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THE LITERACIES OF LITERARY TEXTS:
RHETORICAL BRIDGES BETWEEN
ENGLISH STUDIES DISCIPLINES AND
FIRST-YEAR WRITERS

Genesea Carter

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**THE LITERACIES OF LITERARY TEXTS: RHETORICAL
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by

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

The Literacies of Literary Texts: Rhetorical Bridges Between English Studies Disciplines and First-Year Writers seeks to blend rhetoric, composition, and literary discourses to illustrate how the subfields may engage in interdisciplinary collaboration and conversation. These conversations are important. For English studies to remain relevant in an increasingly business-minded model of higher education, departments must reassess their approaches and methods. As one way to reimagine English studies, I advocate for English studies' return to rhetoric. In an increasingly complex world, Departments of English can become indispensable by using rhetoric to prepare their students for to rhetorically adapt to diverse discourse communities. Rhetoric and composition faculty can use literary characters as examples of rhetorical awareness and discourse community membership; such literary examples may prove useful if rhetoric and composition faculty hope to create buy in among their literature and creative writing colleagues. In order to show how literary characters can be presented as examples, I read *Bleak House*, *Dracula*, and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* as illustrative texts demonstrating how community membership depends on the rhetorical

knowledge of literacy practices.

Moving beyond the analytical, I apply my readings of *Bleak House*, *Dracula*, and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* to the first-year composition classroom. The characters of Jo, Dracula, and Alice illustrate the struggle between privileged and subordinate literacies, insider and outsider practices, and this *praxis* serves two purposes: (1) To help rhetoric and composition faculty see how the literacies of literary texts can be used to communicate rhetorical awareness, and (2) how literary texts can help first-year students understand the relationship between discourse community membership and rhetorical knowledge. This project's two pronged purpose aims to foster interdisciplinarity between rhetoric and composition, literature, and creative writing faculty as well as envision new ways to best prepare students for the literacies they will encounter as professionals, academics, and citizens.

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Preface

The Literacies of Literary Texts: Rhetorical Bridges Between English Studies Disciplines and First-Year Writers seeks to demonstrate that literary texts provide useful examples of how literary characters respond to unfamiliar, privileged literacies.¹ Using Victorian stories as a framing device, my project interprets Charles Dickens' *Bleak House* (1852-53), Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), and Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871) as models for how literary characters, socially and culturally struggle to succeed within communities that privilege literacies different from their own. I have intentionally blended the discourses of literature, rhetoric, and composition in order to show that literature can offer models of critical literacy theory, rhetorical awareness, and discourse community membership when analyzed through rhetorical lenses.

However, my purpose is not just to demonstrate interesting connections. Instead, I hope this project illustrates how rhetoric and composition faculty can use literary characters as examples of disciplinary tenets. Although rhetoric and composition faculty often refrain from employing literary examples within scholarship, research, and pedagogy, literature may offer new opportunities for articulating rhetorical theory, among other tenets, to audiences unfamiliar with or unconvinced by the importance of rhetoric. Making the connections between literature, rhetoric, and composition may prove most beneficial for rhetoric and composition faculty who wish to advocate for including

¹ "Literacies" is broadly defined as the ways of making meaning and knowledge that affect how people are perceived as community insiders or outsiders, and how they engage with the dominant community.

rhetorical awareness into their Departments of English or core writing programs.

This dissertation attempts to provide answers to these two questions: (1) How might rhetoric and composition faculty better communicate rhetorical theory to literature and creative writing faculty? And (2) how might rhetoric and composition faculty better communicate how rhetorical theory affects community membership to first-year students? In my aim to bridge the discourse between the subfields, an important facet of this conversation is how rhetoric and composition faculty can clearly convey their field's best practices to skeptical literature and creative writing colleagues and students. I recognize that presenting rhetoric and composition's best practices in more accessible terms or concepts may not "win" over hesitant or dissenting faculty and students. However, I strongly believe that more clearly articulating what rhetoric and composition does in frameworks that are more accessible to literature and creative writing faculty may encourage discourse and understanding.

The Experiential Exigencies Undergirding this Dissertation Project

This dissertation is largely informed by my personal experiences in the Department of English at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, and the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of New Mexico. As a student at the undergraduate and graduate level, I have often felt like an academic outsider because I did not understand *how* to be an "academic." Homeschooled all through high school, I first attended Cuesta College, a local community college, due to my apprehension and intimidation of public education; I thought I could transition to higher education more easily at a community college, but I was wrong.

As an undergraduate I was unaware of the literacies in public and higher

education—how to take multiple-choice exams, how to approach professors during office hours, how to closely read literature—and I felt very much alone. It was not until my doctoral program at the University of New Mexico that I learned crucial rhetorical awareness and rhetorical genre studies’ skills that helped me think about communication, genre conventions, and audience expectations in a new way. Such tools allowed me to think about communication and writing “mathematically”: I learned to mentally diagram the rhetorical situation like a mathematical equation in order to better understand my role as writer and communicator.

Reflecting on my experiences as an undergraduate who largely felt like an outsider, I desperately wanted a rubric for academic success. Or, at least I wanted to know how to transition from discipline to discipline, writing assignment to writing assignment. Many first-year students attend university feeling as I did, believing they are outsiders without having the tools for academic success. Thus, my chapters about *Jo*, *Dracula*, and *Alice* specifically articulate ways in which rhetoric and composition faculty may adopt literature in a course curriculum to teach students about rhetorical awareness, genre analysis, and literacy knowledge. The literary characters I have chosen are purposeful: Their own difficulties and successes navigating discourse communities reflect struggles that may be experienced by the students we teach.

My feelings of academic “outsiderness” have helped me think about first-year students’ feelings of community membership, whether they feel like insiders, outsiders, or a blend of both, on the university campus and within their classrooms. More recently, as a teaching assistant of composition and literature courses at the University of New Mexico, I continue to seek pedagogical methods that will help first-year students

transition from outsider to insider; my hope is that my first-year students will learn how to adapt to the expectations in the academic, professional, and civic discourse communities they encounter as students and citizens.

Furthermore, my graduate experience as an Assistant Director of Core Writing at the University of New Mexico shapes my dissertation. While an Assistant Director, I was responsible for first-year composition (English 101 and English 102) curricular development, textbook selection, outcome development, Core Writing instructor mentorship, first-year composition portfolio assessment, and co-teaching the teaching assistant practicum course with my fellow Assistant Director Mellisa Huffman. In a department of eighty-five teaching assistants and fifteen part-time instructors all of whom had various backgrounds in English studies or Arts and Sciences, I learned that creating programmatic, pedagogical, and curricular “buy in” was difficult. Many Core Writing instructors from non-rhetoric and composition backgrounds did not always understand the best practices espoused in composition theory, and I worked hard to find ways to communicate those best practices.

Why Collaboration is Important: Responding to Higher Education’s Business Model of Education and Creating Disciplinary Buy In

There is a lack of scholarship in rhetoric and composition that articulates how the English subfields can bring their best practices together to benefit English studies’ pedagogy and theory. For the purposes of this dissertation, I define English studies as the discipline that blends rhetoric and composition, literature, and creative writing. Peter Elbow defines it as “the grab-bag, garbage-pail, everything-but-the-kitchen-sink discipline. Or, recasting this with the dignity that English professors love, English is particularly rich, complex, and many-faceted” (*What is English?* 110). In a discipline

where English studies can include faculty who teach literature, creative writing, technical writing, philosophy, rhetoric, American Studies, English Education, composition, visual rhetoric and others, there will be difficulty defining its purpose to “English studies” as well as its purpose to the university. As such, it is not uncommon for English studies’ subfields to jockey for position and privilege within Departments of English across the nation.

Communication and collaboration will benefit, I believe, the longevity of English studies. Because of the current economic crisis—in which the humanities and English studies must find ways to reassert its value and relevance—there is a need for Departments of English to find creative ways to reinvent themselves. This dissertation, then, offers one option for Departments of English to consider: I advocate for Departments of English to return to rhetoric. This means becoming a rhetorically-focused department to instill students with rhetorical awareness and genre analysis. Rhetoric is the overarching umbrella that encompasses both literary theory and rhetorical pedagogy, thus bringing together theoretical practices of both literary studies and rhetoric and composition. Dovetailing literature and rhetoric and composition is important to help English studies’ defend its relevance. In financially strenuous times, subfields should learn to “pool” resources together—that is, best practices that may collectively work to support the discipline—and one option is by returning to rhetoric. This return to rhetoric should include an emphasis in rhetorical awareness, genre theory, and discourse

community membership.²

Before Departments of English can return to rhetoric, rhetoric and composition faculty must create “buy in” among their colleagues, and this buy in can happen when faculty understand *why* rhetoric is important. I would assert that the literature and creative writing faculty do not buy into rhetoric and composition because they do not understand what we do and why we do it. One of the ways to create support is to speak the language that literature and creative writing faculty do. Rhetoric and composition faculty need to adopt models that other subfield faculty can relate to and understand. If rhetoric and composition faculty use research or arguments that are entrenched in disciplinary jargon or undergirded by empirical research, literature and creative writing faculty may not find those arguments accessible or compelling. Instead, rhetoric and composition faculty can build their arguments with literary examples. Literary examples, I posit, can be more accessible, interesting, and convincing for faculty unfamiliar with rhetoric and composition’s best practices.

In providing literature and creative writing faculty with models that may be more accessible, rhetoric and composition faculty can work toward bridging the gap between the subfields. There are already enough histories and narratives that recount why the English studies’ subfields do not work well together. But there are not enough texts that

²Rhetorical theory is an umbrella term that I believe should include genre theory and discourse community membership. I define genre theory through Anis S. Bawarshi and Mary Jo Reiff’s term “Rhetorical Genre Studies” (RGS) in *Genre: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy* (2010). RGS “tends to focus more on how genres enable their users to carry out situated symbolic actions rhetorically and linguistically, and in doing so, to perform social actions and relations, enact social roles, and frame social realities. At the same time, RGS has also focused on how genres, through their use, dynamically maintain, reveal tensions within, and help reproduce social practices and realities” (59). For simplicity, I will refer to RGS as simply “genre analysis” or “genre studies” throughout this dissertation.

offer practical suggestions for building bridges between rhetoric and composition, literature, and creative writing. English studies faculty such as Peter Elbow, Susan Miller, and Robert Scholes, et al., have noted the hierarchies within Departments of English as one reason for discord. Despite the many reasons for conflict, I believe there is hope for a middle ground. While I may never completely convince rhetoric and composition, literature, and creative writing faculty that a common ground may be found, this dissertation is my attempt to find a unifying middle ground between rhetoric, composition, and literature. More rhetoric and composition faculty should publish suggestions and recommendations for how to close the gap between these subfields because the health and longevity of Departments of English depend on cross-communication and collaboration. Even though this project does not aim to blissfully resolve all differences between the subfields—an impossible feat, I admit—I am an optimist. In my optimism, I believe *some* understanding may be gained if rhetoric and composition faculty can frame disciplinary best practices in language that literature and creative writing faculty can relate to.

The Literacies of Literary Texts: Helping First-Year Students Understand Why Rhetoric Matters

Moving beyond the analytical and theoretical toward the pedagogical, this dissertation offer models for how rhetoric and composition faculty might want to use the literacies of literary texts in the first-year composition classroom. Many rhetoric and composition faculty already teach their students how to develop rhetorical knowledge and awareness. However, for faculty looking for new examples of rhetorical awareness, community membership, and literacy knowledge, they may want to look to literature.

This angle is not to discount the ethnographies, literacy narratives, and other

contemporary examples many faculty use already. Linda Adler-Kassner and Eli Goldblatt are two scholars who attest that pedagogy and theory should be framed by the stories of our students and teachers. Real, contemporary stories provide interesting, accessible ways for sharing classroom practices, administrative initiatives, and community outreach. However, literature offers compelling characterization, setting, plot, and dialogue that is not always present within literacy narratives or ethnographies. Portions of applicable literary stories, whether one chapter or two pages, can be integrated into the classroom alongside contemporary examples and models. Nevertheless, adding literary examples in the classroom may help students better relate to and conceptualize discourse community scholarship, rhetorical awareness, and academic conventions.

Using Literary Examples to Help Students Become Academic Insiders

Literary examples are not just useful to teach students how to envision rhetorical knowledge. They can also help faculty and students understand the rhetorical element to discourse community membership. Departments of English are traditionally the space to prepare students as academic thinkers and writers. Additionally, as Departments of English adopt Writing Across Communities/Curriculum and Writing in the Disciplines programs and principles (WAC/WID), many administrators, stakeholders, and faculty are looking to English to help prepare students for academic insider membership. It may be incorrect to lay the responsibility on English alone to lay the groundwork for students' insider knowledge, but the longevity of Departments of English may depend upon it. Departments have the unique opportunity to redefine their value by actively helping students learn academic literacies.

On the university campus, first-year students are discourse community outsiders,

regardless of their academic preparation and familiarity with academic conventions. Similarly, many literary characters are also positioned as community outsiders. Jo, Dracula, and Alice are three literary characters that must learn to navigate an unfamiliar world. For Jo, an illiterate street urchin living in London, his inability to read or write casts him as an outsider. Dracula, on the other hand, is exceptionally literate, but he must learn how to adopt English literacies in order to successfully invade. Finally, Alice is thrust into a topsy-turvy, backwards world in which she must learn how to get from one side of the Looking-Glass world to the other. The varying successes of Jo, Dracula, and Alice do mirror the difficulties first-year students face when adapting to a new community. Analyzing Jo, Dracula, and Alice's experiences can offer insight into how communities function. Consequently, these literary examples reinforce why rhetorical knowledge is necessary for community membership. Examining literary characters in this light buttress the rhetorical tools first-year students will need to become academic insiders.

Dissertation Chapter Overview

Chapter One, "The Economics of Higher Education and the Strain Created in English Studies" situates this dissertation in the current discourse about how universities are coping with budget cuts and fewer resources. The struggle many universities face necessarily affects English studies as programs and budgets continue to shrink and monies are removed from Departments of English to fund other programs. Undergirding the exigencies for this dissertation, I suggest that such economic changes, as well as the changing face of student populations, will require English studies to rethink its identity and mission. Particularly, I articulate that Departments of English must consider which

literacies are valued within the field and how those values align with student needs and administrative expectations. Setting the groundwork for the rest of the project, I briefly show that these challenges are not new as educators in the nineteenth century experienced similar shifting economies, an examination I unpack in chapter two.

Chapter Two, “The Contested Economies of Classicism and Practical Education in Nineteenth-Century America and England and the Rise of Departments of English” traces the histories of the culture of classicism within higher education and English studies. I use primary periodicals and secondary scholarship to illustrate how modernizing industries, such as the American and British Industrial Revolutions, improved the masses’ literacy skills (reading and writing) and fostered the growth of the middle classes. Such economic and social changes challenged the privileged literacies in higher education. Despite the masses’ demands to learn literacies that would respond to shifting cultural values and expanding professions, classical literacies were favored in part to ensure class separation. I aim to show how competing nineteenth-century literacies directly affected academe; this conflict remains an issue today as economics continue to privilege particular literacies, such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) literacies within academia.

Chapter Three, “‘I don’t know nothink’: Valuing the Knowledge and Literacies of Peripheral, First-Year Student Populations,” examines how the illiterate street sweeper Jo, a child character in Charles Dickens’ novel, is perceived as socially expendable by the novel’s characters because of his inability to read or write. Jo serves as a figure of many underrepresented and underprepared student populations who are perceived as academically “illiterate” and, consequently, have difficulty transitioning to academe.

Public events, like the Celebration of Student Writing (CSW), where students showcase art installations representing coursework in writing intensive courses, can provide a venue for appreciating and identifying the literacies students already have. As well, the CSW gives them a greater sense of self, advocacy, and personal growth. I advocate that before first-year students can become community insiders, they need to know that their knowledge and literacies are valued. This chapter includes research conducted by Erin Gallegos and myself of student participants at the University of New Mexico's 2011 Celebration of Student Writing. While findings indicate students are unable to explicitly connect the event with their advocacy, I argue the Celebration of Student Writing can help students support voices. I frame my *praxis* and CSW research through Funds of Knowledge (FoK) scholarship by Carlos G. Vélez-Ibáñez and Luis C. Moll who argue that students bring to campus rich knowledge and literacy sets.

Chapter Four, "From Dracula's Library to Chalkboard: Using Dracula's Rhetorical Awareness and Genre Analysis as a Model in the First-Year Composition Classroom," sociolinguistically investigates how Count Dracula prepares to invade England by adopting the literacies of the dominant community. In his search for discourse community membership, Dracula relies upon building an "identity kit" (as coined by James Paul Gee) rooted in literacy knowledge of the English community. As evinced in the contents of Dracula's library, he uses practical texts—the Blue and Red books, for example—to gain rhetorical analysis and genre awareness that enables him to successfully assume the identity of an Englishman. Similarly, many first-year students, I would suggest, need tools to become academic insiders. Because they are familiar with some academic conventions, they have some insider status. However, their newness to

academia prevents them from fully acting as insiders. To help them academically succeed, composition faculty can teach first-year students rhetorical awareness and genre analysis skills. Furthermore, these skills will help them fluidly move between academic, professional, and civic communities.

Chapter Five, “Learning From Alice’s Discourse Community Blunders: Why the First-Year Composition Classroom Should Serve as a Funds of Knowledge Third Space” explores how Alice perceives herself as a discourse community insider upon her arrival to the Looking-Glass world. Using a discourse analysis of *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, I examine how language functions as a game played by Alice and her Looking-Glass counterparts as they attempt to claim dominance. Despite Alice’s attempt to “win,” she blunders because she does not tread carefully. Instead, she superimposes her literacies upon a foreign populace and assumes her Victorian understanding of reality can be applied to the Looking-Glass world. Similarly, many first-year students begin university believing their literacies will be accepted or valued in university. Yet, first-year students need to learn to adapt their literacies to the expectations of the academic community. In order to help students transition, I advocate for first-year composition classrooms to become third spaces that embrace the Funds of Knowledge (FoK) students bring with them into the classroom. Adding to Carlos G. Vélez-Ibáñez and Luis C. Moll’s scholarship, I suggest students’ home FoK are often underrepresented within academe making it difficult for them to transition into the university’s dominant discourse communities. Like Alice, many students do not know how to transition their FoK into another community setting, and they either assume an outsider position or believe they are dominant insiders. I suggest that literacy-based

writing assignments can value students' literacies while helping them transition into academe.

Conclusion

Bringing literary characters into these complex conversations may provide an accessible framework to better help literature and creative writing faculty, as well as students, understand what rhetoric and composition faculty do. As rhetoric and composition faculty know, audience awareness is a necessary part of any rhetorical situation. Thus, rhetoric and composition faculty must continue to assess their own rhetorical purposes in relation to audience expectations, needs, and values. Whether the audience is literature and creative writing faculty or first-year students, rhetoric and composition faculty can use literary examples to help convey their message—that rhetoric is important.

The return to rhetoric can reassert Departments of English economic viability. As more universities adopt a business model of education, Departments of English must find ways to reimagine their value. One way is to encourage the return to rhetoric. However, before rhetoric and composition faculty can win supporters for this move, they must find a way to gain the support from literature and creative writing faculty. I recommend examining the history of higher education and English studies, namely how economics in the nineteenth century required higher education to adjust the literacies they taught. Many English studies histories do not illustrate how economics have always influenced higher education. This is a problem because many English studies faculty are pushing against the business model of education—a model that privileges useful, practical skills and literacies—when, in all reality, this is not a new problem.

As I will show in the next chapter, the American and British Industrial Revolutions, the rising middle class, and the masses' literacy demands challenged how higher education envisioned its purpose. Higher education was reserved for teaching the upper classes elite literacies, while also preparing privileged men for religious, political, and law professions. Yet, as the century progressed, the American and British populace demanded access to higher education literacies that would grant them social mobility and economic stability. This history is important to the future of English studies. If English studies faculty are not aware that economics has created the current incarnation of Departments of English, they will be resistant to further incarnations. However, the jobs faculty have now are a result of the changes forced upon English studies within the last century. Without such changes, rhetoric and composition, literature, and creative writing faculty would not have the jobs they do. Therefore, we should not be afraid of future incarnations; instead, we should embrace the evolution, for it will offer new opportunities for future faculty.

1

Introduction: The Economics of Higher Education and the Strain Created in English Studies

The need to reaffirm English studies' relevance in higher education remains critical as institutional budgets are downsized, and as universities adopt a business model of education. Furthermore, the economic downturn and budget crises within institutions have required English studies to validate its cultural and economic usefulness. Nevertheless, the demands upon English studies to be "useful," most often made by politicians, administrators, and citizens, does not necessarily mean creating critical-thinking citizens. Instead, the call to be useful often refers to how English studies will produce economically useful citizens who will help the United States compete in the global economy. As American society, industries, and businesses increasingly demand economically useful citizens, Departments of English must find how to balance the services higher education offers (knowledge) and the demands of the consumer (society). However, because economics continue to drive higher education, faculty are increasingly expected to provide a service the consumers "want": That is, something that has monetary value like a degree, specific knowledge, or industry-specific skill. As a result, the focus on the "useful" and "practical" has created a new economy, and students expect that higher education will prepare them to engage with this new economy.

In this new economy, one that values useful skills that will benefit the United States economy as well as individuals, Departments of English need to produce students who are both critical, well-rounded communicators and flexible, adaptable workers. Furthermore, many students attending higher education intend to enter into STEM

(science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and industry-specific fields, and they need adaptable knowledge sets. I assert Departments of English can contribute to the global economy by offering skills that will help students become flexible readers, writers, and communicators. Departments of English can increase their viability by teaching skills that will build foundations for students' personal, professional, and academic success.

To respond to the call for relevance, this dissertation project seeks to illustrate how English studies may adapt to the changing economy by adopting a rhetorically centered pedagogy. For students to successfully engage with the diverse discourse communities around them, whether academic or civic, they need the tools to analyze and evaluate how each community functions. One facet of discourse community knowledge is the unique and diverse ways discourse communities make knowledge (researching, reading, writing, communicating, etc.). Moreover, for students to successfully adapt to the university campus, they must learn how to navigate the various academic and social communities they will encounter. Therefore, in order to prepare students to fluidly move between academic communities, they need rhetorical tools to analyze the underpinnings of each community.

One way to ensure the longevity of English studies is for rhetoric and composition faculty to encourage a return to rhetoric. However, that call may be very difficult. Literature and creative writing faculty may resist such an idea because they may fear that their specializations will become obsolete. A return to rhetoric does not necessarily mean literature and creative writing will be cast aside. In fact, rhetoric is an overarching theory in which literary theory resides. Returning to rhetoric means that Departments of English emphasize rhetorical knowledge, genre conventions, authorial intent, audience awareness,

and rhetorical situations—facets of rhetoric that are often already addressed within English courses but not directly associated with rhetorical theory.

Before rhetoric and composition faculty can open this discourse, their colleagues must learn that change within English studies is necessary. In order to provide exigencies for English studies' evolution, this chapter provides a brief overview of the economic crunch experienced by the humanities and English studies. Drawing from *Inside Higher Education*, the Association of the Departments of English, and English studies scholarship, I present a picture of the current economic climate and the resulting pressure Departments of English continue to experience. This overview grounds my dissertation in contemporary discourse while illustrating the impetus for English studies to adopt a rhetorical model. Next, to reassert why English studies should consider such a model, I show how changing economies necessarily affect the literacies demanded by society, and, most particularly, students. Lastly, to frame my argument in history, I demonstrate how higher education has been influenced by the changing economies. In particular, I aim to show that the changing economies of nineteenth-century England and America affected higher education and mainstream society literacies.

If rhetoric and composition faculty hope to encourage a revised model of English studies, and if English studies hopes to withstand the business model of education, English studies faculty need to be aware of the historical evidence of change. This chapter, then, provides an overview of contemporary concerns and nineteenth-century changes that illustrates how English studies has evolved within the last one hundred and fifty years. I will show this history more thoroughly in chapter two, but for the purposes of this chapter, I hope to encourage rhetoric and composition, literature, and creative

writing faculty to more clearly see English studies' history. We can use this history to guide contemporary conversations. Faculty can learn much from events in the nineteenth century, and contemporary conversations should look to our past to help guide our future.

Demanding Practicality: The Differing Perspectives in Higher Education

Several *Inside Higher Education* articles note the struggles the humanities are facing. From all angles, humanities faculty are asked to reassert their importance within higher education. In one November 2012 example, *Inside Higher Education* writer Kevin Kiley wrote about Governors Rick Scott (Florida), Rick Perry (Texas), and Scott Walker's (Wisconsin) aim to create \$10,000 bachelor degrees. These less expensive degrees are intended for students entering more useful and practical programs. This plan is to create "efficiency measures" in higher education that value the "right degrees" over degrees perceived to be less useful and practical. Kiley explains, "[A] major component of Walker's and Scott's efforts has been to more directly tie degree production to the perceived needs of the states' employers, a push that has also led to antagonism toward faculty members in arts and humanities disciplines" (n. pag.). Thus, the defining factor of which degrees are considered useful directly relate to the state's industry and economic needs.

Higher education is increasingly pressured by politicians to offer industry-related degrees. In an interview with *The Herald-Tribune* in 2011, Governor Scott questioned the validity of Anthropology degrees by saying, "So I want that money to go to degrees where people can get jobs in this state" and "Is it a vital interest of the state to have more anthropologists? I don't think so" (Anderson n. pag.). Similarly, in November 2012, Governor Walker was quoted as saying that he wants to tie higher education funding to

outcomes and performance, specifically producing degrees that Wisconsin industries need. “[B]ut are young people getting degrees in jobs that are open and needed today, not just the jobs that the universities want to give us, or degrees that people want to give us?” Walker queried (Hall and Derby n. pag.). As well, in early November 2012 a Florida Gubernatorial task force recommended that Florida universities should charge more for humanities courses. In an effort to determine which programs would be more expensive, the task force recommended determining which programs are “strategic” versus “non-strategic.” The task force recommended differentiating strategic from non-strategic by granting an increase of funding to programs whose courses had larger enrollment numbers (Flaherty n. pag.).

As a result of economic and political pressure, administrators are scrambling to creatively readjust budgets and resources by aligning with economically viable partnerships. Professor of Economics Robert L. Clark and Madeleine B. d’Ambrosio, former Vice Chair of the TIAA-CREF Institute, write,

Virtually all colleges and universities are facing the twin challenges of revenue enhancement and cost containment universities are recognizing the need to partner with their stakeholders as they walk the tightrope of cost containment and quality education. (3)

Budget crises cause universities to seek new ways of garnering financial stability in their efforts to increase the economic viability of their campuses. Such financial strain encourages new financial partnerships that will most certainly change how higher education “does business.”

Adapting to a Business Model of Education

Discourse about the future of higher education frequently includes questions about the fate of academe and whether it should entirely embrace a business model of education. At the local level, the University of New Mexico Provost Chaouki Abdallah warns against becoming an entirely industry-focused campus. In a campus-wide October 2012 email he references the 1828 Yale Report that defended classical education and resisted a more inclusive, general education., Provost Abdallah believes that “[to]day, we are again at a time where curriculum and the purpose of college education are being debated. While the Yale report erred in one direction, let us make sure we do not err in the opposite direction.” His caution openly states the struggle the University of New Mexico faces in (re)defining its academic mission and purpose. However, his statement also belies his stance regarding the type of classical education that many humanities programs have provided. Although Provost Abdallah does not recommend returning to a culture of classicism, I surmise he believes higher education needs to be careful to avoid a business model of education where industry- and science-based degrees are valued over what some, like Governor Walker of Wisconsin, may consider “less practical” degrees.

In order to strategically increase revenue, many higher education institutions are privileging financial and commercial partnerships over students’ education. Economists J. Patrick Raines and Charles G. Leathers explain that the business model of higher education has most commonly generated “research aimed at producing intellectual properties that have high commercial value, which the universities intend to market for profit” (2). Research that garners financial investment, grants, or endowments become an important focus for administration and faculty. University administrators and politicians

who prioritize funneling resources to research-oriented disciplines and programs, such as cancer research or sustainability programs, privilege “practical” degree programs.

