 can expect to write four to six papers during the term, including at least one extended research essay, totaling about 20 to 25 pages of text. (“Composition Program,” n.d.)

The official course outcomes for English 102 can be found in Appendix A.

I chose my specific English 102 classroom based on the following criteria. First, the instructor must have taught English 102 at least once before and have at least three years of experience teaching first-year composition. I wanted to observe an experienced instructor so that, during interviews, the instructor would have a greater context of teaching experience to draw on. Second, the instructor had to incorporate some kind of multi-modal or digital media project into the course (preferably as one of the major course assignments). As discussed in Chapter 1, the advent and proliferation of digital media has had a profound effect on how authorship is perceived in the twenty-first century, and I was interested in seeing if and how digital projects altered students’ intertextual understandings and practices. Lastly, the classroom I chose had to use peer review over the course of the semester. How students perceived and understood using peer feedback in their own work, and its effects on them as authors of their work, would potentially be valuable information as I answered my research questions.

Recruiting a course and instructor was done primarily through word of mouth. I made my research project interests known among my colleagues and several approached me as being possibly interested. I asked to see the syllabi of those who expressed interest and determined that Hazel’s course made the most sense. I felt even more certain that

Hazel's course was the right course after an interview with Hazel in which she described the aim of her course in relation to Ridolfo and DeVoss'(2009) "Composing for Recomposition: Rhetorical Velocity and Delivery." As Hazel explained to me:

In that article they talk about rhetorical velocity, which is this idea that when you're writing, you should be writing with the idea that people will take your work and use it again. So can you write in a way that will influence the ways in which people can remix your work, right? And I want that to happen. I want that idea in play in my class. Because I think if students could think about like, "Oh, what I'm writing could be used by somebody else," then I'm hoping that they would care more about what they were writing and the ways that they were writing it because it would be being used.

Hazel's commitment to the idea of rhetorical velocity and, I would argue, intertextual awareness and practices (though it's important to note that Hazel herself never used the word "intertextual" with either me or her students but generally referred instead to intertextual ideas as "remix"), was the determining factor for me in terms of choosing Hazel's classroom for the site of this research project. What intrigued me most about Hazel's course was how explicit she made instruction on the very topics I was interested in. Given her focus on issues of copyright, ownership, and authorship, I thought it would be interesting to see how and if such explicit instruction influenced student understandings of authorship-related issues.

Course Context

Hazel's course met in the morning, three times a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday), for fifty minutes per class period. Hazel was a third-year PhD student in Rhetoric

and Composition with four and a half years of experience teaching first-year composition. She had taught English 102 once before at Midwestern Metropolitan University and a comparable course to English 102 twice at her previous institution. In teaching this course, Hazel adapted a syllabus she had previously used in an English 105 (Honors Composition) course at Midwestern Metropolitan University (English 105 essentially combines the curriculums of English 101 and English 102 into a semester-long intensive honors course). She did modify the syllabus slightly, removing one major assignment.

In addition to the common course goals found in Appendix A, Hazel articulated the following goals for her students in her course syllabus⁴:

This section of 102 will be themed around the idea of remix. We will use the idea of remix to delve into common issues around writing practice including but not limited to the following: authorship, ownership, using and crediting sources, revision, rhetorical community practices, the appropriate forms and genres for particular products, among others. For the purposes of this class, remix will be used broadly to consider a variety of products from video mash-ups to scholarly work. Rather than simply finding and consuming sources, we will consider how those sources can be re-used, re-designed, remixed into new products. Similarly, you should consider how the assignments you write in this class might also be remixed. Upon completion of this course, you should be able to

- Find and use appropriate research in original ways
- Compose print and digital products that clearly communicate original ideas and claims

⁴ See Appendix B for a copy of the full course syllabus.

- Understand how authorship, ownership, and use of commodities function in at least one specific community
- Understand and be able to apply the rhetorical connection between purpose and genre

The course was broken down into four major units that revolved around the four major writing assignments:

1. Product Ancestry⁵: students chose a product and argued whether or not that product should be considered original
2. Community Ownership⁶: students identified a particular community and discussed how products were created and regulated both within and outside that community
3. Remix Researched Argument⁷: students wrote a lengthy (10+ pages) researched argument on a topic related to the course's theme
4. Digital Remix⁸: students took an idea from one of the course's previous assignments and remixed that idea into a digital version

In addition to the four major assignments, students also had to complete regular homework and in-class writing assignments, as well as occasional quizzes. One in-class writing and homework assignment that became particularly interesting to this study was a collaborative class-authored paper written by both the students and Hazel as a model paper for major assignment two. In the collaborative paper, students wrote in small groups in response to questions Hazel had posed about the journalist community. Hazel then used their writing to generate a possible introduction and conclusion. Students were

⁵ See Appendix C for a copy of this assignment.

⁶ See Appendix D for a copy of this assignment.

⁷ See Appendix E for a copy of this assignment.

⁸ See Appendix F for a copy of this assignment.

then given the introduction, conclusion, and all the parts of the paper written by other students. In their groups, they had to determine the ideal organization for all the writing and then present their organizational structure and rationale to the class. The class then voted on the ideal organization to form one cohesive paper. This activity will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4 but is worth mentioning here because of the impact it had on how students approached major assignment 2 and the ways that collaborative writing did and, more importantly, did not influence their understandings of intertextuality.

Students' final grades for the course were determined as follows:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points</i>
A1 Product Ancestry	100
A2 Community Ownership	200
A3 Remix Researched Argument	250
A4 Digital Remix	200
Homework, in-class activities, quizzes	250

The syllabus also noted that class participation would be used to determine borderline grades.

The grading scale used for the class was as follows:

A+	97 – 100	B+	87 – 89	C+	77 – 79	D+	67 – 69	F	59 and below
A	93– 96	B	83 – 86	C	73 – 78	D	63 – 66		
A-	90 – 92	B-	80 – 82	C-	70 – 72	D-	60 –62		

Instructor/Researcher Relationship

Newkirk (1996) points out that the relationship between a researcher and her research participants is muddled with ethical gray areas. Who holds the power at any particular moment is constantly in flux and can make both the collection and dissemination of information both interesting and tricky. This was especially true given

not only my preexisting relationship with Hazel but also the way that that relationship was challenged and changed over the course of the semester. Because Hazel and I belonged to the same PhD cohort, we had already spent two years together in coursework. Additionally, Hazel and I had a friendship that extended outside the classroom. We were as likely to discuss coursework, our research interests, or our teaching on campus as we were off campus, over coffee or during dinner.

Given this preexisting relationship, it was difficult at first to determine how that relationship should be adjusted given the context of this study. Hazel and I had to negotiate being friends but also being a research participant and a researcher. Jointly, we had a desire to, to the extent that it was possible, heed Newkirk's (1996) advice in regards to sharing "bad news" (p. 13) and the "responsibility of intervention" (p. 14). One way that we attempted to do this was by writing memos to ourselves about the state of the course and our relationship. We would share these memos with one another (usually every three weeks or so) and use them as a means to checking in. In these memos, we would describe concerns we had about how our relationship was changing, the ways our interactions might affect the students, and problems or suggestions we had for facilitating my research goals while not compromising her teaching style or pedagogy. We would also use these memos to raise further questions not only about the study at hand but also ways in which we might have been better prepared for the kinds of issues that arose over the course of the study and possible research collaboration projects we might engage in in the future.

The memos and resulting conversations that we shared regarding these memos significantly impacted my behavior in the classroom when it came to interacting with

students. These memos also helped to set up and clarify boundaries for Hazel and me to observe both inside and outside the classroom. My interaction with students and the boundaries I mention here will be discussed in greater detail in the Data Sources section of this chapter. I have chosen to highlight my relationship with Hazel here, however, because it undeniably played a role in the kind of data I collected, the relationship I was able to form with students, and, as both Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 will indicate, some of the concepts and ideas Hazel chose to focus on in this course.

Student Participants

Twenty-six students originally enrolled in this course though by the end of the semester, only twenty-two remained. Of those twenty-two students, nineteen elected to participate in this study. The study was explained to students on the first day of class and students who wished to participate signed an informed consent letter (see Appendix G). Once again aware of Newkirk's (1996) warning that the informed consent letter "is one of the props that all professions use to enact idealized roles," I tried to describe my study to students in as detailed a description as time allowed (p. 4). I also informed them at that time that those students who chose to participate would be invited to, wherever possible, "co-interpret" the data (Newkirk, 1996, p. 13). This co-interpretation will be explained in greater detail in the Data Sources section of this chapter.

Of the students who signed consent forms and elected to participate in the study, eight were female and eleven were male. Students represented nine different majors. Sixteen students were freshman, two students were sophomores, and one student was a senior. In addition, the course accurately reflected the ethnic diversity of the University's student population: seventeen students self-identified as white, one student identified as

multi-racial (African-American, Native American, and white), and one student identified as Asian. Table 1 offers basic information on each of the participants.

Method and Methodology

This study can best be explained using Moss' (1992) concept of the topic ethnography wherein "topic-ethnography narrows the focus to one or more aspects of life known to exist in a community" (p. 155). I chose to do a classroom-based ethnography because I was interested in the "context that contributes to acts of writing and written products" (Moss, 1992, p. 156). That is, I was interested in how the cultural space of a research-based first-year composition classroom, combined with the larger culture of a research university, influenced the ways students understood themselves as authors and perceived the authorial choices available to them. I was particularly interested in the freshman composition classroom as a "sociological space" wherein "individuals write, (or don't write, or resist writing, or combine reading and writing, or are asked to write and perceive those jobs or academic assignments and carry them out)" (Bishop, 1999, p. 1).

I describe this project as ethnographic based on Lauer and Asher's (1988) claim that "ethnographic research [...] examines entire environments, looking at subjects in context" (p. 39). By participating and observing the entire classroom (including outside activities such as conferences) over the course of the entire semester, I was able "to map and define the whole environment" over a "long period of investigation" (Lauer & Asher, 1988, p. 40).

Table 1

Name, ethnicity, gender, year, and major of each of the nineteen participants in this study.

<i>Pseudonym</i> ⁹	<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Year in School</i>	<i>Major</i>
Alex	White	Male	Freshman	Mechanical Engineering
Blair	White	Female	Freshman	Nursing
Brad	White	Male	Freshman	Mechanical Engineering
Cholin	White	Male	Sophomore	Bioengineering
Elle	White	Female	Freshman	Nursing
Ethan	White	Male	Freshman	Biology
Gilligan	White	Male	Senior	Mechanical Engineering
Jay	White	Male	Freshman	Sports Administration
Jessie	White	Female	Freshman	Elementary Education
Landon	Asian	Male	Freshman	Biology
Marie	White	Female	Freshman	Undecided
Mark	White	Male	Freshman	Undecided/Pre-Engineering
Micah	White	Male	Freshman	Mechanical Engineering
Michelle	White	Female	Freshman	Undecided
Nora	White	Female	Freshman	Chemistry
Paige	Multi-racial (Black and White)	Female	Freshman	Elementary Education
Peyton	White	Female	Freshman	Accounting
Steve	White	Male	Freshman	Sports Administration
William	White	Male	Sophomore	Social Work
<i>Summary</i>				
Nineteen Students	Seventeen White One Asian One Multi-Racial (Black and White)	Eleven male Eight female	Sixteen Freshmen Two Sophomores One Senior	Nine reported majors

⁹ All students were given the opportunity to self-select pseudonyms. Alex, Brad, Landon, and Steve decided to let me choose pseudonyms for them.

Lillis (2008) further points to the way “ethnography as methodology, involving multiple data sources and sustained involvement in contexts of production, enables the researcher to explore and track the dynamic and complex situated meanings and practices that are constituted in and by academic writing” (p. 357). As I will discuss below, I use a variety of data sources that represent sustained involvement, including case studies, discourse analysis, interviews, and a number of other tools as methods.

Similarly, I operated by the principle of “thick participation,” first proposed by Sarangi (2007), wherein “a ‘thick description’ of professional practice , in Geertz’s (1973) sense can only be premised upon what [Sarangi] would call ‘thick participation’” (p. 376). For Sarangi, thick participation “extends beyond data gathering and data interpretation – it also includes the provision of feedback and the facilitation of conditions for potential uptake of discourse analytic findings” (p. 377). In the following section, then, I discuss the extent to my thick participation.

Data Sources

Field Notes and Memos

Given the ethnographic nature of this study, I acted as a participant-observer in Hazel’s English 102 course. To that end, I systematically observed the class by attending class all but two class periods (both of which were considered “library days” when students met with a librarian to discuss how to find and evaluate sources). I did not intentionally miss these days but instead was absent once due to illness and once due to a conference presentation in another state. Given the nature of these library visits, I recognize the potential data lost but tried to compensate, to the extent possible, by

discussing the content of these days both with Hazel and with student participants during interviews.

In attending class, I took notes based on classroom discussion and activities. While during the beginning of the semester I was silent in my course attendance, even when sitting in during small group work, as the course moved into the mid-semester period, students became more comfortable with my presence and began to include me in their discussions, often asking for my opinion or feedback. Hazel and I discussed these moments and both agreed that it would be appropriate for me to take a more active role during these discussions. Generally, I allowed students to prompt me before I would engage in their discussions.

On several occasions, when students were confused about what they were supposed to do, I would engage in discussion with them before being prompted, offering the kind of intervention Newkirk (1996) advocated. This was done with Hazel's approval (based on previous discussions about what to do in these instances). In many ways then, I acted as what Bishop (1999) calls the active observer, "moving into the scene where it seems natural and polite, and moving back to observe more carefully when that also seems functional" (p. 75). I attempted to be "a member of the classroom [...] being studied with a minimum of overt intervention" (Lauer & Asher, 1988, p. 39). In addition to in-class observations, I also systematically observed all student conferences held with participating students as well as occasional appointments students scheduled with Hazel to discuss their writing or standing in the course.

As part of my observations, I took daily field notes to help me generate significant trends or patterns occurring in class that could inform the textual analysis and discourse-

based interviews I would be performing. I used these notes to triangulate conclusions I drew based on other materials I collected (such as student papers or transcripts from classroom discussions). Throughout the process of coding, collecting, and analyzing data, I also wrote weekly and occasionally biweekly memos to myself as a means of documenting my own thinking and observations over the course of the study. These memos helped as I moved into various stages of the coding process, from my observations and initial coding into categories that would eventually feed the theory that I developed.

Discourse-Based Interviews

Over the course of the semester, I conducted a total of twelve formal discourse-based interviews with student volunteers (I did not target specific students but instead asked the entire class if anyone was interested). A total of eight students (Blair, Cholin, Gilligan, Marie, Nora, Paige, Payton, and William) volunteered to be interviewed during the first round of interviews (which took place immediately after the first major assignment had been graded and returned to them). Of those eight students, four (Cholin, Gilligan, Paige, and William) were available for a follow-up interview at the end of the semester, after the final assignment, the digital remix, had been graded and returned.

The initial goal for these interviews was to determine how students viewed their roles as authors of their own texts. The focus of these interviews was on the students' own perception of themselves as authors and on the intertextual nature of their writing. Haber & Lingard (2001) explain that "discourse-based interviews elicit tacit knowledge about language by having participants work with a discourse sample and explicitly justify content and organizational choices" (p. 5). In this case, the discourse sample students

were interviewed about was their own writing products that they had turned in and had been graded by Hazel. In questioning students about their writing, I ensured that participants knew that I was “not questioning the correctness of [their] choice[s] in any way,” but rather was interested in the choices they made and the reasons behind those choices (Sullivan, 2012, p. 1).

During the first interview, I asked students specifically about their first paper, focusing on how they used citation and instructor feedback in their writing. While I included general questions about originality, authorship, and plagiarism, the bulk of my questions were specific to the students’ individual papers. I focused on how and why they incorporated sources the way that they did. The second interview focused on the final major assignment and again included questions directly from their digital remixes and accompanying papers, but also included questions related to the third assignment (the researched argument) and the course as a whole. The majority of interviews lasted approximately twenty to thirty minutes. Interviews with William tended to be longer, averaging about forty minutes, and interviews with Paige were shorter, averaging about fifteen minutes.

During each of these interviews, I recognized that despite my best efforts, some students still may have felt pressure to perform and offer what they perceived to be the “correct” answers. This is especially true given my position in their course. On the first day of class, when Hazel introduced me, she introduced me as a fellow composition instructor. This introduction would immediately affect how students perceived me as a “member” of their classroom community. While in many ways such an introduction helped build my own ethos as a researcher and, I believe, encouraged students to sign up

to be interviewed, I cannot ignore the fact that such an introduction would also color any and all future interaction I had with students in this course. Moreover, interviews took place in my office, which had an “Assistant Director of Composition” plaque on the door. One student even explicitly pointed out this plaque when entering the office for an interview. William, upon sitting down in the office, admitted (somewhat jokingly): “Had I realized your title, I might not have signed up.”

In addition, students frequently saw Hazel and me engaged in conversation either before or after class. While these conversations generally revolved around figuring out when I would have access to student work that needed to be copied, or to questions I had about upcoming assignments, students may have mistakenly perceived these moments as indicators of my research agenda aligning itself with Hazel’s pedagogical agenda. During interviews, I was quick to explain that no information offered there would be given to Hazel. Though interviews did occasionally present moments where intervention (Newkirk, 1996) might be warranted, in these instances, confidentiality seemed more important than the potential for intervention—especially since in no case was the intervention required going to significantly hurt the student’s performance if not offered. However, if interviews presented a trend in the kind of intervention necessary, I would share this information with Hazel under the auspices of “something I’ve been noticing in class.” I also emphasized to students that there were no “right” or “wrong” answers; however, students who participated in this aspect of my study were self-selecting and therefore likely to be high achievers looking to please not only their instructor but also the researcher.

Still, overall I found students to be honest, even if uncomfortable, during these interviews. Take, for example, this interview segment with Gilligan. During this interview, we were discussing some of the sources he did and did not cite in his first major assignment:

Barrie: So I know that you paraphrased this information from this source, but then like this section, or over here, where you're giving dates and stuff, you don't have any parenthetical citation to say that it's paraphrased. Why do you think that is?

Gilligan: **I think maybe it's because that's, maybe I feel that that's information that's kind of easily available, you know, like it's, I'm not really plagiarizing that the Gameboy was released in that year. But if someone were to look it up, to get more information, that's something they wouldn't have to dig for.**

Barrie: Do you feel like it's either easy to find or maybe you read it in a couple different places—

Gilligan: I probably went to Wikipedia or something and found that information. **I know it's not a credible source but it's usually spot-on.** If I want to learn something about it, that's usually the first place I go. I know you need to take it at face-value.

Barrie: So speaking of Wikipedia being the first place you go, when you're looking for sources do you normally get a paper topic idea, then look for sources, then start writing? Do you start writing and then look for sources to back up what you're writing?

Gilligan: I probably do research first. **A lot of Google. Like I don't really know how to use the library. I probably get on Google and look around and if you see a lot of sources saying pretty much the same thing I feel like that's acceptable, I guess. It's probably good data then. All these different sources. But not like pulling off people's MySpace pages or anything.**

I use this example because I think it illustrates students' abilities to be honest while still feeling the need to justify their choices based on their perceptions of my expectations. Here, in the bold sections, you can see Gilligan admit to different research habits that he thinks I would disapprove of (using Wikipedia, preferring Google over the library) and then justifying those choices by acknowledging the concerns he assumes a composition instructor would have regarding those sources and offering evidence in his favor. He does this even though, as you can see here, I never question his choices or make qualitative judgments on the sources he used.

Interviews were also a time when students were invited to co-interpret the research data I had gathered. During interviews, I would sometimes share field notes with students and ask them whether they agreed with my interpretations of the situation being recorded or described. I was surprised when most students showed little interest in this activity. For example, I asked each interviewee if he or she would be interested in seeing the parts of my dissertation chapters that related to them and they each said that while it might be "a little cool" or "okay" to see that information, they weren't particularly interested in it and I only needed to send it to them "if I really thought it was necessary."

Instructor Interviews

In addition to interviewing students, I also had four formal interviews with Hazel over the course of the semester. Each interview took place after she had finished grading each set of major assignments. During these interviews, I would ask Hazel to describe the goals she had for the assignment, asking her to specify goals that were writing-based (such as getting students to use quote frames when integrating sources) and more theory-based (such as having students consider the different roles of consumers and producers in any given community). I would also ask Hazel to explain how she felt students did given these goals. Like the student interviews, these interviews were also occasionally discourse-based with me bringing in student writing samples and asking her to comment on either the writing or the written comments she had made on that writing. These interviews each lasted approximately forty-five minutes and became increasingly important as I noticed a disjuncture between Hazel's goals for the assignment and how students perceived and understood those goals.

Formal interviews with Hazel were complemented by informal discussions she and I often shared. Unlike the formal interviews, these discussions were not tape recorded and could last anywhere from a minute (such as a passing comment in the hallway) to a full hour or more. These discussions often formed the basis for different observations I made in my weekly memos.

Transcription of Classroom Discussion and Discourse

Over the course of the semester, I audio-recorded approximately twenty-seven hours of classroom discussion and lecture, group work, peer and instructor conferences, and interviews. I audio-recorded all lectures and discussions explicitly related to how authorship is operating in the classroom. I also audio-record lectures and discussions that,

while not explicitly tied to authorship, I believed may have interesting connections. For example, discussions on digital media (such as blogging or Facebook) provided interesting information regarding student positioning on authorship. I occasionally audio-recorded peer review sessions to generate information on how collaborative work related to intertextual practices in the classroom. These audio-recordings were transcribed with all personal identifiers removed and resulted in approximately 225 pages of transcription. I tried to keep my transcriptions as true to a student's language as possible (for example leaving utterances such as "cause," meaning "because," as is). I also included "ums," "likes," and other verbal fillers to give a sense of pauses and hesitation on the part of the speaker.

Student Texts

I collected copies of all the major assignments students turned in. For each of these assignments, I collected both rough and final drafts. In addition, I collected any pre-writing assignments associated with these assignments, such as outlines and topic proposals. I also collected copies of most homework assignments. These assignments were generally in response to a prompt given by Hazel either in response to a required reading assignment or in preparation for an upcoming major assignment. On occasion, I also requested copies of in-class writing assignments.

Data Analysis

This study used grounded theory, first proposed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967, in the collection and analysis of data. In proposing grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss were arguing for both a new kind of method and a new methodology of data collection that relied not on a preexisting theory for analyzing data but on a theory

that was built while analyzing data. (Birks & Mills, 2010; Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1992; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Using grounded theory, I generated codes for my data from the data itself. I began this process by open coding the data, wherein I identified “important words, or groups of words, in the data and then labeled them accordingly” (Birks & Mills, 2010, p. 9). In the beginning, I focused on words such as *originality*, *plagiarism*, *citation*, and *authorship*. In this way, “the first set of data [was] analyzed and coded immediately, and the results inform[ed] the next set of data collection activity” (Khambete & Athavankar, 2010, p. 13). In doing this, I engaged in what Birks & Mills (2010) described as the “fundamental [aspect of] grounded theory research design[:] the process of concurrent data generation or collection and analysis” (p. 10). This initial method of coding reflected my initial research questions:

1. What assumptions about authorship are operative in the first-year composition classroom? How do these assumptions change over the course of the semester?
2. How do students understand and practice intertextuality in the first-year composition classroom?
3. What kinds of activities and assignments either promote or inhibit student practices and understandings of authorship?