Ranking resources by commercial value publicly devalues programs that may not be perceived as contributing to the state or national economy. Even though this move may prove beneficial to regaining lost financial support, Raines and Leathers admit there is “descriptive truth in the critics’ claim that the four E’s of higher education are Employment, Entertainment, Enterprise, and [lastly] Education” (2). With the emphasis placed on developing programs that are economically viable, educating *all* students may be the last priority of some institutions.

In one very real example of financial crisis, the City College of San Francisco, a community college that serves 90,000 students, may be forced to close given its “financial breaking point.” In a recent visit by an accrediting agency, the team observed a lack of administrators (39 for 1800 faculty) and unsatisfactory methods for student assessment. Severe funding cuts, including a \$17 million cut in 2011, have made it nearly impossible for City College to financially support their programs and students (Cohen n. pag.). City College part-time instructor Todd Lewis, who worked at a recently eliminated English as a Second Language program, explained in a Writing Program Administrator Listserv (WPA-L) email more about the budget cut fallout: In addition to teaching he handles “pre-registration, registration, placement testing and grading, and counseling that administration has done in the past and no longer handles due to budget cuts on top of budget cuts.” As a result of these cuts, Lewis has had to teach large class sizes, as well as lose classes after the semester started. He writes, “In the past I’ve had classes with attendance as high as 50-60 students; recently one of my classes [*sic*] was cancelled 5

weeks into the semester as it dropped to below 15 students/average” (qtd. in Wait).

Lewis’ statement illustrates how the cuts cause additional strain and affect the quality of teaching while reducing resources and services to an underserved student population.

Despite some popular rhetoric that higher education is primarily focused on finances, the success or failure of institutions are often the result of the public’s demands and expectations. Raines and Feathers continue, “[U]niversities tend to experience institutional failures. From an economic perspective, that means that universities tend to fail to efficiently and effectively pursue those particular functions that society has assigned to them as specialized institutions” (3). Therefore, equally important to serving the needs of the campus is addressing the expectations of the citizens.

Higher education institutions bear responsibility to its citizens; however, at what cost to the intellectual life of the nation? Literary scholar and Yale professor William Deresiewicz believes intellectual life continues to suffer due to the “indifference” shown by elite university administrators regarding the student exodus from the humanities. He furthers, elite universities will not “discourage” their students “who take their degrees to Wall Street. In fact, they’re showing them the way. The liberal arts university is becoming the corporate university, its center shifting to technical fields where scholarly expertise can be parlayed into lucrative business opportunities” (n. pag.). These are legitimate concerns. The business model of higher education has, in many cases, prioritized money over intellectual growth. Nevertheless, without public support, universities will be hard-pressed to garner the funding and resources to further their academic and community-based objectives.

The Economic Crisis in English Studies

English studies has been deeply affected by the economic crisis. As universities seek to readjust their budgets and funnel their resources to departments that are creating commercially viable products or skills, Departments of English faced budget and resource cuts as early as 2005 (Association of Departments of English n. pag.). Regardless of the public or private status of the institution, the economic crisis continues to influence departments across the nation. Respondents to the Association of Departments of English (ADE) department chairs' discussion list recount that through 2003 cuts ranged from "3% of operating budgets to 15% of the department's total budget" (n. pag.). Reductions resulted in hiring freezes, program closures, increased teaching loads, salary freezes, and reduced janitorial/maintenance services. Although these figures are a decade old, similar cuts continue across the nation as university coffers shrink.

Whether the budget cuts are large or small, many programs are finding means to increase efficiency. For example, many Departments of English and writing programs are relying upon technology to increase productivity. On the WPA-L there was a flurry of emails about machine scoring essays that illustrated the level of concern writing faculty and directors feel about such change for the sake of efficiency. In one representative email Professor Edward White writes, "The problem is, computer scores DO work, if by work you mean cheap, reliable, and quick sorting of students according to simple-minded criteria" (n. pag.). Such technological advancements may seem fiscally responsible; however, as White suggests, student learning bears the brunt as machine scoring neither can mimic thorough instructor feedback nor integrate complex criteria. Introducing

machine scoring is one example of how many departments are coping with shrinking budgets, overworked and under supported faculty, and demands for increased productivity.

In a prescient anticipation of the Florida, Texas, and Wisconsin governors' recommendations, the ADE report authors stated in 2005, "As a result of these funding patterns, many 'state-supported' colleges have become 'state-assisted' and must increase tuition and seek new revenue sources even as they are forced to contemplate changes that reduce students' educational choices and opportunities" (n. pag.). To consider and plan for continued cuts, the report's authors advise watching the following six areas: (1) "Budget management," (2) "Tenure and the composition of the faculty" (specifically the increasing threat to the tenure system), (3) "Indirect effects" (curricular changes, programmatic closure, etc.), (4) "Faculty governance" (open communication between faculty and administration), (5) "Faculty hiring and compensation" (increased workloads), and (6) "Access, cost, and quality" (higher tuition costs, lowered morale, etc.). The ADE suggests that departments watch for these six areas for the next few years due to "[t]he potential for structural change in higher education" (n. pag.).

The possibility for structural change will necessarily affect how Departments of English individually and collectively function. Furthermore, the structural change could beget a hierarchical change as more part-time instructors, adjuncts, and teaching assistants are hired instead of tenure-line faculty. In order to plan and report to such changes, the authors encourage departments to "to think collectively about their identity and aspirations" because Departments of English "need to know what kinds of opportunities they can use, what their program priorities are, and what aspects of their

programs they must be prepared to defend” (ADE n. pag.).

Reframing English Studies in a New Economy

In order to respond to the ADE’s call for communication, collaboration, and awareness, it is important for all Departments of English to reimagine “English.” In many respects, Peter Elbow’s decades-old statement is true: That English is “the grab-bag, garbage-pail, everything-but-the-kitchen-sink discipline. Or, recasting this with the dignity that English professors love, English is particularly rich, complex, and many-faceted” (*What is English?* 110). To determine how English studies might weather the economic crisis, the discipline should first examine how it intends to respond to the changing economy. This conversation must include how the discipline will respond to stakeholders’ beliefs that state and national economies should drive the programs and degrees granted in higher education.

Because this crisis will invariably affect how Departments of English are perceived for decades to come, English studies needs to find a way to rearticulate its purpose in relation to the shifting function and needs within higher education. According to the ADE, “Departments gain advantage in their institutions to the extent that they are known for providing critically valued services and resources” (n. pag.). Moreover, as Richard Lanham eloquently stated in 1983, English studies is “a powerfully mature discipline ... with a sharply dwindling demand for its services, as it chooses to define them. On the other hand, we have an enormous social need for instruction in language, a need that will continue” (109). These statements should offer faculty exigencies for the evolution of English studies. The question is then: How will academics in English studies define themselves as the world changes and becomes increasingly economically driven?

To respond to this call, I encourage Departments of English to define their mission in relation to the expectations and demands of administrators, politicians, and students. One way to re-envision English studies is by adopting a rhetorically-focused pedagogy. Departments of English can become indispensable by providing an invaluable skill—that is, rhetorical knowledge—all the students who enroll in English courses. I maintain that returning to rhetoric can grant students foundational literacy skills that will be useful across academic, professional, and civic communities. In my supporting chapters, I will show how rhetoric and composition faculty can talk to literature and creative writing faculty about rhetorical awareness and literacy skills. Using literature as a model, rhetoric and composition faculty can pull rhetorical examples from literary texts to offer examples of (1) how literature includes rhetorical models, (2) how literature illustrates the importance of community membership, and (3) how literature can be adopted in the first-year composition classroom.

Contemporary scholars such as Richard Lanham, Robert Scholes, and Thomas P. Miller have written on the need for English studies to evolve with the needs of culture and society although these changes seemingly undermine the importance of literature and academic writing. For example, Scholes suggested in 1998 to “replace the canon of texts with a canon of methods” and advocated for “serious attention” given to student writing in every English course (145, 160). And in 2011 Thomas P. Miller recommended, “defining English studies as literacy studies” (2). These two suggestions, among the many others, suggest the current model of English studies cannot be taken for granted.

Changing Economies, Changing Literacies

Examining how economics influence literacies is important because “[t]he growing entanglement of literacy with economic productivity not only affects how reading and writing are learned and practiced. It also shapes the rationales for acquiring literacy, how it is understood, valued, and evaluated” (Brandt *Literacy and Learning* xii). As economies and industries change, so do the literacies and knowledge sets required. Deborah Brandt explains, “The economy’s appetite for ever more productive communication suggests a different perspective on the nation’s so-called literacy crisis” (*Literacy and Learning* xi). These shifts directly affect and produce “gaps” in literacy knowledge created from “uncompetitive” and “unrealized” literacies that fail to match the needs of an ever-changing world (Brandt *Literacy and Learning* xi). While Brandt defines literacy as reading and writing, I define literacy as all forms of knowledge making that allows people to be “literate” within a particular discourse community. My broad definition encompasses community-specific knowledge—from industry-specific skills to cultural traditions—that provide people with the tools to succeed within the discourse communities they are members of.

As each generation’s literacies shift with economic changes, the definitions of which literacies are culturally valued also change. Therefore, every generation faces “relentless rounds of economic competition” because the literacies valued in one generation may not be applicable to the next (Brandt *Literacy and Learning* xi). Thus, to economically succeed, the populace must become flexible, adaptable workers. Industries continue to rapidly evolve, and the populace must be prepared to adapt. Within the context of academia, in order to be economically competitive, students must be prepared

for the ever-changing, economically driven literacies. Adding a rhetorical emphasis to Departments of English pedagogy can help prepare students for the shifting literacies they will be required to respond to. Furthermore, rhetorical tools can teach students to analyze the literacies around them and teach them how to respond accordingly.

Literacies and Power

In this new economy, it is important for English faculty to discuss which literacies Departments of English will offer. Many of these decisions can be localized, considering the individual needs of the university population, but these conversations should be globalized as well. The definition, aim, and scope of English studies are a national, if not global, concern; without a reimagining of the discipline, English studies—or more precisely, the teaching of literature and creating writing—may become replaced by more “useful” literacies. With the focus on a business model of education, many administrators and politicians are privileging STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) literacies because they provide knowledge and skills that are commercially viable. STEM literacies are privileged because they are perceived as directly contributing to the national and state economies. This emphasis suggests that traditional English studies literacies, or any literacies not directly contributing to the fiscal crisis, are less valuable. In a business model where the “useful” supplant the “less valuable,” departments and disciplines within in the latter category will compete more fiercely for resources. The competitive reality must be acknowledged.

However, perceived value is contextual and audience focused. While “practical” literacies taught in STEM disciplines, like cancer research or electrical engineering, are very useful, the usefulness of practical literacies directly relate to perceived power.

Linguistic choices, from carefully worded mission statements to course descriptions, also affect the perceived usefulness of the department. British linguist Norman Fairclough explains, “Educational institutions are heavily involved in these general developments affecting language in its relation to power. First, educational practices themselves constitute a core domain of linguistic and discursive power and of the engineering of discursive practices” (532). How English studies defines its purpose and mission, as well as defines the skills and tools taught by English faculty, will influence academic and political stakeholders’ perceptions of the discipline. Departments of English might consider adopting a rhetorical focus that will actually be valuable to students and stakeholders.

The perceived value of English studies is in its ability to teach students how to “read” and “write.” These expectations are often defined in transferrable ways across disciplines and specialties. Brandt explains, “Writers put knowledge in tangible, and thereby transactional, form” because, as she notes in one example, “written products become a chief vehicle for economic trade and profit making” (*Literacy and Learning* 117-118). Therefore, the literacies English studies teach, such as reading and writing, become an invaluable part of the economic wheel. However, because English studies has historically determined which reading and writing skills should be taught to students, it has also played a part in defining which literacies are appropriate, worthwhile, or respected. As I will illustrate in chapter two, this relationship is complicated as English faculty negotiate how to maintain allegiance to their disciplinary conventions while accommodating the needs of the university population. Further complicating English studies’ role is the types of reading and writing that the university, politicians, and

students expect. Oftentimes, there are two different expectations about the skills Departments of English impart—English faculty’s perception of what constitutes reading and writing, and other people’s perception of what constitutes reading and writing.

Globalization also affects what literacies students demand. The National Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America’s Promise explains in their report *College Learning for the New Global Century* (2007) that

in this global century, every student—not just the fortunate few—will need wide-ranging and cross-disciplinary knowledge, higher-level skills, an active sense of personal and social responsibility, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge to complex problems. (11)

Therefore, for students to become competitive, adaptable workers, they will need interdisciplinary skills that prepare them for problem solving within a global economy. They will need to learn how to seamlessly transition between discourse communities, and will need rhetorical awareness to analyze the complex world around them. Fairclough furthers, “[E]conomies are increasingly ‘informational’ or ‘knowledge-based’ and ‘knowledge-driven’” (439). Thus, students must learn the appropriate literacies necessary for succeeding in American commerce, industry, and economics. The National Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America’s Promise’s report is a call to action for American college and universities. English studies can apply this call to the discipline as a reminder: In an increasingly collaborative world, students enrolled in English courses will also need exposure to literacies that prepare them for a globalized world mitigated by economic changes and influences.

Lanham asks: Can we in English studies “[u]se the talents and methods of English

studies to address the literacy crisis?” (109) To remain relevant English studies faculty must discuss and consider how to adapt to how the economy influences literacy. But this is not a problem just for rhetoric and composition faculty to solve. Literature and creative writing faculty must also be part of the solution. Lanham recommends “bring[ing] these two worlds [literature and composition] together” by “us[ing] the literacy crisis to support English studies through lean times, [and] preserve this discipline it has taken a century to define” (109). To best adapt to budget cuts and economic pressures, Departments of English can encourage and promote subfield collaboration and interdisciplinarity by embracing rhetoric. Rhetoric is the unifying theory that can bring the subfields together to teach students literacies that will prepare students for academia and fund English studies. My point to return to rhetoric, however, does not suggest that rhetoric and composition accept the sole responsibility for preparing students for academic community membership. Even though funding literature and creative writing to continue as is. Instead, faculty in all English studies’ subfields should collaborate to prepare students for academia.

Departments of English are uniquely suited to provide students with foundational skills that can be applied across literacies, disciplines, and communities. They are uniquely suited because Departments of English are most often the space where students are exposed to introductory and advanced academic reading, writing, and thinking skills. The discipline can reaffirm its relevance by providing students with rhetorically-based communication skills that will help them learn to adapt to the diverse community-specific literacies around them.

Because of the knowledge-making English studies teaches—critical thinking, theoretical analysis, academic and professional writing, rhetorical analysis, among others—our discipline is in the unique position to help students adapt to an economically and technologically-driven world. Academic, professional, civic communities are increasingly interdisciplinary, and students need tools that will help them communicate in this new world. They need to become flexible, adaptable knowledge workers, and English studies should consider how it will respond to the literacies students will need. As Nick Carbone, the Director of New Media for Bedford/St. Martin and former writing professor, wrote on the WPA-L, “If students don't come away learning how to learn and how to adapt, how to let go, sometimes, of the career or job they think they ‘trained’ for and instead find another way, they're going to struggle more.” Students need explicit instruction in how to navigate the challenges and choices they will face as citizens, professionals, and academics. Departments of English cannot solely carry the responsibility for preparing students to adapt to every community. But, they can teach students how to analyze the literacies around them.

Changing Literacies: The Historical and Contemporary Struggle Between Service Courses and Literature Courses

Economics remain a driving influence in which literacy skills are socially and culturally privileged. As economic changes occur desired literacies also change. The late nineteenth-century shift from Departments of Rhetoric to Departments of English is one example of how the economy directly affects the literacies in higher education. Two factors in the discipline's nineteenth-century evolution were a growing literate populace and emerging middle-class professions. As the nineteenth century progressed, writing implements and reading material became more abundant and inexpensive. Both

American and British citizens began to seek literacy skills that would allow them daily agency, such as reading a market bill or signing an invoice, as well as professional opportunities that required reading and writing skills (Russell 4). Additionally, the rising middle class, in part to the American and British Industrial Revolutions and expanding middle-class professions, influenced the incarnation of middle-class literacies. These shifting literacies were the result of economics. And this economic diversity benefitted English studies as well. With the increased interest in diverse literacies, English studies had the opportunity provide an invaluable service, namely teaching reading and writing, to the academic community. However, as the discipline matured in the late nineteenth century, Departments of English placed emphasis on literary analysis and theory and faculty viewed teaching composition as burdensome.

The dual role within nineteenth-century Departments of English to both teach literary analysis and composition—with faculty preferring to teach literary analysis—caused strain within English studies. In the late nineteenth century, David Russell describes, “[w]riting instruction was viewed as an unwelcomed intrusion on [the humanists’] professional lives Moreover, composition threatened the disciplinary integrity of the humanities insofar as it implied that English should teach the discourse of other disciplines” (177). Even a century later, composition’s place in English studies has continued to cause conflict as English faculty decide which disciplinary practices should be emphasized and valued.

Emerging from this nineteenth-century conflict was a social hierarchy. Literary analysis and theory were perceived as more valuable and important to Departments of English, thus resources were funneled towards such emphases. This social hierarchy

remains, and in many Departments of English faculty disagree over which literacies should be taught and valued within the discipline. Peter Elbow writes,

I fear, in fact, that the culture of literary studies still carries a bit of that traditional implication that there is something ‘lower’ about teaching than scholarship; that the tone of a scholarly essay is reduced if there is talk about teaching; and that teaching issues are for the for the less able. (“The Cultures of Literature and Composition” 536)

While I am an optimist and hope that literature and composition faculty may one day accept their invaluable roles within the discipline, I recognize that many Departments of English across the nation remain fractured. The hierarchy within nineteenth-century Departments of English studies remains, and rhetoric and composition faculty are often “othered” within their own departments. However, in order for English studies to compete with STEM disciplines or to reassert their relevance, literature creative writing and rhetoric and composition must find a way to value what each subfield has to offer. Although the subfields may emphasize different scholarly work, literature, creative writing, and rhetoric and composition share common values, namely teaching reading and writing, even if the genres faculty teach vary. The health of English studies depends on faculty’s ability to see the commonalities between the subfields, and to erase the lingering hierarchies.

Much of the conflict between the English studies’ subfields are a result of the literacies that rhetoric and composition faculty teach. As universities adopt general education composition requirements intending to prepare students to write academic and professional genres, composition faculty will be unable to avoid preparing students for

literacies in STEM professions and disciplines. Teaching students to write across curriculums and communities are also a result of a practically minded, business model of education. Literature and creative writing faculty often perceive these literacies as contradictory to English studies' purpose. Preparing students to write across the disciplines neither encourages students to become English majors, nor does it promote literary theory and analysis. Therein lies the conflict for many English studies faculty: If composition does not promote a literary-based reading and writing program, where does it fit into English studies model?

Part of this conflict lies in the difficulty defining English studies. With a clearer definition of English studies, faculty may more clearly envision the roles of each subfield. Literature professor Isaiah Smithson explains, "First 'English studies' has always denoted a contest as much as it has a content. Disputing, revising, and transforming the principles, theories, methods, subjects, and goals of English studies—activities common in the 1990s—are not new" (3). English studies, it seems, has never been clearly defined, and this malleable definition results in contested literacies, pedagogical practices, and mission statements. Lanham notes the strain between these subfields is partially because composition is "the study of communication in a world that is posited as the very opposite of literature's 'imaginative reality'" (110). Nevertheless, the longevity of English studies depends upon the discipline's ability to adapt. As faculty discuss how English studies will adapt, disputes naturally occur. There will be conflict regarding "who" (a person or group) has the power to decide the ideologies and cultural heritage of the discipline. However, in order to ensure English studies' relevance,

literature, creative writing, and rhetoric and composition faculty must find a way to productively collaborate.

Embracing the Past: How Economics Has Shaped 19th Century Higher Education

Collaboration requires that faculty in the subfields acknowledge the important role literature, creative writing, and rhetoric and composition plays in departmental success. As well, collaboration requires the acknowledgement that rhetoric and composition is an integral part of English studies. Perhaps rhetoric and composition remain invaluable to Departments of English because of the departmental and university services the faculty provide. Nevertheless, as long as rhetoric and composition programs remain within Departments of English, departmental subfields must find a way to productively work together.

Additionally, Departments of English need to consider how economics will affect the trajectory of their departments. As states and institutions embrace an economic model of education, Departments of English must adapt. However, many faculty are resistant to change. Resistance may be a result of fear: Fear that faculty jobs may disappear, fear that the discipline may become unrecognizable, or fear that faculty may lose the discipline that they “know.” This is why history is important. History shows the changes, as well as how people adapt. Likewise, English studies’ histories have demonstrated the evolution of the discipline. Missing from these histories is a clear articulation of how economics has directly affected English studies and higher education. This gap must be filled to help faculty understand that economic influence within higher education is not necessarily a horrible reality. The Departments of English that faculty work within today are a result of economic influences a century ago.

In order for English studies to fully understand how much the discipline has evolved requires more historically-focused English studies scholarship that traces how economics have influenced English studies. This history is a necessary part of contemporary conversations because (1) it shows that economics have always affected higher education and changed the literacies taught, and (2) it shows that contemporary faculty are not alone in their frustration and fear. Perhaps this latter point is the most important objective of such history. Knowing the trends higher education has experienced within the last century and a half enables English studies to have an understanding of the past and, potentially, offers hope for the future.

I assert that economics have always been a driving influence in higher education. The influence of economics, however, is not a topic generally included in disciplinary histories, especially in writing pedagogy and composition histories. One point often overlooked in history texts is how nineteenth-century industrialization and population growth affected the literacies in America and England. While I more completely illustrate these points in chapter two, I will include a brief historical overview here to show how economics have influenced higher education.

Higher education in nineteenth-century America and England experienced its own quandary as the masses called for a more practical model of education that would prepare them for a variety of middle and working-class professions. These calls for action turned an inquiring lens upon higher education much like the scrutiny universities are facing today. In an 1825 lecture, Robert Bridges Patton, professor of Greek at New York University, explained before the Literary and Philosophical Society of New Jersey,

[W]e need not be surprised at the keenness with which our college systems are beginning to be scrutinized, nor at the dissatisfaction beginning to be manifested, at the disproportion between the labour and expense bestowed and the advantages derived. (5)

This dissatisfaction was a result of rising literacy demands in nineteenth-century American and England. The growing commercial markets, the Industrial Revolutions, and the affordability of writing instruments were three factors that challenged higher education's literacy practices. Until a more inclusive model of higher education in the mid and late nineteenth century, representative models of higher education at Yale, Harvard, and others, valued classicism as the representative literacy of the elite. As the middle class grew and industries required more complex reading and writing skills, "practical" literacies grew in demand.

Higher education's nineteenth-century challenges are similar to the challenges contemporary institutions and departments experience. The pressure to include more useful literacies in nineteenth-century higher education was a result of changing economics. Similar to students' demands a century ago, students today continue to demand an educational model that will provide economic stability and social mobility. However, the idea of what makes a "useful" education has changed. Today, the useful education is the one that teaches students to adapt to a rapidly changing world.

Practical Exigencies: Helping Students Become Discourse Community Insiders in a Time of Economic Crisis

Even though the economic downturn has caused fears and frustrations regarding the trajectory of higher education and the discipline of English, English studies is uniquely positioned to adapt to the business model of education. As budgets are cut and

questions of relevance loom, students will continue to enroll in English courses. First-year students, in particular, will need tools that help them adapt to academia, as well as prepare them for their professional and civic objectives. Academia is a complex web of diverse discourse communities. Within each community there are community-specific ways of knowledge making, ways of thinking, and ways of researching. Students will need the tools to navigate each community as many of the community rules and expectations are not self-evident or obvious.

In order to succeed in higher education, first-year students will need guidance entering the academic community. Critical pedagogy scholar Peter McLaren writes, “Schools are historical and structural embodiments of ideological forms reproduced through uneven discursive alignments that privilege certain groups, and asymmetrical relations of power that sustain such privilege” (38). The discourse community-specific practices and ideologies associated with higher education may be unfamiliar to students entering higher education, and, as a result, many first-year students may have difficulties adapting. However, because of the value placed on higher education, more underprepared students are applying for and entering higher education. In addition, many institutions adopt an open admission policy in order to provide underprepared or underrepresented student populations opportunities for professionalization and career development.

In order to successfully help students become insiders in students’ self-selected discourse communities, while also adapting to an increasingly business-minded model of education, I advocate for rhetoric and composition faculty to begin conversations with their English studies colleagues about how rhetoric can return to Departments of English.

Rhetoric can be adopted as an overarching umbrella that organizes literary and rhetorical theory, bringing together literature, rhetoric and composition, and creative writing.

In particular, rhetoric and composition faculty may want to advocate for the inclusion of rhetorical genre studies within their departments. According to Anis Bawarshi and Mary Jo Reiff, rhetorical genre studies (RGS) examines the socially performative aspects of language and how genres “through their use, dynamically maintain, reveal tensions within, and help reproduce social practices and realities” (59). RGS may be able to successfully blend the discourses of literature, creative writing, and rhetoric and composition. Because each subfield analyzes and creates genres unique to their focus, genre analysis may be a productive method for teaching all English studies how to analyze the world, texts, and communicative styles around them. Genre analysis is particularly useful for preparing literature, creative writing, and rhetoric and composition students to evaluate subfield-specific rhetorical situations. Bawarshi and Reiff note, RGS’ genre analysis “has been directed toward an understanding of how genres mediate social practices, interactions, symbolic realities” (59). Departments of English can adopt an interpretive, theoretical, writing pedagogy that values rhetorical analysis to provide students with frameworks that will greatly benefit them across the disciplines and communities.

The current economic climate can either cause unrest and resentment, or it can be the motivation that encourages English studies to transform: As students arrive at institutions with the intent of succeeding professionally and financially, they need literacy skills that will help them navigate diverse and complex discourse communities. While economics may require English studies to rethink the literacies it teaches and values, the

discipline can embrace this change and become even more indispensable by preparing students from all majors and academic backgrounds to succeed academically, professionally, and personally.

Looking Forward: Examining the Literacies of Literary Characters to Illustrate Rhetorical Awareness and Discourse Community Membership

In order for rhetoric and composition faculty to begin conversations about reframing English studies, they need to speak the same language as their literature and creative writing colleagues. In this dissertation, I use stories to provide a common ground for English studies faculty to begin from. Storytelling is a useful method for capturing attention, illustrating themes, reasserting values, offering new perspectives, and bonding readers. Linda Adler-Kassner writes in *The Activist WPA*, “But when we hear the breath of others and develop our practice in concert with others, that practice changes in ways we don’t always anticipate” (vii). Inspired by Adler-Kassner’s use of student stories as well as her own, I chose to frame my project in stories—fictional, literary ones—well known and beloved by many English studies faculty. Literary stories, while different from student stories, can be equally powerful and can, as I will illustrate in my chapters, encourage change.

Because the future of English studies can be a contentious topic, stories offer a common meeting ground that may be more accessible and relatable than other academic forms of discourse. Relating practices, themes, and beliefs to stories can serve to provide clarity or associations otherwise absent. Therefore, this project is framed by the stories of literary characters—Jo from *Bleak House*, Count Dracula from *Dracula*, and Alice from *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*—to articulate how rhetoric and composition faculty may be able to explain the importance in rhetoric’s return to

Departments of English. Rhetoric and composition faculty can use these examples to open discussions with their literature and creative writing colleagues about how rhetorical awareness and genre analysis is embedded within canonical texts. Perhaps if literature and creative writing faculty were aware of the prevalent position of rhetoric throughout literature, they would better understand what rhetoric and composition faculty value. Therefore, using literary stories may open new methods for discourse between faculty.

Furthermore, these literary characters can be used in the first-year composition classroom to show students why rhetorical awareness is important. All students, regardless of academic preparedness, need help transitioning from high school to college. Many students experience difficulties adapting their literacies and knowledges to those expected and required within academia. And to show the interconnectedness between rhetoric, literacy, and community, I analyze the literacies of Jo, Count Dracula, and Alice. These three characters illustrate varying levels of student preparedness and insider membership. Furthermore, they offer practical composition classroom activities and writing assignments to help students learn to adapt to academia.