Using these questions as my initial guide, my original coding schema also used a more theoretical concept of authorship. I used Gerard Genette’s classification schema for transtextuality, or the “orderly sets of possible relations among texts” (Bazerman, 2004, p. 5). I selected Genette because among major literary critics engaged in discussions of intertextuality (such as Barthes, Kristeva, and Rifaterre), Genette is the only one to “offer a concrete analysis of how intertextuality works within specific texts” (Bazerman, 2004,

p. 5). Genette coined the term *transtextuality* to discuss the various ways that texts interact with other texts. Genette proposed that transtextuality was made up of five possible textual relationships:

- *Intertextuality* is “a relation of co-presence between two or more texts, that is to say, eidetically and most often, by the literal presence of one text within another” (Genette, 1997b, p. 8). Genette argues that intertextuality is generally marked by the use of quotation marks or explicit allusion.
- *Paratextuality* occurs in those parts of a text “that mediate [it] to the reader: titles and subtitles, pseudonyms, forewords, dedications, epigraphs, prefaces, intertitles, notes, epilogues, and afterwords” (Genette, 1997a, p. XVII).
- *Metatextuality* is what Genette (1997b) calls commentary and “it unites a given text to another, of which it speaks without necessarily citing it (without summoning it), in fact sometimes even without naming it” (p. 4). Metatextuality is frequently invoked in reviews and literary criticism.
- *Hypertextuality* is “any relationship uniting a text B (which [Genette] shall call the *hypertext* to an earlier text A (which [Genette] shall call the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary” (Genette, 1997b, p. 5). In this relationship, one sees “the play of one text off of familiarity with another” (Bazerman, 2004, p. 5).
- *Architextuality*, the final method of transtextuality, is the “entire set of general or transcendent categories—types of discourse, modes of enunciation, literary genres—from which emerges each single text” (Genette, 1997b, p. 5).

I coded student texts based on this framework, looking for patterns of usage within and across genre and assignment types. Writing was coded as being *intertextual* when students made explicit reference to another text using quotation. Paige, for example, makes this move in her second major assignment: “The pronunciation of the word is very hard for some people. ‘It’s pronounced CHAIR-uh-kee. It comes from a Muskogee word meaning speakers of another language’ (Cherokee Indian Fact Sheet).” Text was labeled *paratextual* when it acted as a form of genre or topic signposting for readers. In this study, the only paratextual elements to appear were titles and section headers. Students recognized their titles and section headings as paratextual (not using that word, of course). When I asked Gilligan how he came up with his title, he explained, “I just wanted something short, concise, like an overview of the whole paper. Well maybe not an overview but you know what I’m saying.” *Metatextuality* was largely absent from students’ written texts but did appear in their digital remix projects. Jessie, for example, made a video called “Rednecks and Tiara’s” that implicitly commented on the well-known reality show “Toddlers and Tiaras.” The lack of this element in written work will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 4 but can be largely attributed both to students’ fears of plagiarism and to the genres they were asked to write. *Hypertextuality* was often used by students in titles. Marie, for example, titled her first major assignment “Maybe She’s Born With It: The Birth of Modern Mascara,” a play off of the Maybelline Cosmetics slogan. Lastly, *architextuality* played a major role in class discussions and student /instructor conferences. In this conference transcript between Hazel and Marie, Hazel encourages Marie to set up her paper as a definition argument:

Hazel: Okay, so let's start with originality. Let me look at my notes. Okay, so, I think one thing that you can do about originality is if you did, if you set up a definition of originality, either up front or maybe you could work it in right here, so you could do this kind of like criteria. Have you done a definition argument before?

Marie: I don't think so. If I did it wasn't called that.

Hazel: That's okay. Basically, the way it works is you say, "the definition of originality is this and here are the criteria for it" and then you write a paragraph for each criteria.

I also noted moments when Genette's framework did not lend itself to the texts I was coding. These moments included instances when it was unclear what form of textual relationship I was reading (for example, a moment when something could be coded as both metatextuality and architextuality) or when I perceived a textual relationship one way and the student whose work I was reviewing argued for another way. Paraphrasing was also difficult to code based on Genette's framework, especially when that paraphrasing lacked appropriate citation and therefore was not explicitly linking itself to other texts (Genette's criterion for intertextuality).

Given that Genette's framework did not always work for my data, and given the nature of grounded theory, I consistently reviewed not only my schema for coding and the codes itself, but also the questions that guided those codes. As patterns and points of interest emerged from the data, my guiding questions often changed and post-data collection, I had a revised set of questions:

1. How does citation instruction and practice impede student writing?

2. What is the relationship between citation practice and student notions of “originality” and “authorship”?
3. Does the idea of “originality” or trying to be “original” help or restrict students when they are writing?

In response to this revised set of research questions, I developed a final set of twelve coding categories with which I analyzed classroom transcripts and student work:

1. Arrangement: This category pertained to discussions on arrangement and organization. While this category was often used literally by students discussing, for example, the order of how information should appear in a paper, it became interesting in its lack of use when students discussed their remix digital projects. For example, while arrangement was an important part of the writing process during the class-authored journalism paper, students did not see it as an indication that “writing” was happening during their digital projects. During my final interview with Paige about her remix project (she made a video), I asked her if she would consider making the video a kind of writing. She said she did not “because I didn’t have a script; I didn’t really write anything down for it. I just did stuff for it.” When I pushed her on the arrangement part of the video, asking “What about when you were cutting pieces together and then putting it together as a video? You still didn’t really feel like you were writing something there?,” she replied with a very succinct, “no.”
2. Categories of Originality: I labeled this category “Categories of Originality” because over the course of the semester, both students and Hazel often referred to originality using other words such as *new* and *unique*. While these words each

offer a nuanced understanding of what it means to be original, based on the texts and transcripts I analyzed, they were being used interchangeably with *originality*. In Chapter 5, I offer an analysis of what it means to use these words interchangeably and how they affect student understanding of and response to the need to be original in their writing.

3. Author/Writer: In my research, I initially used the words *author* and *writer* interchangeably. Interviews with students, however, indicated that these words carried very different meanings to them. Students often discussed themselves as writers (almost always in the negative: “I’m a slow writer;” “I’m a bad writer”) but argued, often times intently, that they were not authors. As Gilligan explained to me in our final interview, “I think writer [as compared to author] is a little more, well, they’re probably about the same but writer feels like it’s more general and author makes me think of something being published.” Despite students using these words differently, I elected to group them together because they were always used in relation to the act of writing and having (or lacking) ownership over that writing.
4. Regulation and Power: Much of the writing students did for this class related to control—who owned something, who regulated it, who was allowed to produce it. Power also came up frequently in interviews and group work. This category became increasingly important as I tried to understand how students felt they gained ownership over their work and the ways in which the academy denied them that ownership. This category is exemplified by a paragraph written by

Blair, Elle, and Alex during a group work discussion on how products are produced and regulated in the academic community:

In the academic community professors are in control. They produce academic journals and conduct academic research. Students and other scholars use these journals and the research to further their knowledge and understanding of any given field. Generally, the only rules applied have to do with plagiarism and academic honesty.

5. Identity: While I did not originally foresee having an “Identity” category, it became apparent that I needed one as a way to bridge other categories, such as “Plagiarism” or “Author/Writer” with a category like “Power and Regulation.” There were sometimes moments when students would be discussing plagiarism, for example, not from the perspective of ownership or originality, but as a means for labeling someone as being something. Nora, for example, argued early in the semester, before students had done a lot of reading on plagiarism, that “plagiarism distinguishes the lazy from the hardworking, and the educated from the ignorant.” I felt that a statement like this needed to be placed not under “Plagiarism” (since the focus isn’t on the act of plagiarism) but under a broader category of “Identity” (because the focus was on what the act of plagiarism makes someone). In addition, because this course focused on notions of originality, *authenticity* and *credibility* were often brought up both in student writing and class discussions. I elected to group *authenticity* and *credibility* under the umbrella of “Identity” because, as with the plagiarism example above, the focus in using these words or

ideas was not on the action of the writer, but on how that writer was perceived as being (authentic/inauthentic or credible/non-credible).

6. Plagiarism: I used this category to indicate discussions of ownership. While data grouped into this category was sometimes tied to discussions of “Regulation and Power,” the majority of discussion revolving around plagiarism and ownership did not take into account the power structures surrounding those two ideas. Instead, plagiarism was more often discussed as being the opposite of originality. Gilligan, for example, argued that “plagiarism is the enemy of originality” and Payton feared that “plagiarism is causing students to be less original in their work, which in turn means they are learning less with the assignments they are given because they aren’t really doing them.”
7. Remix: Remix was a popular word over the course of the semester since, from the beginning, it was a topic that Hazel visited and revisited with her students often. While the word was often used in relation to digital media, students also used it during the first assignment to discuss whether or not a product was original. Though I had hoped to eventually see them use it in the context of the work they did with sources in their own writing, this was not the case. It is worth noting that the word “remix,” as it was used in this course, was often synonymous with the word “intertextuality.”
8. Procedures and Mechanics: This category encompassed the nuts and bolts of citation and writing skills: formatting, proper citation, etc. In discussions of source citation, both in the classroom and during interviews, the procedures and mechanics for citing sources almost always took up more discussion time than

more intellectual angles such as source synthesis. Additionally, when students discussed research-related writing and their feelings towards it, they almost always did so in relation to procedures and mechanics. Blair, for example, explained the following on the first day of class: “My most memorable experience with writing and research was a paper I did on abuse in high school. I did not enjoy this assignment because I never learned how to properly get and site [sic] the information needed.”

9. Working with Sources (excluding the mechanics of integrating sources): Because the procedures and mechanics of finding and documenting sources was such an extensive part of this course, I elected to separate it from a more general category of “Working with Sources.” The “Working with Sources” category encompassed what I consider to be the more intellectual moves of working with sources: analyzing sources, synthesizing sources, and entering the ongoing conversation surrounding a given topic. Students often expressed having difficulty working with sources. For example, Nora, in a conference with Hazel, struggled to synthesize two sources that made different claims about the largest Christian denominations. In the end, as she told Hazel, “I didn’t know what to do with that so I just decided I would put them all together.”
10. Creativity: When I first started developing these categories, “Creativity” was grouped under “Categories of Originality.” Upon closer examination of moments where *creativity* was used, however, it became clear that students (Hazel never used the word herself) were using this to mean something very different from words like *originality*. *Creativity* was used to describe writing assignments where

students did not need to use sources, or where they were given free reign over what to write about and how to organize that writing. Because *original* writing could still be considered “researched writing” by most students, I separated “Creativity” out into its own category.

11. Nods towards Intertextuality: As I noted earlier in this chapter, the word *intertextual* was never used by any of the research subjects. The idea of intertextuality, however, was often alluded to or implicitly discussed (especially with the word “remix”). Coding these moments was very important because it helped show the arc of awareness students gained as they began to see why originality was so hard to achieve. For example, early in the semester, Hazel shared remixed movie trailers with students. In one trailer, the author used the video from Pixar’s *Cars* trailer and the audio from the *Talledega Nights* trailer. Students were in awe about how well one trailer’s video could go with another trailer’s audio. Here, Michelle and Landon try to grapple with the similarities:

Michelle: I just didn’t realize how similar they were. The characters are like exact, stupid best friend, love.

Landon: Which one came out first?

Michelle: They were both the same. I looked it up. They were both 2006.

Landon: Wow. Maybe, maybe they had similar producers or something.

Michelle: No, I looked up that, too.

Landon: And different studios?

Michelle: Yeah.

Landon: Wow.

As this exchange demonstrates, students are beginning to see intertextuality at work (though they don't have a word for what they are seeing).

12. Collaboration: This category is used to mark moments where students are writing together. It is also used when students discuss whether or not to cite the words or ideas they got from either Hazel or their peers. This idea is reflected in Nora's feedback to Hazel about the collaborative journalism paper: "This paper was more interesting to read than most because we have all been equally a part of this assignment. Although I do not know which group wrote about what, it is interesting to hear everyone's feedback tied together to create one paper."

Developing Theory

Glaser and Strauss (1967) argue that "in discovering theory, one generates conceptual categories or their properties from evidence, then the evidence from which the category emerged is used to illustrate the concept" (p. 30). In the forthcoming chapters, I have attempted to do just that. While my own ideas and notions regarding authorship and intertextuality guided my initial data collection, it is the data that eventually informed what I decided to collect, what and how I coded, and what I came to believe I saw and understood as operational in this particular first-year composition classroom.

CHAPTER 3

INTERTEXTUALITY AS A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

While many in the field claim to take a social approach, teachers still often expect their students to produce what are considered to be thoroughly ‘original’ texts—texts that make a clear distinction between invented and borrowed work, between that which is unique and that which is derivative or supportive. In addition, this highlighted separation is frequently constructed as a hierarchy in terms of writing process. The best work of writers is understood to be their original text with citations and borrowed materials situated as useful but less valuable support. (Johnson-Eilola & Selber, 2007, p. 376)

Barrie: What do you think was the most original piece of writing you did all semester?

Paige: Mmmm, probably my first one.

Barrie: Why is that?

Paige: Because I knew, like that was more of an opinionated piece than the other two. The other two were just like, I had to pull facts from like the different cultures but I felt like the first one was more original, like more of my writing, other than me like looking up stuff to find out what to write about. (Final Interview)

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I provided an overview of the Midwestern Metropolitan Composition Program and the Composition II classroom I observed over the course of one semester. I also outlined my methodology and the theoretical underpinnings of that methodology. In addition, I discussed the various research participants who were involved in the study. In this chapter, I focus on how Hazel (the instructor) used the term *remix* to teach a more intertextual view of writing and language more generally. Specifically, I examine the way that Hazel’s concept—remix—both helped and hindered

students in exploring the anxieties they felt about needing to be original in their writing and about understanding writing as intertextual (as discussed in Chapter 1) in nature. To that end, this chapter offers insight into the ways students adapted a term like remix to stand in for something other than originality. To explore this, I will begin by reviewing the drive for originality in student writing and how that drive produces anxiety for students. Next, I will review how the term remix was defined and used by the students in this course and will argue that all these student definitions exposed the originality burden. Then, I will show how remix as a concept was complicated by student understandings of power differentials. More specifically, I explore how students came to see remix as something they engaged in while their professors engaged in creating original work. Finally, I will demonstrate the ways remix influenced the academic writing students did in the course.

‘Originality’ and Anxiety in Composition

The epigraphs that begin this chapter point to the originality burden—an anxiety faced by students and composition instructors alike: the drive to demand and produce original writing. As Johnson-Eilola and Selber (2007) indicate, instructors feel compelled to instruct “their students to produce what are considered thoroughly ‘original’ texts” (p. 376). Students in composition courses like the one I studied, however, often feel at a loss for how to accomplish this. The course I observed, English 102, is a research course and, as such, requires incorporating outside resources into writing. As Paige suggests in the chapter’s epigraph, such a requirement hinders her self-perceived ability to be original. The minute she has “to pull facts” or be “looking stuff up,” the degree to which she feels she is writing something original decreases. Still, instructors continue to call for

originality in student writing despite student resistance to the notion of originality in their first-year composition writing (DeVoss & Rosati, 2002; Johnson & Clerehan, 2005; Pennycook, 1996; Porter, 1986).

In addition to having difficulty producing original writing, students also struggle to see that writing, especially academic writing, is a social act. Graff and Birkenstein (2009) explain that “to be persuasive, arguments need not only supporting evidence but also motivation and exigency, and that the surest way to achieve this motivation and exigency is to generate one’s own arguments as a response to those of others” (p. vii). Here, the authors use a key word: *own*. *Own* reflects the idea of writing from within, or of creating something original. But what the authors stress here is that effective original academic writing, especially in the context of the composition classroom, is accomplished when the student’s writing is placed within the context of previous writing. Thus, integrating sources into their writing isn’t just a skill students need to learn before moving on to other university classes. Rather, it is a means through which one makes original arguments. Through this lens, academic writing, especially in research-based courses, is thoroughly intertextual.

As discussed in Chapter 1, however, the idea of original writing *and* integrating sources is complicated in academic settings by the ever-present shadow of plagiarism. Because plagiarism statements often present writing as singular and originary (Howard, 1999; Valentine, 2006), students feel compelled to perceive writing that way rather than in a more social and intertextual way. If we return to Paige’s statement at the beginning of this chapter, we can see her confusion and anxiety as it relates to original writing. For

Paige and students like her, the call to find “something ‘new’ to say about well-travelled ground” can be frustrating, to say the least.

This is especially true in research-based composition courses where students are asked to conduct research or make arguments on topics they knew little about previously or for which they had little interest. Nora, in a homework assignment where students responded to readings on plagiarism, summed up this notion well, explaining that “coming up with an original idea can be difficult if a person had no prior thought on the subject.” Nora is in good company when expressing this concern. DeVoss and Rosati (2002) argue that “American academic writing is full of often conflicting complications, the most obvious of which is expecting students to come up with and develop an original idea, while requiring them to find plenty of material to back up their supposedly new and original idea or perspective on a subject” (p. 195).

In response to the frustrations and struggles experienced by students like Paige and Nora, many scholars in Composition Studies have argued for the introduction of remix into composition pedagogy (Hendricks & Quinn, 2000; Hess, 2006; Johnson & Clerehan, 2005; Johnson-Eilola & Selber, 2007). Remix and its various iterations—sampling, assemblage, and so forth—could serve to disrupt student notions of originality by offering a more intertextual understanding of both language and meaning. Further, because remix is often associated with digital media (Yancey, 2009) and remixed writing often takes place in digital forms, researchers believe it helps disrupt what students think they know about writing and intertextuality since remixed digital writing is outside the norm of what they normally perceive as writing (Dubisar & Palmeri, 2012; Johnson-Eilola & Selber, 2007). Thus, remix has become quite the buzz word in composition,

often touted as a potential golden key to helping students understand what it is we want from them when we ask for originality, especially while working with sources.

For Hazel, the term *remix* came to stand not just for digital remixed projects but for a theoretical concept used to explore the intertextual creation of meaning. As Hazel's syllabus suggests, the *concept* of "remix," not just the *products* of remix, was central to the curriculum she designed. As she explained in her syllabus, the class "will use the idea of remix to delve into common issues around writing practice including but not limited to the following: authorship, ownership, using and crediting sources, revision, rhetorical community practices, the appropriate forms and genres for particular products, among others" (1). She further explained that "the term remix will be used broadly to consider a variety of products from video mash-ups to scholarly work" (1). Thus, from the beginning, and as described in Chapter 1, the idea of remix came to stand for an intertextual view of language. In this course, the term became a driving force for how students were to interpret both the class material they read or watched and the material they produced.

To put in perspective the reach of the term "remix" in this course, during class discussions and in-class group work the term was used by either Hazel or her students 110 times over the course of the semester. Compare this to the use of the other terms you might expect in a course such as this one—organization (31 times), thesis or claim (14 times), writer (22 times), argument (37 times)—and it's clear that it played a major role in class conversations. In fact, of the terms I considered (organization, thesis or claim, writer, argument, research, source, and citation), the only term to appear significantly more than "remix" was "source," which appeared 368 times. The idea of sources will be

discussed more fully in the following chapter. For now, I will focus on remix as it was used in this course.

Remix Defined

I will begin by discussing how remix was introduced to students and then offer the various understandings and applications of the term that students made. I begin here because in order to understand the effectiveness of a term like remix for explaining a concept like intertextuality, one must first understand the various interpretations remix received by students in this classroom. In this class, students first saw the word “remix” in the course syllabus but the concept did not begin to be explored until the second day of class. In preparation for that day, students were expected to watch Part 1 of the “Everything is a Remix” series online. In Part 1 of the four-part series, the filmmaker, Kirby Ferguson, argues that while remix is a term first attributed to the remixing commonly associated with hip-hop music, it can be applied more broadly to any creation. He defines remix as “to combine or edit existing materials to produce something new” (Ferguson, 2011). In reaction to this video, students responded to the following prompt:

Define remix in your own terms/understanding. What are other common examples of remix? What is the significance of remix in our society? In the academy (university, schools in general)?

In reviewing student responses, I perceived that the students were presenting two different definitions of remix. In establishing these two different definitions, I noted the language that was common across all the definitions students presented. Two words in particular became a pattern in the responses: *new* and *own*. Table 2 shows two examples

of how the words *new* and *own* were used by students. These two examples are representative of the two different definitions that students wrote.

Table 2

Remix as defined by students in their first homework assignment.

Definition 1 Combination of Ideas to Form Something New	Definition 2 Making Someone Else’s Work Your Own
Just the combination of different ideas to form something new. (Blair)	Taking someone else’s work but making it your own. Making it your own by changing it a little bit. (Cholin)

As Table 2 indicates, students interpreted remix either as being a vehicle to create something *new* (13 students) or as a way of a making something your *own* (6 students). In quantifying the number of students per definition, I observed which word—*new* or *own*—students used in their definitions. Each student-authored definition included one of these two words but not both making the initial separation into two categories fairly easy. After dividing the definitions based on each word, I reviewed each definition to see if the words were associated with definition overlap. As I suspected, the use of a word—*new* or *own*—did indicate a difference in definition.

As one can see, the difference in definitions is not extreme. The slight difference in nuance, however, is worth noting. Students who agreed with the “Combination of Ideas to Form Something New” definition remained in line with the definition featured in Ferguson’s video. Both the student-written definition of remix and the one offered by Ferguson coincide with Yancey’s (2009) definition of the term. When Yancey used the term, it was in reference to a new graduate program in Rhetoric and Composition being created at Florida State University. In reference to the program, she argued that it was “about making a new, coherent program both from fragments of the old program and

from new programmatic pieces” (p. 5). Yancey, like the students I observed, focused on the idea of creating something *new*. It is this idea of newness that separates Definition 1 from Definition 2. While both definitions agree that remix is about using previously existing material (with material standing in for ideas, texts, music, artwork, etc.), they differ in what one is supposed to do with that material.

Though it might be tempting to say that the students who defined remix in terms of making something your own meant the same thing as those who defined remix as making something new, it is important to distinguish the two concepts. As class discussion on the matter showed, having to make something *new* was far more intimidating to students than making something their *own*. Nora, for example, saw making something your own as feasible while making something new seemed almost impossible. In a homework assignment on copyright law, Nora explained that “we are not creating new things we are simply making older things better.” When I asked her about this in an interview, and presented her with the two definitions I saw students making earlier in the semester, she asserted that her reasoning fell more in line with the *own* definition, Definition 2, since Definition 2 involved making something different, not making something new. Nora wasn’t alone in her skepticism of “newness.” Landon, for example, argued that “you can’t be original” and, by association, that creating something new isn’t possible. Jay took a similar stance. As he explained, “it [the creation] can’t really be around for something that already exists. Every single part of it has to be new, it can’t exist using something that already exists.” For these students, the removal of the “new” idea from the definition of remix, especially as it relates to originality, is crucial. Without the removal of the word “new,” remix—or intertextuality more generally—will

seem impossible to students. This suggests that understanding intertextuality as still involving the production of something new might not be helpful in relieving the originality burden. It does, however, expose the originality burden.

Definition 2 also differs from Definition 1 in its focus on ownership. As one can see in Definition 1, there is no reference to material ownership. In Definition 2, students acknowledge both the ownership of the previously created material and the ownership of the material being generated. There is a “someone else” and a “your own” being explicitly recognized. In this way, Definition 2 also presented anxiety for students, though of a different kind than Definition 1. Whereas Definition 1 was anxiety-provoking because of its insistence on developing something new, Definition 2 is anxiety provoking because it insists on the differentiation between which ideas belong to the author and which ideas belong to others.

For students, this definition was eerily similar to the plagiarism statements they had encountered over the course of their academic careers thus far. Michelle discussed this problem in a homework assignment related to plagiarism statements. She wrote:

When it comes to plagiarism how much is too much? I used to think copying ideas, words, etc. of anyone was considered plagiarism, but now that we have discussed remixing, fair use, and copyright my thoughts have changed. With discussing remix I have learned that taking an idea or ideas and transferring them into another separate idea is not plagiarism.

Michelle’s question, “How much is too much” certainly speaks to the anxiety students feel about distinguishing what is theirs from what is someone else’s and, as this excerpt shows, while remix served to show her that ownership wasn’t as simple as “yours” or

“mine,” it did not fully solve the ownership and attribution dilemma and, by extension, the originality burden. Rather, as with Definition 1, it only seemed to expose it further.

With two different definitions operating in the classroom, Hazel urged students to adopt a class-authored definition of remix. This definition, that remix was “using and recombining other materials to create a new, distinct, unique product,” made clear connections to writing as intersexually understood. This definition, like the original two posed by the students in the class, also raised questions, including what could be considered new, what makes something unique, and how one can argue that something is distinct. Thus, from the beginning, the term *remix* seemed to pose further challenges in relation to originality, rather than provide new answers. Remix, at least as defined by students up to this point in the class, managed to raise and point to the questions that students faced concerning writing and originality, but it did not answer them. Still, in raising these questions, remix did offer students a means for exploring how originality is defined and produced. In exposing the originality burden, it provided an opportunity for students and Hazel to explicitly consider and discuss their concerns.

Remix Explored

After spending several weeks discussing originality and remix, and immersing themselves in high-level readings (students read articles by scholars such as Adler-Kassner, Anson, and Howard (2008) and Jenkins (2006)) and popular culture items (such as YouTube videos), students received their first major assignment from Hazel. The assignment overview read as follows:

In this first unit we’ve focused on how ideas and products are built by improving and remixing previous samples. We’ve also discussed how the explicit and

implicit rules around these products influence how “innovative” products are marketed, received, and used. This assignment asks you to pick an “innovative” or “unique” product and discuss the influences on and reactions to its development. For our purposes, an *innovative* or *unique* product is one that is commonly believed to be “the first of its kind” or unlike anything that’s come before it. Examples of this kind of product include the personal computer, the Kindle, the water-purifying straw, etc. You might find an internet search of “best innovations” or “best new products” helpful in deciding on a product.

Option 2: In class discussion, we’ve done a nice job exposing how “innovative” products are often remixed pieces from previous technology. Essentially, we’ve made clear that “everything is remix.” This does not necessarily mean though that everything is old or that nothing is new, original, or creative. This second option asks that you pick a product and explain why it *is* innovative and original despite its similarities to previous products.

The take away, for both Hazel and her students, was that students were to pick a product and discuss why it was or was not original. Ultimately, Hazel hoped the assignment would encourage the following for her students:

I want them to be thinking about how basically nothing is original, like everything is linked together [...] Part of the reason why I wanted them thinking about this is because in some ways it releases the burden of coming up with an original idea for their papers. And it also emphasizes the fact that they do need to draw on other people to create something new.

Here, Hazel quite explicitly articulates that she thinks nothing is original; it is, at best, remixed. Remix, as Hazel argues here, serves as a vehicle for increased intertextual understanding on the part of her students. It “emphasizes the fact that they do need to draw on other people to create something new.” As such, she wanted to push them to see remix, and originality more broadly, through the class definition of remix. She wanted them to start thinking about writing as an intertextual network. While there was debate about whether remix counted as originality (25% of students said that it did not), there was a general consensus that at the very least, most items drew on previous items in order to be considered innovative or new (synonyms often used by students to indicate originality). Having students argue for a product’s originality (or lack thereof) would thus be an interesting way to gauge how well students really accepted the idea of intertextuality and its ability to relieve the originality burden.

The degree to which students struggled with remix and originality can be seen both in the conferences they had with Hazel to discuss their first drafts and in the drafts themselves. Overall, students fell into two camps: those who believed remix equaled originality and those who did not. Table 3 shows which camp each of the students (who turned in Assignment 1) fell into. The five students who argued that something remixed did not make something original were the only students to argue that either their products were unoriginal or that they were original only because they contained no remixed elements. The remaining nine students all argued that a remixed product was an original product. Interestingly, in making such an argument, among the nine students, four different, more nuanced, lines of remix reasoning appeared. The first line of reasoning, which I call “evolutionary reasoning,” asserts that something original can stem off of or

evolve from something previous. The second line of reasoning, which I call “new perception reasoning,” argues that originality is achieved by creating a new perception. The third line of reasoning, “combination reasoning,” suggests that originality is achieved by combining ideas that hadn’t been combined before. Finally, in the fourth line of reasoning, “new purpose reasoning,” originality is achieved by giving something a new purpose. Tables 4-7 show the four lines of reasoning the students used as well as which students adhered to each. Also included are excerpts from their papers that show how they match this reasoning.

Table 3

Student perceptions of remix as indicated by their papers.

Remix Makes Something Original	Remix is Not Original
9 Students	5 Students
William, Peyton, Gilligan, Julia, Alex, Ethan, Landon, Blair, Micah	Paige, Steve, Michelle, Elle, Marie

Table 4

Examples by students who argue for evolutionary reasoning.

Student	Evolutionary Reasoning Excerpts
William	The Shark Bite fitting is a remix of an older product that because of its innovation must be counted as a new product that will change the home plumbing market.
Gilligan	Overall the Game Boy was quite innovative in the way it had remixed the previous ideas of handheld gaming. It took many of the ideas of early consoles and improved upon them in every aspect in order to create a device that was not only unique, but cost effective as well. [...] Even though the last of the original Game Boy's was produced in 1998, it is the second highest handheld video game console of all time (North), behind Nintendo's own DS, proving that sometimes a remix of older ideas can result in something completely original and innovative.
Blair	Duct tape has grown over a century now and its originality has stayed with it. It was a stem off of medical tape but the new additions allowed it to be an original idea. Everything branches off from something before but the question is whether the changes that were made allow it to be a new product, an original idea.
Julia	Innovations can be refined over time by taking an original idea and adjusting it ever so slightly to become a more useful product. [...] Its innovation has been incredibly refined over the years and yet its original concept has stayed pure.

Table 5

Examples by students argue who for new perception reasoning.

Student	Perception Reasoning Excerpts
Peyton	Before researching Snapchat I thought that nothing could be 100% original because everything has an inspiration. But that inspiration does not have to be a positive one, it could be something that inspires you to create something totally opposite and that is what Snapchat is. Its uses and intentions are totally opposite from other photo applications. Snapchat is not really for sharing photos it is mainly for communicating using photos. You do not get on Instagram to communicate: you look through pictures and occasionally comment but not really have a one on one conversation. Snapchat is an alternative to texting because you can see the person you are communicating with, allowing you to see their emotions along with their words. If anything Snapchat is a remix to texting rather than other photo apps.
Alex	What would make a website original? In my opinion, for something on the internet to be original, it must product a new perception [...] Originality will never be defeated. There is always another step, another twist to add to change a perception, or opinion. Ideas will always be split and altered into new and original ideas.

Table 6

Examples by students who argue for combination reasoning.

Student	Combination Reasoning Excerpts
Ethan	The assembly line was responsible for the beginning of what we call today the Industrial Age in America. By combining the ideas of the division of labor, continuous flow, interchangeable parts, and reducing wasted time, Ford was able to develop this system of mass production that we still see today.
Micah	This is evident to the originality of Star Wars and, even though it is based on un-original ideals, something original was created when they were combined.

Table 7

Example by student who argues for new purpose reasoning.

Student	New Purpose Reasoning Excerpts
Marie	Although technically mascara was used initially by Egyptians, Rimmel was the first to produce a product with the actual intention of enhancing the eyelashes for a more attractive appearance, an original purpose.

What is interesting about these four different perspectives is that they speak to the ambiguity of the original class definition. The initial class definition of remix was “using and recombining other materials to create a new, distinct, unique product.” For the students who argued that remix could create an original product, however, it was not sufficient to say that their product was a recombining of other materials to create something new because they still had to assert what qualified as newness. Thus, what nine students did in their papers was, in sophisticated ways, to argue for what makes something new, distinct, or unique.

The fact that students complicated and expanded on the class definition of remix to make their arguments about what makes something new, distinct, or unique suggests that as a concept, intertextuality might in fact help students challenge the idea that something can be original or, at the very least, demonstrate how subjective originality really is. Of particular interest to me is the way that the four lines of reasoning developed by students coincide with the definitions of originality made by the fellowship review boards in the study described in Chapter 1. In that study, Guetzkow, Lamont, and Mallard (2004) argued that in academic writing, originality is established through seven different moves: original approach, understudied area, original topic, original theory, original method, original data, and original results. Each of these moves could be categorized

under the student’s definitions of remix—evolutionary reasoning, new perception reasoning, combination reasoning, and new purpose reasoning—with some overlap about where each of the researcher’s categories would fall. This kind of nuanced understanding might offer students some relief from the originality burden.

Students did not get to this point without serious intervention from Hazel, however, which demonstrates not only how difficult a concept like intertextuality can be but also how complicated it is to overcome the originality burden. To illustrate this, I will focus on the teacher/student conference and draft of one student, Blair, whose struggles paralleled those of her classmates. Blair struggled in her initial draft to define and illustrate how remix might make something original because she could not see that the idea of remix and originality was subjective. In writing her paper, Blair felt there was a “right” answer and that Hazel knew and would be seeking out that right answer

I will begin by looking at how Blair struggled to define originality because this struggle was shared by every other student in the course. Not a single student explicitly defined originality in their papers, as Hazel had requested, so that they could then go on and argue whether the item they chose was or was not original. In Hazel’s conference with Blair, for example, the following exchange occurred:

Hazel: So I think that you should spend some time in your paper talking about what your criteria is for originality.

Blair: Okay

Hazel: Because, I don’t, I mean, I think you probably looked at a dictionary definition but you know, a dictionary definition isn’t always how it’s used. So whatever you want to establish as your criteria for originality is fine with me but

you want to lay that out and use them through your paper to prove why duct tape is original.

Blair: So should I just, I guess I should not talk about it by itself. Because I was trying to bring it out more but it was just hard I guess. I was struggling.

This conference moment is indicative of just how complicated originality and intertextuality are. Hazel's hesitancy to help Blair through her struggle might have been Hazel's attempt not to direct Blair into any single notion of originality. Doing so might have indicated a "right" answer when in fact Hazel's goal for the assignment was to argue the complete opposite. As Hazel explained to me in an interview, she was interested in "pushing them [her students] to the next step" and making them question "if everything is remix but these ideas of originality still persist, then what is originality?" In many ways, this strategy was successful, as evidenced by the four differing lines of reasoning that students developed to explain remix. The four lines of reasoning became students' criteria for originality.

On the other hand, before getting to those lines of reasoning, many students felt boxed in, feeling compelled by the language of the assignment to see items either as original or unoriginal. This struggle is evident in the final paragraph of Blair's first draft. In this draft, Blair was trying to argue that duct tape was original. She seemed to struggle with how it was original, however, waffling between it being used for original purposes—such as the man who used duct tape with "imagination" by using it to cover his broken car window to "keep the cold out of his car" to the fact that the original "duct tape" had been copied and was now marketed by several different companies under such

names as “gaffer’s tape,” “Jesus tape,” and “gun tape.” Five pages into the paper, in her conclusion, Blair makes her most explicit attempt at explaining duct tape’s originality:

Duct tape has grown over a century now and its originality has stayed with it. It was a stem off of medical tape but the new addition to it allowed it to be an original idea. Everything branches off from something before it but the question is whether the changes that were made allow it to be a new product, an original idea. Originality is a very controversial topic items such as Coca Cola and Pepsi compete for originality. Coke was invented first but the changes mad to Pepsi enough to be an original product or is to too similar to Coke and would just be a copy.

Duct tape itself has evolved from its original make-up and use in our world. By adding cloth in the middle of the tape and the water repellent seal on the outside it creates a new idea, which is a new product. The duct tape can be seen as a remix of the original version of the tape used because the new parts were added, there is a new product. A Patton was placed on the product in 1992 protecting it from potential copiers. How will this wondrous tape evolve into yet something new, no one knows for sure. Only the future will tell.

In her conclusion, Blair is wrestling with several difficult concepts. First, she acknowledges that originality is “controversial” but she doesn’t really explain why, instead offering the competition between Coca Cola and Pepsi as a vague example. Next, she seems to equivocate something being “new” as something being original. For example, the changes in the original tape “creates a new idea, which is a new product.” She then claims that the duct tape is actually a remix of an “original version,” the

ordinary medical tape she explained was the precursor to duct tape. Here, we see a productive use of the class Definition 1 of remix but Blair appears slightly unsettled in using that definition as a stand in for originality. It is, nonetheless, Blair's first inkling to consider remix as a separate category from originality (which will be discussed in greater detail below).

Hazel's conference with Blair was productive in that her revised draft showed significant improvements with regards to Blair's understanding of originality and remix. In the conference, Hazel urged Blair to spend more time in her paper "talking about her criteria for originality." While Blair's revised paper did not explicitly feature criteria for originality (in fact, the bulk of Blair's changes addressed some of the easier suggestions Hazel made for revision—removing the introduction and shuffling some paragraphs), it did become bolder in the conclusion, which read as follows:

Duct tape has grown over a century now and its originality has stayed with it. It was a stem off of medical tape but the new additions allowed it to be an original idea. Everything branches off from something before but the question is whether the changes that were made allow it to be a new product, an original idea.

Duct tape was an idea invented by a man in need of a product that fit his needs at the time. The idea was taken from something already invented but changed enough to have been claimed as his own idea. This product started in the military but has become very prominent in our lives today. Duct tape is now an important part in the housing industry and even fashion. Duct tape has evolved from an industrial need to becoming a part of American culture.

Whereas in her initial draft Blair was non-committal to terms like originality and remix, in her revised draft, she is more effective at outlining the “new additions” made to duct tape. She then explains that “everything branches off of something else” (an allusion to intertextuality, though Blair is not cognizant of this) but that a product needs sufficient changes to be “new,” to be “an original idea.” She explains that duct tape “changed enough” to be the inventor’s “own idea,” thereby original. She also removes the word remix altogether.

The removal of the word remix from her conclusion was perhaps the most fascinating change to Blair’s essay. At first, I attributed the word’s removal to the fact that Blair’s new definition of what made the product original did not fit the original definitions of remix authored by the class at the beginning of the semester. In Blair’s concluding paragraphs, she is arguing the evolutionary originality argument shared by three of her peers. It’s a definition of remix that is not absent from remix scholarship (Kuhn 2012) but one that had not been fully explored during the course. For this reason, she may have been uncomfortable labeling it as such. More optimistically, I had hoped that students like Blair dropped the word “remix” from their papers because they had redefined originality as remix. In other words, they didn’t need to use the word remix because they viewed originality itself *as* remix. Interestingly, as I will discuss below, neither of these hypotheses proved correct.

Remix and Power

My analysis of Assignment 1 indicates that though all students were beginning to use the theoretical underpinnings of remix to interrogate the concept of originality, the students still seemed hesitant to use the concept as a stand in for originality (as evidenced

by the lack of the word in roughly 80 percent of final drafts). In fact, in some ways, remix seemed to be causing more anxiety for students rather than less. Instead of collapsing the ideas of originality and unoriginality altogether, which was Hazel's goal for Assignment 1, it seemed to reinforce those concepts since remix, in each of the definitions students presented in their papers, specifically acknowledged that there was material used by others and material created by one's self. The new question raised for students then wasn't how to be original but rather how much it takes to be original.

Still, I was surprised by how tentatively students embraced the term remix in Assignment 1. Though the concept seemed apparent in the various definitions the students used, the term itself only appeared in three student papers. It was only when students began Assignment 2 that I started to understand students' reasons for tentativeness in using the term remix as a stand in for originality. The overview of the second major assignment Hazel gave students read as follows:

In Unit 2, we are focusing on how communities make and regulate their commodities. Unlike the commodities in Unit 1, cultural products are often regulated implicitly—though not always. This assignment asks you to choose a community you belong to or hope to join and answer the following questions:

- What counts as valuable products within that community?
- How does one become a respected creator of products within that community?
- Who owns and who gets to use those products?
- Have these products been re-used or appropriated by any other communities?

What have been the consequences of that re-appropriation? [OR] Are these

products similar to those in another community? How do the communities assert their differences?

In what ways do the answers to these questions influence your understanding of the values of that community?

As with Assignment 1, Assignment 2 didn't use the term remix explicitly but it did forecast the idea of remix by asking students to think about how products are reused or re-appropriated. More importantly, it added a new variable to how remix may or may not be useful to student understandings of originality: power dynamics.

To introduce students to the ideas this assignment was asking them to consider, Hazel spent a day discussing the academic community as a case study for the kind of work they'd be doing in this project. It was a fruitful discussion in part because it helped them see one of her major goals for the assignment, which she explained in an interview as follows:

Within a certain community, there are people who have the power to author or the privilege to author and people who don't. And in what ways within that particular community can you earn that power? So that's a big thing. So authorship power. And then, because part of the class is remix, also re-appropriation, like how are the products in the community used by other communities?

In other words, the assignment was asking students to consider who is allowed to author and re-appropriate materials and why.

What unfolded during the class discussion about the academic community indicated much about how students perceived their place as authors within the academic community specifically and why remix might sometimes be more anxiety provoking

rather than anxiety relieving. While in many ways student views were unsurprising, it is nevertheless important to note these views, as they no doubt played an important role in how students would interpret and use a concept like remix.

To illustrate the ways power differentials influence how students might perceive remix, consider the following conversation between Micah and Cholin. This conversation took place in class when, in small groups, students were discussing who gets to author products and who consumes them in the academic community:

Micah: Who makes and who uses? I think the professors, people with doctorates or graduate students, they create the main product and then the students use those products to create their own products.

Cholin: Yeah, but what are you calling the main product here?

Micah: Like, the source for the students' research paper. Does that make sense?

Cholin: Yeah.

Micah: Like essentially the professor doesn't use any sources, if that makes sense. He or she develops their own source because they are just themselves. I don't know how to, they're one to one. But then you have the student who needs sources for their paper so they use the one that doesn't have sources. Does that make sense?

Cholin: Typically people who are higher up on the academic food chain are going to be creating the products.

What Micah and Cholin agree on here is that in the academic community, professors author and students use what professors author in their own work. In order to make arguments, students use their professor's work (textbooks, journal articles, research

results, etc.) because professors “are higher up on the academic food chain” and their work is therefore, as Micah says later in the conversation, “better.” One reason it is better is because, from Micah’s point of view, “the professor doesn’t use any sources.” When I pushed Micah on what he meant by better, he explained “that they were more original,” supporting claims made by Johnson-Eilola & Selber (2007) and DeVoss & Rosati (2002) that students equate originality with fewer sources and that original writing is prized over writing that comes from sources.

Though academics will quickly see the faulty logic in Micah’s point here, it does not negate the fact that he really believes it and that this belief has serious repercussions for how he understands writing, intertextuality, and the value of original writing. It is a belief like this that would lead a student like Paige to make the argument she makes in this chapter’s epigraph, that writing with fewer sources is not only more original but also somehow better than writing without sources. Because many composition courses model the writing expected of students on the writing of professional writers, who students perceive as producing “original” writing, a student like Paige will believe that the writing she feels has been more original is more highly prized than writing she might now perceive as remixed.

Micah wasn’t the only student to see professors as creators of original material and students as consumers of that material. Jay and Steve, in a write-up asking them to explain the academic community, argued:

Academic researchers could be anyone that does research for academic purposes. An example of this could be a higher level professor. They could produce books, academic articles, experiments, studys, class work, class discussion. The people

that use these could be students and anyone looking for new information on a subject.

Here, Jay and Steve go even further than Micah by naming “a higher level professor” as someone who produces the original or, as they call it, “new information” that “student and anyone looking for new information on a subject” might then use.

This perception, misplaced though it may be, can lead students to believe that remix is something *they* produce but originality is something achieved by professors and professional writers. If this is the case, remix fails to collapse the concept of originality as students understand it and instead becomes a third category. There is original writing, unoriginal writing, and remixed writing. This perception is very different from what students were arguing at the beginning of the semester when they first defined remix and used it as a way for gauging something’s originality. Moreover, this perception helped me understand a potential reason for the absence of the word “remix” in students’ final drafts of Assignment 1. Whereas I had initially hoped that remix disappeared from final drafts of student papers because *remix* had come to mean the same thing as *original*, the student perceptions being offered in response to Assignment 2 suggested otherwise. It now seemed that students removed the word remix from their drafts precisely *because* remix was *not* originality and the assignment specifically asked them to argue for whether or not a product was original.

This reimagining of remix as a separate category from originality was also reflected in Assignment 2 papers about ownership and re-appropriation in communities outside of academia. Jay, for example, in discussing the basketball coach community, made an argument that was very similar to the ones about academic offered by Micah, Cholin, and

Steve. In his paper, Jay explained that basketball players were a product of basketball coaches “because the coaches mold them into the players they need to be.” He goes on to write:

They [the coaches] bring forth their [the players’] full potential and make them into the best basketball players they can be while also getting them ready for the next level. When these players are moved into a different community of coaching they are being reused by them. The new NBA coach will try to then change the player into a whole different player according to his style of play. They appropriated these players to make them into their own.

Here, according to Jay’s logic, the player, under the tutelage of a college-level basketball coach, is an original product. When they are “appropriated” by NBA coaches, these new coaches “make them into their own.” Here we see Jay using Definition 2 from the class definition of remix: making something your own. As in the academic community, in the basketball coach community, there is an original player (an original product) created by the basketball coach, and then the retrained player (the remixed product) playing under a new coach.

As with the academic community arguments made by students, there are clear fallacies in Jay’s argument. Most obviously, Jay seems to ignore the number of coaches that a player might have before reaching the college-level. One might ask which coach is truly the first coach to produce a player before, according to Jay’s argument, all other coaches remix that player. Nonetheless, as with the academic community arguments, fallacies or not, this is how students are understanding remix. Remix continues to be

something that occurs *after* an original product has been made. While remix becomes something that is therefore attainable, it does not circumvent the originality burden.

Remix in Action

This perception, that remix is what happens after someone else has created something original, persisted and became even more evident as students began working on the third major assignment, a researched argument. In this assignment, students were asked to take a position and make an argument while working with a large number of sources. Because this was the first assignment where Hazel really focused on integrating sources, it was in preparing for and drafting the third assignment that students' struggles to be original and "say something new" really became apparent.

The third assignment overview read as follows:

You will write a lengthy researched argumentative essay on a topic related to our class's theme (remix, composing authority, intellectual property, copyright, plagiarism, and other related ideas). In this essay you are making a *researched argument*, so you are not just cutting and pasting information—you are making a researched argument. But this isn't just your opinion—you are making a researched argument.

As the overview suggests, Hazel wanted to stress to students that this assignment called on them to make a "researched argument." For Hazel, making a researched argument involved coming to the assignment with a research question rather than a ready-made argument. She stressed that students should "come to [their potential sources] with an open mind" with the end goal being to do "research that will help [students] develop an argument." In a PowerPoint presentation where she further explained argument to her

students, Hazel explained that “the goal of the argumentative paper is to convince the audience that the claim is true based on the evidence presented.” In such an assignment, and especially given how Hazel was explaining “researched argument” to her students, the use of sources was both necessary and highly stressed in the days leading up to the rough draft’s due date. The assignment itself required students to use, at minimum, ten sources with “at least five being peer-reviewed,” “at least one must be a physical copy of a book,” and “at least 2 primary sources.” The grading criteria also helped to illustrate the importance of working with sources while developing an argument:

Topic Proposal – 20 points

Source Annotations – 30 points

Full Draft and Peer Review Feedback – 50 points

Full Draft – 150 points

- Abstract and Key Words (20 pts)
- Thesis (15 pts)
- Synthesis of Sources (30 pts)
- Analysis and Use of Primary Evidence to Support Thesis (30 pts)
- Language, including grammar, syntax, and punctuation (20 pts)
- Organization, including abstract, topic sentence & coherent paragraphs, transitions, introduction, and conclusion (20 pts)
- MLA formatting (or other pre-approved style) in the paper & Works Cited page (15 pts)

For all grading related to the assignment, the criteria related to the use of sources accounted for 60 points (Source Annotations and Synthesis of Sources). The students’

“own” writing and, presumably, their “own” ideas, accounted for 85 points (Topic Proposal, Abstract and Key Words, Thesis, and Analysis). Both the way that writing was broken down (source usage versus “original” work) and the point system attributed to that work furthered the notion that original writing was privileged over writing stemming from sources *and* that the two ideas could be separated. Here, a simple rubric meant to help students could in fact reinforce the ideas that Hazel was trying to work against. For Hazel, the goal of such an assignment, and a rubric designed as such, was meant to teach students “Swales moves, so intro, what other people have said, where’s the hole, I’m going to add something new, right, something that is an extension.” Ultimately, she wanted students thinking about “how to add to the conversation.” In many ways, she was trying to show students that “effective writers enter conversations of other writers and speakers” (Graff & Berkenstein, 2009, p. xi). She was trying to model how experienced writers in the academy write and, by extension, undo some of the thinking students like Micah, Steve, and Jesse presented during the discussion on the academic community.