Blending literacies can bring rhetoric and composition, literature, and creative writing faculty together in new, meaningful ways. In a time of economic crisis, and as students attend university for more useful degree programs, English studies faculty can collectively teach students how to adapt to the discourse communities around them. Like the diverse student populations we teach, Jo, Dracula, and Alice exemplify the difficulties and challenges students face when adapting to new literacies and communities. Literature and rhetoric and composition can dovetail their disciplinary strengths to encourage the meta-cognition of students who enroll in English courses, while also teaching them

transferrable tools that will benefit them in whatever academic, professional, or civic communities they want to become insider members of. Furthermore, using literature to help students learn to adapt their literacies to the different communities they'll experience on campus can show those who question the relevance of English studies that the field's seemingly weakest tool, studying literature, is actually our strongest tool: Rhetorically reading literature provides rhetorical sophistication, teaches multiple literacies, encourages audience awareness, and advanced reading and writing skills.

2

The Contested Economies of Classicism and Practical Education in Nineteenth-Century America and England and the Rise of Departments of English

“It is the mark of educated persons to ask themselves, constantly, ‘Why do we think the way we do?’”

— Donald C. Stewart, “Forward,”
Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges, ix

In the discipline of rhetoric and composition, it is more common to inquire into American English studies history by either tracing the legacy of classical Greece and Rome or the legacy of nineteenth-century universities like Harvard, Yale, and Cambridge. The oft cited and self-referential texts by James Berlin, James Murphy, and David Russell maintain these boundaries without venturing into how America was influenced by England’s ideas of education.³ Nevertheless, England remains important to our disciplinary history because of our political and cultural histories with the empire. Although the United States is separated from England by the Atlantic, both nations have exchanged culture and politics. As historian Daniel T. Rodgers has shown in *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*, the Atlantic has functioned like a conduit transferring worldviews, culture, and political alliances between both nations.

³ Because the primary sources I cite are from English authors, periodicals, or Parliamentary publications, I have chosen to reference England instead of Great Britain. Likewise, I have chosen to define the texts as “English”—those texts from England—instead of being “British.” I do not want to presuppose that English values, practices, and literacies necessarily bled into Scotland, Ireland, or Wales. Although, I do know that they almost always did.

Contemporary rhetoric and composition scholars who trace the history of English studies often summarize how the shifting economics in nineteenth-century America influenced the rising literacies of American citizens. Histories written in the 1980s and 1990s by James Berlin, Richard Ohmann, David Russell, and James Murphy, all touch on, to varying degrees, how and why literacy shifted with changing nineteenth-century economics. However, these histories do not fully illustrate how economics directly affected social class issues that, in turn, affected literacies taught and valued in higher education. Because of this gap in knowledge, contemporary rhetoric and composition faculty are prevented from understanding of how nineteenth-century culture—whether religion, politics, ideologies, commerce, etc.—affected higher education and English studies.

Such histories written in the 1980s and 1990s were intended to trace the history of writing instruction or the growth of rhetoric and composition. Yet, equally important to this discourse is examining how changing economics and industries of the nineteenth century affected the literacies taught to the individual social classes. I use the plural “literacies” because being literate is not just proficiency in reading and writing. It encompasses all types of knowledge-making, including unique and specialized literacy skills within communities, subcultures, and societies.

What I intend to show in this chapter is how the changing economics in America and England caused nineteenth-century higher education to grapple with the demands of the populace. To make these connections, I will utilize the histories recounted by noted rhetoric and composition scholars as well as nineteenth-century primary sources to offer a specific look at the people’s voices. Although many historians fail to specifically

articulate how economics influenced nineteenth-century literacies, these histories are important as contemporary English studies faculty try to find solutions to the business model of education. It may seem counterintuitive to examine Victorian England in a dissertation about the American rhetoric and composition discipline. However, as the late Economics professor Clark Kerr notes, “Higher education cannot escape history Much of the history of higher education is written by the confrontations of internal logic versus external pressures” (xvi). I maintain that the history of English studies cannot escape the history of Victorian England especially Victorian discourse on education and literacies.

The nineteenth-century primary sources I highlight in this chapter specifically show how educators, politicians, and cultural sages’ literacy values seeped into popular culture. I include texts from Rev. J.L. Brereton, Thomas Carlyle, and John Ruskin, among others, to show how the voices of the elite, privileged classes furthered a literacy divide. Much of the nineteenth-century education discourse aimed to solidify which literacies should be granted to each class. In many cases, the elite believed classicism and *belles lettres* should be the valued literacies of elite culture. These perceptions leaked into mainstream society with many popular periodical writers promoting elite literacies as more valuable than useful literacies. This chapter examines a blend of popular periodicals and upper class essays to illustrate how the “‘common people’ of the culture” were “imposed by the ‘elites’ producing the language (de Certeau xiii). The elite’s production of language, particularly in ways that valued classicism and *belles lettres*, also affected Victorian educational practices.

Within this nineteenth-century context, America and England's growing industries and economies challenged the established order. While many American and English elites believed the literacies of classicism and *belles lettres* should be the primary literacies valued educationally and culturally, economic factors forced both nations to reexamine the social order of literacies. The rise of the middle class, the Industrial Revolutions, and the inexpensive reading and writing materials caused the populace to demand more "useful" literacies. These useful literacies included basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, as well as training in trade and industrial literacies.

The evolution of nineteenth-century literacies does inform contemporary conversation. As contemporary Departments of English and higher education institutions grapple with an increasingly economically-focused world, academia must balance useful literacies those that are perceived as less useful. English studies faculty must also consider which literacies to teach within their departments.

In order to demonstrate the struggle between useful and elite literacies, I will first examine how the expanding literacy needs of the nineteenth-century masses affected America and England. Second, I will show how the English and American social order of education—privileging classicism and *belles lettres*, both high culture literacies primarily available to the elite—was an attempt to reinforce which literacies should be culturally valued. Finally, I conclude by encouraging rhetoric and composition faculty to help their English studies counterparts to embrace current economic challenges by (1) helping them recognize that economics and industry have always been influential in the literacies valued in higher education and professionally, and (2) encouraging dialogue that

addresses how the discipline will respond to students' evolving and economically-driven literacy demands.

Why England Matters to English Studies' History

In the story of English studies, the Victorians (1832-1901) are important characters because of their emphasis on public education. English literature professor Dinah Birch writes, "It was the Victorians who first conceived of education as a formal process that would be crucial to the life of the nation and all of its citizens" (7). As the nation discusses, contemplates, and then establishes compulsory education for children in 1870, Victorian literary and social elites begin determining what kinds of education should be taught to maintain the social order.

During the nineteenth century, England, as with Europe and America, widely valued education as the method for bestowing a high culture of classicism. Such elite literacies were not generally useful to the populace; although, in many cases they were desirable because classicism was synonymous with "good breeding." Good breeding, according to the Victorians, means the people cultivated their intellect and lived moral lives. Although Victorians wanted to impart good breeding to the populace, in reality it was only perceived as "available" to the upper middle and upper classes.

While I do not intend to provide an exhaustive historiography of the Victorian education system as there are several excellent texts that accomplish this task, I intend to show that the Victorians disagreed over which literacies should be granted to each class

strata.⁴ It was without debate that the upper classes should be educated in classicism and *belles lettres*, but many Victorians differed over which literacies should be taught to the masses. In most instances, Victorian educators believed classical literature and *belles lettres* should be used to instill morality, good breeding, and wisdom to the masses. However, the middle and lower classes demanded the practical literacies that would ensure social and economic advancement (Digby and Searby 23).

Examining the literacies valued by the Victorians offers insightful clues into a nation experiencing change and anxiety that, in many ways, parallels the contemporary American social, political, and cultural climate. Whether the topic was class systems, division of wealth and resources, capitalism and consumerism, industry, ecology, art and aesthetics, empire, national identity and patriotism, or education, the Victorians discussed it. Although nearly two centuries divide the Victorians from contemporary America, their discourses were similar in topic and uncannily resemble many of our own conversations. In particular, questions about economy emerged in light of the booming Industrial Revolution where new professions and industries allowed the Victorian populace financial, intellectual, cultural, and social growth. Additionally, as industrial work became more specialized and complex, more Victorians needed access to education that would prepare them for industrial jobs.

The Culture of Classicism in America

Like the higher education model in Victorian England, higher education in nineteenth-century America remained an exclusive community. For one, almost all

⁴ For more exhaustive historiographies on Victorian education, see Stanley Lewis Curtis and Myrtle E.A. Boulwood's *An Introductory History of English Education Since 1800* (1964), Phil Gardener's *The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England: The People's Education* (1984), and Marianne Larsen's *The Making and Shaping of the Victorian Teacher: A Comparative New Cultural History* (2011).

institutions in Antebellum America (1789-1860) “were unapologetically elitist and sectarian. Students and faculty were of the same sex, race, religion, and, for the most part, of the same social class” (Russell 35). By the 1900s institutions were primarily established by specific grouping of peoples—occupation, religion, race, social class, sex, ethnicity, and locality—such as women, Catholics, Protestants (Presbyterian, Methodists Episcopal, Baptist, etc.), African Americans, and the poor and the wealthy, among others (Jencks and Reisman 2-3).⁵ Although there were some institutions that accepted female students, most of the elite universities did not, and curriculum catered to male-specific professions. These parameters ensured linguistic, cultural, and social homogeneity as the literacies taught directly informed the ideologies and purposes of each institution. The diversity of Antebellum higher education institutions intended to meet the needs of diverse populations. In many regards, economics, the exchange and transaction with a select customer base, directly influenced the founding of these universities and colleges.

Before the advent of the modern Department of English, American universities and colleges had departments of rhetoric and oratory that prepared students for professions in law, politics, and religion. Nineteenth-century curriculum was based on the ancient Greek and Latin models of recitation, imitation, argument, and included studies in spelling, rhetoric, writing, oratory, grammar, logic, reading, and history. Moreover, curriculum and courses referenced the “themes, grammar, and rhetorical principles of the ancient Greek and Latin texts” (Smithson 3). These specialized facets of education specifically addressed the needs of male students preparing to enter fields that required exceptional public speaking skills.

⁵ For data on higher institutions founded by such communities, see *The American College in the Nineteenth Century* (2000) edited by Roger L. Geiger.

The inclusion of Greek and Roman antiquity in higher education was a result of classicism. During the nineteenth century, classicism was “the central intellectual project” after Christianity. According to professor of History and Classics Caroline Winterer, classicism was integral to higher education until the 1880s when the majority of institutions began cancelling their Greek and Latin requirements (1). At Yale from 1822-1823, for example, the four year curriculum included “Elegantiae Latinae” “Graeca Majora,” Horace, Playfair’s Euclid, and Cicero de Officiis, among others (Scholes 181-182). And until the late-nineteenth century it was common for male students across America to spend at least half their academic years in classical education (Winterer 2). While this curriculum valued a specific literacy set, it also ensured that a select population could gain university entrance. Even if classicism was widely valued, familiarity with these elite literacies—such as reading Greek and Latin—prevented average citizens from accessing a university or college education entrenched in such curriculum.

American interest in classicism was partly a result of Europe’s emphasis in classicism. Since the Renaissance, Winterer writes, Europeans thought classicism was “fundamental to forming ethical human beings and upright citizens” (2). The importance placed by Europe on classicism influenced American culture to followed suit (Winterer 2). In America, as in Europe, men and women aspiring to a classical model of education and culture adopted classicism in a variety of ways. For one, within primary and secondary schools, American education in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries included Latin and Greek, even for boys (Winterer 11). Additionally, classical terms were

applied to society group names and were used to describe and define home life (Winterer 24).

The relationship between classicism and intellectualism ensured class distinctions. Winterer explains, “a formal classical education formed an essential ingredient in the alchemy of the gentleman, supplying the indefinable acquisition that distinguished him from the masses...[and from] the imposter or the arriviste” (20). In a changing nineteenth-century world, classicism firmly defined the boundaries of the upper classes and reinforced the literacies of the elite by creating literacy-based boundaries. Thus, classicism became an additional marker to define the cultured from those who were not.

Thomas P. Miller explains Yale used classicism to maintain the “distinction between ‘liberal’ and ‘professional’ education to limit the encroachment of the ‘mercantile, mechanical, or agricultural’ arts” (106, emphasis in the original). Such an example set by Yale, and most likely adopted by other institutions, reinforced the American cultural and social perception that a liberal education was prized above all else, systematically devaluing the professions and jobs of the masses and working classes. Furthermore, because society placed such importance in classicism, even if it remained inaccessible to many Americans, the popularization of classicism reinforced which literacies were considered respectable. As a result, the gap widened between those who had access to classicism and who did not. Furthermore, for those Americans wanting or needing a practical or useful education beyond secondary school, it was nearly impossible to find such education.

Education in England: Literacy for the Masses

The Victorian perspective that “natural order” organized the world buttressed educators and politicians’ beliefs that primary and secondary public education was the means to maintaining social control. “Natural order” affected how education was administered and offered to the English populace. Generally, wealth, God-fearing Victorians believed it was their *noblesse oblige* to offer education to the masses. Because state controlled, compulsory primary education was not offered until the 1870s, primary education was privatized and controlled by the Church and benevolent societies. These organizations typically offered “Sunday schooling” where students were taught basic reading, writing, and arithmetic through (Vaughan and Archer 63). Additionally, before compulsory education in the 1870s, the *noblesse oblige* of the upper classes encouraged their involvement and support of the masses’ education with the purpose of instilling Christian values and morals in the people.⁶ Thus, the scope of education was often determined by the wealthy and elite. This top down hierarchy reinforced the natural social order of Victorian England (Vaughan and Archer 65, 72).

Before the Education Act of 1870, quality education for the working-class children was scant. The state granted nearly a million pounds in the 1860s to privatized schools, but the continuance of these grants was determined by attendance and state examinations (Parliament n. pag.). In order to determine whether state funding was benefitting the students, the state mandated examinations. However, these examinations, like state mandated examinations today, influenced the types of literacies students would receive. For example, examinations only tested reading, writing, arithmetic (and simple

⁶ For more information, see Peter Gordon and John White’s *Philosophers as Educational Reformers: The Influence of Idealism on British Education Thought and Practice* (1979).

needlework for girls). As a result, schools only taught these four subjects to their female students because there was no “need” to expand beyond this curriculum. In 1867 the curriculum expanded to include grammar, geography, or history (Curtis and Boulwood 71-73). And in 1870 the Forster’s Education Act was passed in which the state acquired control from the Church and private benevolent societies to institute a public educational system through a liberal education (Birch 3). This act extended the educational opportunities of non-denominational, free, and compulsory education to healthy children between the ages of five and thirteen. According to the Act, these children should attend school if there is a school within three miles of their homes (Preston 92).

In reality, the Act of 1870 neither established free nor compulsory education; in fact, it took several decades to establish Victorian education as free and compulsory (Curtis and Boulwood 76). Not until the extended Act of 1880 was schooling compulsory for children between five and ten years old (Parliament n. pag.). Open to all members of the populace, this system radically changed how education was perceived. No longer was education just an act of generosity; it was something Victorian children deserved. Victorian Thomas Preston wrote in his monolithic analysis of the Act of 1870 that children had the right to an education that “cannot fail to be of incalculable benefit to themselves and to the country generally” (75).

As a result of public schooling opportunities, increased urbanization, and inexpensive reading material, literacy rates drastically increased in the early nineteenth century. While “literacy,” defined in Victorian England as the ability to sign one’s name at marriage, “had been stagnant at around 50 percent” it rose to nearly 95 percent during the 1830s (Mitch xvi). This growth was a result of expanding urbanization and

professionalism, as well as the Industrial Revolution. The changing economies directly affected the populace's jobs and living situations. As a result, the masses' cried for an education that would benefit them economically, socially, and culturally. These cries reached a crescendo (Müller 90). Education was believed to be a means for economic stability and social mobility. According to Literature professor Myron Tuman, the "emerging middle class saw it [education as the] primary means to a higher material standard of living" (174). Consequently, the "rising expectations for literacy in that population" challenged the elites' belief that public educators should only teach reading, writing, and arithmetic to the masses (Leslie Williams 142).⁷

Even though the middle classes wanted education to bolster their status, access was difficult. In 1864 Earl Fortescue explained there were two systems of education serving only the working and upper classes. Both "alone pervade the whole country with their influence, and are devoted to general not special education" (Fortescue 3). Energies were focused on educating the lower classes and the elite, instead. Because many of the Victorians focused their energies on the working classes and poverty-stricken or the upper classes, the literacies of the middle classes were often ignored (Vaughan and Archer 71).

The 1861 Education Commission: Practical Literacies for the Working Classes

Due to the entrenched *noblesse oblige* within Victorian society and the cries of the working classes, many educators focused their attention on teaching working-class students literacy skills and trades that this population would deem useful. Commonly

⁷ For more information on children's education, see Anne Digby and Peter Searby's *Children, School and Society in Nineteenth-Century England* (1981), and David F. Mitch's *The Rise of Popular Literacy in Victorian England: The Influence of Private Choice and Public Policy* (1992).

referenced as the Newcastle Commission, the 1861 Education Commission's *Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into The State of Popular Education in England, Volume 1* identifies in what ways the working classes wanted an education that could help them survive in an increasingly literate society. Because of the unfair advantage the literate had over the illiterate, many educators taught their working-class students basic literacy skills, so they could garner a modicum of agency. In one representative example, Rev. James Fraser, a member of the Commission, taught his students how to read simple texts, such as a bill, letter, or newspaper; and write basic prose, as well as the skills to calculate their wages and tabulate and pay bills (Education Commission 243).

Mr. Winder, another member of the Commission, writes that the evening schools he supervised were "almost entirely confined to reading, writing, and arithmetic,— writing, on the whole, being the favourite subject" (Education Commission 41). According to Mr. Cumin, another member of the Commission, some working-class men would walk nearly two miles to "pursue their studies. Every one had his reason for coming, and one of the most intelligent had the ambition of rising to be an engine driver" (Education Commission 41). Evident in the Education Commission is how important basic and vocational literacies were for the working classes. In order to survive within an increasingly modern nation, working-class citizens wanted to learn practical literacies that would benefit their home and work lives. Additionally, because many working-class children were pulled from school at age ten or eleven to financially contribute to their families, educators faced the immediate need to teach them basic literacies before they left school.

Many of the brief narratives in the 707-page report reinforce the understanding that working-class people recognized basic literacies like reading, writing, and arithmetic as providing them with better jobs and better pay. In one example, Mr. Cumin asked an Irishman about the importance of reading and writing. The Irishman responded by saying, “[D]o you think that if I could read and write I would be shoved into every dirty job as I am now? No, Sir! Instead of driving this horse I’d be riding him” (Education Commission 175). In this instance, the Irishman accepts the rhetoric of education, just as many believe the American Dream exists, by believing reading and writing skills would offer him the opportunity to ride a horse. In effect, he believes that practical and useful literacy skills would afford him economic prosperity and social mobility.

While such literacy skills would not necessarily guarantee much economic advancement or financial security for the working-class population, teaching the working classes job and industry-related literacies could offer them some agency and financial stability. In one example that illustrates the importance of life-sustaining literacies for this class strata, E. Carleton Tufnell, a member of several Education Commissions, reports that sewing machines are “extensively used” in schools for pauper children “and hence sometimes a deformed girl who would be quite unable to gain a living as servant, has been taught a trade, at which she has been able to earn twenty shillings a week” (352). Although this girl was a member of the pauper classes, this example shows how financial stability is inextricably linked to vocational literacies. Even though this deformed girl could not “advance” as we might imagine it, her sewing skill guaranteed a weekly wage and moved her out of the pauper classes and into the working classes. Although most pauper and working-class pupils who received class-specific education

never advanced beyond primary school, reformers realized that the illiteracies of this population ensured their disenfranchisement.

The Struggle to Define Class Appropriate Reading Material

The growth of the masses' literacy skills both influenced definitions of "appropriate" reading material and questioned what kinds of literacies should become available to the people.⁸ In one representative example, Edward Salmon writes in "What the Working Classes Read" (1886), "A great deal has been said and written nowadays about the education and enlightenment of the masses. The working man, as compared to his ancestor, is regarded as a prodigy of learning" (108). Salmon recounts that working-class men read "influential dailies," but "an important constituent in the mental food—or rather poison—of the people is the penny novelette" that contain stories of "veriest trash" (112). While this article touches on the reading habits of the working classes, the masses were critiqued for their intellectual vulnerability. Salmon continues, it is "hardly surprising that there should exist in the impressionable minds of the masses an aversion more or less deep to the upper classes" (112). This strong rhetoric exemplifies many popular opinions about the masses' reading choices: That without proper instruction, the populace is easily manipulated.

Evident in Salmon's statements is the perception that the masses' intellect, mental fortitude, and moral compass are grossly lacking. The masses improving reading ability caused many Victorians to believe they were reading the "wrong" texts. Typical to Victorian notions of social control, popular periodicals published articles on Victorian readings habits with the intent of corralling susceptible readers. Periodicals chastised

⁸ For more information about class-appropriate literacies of the Victorian period, see M.L. Clarke's *Classical Education in Britain, 1500-1900* (1959).

particular genres and made mass generalizations about certain strata's reading habits. Moreover, periodicals often lauded appropriate reading material to influence what Victorians read. Articles such as "Penny Awfuls" (1873) and "The Habit of Reading" (1878) illustrate the impressionable nature of the masses, their awful reading habits, or even their excessive reading. The rhetoric of fear evident in these articles reinforce the need for the upper classes to either supervise the masses and inoculate them with morality and good taste, or to prevent them from reading altogether.

The Middle-Class Literacies: Practical Education with a Hint of Classicism

Even though many Victorians devoted their attention to providing education for the working and lower classes, the middle classes were not entirely forgotten. A middle-class education included a mixture of practical literacies and classicism. Classicism was included because the elite believed the middle classes needed the morality. As well, the middle classes wanted the education that the elite had access to.

This mixture of classicism and practical literacies were intended to extend morality and good breeding to the middle classes while also giving them class-specific knowledge. Rev. J.L. Brereton, who founded inexpensive education for the middle classes, was one influential Victorian who believed that the middle classes had the right to learn literacies useful to their trades. In *County College: A Contribution of Experiments, Estimates, and Suggestions* (1874) he offers practical suggestions for creating affordable education for middle-class farmers, tradesmen, and artisans. His recommended curriculum included "correct" reading and writing of English, ancient and modern languages (French, German, Latin, and Greek, particularly), mathematics, science, and art. The subject matter and course expectations were to vary in degrees

depending on the ages and abilities of the students (Brereton 103). In particular, “English” subjects should include “so much arithmetic, history, geography, literature and political economy, as the age of the different class will allow, and the general expectation the public will call for” (Brereton 103-104).

Furthermore, Brereton includes Latin and Greek to mimic upper-class education to ensure the morality of the middle classes. Offering a sampling of the gentry’s literacies to the middle classes was not because the classes were perceived as equals. Instead, classicism “promot[es] moral and intellectual excellence” that, presumably, useful literacies cannot (Brereton 4). In this representative example, Brereton, like many in the upper classes, believed offering a small portion of high culture literacies were necessary to ensure moral order, intellectual growth, and community stability.

Shifting Economies in America: The Rise of Practical Literacies

In America, shifting nineteenth-century economies also made reading and writing materials less expensive and more accessible. In part to the technological developments of the age, the masses’ reading and writing skills increased. There are three reasons for this growth. First, pens, ink, paper and pencils became more affordable and functional. Second, the printing of books and periodicals increased and were accessible to everyone. The access to inexpensive reading material, like in Victorian England, caused many American elites alarm that the populace would read anything and everything print. In an effort to educate Americans on good taste, the *belles lettres* model was promoted within society and education as a guiding principle to define the valuable texts from the invaluable (Miller 89). Third, by the mid-nineteenth century sending mail and correspondence was affordable to all citizens (Wright and Halloran 226).

Perhaps most important to the growth of reading and writing among the middle and lower classes was the Industrial Revolution in America (1820-1870), creating a “radically literate” society (Wright and Halloran 226). Increased professionalization and industrial jobs required Americans to use reading and writing skills in their jobs, or required proficiency for job promotion. As industries adopted reading and writing literacies as requirements for employment, American citizens had financial impetus to demand the educational, cultural, social, and economic resources of the upper strata, effectively challenging the demarcated class systems (Wright and Halloran 229-231). James Berlin explains, “Citizens demanded it, students demanded it, and, most important, business leaders—the keepers of the funds—demanded it” (*Writing Instruction* 60). In an effort to respond to the interest and demand, new colleges and universities opened their doors “certifying the members of new professions, professions that an expanding economy had created ... to anyone who could meet the entrance requirements” (21). In order to best prepare Americans for employers’ expectations, free high schools became more common. As a result of expanding educational opportunities, America produced a “new middle class, a body claiming and receiving economic privilege and political power on the basis of its certified, professional status” (Berlin *Rhetoric and Reality* 21). And the growth of new, more inclusive institutions that catered to Americans’ professional interests challenged the supremacy of classical education and the hierarchical distinction it fostered.

By the 1850s many American institutions were revising their programs and curriculum to meet the needs and demands of students’ needs. According to Roger L. Geiger, the late Distinguished Professor of Higher Education, the “emerging markets for

practical, vocational skills” required institutions to revise their curricula (“The Era of Multipurpose Colleges” 128). These institutions included Baldwin-Wallace College (1845), Kenyon College (1824); Mount Union College (1846); Ohio Agricultural and Mechanical University (1870), now The Ohio State University; Saint Xavier College (1846); and University of Cincinnati (1819) (Geiger “The Era of Multipurpose Colleges” 127-152). In addition to the private establishment of colleges that valued a more inclusive curriculum was Senator Justin Morrill’s 1862 Land-Grant Act. The passage of this act ensured land was reserved for each state’s used for public education. Although Morrill intended the act to promote schools of science, land grant institutions were founded with the intention of providing an education for the populace (Geiger “Introduction” 26).

In the 1870s and 1880s American jobs became professionalized and citizens needed writing and reading skills would prepare them for an increasingly literate job responsibilities. Before the 1880s written communication was largely done by hand, and many industry giants wrote their correspondences by hand (Russell 102). David Russell explains in one representative example to illustrate the need for professional reading and writing skills that Henry DuPont wrote 6,000 business correspondences by quill pen annually. Although DuPont wrote by hand, with the advent of the typewriter and carbon paper in the 1870s, business communication was written and typed by secretaries and stenographers by the turn of the century (Russell 102). Additionally, by the 1870s job-related writing included “the myriad reports, memoranda, specifications, scholarly articles, and so on.” These technical and professional genres were largely a result of new modern professions (Russell 4). Thus, Americans needed writing skills that would meet the needs of employers and academic disciplines. In the 1880s the need for practical

literacies was so great that “high schools of commerce” were founded by cities “at the behest of industrial interests” to order to train office workers (Russell 126). As evinced in these examples, businesses drove the populace’s education. In essence, the masses’ education was driven by a business minded model of education.

As a result of more diverse educational opportunities, middle-class professions grew. And those within such professions demanded education that complemented and supported their professional aspirations. These demands were not for a classical education, however. As early as 1825 Robert Bridges Patton claimed the established classical mode of “education has not kept pace with the progress of society” (6). Classical education is, instead, “petrifying,” “plodding,” and “defective” (Patton 6). Furthermore, Patton maintains that a classical education teaches students to know more about the “mountains in the moon” than the “geography and production in our own nation” (6). Similarly, in 1867 Jacob Bigelow, M.D., the former president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, gave a speech to the Academy titled “Remarks on Classical and Utilitarian Studies.” In his speech Bigelow asserts, “classical literature, copious, majestic, expressive, and musical as it is, has failed to perform its desired mission of improving or ameliorating the condition of the human race” (14). In fact, the knowledge and intellect of all antiquity did not prevent the world returning to “barbarism” (6).

While proponents of a classical education believed classicism established taste and character, Bigelow did not believe “such training is superior to all others, or that it promotes the greatest economy of time of young persons destined to various pursuits of life” (15). Instead, education, “in a liberal sense” should bestow two things: Development of the mind and acquisition of “useful knowledge” (15). As he articulates, education

should give students literacies that can specifically benefit them in whatever life pursuits they choose. It is not enough to proffer an education that supposedly cultivates the mind; students must be practically prepared to succeed in life.

And in 1872 Dr. Van Der Wyde argued that that classicism does not benefit medical students. To support his stance, he notes that doctors of the Middle Ages generally relied upon classical studies knowledge to inform their medical practice instead of legitimate scientific inquiry. As a result, the doctors of the Middle Ages were “unfit” who were “a set of barbarians” (404). Van Der Wyde’s point is that nineteenth-century doctors do not benefit from the medical practices of the classical age. This is one example illustrating why nineteenth-century educators did not always support classicism.

Although classicism may be the means to culture and good breeding, Bigelow, Patton and Wyde’s statements demonstrate the opposing perspectives many American educators and cultural critics maintained regarding Americans’ educational needs.

The Emerging Middle-Class’ Social Mobility and Its Effects on Education

The growing middle class gained influence and power. As well, their class distinctively valued certain characteristics that strengthened the power of their status. The middle class, according to Berlin, particularly valued individualism, both social and economic, as its primary philosophy. Furthermore, this new class was

[A] body claiming and receiving economic privilege and political power on the basis of its certified, professional status offering upward mobility through certification in such professions as agriculture, engineering, journalism, social work, education.

(Rhetoric and Reality 21)

Americans recognized that professionalization and certification could offer them a place in the growing, powerful middle class. Although not all Americans had the opportunity to become members of the middle class, many Americans gained the education and literacies necessary to work in middle-class professions. This newfound agency gave middle-class citizens opportunities for social mobility and economic stability.

The new middle classes' claim to social mobility was influenced by their belief in their "right" to status and success. This belief was not uniquely associated with the middle class, however. The prosperity and growth of the nineteenth century bred the assumption "everyone [had] a 'right' to rise socially and economically" (Wright and Halloran 229). Professionalism was an invaluable tool for the middle class. It granted them the individuality they wanted and the socioeconomic advancement they sought (Wright and Halloran 229-230).

The Rise of the American Department of English

The rise of English studies and the creation of the Department of English were also a result of shifting literacies and economics. Technically, the first English professorship was in 1755 at the College of Pennsylvania, founded by a group led by Benjamin Franklin (Miller 57). However, the modern incarnation of the Department of English did not happen until the 1860s and 1870s. With the professional move away from orality toward literacy, Departments of Rhetoric and Oratory were not needed in the same capacity, making way for formalized Departments of English during these decades (Scholes 75). But the evolution from rhetoric and oratory to literary studies began even earlier. Yale's current Department of English was originally Rhetoric and Oratory (1817) but evolved to Rhetoric and English Language (1839) and then to Rhetoric and English

Literature (1863) (Scholes 3). It was not until 1876 that Yale offered its first course in literature, titled “English Literature and Disputation,” which was a required course in addition to required freshman courses in Greek, Latin, and math, the three subjects required for university entrance. When Yale moved to a modified electives-based curriculum in 1883, there were twelve courses in English offered (Scholes 10).

At Harvard, Francis Child, the fourth Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory, revised his 1851 senior course in rhetoric and criticism to “English Language and Literature” (Miller 112). Then during the 1852-1853 year, under the guise of Rhetoric and Oratory, he taught “The Gothic and Anglo-Saxon languages are taught (to those who desire to learn them), by Professor Child.” The inclusion of English literature and language courses continued in frequency, and in the early 1860s sophomores learned Anglo-Saxon and “readings in English literature” (McMurtry 75-76). In 1876 Child was instated as the first chair of English, a separate department from Rhetoric. As the first English chair, he instituted elective courses in English literature that included courses in Chaucer, Bacon, Milton, Dryden, and Shakespeare (McMurtry 75-78).

The newly developed Departments of Literature faculty felt the need to legitimize their places in the academic hierarchy. Ironically—given the divide between literature and rhetoric and composition today—legitimization was achieved through the teaching of compulsory composition courses. First-year composition was the “successor” to rhetoric and oratory (Ohmann 301). It was understood that students needed writing skills, and the teaching of writing was designated to Departments of English. Teaching composition, although not a favored task for the literature faculty, could make Departments of English invaluable to the university community. However, this

responsibility was not necessarily relished by English faculty, who took “pleasure and its internal scale of merit from the study of *literature*” (301, emphasis in the original).

Nevertheless, the teaching of writing was adopted because Departments of English were sure to expand with the university “as long as they staffed freshman English, almost in regardless of their success or failure in teaching the subject” (Ohmann 301). As the designated space for writing instruction, English was granted an indispensable position within the academic hierarchy. In this role, English literature faculty served as the academic gatekeepers—keeping out students who were unfit and/or unprepared for university life and rigor. Moreover, this position enabled English literature faculty to teach the literary literacies they privileged.

Acting as gatekeeper offered Departments of English legitimization and specialization. English professors capitalized upon the needs of the universities, namely to teach writing instruction, as a way to prove their use to the university. Proving their use to the university helped solidify their place in academia alongside the already specialized science departments. Berlin notes that the rise of Departments of English were “part of this quest for a certifiable, professional designation” even if their services were largely service-oriented, practical, and utilitarian (*Rhetoric and Reality* 21). Nevertheless, specialization allowed English faculty to teach the texts they loved—the canon.

As Departments of English specialized, the field faced a challenging task: English faculty had to figure out how to teach the literacies they valued while simultaneously addressing the needs of the students. This was (and is) a difficult balancing act. For one, English faculty had to fit within two distinct models of the American university. Jonathan

Culler notes there are “two general models [of the American university] at work” (33).

The first model established the university as “the transmitter of a cultural heritage, giv[ing] it the ideological function of reproducing culture and the social order. The second model makes the university a site for the production of knowledge” (33).

Understanding the underlying models of how different universities work can inform our understanding of the historical underpinnings of higher education. Departments of English had to carve out a place for themselves within these models. After all, the present is rooted in the broader cultural and historical context of the development of English studies within higher education.

The Debate: Which Literacies Should Nineteenth-Century Departments of English Teach?

As practical literacies grew in importance, the late nineteenth century became a breeding ground of conflict within Departments of English. English faculty debated and rearranged which literacies—writing instruction or literary analysis—were more important to the field. David Russell explains that there emerged a “contradictory instead of as complementary” relationship between the humanists’ great books tradition and the teaching of composition (177). He explains:

Writing instruction was viewed as an unwelcomed intrusion on [the humanists’] professional lives and a distraction from a much higher professional calling. Moreover, composition threatened the disciplinary integrity of the humanities insofar as it implied that English should teach the discourse of other disciplines in this ‘service course.’ (177)

For nineteenth-century American educators, writing instruction was secondary to literary analysis. Valuing the literacies of theory, analysis, and interpretation over writing

instruction set a precedent for which types of knowledge should be taught regardless of the student population demands or the increasingly powerful middle class.

Yet, despite the disdain for teaching writing instruction there was a need for it. Even before the incarnation of Departments of English, faculty in Departments of Rhetoric and Oratory were displeased with students' writing abilities. Berlin notes, not even at Columbia, Harvard, Michigan, or Stanford were students' rhetorical skills adequate without writing instruction (*Rhetoric and Reality* 25). That writing instruction was necessary at elite institutions illustrates the importance of writing instruction. All students need it, even if faculty do not want to teach it. Ohmann furthers that the nineteenth-century division between writing instructor and literary studies was related to literature faculty's "ideology of the field grew up around great books, not around freshman English, to the confusion of all but to the considerable benefit, psychic and financial, of professors" (Ohmann 301). The sheer necessity of writing instruction should be reason enough to persuade English studies faculty to equally value writing pedagogy alongside literary theory and creative writing. Furthermore, that nineteenth-century students needed writing instruction suggests that writing instruction will always be a lasting concern. Instead of devaluing the work writing instructors do, Departments of English need to encourage the scholarly work that focuses on writing practices and pedagogy. Students' writing "problems" will not disappear. Departments of English could relinquish their writing instruction responsibilities, but that choice would not make sense either.

This brief overview of higher education's conflicted relationship between practical literacies and classical literacies can inform how rhetoric and composition

engages in contemporary conversations about which literacies should be valued by Departments of English. Because literacy discourse is influenced by social, economic, and cultural needs, Departments of English cannot ignore how cultural, social, and economic changes affect which literacies are valued in academia.

Contemporary Conversations: What Literacies Should Departments of English Teach?

As I have briefly shown, the American and English rationale for defining class-appropriate literacies was grounded in a debate regarding class status and education. Literacy discourse was complex because it was tied to economics, industry, class, education, good character, breeding, and morality, among others. The American and English arguments over methods of education and curriculum were not just disagreements about professions or academic specializations. Instead, issues of social order undergirded literacy-based discourse. And many American and English thinkers used classicism to define the cultured and intelligent from those who were not. This correlation should not be surprising. Sociolinguistics professor James Paul Gee explains: “Literate people are, it is widely believed, more intelligent, more modern, more moral Literacy is what freed some of humanity from a ‘primitive’ state” (*Social Linguistics and Literacies* 47). While Gee’s statement specifically refers to general literacy issues, his point is appropriate within this context. Elite literacies, like classicism, were believed to demarcate the evolved (the upper classes) from the primitive (the masses).

The culture of classicism and *belles lettres* furthered the literacies of the higher, ruling classes in both America and England. However, economics were also part of the cultural and social influences that shaped literacy instruction. The struggle between the cultural influence and economic influence has, I would suggest, caused contention within

nineteenth-century Departments of English. These two factors also continue the discord within contemporary Departments of English. This discord is evident in contemporary discourse about the purposes of English studies. For example, technical communications professor Barry M. Maid explains, “It is quite difficult for me to see that a discipline that teaches students to engage in academic writing and workplace writing should be considered part of the humanities. To my thinking, this is clearly the definition of an applied discipline” (99). Evident in Barry’s statement is the lingering contention regarding which literacies should be promoted and valued within the Departments of English. The questions I see driving the divide are three-fold: (1) What types of literacies should people receive? (2) can practical literacies be just as useful as high culture literacies? and (3) are Department of English the appropriate place to teach practical literacies?

To answer these questions, English studies must first define “literature,” and, more broadly, “English.” I suggest that literature is defined that makes English studies academically useful and culturally important. However, dovetailing culture and academic needs is a complicated task because shifting economies, industries, and culture affect which literacies the populace need. And the academics may have a very different idea of what the people need. The people may want something completely different. Noted literary critic Terry Eagleton explains how complicated the definition “literature” has been over the years. According to Eagleton, literature is both fact and fiction; it incorporates devices like imagery, sound, syntax; it can be analyzed and misread; it includes “fine writing”; it allows people to “relate themselves to writing”; it is a “highly valued kind of writing”; and it is not objective (8-9). The complexity of the definition

causes disparate ways in which people define literature. Eagleton claims, “Anything can be literature, and anything which is regarded as unalterably and unquestionably literature—Shakespeare, for example—can cease to be literature” (9). Many English studies faculty will most certainly not agree with Eagleton. Yet, his statement should remind faculty that the definition of “literature” changes and evolves with the interests and needs of the people.

Nevertheless, the importance of English studies is predicated upon the fact—or perceived Truth—that without “literature” people would be lost. Literature, for many faculty, is much more than being defined as “anything” as Eagleton would suggest. Literature contains truth, wisdom, ideologies and worldviews necessary for cultural growth. And literature shapes culture or maintains the established social order in ways that many other texts cannot do. Nevertheless, Eagleton asserts the very act of defining literature is a “value judgment” that has “a close relation to social ideologies. They refer in the end not simply to private taste, but to the assumptions by which certain social groups exercise and maintain power over others” (14). While these judgments are necessary to defining the canon—and are as “apparently unshakeable” as the Empire State building, Eagleton contends—such decisions also necessarily precludes specific texts on criteria that, historically, a select group of people determine (14).

As higher education adopts a business model, universities are becoming places of commerce as administrators try to only “sell” (knowledge and skills) what their “customers” (the students) want. In many cases, students only want to purchase the items necessary for their professional advancement, and Departments of English are being

relied upon to teach reading and writing literacies that students deem useful.⁹ Scholes argues English studies faculty “need to offer a disciplined approach to textual consumption that applies the phases of reading, interpretation, and criticism to all kinds of texts in all sorts of media” (231). Even though many Departments of English hold onto what they know and love—literary analysis, creative writing, theory—faculty need to find a way to meet the needs of the student populations. I do not suggest that English studies “sell out” and only provide the literacies that students want. However, I want to draw attention to the point that for English studies to remain relevant, we need to find a way to “sell” what the students want to “buy.” Scholes furthers, “[W]e want to sell what most of our potential customers do not want to buy [the great books], and they want to buy what we cannot be bothered to sell [writing]” (233). As long as Department of English continue as the university-designated place where students learn how to read and write, English faculty will need to reconsider how it teaching writing instruction, a balance between what kinds of writing instruction students need and want.

Just as the nineteenth-century Americans and English demanded education that met their professional and economic needs, the American populace is returning to higher education for economic reasons. In 1996 English professor Joseph R. Urgo notes, “The frequency of observations in *Profession* and elsewhere about the paucity of opportunities in the academic job market . . . enforces the notion that education ought to be for something, whether that something is business leadership or a tenure-track job” (137).

While Urgo writes to an academic audience regarding the difficult academic job market,

⁹ For more information on the business model of English studies, see Joseph Urgo’s “An Obscure Destiny, This Business of Teaching English” (1996), and Ray Watkins’s “The Future of Departments of English: Cultural Capital and Professional Writing” in *Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers: Writing instruction in the Managed University* (2003).

his observation is correct: Higher education should meet the needs of the students, whether those needs are future academic jobs or specialized, industrial jobs.

Even though English studies teaches students invaluable skills that are transferrable to a variety of personal, professional, and civic occupations, many students are seeking degrees that seem more “useful”—engineering, business administration, construction management, nursing—to ensure economic advancement and/or stability. David Laurence, the editor of ADE Bulletin’s *The English Major* (Winter 2003), writes there is “concern about how undergraduates, and their parents, regard the practical value of study in English, especially the utility of that study as preparation for a graduate’s prospects for employment, earnings, and career” (4). These narratives continue as the market becomes tighter and the difficulty finding tenure-track professorship positions increase. As Urgo highlights and Laurence alludes to, education should have a practical end goal that will help graduates find jobs.

Fears of the Mechanized Age

The histories of English studies and higher education are both economically driven—whether catering to a specific consumer base or responding to changing literacies. These realities can either be debilitating, or they can encourage rhetoric and composition faculty to broach the topic of how English studies is going to redefine its cultural and academic influence. The resistance rhetoric and composition faculty experience regarding writing instruction and rhetorical theory is often rooted in the fear that English studies is becoming too consumer focused. The objection to teaching courses that espouse practical literacies, such as genre analysis and rhetorical awareness, harkens to Thomas Carlyle’s fear of a mechanized age. As one of the few Victorian cultural

sages, Carlyle warns against culture solely valuing the practical and useful. In “Signs of the Times” (1829) he writes about the dangers of becoming a “Mechanical Age,” where cultural and industrial changes are made based on the need for a “means to ends” (229).

This rhetoric resonates with those Victorian educators and literary elites who wanted to maintain and promote classical literacies. Carlyle explains, there is a

[C]ondition of the two great departments of knowledge—the outward, cultivated exclusively on mechanical principles; the inward, finally abandoned, because, cultivated on such principles, it is found to yield no result,—sufficiently indicates the intellectual bias of our time, its all-pervading disposition towards that line of inquiry. (238)

For Carlyle, the problem with a mechanical age of instruction is that the utilitarian model, or the means to the ends, has replaced morality and spirituality (239). Instead, Carlyle seems to suggest that economic and social advancement are not worthy goals of education because education should refine the moral and spiritual condition. Even though Carlyle’s concerns are valid, the masses needed the literacies and tools to survive in an increasingly sophisticated and educated culture. Carlyle’s rhetoric unconsciously articulates the contemporary struggle within the nation today regarding how to balance what the politicians, administrators, and citizens want from higher education. Victorian elites like Ruskin and Carlyle condemned consuming education for “applause” (Ruskin *Sesame and Lilies* 14) or living for pursuit of wealth over all else (Carlyle *Past and Present* 182). Nevertheless, many Victorians—like American college students today—were seeking literacies that would grant them economic advancement and/or stability.

As culture and society evolves and adapts with changing economies, technologies, and professions, the value of practical literacies increases. Gee notes, “[I]n our technologically driven society, literacy is changing dramatically. What appears to be crucial for success today now are abilities to engage in lifelong learning, innovation, technological and technical learning” (*Social Linguistics and Literacies* 38). Advocating for technological and collaborative literacies, Gee asserts that a narrow view of literacy may not be seen as useful for the majority of citizens. Therefore, a more inclusive view of literacies should be considered as American universities are becoming increasingly comprised of students seeking economic stability and social advancement. In most cases, students are not taking degrees from the humanities; they are instead earning a “middle-class education,” an education that is housed in the sciences, medical, or teaching fields. However, these moves often cause instructors and faculty to claim the department or university is “becoming like a tech school.”

How English Studies Is Responding to an Increasing Mechanized Age

Despite academics’ fears of becoming consumer-driven, many core writing programs, like the Department of English Language and Literature’s Core Writing Program at the University of New Mexico, are moving toward curricular and pedagogical practices that give students practical and useful literacies to help them succeed across disciplines and communities. Some programs, like the University of New Mexico, offer English bachelor degrees concentrations in Liberal Arts, Pre-Graduate work, Professional Writing, Pre-Law, Creative Writing, and English-Philosophy. University of Colorado—Denver offers an English Writing Major as well as an English major with an emphasis in film studies. And Ferris State University offers a degree in English education. Even if

these changes are made to maintain relevance and ensure revenue, these diverse subject areas under the umbrella of “English” s how some departments are adjusting to the professionalization—beyond literary analysis—students seek. Departments offering a wider variety of concentrations and degree choices implicitly acknowledge that many students interested in “English” are not necessarily going to become teachers or creative writers. Carlyle and others might assert these changes are embracing the “mechanical principles,” and this may be so; nevertheless, “practical” degree programs and courses meet the academic and professional interests of many students.

In addition to Departments of English adopting degree programs that prepare students for a wide range of professions, composition and rhetoric programs are adopting rhetorically-focused, genre-based curriculum to help prepare students for the diverse texts, rhetorical situations, and audiences they will engage with academically, professionally, and civically. At the University of New Mexico, the Core Writing program’s first-year writing courses are genre-based. Students learn to write reviews, letters to the editor, instruction manuals, and analyses among other genres, to learn how to navigate different rhetorical situations. Students must use reason to decide the best rhetorical moves to make depending on the writing situation; they must employ their senses, faculties, and intellect to appropriately weave genre conventions, audience expectations, and content together.

While some English faculty may resent what they perceive as “service courses,” courses that prepare students for majors outside of English studies, the Core Writing program provides a necessary service. Teaching students to navigate complex and different rhetorical situations, to analyze audience expectations, and to respond

accordingly requires great skill. In effect, these courses prepare students to navigate diverse discourse communities, a necessary skill for students' academic success.

Departments of English can embrace this role, that is, to prepare students to fluidly move between communities, and teach students to “learn to speak our [academics'] language, to speak as we do, to try on the peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that the discourse of our community” (Bartholomae 273).

In the face of a business model of education, where Departments of English are called to legitimize their place in academia, rhetoric and composition faculty can better communicate rhetorical theory to literature and creative writing faculty by (1) illustrating how nineteenth-century economics molded the literacies of the people, and (2) by emphasizing that the nineteenth-century evolution of Departments of English was a result of students' social and professional needs. Rhetoric and composition's move to return to rhetoric within the composition classroom is the field's way, I would suggest, to address the professional, economic, and social needs of the student population.

Looking Forward: Using Victorian Literature as Models

To the importance of valuing practical and student-centered literacies, the rest of this dissertation project closely examines *Bleak House*, *Dracula*, and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* through sociocultural, sociolinguistic, and critical literacy lenses to demonstrate the difficulty literacy characters, like many first-year student populations, experience when they try to adapt to different discourse communities. These novels are models offering relevant, interesting insight that can inform contemporary critical literacy discourse, inter-department conversations, and classroom *praxis*.

Rhetoric and composition faculty can use these models to engage in discourse with literature and creative writing faculty regarding the timelessness and timeliness of rhetorical awareness. Because Departments of English remain the space to teach critical thinking, reading, and writing skills, the field can become indispensable to the academic community by preparing first-year students to enter the academic community. Using *Jo*, *Dracula*, and *Alice* as examples of discourse community outsiders, rhetoric and composition faculty and impress upon their colleagues the importance of adopting a rhetorically-focused curriculum as a method for preparing students for discourse community analysis and awareness.

I rely upon literature to tell the stories of community outsiders because I hope to encourage rhetoric and composition faculty to see anew how to productively use literature to help unpack literacy discourse. While English studies needs to do a better job communicating across subfield divisions, rhetoric and composition faculty can use literature to frame topics in a new way that may be more accessible to literature and creative writing faculty. If non-rhetoric and composition faculty do not understand the concerns of the field, it is necessary to find a new productive means for communication. At stake is the future of English studies for students and faculty alike.

Furthermore, I hope to show in this dissertation that literature can be used to help first-year composition students understand composition's pedagogical best practices. As the following chapters will show, first-year students need transactional, rhetorical tools that will help them successfully integrate into academia, as well as the diverse professional and civic communities around them. As new members of the academic discourse community, they may have difficulties conceptualizing and navigating the

discourse community explicit and implicit expectations and genres that they will encounter. Therefore, literature can be one method to helping new university students transition from outsider to insider.

Literary characters, like Jo, Dracula, and Alice, are often relatable case studies as they experience similar emotions, events, and challenges that mirror reality. As with Jo, Dracula, and Alice, they are characters who maintain varying degrees of community membership in their respective novels. Jo, a homeless street sweeper, remains on the periphery of the societal discourse community because he is illiterate. Without basic literacy skills, or without the skills valued by the dominant discourse community, he is perceived as useless. Dracula, on the other hand, has taught himself the dominant literacies of the English by collecting and reading English texts. In order to fulfill his plans for global domination, Dracula must learn to completely adopt the literacies of the English people, particularly Londoners. Finally, Alice blunders through the Looking-Glass world because she is unable to transition and adapt her own literacies to the dominant literacies in the Looking-Glass world. Within my dissertation, these three characters are used to model the difficulties and successes people, like first-year students, face when confronted with unfamiliar community expectations.

In addition to building students' understanding of discourse community membership, rhetoric and composition faculty can work to reassert English studies' relevance by encouraging greater collaboration between the subfields. As higher education becomes more economically driven, and universities adopt the business model of education, English studies needs to address the changing focus of higher education. Higher education is moving away from the humanities and towards STEM disciplines,

and this shift requires English studies to seriously consider how it will meet the academic and professional needs of an economically-driven, consumer culture.

3

‘I don’t know nothink’: Valuing the Knowledge and Literacies of Peripheral, First-Year Student Populations

Published in twenty monthly installments between March 1852 and September 1853, Charles Dickens’ *Bleak House* critiques the Court of Chancery, England and Wales’ court of equity. The primary plot in *Bleak House* follows wards of the state and distant cousins Ada Clare and Richard Carstone as they become embroiled in the Jarndyce and Jarndyce case, a case contested for over a century. Having been named beneficiaries in a contested Jarndyce will, Ada and Richard are swept up in the excitement of litigation and possible monetary award. However, as Dickens shows readers, the Court of Chancery’s is not, despite its name, a court of equity: The case continues to drag on, barristers continue to charge for their unproductive services, and the beneficiaries grow old and die before resolution is decided.

As with all Dickens novels, *Bleak House*’s primary plot and subplots are carefully interwoven, demonstrating the complicated inter-relatedness between people, places, government, and society. The timelessness of Dickens’ novels is a result of masterfully writing that s how every human action creates a reaction: There is within all his novels a rippling effect that always affects people outside of the immediate incident, context, or relationship. In a *Bleak House* subplot, Dickens introduces readers to the street sweeper boy Jo, a homeless child of about ten or twelve who lives on the social periphery. While Jo is not a primary character within the novel, his story is worth noting. Because of Jo’s illiteracy, that is, his inability to read or write, he is treated as socially expendable, very much like a “ghost” who sees the community around him but is ignored.

Jo's character provides a powerful and moving example of how a discourse community¹⁰ outsider feels when lacking the resources and literacies to transition from outside to insider. As an illiterate boy whose common refrain is that he "don't know nothink," he remains on the social periphery because he cannot engage with or respond to social expectations. As a result of his outsider, urchin status, he is forced from one corner to the next, sweeping wherever he can to earn a few coins. Moving beyond a thematic reading of the novel, Jo can be used as a case study to examine the link between literacy and discourse community membership. An element to evaluating the integrated relationship between Jo's literacies and social status is to examine the power structures that influence which literacies are valued, promoted, and sponsored. This reading of *Bleak House* can be especially useful for rhetoric and composition faculty who wish to use interdisciplinary methods for articulating critical literary pedagogy or discourse community membership.

In order to clarify my reading of *Bleak House*, and to show how Jo can serve as a example of discourse community outsidersness, my chapter has a two fold purpose: (1) I will first show how Jo's illiteracy causes his peripheral status in ways similar to first-year students who are on the periphery, and (2) I will offer one recommendation to mitigate the social gap between outsider and insider. Rhetoric and composition faculty can use Jo to explain the importance of discourse community membership, as well as the difficulties people face on the outside of the community. As well, rhetoric and composition faculty can use Jo as an example that supports critical literacy scholarship.

¹⁰ I rely upon Patricia Bizzell's definition of discourse community as a "group of people who share certain language-using practices...although bound perhaps by other ties as well, geographical, socioeconomic, ethnic, professional, and so on" (222).

Moving beyond the theoretical and toward *praxis*, I apply Jo's experiences to those of peripheral, underrepresented student populations. I draw comparisons between Jo's need for community insidership and the needs of peripheral student populations who need the tools to learn how to become academic insiders. One way to usher university students into the academy, and to help them transition from outsider to insider, is to value their knowledge—to show them that they know “*some*think.” Jo, like many first-year students, believes he knows “*no*think” because the society around him continually works to undermine and dismiss his contributions. I frame the second half of the chapter through Luis C. Moll et al.'s Funds of Knowledge scholarship. Funds of Knowledge has been historically defined as the home community-specific knowledges valued within each home community. I adopt the Funds of Knowledge framework to the importance of valuing the literacies brought from students' home communities to the new communities they enter. This framework can be particularly useful for instructors who teach students who feel similarly to Jo, as an invisible outsider. In order to encourage first-year students' community membership, composition instructors must find a way to value the contributions, voices, and identities of their students. Without this support from their instructors, peripheral students may not believe they are welcomed, or useful, or contributing members on campus. Furthermore, rhetoric and composition faculty who wish to garner departmental support for initiatives, programs, and events that value student voices might find Jo's story more useful or accessible to share with colleagues.

Within the second part of this chapter, I will unpack how rhetoric and composition faculty can encourage the voices, creativity, and literacies of underrepresented and underprepared first-year students. One way to encourage the voices

of the peripheral student population is through events like the Celebration of Student Writing (CSW). Public events like the CSW publicly value what they add to the campus community.

Composition scholars like Patricia Bizzell, Eli Goldblatt, Mike Rose, and Victor Villanueva have written about how student success, particularly with underprepared or underrepresented student populations, is dependent upon particular community membership, specifically the academic discourse community.¹¹ Successful insider integration into discourse communities, whether they are social, professional, or civic, require students to adapt their literacies to those literacies valued within the communities they want to join. There are explicit and implicit rules that define the insiders from the outsiders, and community outsiders often need explicit guidance if they want to transition from outsiders to insiders. I intend to extend the established discourse community discourse by Bizzell et al. beyond the realm of academic and professional communities to also include the dominant societal discourse community. Society is a discourse community defined by commonly understood genre conventions, such as acceptable interactions within a public place. Before citizens can feel comfortable entering specialized discourse communities like academia, they must know how to interact within the dominant societal discourse community. As I will show, Jo's inability to engage with the Victorian's discourse community expectations, such as basic reading and writing skills, causes him to remain on the social periphery.