This assignment then was the perfect place to see if students could apply a concept like remix to their own written work. If students could perceive themselves as remixing (in the sense of *any* of the definitions for remix that the class had established) the sources they found, they would feel less pressure to be “original” or, perhaps even better, recognize that in remixing sources they *were* being original. Hazel attempted to show her students that remixing sources could produce original writing using two methods. First, she had students write source annotations. Second, she spent considerable time inside and outside of class discussing how to write literature reviews. With both approaches, the ultimate goal was to have students feel like they were *part* of the

conversations they were entering in their papers. For example, after reading the first round of annotations, Hazel noticed that students weren't necessarily seeing their sources as argumentative. In some cases, this was because students used sources such as dictionary.com or about.com. In other cases, it was because of how their annotations were written. Take, for example, this annotation written by Blair:

Studies were done at Indiana University in Bloomington and Tufts University in Boston. Indiana researchers surveyed 272 female students and 149 men on campus about their weight gain and living habits there were many interesting facts found. 60 percent of students said they gained weight from freshman year to the beginning of sophomore year, for men it was almost 9 pounds and for women around 7.5. Another finding was that the women that continued to gain weight throughout college, their weight gain grossed to about 10 and the men gained an overall amount of 14 pounds. They found that a lot of students ate because they were very stressed out and an increase in socializing with alcoholic beverages. Most college students reported an increase of two to four beers per week compared to high school. Also in college the students did a lot less exercise leading to the increase of weight gain. Studies have shown that the weight gain doesn't magically stop after freshman year. A lot of students continued gaining weight throughout all four years.

While Blair does a wonderful job summarizing this article (indicating both the participants in the study and the various findings), she does not explicitly allude to why this study would be beneficial to her argument or to how it fits into the larger conversation she plans to enter. In response to annotations like this one, Hazel discussed

with students a strategy to help them approach sources as remix rather than summary. She suggested that students might want “to write down something like here’s a thesis statement that this article could support, because basically what you’re working on here is getting an idea of how sources might be used, what they’re saying, what other sources they might be grouped with.” In this annotation, however, Blair is unable to move from summary to synthesis, a process that shares basic characteristics with remix. As Blair explained to me early on in the semester, she thinks research is “a pain in the butt” because she is “more creative.” Like Paige in this chapter’s epigraph, Blair believed research and writing from sources hindered her “creative voice.” In the case of the above annotation, we can see Blair’s voice submerged as she summarizes the sources rather than uses them as a means towards her own “creative,” or, one might argue, “remixed” or “intertextual” argument about weight gain in college freshmen.

Thus, while research and source annotations might be an ideal place to start for pushing students to see remix as operating in their writing—“that scholars working on the same problems and questions, sometimes in the same discipline and sometimes in different fields, know each other’s work and often collaborate, implicitly as well as explicitly”—the conversation metaphor is lost on students like Blair in favor of the more familiar narrative: there is what is theirs and what is mine and these two things do not, or cannot, overlap (Yancey, 2008, p. 159).

Sensing the struggle students like Blair were having, Hazel really stressed the literature review portion of the researched argument as a moment of synthesis with the goal being for students to “demonstrate an ability to use multiple sources to make an argument,” with the end goal being for them to, as Hazel explained in class, “add

something new,” or, as students still convinced that originality was possible may have heard it, add something original. Note here the extreme similarities between what Hazel is asking and Definition 1 of remix: “use multiple sources;” “add something new.”

Given the importance of synthesis to effective academic writing, Hazel developed an in-class activity that involved students filling in a worksheet of a house. The worksheet showed four empty rooms (with one room indicating the front door) that eventually led to a final room with a “food and drink” table. The goal was for students to think of these rooms as various conversations at a party. When they go to a party, they might first get to one room, where one conversation is going on, and then move to a new room and find another conversation. For Hazel, at any party, an individual’s goal is to eventually reach the food and drink table and this, she explained to the class, is “where you want to get your reader to [...], which is your study.” The study she is referring to is the primary research students needed to conduct themselves (most students used a survey for this part of the requirement).

While the illustration was meant to help students see the interconnectedness of their work, for many students, it only served to further divide what they were doing from what had been done before. Moreover, it strengthened their sense that what was original, in this case their own primary research, was more valuable (it was, after all, the food and drink table marked with a star) than the studies that came before theirs. In some ways, it lent itself to Micah’s earlier notion that professors’ work is more valuable than student work in part because “the professor doesn’t use any sources.” While to experienced academic writers the house party metaphor seems apt and even very helpful, to students who still seemed to see remix as something they did (if they even made that connection)

and originality as something their professors did, the house might actually be more damaging.

The conversation metaphor was also used as Hazel presented potential outlines to her students about how to write their papers. Though she offered various options (a traditional article, an IMRaD, or a research proposal), each option made use of a distinct rhetorical move where students moved from the sources they were primarily drawing from (essentially a literature review) to their own original contributions, what Hazel called their “new stuff.” Again, for experienced writers, this move is expected. It is the epitome of Graff and Birkenstein’s (2009) “they say/I say” idea and “the importance of not only expressing your ideas (‘I say’), but of presenting those ideas as a *response to some other person or group* (‘they say’)” (p. 3). It is the enactment in writing of the Burkean Parlor. But for students, it was seen as further evidence that what they say and believe is easily distinguishable from what others say and believe. Moreover, it potentially suggested that remix was separate from their new stuff. If remix was the combination of sources, the separation of sources from their analysis might suggest that remix was separate from originality. This is visible in a comment Peyton made when Hazel was discussing the proposal genre as one means of making their arguments. Peyton asked Hazel: “So for our paper if we are writing about a problem, this part could be about a solution but it’s not our solution, it’s what research says would be best. Like our solution would be in the other model, right?” The other model she is referring to is the IMRaD model usually associated with more scientific disciplines.

Peyton’s inability to easily distinguish where to put existing information (from sources) and where to put new information (her analysis) was not unique. After Hazel’s

presentation on the various models, she divided students into groups for them to discuss what model they planned on using and how they intended to group their sources based on those models. I sat in on a group with Gilligan and Landon and Landon's first words to me once the group got situated were "Do you understand what she means?" Clearly I did and, given Hazel's and my agreement that it would be okay to help students in this kind of situation, I offered to help Landon any way I could. Thus, we embarked on a discussion about the conversation metaphor:

Landon: I don't understand what she means when she says to add new stuff. Do you understand what she means?

Barrie: Yeah, so see how she has up there about adding to the conversation. So there's basically two parts. There's the part where you summarize what everyone else has already said, and that's your literature review. And then there's the part where you come in and say here's what everyone has already said and here's what I add to it.

Landon: Add, what do you mean? Like doing research?

Barrie: So the difference between the paper you're writing and a Wikipedia article is that a Wikipedia article just reports everything that's already been said, right? What you're doing, you're not just reporting, you're making some kind of argument.

Admittedly, my Wikipedia analogy is arguable at best (as most articles certainly do make an argument of some sort) but it seemed to work enough for Landon to at least begin to see the difference between using sources for analysis and using sources simply to report. After discussing his project more specifically, Landon walked away with a better, though

not complete of what Hazel was asking for: “So pretty much the literature review presents information and then analysis I take a stand on whether it’s good or bad.” That being said, Landon, like his classmates, continued to see the researched argument as two separate entities: that which others have said and that which he would argue. They were not seeing the argument as a whole as remix, or as being intertextual. At best, their use of sources was remixed but they were still expected to contribute new knowledge via an original argument.

Conclusion

Over the course of the semester, I witnessed the various iterations of remix that appeared in this classroom. More often than not, I was disappointed to see it fail to act in the way I thought that it would. Remix as a concept did not necessarily make students feel more comfortable working with sources and it did not seem to reduce their anxiety about being original. It was not, however, a useless concept. Though remix did not serve in the capacity that Hazel (and I) had hoped that it would, it did offer insight into the roadblocks that can happen when instructors try and open students up to a more intertextual view of writing. As the Blair case study illustrates, remix can be a helpful vehicle for students as they try to define originality for themselves. For students like Blair, however, remix might not be the golden ticket to relieving the originality burden. Students like Blair came to see remix as a middle man for originality. Rather than coming to stand in for originality, remix was something a novice might produce while trying to learn how to be original. Based on student papers, comments, and discussions, remix was *not* originality and originality was therefore not redefined for students through remix.

Because remix did not come to be understood as a synonym for originality, students continued to perceive originality as a desirable yet often unachievable quality in their writing. The introduction of remix to these students, however, did invite them to see how nuanced originality is. In having to determine whether a product was original or not, students developed varying definitions of originality in order to support their claims. By exposing originality as varying in definition, a concept like remix is certainly a start for reducing student anxiety in regards to writing. That being said, because remix was seen as something students produced with sources, and originality as something more advanced scholars and professionals could produce, remix did not necessarily serve to undo the kinds of beliefs that led Paige at the beginning of this chapter to suggest that writing from sources is unoriginal writing. For remix to help students like Paige, it cannot and should not be wholly separated from originality. It should not be a third category (original, unoriginal, and remixed). For the students in this course, remix became a third category in and of itself. The hierarchical arrangements of originality and remix only further confirm to students that they cannot participate in the discourse of the academy in a way that is original. Therein lays the danger of forgetting remix when using it to redefine originality. If students could truly see originality as remix—wherein originality *is* remix—they might feel less threatened by the call to be original.

Seeing originality as remix would mean that students could approach a research assignment knowing that the integration of sources is not only the way the disciplines make knowledge but also a way to be original. Researched writing (and one could argue all writing) could be seen as remix. Instead, the students continued to see writing as what was theirs and what belonged to others and originality as a distant and eventually

obtainable goal. The students in this chapter, then, help illustrate how difficult it is to use remix, as a concept, to help students reconsider their beliefs about originality.

The findings in this chapter therefore suggest that intertextuality is a difficult concept for students to grasp. While intertextuality does help them interrogate a concept like originality, it does not remove the originality burden. It doesn't even soften it. It does, however, expose it. By introducing a concept like intertextuality into this course, Hazel managed to bring the originality burden to the forefront of students' minds. While students still demonstrated concerns and anxieties with regard to originality in their writing, they did so in a space where they were given an explicit vocabulary to do so. While intertextuality did not solve the originality burden for students, they were able to discuss it in meaningful and productive ways; they were able to see that originality is a question of definition and that its definition can vary widely from one party to the next.

In the following chapter, I will analyze the ways that non-traditionally written intertextual products such as digital remixes (sampled music, memes, etc.) allowed more students to see originality as being equal to remix. Whereas the concept of intertextuality exposed the originality burden, the following chapter will discuss how, for some students, intertextual products could solve the originality burden.

CHAPTER 4

DIGITAL REMIX IN AN ACADEMIC WORLD

Although sampling often opposes academic writing's emphasis on attribution, it accomplishes many of the same goals in responding to sources. Sampling transforms sources by placing them in the context of hip-hop lyrics and other samples. Rather than copying the original source, hip-hop producers critique and respond to the original through juxtaposition, parody and direct commentary. Sampling, therefore, is like academic citation systems in that it builds upon existing texts by making new connections and responding to them with new ideas. (Hess, 2006, p. 282)

Barrie: Why do you think Hazel made you do a remix?

Paige: Because she likes digital projects. She said that at the beginning, that she likes digital projects.

Barrie: Well you said you didn't really feel like anything in that is going to help you with your writing. Do you feel like you got something out of it that's going to help you in school or in life?

Paige: Mhmm. Like I know how to make a video now. And how to edit and make a video for like other classes that I may have.

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the way the term *remix*, which Hazel used as a stand-in for *intertextuality*, came to be seen not as the means through which original academic writing is achieved but rather as a category separate from originality. I also examined the way that authority differences between professors and students came to be seen through remix, wherein professors authored "original" texts and students authored "remixed" texts. Remix then, rather than helping to at least begin to alleviate the originality burden, actually reinforced it by suggesting that originality, though asked for in many assignments, was beyond the scope of what students were actually capable of.

Remix was not without its value, however. It did, for example, help put a spotlight on the kinds of anxieties students felt when encountering an academic writing assignment. By discussing remix, students were able to, at the very least, discuss what it meant to be original and unoriginal. To that end, the previous chapter was concerned with how remix, when introduced in an academic classroom, helped students to interrogate a concept like originality.

In this chapter, I examine one intertextual practice many students are familiar with *before* entering the composition classroom—digital remix—and the ways this practice helps alleviate the originality burden while at the same time pointing to further complications in relieving the originality burden. Digital remix has the potential to lift the originality burden by giving students an opportunity to create what they themselves consider to be original texts while using a great deal of unoriginal work (such as music and images made by others). Where digital remix fails to lift the originality burden, it opens up new avenues for discussing elements of intertextuality that make students uncomfortable, such as citation and plagiarism. This chapter will demonstrate that while intertextuality may appear jarring when first encountered in the academic classroom (as described in Chapter 3), many students are already familiar with intertextual texts (though they may not recognize them as such) in non-academic spaces. How Hazel and the students in this course harnessed the power of that familiarity—through discussions on gaps, genre, and citation—is the major focus of this chapter.

Digital Places, Academic Spaces

Various genres of digital remixes (Hazel’s inspiration for the use of the term *remix* to represent *intertextuality*) are a staple in many students’ lives. Students listen to

them in the form of hip-hop music, watch them as YouTube videos online, and read them as memes in their Facebook newsfeeds. Some students, such as Cholin (who had an affinity for creating memes outside of school), even create them in their spare time. It is reasonable then to believe that introducing digital remixes into a classroom focused on relieving the originality burden through intertextual awareness will help further the cause. As discussed in Chapter 1, a key motivation for integrating digital remixes into composition courses is the notion that, as Hess explains in this chapter's epigraph, digital remixing shares properties with academic writing. In digital remix projects (such as sampling and assemblage), authors bring together multiple sources to create a new product. In academic writing, writers often bring together multiple sources to create a new argument. The similarities therefore suggest that remix can be helpful in at the very least exploring the originality burden and Hazel, as she explained in an interview, likewise agreed that remix was helpful in this way:

English 102 is supposed to be about research, which is inherently about using other people's work in the service of your own work, which is an example of remix and theoretically if you're making your own argument, also an example of an original idea.

For Hazel, creating digital remix projects was an opportunity for students to enact many of the themes they had discussed over the course of the semester. Students would see how using material that was entirely created by others could forward an original idea.

Introducing digital remix into the composition classroom can be challenging, however. In particular, most students enter their composition classrooms with an understanding that remixing does not take place in the academy. Rather, as discussed in

Chapter 1, it operates in more digital spaces, such as online or over the radio. For students, making the connection between what happens in digital spaces and what happens in academic spaces can be difficult. In the EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research's *2011 National Study of Undergraduate Students and Information Technology*, researchers found that while 90 percent of students use Facebook and/or other social media sites, 12 percent of those students found such sites to be "extremely valuable" to their education and only 25 percent found them "valuable" or "extremely valuable" (p. 26). Given that social media sites are locations where remixed media can often be found (for example, memes are known to float around via people's Facebook newsfeeds or Tumblr pages), the fact that students don't find these sites helpful to their academic lives suggests that they are likely not entering the classroom thinking about how what they see and do on those sites may be beneficial in their academic work. Not only that but students might also be skeptical about whether the digital work is even helpful and therefore resist it altogether. This disconnect and skepticism, however, isn't altogether surprising. Many students perceive school, and the literacy practices operating therein, as a kind of commodity. A large number of students assert that they go to college in order to get a better job in the future. Their literacy, then, is meant to help them acquire and do well in future professional spaces. Literacy practices online, however, are more likely to be perceived as social spaces, places where literacy might help them to connect and socialize but not necessarily acquire a job. Students therefore question practices in school that they don't see as helping to achieve their end goal: a professional job. Though students' feelings on this matter aren't altogether surprising, they are nonetheless important. When students are skeptical or even resistant, it makes it altogether more difficult for instructors

and scholars to help students make and/or buy into the connection between remix and academic writing.

This isn't to say that students don't see any connection at all between what happens in digital spaces and what happens in the classroom. Rather, many students do see ways that their work online and in digital mediums plays out in the academic world. Unfortunately, the connections students make aren't always positive. One that came up repeatedly in this research project during class discussion and interviews was the connection between cutting and pasting online and plagiarism statements. Purdy (2005) discussed this kind of connection using the example of Blair Hornstine, a high school student whose admission to Harvard was revoked when it was revealed that five of her articles published in the *Courier-Post* included borrowed material lacking citation.

Hornstine, reacting to Harvard's decision, explained her actions as follows:

When finalizing my thoughts, I, like most every teenager who has use of a computer, cut and pasted my ideas together. I erroneously thought the way I had submitted the articles was appropriate. I now realize that I was mistaken. I was incorrect in also thinking that news articles didn't require as strict citation scrutiny as most school assignments because there was no place for footnotes or endnotes.

(Purdy, 2005, pp. 290-291)

For Hornstine, plagiarism was, at least in part, "a problem of technology" (Purdy, 2005, p. 291). The same technology that would allow her to remix a song or video to be uploaded to YouTube, where citation is less expected, encouraged her to "remix" sources for her journalism articles. Moreover, as with a sampled song, for example, where no mechanism for citation existed, Hornstine didn't cite in her newspaper articles because

they too seemed without a mechanism for citation. In other words, rather than remixing-type practices helping a student understand how sources can be used and responded to in academic writing, this student experienced the opposite problems. In this instance, the lessons she transferred from her experience in digital spaces were actually counterproductive to what was expected in more traditional, academic settings. This is not to suggest that Hornstine, or students like her, have a black and white perception of where citation is and is not necessary, or that citation is only important in academic writing. As this chapter will suggest, the divide between academic writing and some of the more digital genres students engage in is more often a murky barrier than a clear boundary. Nonetheless, Hornstine's experience is very much indicative of the way that some digital writing can be perceived as counterproductive to more traditional academic writing.

Students in Hazel's course had similar feelings and experiences. Jay, for example, wrote in a homework assignment that "plagiarism has been growing as a problem as technology becomes more advanced. Students take advantage of using the internet to copy information straight from websites into their reports or essays." Ethan, also in a homework assignment, made comparable comments:

Before the Internet, plagiarism had little effect on our education. If someone wanted to copy and paste information they would have to scan through large volumes of text to find what they could use. It just wasn't practical; therefore, it wasn't taken advantage of. Today this is a different story; students are taking advantage of the Internet's purpose by using the work of another author in their own personal work.

While Ethan may be misinformed about the nature of plagiarism prior to the invention of the Internet, his sentiment is nonetheless significant. Ethan, like Jay, sees the Internet as a dangerous place for academic writers. It is a place where, as Alex explains, there is “unlimited knowledge” but also a place where “anyone can steal and replicate anything.” The Internet becomes dangerous because on the one hand, students often use it over the course of their research—all of the students interviewed for this project stated that their first step in the research process was to “google”—while at the same time fearing it not only because they question its trustworthiness but also because they believe it is easy not only for others to poach it but because they believe they can just as easily be accused of such poaching. These feelings lend themselves to a kind of tension when students begin using the Internet (a popular domain for digital remixes) in their research.

Instructors, on the other hand, often introduce remix *because* it encourages the kind of cut and paste strategies that got Hornstine in trouble and that students like Ethan, Jay, and Alex fear. Dubisar and Palmeri (2012), who used remixing in their classes, often found the most successful projects to be the result of pure cutting and pasting. One student, Susan, created “an exploration of how presidents and presidential candidates have defined America and its people” (p. 83). Her remix was composed “of a montage of spoken words from American presidents and presidential candidates, played one after another and culled (mostly) from hours of listening to presidential speeches archived on the Americanrhetoric.com web site” (p. 83). Dubisar and Palmeri said of Susan’s project that it was “deeply complex, weaving together multiple sources in order to make a coherent argument” (p. 84). In many ways, then, Susan’s piece was no different from Hornstine’s newspaper articles. Hornstine also weaved together various sources to make

an argument. Hornstine's piece, however, cost her an acceptance letter into Harvard. Susan's piece garnered her an A on the assignment.

There are obvious, and I might argue fair, reasons for the difference in outcomes. It is partly a question of genre. In the kind of digital remix Susan composed, she is expected to take pieces from various sources to construct a cohesive narrative. Furthermore, as is generally the case for remixes—or what Johnson-Eilola & Selber (2007) call assemblages—“the assemblages do not distinguish primarily between which parts are supposed to be original and which have been found and gathered from someplace else; assemblages are interested in what works, what has social effects” (p. 380). This is clearly not the case in newspaper reporting, where writers are still accountable for reporting their sources. Still, according to scholars like Johnson-Eilola and Selber (2007), Dubisar and Palmeri (2012), Yancey (2009), and others, even if students mistakenly transfer the cut-and-paste mentality associated with digital remixing into their more traditional academic writing (a common critique for introducing such practices but one with little evidence to substantiate it) there is more to be gained from introducing digital remixing into academic classrooms than there is to be lost. By cutting and pasting to create new digital arguments, students can potentially learn how sources may be used in their written work to create an original argument.

Hazel believed in the power of digital remixing to help students begin to understand intertextuality. In her students' final major assignment (See Appendix F)—a digital remix of a previously written assignment—Hazel asked students to specifically consider the ways in which “traditional writing and digital composing [become] inter-related as multimodal remixing becomes more common.” One major goal for the

assignment, then, was to help students see writing as intertextual by using a medium that was intertextual by nature: the digital remix.

Intertextuality, Gaps, and Rhetorical Velocity

To the trained eye, there was much in common between the digital remixes Hazel had her students create, and the writing they had done in their earlier assignments. For one thing, Hazel's digital remix assignment wasn't simply a matter of mixing digital content to create a cohesive argument. Instead, it required students to reflect back on the idea that work, including their own, gets used and reused. The assignment's overview stated the following:

This assignment asks you take any of your previous written assignments in this course and create a digital remix of that assignment. This digital remix should not attempt to create a multimodal version of your entire paper. Instead imagine the digital remix as highlighting one aspect of your paper. The format of this digital remix is up to you, but you must approve your plan with me first. If the digital remix is not static, it should be no longer than 3 minutes.

Before beginning to compose their assignments, students needed to identify one aspect from a previous assignment that they wanted to forward using the digital remix format. In other words, they were to use a single idea from a previous paper and reinterpret, not only in a new genre but perhaps also for a different audience or a different purpose.

In many ways, this move is similar to when students are asked to identify a gap in previous research and then move that research forward with their own thoughts. The only major difference, in this case, is that the "gap" students are identifying was from their own previous research. Consider the moves students made when completing Assignment

3 (see Appendix E), the major research assignment. To complete this assignment, students all (ideally) consulted various sources to decide on a clear topic and argument.

We can see students making these kinds of moves for their Assignment 3 essays by reviewing the progress reports they wrote to Hazel. These reports were written after they had submitted a topic proposal. Steve, in his report, wrote the following:

Probably the biggest thing that I have found out by researching about my paper is that nearly everyone that has written about the argument of whether or not to pay college student athletes agrees that the students should get some type of payment. I believed that this was very surprising since I did an online survey, and most people believed that college athletes should not get paid. So maybe there is something that the experts believe and normal citizens don't. And I think looking up the mystery would really help my paper.