¹¹ I refer to "underprepared" and "underrepresented" student populations as "peripheral student populations," or a variation of that phrase, in this chapter. I do not intend to overly generalize the backgrounds and experiences of peripheral students; they may include students who identify as first generation, working class, minority, low performing, learning disabled, or include other factors that affect their academic preparedness.

Feeling like a member of a particular community is a necessary part of the integration process. Australian researcher Julie Ballantyne completed a 2009 study examining the “first-year experience” of first-year students, ages from 19-50 years old, at the University of Queensland, St. Lucia. Most of these students were first-generation, working-class university students. Ballantyne writes, “[S]tudents also emphasised the importance of feeling that they ‘owned’ the campus/university, and that this was central to their decision to remain at the university Students spoke of a need to feel valued as part of the university as an institution” (48). People on the periphery must be treated and perceived as valuable, contributing members of society before they can envision themselves as successful members of more specialized communities.

Peripheral community members are often deemed peripheral because they do not know, or cannot respond to, social expectations. In Jo’s case as a homeless street sweeper, he never had access to common knowledge deemed valuable by the Victorian society around him. Pulled in from the street to stand witness at a Nemo’s inquest, readers are introduced to Jo in chapter six. Because Jo was often seen talking with Nemo, the judge asks the beadle, a minor parish official used for civil service, to find Jo. The beadle speaks for Jo, telling the judge,

Name, Jo. Nothing else that he knows on. Don't know that everybody has two names. Never heard of sich a think. Don't know that Jo is short for a longer name. Thinks it long enough for *him*. *He* don't find no fault with it. Spell it? No. *He* can't spell it. No father, no mother, no friends. Never been to school. What's home? (179, italics in the original)

Unable to offer specifics about his background, his whereabouts, the dead man in question, or a full name, Jo's testimony is dismissed. The coroner calls such evidence a "terrible depravity" that cannot be allowed into a court of justice. As a result, Jo is "put aside; to the great edification of the audience" (180). Unable to contribute in this societal event, Jo is rendered useless to the court, as well as to the audience. Furthermore, as Dickens notes, casting Jo aside is an action that educates the audience, publicly demonstrating that illiterate, homeless citizens are useless to the government and, more broadly, society. Because Jo cannot meaningfully contribute according to the expectations of the social collective (the beadle, the coroner, the audience), he is cast "aside." This act of putting Jo aside becomes the first example of Jo's peripheral place in Victorian society. As well, it reinforces the cultural norm that the pauper classes are worthless.

After the inquest, Jo is spoken to by Mr. Tulkinghorn, a solicitor, and the coroner. Jo shares that the dead man, Nemo, would often talk with him about their similar circumstances, namely their shared poverty and friendlessness. "'He was wery good to me,' says the boy, wiping his eyes with his wretched sleeve. 'Wen I see him a-layin' so stritched out just now, I wished he could have heerd me tell him so. He wos wery good to me, he wos!'" (181). As Jo's statement shows, he did *know* something about the dead man. What he knew about Nemo—his kindhearted, sensitive nature—was irrelevant to those presiding over the inquest because Jo was considered not credible. Unable to meet the societal expectations of a credible witness, Jo's contributions to the inquest were not formally heard.

Failing to meet the expectations of basic Victorian literary skills, namely reading and writing, casts Jo to the periphery. In addition, his inability to fit the “norm”—knowing his parents, having a first and last name, and living at his own residence—contributes to his outsidership. He is not simply illiterate because he can neither read nor write. He is illiterate because he cannot productively engage and interact with society around him. F. Niyi Akinnaso defines literacy as “more than the act of reading and writing. In this view, literacy is given an extended definition to include ways of perceiving, thinking, speaking, evaluating, and interacting that characterize a group of individuals *and set them apart from others*” (139, emphasis mine). The courtroom exchange, as a microcosm for society-at-large, is a reenactment of Jo’s experience with the dominant discourse community.

Jo is aware of his outsider status in the dominant discourse community; as a result of this knowledge he believes he cannot meaningfully contribute to the world around him. However, he does have knowledge that is specifically related to his own, small, street sweeping world. Dickens writes that Jo “sums up his mental condition when asked a question by replying that he ‘don't know nothink.’ He knows that it's hard to keep the mud off the crossing in dirty weather, and harder still to live by doing it. Nobody taught him even that much; he found it out” (266). This passage highlights Jo’s knowledge—he is a self-taught street sweeper—who is able to problem solve to discover the best way to keep the mud off the crossing. Even if Jo does not know the literacies of the dominant community, he is knowledgeable. In fact, his knowledge is comprised of community-specific literacies that are useful to him. In effect, Dickens’ narrator affirms that Jo, like the Victorian citizens who walk his streets, has community-specific knowledge.

Ethnographers Norma Gonzáles, Luis Moll, and Cathy Amanti write, “People are competent, they have knowledge, and their life experiences have given them that knowledge” (“Preface” ix-x). Jo may not know how to interact with the literate society who cross his streets, but he knows how to negotiate and navigate his own small world.

Despite Jo’s knowledge about street sweeping and street life, he is cognizant that those literacies are not valued; instead, he “don’t know nothink.” Dickens s the gap between Jo’s literacies and the socially acceptable literacies by writing into the novel that Jo “don’t know nothink.” This phrase or a variation thereof is said thirty times throughout the novel. In fact, every time Jo is given dialogue in the novel, his speech is peppered with the fact that he knows “nothink.” His continued belief that he knows nothing—or that he claims to know nothing when in the presence of the socially superior people around him—reinforces the relationship between his outsider status and his knowledge. Jo is unable to believe that he does know *something*, and his inability to recognize his own useful literacies perpetuates the strict class hierarchy within Victorian society. Moreover, such linguistic repetition draws readers’ attention to the literacy hierarchy inherent within discourse communities. As an outspoken social critic, Dickens s that community outsiders will always feel their outsider status if they are not taught that their literacies are valuable.¹²

Never one to ignore an issue of social justice, Dickens diverts from *Bleak House*’s main plot to speak directly to the readers regarding Jo’s status in society. Almost a call to

¹² For a sample of Charles Dickens’ social and cultural critique see “The Battle of Life” in *The London Journal* (Jan. 9, 1847), “The Case of the Reformers in the Literary Fund” in *The Athenaeum* (Mar. 6, 1858), “New Uncommercial Samples” in *All The Year Round* (Dec. 5, 1868-Jan. 16, 1869), “May Day” in *The Gentleman’s Magazine* (May 1869), and “The Public’s Point of View” in *The Theatre* (Nov. 1894).

public action, Dickens uses the narrator to highlight how painful it is to remain on the periphery. The narrator remarks:

It must be a strange state to be like Jo! To shuffle through the streets, unfamiliar with the shapes, and in utter darkness as to the meaning, of those mysterious symbols, so abundant over the shops, and at the corners of streets, and on the doors, and in the windows! To see people read, and to see people write, and to see the postmen deliver letters, and not to have the least idea of all that language—to be, to every scrap of it, stone blind and dumb! (267)

Readers are called to sympathize with Jo and his peripheral status. But, it is an understatement to define Jo's illiteracy as "strange." It must be alienating, confusing, frustrating, and saddening to Jo. He is surrounded by a society with whom he cannot engage because of his inability to contribute. In every facet of daily life, Jo remains an outsider. He could not even answer a question about street names—because he would not know those names. Truly removed from the society and culture around him, Jo is expendable. Observing from the outside, Jo's "individual consciousness" is affected by his illiteracy. Akinnaso writes, individual consciousness "is not simply a mental state but a dynamic process involving both the internalization and representation of social reality" (138). The signs, symbols, actions, and people that Jo cannot engage with mitigate his social reality; he is a ghost, watching the world move around him while he remains unseen.

In Dickens' treatment of Jo, he draws attention to the relationship between illiteracy, reasoning, and cognition, showing that illiteracy is not synonymous with the inability to think. The narrator explains:

It must be very puzzling to see the good company going to the churches on Sundays, with their books in their hands, and to think (for perhaps *Jo does* think at odd times) what does it all mean, and if it means anything to anybody, how comes it that it means nothing to me? To be hustled, and jostled, and moved on; and really to feel that it would appear to be perfectly true that I have no business here, or there, or anywhere; and yet to be perplexed by the consideration that I *am* here somehow, too, and everybody overlooked me until I became the creature that I am! (267, italics in the original)

In this passage, Dickens' narrator explicitly asks readers to commiserate with Jo's peripheral status. His inability to interact with society—namely to understand the social genres that members of the dominant discourse community engage with, like attending church—is alienating. The narrator's aside regarding Jo's ability to think, namely to state that “perhaps *Jo does* think” is a rhetorical move meant to challenge Victorian readers' assumptions regarding literacy. Even though the narrator is unsure of Jo's reflection of his social standing and alienation, the narrator images the questions Jo might ask himself. In fact, the narrator says what Jo himself cannot say. Instead of knowing “nothink” Jo knows several things: He knows that he is living in a society that ignores him. He knows that his life could have been different. He knows that he is expendable.

Just because Jo cannot engage with the world around him does not mean he is without reasoning or feeling. The existential questions the narrator attributes to Jo are an articulation regarding the interwoven relationship between identity and society. Gonzáles et al. write, “[H]uman beings and their social worlds are inseparable. They are embedded in each other; thus, human thinking is irreducible to individual properties or traits” (261). Although Jo is socially separated from his world, he is still very much connected to it. As the narrator articulates, Jo observes the literate world around him, the Victorians who attend church, who can read shop signs, who can engage in financial transactions. As Gonzáles et al. note, humans, including pauper Jo, are inseparable from their worlds. This interconnectedness affects how people perceive their worth and value within their communities, as well as transmits hegemonic principles from the dominant community members. In the tightly controlled Victorian class system, Jo’s social status will always be mitigated by the dominant discourse.

Dickens’ inclusion of Jo within *Bleak House* is an indirect call to action. Dickens does not explicitly state that Jo must be heard and valued, but he shows how the established hegemony and class system affect Jo’s ability to engage with the world around him. As a street urchin, Jo has no rights or hopes. And he will remain on the periphery unless he is pitied by the people around him or cared for by London’s benevolent societies. While there are characters within the novel who do pity Jo and offer him a place to sleep, or give him pennies, or take care of him when he is ill, these small kindnesses are not enough to help Jo transition from outsider to insider. Jo’s societal membership depends upon his ability to successfully engage with and respond to the discourses, literacies, and genres common within the Victorian world. To be accepted by

the Victorians, Jo must create a legitimate identity and learn basic literacy skills, or he will continue to be perceived as knowing “nothink.”

Praxis: Transitioning Peripheral First-Year Students from Outsider to Insider through Cultural Literacy

Despite Dickens’ social critique of how the poor were treated by Victorian society, he does not demonstrate that Jo has a useful or practical skill to offer the dominant community. In a Victorian world where usefulness and value were defined by literacies that benefitted the Empire, Jo’s ability to sweep streets remains unimportant. In fact, Dickens’ narrative treats Jo as a person to be pitied, not as a boy desperately needing the dominant discourse community literacies. For contemporary readers, this oversight can serve as a call to action. The disenfranchised citizens, like Jo, need to gain the tools and skills necessary for dominant community membership. Because particular populations lack the resources to learn the dominant literacies, or because the culturally and socially valued literacies change, disenfranchised populations need sponsorship that will help them adapt.

No character accepts the role of literacy sponsor in *Bleak House*. This missing literacy sponsor causes Jo to remain on the periphery. However, Jo’s story can serve as a call to action for rhetoric and composition faculty. In conversations with literature and creative writing colleagues, rhetoric and composition faculty can reference Jo’s experiences as a means to articulating critical literacy discourse and issues of community membership. Furthermore, rhetoric and composition faculty can use Jo’s story to encourage their English colleagues to seriously consider literacy sponsorship across the department.

Literacy sponsors are, according to Deborah Brandt, those “agents” who are “local or distant, abstract or concrete, who enable, support, teach, model, recruit, regulated, suppress, or withhold literacy and gain advantage by it in some way” (“Reading, Writing, and Wealth” 2). Literacy sponsors, which can include people or persons or entities and organizations, have the power to help the illiterate become literate, or to prevent the illiterate from learning the literacies necessary to become a contributing member of society. Jo is the apt example for what happens when available literacy sponsors. And within the novel’s context, benevolent societies, persons, or the government, ignore his real needs: Learning the literacies of the dominant community. Although he is often given money by the novel’s characters, Dickens shows that financial handouts do not solve the crux of the problem. Until Jo and all paupers like him are perceived as valuable beyond the Empire’s economic definition of usefulness, this social class will remain disenfranchised.

Similarly to Jo’s peripheral status, there are first-year students who need guidance adopting the literacies of the dominant discourse community, namely the academic community. These literacies can range from reading and writing skills to professionalization to financial literacy. In many cases the peripheral students are those who do not know how to successfully engage with the academic discourse community. These students often remain on the outside because they do not know how to read textbooks, email professors, research within their discipline, or how to seek the help needed. As d in Jo’s experiences, those on the periphery, without a sponsor to provide literacy skills and resources, will continue to remain on the outside.

Composition scholars and teachers like Victor Villanueva, Mike Rose, and Eli Goldblatt have thoroughly and completely addressed the subject of peripheral student populations. I do not intend to rearticulate what has already been said in this section, except that for peripheral student populations' academic and economic success, they must learn to become insiders of the dominant communities that gate keep the social, economic, and civic success. Victor Villanueva defines this capability as "cultural literacy." He writes, "[T]here *is* something to cultural literacy. One has to know how to be heard if one is to be heard" (95, italics in the original). To be heard, however, requires that people know the implicit and explicit rules governing the discourse communities they engage with on a daily basis. Cultural literacy, therefore, is dependent upon discourse community knowledge because culture is comprised of all types of communities. González, Moll, and Amanti write, "[L]earning does not take place just 'between the ears,' but is eminently a social process. Students' learning is bound within larger contextual, historical, political, and ideological frameworks that affect students [*sic*] lives" ("Preface" ix). Within academia, to narrow the scope, students must learn to be academically literate. The peripheral student population attending the university will need more particular and explicit guidance navigating a place of diverse academic literacies.

Valuing Peripheral Students' Funds of Knowledge to Begin the Process of Moving From Outsider to Insider

Before students on the periphery can learn to adapt and adopt the literacies of the academic community, I suggest that they must first know they are already valuable members of society. Peripheral students bring to campus with them knowledge about their home discourse communities and literacies; this knowledge is what Luis Moll

defines as “funds of knowledge”: The cultural, social, and subject knowledge people learn within their home communities (232). Consequently, students bring to the academic community a rich fund of knowledge that should be celebrated and appreciated by rhetoric and composition faculty. As a nation “obsessed with evaluating our children,” Mike Rose writes, “those most harshly affected [by the assessment], least successful in the competition, possess some of our greatest unperceived riches” (xi). Educator Brian L. Wright explains, “[T]he everyday funds of knowledge and meaning-making practices, which students from historically non-dominant communities bring to their school learning, are often missed or dismissed as being interpreted as having no real intellectual value in the classroom” (5). Rhetoric and composition faculty, as well as their English studies colleagues, can use the disciplinary strengths (reading, writing, creating) as methods for uncovering the riches peripheral students bring with them into the classroom and campus.

The phrase Funds of Knowledge (FoK) is attributed to Anthropologist Eric R. Wolf. In Wolf’s 1966 book *Peasants*, he highlights the various funds—ceremonial fund and funds of rent, for example—peasants use to engage in social exchange. While Wolf does not explicitly define “funds of knowledge,” the concept derives from his explanation that peasants “exchange their own labor and its products for the culturally defined equivalent goods and services of others” (3). In this sense, peasants’ skills and cultural practices are literacies that can be exchanged for other necessary goods and services. As Linda Hogg explains, Wolf’s term “define[s] resources and knowledge that households manipulate to make ends meet in the household economy. These include caloric funds, funds for rent, replacement funds, ceremonial funds, and social funds” (667). More

recently, however, FoK has been appropriated and expanded to “refers both to the content and to the social relationships that facilitate the exchange” (Moll 232). As such, FoK directly inform literacies as the knowledge gleaned after successful transactions—from specific types of communication used to practical knowledge shared—foster and grow a multitude of literacies. I also expand the FoK concept by linking it to literacy knowledge. Literacies, the skills to know and be in the world, are directly affected by the FoK we attain. Like literacies, FoK include any knowledge gleaned from the household or community such as trade and vocational training, hunting skills, farming and animal husbandry, and language practices.

In the 1980s and 1990s researchers studying FoK in communities and social settings, most notably anthropologist Carlos G. Vélez-Ibáñez and ethnographer Luis C. Moll, particularly examined the ways Hispanic and Mexican households in the United States and Mexico created an exchange of knowledge and resources. Vélez-Ibáñez has studied border families to examine how “Mexican populations in Mexico and the United States respond dynamically and create mediating networks of exchange between themselves and wider societal and environmental forces” (28). Vélez-Ibáñez’s research was directly related to contextualizing and complicating researchers and scholars’ understanding of Hispanic and Mexican family networks to “challenge the often repeated ethnocentric clichés describing Mexican populations on both sides of the border as apolitical, non-historical, maladaptive, and passive” (28). The FoK evident in “clustered households”—families living within a one mile radius with an average of 3.5 homes per cluster—ranged from mathematics and science to “making things” like cooking and building to repair of home appliances and vehicles (38). As Vélez-Ibáñez notes, “When

such skills and funds are not readily available, then relations are mobilized with other households and individuals in which a need may be fulfilled (38).

Similarly, Moll, with Kathy Amanti, Deborah Neff, and Norma Gonzáles, has researched the literacies of working-class Latino households in Tucson, Arizona for ten years. This population is of importance to Moll because of Latinos' "persistently high rate of educational failure" (211). In an effort to understand the relationship between literacy, Latino students, and classroom practices, Moll et al. have investigated the FoK within Hispanic households to emphasize "how households, in contrast to many classrooms, never function alone or in isolation; they are also way connected to other households and institutions through diverse social networks" (216). Important to Moll's research in classroom literacy practices is how schooling functions as a "sociocultural process" that "mediates students' academic experiences and outcomes" (213). Like Vélez-Ibáñez, Moll et al. discovered that FoK in Tucson households directly related to the socioeconomics of the study participants. As members of the working classes living in rural areas, their FoK was informed by the lived lives of the people in their rural communities. Specific FoK included working-class skills, like construction, and mechanics, or survival skills like homeopathic medicine, hunting, cooking, farming, and husbandry (219-220). Vélez-Ibáñez and Moll's scholarship highlight how community relationships are essential to developing and sustaining FoK. For these working-class Latinos, FoK was essential to their economic survival.

Literacies in these working-class communities are directly related to the types of FoK needed for the community to sustain itself, and in most cases the FoK literacies are not academic. Moll offers the example of Mr. Zavala, a washing machine and refrigerator

repairman who uses books and reference manuals in his repair business. Outside of work he reads *Newsweek*, *National Geographic*, and history books. The literacies Mr. Zavala employs are directly related to his job and home life. As well, these literacies—from fixing washing machines and refrigerators to his interest in history—directly inform his FoK. More formal, academic literacies, on the other hand, are more difficult to acquire. Given that formal education does not necessarily guarantee a job but requires a significant time and financial commitment, the literacies learned in an institutional environment are less common (223). However, if literacies must be learned or acquired, there is an “activity of sharing” that includes a “didactic component” where “[p]eople must teach and learn new knowledge and skills. These exchange activities are employed by people to deal with reality” (224). Thus, as Moll adds, “These households are not socially or intellectually barren; they contain knowledge, people use reading and writing, they mobilize social relationships, and they teach and they learn. These are systematic strategies that enhance survival within harsh social conditions” (225). Moll et al.’s research elucidates the complex web of knowledge shared among Latino communities that aids their survival. As demonstrated, there is a direct relationship between FoK, literacies, and socioeconomics that affect what types of knowledge these Arizonians learn.

Using the Celebration of Student Writing to Celebrate Students’ Funds of Knowledge

In order to help Hispanic working-class students academically succeed, Moll advocates for welcoming students’ FoK into the classroom. This can be achieved a number of ways: By creating lesson plans that draw from students’ FoK, asking parents to participate in classroom discussions, or asking students to talk about their own home

literacies, among others. Demonstrated in Moll's point is that students need to know that their experiences, knowledge, and literacies are useful within academia. If students believe their home literacies are undervalued on the university campus, they may have a greater difficulty feeling a part of the community. As well, peripheral students may be more hesitant to adopt the literacies of academia if they believe their home FoK are devalued. Educator Dana L. Mitra confirms that "[r]esearch in developmental psychology finds agency, belonging and competence to be necessary factors for adolescents to remain motivated in school and to achieve academic success" (655). Even though I agree entirely with Moll's recommendations to use the classroom as a site that values students FoK, I propose another way to help peripheral students succeed. Organizing events like the Celebration of Student Writing is a more efficient, quicker method to valuing students' FoK, to celebrating their literacies, and to affirming their contributions.

To demonstrate my support for events like the CSW, I use interview and survey data collected in a 2011 mixed-method study by my colleague Erin Penner Gallegos and myself. Undergirding my research is a collective community of scholars, Linda Adler-Kassner being the most noted, who believe the CSW is an excellent opportunity to publicly celebrate the literacies and FoK students bring with them to the classroom. Additionally, the CSW draws positive attention to peripheral students' intellectual, creative, and unique contributions. Celebrating the knowledge and literacies they bring with them to the academic community affirms their community membership and reaffirms that they are contributing members of society. The CSW, an event where students showcase art installations based upon the work they are doing in their writing courses, visibly celebrates students' agency. While the CSW can showcase the work of

all writing-intensive courses, I advocate for the CSW as a site that showcases the work of first-year students. As new students to campus, first-year students are peripheral: The environment is new, the course material is new, the policies are new, and the academic conventions are new. In order to aid their transition from outsider to insider, the CSW can be a site that builds community between event participants as well as builds community between participants and visitors.

The Celebration of Student Writing (CSW) was pioneered by Linda Adler-Kassner and her colleagues at Eastern Michigan University (EMU) in the winter of 2001. Organized as a public space for first-year students enrolled in the second semester, first-year composition course intending to teach students argument and analysis skills, the CSW was an end-of-semester presentation of students' research projects. In order to move beyond the typical poster presentation, the CSW is an event with art installations representing student research. Participation in the CSW is optional, and every student is required to participate if his or her section participates (Adler-Kassner 153-153). For example, students researching homelessness in Ypsilanti, where EMU is located, brought a tent, sleeping bags, and other relevant items that visually represented Ypsilanti homelessness.

Proponents of the CSW and similar events believe the CSW creates a public space to value students' voices, creativity, literacies, and agency. Adler-Kassner explains that EMU's First Year Writing Program members "quickly realized that this also would be a powerful way to showcase what students *could* do, and to create an environment where the only acceptable response to the displays would be 'Wow! This is fantastic!'" (154). Similarly, in a webpage for 2009 CSW student participants at Texas A&M University—

Commerce, a branch campus of Texas A&M, the website defines the purpose of the CSW this way: “This is your chance to show off all you have learned throughout the course of the term. You are a developing expert in the research site you investigated, so it only makes sense that you should have the chance to share your work with audiences that extend beyond your classmates and instructor” (“The Celebration of Student Writing” n. pag.). Since the CSW at EMU, CSWs and events similar have been adopted across the nation, including Celebrations of Student Writing at Bellevue University, Appalachian State University, the University of New Mexico, Community College of Allegheny County, Case Western Reserve University, and other locations. The growth of the CSW demonstrates that stakeholders, instructors, and writing program administrators believe the event provides a welcoming space that (1) shows students as contributing members of the academic community, and (2) builds community within the classroom and across campus.

The History of the Celebration of Student Writing at the University of New Mexico

I met Adler-Kassner in the spring of 2009, as a second year doctoral student at the University of New Mexico (UNM) when she came to speak to a graduate course about writing program administration. I was first introduced to the CSW during this meeting and immediately decided that UNM needed an event like the CSW for two reasons. First, UNM functions much like an open admission university and has difficulty with first-year retention. UNM is a Hispanic-serving institution, with a large population of first-generation, working-class students, who often enter the campus with low average grade point averages and on the lottery scholarship (University of New Mexico n. pag.).¹³

¹³ UNM’s entrance requirements is a 2.5 GPA; the average admitted first-year GPA is a 3.2 (University of New Mexico n. pag).

Second, first-year students need to know their voices are valued. There are many spaces on the UNM campus where upperclassmen and women, graduate students, and faculty, are invited to share their work, but there was not a space for *just* first-year students to be celebrated.

In the fall of 2009 I collaborated with the Department of English Language and Literature's Director of Core Writing Programs, Dr. Wanda Martin, to pilot the first CSW. In this event, all new Core Writing teaching assistants were required to participate with their English 101 (Introduction to Expository Writing) sections. In total, twenty-five sections participated, with an estimate of 525 students. From 2010 to 2011, the CSW grew by several hundred students. In 2011, the last year I organized the event, thirty-eight sections participated, with thirty-seven of those participants from English 101, and one section from English 102, Argument and Analysis. Since classes are capped at twenty-three students, and provided all thirty-eight sections were fully enrolled, there were eight hundred and seventy-four students who participated in the CSW.

2011 Research Data on How Students Perceive the UNM CSW

To date, no research has been published assessing the CSW, nor assessing students' reactions to their own participation in the CSW. In order to determine students' reactions to the CSW, specifically examining what students gained or gleaned from their participation, my colleague, Erin Penner Gallegos, and I completed a mixed-methods study of the 2011 CSW. Our data aimed to answer the following research questions: 1) What do students say they learn from the CSW? 2) What do students say they were meant to learn from the CSW? 3) Do they say it is related to their course outcomes? Collecting twenty-three student-participant interviews (twelve male, and eleven female) and forty-

two post-CSW anonymous survey responses (Appendix A), we discovered that students felt positively about the event, learned about the collaborative process, and enjoyed learning from their peers.¹⁴

For the purposes of this chapter, I want to examine in what ways, if any, student participants believed their voices were heard. Many supporters of the CSW believe it provides an importance space for celebrating the voices of first-year students, but no research has been published that notes the connection between student voice and the CSW. Although Gallegos and I did not specifically ask in the interview if students believed their voices were heard; several students broadly commented about how the CSW valued their voices.

Data on Students' Reactions to the CSW

When coding our data and looking for common themes among interview and survey comment box responses, Gallegos and I discovered that only nine students (combining both survey and interview responses) explicitly expressed in some way that the CSW provided a space for their voices to be heard. Students more readily connected the CSW to “learning about material” and “learning to write,” a natural connection as the CSW involved only first-year composition courses and is an academic, educational event. However, just because students made more connections between writing and academics than sharing their own voices does not mean that they did not recognize their voices were heard. “Sam,” a freshman in English 101, said in response to our interview question “What did you learn from the Celebration of Student Writing?” that “I learned I ... that my opinion really matters and I have a say and I ... on ... know, that people like to hear

¹⁴ Our research results are in an article under review with the *WPA: Writing Program Administration* journal.

what I have to say.”¹⁵ Similarly, “Eric,” a sophomore in English 101 said in response to the same interview question, “...we got to learn something different about each person and got to cre ... to express our creativity in all different types of ways...” And one survey respondent wrote, “I learned that all the student’s [sic] voices are important.”

While most students did not articulate that they felt the CSW celebrated their voices, they did identify how the CSW valued students’ creativity, opinions, and knowledge. These points are related to being “heard.” However, reproducing the interesting, unique, and faltering ways students expressed themselves is how we celebrate their voices.

Survey Data: Students’ Feelings about Community Membership

In the survey, we asked a variety of questions about students’ feelings prior to the event because we wanted to gauge how students felt before and after the event. Question 7 on our survey stated “Check all that apply. Before the Celebration of Student Writing, I felt.” We listed twelve choices ranging from community membership to “convinced that the CSW was a bad idea” (Appendix A). Our results showed a wide range of feelings: 55% of the respondents (26 students) felt they were “part of the UNM community,” but only 27.5% (11 students) felt that “the UNM campus took an interest in me and my work.” The numbers are significantly higher when responding to feelings regarding their classroom: 65% (26 students) felt that “my English class was a community,” and 60% (24 students) felt that “my teacher took an interest in me and my work.” It’s natural that students would believe there was more community within their English courses because of the many ways that English courses foster community (from in-class discussion to peer review to group work). Moreover, it’s common that students feel part of the UNM

¹⁵ To visually represent students’ faltering or halting words, I have added three ellipses within the quoted responses.

community—attending social functions, living in the dorms, etc.—but may not know how their voices are valued, or even how to express their voices on campus.