Here, Steve is articulating a gap in the published scholarship. Though his research using published sources suggests that college athletes should be paid, his own primary research using an online survey suggests otherwise. Steve is therefore interested in why there is a disconnect and hypothesizes that it might be a difference between “experts” and “normal citizens.” In this case, Steve’s research project progressed from one interested in whether or not college athletes should be paid to one concerned with why experts argue college athletes should be paid and non-experts argue otherwise. Steve’s topic evolved from his initial interest in large part because of something interesting that stemmed from his sources, a gap of sorts. In recognizing this gap, Steve was also recognizing that, based on his research, his argument would be new and perhaps even original. Since Steve’s research indicated that “nearly everyone that has written about the argument of whether

or not to pay college student athletes agrees that students should get some type of payment,” he was not only going to avoid making that same argument but also take it a step further by examining it from a new perspective: experts versus lay people.

Steve made a similar gap-identifying move when deciding on a topic for his digital remix, only this time, rather than using sources written by others to construct his argument, he used his own sources. In his digital project, Steve decided to branch off from the paper he wrote for the second major writing assignment. In that assignment, where he was asked to write about how a specific community authors and uses products, Steve wrote about college students. For his digital remix, he decided to create a “Shit Midwestern Metropolitan College Students Say” video. This video was based on the “Shit [People] Say” video meme series. In these videos, the authors take a specific population and have actors speak (in character) the different statements that these populations stereotypically say. To create his own video, Steve interviewed classmates and his father, an administrator at the University, and gathered the fifteen most commonly uttered phrases. He then composed a video in which he, in character, uttered each of the major phrases. Though Steve’s second major written assignment did not address these phrases specifically, it did concern itself with language use in a college community. Steve, feeling this his second major assignment didn’t discuss campus-specific phrases enough, decided to use his previous research and ideas to forward a new idea.

In some ways, the digital remix assigned in Hazel’s class was an opportunity for students to think of their original texts through a concept like rhetorical velocity. How might their texts (whether they see them as original or unoriginal) be understood? How

could they be used or repurposed by differing audiences? How might they be read or seen by others? Though in this case the text was being repurposed by the students themselves, they asked similar questions of themselves as they might have if they were considering an outside audience. They were able to see that ideas move forward from other ideas, and are reinvented in new ways (in this case through a new medium).

The students in the class were very astute about this point, particularly because the assignment called for them to use their own previous material as inspiration and also because one element of the assignment required for them to articulate in a written reflection how their remix was in fact a “remix” of a previous paper. Steve explained his remix as follows:

The project really does connect with one of my previous papers. In my MA2 paper [Major Assignment 2], I wrote about how college students are all a part of one big community. And a small part of that paper was about certain language students may use, like slang. Doing a video on what college students say therefore connects the two projects together well.

The other students in the class showed similar understanding from a rhetorical velocity point of view. Elle, for example, wrote the following:

This A4 digital project relates to my original A2 print project. The A2 paper I wrote was about the cultural products of Midwestern Metropolitan University. I emphasized how Midwestern Metropolitan University is an athletic, vivacious, and scholarly community within the collegiate realm. Some of the products produced as a result of important aspects of Midwestern Metropolitan University include spirit wear, bumper stickers, and job placement.

With this background, Elle decide to produce an infomercial “to persuade my audience to buy a Midwestern Metropolitan University seat cushion.”

Students’ abilities in this course to see how ideas could move forward and be used to foster new ideas was promising. In particular, by having students take an idea from a printed text and recast it in a digital remix, students appeared to enact a clearer understanding of intertextuality or at least one that they were more comfortable with. Whereas in their major written assignments students expressed significant fear about using sources, even their own, in papers, in their digital remixes, I saw no such fear. I attribute this kind of fearlessness to two differences: genre and familiarity. First, students seemed more comfortable using previous material to identify a gap and create new “original” material because they were doing so in genres that often have no inherent citation systems or mechanisms. Fears were relieved then simply because there was no pressure to cite and likewise no overarching threat of plagiarism accusations. Additionally, students were writing in genres they were more familiar with. Whereas in their academic texts students were often relying on texts that seemed foreign to them, and beyond the scope of their own writing abilities (such as articles from peer-reviewed journals), the texts that many students included in their digital remixes were accessible and familiar. For example, a student splicing together a commercial from previously authored commercials is familiar with the commercial format. She knows what a commercial should look like and can articulate it’s various parts. This is often not the case with some of the more “scholarly” sources that students invoke in their more traditional writing assignments.

Perhaps because there was no inherent pressure to cite, or because doing a digital remix provided a kind of scaffolding that allowed students to focus on how language and ideas work rather than on how to format them, students learned lessons from the digital remix that they did not learn in their more academic assignments. For example, Michelle, in discussing using sources in digital remixes, explained the following: “With remixing, I have learned that taking an idea or ideas and transferring them into another separate idea is not plagiarism.” Paige was even more assertive. In her final interview of the semester, the following exchange took place:

Barrie: In your remix, you don’t do any citation, like in the video you don’t cite where you got the information. Why not?

Paige: Because most of the information was already from my A1 paper. Like I didn’t have to look anything up to do the video.

Barrie: So when you were doing the video you never worried about plagiarism or anything like that?

Paige: No ma’am.

Despite the fact that Paige’s digital remix did rely on sources Paige used in the first major assignment, for Paige, by the time those ideas got to her digital remix, they had already become hers—appropriated through their use in the first major paper. Paige’s ability to see ideas that once belonged to others as belonging to her because they have been transformed indicates that Paige is beginning to get a sense of how intertextuality can work towards originality. There is much to be gained if digital remixes can help students better grasp intertextuality in this way. There is also great promise in an assignment that

relieves students of fears of plagiarism and which, in turn, can help relieve the originality burden.

Remix and Genre

Given the way that students were able to identify gaps in their previous written work to construct what they viewed as original digital remixes, I became interested in whether this kind of intertextual move could transfer to assignments that were more traditionally academic (like a researched writing assignment). In final interviews with students, I focused on the way the last assignment, the digital remix, might help them overcome some of the obstacles they seemed to articulate about overcoming the originality burden (obstacles discussed in Chapter 3). In these interviews, I asked students to compare the “writing” process for their digital work with the writing processes they did in more traditional academic writing. I also asked them to discuss the ways they believed the digital work they had done would contribute to the work they would do in other classes or outside the university. Finally, I asked them about citation and about how using sources was part of their thought processes in completing their digital projects. As students answered these questions, it became clear to me that the lessons I perceived them learning from creating digital remixes might not transfer to traditional written work. Overall, I found the one major barrier for knowledge transfer was also the same way that students came to at least begin to recognize intertextuality: genre differences.

Interviews with students revealed that the same concerns they expressed early in the semester about the Internet being a place where copying and pasting was encouraged lived on in the classroom when it came to their digital remixes. As many students saw it, the digital remix *was* an exercise in copy and paste while traditional academic writing

involved significant attention to source usage and citation. In other words, they saw their digital remixes as encouraging copying and pasting while academic genres forbid it.

Students' assumptions on this matter are merited. None of the students chose to compose digital genres that had expected citation systems, nor did Hazel require any kind of citation at the conclusion of their digital projects. On the one hand, students' abilities to recognize these genre differences between their digital work and their academic work is both important and commendable. If nothing else, having students compose digital texts can help students begin to articulate differences in genre. Just as Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) found that students who double-majored were more able to assert genre differences, students in this course seemed to demonstrate that students who compose in written and digital genres are likewise more capable of identifying genre differences.

In this course, conversations on genre were frequent, particularly before students began major assignment 3, where Hazel asked students to write either according to her "Basic Model" (see Figure 1), an IMRaD (see Figure 2), or a Research Proposal (see Figure 3). Several days were spent on each of these models, wherein Hazel offered students sample essays in each and used PowerPoint presentations to break the models down. As Figures 1, 2, and 3 demonstrate, there were varying genre constraints to each model, particularly in terms of what information would be found where as well as what kinds of conclusions would be drawn. When working only with traditional academic genres, students struggled to understand the differences between the

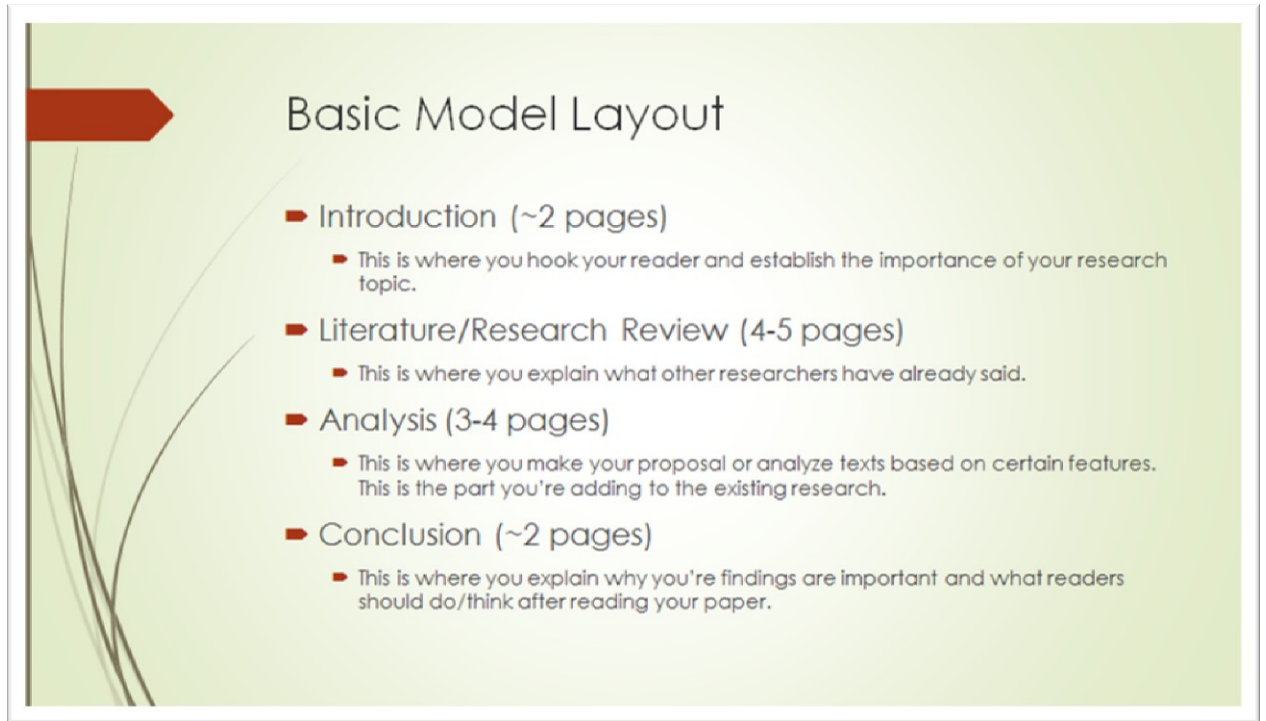


Figure 1. PowerPoint slide outlining the “Basic Model.”

models. This confusion is evident in a portion of Hazel’s PowerPoint presentation, when Peyton raised her hand to ask Hazel a clarifying question. The question came after Hazel presented the model in Figure 1:

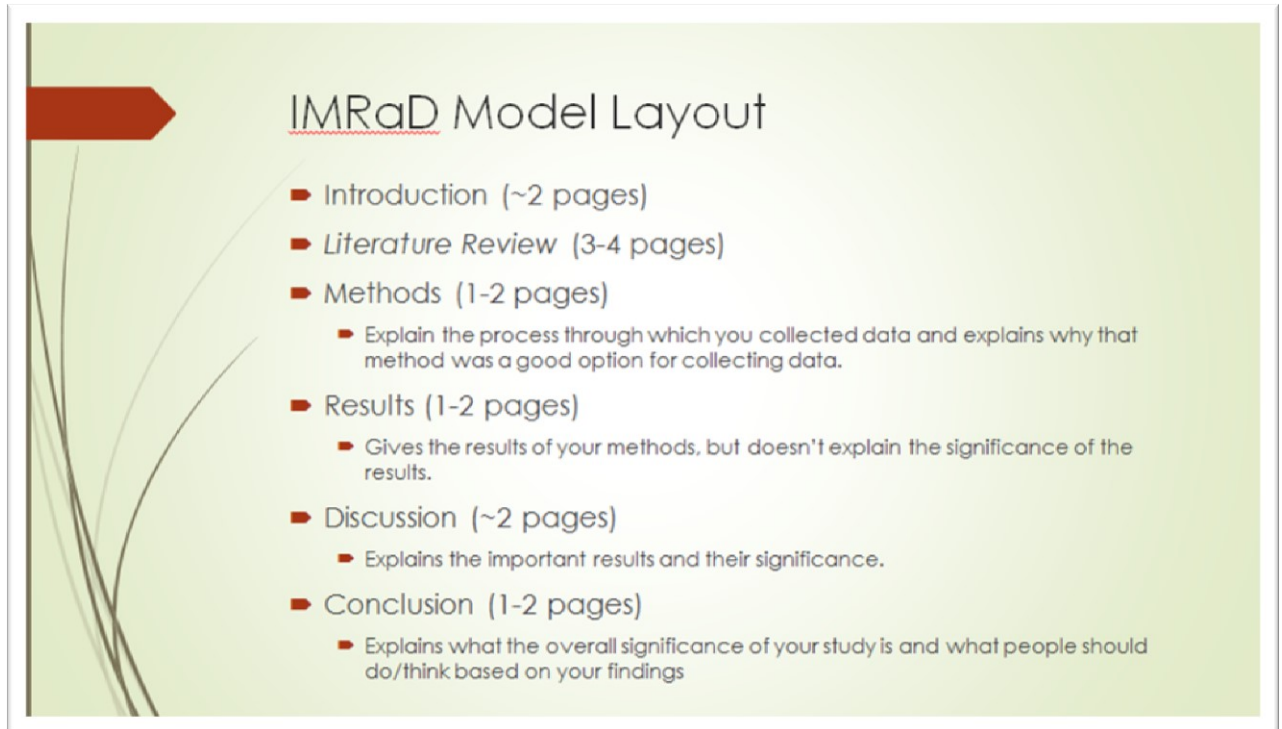


Figure 2. PowerPoint slide outlining the IMRad Model.

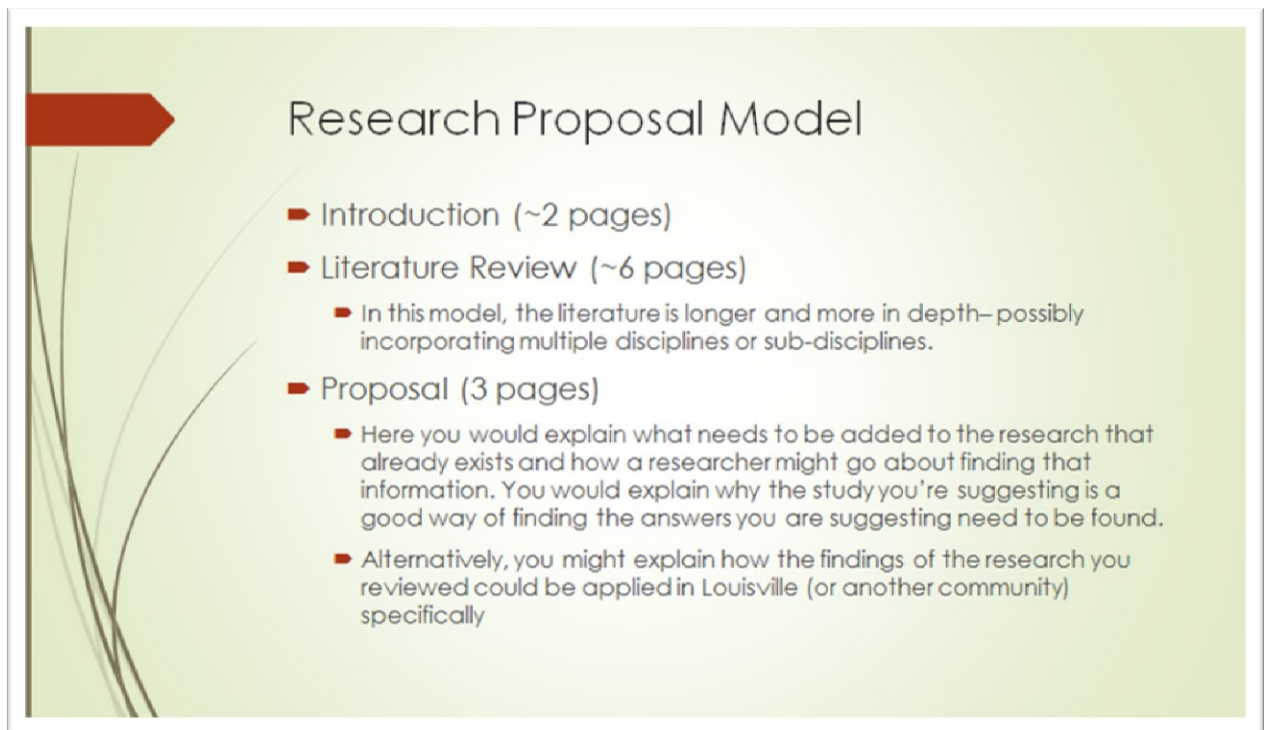


Figure 3. PowerPoint slide outlining the Research Proposal Model.

Hazel: So adding to the conversation can happen in a lot of different ways and doing analysis can happen in a lot of different ways. But I figured for the sake of sort of minimizing the balls that we all have in the air, I would respond directly to the three possible outlines that I gave you a couple weeks ago. So here's a review of those. And the new part generally comes after your literature review. So in the first model and the second model you can see where those are happening, right?

Peyton: I was going to ask what is the new material in the first one?

Hazel: So your answer is on the next slide. So normally for, and this is what I'm calling the basic model, which is just a phrase I made up for ease of clarity. After you do that lit review you're going to do some sort of analysis or study that is probably textually based. You're either analyzing ads or websites, something that is not a person, that is not about getting someone to respond to a survey or questions. There are, again, different ways to do this but the way that I find is easiest is to in your research develop a set of criteria. All researchers say that college students gain weight based on these five factors. So then you might look at how those five factors appear on the Midwestern Metropolitan campus. Or you might see how efforts maybe on campus since we're talking about college, how efforts on campus combat those five factors. But that criteria that you're pulling from the research becomes part of your analysis. So basically then what you can do is you can break up this new material or this analysis section into subsections based on your criteria. And you explain what the criteria is. You might reference briefly the research you're pulling that from. Does that make sense? So that's one option and what you'll find is that if you have a paragraph or two per criteria, you

should be able to get at least half a page per criteria and that's on the underestimating side. Another thing that you can do here is if you have a more sort of specific proposal, specific things that you think should be done, you can break that into steps and then you would say how that would be implemented in more depth, okay. So the different between doing a proposal in this method and doing a proposal for the last outline is that this one would be a lot more specific and concrete. It would be something that you might take to somebody on campus or your boss or something to say look, I already have these things figured out.

Peyton: So for our paper if we are writing about a problem, this part could be about a solution but it's not our solution, it's what research says would be best. Like our solution would be in the other model, right?

Hazel: What I'm saying is that you could do a more concrete solution in this model because it would be longer. You could break it into steps and you might use research to support each step but it would be your solution you are implementing. Or you might take somebody else's solution and adapt it to a particular community, right? Because just because someone says these are the five steps we should do and it will cure world peace doesn't mean that that solution works in every context, right?

Peyton's question is actually not only commendable but also encouraging. We can see here that she is making an earnest effort to understand the genre differences between the models Hazel is describing. As previously mentioned, Hazel spent significant time discussing genre and how to identify genre differences, even as students were handing in their final drafts. At that time, Hazel asked students to read through their papers and mark

out the different sections, labeling them (introduction, discussion, etc.) and explaining what that section was doing.

Despite this attention, however, when students got their graded papers back, a good amount of Hazel's written feedback dealt with difficulties students had maintaining genre constraints. For example, in her overall comments to Elle, who wrote about embryonic stem cell funding, Hazel wrote:

You've done a good job wrestling with a very complicated topic. Overall this is good. However, your discussion of the 2 sides and how and why they disagree could have more depth and better structuring. Right now you allot 2 paragraphs but scatter related statements in other paragraphs. Before you cover the 2 sides, you should state: "They disagree because they are making decisions/positions based on different beliefs" (except w/ better wording). Then go into detail about both sides. Then talk about funding. You should be clearer up front (thesis area) about whether you're arguing for private or federal funding.

Words like "organization" and "structure" appeared in the majority of paper comments, indicating that students were struggling to meet the requirements of the genre they chose to work in. The fact that students struggled isn't altogether surprising. Organization is one of the elements students say they struggle most within their written work. What is interesting here then is not that students struggled (as this should be expected) but rather that they didn't seem to show nearly as much struggle when transitioning to their digital media projects. This can be seen, in part, by the grade distribution in comparing the major research assignment (A3) and the digital remix (A4).

Table 8

Grade comparison between Assignment 3 (the major research paper) and Assignment 4 (the digital remix).

Name	Percent Grade on A3	Percent Grade on A4
Alex	70	80
Blair	83	100
Cholin	70	90
Elle	95	100
Ethan	91	80
Gilligan	95	100
Jay	76	80
Jessie	92	95
Landon	67	90
Marie	64	100
Mark	34	75
Micah	88	85
Michelle	84	100
Nora	85	100
Paige	81	100
Peyton	94	95
Steve	77	85
William	90	100

As Table 8 shows, only two students had lower grades on their A4 projects than on their A3 papers. While it might seem easy to associate this with the leniency instructors often give when grading digital projects, in this course, that was not the case. During interviews, Hazel frequently expressed concern about how to grade digital projects effectively and fairly. Hazel was well aware of scholarship that discussed how teachers often grade digital projects based on effort rather than results or how they grade the quality of the final product more easily because students aren't as comfortable using the editing software needed to create the project. To combat this possibility, Hazel spent a good deal of time in class discussing the different genres students would be creating digital projects in and what the requirements and constraints of those genres were. She

even grouped students based on the kinds of projects they intended to create (videos, memes, music, etc.) and had them generate a list of genre criteria that Hazel would then use in grading those projects. For example, students making videos discussed the importance of the camera being in focus, high quality sound, etc.

Hazel's written comments also suggest the depth to which she considered students' projects. Consider the comments she gave to Nora and Gilligan, whose projects I will discuss in greater detail below:

Nora, When I first watched this video before class, I admit I was a little concerned that you hadn't remixed very much. After watching it a couple times and watching the original Southern Comfort commercial, I realized that what you've put together here actually works very nicely and is a good example of remix. It probably speaks to the quality of your project that I wasn't convinced at first. The editing here is very smooth. It would have been nice to have a few more sub-titles that would expand on your point, maybe add some info about Coppertone specifically. Also, your classmates found your project to be one of the best—nicely done.

Gilligan, This video is nicely composed. The order and the subtitles work together well to demonstrate both the growth over time of the genre and your point that Rock n Roll is made up of many sub genres. Also, I appreciated that your text was always visible against the background, and the sound quality was both good and consistent. Nice work here. Also, your classmates were similarly impressed with your project, commenting that the combination of sound, visual, and text helped them to see the genre in a new light.

In both these comments, Hazel addresses not only the rhetorical effectiveness of the students' pieces but also the degree to which they properly executed the genre they were working in. Given that Hazel graded the digital projects as carefully as she did students' written work, and given the significantly higher grades that most students received on their digital projects, it is clear that students were both more comfortable working in a digital medium and had a better sense of what the genre requirements were for that medium. This comfort can be attributed to students' antecedent genre knowledge when it came to the kinds of digital remixes they chose to create. For the most part, the students all had experience, if not creating, then at least seeing or hearing the digital genres they chose to work with. As such, they more easily worked with those genres and were able to clearly make genre distinctions.