In Question 8 of the survey, we asked for post-CSW feelings. This question stated, “Check all that apply. After the CSW, I felt” with a listing of eleven different questions. We did not ask the same questions for prior and post feelings, but varied the language a little bit. In this post-CSW question, 69.2% (27 students) selected that “My class project represented everyone’s voice” and 64.1% (25 students) selected that “My voice and ideas were valued.” There was a slight change in how students perceived their UNM community membership as 59% (23 students) selected “I was part of the UNM community.” This response was a 5% increase from the “prior to the CSW” question. While this survey is methodologically incomplete, it does provide some data to discuss students’ feelings regarding their campus community membership and how the CSW may contribute to those feelings.

Do Students Have an Accurate Understanding of Their Voices?

Despite students not directly connecting the CSW as a celebration of their voices, they do share their voices in other ways. The CSW is a public event, held in UNM’s Student Union Building’s Ballrooms each year to garner foot traffic. Every year we have several hundred visitors, from administrators to students to parents, come and observe the CSW student participants’ installations. Student participants are in attendance, either talking to the visitors or socializing with the CSW visitors. In this respect, student participants do engage and share their voices. They answer questions about their art installations, talk about their coursework, and talk to the students who are also participating in the CSW. Even though much of this socialization is not necessarily CSW-

related, students do have the opportunity to share their voices. I have seen this happen as student participants wander around the Ballrooms asking about installations, talking about their English coursework, and talking about college life in general.

Although students may not be able to articulate how the CSW allows them to express their voices, they are aware that the CSW is a space that allows them to express their ideas, knowledge, and creativity. Within the survey, “express” (or an extension thereof) was mentioned seventeen times while in the interview, it was mentioned once. In response to the question “What did you learn from the Celebration of Student Writing?” one respondent wrote “Many ways to express your writing ideas.” Another wrote, “Students’ ideas of how to express their work.” And another student wrote, “That people have a wide range of expressing what they feel.” Most of the survey responses connected writing and expression, and many CSW participants understood that the event provided a space for expression. In response to the question “What do you think you were meant to learn from the Celebration of Student Writing?” that “That all student’s [sic] ideas and feelings are important.” Indeed, the CSW, as I envisioned it, is supposed to be a public space where first-year students can be celebrated, their knowledge can be valued, and their literacies can be shared. All students’ ideas and feelings are important, and the CSW can be one space to offer a venue to value those feelings. Particularly for peripheral students who feel like they “don’t know nothink,” like Jo, the CSW is a space that allows students to share what they do know.

Looking Ahead: How CSW Organizers Can Better Connect Student Voice and the CSW

Students were clearly able to connect the CSW to types of expression. However, to truly determine if the CSW values student voices like stakeholders believe it does, I

recommend building a stronger connection between students' voices and the event. While stakeholders, instructors, and writing program administrators may believe the CSW fosters student voice, CSW organizers should work to discover if student participants believe the CSW values their voices. In the weeks leading up to the event, instructors can more explicitly connect the CSW to voice, exploring how students define "voice" and in what ways they want their voices to be heard. Group discussion and reflection can be used to ask students to think about how the CSW (if at all) values first-year students' voices, or how the CSW can be amended to better promote and value student voices. CSW organizers may want to hold focus groups with student participants before and after the event to better assess students' reactions to the event.

Peripheral student populations, especially those who are disenfranchised, underprepared, or from non-dominant discourse communities, need to know they are contributing members of the community around them. Like Jo, they need the cultural literacies of society, so they can become productive members of professional, academic, and civic communities. They cannot just be pitied or cast aside, like Jo, or they will not learn how to integrate. Rhetoric and composition faculty can encourage English studies colleagues to act as sponsors by helping peripheral students learn how to become members of the dominant discourse community. However, before peripheral students can learn to adapt to the cultural literacies around them, they need to know their knowledges and literacies are valued. The Celebration of Student Writing is one event that can encourage the often ignored and unheard voices of the peripheral students. The Celebration of Student Writing is not just an event that aims to celebrate writing on the

university campus; more importantly, it celebrates the agency of new students and publicly values their contributions to the academic community.

4

From Dracula's Library to Chalkboard: Using Dracula's Rhetorical Awareness and Genre Analysis as a Model in the First-Year Composition Classroom

In Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), Jonathan Harker, the novel's protagonist and a London solicitor, travels to Castle Dracula in Transylvania to complete the sale of Carfax Abbey, located just outside London. Although initially oblivious to Count Dracula's sinister history and intentions to invade England, Harker's suspicions grow. Within a few days Count Dracula takes Harker prisoner in Castle Dracula. Harker is tormented by vampire-infested nightmares. Barely escaping his prison, Harker returns to England to recover from his trauma. Meanwhile, Count Dracula's plot to invade England is realized as he sails with his vampire brood to England via Whitby on the northern coast. This epistolary, Gothic novel recounts how Harker and his social circle, including his wife Mina, Arthur Holmwood, and Lucy Westenra, experience Dracula's attacks to varying degrees—from blood sucking to thought control—and actively seek to destroy Dracula with the help of Professor Helsing, Quincy Morris, and Dr. Seward.

Dracula wonderfully captures Victorian fears about the fall of the British Empire, reverse colonization, the New Woman, and other themes. Published as the turn of the century loomed when Victorians were apprehensive of the emerging, new modern world and accompanying changes, Stoker capitalizes upon a rhetoric of fear that masterfully mirrors cultural, political, and social shifts. Victorian and contemporary readers familiar with the Count Dracula mythos know him as a political invader, and the progenitor of a worldwide vampire brood.

Recent critical approaches to *Dracula* focus on Dracula's linguistic proficiencies. James Paul Gee and Christina Ferguson are the most recent scholars who have written on Count Dracula's English language skills and how they affect his self-perceived and actual identity. Both authors identify how Count Dracula's literacy skills and linguistic choices define his outsider status and affect his integration into English life. As Ferguson explains, Dracula's "ultimate defeat is as much a result of his failure to navigate the wildly divergent and multimediated forms of English as it is of his inability to move through London freely" (230). Both Gee and Ferguson figure Count Dracula as a metaphor for the non-native English speaker, but I would like to complicate this idea. In addition to reading *Dracula* as relevant to language studies scholarship, the novel can be read as a case study for rhetorical awareness.

To illustrate this point, I will demonstrate how Dracula's library contents, texts that Dracula has amassed over the centuries, prepares him for adopting English literacies that, in turn, will allow him to covertly adopt an English identity. His library contents reveal much about his cultural, linguistic, and genre knowledge, all necessary skills for a successful invasion. I model in the following pages how rhetoric and composition faculty can use *Dracula* as an example of rhetorical awareness when speaking to their literature and creative writing faculty. For literature and creative writing faculty who may be hesitant or resistant to rhetoric and composition's emphasis on rhetoric in English, examining *Dracula*'s character may prove accessible and useful.

I build upon James Paul Gee's sociolinguistic reading of *Dracula*, specifically that Dracula's language practices offer insight into the "social workings of language" (*Social Linguistics and Literacies* 112). In order to successfully mask his true identity and

seamlessly enter the English discourse community, Dracula must know how to mirror the dominant literacies practiced by the English. These literacies are more expansive than just reading and writing. I include all community specific knowledge sets, from cultural knowledge to social expectations. Dracula must become a “literate” member of the English community if he intends to seamlessly enter the country and wreak havoc. However, before becoming a literate member of the community, Dracula must rhetorically analyze the act (the invasion) and his audience (the English) in relation to his own literacies. He must find ways to infiltrate English life, and such task relies upon his understanding of the rhetorical situation of invasion.

In *praxis*, Dracula can serve as a case study in the first-year composition classroom to (1) teach students to conceptualize the rhetorical situation and (2) illustrate how successful rhetorical awareness garners insider community membership. For first-year students learning to adopt and adapt their literacies to academic expectations, Dracula can serve as an example of how rhetorical awareness and genre analysis can facilitate students’ transition into the academic community. I advocate for the use of using stories, such as Stoker’s narrative regarding Dracula’s library, as an accessible way for students to understand key tenets of rhetorical analysis, specifically the transactional relationship between agent, purpose, and audience. Although I narrow my lens to examining how rhetorical knowledge can aid students in becoming academic insiders, this reading of *Dracula* can be applied to aiding students in becoming members of the professional, civic, social, and cultural communities they may intend or wish to enter.

While some rhetoric and composition faculty may be reluctant to bring literature into the first-year composition classroom, literary stories can offer accessible methods of

teaching adopting composition studies best practices to the composition classroom. Literary characters are often excellent examples of complex, adaptable personalities who experience or overcome diverse and difficult situations. To make my point, I rely upon Linda Adler-Kassner's point in *The Activist WPA*: "But when we hear the breath of others and develop our practice in concert with others, that practice changes in ways we don't always anticipate" (vii). Although Adler-Kassner specifically denotes hearing and telling the stories of students, instructors, and administrators, literary stories can be equally powerful. They offer and encourage a new way of imagining and teaching best practices, such as imparting rhetorical knowledge in ways that may be previously unexplored.

The library in *Dracula Castle*, as a starting point, is a constructed space in which Count Dracula plays the part of educated, benign landowner and foreign dignitary. The library serves to illustrate Dracula's interest in knowledge. As well, the library draws attention to where Dracula's knowledge of England, his next invasion point, derives. In chapter one, the protagonist, Jonathan Harker, discovers the library after an evening of explorations. Just recently taken captive in the castle, Harker, still naïve regarding Dracula's true identity and intentions, intends to amuse himself. He writes in his journal about this first visit to the library:

I found, to my great delight, a vast number of English books, whole shelves full of them, and bound volumes of magazines and newspapers. A table in the centre was littered with English magazines and newspapers, though none of them were of very recent date. The books were of the most varied kind—history, geography, politics, political economy, botany, geology, law—all relating to England and English life

and customs and manners. There were even such books of reference as the London Directory, the ‘Red’ and ‘Blue’ books, Whitaker’s Almanack, the Army and Navy Lists, and—it somehow gladdened my heart to see it—the Law List. (25)

The purpose of the library as a plot device is twofold: First, as a new owner of Carfax Abbey near London, Count Dracula’s library contains texts that allow him to become familiar with the culture and customs of English life. The library contents provide him extensive knowledge about England perhaps interesting to a new resident, but the contents also clue readers to Dracula’s objective: Invasion. With texts such as the British government directory (the Red book), the Parliamentary publications (the Blue book), and the military lists, Dracula’s choice in library illustrates Count Dracula’s extensive research of England—something quite necessary for an undercover invasion—and his determination to seamlessly integrate into English life. Second, the library genres, such as government, military, and administrative texts, reaffirm Count Dracula’s determination to understand English economy and business. Such knowledge is necessary to cripple England’s global hegemony, an empire that spans a quarter of the globe in the late nineteenth century.

Despite the outdated magazines and newspapers, this collection of English texts becomes the physical representation of the English ways of life and ways of knowing. They offer insight into a unique discourse community. As well, the texts represent what knowledge must be amassed to be “literate” within this discourse community. As defined by Patricia Bizzell, a discourse community is a “group of people who share certain language-using practices.... although bound perhaps by other ties as well, geographical,

socioeconomic, ethnic, professional, and so on” (222). Until Dracula can enter the community as an insider, he will be positioned as an illiterate outsider. However, his illiteracy is not necessarily related to his reading and speaking skills. E.D. Hirsch, Jr., explains, “Illiteracy ... is not merely a deficiency in reading and writing skills. It is also a deficiency in cultural information” (147). Therefore, Dracula’s illiteracies include any cultural or social knowledge, and this definition explains the importance of English life and custom books within his library.

Dracula’s books offer cultural-specific knowledge that prepares him for his transformation. Cultural critic Raymond Williams notes that community specific texts, such as those within Dracula’s library, are quite literally “writing themselves into the land” (54). This phrase nicely highlights the transactional relationship between text and audience. The books have not been just *written* into the land, as an act rooted in the past; they are, instead, alive and continually offer Dracula insight into English culture. Thus, every time Dracula opens a book, the content within is being written into his mind and onto his heart. Absorbing these literacies are a necessary preparation for executing his rhetorical purpose: Establishing a base of operation at Carfax Abbey. Dracula must be able to blend into English life disguised. He must immerse himself in the appropriate texts that will best prepare him for societal integration, including cultural, linguistic, political literacies.

Stoker uses the library contents to clue readers into the inevitable, but the library also illustrates how community-specific knowledge can prepare outsiders for insider membership. Because Dracula is an outsider who intends to invade, he must find a method to gaining insider knowledge. Therefore, this collection of texts serves as the

physical representation of English life while specifically cluing readers to what types of knowledge Dracula is consuming. As a discourse community, the English are a group of people defined by language and literacy practices, culture, worldviews, and ideologies. As with any community, there are perceptible and imperceptible boundaries that define outsider from insider. But the inner workings of a discourse community, according to James Paul Gee, is “more than language at stake [they] also have to get [their] minds and deeds ‘right,’ as well. [They] also have to get [themselves] appropriately in sync with various objects, tools, places, technologies, and other people” (*Social Linguistics and Literacies* 152). The library provides a space in which he can practice applying that knowledge to adapting his behavior, appearance, language skills to the needs and expectations of the English. Moreover, the library acts as a microcosm of English life and culture for Count Dracula to recreate his identity and practice his deception.

Relying upon the diverse genres in his library, Dracula learns about the English discourse community. In addition, the library becomes a space where he can practice the ways of being, acting, and knowing Englishness. When Dracula finds Harker in the library, he articulates the usefulness of the English texts:

‘These friends’—and he laid his hand on some of the books—‘have been good friends to me, and for some years past, ever since I had the idea of going to London, have given me many, many hours of pleasure. Through them I have come to know your great England; and to know her is to love her. I long to go through the crowded streets of your mighty London, to be in the midst of the whirl and rush of humanity, to share its life, its change, its death, and all that makes it what it is.’ (26)

Dracula insightfully recognizes that his library texts offer the community-specific knowledge needed to adapt to English life. Without his texts, he would not have the same insider knowledge needed to prepare for his move to England. Although maintaining a benign ruse to avoid Harker's suspicions, Dracula's exegesis for knowing, navigating, and blending into London is achieving what he wants and needs—new blood and new vampires (Gee *Social Linguistics and Literacies* 113). If London, as the central hub of the Victorian empire, an empire that spanned a quarter of the globe in the late nineteenth century, was crippled, the nation would collapse. Therefore, purchasing property just outside London is a strategic location for Dracula to establish his vampire hub.

The texts in Dracula's library aid him in understanding the "identity kit" (Gee *Social Linguistics and Literacies* 152) of the English as well as develop his own identity kit that would ensure successful immersion into the English community. According to Gee,

[W]hen people mean things to each other, there is always more than language at stake. To mean anything to someone else (or even to myself) I have to communicate *who* I am (in the sense of what socially situated identity I am taking on here and now) and *what* I am doing in terms of what socially situated activity I am carrying out. (*Social Linguistics and Literacies* 152)

The communication of self is more than just the language used. Effective communication requires the recognition of "a distinctive sort of *who* doing a distinctive sort of *what*" (Gee *Social Linguistics and Literacies* 152). This relationship is the identity kit that people naturally and deliberately "put on" to respond to various social situations.

Therefore, the texts in Dracula's library offer clues into the identity kit Dracula will need to put on in order to assume the role of Englishman. As well, each genre in the library is a socially situated activity with defined rhetorical purposes. The texts have deliberate purposes that intend to meet the expectations of specific audiences who have particular literacies. As a result, Dracula must analyze each identity kit associated with each text in order to execute his rhetorical purpose. Furthermore, these texts teach Dracula what it means to be a community insider. Although he speaks English well and understands much about English life, he remains on the border of insider-outsider status. Because he has some knowledge of English custom, social practice, and language he can maintain a margin of insider status, but as a foreigner and English language learner, he remains outside the community. These texts are one way to help Dracula move from the cusp to insider.

To become a discourse community insider requires immersion into the location as well as observation and interaction with insider members. When Dracula tells Harker he wants to fully experience England—the sights, sounds, smells—he evokes what Michel de Certeau writes about “practicing” the common place that involves “something that can be neither said nor ‘taught’ but must be ‘practiced’” (77). This theory relies upon the acknowledgement that “everyday practices (talking, reading, moving about, shopping, cooking, etc.) are tactical in character” (de Certeau xix). Dracula's tactical choices include gaining knowledge and literacies that enable him to invade England. As an outsider, Dracula cannot simply be taught how to speak and act as an Englishman, but he must also practice the persona he wants to adopt. The techniques Dracula learns to successfully act as an Englishman must specifically address the cultural and social “ways

of operating,” as de Certeau terms it. According to de Certeau, there are specific “ways of operating” within each culture that need to be examined and observed (xix). From this perspective, Dracula needs to examine, observe, and fully practice English life in order to seamlessly blend in. In essence, he must practice the environment and culture he wants to enter into. Similarly, Gee terms these everyday practices as building an “identity kit.” This kit includes specific clothes, mannerisms, jargon, hobbies, etc., that identify the wearer as an insider (*Social Linguistics and Literacies* 152).

Practicing the community-specific identity kit is an important part of Dracula’s transition from outsider to insider. However, in order to fully become an accepted member of the dominant community, he needs to demonstrate proficiency with English language practices. Even if Dracula could impersonate an Englishman in dress and mannerism, the ruse would not be complete without the Londoner’s accent, colloquialisms, and sentence structure. Dracula explains this concern to Harker: “But alas! as yet I only know your tongue through books. To you, my friend, I look that I know it to speak” (26). Maintaining his ruse, Dracula’s English sentence construction becomes imperfect at this very phrase. Although prior to this point in the novel his linguistic skills have been perfect. In this instance, he is a “distinctive sort of *who* doing a distinctive sort of *what*” (Gee *Social Linguistics and Literacies* 152, italics in the original). The distinctive “who” is Dracula’s persona as a benign landowner. The distinctive “what” is learning the King’s English.

Or, Dracula’s adopted persona and rhetorical purpose can be interpreted as his effort to intersect his individuality with these language choices. Johnstone claims, “the ways people talk about themselves have to do with the particular selves they are creating

and expressing in narrative” (*The Linguistic Individual* ix). Therefore, Dracula’s rhetorical move, his claim that his English language skills are imperfect, reinforces the innocent, benign identity the Count intends to maintain.

How meaning is constructed is a complicated part of communication because it “is not a thing that sits fixed in the mind” or “sits in dictionaries” ... “[r]ather, meaning is primarily the result of social interactions, negotiations, contestations, and agreements among people. It is inherently variable and social” (Gee *Social Linguistics and Literacies* 21). Just as Dracula must negotiate the meaning of English life, culture, and custom, traditional students must negotiate the meaning of academia and its expectations. But those meanings are fluid, transactional, contextual, and relational. There may be agreed upon definitions, but the unique experiences and ways of seeing the world will affect how each student integrates into academic communities.

Furthermore, Dracula’s rhetorical move to adopt English literacies and language practices also illustrates his awareness of the transactional relationship between insider status and language. He looks to Harker, a native Londoner and member of the dominant community, to fulfill his agenda. Dracula is consciously aware that in order to become an insider, he must learn from a Londoner, a member of the community he wished to enter. Gee notes, “[T]here are many different ‘social languages’ (different styles of language used for different purposes and occasions) connected in complex ways” (*Social Linguistics and Literacies* 3). Dracula’s choice to rely upon Harker clues readers to which community he wishes to enter; he does not choose a citizen of Manchester or Whitby to aid him. Instead, he narrows his focus to “learning” from a Londoner, so Dracula can learn to seamlessly integrate into London life. The physical practices “appear now in the

verbal field, not in a field of non-linguistic actions; they move from one field to the other, being equally tactical and subtle in both” (de Certeau 78). Dracula, ever tactical, realizes he cannot solely practice the ways of operating as a Londoner, but he must know how to transition seamlessly between the linguistic and non-linguistic ways of speaking and operating.

While the Count may have mastered the ways of operating as gleaned from his books, he knows he has not mastered the ways of speaking. He balances between insider and outsider status and claims he must rely upon the assistance of an insider, Harker, to completely transition. Gee notes, “Dracula realizes there are two major motivations underlying language use: status and solidarity” (*Social Linguistics and Literacies* 113). Dracula relies on Harker’s status, that is, his status as a member of the English discourse community, to help learn how to fully integrate into the community. No outsider can transition to becoming an accepted member of the discourse community without the help of someone already on the inside. Dracula “looks to” Harker to “know how to speak” because Dracula’s King’s English proficiency creates an immediate and obvious demarcation of group status. Language is used to separate those who are members from those who are different. To maintain the rhetoric of the British Empire’s global hegemony, Victorians held tightly to clear-cut definitions of “Britishness” deeply rooted in identity politics, language practices, skin color, and customs.¹⁶

Dracula’s observations about the important relationship between status and language offer a new way of discussing how operational rules of discourse communities create insiders and outsiders. In the context of *Dracula*, gaining entrance into the British

¹⁶ See *Britishness: Perspectives on the British Question* (2009) edited by Andrew Gamble and Tony Wright.

discourse community garners one step closer to dominion. Ferguson claims, “Count Dracula equates linguistic mastery with other kinds of mastery—if he can speak English like, or perhaps better than, a native, he can assimilate with and eventually dominate British citizens” (238). Therefore, knowing the people, their language, and their culture allows him to *know* his victims.

Dracula is cognizant of how his literacy skills identify his outsider status, and like any outsider he accepts that language serves as the gatekeeper to status and success. He explains to Harker:

True, I know the grammar and the words, but yet I know not how to speak them.... Well I know that, did I move and speak in your London, none there are who would not know me for a stranger. That is not enough for me. Here I am noble; I am *boyer* [a member of the privileged class]; the common people know me, and I am master. But a stranger in a strange land, he is no one; men know him not—and to know not is to care not for. I am content if I am like the rest, so that no man stops if he see me, or pause in his speaking if he hear my words, to say, “Ha, ha! a stranger!” I have I have been so long master that I would be master still—or at least that none other should be master of me. (26)

Count Dracula’s concerns about his reception and treatment are reasonable and expected; no one desires ridicule because of poor speaking skills or pronunciation. As well, it is logical that the Count wants to maintain his powerful status abroad. Furthermore, apparent in this passage is the Count’s recognition that language acts a gatekeeper and determiner of Dracula’s future success. What the Count recognizes is that power and

status are directly tied to literacy and linguistic skills. This is not to say England was not linguistically diverse with a wide range of dialects—from Northern to East and West Midlands to the King’s English—but class and status have been markers for insider status for centuries. Not being able to speak like a native English speaker would immediately identify him as an outsider and remove whatever power he might attain as an insider.

Despite Dracula’s rhetorical awareness and knowledge that makes possible his adaptation to English literacies, it may be argued that he was not entirely successful. In chapter thirteen, Mina Harker, Harker’s wife, writes in her journal that one day in London Jonathan he exclaimed “under his breath ... My God!” and clutched her arm while pointing to “a tall, thin man, with a beaky nose and black moustache and pointed beard” (155). As Mina recounts, Jonathan says, “‘Do you see who it is?’ ‘No, dear,’ I said; ‘I don’t know him; who is it?’ ... ‘It is the man himself!’” Jonathan exclaims. “I believe it is the Count, but he has grown young. My God, if this be so! Oh, my God! my God! If only I knew! if only I knew!” (155). As evidenced in Jonathan’s dialogue, he *thinks* this is the Count—who it actually is—but he remains unsure, a testament to Dracula’s assumed identity. Although Mina describes Dracula with “big white teeth, that looked all the whiter because his lips were so red,” Jonathan does not immediately believe it is the Count (155). In fact, Jonathan only can recognize him, albeit not assuredly, because he has seen Dracula before. A testament to the success of Dracula’s identity kit, none of the other Londoners perceive Dracula as an outsider or a danger.

Praxis: Building Rhetorical Awareness in the First-Year Composition Classroom

Because Dracula figures as an outsider who must anticipate the literacies of the insider community, his character can be used to support rhetorical awareness pedagogy in

the first-year composition classroom. Rhetoric and composition faculty may want to use *Dracula* as a model when speaking with their literature and creative writing colleagues about the importance of rhetorical awareness within first-year composition classes, core writing programs, or the Department of English. Additionally, rhetoric and composition faculty may want to use *Dracula* as an example in their first-year composition courses and composition programs. *Dracula*, I believe, provides an excellent example of the interconnectedness of discourse community membership and rhetorical awareness.

Similarly to Count *Dracula*'s need to become a seamless member of the English community, the first-year composition student population needs tools to become members of the academic community. Helping first-year students successfully transition from high school to college remains a continued concern. Rhetoric and composition scholars such as Patricia Bizzell, Lynn Z. Bloom, Irv Peckham, Gregory Glau, Eli Goldblatt and others have written about how to increase student preparedness and retention rates. Patricia Bizzell wrote two decades ago, "Over the past decade, however, more and more students have come to college while at a very elementary stage of their initiation into the academic discourse community" (107). Bizzell's observations remain pertinent as first-year students need continued guidance as they transition from high school to university and learn to enter the academic community.

In order to best prepare first-year students for the academic community, Bizzell recommends examining "the relationship between the academic discourse community and the communities from which [our] students come: communities with forms of language use shaped by their own social circumstances" (108). While first-year students might have a fair amount of academic confidence and expect academic success, they may

not fully understand or know how to present themselves as academics. Rebecca de Wind Mattingly and Patricia Harkin write:

Students who don't get enough exercise in paying attention to context and audience in their native forms of computer-enabled writing are more likely to fail to meet the needs of context- and address-sensitive audiences in the types of writing situations encountered in college and the workplace. (16)

Despite students' abilities to navigate complex social, technological-driven communication, they have difficulty transferring whatever rhetorical awareness they've learned from their own social methods of communication to the classroom. As well, many students are unaware of the rhetorical choices they make on a daily basis, making it difficult for them to conceptualize the types of rhetorical awareness they will need in a new discourse community—the university campus.

Teaching students rhetorical awareness can offer reading, writing, researching, and evaluating skills that will aid their navigation of the literacies of academic communities. Rhetorical awareness is also useful to navigating higher education. It is a locus of community-specific power dynamics with “rules” of membership. First-year students will be better prepared to adapt to academia if they learn how discourse communities function. This knowledge requires students' to navigate community-specific literacies, implicit rules, ideologies, identities, etc., that are embedded within each community. Henry A. Giroux explains,

At stake here is the notion of literacy that connects relations of power and knowledge not simply to *what* teachers teach but also to the productive meanings that students, in all of their cultural and social differences, bring

to classrooms as part of the production of knowledge and the construction of personal and social identities. (17)

First-year composition instructors are uniquely positioned to prepare students for the communities they will encounter, and also help students adapt their literacies to those within higher education. While it's not the sole responsibility of composition to prepare students for academia, one of composition's best practices is to impart students with rhetorical awareness in order to successfully communicate across all disciplines and communities. Rhetorical awareness is a complementary function is discourse community pedagogy because of their interrelated elements. And, first-year composition instructors can use discourse community pedagogy as a means to teaching rhetorical awareness. For students to become successful academic insiders—specifically gaining membership into the communities that will aid their professional, academic, and civic aspirations—they need transferrable tools that will allow them to effectively and productively engage with the diverse communities around them.

In order for first-year students to gain the academic literacies they need for community membership, they need to “learn to speak our [academics'] language, to speak as we do, to try on the peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that the discourse of our community” (Bartholomae 273). To teach first-year students how to adapt to the literacies found in academia, they need specific rhetorical knowledge that will help them analyze the varied and diverse discourse communities on campus. Rhetorical knowledge, according to the Council of Writing Program Administrators, National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Writing Project's “Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing” is “the ability to

analyze and act on understandings of audiences, purposes, and contexts in creating and comprehending texts” (5). Before first-year students can successfully adapt to academia—knowing how to create and comprehend community-specific discourse—they first need to know how to analyze those discourses.

Learning About Community Membership Through the Rhetorical Situation

Learning how to navigate the community-specific discourses requires tools that will help first-year students unpack the complexities of each community. Like Dracula relying on Harker, first-year students cannot achieve this knowledge alone. They must have an insider to guide them (Bizzell 228). Rhetoric and composition faculty are uniquely positioned to teaching first-year students rhetorical tools that can help them learn to analyze the community-specific literacies needed for successful integration. One method for facilitating such knowledge is by teaching students how to analyze complex and diverse rhetorical situations. The rhetorical situation, defined by Lloyd Bitzer in 1966, is “a natural context of persons, events, relations, and an exigency which strongly invites utterance; this invited utterance participants naturally in the situation, is in many instances necessary to the completion of situation activity” (5). The rhetorical situation is a transactional exchange between speaker (or writer), audience, intended purpose, and context.

However, for first-year students, knowing how to unpack rhetorical situations—from emailing a professor to reading a biology textbook—is a difficult process. In my own first-year composition courses at the University of New Mexico, a Hispanic-serving state flagship, my students, who have a variety of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and literacies, have difficulty adapting their own literacies to those expected in academia.

These difficulties are generally a result of students' inability to analyze their audience and appropriately meet audience expectations. For example, common problems range from a conversational writing style in academic genres to an inability to analyze audience expectations. While these examples are not institution specific and can be found within community colleges and research institutions alike, I have learned to adapt my pedagogical practices to emphasize rhetorical awareness in every class I teach.

Invaluable to first-year student success, rhetorical awareness teaches students what Michel de Certeau calls the "art of speaking," "an art of operating and an art of thinking" (77). Rhetorical awareness requires students to actively think about how they present themselves, the word choices they make, the genres they rely upon as well as considering the needs and expectations of their audiences. Even though making appropriate literacy choices may be an art, the verb "operating" also implies that there are deliberate, methodological choices made when communicating. Different communities require different arts—deliberate choices in action, thought, and behavior—that cannot be simply transferred from one community to another. Students are not always aware of their own rhetorical choices, or that they have agency as an author, speaker, and communicator. First-year students, as communicators, do have agency, and are responsible for the rhetorical choices they make. These choices, as agents, include language choices, document design choices, secondary source choices, and others. However, first-year students are not generally cognizant of the "art" of communication. For example, in order for Dracula to seamlessly pass as a Londoner literally requires employing the art of speaking as a Londoner. Similarly, first-year students can learn how

Dracula's artful communication advances his rhetorical purpose that, ultimately, allows for his undetected travel to England.

How the Rhetorical Triangle Helps First-Year Students Develop Rhetorical Awareness

I introduce my first-year students to rhetorical awareness through the rhetorical situation triangle. I use this triangle to show the transactional relationship between purpose (authorial intent), audience expectations, and genre (the medium used to convey the speaker's purpose). Students need to be aware of the necessary exchange between these three elements, as well as the choices they have when responding to a rhetorical situation.

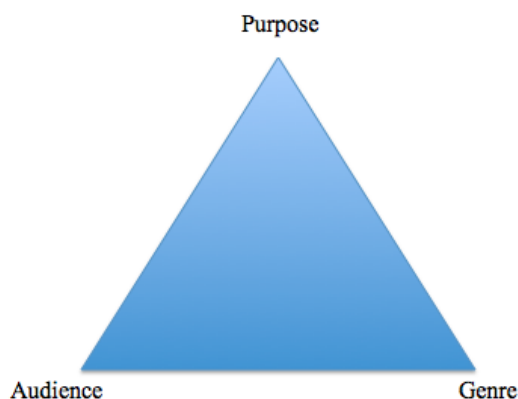


Figure 1. Rhetorical Situation Triangle

Many of my students arrive in the first-year composition classroom approaching course assignments and activities through osmosis—believing that they are passive receptors of information. With this passivity comes a lack of awareness that they do have choices in all communication. To aid students in this understanding, we often unpack everyday rhetorical situations from emailing professors to interviewing at a job.

For example, when we discuss how to send professors email, students often blank out and do not respond. This silence is not usually a result of fear of talking, but more of an indication that my students have not *thought* about how to send professors email. I have to coax the ideas out of them, and their silence often indicates their unfamiliarity with evaluating the genre (email) and audience (professors). While they know that using CAPS in an email is a *faux pas* (or screaming at the email recipient), they are largely unable to explain how to send a professional email. To help students think about their choices, I ask them to compare and contrast an email content to a friend about a less than stellar grade versus an email to a professor who assigned that less than stellar grade. Building from knowledge they are familiar with—venting emails to friends—helps them articulate what different choices they may make when emailing a professor. In order to link the comparison to the rhetorical situation, I ask students to diagram out two triangles, one for the friend and one for the professor. Notably different is the author’s purpose as well as the audience expectations for the email content. This activity directly responds to Eli Goldblatt’s call for student-centered literacy curricula: “If we look beyond the curriculum, to the places students come from, the jobs they will go to, and the language and literacy needs of the neighborhoods where students might work and study, then a new picture of reading and writing begins to emerge” (12).

Teaching students to explain and evaluate the elements of different rhetorical situations, such as emails to friends or professors, is one way for them to learn about discourse community membership. Students need to learn to consciously analyze community expectations—whether those communities are comprised of professors or friends—and how they will respond to those audience expectations. Lori Baker and

Teresa Henning explain students have “the potential to develop a strong rhetorical understanding of a variety of disciplines and texts that they can later apply to a variety of unique career and writing contexts” (156). However, many first-year students enter the academic classroom transferring their understanding of community membership from their experiences in high school. Although difficulties with this transference is to be expected, first-year students need to learn to deliberately analyze the communities around them, so they can make community-specific rhetorical choices that will help them become community insiders. The triangle is an effective visualization for showing the transactional and situational relationship in any given rhetorical situation. It can be drawn on a whiteboard, or the parts can be included in a handout. Asking students to illustrate the relationship between audience, purpose, and genre moves them beyond just analyzing the message. Instead, the triangle is an effective way to show that communication is social, fluid, and adaptable.

Using Genre Analysis to Complicate Rhetorical Awareness

Although not stated in the novel, the various genres in Dracula’s library undoubtedly inform much of his rhetorical awareness. His wide collection of texts—from the Red and Blue books to directories to texts on English culture—offers insight into the types of texts important to English life, but also each genre contains separate values and worldviews. For example, the British government directory (the Red book) and the Parliamentary publications (the Blue book) offer particular clues to British government not solely by the content within but also by the intended audiences of the publications, the word choices used, and the color of the bindings. Without exposure to all these different texts, Dracula would have an incomplete perspective of Britain. Dracula’s

library creates what Anis Barwashi refers to as a “rhetorical ecosystem” (8). As Bawarshi explains, “generic boundaries are not simply classificatory constraints within which writers and speakers function; rather, these boundaries are social and rhetorical conditions which make possible certain commitments, relations, and actions” (8-9).

Additionally, while unstated in the novel, Dracula’s experience with a wide variety of English texts exposes him to the complexities of English life. He is better prepared to assimilate into English culture and customs because he has experienced a wide-variety of knowledge through the texts he has read. Similarly, as Dracula learns through the texts in his library, a genre-approach teaches traditional students that “genres maintain rhetorical conditions that sustain certain forms of life—ways of discursively and materially organizing, knowing, experiencing, acting, and relating to in the world” (Bawarshi 9). In an ever-increasingly complex world, and as interdisciplinarity gains ground, students will need the know-how to rhetorically read texts to learn what those texts say about the people writing them and the ways of knowledge-making evident or expressed.

To help first-year students gain the literacies needed to become academic insiders, rhetorical awareness also requires familiarity with genre analysis. As part of the rhetorical situation, genre analysis introduces students to complex relationship between purpose, audience, and genre. According to Carolyn R. Miller, “For the critic, genres can serve both as an index to cultural patterns and as tools for exploring the achievements of particular speakers and writers; for the student, genres serve as keys to understanding how to participate in the actions of the community” (165). Because genres are “social,” “rhetorical,” “dynamic,” “historical,” “cultural,” “situated,” and “ideological,” they are

also necessarily rhetorical and a crucial part of rhetorical awareness (Dean 11). Each text, written, visual, or oral, offers insight into the relationship between speaker, audience, and purpose. Rhetorical awareness encompasses genre analysis—from knowing how to answer the telephone to knowing how to write a letter of intent—since each genre has specific conventions that must be considered in relation to the authorial intent and audience expectations.

The interplay between rhetorical awareness and genre analysis is social and transactional. Amy Devitt notes, “As we complicate our understandings of society, its relationship and working, we must similarly complicate our understanding of genre and how it works, for genre develops within, embodies, and establishes society’s values, relationships, and functions” (33). Therefore, first-year composition instructors can explicitly use genre analysis as a method for teaching students rhetorical skills that will serve them throughout their academic careers. Such knowledge will prepare them with a foundation of critical, inquiry-based skills needed when learning to adapt to the complex academic discourse communities. If students are to navigate the complex and disparate literacies in academia and beyond, the ability to analyze genres and their relationship to rhetorical situations are crucial.

As Dean explains, “Genres are social. They are used to act in specific situations, and they arise from social interaction and help people make sense of shared social experiences” (11). The triangle, then, is a useful way to show the relationship between message, audience, and communicator. For example, when introducing students to the rhetorical situation, I begin by asking them to name different movie genres while I write those answers on the board. I pick one genre, like romantic comedy, and then ask

students to shout out all the necessary elements of a good romantic comedy. Responses include “the happy ending” (e.g. “boy meets girl, boy loses girl because of a stupid mistake, boy gets girl back”), “humorous mishaps,” “flowers, cute animals, and gifts” “chick flick,” “the lingering look,” “silly sidekicks,” and “hot leads.” These questions ask students to begin thinking about genre conventions, but genre analysis must incorporate the relationship between the genre, the audience, and the rhetorical purposes.

Dean suggests the following questions when teaching students about genre analysis:

- Where is the genre used?
- What is the interaction it accomplishes?
- Who uses the genre and to do what?
- What subjects does the genre discuss?
- What relationships does the genre suggest?
- What roles does the genre suggest for participants? (56)

These questions get students thinking about the text in relation to the topic, the rhetorical purpose, and the audience. If analyzing an article from *The New York Times*, students will need to critically analyze the readership of the newspaper in relation to the article topic. Rhetoric and composition faculty can ask students to analyze word choice and sentence structure to see what reading level and subject-knowledge expertise would be necessary to understand the content. Students can also be asked to examine advertisements for clues as to the newspaper’s intended audience. Depending on the section of the newspaper, advertisements for State Farm, Tribeca’s “Premier Residences,” and Lincoln Center Theatre will exist. Armed with general knowledge of *The New York Times* readers,

students can then answer more advanced questions about the genre's interaction, the relationships, and the author's rhetorical purposes. These questions most certainly challenge students' comfort zones because many, if not all, will not be familiar analyzing texts in this way. However, in order for students to learn to analyze varied and complex texts they encounter in their personal, professional, and academic lives, they must also learn to evaluate the genres they encounter daily.

Looking Ahead: Practically Applying Literature in the First-Year Composition Classroom

As a model, *Dracula*, like other literary texts, can be used to articulate the interrelated relationship between rhetorical awareness and community membership. In particular, portions of the novel can demonstrate how important appropriate rhetorical choices truly become to furthering the speaker's (communicator's) purpose. Goldblatt notes, "I believe we are teaching reflective and critical processes as we are working to give the greatest number of students the best access we can to benefits the university may provide them" (28). While Goldblatt specifically refers to building upon students' home literacies with those in academia, examining literary characters as case studies allow a new perspective when teaching students to reflect upon their rhetorical choices.

Compositionists, particularly those teaching and administering first-year composition, may not believe literature is appropriate for the composition classroom. Charles Bazerman writes, "[B]ecause literature is often written and read in contemplative circumstances, apparently (but not thorough-goingly) removed from immediate exigencies of life, the social embeddedness of [the] genre has been less visible" (20). However, as my reading of *Dracula* demonstrates, literature can be read to illustrate key tenets in composition theory and pedagogy. Using these literary characters can

demonstrate how literacy tools are attained, maintained, and adapted. Furthermore, the narrative, fiction genre can be added to other genres used in the composition classroom to bring composition, rhetoric, and literature together in new, meaningful ways to teach students how to adapt to the discourse communities around them.

Finally, the novel can be specifically applied to critical literacy discourse within broader, campus-wide or departmental conversations. Preparing students to assess and respond to the diverse discourse communities around them is an example of “functional literacy competency,” a speaker-centered literacy that values the needs of the speaker. Sylvia Scribner explains, “Today’s standards for functional competency need to be considered in the light of tomorrow’s requirements it takes into account the goals and settings of people’s activities with written language” (10, 11). Likewise, Goldblatt confirms, “We can honor students’ desires while still recognizing the complexity of rhetorical and literate practice in contemporary American culture if we are inclusive rather than exclusive about connects a writing program to its university and its surrounding region” (29). For students intending to become members of the academic community, they must be given the tools that match the goals and agendas for their rhetorical purposes. Dracula’s outsider status may resonate with university students who enter academe with some knowledge of insider literacies but who may need additional help transitioning to insider status.

Like the diverse student populations we teach, Dracula exemplifies the difficulties and challenges people face when adapting to new literacies and communities. Examining Stoker’s novel through the rhetorical and genre theory lenses can help rhetoric and composition studies faculty answer (1) How to use literature to convey rhetorical and

genre theory to literature and creative writing colleagues, (2) how literature might be practically applied in the composition classroom, (3) how literary characters be used to teach students how to adapt to diverse discourse communities, and (4) how blending literary and rhetorical discourses may help first-year students transition to academia.

Particularly, as rhetoric and composition faculty seek out ways to discuss rhetorical analysis and genre theory with their English colleagues, *Dracula* may prove a useful text to illustrate the importance of rhetorical awareness. In addition to explaining rhetoric and composition's best practices to colleagues in other subfields, reading literature rhetorically elucidates how literature, rhetoric, and composition subfields might collaborate by sharing the strengths of each discipline. As Departments of English continue to experience economic and budgetary strain, rhetoric and composition, literature, and creative writing faculty may want to find new ways to collaborate and share disciplinary knowledge. Rhetorically reading literature demonstrates how literature and rhetoric and composition faculty can dovetail their disciplinary strengths to encourage the meta-cognition of students who enroll in English courses. Adding rhetorical awareness to literature and creative writing courses and adding literature the composition classroom will grant English students rhetorical sophistication, teach them multiple literacies, encourage audience awareness, and expose them to advanced reading and writing skills.

Interchapter

The legacy of nineteenth-century higher education in both America and England is a legacy that largely values and espouses upper-class literacies. Higher education was initially for the elite—those who could afford to study Greek and Latin—and the literacies lauded in higher institutions perpetuated the established class hierarchy as well as *belles lettres* and classicism. During the nineteenth century there were fears of a mechanized age, namely that society would adopt a culture that was financially focused; furthermore, the growing middle- and working-class populations necessarily affected how educators and politicians responded to the masses' demands for access to literacies. As a growing middle class emerged, as industries and economies shifted, and as writing utensils and reading material became more affordable, the masses wanted access to education and literacies that would provide economic stability and social mobility.

Examining the history of economic and social forces within higher education and English studies is necessary. Contemporary discourse about the future of English studies, as well as the current political moves to rearticulate the purposes of higher education, often returns to how the current economic crisis is affecting higher education and English studies. Even though many of these same concerns were felt and discussed during the nineteenth century, over a century later, English faculty remain concerned regarding the affect of economics on higher education. Despite all the English studies histories available to faculty, much of our current concerns can be also found in nineteenth-century American and British scholarship, periodicals, and essays about literacy, education, and culture. For example, Thomas Carlyle's "Signs of the Times" (1829) not only anticipated the growing concern regarding how economics and industry would affect Victorian

culture and society, but it remains relevant today as *Forbes*, the Treasury Department, the *Economist*, and Governors Rick Perry (Texas), Rick Scott (Florida), and Scott Walker (Wisconsin) address how higher education should respond to the economic crisis.

As with nineteenth-century Britons and Americans, Americans in the twenty-first century believe higher education will afford them degrees, professionalization, and networks that will allow graduates economic stability. The myth of education persists as students and parents alike believe hard work and a university degree will provide opportunities for jobs with salaries, good health care, retirement, vacations, and other opportunities. Historians Barbara J. Shircliffe, Sherman Dorn, and Deidra Cobb-Roberts note, “We would like to believe that we live in a rational world in everyone agrees that all are created equal and that equality should extend itself to schools” (6). However, not all students know how to make the most out of their university experiences, particularly if they are underprepared, marginalized, or underrepresented.

This transition proves difficult for students unfamiliar with the dominant academic discourses because schools are “imagined communities” that “pull in people, divide as well as unite” (Shircliffe, Dorn, and Cobb-Roberts 2). Academia is an imagined community—but not imaginary. There are explicit and implicit rules, expectations, and discourses. For students to succeed within academia, they must learn how to blend into unfamiliar academic communities and move fluidly between those communities. Understanding the rules of each discourse community requires rhetorical awareness. Without that awareness, and ability to dissect the rhetorical situations that accompany community membership, students will remain on the periphery. This outsidership will affect students’ access to resources, tools, mentors, and skills. “People make

opportunities available only to those they identify as being part of the same community ... It is a form of sponsorship,” Shircliffe, Dorn, and Cobb-Roberts write (2).

In order to help students become insider members of the academic community, namely to ensure that students can fulfill their academic, professional, and civic agendas and interests, Departments of English have the unique opportunity to prepare students for the discourse communities they will interact and engage with on campus. While I advocate for all English courses to help students integrate, the first-year composition classroom and program is comprised of students with the most pressing needs. First-year students, regardless of their academic preparation, are community outsiders to varying degrees. They many not know simple things—finding the bookstore, buying parking permits, checking out library books—or may encounter more difficult problems like writing timed in-class essays, socialization, researching, reading textbooks, or basic English language skills. The first year is a crucial period for new students as their comfort and academic and social successes depend on their ability to integrate into the new discourse communities around them. As elucidated in chapter three with Jo, peripheral students need their knowledge and literacies valued in order to feel like a contributing member of the community. First-year students will continue to perceived themselves (and be perceived by those around them) as outsiders, expendable, and non-contributing if they are not welcomed and ushered into the dominant discourse community.

Before peripheral students will be willing to adopt and adapt to the dominant community, I recommend valuing the knowledge they bring to campus. Valuing the literacies, knowledges, and identities students bring with them into the first-year composition classroom and academic community greatly affects whether they feel like

insiders or outsiders. Shown in the Celebration of Student Writing (CSW) research, events like the CSW can provide a venue for celebrating the knowledge students already have, as well as showcase their creativity, agency, and identities.

Even though student voices need to be valued and heard, first-year students also need transferrable skills that will help them negotiate the academic literacies they will experience on campus. In chapter four I present Dracula as one model that illustrates the importance of knowing how to move from outsider to insider. I am not suggesting that first-year students are “invading” academia. But Dracula provides a very useful case study of how community membership depends on how well he can meet audience expectations as well as adapt his identity to the expectations of the community. Students can learn to navigate academic and professional communities is through genre analysis. A community’s texts offer insight into the values and expectations of a community; as well, genre analysis can occur beyond the written page. As students learn to interact with different academic genres—from attending professors’ office hours to engaging in class lectures—they will learn to identify, respond, and negotiate the explicit and implicit rules of each community. Dracula is a useful model for teaching students how to adapt their literacies and knowledges to the expectations of the dominant discourse community because Dracula’s own rhetorical purpose is evident and can be accessibly analyzed.

In the final chapter, “Learning From Alice’s Discourse Community Blunders: Why the First-Year Composition Classroom Should Serve as a Funds of Knowledge Third Space” I address difficulties first-year students face learning to balance their own understanding of discourse community membership, particularly knowing how to adapt their own knowledge and expectations to new communities. Lewis Carroll’s Alice in

Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There exhibits the difficulties associated with navigating a new discourse community, the Looking-Glass world. Because of Alice's inability to correctly anticipate the expectations of this new world, she blunders through communicating with the inhabitants and is often unable to build meaningful relationships with the characters around her. This popular sequel to *Alice in Wonderland*, richly illustrates how complicated it can be transitioning from one community to the next. In *praxis*, I recommend using the first-year composition classroom as a Funds of Knowledge third space in which students learn about discourse community membership and associated literacies to productively navigate their own worldviews and perspectives when thrust into a new discourse community.

Rhetoric and composition faculty have the unique opportunity and difficult task to convey critical literacy scholarship and rhetorical theory to their colleagues in literature and creative writing. As resources in Departments of English dwindle, faculty within English subfields may feel the need to compete with each other for resources, respect, and relevancy. As universities support composition programs, and as composition programs continue to garner more financial support than their literature and creative writing colleagues, rhetoric and composition faculty may find it difficult to encourage their colleagues to support and/or adopt rhetoric and composition theory and pedagogical practices. However, rhetoric and composition faculty may find support with their literature and creative writing colleagues if disciplinary practices are couched in terms that intend to extend the longevity of English studies. Departments of English may find it difficult to reframe their relevance if the subfields do not find productive ways to cross-collaborate and communicate.

Rhetoric and composition faculty can both use nineteenth-century history and literary examples when advocating for their Departments of English to revise and revamp their missions, curricula, and ideologies. Over the century, English studies has evolved with the economy, the industries, and the citizens' needs. Redefining the services English studies offers is not new, but without examining the historical story of how economics affected Departments of English and higher education, literature and creative writing faculty may not understand that adaptation is natural and necessary. Rhetoric and composition faculty can use these histories to better articulate why departments must evolve. In addition to using history as a method for creating change, rhetoric and composition faculty can also use literature to support key tenets of rhetoric and composition within English studies. As I have shown with *Bleak House* and *Dracula*, rhetorically reading literature uncovers the important link between community membership, literacy, and agency. In the latter half of this project, I hope to reinforce that rhetoric and composition faculty need not be afraid of literature. They can use literature to denote important tenets that may go unheeded or unnoticed by their colleagues. And they can use literary examples within their classrooms to help first-year students better understand community membership, rhetorical awareness, and literacy. My ultimate goal is to demonstrate how literature and rhetoric and composition can cross-pollinate for departmental and student success.

5

Learning From Alice's Discourse Community Blunders: Why the First-Year Composition Classroom Should Serve as a Funds of Knowledge Third Space

In Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871), the sequel to *The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland* (1865), Alice, the ever-inquisitive Victorian girl, meets many curiosities—talking flowers, living chess pieces—that defy her perspective of reason and rationality. In order for Alice to make sense of the Looking-Glass world and engage with the inhabitants, she must navigate the nonsense while traveling through a topography that resembles the grid of a chessboard, an obvious gesture at the games within the story. As Alice advances from Pawn to Queen, she must also engage in linguistic games with the Looking-Glass world inhabitants. Made possible by the power of Alice's imagination, word play and nonsense act as rhetorical tropes that evoke Victorian fears concerning England's ability to maintain imperial hegemony.

Major critical approaches to *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* focus on Carroll's subversion of Victorian cultural norms, but they do not/rarely address how Carroll uses language as a rhetorical device. With the abundance of nonsense, as Claudia Nelson posits, Carroll's stories attempt to subvert the Victorian nursery regimen (75). Carolyn Daniel adds, "Carroll's fantasy appears to reject the didacticism, the moralism, and the piety prevalent in many other Victorian stories for children" (48). Similarly, Donald Rackin writes, "In a sense, the *Alice* books are about revolution in that they present a funny but anxious vision of an entire middle-class world turned upside down: two topsy-turvy, 'backwards' places where the sensible child of the master class acts as servant, and the crazy servants act as masters" (8). My reading of

Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There does not discount these interpretations but builds upon them. As these scholars argue, Carroll's story challenges Victorian regimen, reason, and social order. However, equally important is examining how language functions as a rhetorical device to further Carroll's rhetorical purpose. Carroll's use of word play and nonsense covertly subverts Victorian didacticism, specifically reason, through the guise of imagination. For with imagination all things are possible and probable.

Inquiring into how and why Carroll uses language to subvert will answer why he positions Alice as an outsider in the Looking-Glass world, unnerving her sense of self and the Victorian worldview. Specifically, Carroll uses language to challenge Alice's perceptions of how communication functions, a rhetorical move that situates her as an outsider in the Looking-Glass world. Since language is key to understanding and enjoying Carroll's story, as well as determines how successfully Alice can engage with the Looking-Glass inhabitants, a discourse analysis of the text is central to unpacking the nonsensical language. Discourse analysis "sheds light on how meaning can be created via the arrangement of chunks of information across a series of sentences or via the details of how a conversationalist takes up and responds to what has just been said" (Johnstone *Discourse Analysis* 6).

Through a rhetorical and discourse analysis of the first two chapters of the story, I will argue that Carroll's language in his story works as a rhetorical trope to challenge mainstream Victorian ethnocentrism; this ethnocentrism was furthered by the belief that Victorian perspective equaled Truth. Just as the Queen of Hearts screams at Alice in Walt Disney's version of *Alice in Wonderland* that "All ways are *my way*," Victorians believed

that their ways of seeing and interpreting the world could be applied to any situation anywhere. This perspective developed in large part due to the British Empire's economic and political strength across the globe, and within the context of such strength and influence, blossomed rhetoric that reinforced England's supremacy.

In light of the Victorian worldview, the first two chapters of *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* are particularly significant because it is at the beginning of the story when Alice is first unnerved, realizing that she is devoid of power, indeed just a Pawn in another world's game. To demonstrate how assumptions about insider-outsider literacy practices affect community membership, I will analyze Alice's unsuccessful discursive engagements with the Looking-Glass flowers and Red Queen. Second, I offer pedagogical *praxis* applying my reading to the difficulties students often face when entering the academic discourse community.

In order to help students transition from outsiders to insiders, I advocate for the composition classroom to serve as a discursive third space, embracing students' funds of knowledge through literacy assignments that value the literacies students already have when they enter the classroom. Funds of knowledge is defined by ethnographer Luis C. Moll as the cultural, social, and subject knowledge people learn within their home communities (232). However, I also define it as all-inclusive and different types of knowledge gleaned from discourse communities. The composition classroom can serve as a hybrid third space in which students' funds of knowledge and academic knowledges meet. Many students, especially those from underrepresented or marginalized groups, are wary of the literacies they will be taught in academia; many have been told or assume that they must leave their own knowledge outside the classroom to be inculcated with the

knowledge and ways of knowing valued by academics. Instead, the composition classroom, particularly for first-year students, can be a space that publicly values the knowledges students bring with them into the classroom while also helping them adapt those knowledges to academic literacies and expectations. I advocate that in order for students to become successful insiders, as evinced by Alice's blunderings, they need guidance transitioning from outsider to insider. I maintain that this transition can happen more seamlessly if students recognize their knowledges are valuable and can contribute to classroom learning.

Using Rhetoric to Read Alice's Actions

To fully understand how Alice's linguistic blunders and the Looking-Glass world nonsense function as rhetorical devices requires the acknowledgement that language, even linguistic nonsense and word play, is rhetorical. Twentieth century rhetoricians Mikhail Bakhtin, I.A. Richards, and Kenneth Burke, among others, argued that language is always rhetorical and audience-focused. Bakhtin writes that "Utterance, as we know, is constructed between two socially organized persons . . . The *word is oriented toward an addressee*" (3). Recognizing literature as a rhetorical device in which the author is the speaker who has an audience, or addressee, opens new possibilities of interpretation. Because rhetoric can be defined as the "study of verbal understanding and misunderstanding" (Richards 23) and given that *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* is predicated upon misunderstanding and confusion, analyzing the language Carroll uses to construct his story becomes ever so important. While Carroll's conscious intentions may have solely been to write a story for his child-friend Alice Liddell, her siblings, and her cousins, rhetoricians want to know, as Kenneth Burke asks,

“What is involved, when we say what people are doing and why they are doing it?” (xv). Thus, analyzing the use of language in the story provides a new way of seeing Carroll’s rhetorical purpose, thereby making new sense of the linguistic nonsense that occurs. As I argue within this chapter, Carroll’s particular and deliberate use of nonsense, imagination, and word play serve as rhetorical tropes that directly challenge Victorian perceptions of global positionality.