This antecedent genre knowledge is what can make some digital remixes a good entry point to intertextuality. The students' digital remixes made use of various sources (their own and others) to construct what they themselves viewed as original arguments. For example, Nora decided to base her digital remix on her A1 paper, which discussed why Coppertone sunscreen was an original product. For her digital remix, she created a YouTube video using a Southern Comfort commercial. The original commercial was approximately one minute and thirty seconds of a tan, older gentleman walking confidently down a beach in what is, by American standards, a small bathing suit (see Figure 4). Nora used almost the entire ad, cutting only the last five seconds, which featured a glass of Southern Comfort. She replaced this section with a section she wrote



Figure 4. Screenshot from Nora’s digital remix showing a segment of the Southern Comfort commercial.

herself. In the new section, Nora placed an old Coppertone ad (see Figure 4) where the image of the beverage once was (see Figure 5). Her argument was clear. Whereas the original ad for Southern Comfort was selling confidence through their beverage (as evidenced by a man who didn’t conform to a culturally accepted standard of beauty), Nora used that same man to sell confidence through Coppertone sunscreen. It was a seamless blend of sources not often seen in the written work that students produce. Whereas in written work instructors often complain about students using quote bombs (where quotes are inserted with no framing material), Nora’s video framed her various sources perfectly to make an effective argument.

By being familiar with the genre, Nora was able to compose seamless transitions with source material. After all, she was well aware of what a seamless transition with that material would look like. Nora had years of watching commercials to master an understanding of the commercial genre. She knew what her audience expected from her not only for a commercial but, for a digital remix and as stipulated in the assignment, for a product that was to bring together various ideas and parts, both hers and those

belonging to others. This was certainly different from the academic writing Nora engaged in. If Nora was writing a research paper, such as the one she composed for the third assignment, she had, at best, received a few years of instruction writing in that genre. It is no wonder, then, that her digital remix would be so much more effective. This is noteworthy because it suggests that if students can initially work in genres where they have antecedent knowledge to learn the moves of genres that are less familiar, they might be more successful. Or, at the very least, these antecedent genres can be used to discuss moves that are familiar but seem foreign when presented in new genres. While any genre, digital or otherwise, could presumably be used for this purpose, in teaching intertextuality, in this course, digital genres seemed especially effective in this way.



Figure 5. Screenshot from Nora's digital remix showing the final seconds of the video, where she used an old Coppertone billboard picture.

Citation, Plagiarism, and the Digital Realm

Using one genre to teach how intertextuality works in another genre has its challenges. In this course, many students mastered the genres they wrote in but didn't

necessarily transfer that knowledge to the new related genre. For example, Gilligan was highly effective in making an intertextual argument that he felt was original and that, by and large, met the genre requirements. Gilligan made a three-minute video describing the evolution of rock n' roll. Like Nora, Gilligan used a number of sources that he did not personally create in order to make his video. He included video clips from various performances by artists like The Beatles, Elvis Presley, Pink Floyd, Nirvana, and others. Importantly, none of these sources was cited in any kind of credit reel. When I asked Gilligan why this was the case, he explained:

Barrie: How'd you approach citation, because you were obviously using music videos that you didn't create yourself. Did you ever think that I need to cite this stuff or did you not worry about it?

Gilligan: Um, well I guess I didn't worry about it too much.

Barrie: Why didn't you?

Gilligan: Are you talking about the actual footage and stuff?

Barrie: Yeah, you know, some people had a credits thing at the end of their video, some people didn't. Some people cited in the written paper, some people didn't.

Gilligan: Well, as far as videos, I mean, I guess I just, I don't know. I really don't know. Like all the subtitles is just stuff that came off the top of my head but the videos themselves I guess I didn't cite them.

Barrie: Because you just didn't feel you needed to?

Gilligan: Yeah, I mean, I put the artist and the song name to give them credit, so I guess I made it, I made them accessible to people to go look up but didn't really cite. And probably unlike written text where you just pull a sentence from

someone's paper, someone wouldn't necessarily know; when they watch the video, I'm pretty sure, especially Elvis, I wasn't alive back then so it's obvious I didn't do it.

Gilligan makes several comments that are worth noting. First, he explains that he never even thought about citation when it came to making this video. That was a very different feeling from when he would talk about writing his written papers. After turning in the first assignment, he discussed with me what his citation practices were in that assignment. As he explained:

I think if I'm talking about something very specific, like I said, exact figures and units sold. That's something that I would never know off the top of my head. I'd have to cite that. Well, I'd have to look it up to cite it. Maybe that's what it boils down to. If I don't have an idea of what it is off the top of my head, I feel like I need to cite it because it's not something I came up with. I have to look up.

By this logic, Gilligan's video clips should have been cited, particularly because he had to look each of them up. He went on to state:

Well, I mean, you're not technically plagiarizing if you give the source specifically after the sentence but I guess on the other page, it gives credit to the people who had the ideas or said these things. Sometimes they're profound, sometimes they're not but there is still a creator.

Gilligan's explanation here could suggest why he felt he had cited sufficiently in his video by including a subtitle with the name of the musician and the title of the song. The song was the musician's creation. However, as a multimedia piece, the song was not the only element that should have technically been cited. Who created the video would also

be essential information, particularly if someone else wanted to find it in its original location.

Gilligan's admission that he never even considered citation in this project is telling, particularly if these projects are assigned to give students a lens into how language and writing is intertextual. Hess (2006) argues that sampling, which is essentially what Gilligan did in his video, "is like academic citation systems in that it builds upon existing texts by making new connections and responding to them with new ideas" (p. 282). As a researcher and fellow composition instructor, I can see how videos like those made by Gilligan and Nora do in fact do this. These students, however, were not cognizant of this fact. While from afar it seemed like introducing a new genre (the digital remix) to complicate older genres (more traditional academic writing) would be effective, what students like Nora and Gilligan showcased in both the physical products they created and the comments they made during follow-up interviews suggests that for the students, the genres are so removed from one another, and the genre requirements so different, that no association is made between the two. In other words, what students might learn about intertextuality from engaging in digital remixes does not transfer back to their more traditional academic writing, and vice versa.

Also of note is Gilligan's explanation that he did not cite the videos because someone would know that he did not create the Elvis video himself. Whereas it might be difficult to know based on text alone whether a student wrote something or not, a video clearly made before a student was even alive (Elvis was long dead by the time Gilligan was born) was clearly not his own work. Gilligan's comment points to the third and final reason why tapping into students' familiarity with intertextuality through digital media might not be as effective as we might hope in relieving the originality burden. Gilligan's

comment points to a reoccurring theme throughout the course—that citation in written work is about avoiding plagiarism. Consider this interview exchange I had with Nora after she completed the first major writing assignment:

Barrie: So I've heard you say in class a couple times that you think everything is remix. How do you feel, given that you feel like everything is remix, how do you feel about plagiarism policies that are like cite it if it's not original. If it's original, then you don't have to cite it, if it's yours. Because if you think everything is remix then that becomes really complicated, right?

Nora: It makes me nervous, to be honest.

Barrie: Why does it make you nervous?

Nora: Because, well, they have, you know that website where teachers have you turn it in and it tells you what percent of your paper is, well I mean, you can have a student who's like "and the" and that could be on that website and seen as plagiarism. Of course teachers don't take it like that but you never know what word order you put it in it would be seen as plagiarism, even if you're not intending to do that. But I mean, as far as like quotes and stuff like that, I'm okay with that because then I know that people understand it's not my writing.

Barrie: So are you totally confident that there's no plagiarism in this paper?

Nora: I'm not totally confident but I mean, I know that my cited stuff won't be seen as plagiarism.

I point to this exchange with Nora because of all of the students in the course, she was the most adamant about how everything is remix. Given this, I presumed that she would begin to see citation as something that helps relieve the originality burden. I hoped that in

pointing out language in plagiarism policies, Nora would consider the implications “everything is remix” would have on academic writing. Instead, Nora clung to the fear of plagiarism, referencing plagiarism detection software like turnitin.com, and explaining that she prefers to use quotes in her work because then it is clear that those quotes are not her own words.

Interestingly, on the very first day of the course, Hazel asked students to write down their most memorable experience with writing. While five students described positive moments, such as researching family history or receiving an A from a very difficult teacher, the remaining students discussed difficult moments in their writing career, particularly as they related to research. Blair, for example, wrote:

My most memorable experience with writing and research was a paper I did on abuse in high school. I did not enjoy this assignment because I never learned how to properly get and cite the information needed.

In this case, the originality burden almost becomes surpassed by the fear of plagiarism. Blair wasn’t even concerned about whether her argument was original (or at least she did not note concern in her response). Rather, she was afraid she might not cite properly and be accused of plagiarism.

Paige also alluded to the problem with research and citation when she explained: My most memorable experience with writing and research would have to be last year in English 101 when we did a research paper, and I got an A on my research material, but I got an F on the actual paper, but the research material was worth more than the paper. What made it memorable was that if my research was worth

an A, and I just put all the research in my paper, how could I have failed the paper?

Paige failed the paper both because of her failure to cite properly and her failure to use the research materials effectively in an argument. In other words, Paige's failure of the assignment related both to her inability to overcome the originality burden and her plagiarism. Paige, like Blair and the other students in the course, saw citation then as a means of avoiding plagiarism, not as a means of overcoming the originality burden.

This way of thinking continued into the digital projects. In an interview with William, I discussed how he did or did not use citation in his digital piece on why Boy Scouts are innocent and shouldn't be held accountable for the scandal regarding openly homosexual leaders and scouts:

Barrie: So in your remix, both in the written one and the video, did you think about citation at all? In the written one you obviously did because you had a works cited page.

William: But I didn't cite no one. I said it was all mine, my own ideas. I did a little bit I went to, I thought about acknowledging boy scouts—

Barrie: In both pieces, the written work and the video?

William: Because of time constraints, I didn't have time to put anything on. Because it ran 2 minutes and 54 seconds. I didn't have time to put the scroll real quick on the video. But I thought of in here [the paper] putting the Boy Scout promise because they own that. At the same time, all Boy Scouts own it and it's kind of community property. As long as you follow.

On the one hand, this exchange suggests that not citing because the project stemmed off of a previous project is problematic. Students, having finished a written assignment where they needed to use outside sources, seem to appropriate all the information that came from those sources, even though the information from the sources remains a part of those sources. Experienced academic writers know that this isn't the case. Scholars routinely cite not only people they have cited before but also their previously published work in order to attribute ideas where they should be attributed.

On the other hand, by William deciding not to cite in part because it all came from his own work (even if that work contained the work of others), there seems to be a subconscious acknowledgement of intertextuality and the ways in which ideas flow from one place to another. Though William did not feel that his Assignment 2 paper (the inspiration for his remix) was original, it became original when he did his remix since, as his own "original" work, he did not feel the need to cite it. Consider the following interview transcript:

Barrie: What do you think, if you think back on the whole course, was the most original piece of writing that you did? And the video remix we can consider writing, too, if you'd like.

William: I would probably say the A1 [Assignment 1].

Barrie: Why is that?

William: Um, just the material that you had to look up. There wasn't a lot of written material because I used the sharkbite connector so it was—. With a lot of the other stuff, you draw from other people's ideas more. And maybe the A2 or the A3 because it was long, too. It's hard to say.

Barrie: So did using other people's stuff affect how you perceived what was original?

William: Yeah.

Barrie: So in that sense, your video, since it has no citation, did you feel pretty original about that?

William: Yeah.

This conversation with William is similar to one with Paige, discussed in Chapter 3. It points to the originality burden and the way in which source usage affects students' perceived abilities to make an original argument. And yet, despite feeling this way, by the time William was done with his remixed video of his son discussing the Boy Scouts, William felt that his second major assignment paper was *his* and that his video therefore required no citation since he was using his own work.

Whether William is cognizant that he is doing this is difficult to say. Still, moments like these do point to some of the possibilities associated with remix in the composition classroom. If nothing else, William came to see his writing as his original work and the ideas of others appropriated into his to a point where one can't distinguish what was originally his and what was originally someone else's.

William's decision not to cite, however, also comes back to genre. William explained that he did not include any kind of credits reel in his video because by the time his video was complete, he only had six more seconds left (given Hazel's requirement that videos be no longer than three minutes). In written work, William would have never considered leaving off a works cited page. If his paper had become too long, he would have either shortened it so that the Works Cited page fit the allotted page count or he

would have discussed it with his instructor to see if an extra page was allowable. In the digital project, it just wasn't as necessary. William took a similar approach to Gilligan. In this genre, the YouTube video, there just isn't as much of an expectation for citation.

Over the course of the semester, students were unable to discuss their use of sources without also discussing citation. By that I mean that discussing sources, and the information a source offered an argument, was never discussed outside the mechanics of citation. For students, the two went hand in hand. In their digital remixes, students were only concerned with the intellectual work a source did. William didn't concern himself with how to cite the sources in his video. Gilligan wasn't concerned about where his sources came from, only that they worked for his argument. These thought processes are what help students see unoriginal work as contributing to original arguments. Without a citation mechanism to associate with them, however, students saw no connection between written source usage and digital source usage.

In my final interviews with students, I asked them to tell me first, whether or not the digital project would help them in their future and second, why they thought Hazel assigned the project. Their responses were telling:

Barrie: Why do you think Hazel made you do a remix?

Paige: Because she likes digital projects. She said that at the beginning that she likes digital projects.

Barrie: Well you said you didn't really feel like anything in that is going to help you with your writing. Do you feel like you got something out of it that's going to help you in school or in life?

Paige: Mhmm. Like I know how to make a video now. And how to edit and make a video for like other classes that I may have.

Paige's take away from this project was that her instructor assigned them because she "liked digital projects" and that she now knows "how to edit and make a video." While these points are in fact true, the overall objectives for Hazel assigning this project don't match what students perceive as a take-away. William had similar take-aways:

Barrie: So why do you think Hazel assigned a remix project?

William: I think to broaden everyone's scope. And like, one of the questions she asked in the assignment sheet was how do businesses look at it now. You've got to be, to be competitive nowadays you can't just put everything on paper. You've got to be able to work with the computer and put something together that is going to draw the attention of people. Both employers and once you get out in the marketplace. If you're in sales or marketing, to be able to market yourself.

William, like Paige, perceived the remix assignment in terms of the skills learned making a video. The project was meant to help students in a technological age when "you can't just put everything on paper." While I have no doubt that Hazel would applaud the students for these take-aways, and that they are certainly valuable lessons, I believe there was more she had hoped for, especially in a class meant to help students better understand intertextuality and feel less burdened by the need to be "original" in a traditional sense.

Of all the interviews I conducted, only one showed promise of seeing Hazel's objectives and, more importantly, considering how doing a digital remix might connect to the written work students do in class:

Barrie: So why do you think Hazel assigned the remix project?

Cholin: Well, I think, that it's just kind of a change of pace from writing things and it kind of allowed us to be a little more creative I guess. And also I think it's important for the role of the class, just to do a remix. Like we didn't really, up to that, we had talked about different copyright laws but we hadn't actually put them into action. I suppose, in remixing something and part of the written assignment I think was talking about that, was talking about how your project has to do with those different laws. So I think it was just to give us a hands-on experience with that, and to be able to recognize that this applied to different situations and not just writing and that we have this experience. Because I mean, we went over copyright and things like that and that has to do with citing sources and things like that, you sort of are remixing your sources into a different papers when you write any of the other assignments that we did but I think this one was more of a, it was more explicitly stating you're doing a remix and it's more of an explicit, I can't think of the word, example or remix.

Though Cholin began his explanation similarly to Paige, William, and others, he ended by emphasizing what I hoped remix would teach all along: that when you are engaged in researched writing, "you are sort of remixing your sources." There are many possible reasons why Cholin was the only student in class to articulate this understanding but to me, what seems most promising is likely the fact that of all the students in class, he was the only one who actively engaged in creating digital remixes at home. In the same interview, Cholin explained the following:

I make memes all the time just for, like I make them. I haven't quite as much recently. Just I've had lots of stuff going on with school but that's something that I used to do a lot so I guess having that experience with memes as more just a casual thing.

Because Cholin was familiar with the process of *making* memes, and not just consuming them, it's possible that he was able to perceive a deeper reason for engaging in digital remixes than his peers. Paige, for example, struggled a great deal to produce her video. She even scheduled an extra conference with Hazel because she was having difficulty editing different clips and putting them together. William likewise struggled because he wasn't sure how to use the technology. As he explained to me, he spent "hours in the digital media suite" getting help putting the video together. For Paige, William, and other students who struggled with the technological aspect of the assignment, the intellectual work required just to achieve the various parts of the assignment overwhelmed the intellectual work we hope accompanies remix: that one can use sources to make something original. In many ways, this is no different than the way students approach citation in their written work. Students obsess about citation style and whether or not they have cited correctly and generally spend less time concerned with framing their quotes or considering what sources or pieces of sources could work best for their argument. Only Cholin, who was familiar not just with reading memes but with actually making them himself, was able to think about the project from the perspective of remix and only because he wasn't overwhelmed by the task of simply producing the meme.

Conclusion

Though Cholin was the only student to articulate the similarities between digital remixes and written work with sources, the integration of digital remix into the composition course was not without its merit. Like students' interrogation of the word "remix" discussed in Chapter 3, in learning about, watching, and producing digital remixes in class, students asked the kinds of questions we hope they will ask about written texts. One day, when students watched a remixed movie preview that joined the trailer video from *Cars* and the trailer audio from *Talladega Nights*, Michelle and Landon engaged in a heated discussion about the similarities between both films:

Michelle: I just didn't realize how similar they were. The characters are like exact, stupid best friend, love.

Landon: Which one came out first?

Michelle: They were both the same. I looked it up. They were both 2006.

Landon: Wow. Maybe, maybe they had similar producers or something.

Michelle: No, I looked up that, too.

Landon: And different studios.

Michelle: Yeah.

Landon: Wow.

Michelle was so intrigued by the similarities between both films that she made an effort to learn about the making of each one to understand why there were similarities. When she discovered that both films were entirely independent of each other, she was left to consider how the similarities could occur. For instructors, what Michelle did here was exciting. First, she was motivated to seek outside information even though it wasn't

specifically assigned. Instructors can only hope to engage their students enough so that they do this. Second, she is beginning to see intertextuality in action. While she might not be able to name it yet, or fully comprehend it, she is witnessing it. I would argue that she is able to witness it because the medium she is examining is familiar. Not only is she familiar with the movie trailer genre, but she is also familiar with both movies being used in the trailer. This familiarity allows her insider status, the kind of status that empowers her to make judgment calls about how things might be similar or different. Students are less likely to feel this insider status when they are engaged in academic writing tasks. After all, one reason students enroll in composition courses is to “learn how to write for university classes,” as Landon explained on the first day.

Because many students feel more comfortable assessing digital products (because they have been seeing them their entire lives), using them to start discussing intertextuality seems like a wise pedagogical decision. Furthermore, as has already been stated by many scholars, writing digital products entails using the same skills as writing written ones. Students must think about genre traits, audience, and purpose. Since students did so much better working with digital genres than written ones, digital remixes might again be a good starting point for discussing genre.

Unfortunately, if the goal is to lift the originality burden, digital remixes in familiar genres may not be the golden ticket we might hope for. For the students in this course, digital remixes, familiar or otherwise, were simply too different from written genres for students to be able to see the similarities. Because many digital genres don't have inherent citation systems, or deny the need for citation altogether, students can't

make the leap that Cholin made that the work students do with sources in digital remixes is similar to what they do with written sources in written work.

Still, in sixteen weeks, one can hardly expect for a cultural worldview students have had for over a decade to completely dissipate. It is certainly possible that with time and further practice, students might be able to make the leaps Cholin made about remix. They might begin to see that the intertextual work they see online is similar to the intertextual work they create in classrooms, and that their professors create for journals and books. If the originality burden is perceived like a calm, undisturbed pond, then the introduction of digital remix to students can be seen as a pebble thrown into that pond. It lands and makes ripples. It disturbs the surface. But eventually, the pond goes back to being calm and undisturbed. Throw enough pebbles at a pond, however, and its landscape might be changed forever.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Major Findings

This study examines the originality burden, an encumbrance wherein students feel overwhelmed by the need to write an “original” paper. More specifically, this study speculates on why the originality burden can be so hard, and sometimes even impossible, for students to overcome. The results of this study suggest that many students enter the classroom with culturally engrained understandings of originality that are hard to break, even when the pedagogy is focusing on just such a task. Though Hazel developed a syllabus meant to show students “how basically nothing is original” and to release them from “having to come up with an original idea for their papers,” achieving originality in their writing remained an elusive goal for students. Even when originality was discussed through the lens of remix, and even after completing major writing assignments that asked students to reflect on how their writing was a form of remix, students maintained that originality in their writing was unachievable (though desired) and remix, or intertextuality more broadly, (not a form of originality itself) was at best what they did in their own writing.

For the students in this study, the originality burden manifested itself as a crossroads between imitation and invention, supporting Bawarshi’s (2008) argument that there is a “complex relationship between imitation and invention [wherein] imitation and

invention exist on a genre-defined continuum and thereby have a variable relationship that we must acknowledge if we want to understand imitation's inventive power—that genre-differentiated point of transformation where imitation becomes invention” (p. 79). Though the students studied here could clearly see the intersection between imitation and invention (even seeing their writing as a kind of remix), they were unable to grasp the “genre-differentiated point of transformation where imitation becomes invention” (Bawarshi, 2008, p. 79).

Bawarshi's “point of transformation” is a helpful metaphor for describing to students how concepts like remix or intertextuality can lead to original work. For the students in this classroom, however, serious consideration of those terms was not enough for overcoming the originality burden. This study therefore adds to Bawarshi's work, and work done by Dubisar and Palmeri (2012), who discussed originality through remix, and Bazerman (2004) who discussed originality through intertextuality, by unearthing two major hurdles that reinforce the originality burden: the citation practices most students engage in and the plagiarism policies that dictate those citation practices.

Citation Practices

In this study, when citation was introduced to students either in class discussion, conferences, or in paper comments, it became the main focal point. For example, when Hazel conferenced with William about his second major writing assignment, fifteen out of the twenty minutes of conferencing was spent discussing how to properly cite in APA. This was not Hazel's intention; rather, William arrived at the conference with his APA manual and, when Hazel asked him at the beginning of the conference if he had any questions, he began to flip through the APA manual looking for guidance on how to cite

each of the sources currently being used in his paper. Even in moments when Hazel tried to steer the conversation back to areas of content, organization, or rhetorical effect, William would return again to citation questions.

While no other student in the course carried around a style manual with such regularity, all students were deeply concerned about citation. Students' concerns were made apparent the first day of class (as discussed in Chapter 4) when almost all of them discussed their relationship with writing as being somewhat negative because they felt limited in their citation abilities. Their frustrations were made all the more clear when preparing to write major assignment 3, the researched argument. Because this assignment, more than any other, required the explicit use of sources, source citation became an important issue for students, even when it needn't be. For example, in conferences with Hazel, many students, like William, began the conference by expressing doubts on whether or not their citations were correct. For example:

Peyton: I was really worried about my citations, because like—

Hazel: I didn't think I found anything.

In this conversation, Hazel actually cuts Peyton off before hearing an explanation for why Peyton was worried. While I can only speculate as to why Hazel didn't let Peyton finish her sentence, it seems likely that Hazel stopped her not only because there was nothing wrong citation-wise in the paper, but also because it's not what Hazel wanted to focus on. In this case, Hazel had a number of questions about Peyton's organizational structure which, in Hazel's eyes, warranted far more attention. In another exchange, this time with Cholin, there is a different kind of citation concern. Rather than worrying about whether

his citations were formatted correctly, here Cholin was worried about whether he used a large enough variety of citation-types in his actual paper.

Hazel: But I mean as far as whether or not you're citing correctly, I didn't notice a problem.

Cholin: I didn't use any direct quotations. That just didn't even cross my mind.

On the one hand, it's a relief that direct quotations didn't cross Cholin's mind. Rather than seeing citation as a checklist where he needs to include paraphrase, and some summary, and some direct quotations, Cholin did what he thought was best for his message. In this case, he only paraphrased. Unfortunately, rather than consciously seeing this as a moment where Cholin made his citations work for him, paraphrasing rather than quoting for rhetorical effectiveness, Cholin was concerned that he messed up the assignment by not quoting directly. It was a reasonable concern given the amount of class time spent talking about how to format quotations and cite them correctly.

Around the same time that Hazel was conducting these conferences with students, I was conducting interviews with them to discuss major assignments 1 and 2. In these interviews, a related though different kind of citation concern emerged. Inevitably, and without my prompting, students in interviews would begin to talk to me about citation. Often, these conversations would start with students questioning me. Marie, for example, wanted to know why she was never explicitly taught citation in high school. Emma asked why such "hardcore" citation instruction was saved until college. Micah wanted to know why, in high school, all he had to do was list his sources on the last page but in college, he had to "be so detailed about it all."

At least among the students I interviewed, the common consensus was that they hadn't received enough citation instruction in high school and, if they had, their college-level writing would have been better. Feeling ill-prepared for the citation demands of college could easily explain students' expressed concerns about citation during conferences with Hazel. Interestingly, though not surprising, these same students, either in class discussion or in separate interviews, also discussed how "boring" citation instruction was. As Micah explained to me one day, "it's like grammar all over again."

Plagiarism Policies

Students saw citation instruction, and specifically the mechanics of how to cite, as a kind of "drill and grill" session. Emma told me that learning citation is "like going to the dentist." As she put it, everyone needs to do it but no one likes it. When I pushed her on this, and asked her why everyone needs to do it, she explained that it was so "that you would not be reported for stealing other people's work." Unsurprisingly, the common consensus on why to cite was to avoid plagiarism. In every interview with students, when I asked them why they cited a specific source, it was to avoid plagiarism. Despite multiple conversations on why to cite, and even a written homework assignment in response to Dowdey's (1992) "Citation and Documentation Across the Curriculum," students' overarching reason for citing was to avoid plagiarism.

Citation thus became the antithesis of plagiarism, and it was citation's relationship to plagiarism that made it inherent to the originality burden. As Bazerman (2004); Howard (1995); Pennycook (1996); and Ranamukalage, Thompson, and Pennycook (2004) have all previously discussed, plagiarism statements and the policies that enforce them make students hyperaware of the work they use that is not their own, conclusions

clearly supported by the students in this study. Rather than seeing themselves as forwarding their own thoughts using the work of others—a goal compositionists have for students and one that is discussed at length in Howard's (1996) aptly named book, *Standing in the Shadow of Giants: Plagiarists, Authors, Collaborators*—the students in this study saw a major distinction between what was theirs and what they were using from someone else.

Moreover, as the students in this study repeatedly said, the more text they borrowed from someone else, the less original they felt their work was. In final interviews with students, each student asserted that their most original piece of writing was the paper they did for assignment 1, because it required the fewest, if any, outside sources. The researched argument, which called for students to use at least ten sources, was perceived as the least original of the semester. Even though students were able to choose their own topics, and even though many students chose to conduct primary research, such as surveying, that assignment was, in their eyes, unoriginal. The overwhelming power of citation, and citation mechanics more specifically, was especially evident in this classroom, where Hazel probably spent less time on how to cite than the average first-year composition instructor. Moreover, whereas some composition instructors may only teach students how to cite, Hazel spent considerable time discussing with students why they cite, with particular attention to Feak and Swales' (2009) list of eight reasons why academics cite (wherein only one reason is to avoid plagiarism). If, in a classroom of this nature, students could become so overwhelmed by citation, it would be easy to speculate that it could be even worse in classrooms where attention to citation is limited mainly to the mechanics of how to cite.

Pedagogical Implications

Students' overwhelming concern for citation and avoiding plagiarism is understandable, but given its negative effect in overcoming the originality burden, it may make sense to draft assignments that purposely remove that focus for students, such as by requiring fewer (if any) citation (as when students completed Hazel's digital project). Though at first it might seem jarring to remove the focus from the mechanics of citation style (something frequently put on the shoulders of compositionists by college administrators and non-English Department faculty), this study suggests that such a move may in fact benefit students, and thereby other departments on campus, more than explicit instruction on citation style. For example, while such instruction does help prevent future incidents of plagiarism (certainly a concern of most college administrators), it does little to remedy other frequently heard complaints by faculty across the curriculum, namely, that students aren't using their sources meaningfully, or putting their sources in conversation with one another.

As McLeod (2012) explains, when instructors in *any* discipline are trying to teach students to write, it is often through the notion of apprentice. Faculty want to apprentice students to become members of their disciplines. One way that membership can be attained and asserted is through writing. Students therefore need experience writing meaningfully from sources. Given the years of training compositionists receive as well as their various research interests, they are prime candidates for teaching students how to interact meaningfully with their sources and help students feel that in so doing, they are contributing original work into various conversations. If students feel a sense of

ownership of their work, if they feel that they, like their professors, can be original, they will be more confident going into discipline-specific courses.

It is therefore important for composition instructors interested in relieving the originality burden to find alternate ways to discuss citation and source usage with their students. My own interest in how students use sources in particular ways led me to Genette's (1997) concept of transtextuality, a framework for identifying the different ways that language can be intertextual. Genette's framework was useful during this research project because it offered a means through which I could ask students for their motivation behind using a particular source in a particular way. However, when I would ask students why they elected to use a particular source, or to use it in a specific way, students found these questions jarring and often met them with a considerable period of silence. I attribute the silence to the fact that, at least for the students I interviewed, they hadn't spent a lot of time thinking about why they used a particular quote or how they put that quote to work for their own rhetorical purposes. For example, consider this exchange I had with Marie while discussing her first major writing assignment:

Barrie: So, when you just used a direct quote, how do you choose the quote?

Marie: [Silence while flipping through her paper.] I know, like with this one [pointing to a direct quote], it was the website was like one long page or whatever and I started reading it and it seemed legit to me so I was like, oh well, this is probably fine. And I read this [pointing to a different section] and I thought it was interesting, like the story of him and his sister. And so I just, I don't know. Pretty much if it seems legit then I will put it on there.

This exchange, and similar ones I had with other students, supports the findings of Howard and Jamieson's (2011) *Citation Project*, which has looked at 1,911 citations in 174 different student papers at 16 different colleges and universities. Howard and Jamieson found that regardless of how long a source was, 46% of all the citations studied came from the first page of the source and 23% from the second page. In total, 77% of all citations came from within the first three pages of the source. As Howard and Jamieson explain, students' citation usage from only the first few pages of a source "suggests that students are not engaging with texts in meaningful ways" (para. 3).

My conversation with Marie, and other students like her, further Howard and Jamieson's findings by confirming them and offering further insight into why students may not be using sources in as meaningful ways as we might hope. For example, Marie's concern with the rhetorical effectiveness of her source did not appear to extend beyond whether or not the source could be considered "legit." While deciding on the reliability of a source is certainly a first step in citation, and assessing reliability does help build a source's rhetorical effectiveness, my research argues that it is not enough if our goal is to help students see how using sources *can* contribute to original writing. This is where Genette's framework for intertextuality, or any framework that considers the rhetorical effect of a citation, could prove useful.

As discussed in Chapter 3, when students were introduced to intertextuality through the lens of remix, they were able to interrogate a concept like originality and see how tenuous defining originality can be. Students nonetheless remained steadfast in their belief that originality is possible in academic writing (particularly among advanced members of the academic community, like professors) but that what they wrote was

remixed because they depended so much on outside sources. In other words, by using sources, students were remixing arguments, not necessarily making original ones. This conclusion is understandable given that, rather than seeing themselves as making sources work for them, most of the students' asserted that their motivation for using a source in their writing was based on whether it was reliable or not.

Focusing on how an author gives a citation a particular meaning, on the other hand, would offer a different basis on which students could judge not just the sources they use (a skill the students in this course demonstrated time and time again) but also the ways in which students put those sources to work for the purposes of their papers. For example, what would happen if, rather than being concerned with properly citing a source, students were concerned with how that source was working to their rhetorical ends? It is easy to see how this could be accomplished. For instance, in the major researched argument assignment—the assignment students deemed to be the least original of their written assignments—Hazel asked that students cite ten sources and that five of those sources had to be peer-reviewed, one had to be a physical copy of a book, and two had to be primary sources. Hazel is not alone in making these kinds of lists when handing out researched assignment. Hazel explained to me that she made such a list in order to give students experience finding sources in different locations. In a classroom where one major objective was to help prepare students for the kind of research they might have to do in later courses, this reasoning is sound. On the other hand, given that my research suggests that despite students finding sources in various locations, they felt no more comfortable considering their work to be original, they may be better served thinking of sources not just based on where they come from, but rather with how they

work. Hazel was of course interested in having her students use sources based on how they work as well, but by foregrounding where sources came from, this lesson was lost to most students.

Thus, what if, instead of having students find a certain number of books or articles, we asked them to make sure that in their paper, they demonstrated instances of hypertextuality, metatextuality, and intertextuality (to use Genette's terms)? While one could make the argument that we are simply replacing one checklist (the kind of source) with another (what the source is doing), I would argue that what the source is doing is far more important than what the source is, particularly if the goal is to help students overcome the originality burden. Such a requirement would still make students to determine whether a source was reliable, but students would be doing it within the context of what a source is doing and how it is doing it.

Having students think of sources through the lens of transtextuality is much like having students offer frames to the sources they use in their papers. For example, when instructors implement a text such as Graff and Birkenstein's (2009) *They Say, I Say*, instructors are hoping for students to see how they put sources in conversation with one another. The large number of templates that Graff and Birkenstein provide in the text emphasizes the many, many possibilities available to students in terms of how their sources might relate with each other and with the student's own argument. *They Say, I Say*, then, is one way for students to see that *they* decide how a source works for their argument and in this way sources *can* be used to make something original. A framework like Genette's compliments the work accomplished by Graff and Birkenstein. Genette's framework explicitly asks students to think about what kind of source they are using

based on how it relates to other sources the reader may or may not be familiar with. Students are pushed to consider the ways in which a source, and even language more broadly, fits into a larger conversation. Even elements such as genre and organization can be framed through the lens of transtextuality.

Additionally, it is important to note that this pedagogy does not suggest that we ignore citation style or resource-type in composition instruction. Rather, these become inherent to conversations about meaningful uses of sources—inherent but not the primary focus. Whereas Hazel required students to use peer-reviewed journals and a physical copy of a book from the school's library because those seemed like the resources of choice for academic writing, such instruction made what the source was a primary concern and how it was important to the argument a secondary concern. When this is the case, students can easily begin to focus on the *what* of the source, rather than the *how*. Such an approach emphasizes that they are using other people's material in their own work without asserting that they are in control of what work is used and how it is effective. Instruction of this nature deemphasizes the very aspect of the research project that can help students overcome the originality burden.

In order for instruction such as this to work, however, instructors need to reconsider how they approach a topic like plagiarism. Students already enter the composition course fearing plagiarism. As the students in Hazel's classroom made clear, the threat of the plagiarism is real in their lives. When students began conferences with Hazel asking if they had cited correctly, they did so not because they were particularly interested in the intellectual properties of citation, but because they wanted to make sure they were doing it right so that they wouldn't be accused of plagiarism. As more and

more secondary schools implement plagiarism detection software, students entering the composition classroom will only be that much more afraid of plagiarizing. As Zwagerman (2008) explains, plagiarism detection software actually makes students feel like prey, being hunted by instructors looking for cheaters. The truth is that *most* students are not trying to game the system. Howard and Jamieson's (2011) research showcased this fact, emphasizing that the majority of plagiarism they found was the result of students who didn't know how to properly summarize. In order for a rhetorical approach to citation, such as that offered by framework like Genette's, to work in unraveling the originality burden, instructors must find ways to alleviate student fears of plagiarism, at least in that course. Having students compose a paper with guidelines from Genette but where citation isn't necessary may be one avenue for such a pursuit. By having students highlight the places where Genette's framework is being used, the instructor will know the places where a student is using an outside source. Students, however, will have spent the majority of their time thinking about how to make a source work for them, not worrying about whether that source was cited correctly or not. Over time, and given such practice, citation can be reintroduced but only after students have become comfortable thinking about and articulating meaningful reasons for including the sources that they do.

In addition, for a framework like this to potentially work, instructors need to rethink the researched writing assignment. My findings add to previous conversations about the nature of the research paper in first-year composition, particularly conversations by Russell (1997), Freedman (1996), Petraglia (1995), Wardle (2009), and others, who all discussed the difficulty of teaching "general" academic writing skills, especially through a research paper, which Wardle appropriately calls a "mutt genre" (p.

774). Wardle critiques the research paper, and assignments like it, because it seeks to “mimic genres that mediate activities in other activity systems, but within the FYC system their purposes and audiences are vague or even contradictory” (p. 774). Her criticism is similar to one made decades earlier, by James Britton (1965):

I believe that in all too many instances, at least in college, the student writes the wrong thing, for the wrong reason, to the wrong person, who evaluates it on the wrong basis. That is, he writes about a subject he is not thoroughly informed upon, in order to exhibit his knowledge rather than explain something the reader does not understand, and he writes to a professor who already knows more than he does about the matter and who evaluates the paper, not in terms of what he has derived, but in terms of what he thinks the writer knows. In every respect, this is the converse of what happens in professional life, where the writer is the authority; he writes to transmit new or unfamiliar knowledge to someone who does not know but needs to, and who evaluates the paper in terms of what he derives and understands. (p. 116)

In both respects, students have no real impetus to do their research, other than because the instructor has asked them to. They may or may not have interest in the topic and, even if they do have interest, aren't likely to have enough time or the resources to develop enough knowledge to both know and explain something.

In order for instruction on citation to work using a schema like Genette's, students must have a clear impetus for writing and, by association, a clear target audience. This is largely because in order for them to make conscious decisions about how their writing is intertextual, they need to have a sense of what their reader knows, doesn't know, and

needs to know. Though these assertions are hardly new, and have been discussed for as long as we have been discussing the rhetorical triangle with our students, this study suggests that our current methods aren't working as well as we might hope in large part because, as discussed above, the mechanisms of citation overwhelm students. If we instead offer the same assignments and ensure there is a clear, meaningful impetus for writing, we *may* help students overcome the originality burden. Service-learning courses may be an excellent place to try such assignments because in such courses, there are real, living readers outside of the classroom with real problems needing to be solved.

Another option for combatting the originality burden is to make better use of students' antecedent genre knowledge. This study found that for the most part, when students engaged in genres that were explicitly intertextual, such as their digital remixes, few of them came to see how the moves they made in combining digital content were similar to their synthesis work in their more traditional written assignments. A classroom like Hazel's, where the course content (readings, discussions, assignments, and so forth) was meant to teach students about intertextuality, was meant to encourage this kind of knowledge transfer. Instead, students were still just as likely to not see transfer as in courses where the content was on anything other than intertextuality.

In speculating about the lack of transfer, it is possible that because the digital remix was the last major assignment, students didn't have the opportunity to reflect on how some of the moves they made remixing digital content matched the moves they had or would make working with written sources. Hazel's choice to put the digital project at the end is not unusual, however. Many instructors have their students complete the digital assignment last because 1) they want it to be related to a piece of writing previously

created in the course and/or 2) they prefer the major writing assignments to occur earlier during the year so that students aren't writing long research papers when all their other final papers for other classes are due.

Unfortunately, such planning prevents the kinds of discussions that instructors might have with students about using their antecedent genre knowledge with digital remixes, for example, to help them with more academic genres, like the research paper. Such a change, however, may be difficult. Administrators, students, and even some departments still question the value of digital genres when it comes to the teaching of writing. Still, scholars like Dubisar and Palmeri (2012), Williams (2009), Yancey (2004), and a slew of others are working hard to change the mindsets of those who do not yet see the value of digital work for teaching not just composition, but communication more broadly.

Of course, whether any of the suggestions made above will relieve students of the originality burden remains to be seen. Future studies will need to be conducted to see whether citation instruction based on intertextuality rather than mechanics is any more effective at lessening the originality burden. Likewise, studies comparing transfer in courses where a digital project comes first versus last will also need to be conducted. What is clear, however, is that in this classroom, conversations and assignments about originality and remix were not enough to overcome the originality burden because lessons about originality and remix that were learned theoretically were lost in practice.

Reflections

This study was born out of an interest in student authorship, and the notion that students should believe that the writing they produce in first-year composition has value

not just because it is potentially teaching them the “moves of academic writing,” but because in writing, students are creating new knowledge that will be important, useful, interesting, or informative to a given community of readers. More specifically, it was born from a feeling I had as a writing instructor that despite my best efforts at creating meaningful assignments with real-world audiences, students still felt that the work they created was unoriginal, uninspired, and unimportant to those who read it.

In conversations I had with students about this issue, the word “original” came up frequently. Students felt frustrated writing long research papers that depended almost entirely on other people’s knowledge. Even when given the opportunity to choose their own topic, or to choose a topic they were already familiar with, students lost sight of their excitement for the topic over the course of the research process. They also felt unoriginal because they felt that academic writing quieted their “voice.” This was particularly true for students who’d had experience with more personal genres of writing, like memoir.

Increasingly, I became interested in learning what it was students meant when they talked about “original” writing and how first-year writing curriculums might help students feel that they could write original papers, even if they involved research. Specifically, I began thinking about how a concept like intertextuality might be used to help students understand that originality wasn’t just black and white. Something wasn’t just original or unoriginal and everything relies, in some way or another, on what came before it.

I recognize that the concerns I have about originality are not shared by all writing instructors. Depending on one’s pedagogy, or how one defines the goals of first-year composition, whether students think their writing counts as original or not may not be an

important issue. But as someone who believes that compositionists can and should be teaching writing with the idea of transfer in mind, I cannot let the originality burden go. Just as grammar instruction has decreased to make room for instruction on more macro issues, such as idea development and organization, so too must instruction on citation style and plagiarism be reconsidered.

On June 16, 2014, Jerry Nelms asked of members of the Writing Program Administration listserv the following question: “Why teach documentation in FYC?” Nelms was concerned that teaching students any one documentation style (such as MLA or APA) could amount to “cognitive overload,” particularly for students who would never need to use this documentation style again. Members of the WPA community responded in various ways. Bradley Bleck, for example, suggested that the teaching of documentation in FYC is “driven by the place of FYC as a ‘service’ course to the student and the institution, so that they can at least have a sense of what will be expected from their classes when they write.” Others, such as Doug Sweet, argued that “teaching documentation [...] is to teach research. Not some 8 source ‘report’ or ‘paper,’ but the way we actually go about teaching intellectual work.” I agree with Sweet. Teaching documentation does teach research. I would argue more strongly however, that it teaches not only research but what it means to be a contributing member of a discourse community and, more importantly still, that even students in first-year composition courses can be contributing members.

For too many of our students, the originality burden is a real hindrance to their writing. The frustrations that instructors feel when teaching citation or going over a school’s plagiarism policy are felt all the more strongly by our students. As such, we

must be willing to engage in the kinds of conversations that Nelms started on the WPA listserv. More importantly, we must engage in them *with* our students. If we engage with them, and act on them, our students may begin to feel the originality burden lifted.

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APPENDIX A

ENGLISH 102 COURSE OUTCOMES

The focus of English 102 is creating and answering questions through research and writing that draws upon written texts and other sources. A student in English 102 should expect to create research questions, find relevant information to answer those questions, and write longer essays that use the information to create and support a clearly defined position on the topic involved. A student in English 102 can expect to write four to six papers during the term, including at least one extended research essay, totaling about 20 to 25 pages of text.

Student Learning Outcomes for English 102:

Rhetorical Knowledge

By the end of English 102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Demonstrates rhetorical purpose by creating a position relative to their research
- Analyzes the needs of the audience and the requirements of the assignment or task
- Demonstrates knowledge of genres employed in writing with research
- Provides supporting evidence from research sources
- Employs a tone consistent with purpose and audience

Critical Thinking and Reading

By the end of English 102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Identifies rhetorical strategies and summarizes main ideas of outside sources
- Places sources in context with other research
- Represents and responds to multiple points of view in research

Processes

By the end of English 102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Identifies a research question
- Develops a research strategy
- Identifies and evaluates sources
- Uses research sources to discover and focus a thesis

Conventions

By the end of English 102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Integrates sources with one another and with own analysis

- Demonstrates control over conventions of format and presentation for different purposes and different audiences
- Demonstrates an understanding of the purposes and conventions of documentation
- Demonstrates awareness of multiple methods of citation

APPENDIX B

HAZEL'S COURSE SYLLABUS

English 102.09 Intermediate College Writing

Course Description and Goals:

This section of 102 will be themed around the idea of remix. We will use the idea of remix to delve into common issues around writing practice including but not limited to the following: authorship, ownership, using and crediting sources, revision, rhetorical community practices, the appropriate forms and genres for particular products, among others. For the purposes of this class, remix will be used broadly to consider a variety of products from video mash-ups to scholarly work. Rather than simply finding and consuming sources, we will consider how those sources can be re-used, re-designed, remixed into new products. Similarly, you should consider how the assignments you write in this class might also be remixed. Upon completion of this course, you should be able to

- Find and use appropriate research in original ways
- Compose print and digital products that clearly communicate original ideas and claims
- Understand how authorship, ownership, and use of commodities function in at least one specific community
- Understand and be able to apply the rhetorical connection between purpose and genre

This description is an addition to and does not contradict any information in the catalog description. The details of the general course description and more about course outcomes can be found on the Composition program website. This course fulfills a General Education Written Communication Requirement. *Course prerequisites:* Eng. 101, approved transfer credit for Eng. 101, or Portfolio Placement into 102.

Course Materials:

Each day you will need to bring the following to class:

- The appropriate readings and exercises printed from Blackboard
- Something to take notes on
- Something to take notes with
- Your prepared brain, preferably in your head attached to your body (just sayin')
- Printing access and funds
- Paper clips and/or a stapler and staples

- I will not accept any assignments with multiple pages that are not stapled or paper-clipped.

Major Requirements:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Approximate Due Dates</i>	
		<i>Draft</i>	<i>Final</i>
A1 Product Ancestry	100	1/28	2/4
A2 Community Ownership	200	2/25	3/4
A3 Remix Researched Argument	250	4/1	4/8
A4 Digital Remix	200	4/12	4/24
Homework, in-class activities, quizzes	250*	Ongoing: See Blackboard for Details	

**Class participation will be used to decide borderline grades.*

Grading Scale

A+	97 – 100	B+	87 – 89	C+	77 – 79	D+	67 – 69	F	59 and below
A	93– 96	B	83 – 86	C	73 – 78	D	63 – 66		
A-	90 – 92	B-	80 – 82	C-	70 – 72	D-	60 –62		

Blackboard:

On Blackboard you will find copies of the syllabus, assignments, readings, and any other documents pertinent to the class. I will also maintain your grades on Blackboard on a fairly regular basis.

Course Policies Section

Conferencing:

For each assignment we will have one set of one-on-one conferences. These conferences allow focused instruction and, thus, development of your writing. It is important that you come prepared with at least one draft, the assignment sheet, and questions.

When we have conferences, the meeting of the whole class will be cancelled for two class meetings. You will be required to attend the one-on-one conference in place of those class meetings. In other words, not attending the conference could earn you two absences. Conferences will be held in my office in the basement of the Bingham Humanities building. Sign-up sheets will be passed around in class the week before conferences.

Revision policy:

You have the opportunity to revise it **before the next major assignment is due**. This new grade will replace the original grade. All revised essays must be accompanied by a **cover letter** detailing the changes made and why these changes improve the paper. I strongly encourage you to also meet with me during office hours to develop a revision plan.

Use of student work:

I may keep copies of work that you turn in and may use samples of student work for class discussion. Expect to have at least one of your pieces critiqued with the class. If you have concerns about this policy, please let me know.

Daily Work and Late Work:

Like other activities and practices, you can only get better at writing through *repeated and focused* practice. To give you this practice, graded homework and in-class work applying skills and concepts will be due in most classes. The weight of the assignment will be directly proportional to the intensity of work involved, ranging from 5 to 20 points. This homework will be due during class time. **Late homework will not be accepted.** An absence does not allow you to miss a deadline. I do not accept late work without a valid documented excuse or unless previous arrangements have been made.

Extra Credit Opportunities

Half-a-letter grade can be earned once on any major assignment by attending a Writing Center (852-2173) session by at least the day before the assignment is due. Other opportunities may arise throughout the semester.

Library Research Assistance

This course includes a library research component. Librarians are available to help you think through the research process and find relevant information sources, including peer-reviewed articles. To schedule an appointment with a librarian or ask a research question, click on Ask a Librarian on the library homepage at louisville.edu/library. You can also visit the Reference Department in person on the first floor of Ekstrom Library.

Attendance policy:

Regular attendance in this course is necessary for successful completion. Because all class sessions require active participation, you cannot make up an absence by getting notes, though if you do miss class it would be wise to talk with a classmate and/or the instructor about what you missed. Absences will be only excused based on private conference with the instructor, which ideally would happen prior to the class meeting. Unexcused absences will negatively impact the final grade. **Every absence after the 3rd absence will drop your final grade by one-half letter** (eg: A fourth absence could take your grade from a B+ to a B). Excused absences include religious holidays, university-sponsored athletic events, and *serious* illness documented with a doctor's note. **Tardies will be counted and will add up to absences.** A total of 50 minutes in tardies will equal one absence.

Gadget and Technology Policy

Unless otherwise noted, there is a no-tech policy in this course. Please keep all electronics and other items not directly related to participation in this course safely stowed away. There may be times at which it will be appropriate to use technology; I will let you know when those times are. Simply put, if you aren't invested enough to pay attention in class, I will assume that you would rather be somewhere else and will ask you to leave, effectively earning an unexcused absence.

Plagiarism

The University defines plagiarism as “representing the words or ideas of someone else as one’s own in any academic exercise.” Thus, all writing you do for this course must be your own and must be exclusively for this course, unless the instructor stipulates differently. Please pay special attention to the quotes, paraphrases, and documentation practices you use in your papers. If you have any questions about plagiarism, please ask your instructor. If you plagiarize, your instructor reserves the right to grant you a failure for the course and your case may be reported to the College of Arts and Sciences. NOTE: Please see further information in the PLAGIARISM section in the composition handbook.

Students with disabilities

Students who have a disability or condition which may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria are encouraged to meet with the instructor to identify, discuss and document any feasible instructional modifications or accommodations. Please inform instructor about circumstances no later than the second week of the semester or as soon as possible after a disability or condition is diagnosed, whichever occurs earliest. For information and auxiliary assistance, contact the Disabilities Resource Center.

Grievance procedures

Students who have questions or concerns about their grades, the class, or an assignment are encouraged to see the instructor as soon as possible. If not satisfied with that discussion, students may see an assistant director of composition.

The instructor has the right to make changes to the syllabus and schedule if necessary.

APPENDIX C

MAJOR ASSIGNMENT 1

A1: Tracing the Ancestry of an Innovative Product

Overview:

In this first unit we've focused on how ideas and products are built by improving and remixing previous samples. We've also discussed how the explicit and implicit rules around these products influence how "innovative" products are marketed, received, and used. This assignment asks you to pick an "innovative" or "unique" product and discuss the influences on and reactions to its development. For our purposes, an *innovative* or *unique* product is one that is commonly believed to be "the first of its kind" or unlike anything that's come before it. Examples of this kind of product include the personal computer, the Kindle, the water-purifying straw, etc. You might find an internet search of "best innovations" or "best new products" helpful in deciding on a product.

Option 2: In class discussion, we've done a nice job exposing how "innovative" products are often remixed pieces from previous technology. Essentially, we've made clear that "everything is remix." This does not necessarily mean though that everything is old or that nothing is new, original, or creative. This second option asks that you pick a product and explain why it *is* innovative and original despite its similarities to previous products.

Goals:

This assignment is designed to give you practice

- Understanding the connections between ideas, cultures, and products
- Discussing the influence and impact of copyright, fair use, and other regulations on the product
- Finding and using relevant sources
- Writing an academic research paper
- Using cohesive and clear prose

Requirements:

Your paper should

- Be 5-7 double-spaced pages
- Make use of at least 4 credible sources
- Establish the product, why it is innovative, and its cultural or societal importance
- Discuss previous products or ideas that influenced its development

- Discuss how explicit or implicit ownership rules, such as copyright or intellectual property, impacted the products development and marketing
- Discuss how understanding the ancestry of this product affects our understanding of the product, ownership laws, our ideas about innovation, etc.

Formatting:

Be sure to include

- page numbers (in Word, go to the *Insert* menu and select *Page Numbers*)
- an original title
- your name
- the appropriate works cited page
- Typed in Times New Roman font, 12 pt

Evaluation Criteria:

Your argument will be primarily graded on its adherence to the requirements listed above. However, your grade will also be based on the quality of certain features in your writing that were discussed during this unit. Those may include transitions, introductions, paragraph organization, etc. I will inform you which will be relevant to this assignment closer to the due date, but remember we've covered them in class, so also consider the class content thus far.

Due Dates:

Draft: Jan 28

Final: Feb 4

Revision: Mar 4

APPENDIX D
MAJOR ASSIGNMENT 2

A2: Discovering Community Ownership and Authority

Overview:

In Unit 2, we are focusing on how communities make and regulate their commodities. Unlike the commodities in Unit 1, cultural products are often regulated implicitly—though not always. This assignment asks you to choose a community you belong to or hope to join and answer the following questions:

- What counts as valuable products within that community?
- How does one become a respected creator of products within that community?
- Who owns and who gets to use those products?
- Have these products been re-used or appropriated by any other communities? What have been the consequences of that re-appropriation? [OR] Are these products similar to those in another community? How do the communities assert their differences?
- In what ways do the answers to these questions influence your understanding of the values of that community?

Goals:

This assignment is designed to give you practice

- Identifying the commodities and their rules in a particular community
- Analyzing authorship and ownership trends in a situated context
- Understanding connections between community values and practices
- Writing an academic research paper
- Composing clear, cohesive, and logically-ordered prose

Requirements:

Your paper should

- Be 5-7 double-spaced pages
- Incorporate material from at least 5 credible sources
- Identify the community, its members, its purpose, and its values
- Answer the questions in the overview

Formatting:

Be sure to include

- page numbers (in Word, go to the *Insert* menu and select *Page Numbers*)
- a title
- your name
- a list of citations using MLA (or another approved style) formatting
- Be typed in Times New Roman font, 12 pt

Evaluation Criteria:

Your argument will be primarily graded on its adherence to the requirements listed above. However, your grade will also be based on the quality of certain features in your writing that were discussed during this unit. Those may include transitions, introductions, paragraph organization, etc. I will inform you which will be relevant to this assignment closer to the due date, but remember we've covered them in class, so also consider the class content thus far.

Due Dates:

PowerPoint Draft: Feb 22

Full Draft: Feb 25

Final: Mar 4

Revision: Apr 8

APPENDIX E
MAJOR ASSIGNMENT 3

Researched Argument

Overview:

You will write a lengthy researched argumentative essay on a topic related to our class's theme (remix, composing authority, intellectual property, copyright, plagiarism, and other related ideas). In this essay you are making a *researched argument*, so you are not just cutting and pasting information--you are making a researched argument. But this isn't just your opinion--you are making a researched argument.

Goals:

- Generate a research question
- Demonstrate an ability to use multiple sources to make an argument (synthesis)
- Practice writing in an academic style
- Practice locating and analyzing information from a variety of sources.
- Practice writing and organizing a lengthy research paper
- Practice creating an abstract & key words

Source Requirements:

Unless “negotiated” prior to writing, your paper must use ten sources, adhering to the following criteria:

- At least five must be peer-reviewed
- At least one must be a physical copy of a book
- At least 2 primary sources

Other Requirements:

- Follows the conventions of MLA, including MLA Works Cited page, unless another style is appropriate and previously approved.
- Minimum of 2,000 words (excluding Works Cited page)
- Word doc and double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt font
- 100-150 word abstract
- 5 – 10 key words
- 250-500 word Topic Proposal
- Seven (7) 150 – 250 word annotations for different sources

Evaluation Criteria:

Topic Proposal – 20 points, see details below

Source Annotations – 30 points, see details below

Full Draft and Peer Review Feedback – 50 points

Final Draft – 150 points

- Abstract and Key Words (20 pts)
- Thesis (15 pts)
- Synthesis of Sources (30 pts)
- Analysis and Use of Primary Evidence to Support Thesis (30 pts)
- Language, including grammar, syntax, and punctuation (20 pts)
- Organization, including abstract, topic sentences & coherent paragraphs, transitions, introduction, and conclusion (20 pts)
- MLA formatting (or other pre-approved style) in the paper & Works Cited page (15 pts)

Topic Proposal (20 points)

The purpose of the topic proposal is to ensure that you have a clear idea of your research project and to give me the opportunity to offer feedback before you begin drafting the larger document. The topic proposal should be 250 – 500 words in length. It should do the following:

- Introduce your topic
- Establish its overall importance; Why would anyone want to read about this topic?
- Establish its relevance to the course theme
- Offer a tentative and preliminary research question; What question(s) are going to guide your investigation?
- Give a brief overview of what you already know about the topic, including brief reference to your first three sources

Source Annotations (30 points; 5 each)

Crafting a researched argument requires a significant amount of time and research. Because the source material should help you develop your position, you need time to reflect on the material before you start writing. Remember, you should *not* just be plugging in quotes to support an opinion. Therefore, for 7 of the 10 sources you will write and turn in brief annotations. Each one should adhere to the following requirements:

- Be 150 – 250 words
- Offer a brief overview, focusing on the argument or main point of the source (2-3 sentences)
- Discuss the intended audience and any possible biases (1-2 sentences)
- Explain what is most useful from the source for your project (3-4 sentences, more if you include a quote or paraphrased material)

Abstract and Key Words (20 points)

According to *Envision*, “The **research abstract** is a professional academic genre designed both to present the research topic and to lay out the argument” (243). An abstract gives a busy person a quick read of your argument. It needs to be brief, coherent, and an accurate summation. Someone should be able to read the abstract and go away with the gist of your argument. For this paper, you will create an abstract that serves as a short (100-150 words) summary of your paper.

Additionally, list 5-10 key words or brief phrases that a person would use in researching the main topics and themes covered in your paper. Key words are search terms that people use to find information. So, if your topic were ghosts, one of the key words might be “paranormal.”

Formatting Requirements:

- Underneath the title of your paper, insert a 100-150 word abstract (single space, left-justified, with the title “Abstract” centered).
- Underneath your abstract, list 5-10 key words (single space, left-justified, with the introductory phrase, Key Words)

Due Dates

Topic Proposal	Mar 18
Source Annotations	
3 sources, one peer-reviewed	Mar 18
4 sources	Mar 25
Full Draft	Apr 1
Final Draft	Apr 8
Revision	Apr 24

APPENDIX F

MAJOR ASSIGNMENT 4

A4: Digital Remix

Overview:

The Digital Project

This assignment asks you take any of your previous written assignments in this course and create a digital remix of that assignment. This digital remix should not attempt to create a multimodal version of your entire paper. Instead imagine the digital remix as highlighting one aspect of your paper. The format of this digital remix is up to you, but you must approve your plan with me first. If the digital remix is not static, it should be no longer than 3 minutes. The list below offers some suggestions, but the list is not comprehensive:

- Create an a commercial or an ad campaign for the product in A1 (static or video)
- Create a trailer that previews your paper
- Create a public service announcement based on your topic for a specific audience

The **Digital Media Suite** located in Ekstrom library offers tutoring and assistance in creating digital products. You can visit their site for more information at <http://louisville.edu/digitalmediasuite/>. There are also many programs and tutorials available for free online. I strongly encourage you to start early.

The Written Project

In conjunction with the digital version, this paper asks that you submit an explanation and justification of the choices you made in your digital remix. In this paper you should consider the following questions as well as any information you deem relevant:

- What is the purpose or aim of the digital project? Explain the relevance of specific elements of the project or choices that you made.
- How is the digital project related the original print project?
- Why is the format or genre you chose most appropriate for the digital remix's goal?
- In what ways did you engage the explicit and implicit rules around copyright and use in making this digital remix?
- In what ways are traditional writing and digital composing becoming inter-related as multimodal remixing becomes more common? What do you believe the role of multimodal projects is in the university and in the business world?

The Presentation

During the last days of class, you will present your digital remix project to the class. These presentations will be fairly informal but I ask that you come prepared to show your digital product and discuss your aims and experience with the project.

Requirements and Evaluation Criteria:

As usual, the assignment will be held to the requirements on this sheet plus relevant stylistic and composing characteristics discussed during this unit.

Your digital project should

- Demonstrate concerted effort to create a *finished* and smooth piece
- Be no longer than 3 minutes and not less than 1 minute, if a video or an audio recording
- Have material for at least 3 different audiences or perspectives, if static
 - Ex: 3 different print ads for one product that target 3 specific target audiences
 - Ex: 3 different sets of memes about the same topic
- Remix an idea from a previous paper

(more requirements and due dates on back)

Your justification paper should

- Be about 5 double spaced pages in Times New Roman font, 12 pt.
- Fully address all questions above

Due Dates:

Draft of Digital Product: Apr 12

Final Digital Product and Essay: Apr 24

APPENDIX G
INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Subject Informed Consent Document

AUTHORSHIP IN THE FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION CLASSROOM: PRACTICES,
PROBLEMS, AND POSSIBILITIES

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine how students enrolled in first-year composition courses understand their roles as authors and how their understanding of what it means to be an author changes over time and from one assignment to the next.

Procedures

In this study, you will be asked to share copies of your major written assignments, homework, and in-class writing samples. These samples will be analyzed to see how you are using sources and how you make claims as an author. In addition, you will be invited to participate in two interviews based on two major writing assignments. During these interviews, I will ask you questions about the choices you make in your writing. Lastly, you will occasionally be audio-recorded during discussions, group work, and peer review sessions. These audio-recordings will be used to analyze how you discuss authorship in class. The study will take approximately four months. The interviews will last approximately 45 minutes each. You may decline to answer any questions that may make you uncomfortable.

Potential Risks

There are no foreseeable risks, although there may be unforeseen risks.

Benefits

The possible benefits of this study include better understanding the choices you make as an author. Moreover, this study may illustrate different teaching practices that either positively or negatively affect student authorship. As such,

the results of this study may provide evidence for improved pedagogical practices in future first-year composition courses. The information collected may not benefit you directly. The information learned in this study may be helpful to others.

Compensation

You will not be compensated for your time, inconvenience, or expenses while you are in this study.

Confidentiality

Total privacy cannot be guaranteed. Your privacy will be protected to the extent permitted by law. If the results from this study are published, your name will not be made public. While unlikely, the following may look at the study records:

- The University of Louisville Institutional Review Board, Human Subjects Protection Program Office
- People who are responsible for research and HIPAA oversight at the institutions where the study is conducted
- Government agencies, such as: Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Office of Civil Rights

Data from this study will be stored on a password protected computer in a secure room with access limited to the investigator and key personnel.

Voluntary Participation

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to be in this study you may stop taking part at any time. If you decide not to be in this study or if you stop taking part at any time, you will not lose any benefits for which you may qualify.

Research Subject's Rights, Questions, Concerns, and Complaints

If you have any concerns or complaints about the study or the study staff, you have three options.

- You may contact the principal investigator at (502) 852-3056.

- If you have any questions about your rights as a study subject, questions, concerns or complaints, you may call the Human Subjects Protection Program Office (HSPPO) (502) 852-5188. You may discuss any questions about your rights as a subject, in secret, with a member of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or the HSPPO staff. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, staff of the institutions, as well as lay members of the

community not connected with these institutions. The IRB has reviewed this study.

If you want to speak to a person outside the University, you may call 1-877-852-1167. You will be given the chance to talk about any questions, concerns or complaints in secret. This is a 24 hour hot line answered by people who do not work at the University of Louisville.

This paper tells you what will happen during the study if you choose to take part. Your signature means that this study has been discussed with you, that your questions have been answered, and that you will take part in the study. This informed consent document is not a contract. You are not giving up any legal rights by signing this informed consent document. You will be given a signed copy of this paper to keep for your records.

Signature of Subject/Legal Representative

Date Signed

Signature of Person Explaining the Consent Form
(if other than the Investigator)

Date Signed

Signature of Investigator

Date Signed

CURRICULUM VITAE

Barrie Olson Harvey

Education

Ph.D. Rhetoric and Composition, University of Louisville, (anticipated) August 2014

M.A. English, University of Nevada, Reno, December 2009

B.A. English, University of Nevada, Reno, December 2007, *Magna cum laude*

Academic Positions

Assistant Director of Composition, Business Writing

University of Louisville, English Department, College of Business, 2013-2014

Assistant Director of Composition

University of Louisville, English Department, 2011-2013

Assistant Director of the University Writing Center

University of Louisville, English Department, 2010-2012

Graduate Teaching Assistant

University of Louisville, English Department, 2010-2014

University of Nevada, Reno, English Department, 2008-2009

Teaching Experience

Graduate Teaching Assistant

University of Louisville, Composition Program, English Department, 2010-2014

- English 101: Introduction to College Composition
- English 102: Intermediate College Composition
- English 306: Business Writing
- English 309: Inquiries in Writing

University of Nevada, Reno, Composition Program, English Department, 2008-2009

- Core Humanities 203: The American Experience
- English 098: Preparatory Composition

- English 101: Composition I
- English 102: Composition II

Writing Center Consultant

University of Louisville, University Writing Center, 2010-2012

University of Nevada, Reno, Writing Center, 2007-2009

Online Course Designer and Editor

University of Nevada, Reno, Online and Independent Learning Department, 2009-2010

Publications

With Joanna Wolfe and Laura Wilder. “Knowing What We Know about Writing in the Disciplines: A New Approach to Teaching for Transfer.” *The WAC Journal*. Forthcoming, Fall 2014.

“Academic Writing Across the Disciplines.” *Literacy Design Collaborative*. 1 Aug 2012. Web. 5 Sep 2013.

“Learning to Appreciate the Faculty Consultation.” *The Writing Lab Newsletter* 37.1 (2012): 14-15. Print.

With Josh Kelty. Rev. of *Writing at the End of the World*, by Richard E. Miller. *Journal of College Writing* 9 (2007): 113-116. Print.

Conferences and Presentations

“Building a Common Playground: Making Meaningful Gamification for Composition.” The Thomas R. Watson Conference. October 16-18, 2014. Forthcoming.

“College-Ready Writing: Policies, Practices, and Pedagogy.” College and Career Readiness Standards Networking Conference.” July 16-17, 2014.

“College and Career Ready Writing Across the Disciplines.” Leaders in Literacy: LDC Partners’ Convening. June 2 2014.

“Beyond Gold Stars: Beyond Gold Stars: Making Gamification Meaningful and Valuable for Students.” Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 19-22, 2014.

“Remix Pedagogy in the Business Communication Classroom: Practices, Problems, and Possibilities.” Association for Business Communication International Convention. October 23-26, 2013. Upcoming.

- “Revisioning Business Communication: Benchmarks and New Directions.” Association for Business Communication International Convention. October 23-26, 2013. Upcoming.
- “Communicating Corrective Feedback with Dignity” (co-facilitated with Kristen Lucas). Great Places to Work-Staff Leadership Academy. University of Louisville. November 19, 2013. Upcoming.
- “Mechanics, Sources, and Plagiarism, Oh My!: The Challenge of Making Students Feel Like Contributing Authors.” Summer Summit for College Readiness, June 18, 2013.
- “‘It’s Just So Hard and Boring’: (Re)Framing How Students Perceive Research Papers.” English Teacher Connection Conference, June 12, 2013.
- “Turn-of-the-Century Notebooks: A Challenge to Current-Traditional Pedagogy.” Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 14-16, 2013.
- “From Slate to Notebook: (Re)Informing Our Conception of the Current-Traditional Classroom.” Thomas R. Watson Conference, October 18-20, 2012.
- “Reframing What Literature Scholars Know: Transfer and the Rhetoric of Literary Analysis.” Conference of the Rhetoric Society of America, May 25-28, 2010.
- “Programming What We Preach: The Epistemology of Writing Center Websites.” Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 21-24, 2012.
- “Reexamining Triangulated Spaces: The Role of Directors and Assistant Directors in the Writing Center.” SWCA Conference, February 16-18, 2012.
- “Faculty Perceptions of the University Writing Center.” SWCA Conference, February 18-20, 2011.
- “Claiming the Armenian Genocide: How Risk Manifests Itself in the Rhetorical Communities of the Armenian Genocide.” Western States Rhetoric and Literacy Conference, October 23, 2009.
- “(Re)Inventing Aspasia: Remembering the Place of Women in the Rhetorical Tradition.” Federation Rhetoric Symposium, February 6, 2009.

Workshops Conducted

Teaching the Research Assignment
 Designing Multimodal Assignments
 Teaching Business Communication
 Writing Effective Thesis Statements
 Writing Strong Emails
 Avoiding Plagiarism

MLA and APA Citation
Setting SMART Goals
Critical Thinking in Business Communication

Honors and Awards

Barbara Plattus Award for Excellence in Teaching: University of Louisville, 2013.

Best Graduate Student Paper, “(Re)Inventing Aspasia: Remembering the Place of Women in the Rhetorical Tradition”: Federation Rhetoric Symposium, February 2009

English Graduate Student Organization Outstanding Graduate Award Nominee:
University of Nevada, Reno, May 2009

Grant Writing Academy, Selected Participant: University of Louisville, 2013-2014.

Graduate Teaching Assistantship: University of Louisville, 2010-2014

Graduate Teaching Assistantship: University of Nevada, Reno 2007-2009

Graduate Student Scholarship: University of Nevada, Reno 2009

Bob Davis Scholarship: University of Nevada, Reno 2007-2008

University Service

Dissertation Writing Retreat Founder and Peer Tutor, Spring 2012 and Spring 2013

PhD Student Mentor, University of Louisville, Spring 2011

Advisor to University of Nevada, Reno’s STAND (Students Taking Action Now: Darfur) Chapter, 2009-2010.

Writing Center Alternative Committee, University of Nevada, Reno, 2008-2009.

English Graduate Organization Award Committee: University of Nevada, Reno, May 2009.

Relevant Coursework

Pedagogy

Teaching College Composition, Joanna Wolfe

Teaching College Language and Literature, Jane Detweiler

New Media and Composition Pedagogy, Bronwyn Williams

Writing in the Disciplines, Joanna Wolfe

Advanced Writing in the Disciplines, Joanna Wolfe

Research and Technology

Research in Rhetoric and Composition, Jane Detweiler

Research in Composition, Debra Journet

Applied Statistics, Namok Choi

Rhetoric and Literature

History of Rhetoric, Carol Mattingly

Historical Principles of Rhetoric, Shane Borrowman

Rhetorical Studies and Ethnography, Debra Journet

Others and Othering in Rhetoric and Composition, Kathy Boardman

Studies in Genre: Trauma Narrative, Suzette Henke

Scenes of Reading: Nineteenth Century Reading Practices, Susan Griffin

Seminar in Creative Writing, Christopher Coake

Theory

Composition Theory and Practice, Karen Kopelson

Topics in Interpretive Theory, Bronwyn Williams

Problems in Writing: Functional Linguistics, Donald Hardy