In addition to being rhetorical, language is situational, and there is a relationship between meaning and context in all communication. Jean Lyotard refers to the use of language as a “chess game” between all “players” who attempt to create change based upon their interpretation of meaning-context. Each speaker, acting as the player, engages in the discourse and makes linguistic moves in the attempt to block or reroute the other speaker’s moves. These moves are determined by each speaker’s stance and interpretation of the meaning-context. Because Lyotard believes language is a game, he suggests “every utterance should be thought of as a ‘move’ in a game” (10). Through this framework, language becomes competitive and carries forward or represses the verbal responses made by all participants. There is an intention of “winning” when language is cast this way, and linguistic choices become more than benign acts. Spoken or written language becomes an intentional transaction as each person attempts to advance his or her rhetorical purposes. Thus, on multiple levels, *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found* becomes a competitive game—quite literally as the topography of the Looking-Glass world is designed like a chessboard and many of the characters are chess pieces. As the agent who creates how language functions in his story, Carroll creates a story whose plot is furthered by the game of word play, and he requires readers to accept

his nonsense if they want to finish reading the book. Additionally, since Carroll's story initially casts Alice as a Pawn who encounters difficulty communicating with the Looking-Glass characters, readers become the game-watchers who wait to see if Alice can successfully integrate and become Queen.

Even if its cultural stimuli were not consciously intentional, the Victorian world was ridden with anxieties and fears that undoubtedly influenced Carroll's writings. Noting the relationship between Carroll's language and the Victorian culture is essential to discourse analysis because discourse analysts help "to describe the culturally-shaped interpretive principles on which understanding is based" and "help answer questions about social relations" (Johnstone *Discourse Analysis* 6, 7). As a Victorian, Carroll lived in a culture of perpetual crisis that was rooted in many changes: The rise of science combined with religious infighting creating a crisis of faith, industrialism stimulated the rise of a new middle-class that pushed the working-class farther into poverty, the Victorian Sages were dying off without apparent replacements, and there was a continual fear of Imperial decline (Peterson 373). In an effort to make sense of this rapidly changing world, the social elite held tightly onto the prevailing social order in order to maintain cultural stability. Ideologies of natural order, typically embedded within the rhetoric of science and technology, were intended to rationally interpret the world but were simultaneously used to maintain class, gender, and racial strata (Hughes 42-43). Naturally, these ideologies took root within the Victorian education system (Vaughan and

Archer 62) and were frequently expressed in popular periodicals.¹⁷ All these cultural and intellectual changes pushed Victorians to firmly cling onto what they believed to be sure and unchanging—their position at the top of the global hierarchy.

As an upper-middle class child, Alice rarely experienced life as a Victorian outsider, the “other.” However, in order to force her into that position, Carroll begins her adventure at home, a place where children’s social identities and ideologies are formed and embody entrenched Victorian values. Gaston Bachelard’s perspective on home as cosmos offers a noteworthy lens for interpreting why Carroll uses the home as the starting location for Alice’s journey through the looking-glass portal. Bachelard suggests that home is “our corner of the world ... it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word” (4). Surrounded by their governesses and older siblings, the home served as the Victorian children’s “first universe” in which they spent most of their time and were socially and ideologically groomed, learning to situate themselves within the Victorian world.¹⁸ Any space, like the home, “can be seen as constructed out of the multiplicity of social relations across all spatial scales, from the global reach of finance and telecommunications, through the geography of the tentacles of national political power, to the social relations within the town” (Massey 4). For children living in the regulated Victorian world, the home became their personal spatial location that

¹⁷ For more on being a reasonable Briton, see “Definition of a Reasonable Man” in *Philological Society* (1817), “Early Risers” in *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, and Science* (1866), “Sins Against Health” in *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, and Science* (1865), “Art. III—Woman” in *Calcutta Review* (1870), “A Woman’s Thoughts About Women” in *The Christian Remembrancer* (1858).

¹⁸ For further reading about childcare see “Nurseries” in *The Monthly Magazine* (1837), “The Holy Homes” in *Sharpe’s London Magazine of Entertainment and Instruction for General Reading* (1856), John Stewart’s “English Homes: As They Are, And May Be, in Furnishing and Decoration” in *Art Journal* (1859), “Management of the Nursery” in *Macmillian’s Magazine* (1862), “Softly, Sweetly, Proceeds the Hymn of Home” in the *Novel Review* (1873).

introduced them to the “ever-shifting geometry of social/power relations” (Massey 4). With this in mind, it can be supposed that Alice’s upbringing introduced her to the dominant cultural and social mores in Victorian society.¹⁹ Alice’s knowledge and perspective of the world and her place in it become important factors as she tries to interact with the Looking-Glass inhabitants.

In an effort to judge her understanding of reality against whatever reality might be on the other side of the mirror, Alice compares both rooms to codify her knowledge and analyze the Looking-Glass world. This codification is a child-like attempt to logically interpret and assess both worlds through reason. Alice chatters to her kitten about her curiosities:

I want so much to know whether they've a fire in the winter: you never *can* tell, you know, unless our fire smokes, and then smoke comes up in that room too—but that may be only pretence, just to make it look as if they had a fire. Well then, the books are something like our books, only the words go the wrong way; I know that, because I've held up one of our books to the glass, and then they hold up one in the other room. (Carroll 142)

The influences of Victorian reason are apparent as Alice logically sorts through her knowledge first instead of impulsively climbing through the mirror. While this sorting is paired with imagination, it also enables her to examine her own childlike internal curiosities and apprehensions. Such chattering becomes the first, real attempt to classify her knowledge, a necessary step to affirming her worldview.

¹⁹ For more on educating women see “Art. IV. – The Education and Influence of Woman” in *The Eclectic Review* (1857).

Children ask questions to not only gain knowledge but to make sense of the world. And in this instance, Alice is doing both. Her dialogue with her kitten demonstrates “the ways people talk about themselves have to do with the particular selves they are creating and expressing in narrative” (Johnstone *The Linguistic Individual* ix). Even though Alice does not explicitly talk about herself, the fact that she speaks to herself out loud represents an attempt to situate herself within the Victorian world. Therefore, this act is also her first move towards defining herself within her world. Despite the fact that she can only compare the features and events within the other drawing-room to her own experiences—when *her* fire smokes, there is smoke in the other drawing-room—she uses dialogue, imagination, and reason to try to understand how both worlds function.

In her search for shared likenesses, the similarities of the Looking-Glass world to her own Victorian world provide a kind of familiarity that stimulates curiosity rather than suppressing it. Because she sees similarities between both worlds, Alice believes she can interpret the Looking-Glass world through her own Victorian ways of making meaning and communication. In this sense, the Victorian worldview acts as a template upon which she superimposes every new impression of the world. This perspective would not be unusual since the “political realities of the nineteenth-century [were] ... based on the images of sharing; a nation consisted of people with a shared culture, a shared history, and a shared language” (Johnstone *The Linguistic Individual* ix). Thus, the power of Victorian culture affected Alice’s sense of reality and her methods of interpretation.

Without the shared images Alice would not have entered the Looking-Glass world; instead, her assessment of the world’s safety is dependent upon its familiarity with

Victorian drawing-rooms. Bakhtin writes, “[W]e envision this ‘world at large’ through the prism of the concrete social milieu surrounding us” (3). Because the Looking-Glass drawing-room has the physical presentations of Victorian interior design and furniture, Alice finds the Looking-Glass House welcoming and safe, even though it is shrouded in a bit of mystery. As well, the shared likenesses mislead Alice to believe that the Looking-Glass world will function like the Victorian world. This explains why Alice does not anticipate the nonsense and confusion that she experiences once she climbs through the mirror. It never occurs to her that this new world may be “backwards” even though the reversed mirror images act as a forewarning.

Since Alice is able to create a new reality through her utterances, Carroll’s rhetoric suggests that knowledge can be acquired despite bypassing Reason and Fact. In the beginning of chapter one, Alice implicitly articulates her desire to imagine when chattering to her kitty about her ideas on the Looking-Glass house. She explains that she can only see a little bit of the other house while standing on the chair, but she really wants to see more (142). It is then that Alice decides to “pretend there’s a way of getting through it”; however, she is not able to see that the mirror is passable until she begins climbing onto the chimney-piece and says aloud “let’s pretend the glass has got all soft like gauze” (143). At that moment, Alice realizes that the mirror has changed: “Why, it’s turning into a sort of mist now, I declare! It’ll be easy enough to get through—... And certainly the glass *was* beginning to melt away, just like a bright silvery mist” (143). The act of speaking aloud her intention to pretend creates a new reality—a world devoid of Victorian Reason and Fact-based knowledge—in which Alice is given the opportunity to explore and apply her understanding. Imagination, then, becomes a learning space for

Alice to modify or challenge the social identity and ideologies she has learned while growing up.

Alice's ability to speak her imaginative reality into being recasts questions about how identity and knowledge are constructed. Her very utterances—"let's pretend the glass has got all soft like gauze" (143)—have spoken into *being* the reality of the Looking-Glass world. This is possible because "[p]eople bring worlds into being by talking, writing, and signing" (Johnstone *Discourse Analysis* 33). Language becomes the means of creation. It takes the implausible and makes it plausible since language "is inherently powerful in creating and sustaining realities" and becomes "the medium through which personal meaning and understanding are expressed and socially constructed in conversation" (Lee 462). As with make-believe, children are seeking new, individualized experiences that separate themselves from the real worlds they live in and the people with whom they must live and interact. Therefore, imagination becomes a vehicle for creating identity, separate from the one conferred upon them by their siblings, their parents, their schoolmates, etc. From this perspective, I interpret Alice's ability to enter the Looking-Glass world as her own means of creating for herself a life story and identity that is uniquely her own; she creates agency that allows her to determine who she is and how she will act.

The process of transitioning from an actual reality to a new, imaginative reality allows Alice to develop her own identity as she merges the two worlds together. Once she climbs through the mirror and finds herself in the Looking-Glass House, her language reinforces the merging of her imagination with reality. The narrator explains,

The very first thing she did was to look whether there was a fire in the fireplace, and she was quite pleased to find that there was a real one, blazing away as brightly as the one she had left behind. ‘So I shall be as warm here as I was in the old room,’ thought Alice: ‘warmer, in fact, because there'll be no one here to scold me away from the fire. Oh, what fun it'll be, when they see me through the glass in here, and can't get at me!’” (144)

Before climbing through the mirror, Alice does not seem to grasp that the Looking-Glass House is only a reversed reflection of her drawing-room. In immediately looking for a fire in the fireplace Alice checks her knowledge of reality against the “reality” of the Looking-Glass drawing-room. Satisfied that there is a fire, which makes sense to her, she becomes confident that she is not pretending. The setting Carroll creates suggests that Alice is only free to question and examine her understanding of reality outside of the presence of adults or guardians; she must be alone to discover her world and her self. Furthermore, it is when she is alone that she can create by using language and defy the social definitions and constraints placed upon it by Victorian society.

The switch between imagination and reality is typical in young children, and this seamless, sliding continuum allows for the growth of Alice’s “individual voice” shaped by her linguistic choices and her interaction with the world around her (Johnstone *The Linguistic Individual* 142). Despite climbing through the mirror, an act Alice should logically know is impossible, she still believes that she is in England and happily declares that others in the (real) house “can’t get at me!” (143). Because of the heavy constraints placed on Victorian children—most especially being seen and not heard—Alice would

not have been free to develop her individual voice and perceptions within the presence of adults.²⁰ Instead, the Looking-Glass world offers her the chance to interact with its environment in a dynamic way that would have been denied her in the Victorian world. Perhaps more importantly, the Looking-Glass world becomes the space in which Alice must redefine her sense of self and interact in ways she never would have believed possible. This redefinition requires that Alice, as an outsider, assume the role of “Other,” a position Victorians believed they should not have to take. Thus, because of the entrenched ideologies within her home, her very corner of the world as Bachelard notes, it becomes necessary that Alice be forced into another location.

After examining the Looking-Glass drawing-room, Alice decides to explore the rest of the house, presuming there is a garden based on the shared similarities within the drawing-rooms. Speaking with confidence “Let’s have a look at the garden first!” (150), Alice makes her first mistake by assuming the houses are identical. The images of sharing gives Alice confidence, and she does not anticipate the “backwardsness” of the Looking-Glass world. After Alice finds a hill with enough height to fully view the garden path, she begins to walk the garden path assuming that she knows the direction into the garden:

‘and here's a path that leads straight to it—at least, no, it doesn't do that – ‘
 (after going a few yards along the path, and turning several sharp corners),
 ‘but I suppose it will at last. But how curiously it twists! It's more like a
 corkscrew than a path! Well, *this* turn goes to the hill, I suppose—no, it

²⁰ For more information about Victorian child-rearing, see “Negative Goodness,” in *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art* (1868).

doesn't! This goes straight back to the house! Well then, I'll try it the other way”’. (156)

Her attempt to get to the garden is predicated upon her belief that what she *saw* from the hill would be reality once she walked the path. Because she saw a path to the garden, she naturally assumed that it would take her there. Alice’s lack of success navigating to the Looking-Glass garden becomes the first clue that she is in a world vastly different from her own, yet she does not fully recognize how this will affect her exploration.

Alice soon realizes that her knowledge cannot be seamlessly applied in this new world. Although the path to the garden seemed straightforward, Alice found that it was not so. Again and again she tries to walk the path to the garden; however, regardless of the path she takes, she always ends up back to the house (156). In fact, she finds that all her attempts of *knowing* the paths and the directions in which they lead are wrong. Alice tries and tries again to sort through and assess her knowledge of garden paths by walking the path up and down. The narrator explains, “[W]andering up and down, and trying turn after turn, but always coming back to the house, do what she would” (156). It is not until she sees the hill again that Alice assumes she must restart, but instead of restarting, Alice “came upon a large flower-bed, with a border of daisies, and a willow-tree growing in the middle” (157). These changes in directions—with Alice trying to go one way and the path leading her into another way—illustrate a connection between Alice’s mind, her decisions, and what actually happens. Every time Alice consciously decides to walk one direction, she is taken someplace else. It is only once she mentally agrees to start over that she arrives at the garden. This suggests that Alice must relinquish and abandon the definitiveness in her interpretations of how the Looking-Glass world functions. The

Looking-Glass world almost seems to fight against Alice's attempts to assume how it functions.

Alice's inaccurate assumptions confirm that what she sees as reality does not actually function as reality. Johnstone asserts, "Speakers can be *represented*, via descriptions or reconstructions of their speech, as making knowledge claims. One way in which people can be positioned as relatively powerless, for example, is by being forced or expected to express uncertainty about the claims they make" (*Discourse Analysis* 57). With the Looking-Glass world serving as a foil to Alice's knowledge, Carroll situates Alice as an outsider: She continually tries to use her knowledge of reality despite her failures to accurately assess the Looking-Glass world. This new Looking-Glass world is a different reality with its own invisible and visible boundaries that Alice must now learn to navigate anew.

Once Alice finds the correct way to the garden, she encounters her first Looking-Glass inhabitants, the flowers in their flowerbed. She neither recognizes that she is an outsider in a new world, nor does she expect her knowledge of Looking-Glass flowers to be incorrect. Applying her knowledge of the Victorian world to the situation, Alice speaks aloud, wishing that the Tiger-lily could talk. This assumption elicits a less than warm response: "'We *can* talk,' said the Tiger-lily: 'when there's anybody worth talking to'" (157). Although the oddity of the garden path should have indicated to Alice that things are not what they seem in this world, Alice did not expect talking flowers and "was so astonished that she could not speak for a minute: it quite seemed to take her breath away. At length ... she spoke again, in a timid voice—almost in a whisper. 'And can *all* the flowers talk?' 'As well as *you* can,' said the Tiger-lily. 'And a great deal

louder” (157). Alice’s commits this error because she does not yet recognize that similarly to her knowledge of reality, her discourse must be adapted as well. In this new world with a new audience—a magical, nonsensical one—Alice must reevaluate how she assesses the Looking-Glass reality.

If Alice is going to be a successful participant and become an insider, she will have to develop cognizance of her new reality. Much of the dialogue between Alice and the flowers, consuming nearly half of chapter two, allows Carroll to establish the constraints within which Alice must behave in order to empower herself within the terms of a world that refuses to mirror Victorian England predictability. As Alice and the flowers push back and forth in attempts to assert authority, the flowerbed, a microcosm of the Looking-Glass world at large, becomes a shared space where Alice and the flowers produce and receive communication solely interpreted through their respective worldviews. Doreen Massey explains it this way: “Places are shared spaces” and a place “must not be seen as made up of a number of different but connected *settings for interaction*” (137, italics in original). Because Alice interprets the Looking-Glass world through her knowledge—determined by Victorian reason and fact—she is astonished when the Tiger-lily spoke. She was not *expecting* it, just as she did not expect the Looking-Glass world garden path to seemingly switch directions, because in Victorian England flowers do not talk and garden paths do not change direction.

However, operating as insiders, the flowers do what they can to reaffirm their own power by critiquing Alice’s appearance and behavior. The Rose begins, saying, “It isn’t manners for us to begin, you know,” and adds, “Said I to myself, ‘Her face has got *some* sense in it, though it’s not a clever one!’ Still, you’re the right colour, and that goes a

long way'. 'I don't care about the colour,' the Tiger-lily remarked. 'If only her petals curled up a little more, she'd be all right'" (157). Immediately Alice is positioned as the outsider; she is judged for her color, facial expressions, and "petals"—criteria that are important to the flowers for determining likeness and similarity. These critiques offer insight into how the flowers define their community.

Community boundaries are important because "humans need ways to claim membership in a group and to show that they are thereby in some senses in symmetrical relationships with fellow group members" (Johnstone *Discourse Analysis* 130). Although not human, the flowers have their own social group, demarcated by the flowerbeds in which they grow. This physical boundary separates the flower community from the non-flowers, and as a community they are defined by the genus and sociolinguistic similarities they share. Although the flowers are confined to a flower bed, they do see themselves as a discourse community, a community determined by "the use of language, although bound perhaps by other ties as well, geographical, socioeconomic, ethnic, professional, and so on" (Bizzell 222). Discourse communities have various communities rules that define the boundaries of that community, and in many cases the act of discourse becomes one mean to defining the insiders from the outsiders.

As evinced in this dialogue, the flowers, like Alice in the drawing-room, base their criteria on their own interpretations of reality and perspective. This rhetorical dialogue reaffirms how people (or flower) groups have different, yet logical, frames of analysis that hinge upon context, worldview, and perspective. Just as Alice fails to evaluate the direction of the path from her perception of reason, so, too, the flowers fail to accurately discern Alice's physical features because she is not a flower. In addition to

Carroll illustrating insider-outsider binaries, this scene subverts Victorian perspective of their imperial power. Alice's status as "other" destabilizes popular Victorian perspectives of global hierarchy. Indeed, the flowers—perhaps metaphors of England's colonies—have their own insider rules that Alice must learn in order to achieve productive discourse.

While Alice's approach to discourse is systematic and mirrors the Victorian principles of polite conversation, her inability to engage in civil and courteous discourse implies that Victorian perspectives of social graces are relative to the insider-outsider boundaries in which they operate. The narrator explains, "Alice didn't like being criticised, so she began asking questions" (157) which is a logical transition away from the flowers' critiques to a new topic of discussion. Alice inherently realizes that she needs to learn about the flowers without first making assumptions about their world because doing so will give Alice the necessary information to create productive discourse. Alice begins this process by asking questions about the flowers' living environment: "Aren't you sometimes frightened at being planted out here, with nobody to take care of you?" The Rose answers that the tree in the middle protects them. Alice continues, "But what could it do, if any danger came?" Alice asked. "It says 'Bough-wough!'" cried a Daisy: "that's why its branches are called boughs!" "Didn't you know *that*?" cried another Daisy, and here they all began shouting together, till the air seemed quite full of little shrill voices" (157-158). Despite Alice's attempts to learn about the flowers and their environment, they have already drawn the boundaries between insider and outsider, and Alice has been firmly positioned as the unwelcomed outsider.

The flowers' firm community lines are their way of defining the context of their group without explicitly saying that she is an outsider who cannot gain entry. Furthermore, Her inability to communicate with them indicates that she may not be able to communicate with anyone in the Looking-Glass world, a reality that Alice certainly did not anticipate. For outsiders trying to gain entry into a new community, they must learn how to become insiders, and this is generally achieved through an insider helping the outsider learn the rules of the community. In Alice's dialogue with the flowers, she tries to figure out how to gain entrance into the flowers' community, but her attempts fail, and in the end Alice resorts to threats. As the daisies' continue to laugh at Alice's ignorance about life in a flower bed, the Tiger-lily demands silence and admits "“They know I can't get at them!’ ... ‘or they wouldn't dare to do it!’” The Tiger-lily's honesty seems to indicate that she is sensitive to Alice's plight. Alice capitalizes upon the Tiger-lily's comment, and hoping to gain the flower's favor, responds with ““Never mind!”” and “stooping down to the daisies, who were just beginning again, she whispered, ‘If you don't hold your tongues, I'll pick you!’” (158). Instead of giving up and letting the flowers ridicule her, Alice uses intimidation to gain influence. Like an empire taking respect from the indigenous people it occupies, Alice uses the power she does have to garner compliance. On the surface level, while the flowers may not willingly respect Alice, she is content with their fear. The deeper meaning to this tactic is that Alice seemingly hopes to gain an alliance with the Tiger-lily who might offer the knowledge that Alice seeks.

Threatening the daisies through intimidation garners their silence, which gives the Tiger-lily the peace and quiet she wants. Alice asserts the power she does have—the physical ability to pick flowers—to gain compliance. Johnstone writes, “In some

situations, power can be seen as something one subgroup or one person 'has' and the others do not: power comes with social status But power is also negotiable. People compete for the ability to make things happen" (*Discourse Analysis* 130). While intimidation is not the best way to achieve a symmetrical relationship with the flowers, Alice's threat creates an ally with the Tiger-lily, who *can* help her to enter into the community. After Alice's threat, the Tiger-lily responds, "'That's right!' ... 'The daisies are worst of all. When one speaks, they all begin together, and it's enough to make one wither to hear the way they go on!'" (159). Thus, Alice and the Tiger-lily become socially aligned, and Alice's threat becomes a familiar social activity that allows her to enter the flowers' discourse community (Gee *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis* 35).

Although Alice is able to establish some camaraderie with Tiger-lily, she attempts to gain insider status with the other flowers through compliments: "'How is it you can all talk so nicely?' Alice said, hoping to get the Tiger-lily into a better temper by a compliment. 'I've been in many gardens before, but none of the flowers could talk.'" The Tiger-lily, perhaps willing to aid Alice's transition from outsider to insider shares her knowledge with Alice and states that the flowerbeds must be "hard" enough to keep the flowers awake. However, the Rose and the Violet are less obliging to Alice's attempts at gaining insider knowledge. When Alice exclaims she had never thought of the hardness of the flowerbeds the Rose says in a "rather severe tone," "'It's *my* opinion that you never think at all' ... 'I never saw anybody that looked stupider,' a Violet said, so suddenly, that Alice quite jumped; for it hadn't spoken before" (159). Like the daisies, the Rose and the Violet insult to reassert their insider status, and they have no intention of welcoming Alice into the Looking-Glass community. The insults serve to build a boundary to keep

the outsider *outside*, and the flowerbed becomes divided with the Tiger-lily and Alice on one side and the Rose, Violet, and daisies on the other.

We can interpret Alice's questions as efforts to understand how flowers talk and live, yet she does not recognize the "rules" of the flowerbed or that the flowers' "discourse may be quite consciously designed for strategic purposes," such as putting Alice in her "place" (Johnstone *Discourse Analysis* 244). Instead, the Rose, Violet, and daisies' discourse reaffirms the boundary between Alice and the flowers, reminding her that inclusion is also determined by physical appearances. Like most discourse communities, the flowers hold fast to certain group identification criteria that include specific behaviors and appearances. These criteria are socially constructed ideologies that "describe how people ... will and ought to behave and interact with one another" (M. Hogg 209-210).

Alice's inability to fully connect with the flowers results in her hope to build a relationship with other members of the Looking-Glass world that are more like her. She asks the flowers, "Are there any more people in the garden besides me?" and learns from the Rose that there is "one other flower who can move about" like her (160). Alice eagerly assumes it is another little girl: "Is she like me?" Alice asked eagerly, for the thought crossed her mind, "There's another little girl in the garden, somewhere!" (160). Alice's eagerness to meet a little girl like her illustrates her desire to connect to the Looking-Glass world in a relatable way. She presumably hopes to have a similar communication style and knowledge that could not be achieved with the flowers. Marc Augé attests, "Language is not an insurmountable barrier; it is a frontier. Learning the other's tongue, or the other's dialect, means establishing an elementary symbolic relation

with him, respecting him and joining him; crossing the frontier” (xiv). In order for productive discourse, both parties need to willingly cross the frontier together as equals. However, the flowers’ behavior purposely devalues Alice’s personhood in their attempt to reaffirm their power. Alice experiences a power struggle as she tries to gain access to their community while they try to keep her out.

Alice’s inability to successfully communicate with the flowers causes her to seek out the Red Queen. Once Alice learns the other “flower” like her is the Red Queen, she decides “it would be far grander to have a talk with a real Queen.” In response, the Rose tells Alice ““You can't possibly do that,’ ... ‘*I should advise you to walk the other way*”” (160). Unaccustomed to taking orders from a flower, Alice dismisses the Rose’s advice and proceeds to find the Queen. The Rose’s use of the contracted verb “can’t” in response to Alice’s decision to “have a talk” with the Red Queen suggests that Alice is not capable of engaging in a conversation with the Queen. As a citizen under Queen Victoria’s reign, Alice will be familiar with the concept of the Queen rather than talking flowers, and perhaps she can engage in productive dialogue with her. As well, Alice’s Victorian worldview assumes that the Red Queen has power in the land and will provide Alice with the answers she seeks. Alice’s reaction is not surprising given her inability to subordinate herself to the flowers’ knowledge. Despite Alice’s best intentions to seek out the Queen, “lost sight of [the Queen] in a moment, and found herself walking in at the front-door again” (160). Her unwillingness to take directions from the Rose—literally and figuratively—reaffirms her reluctance to approach the Looking-Glass world as an outsider. Evident in the Rose’s statement, she knows how to navigate both the Looking-Glass topography and the discourse, unlike Alice who would travel in the wrong direction

and most likely offend the Queen. Nevertheless, like an explorer hopping from one curiosity to another, Alice seeks out what interests and intrigues her regardless of her inexperience and naiveté.

Despite Alice's naïve assumption that she can talk with the Red Queen, the conversation between Alice and the Red Queen nods at Victorian fears of imperial decline. Because Carroll positions Alice as the powerless outsider, he challenges her perception of global hierarchy. At seeing Alice, the Queen commences with pleasantries and orders: "'Where do you come from?' ... 'And where are you going? Look up, speak nicely, and don't twiddle your fingers all the time'" (161). The Red Queen's questions indicate that she immediately recognizes that Alice is not from the Looking-Glass world, and she acts accordingly. She does not wait to be spoken to like the flowers did, and her orders force Alice to subordinate herself to a foreign ruler. Alice "attended to all these directions" and explains that she had lost her way. Without thinking, Alice's benign use of the possessive "my" elicits an antagonistic response from the Queen: "'I don't know what you mean by *your* way,' said the Queen: 'all the ways about here belong to *me* — but why did you come out here at all?' she added in a kinder tone" (161). Issues of empire and power structures surface in this exchange, and the Queen's vigorous response to Alice's possessive use of "my", a natural form of speech, indicates that insider-outsider binaries are more complicated than just creating polite conversation and obtaining directions. Carroll's rhetoric implicitly suggests that Alice is a representation of empire-as-child, a child who believe she is on equal footing with the Red Queen.

As the Red Queen continues to order Alice to curtsy, to open her "mouth a little wider," and to "always say 'your Majesty,'" Alice is clearly put in her place (161).

However, she still tries to interact as an equal by explaining her intention to see the garden. Immediately, the Queen cuts her off by contradicting her notions of reality: “[T]hough, when you say ‘garden’—*I’ve* seen gardens, compared with which this would be a wilderness.”” The Red Queen’s contradictions continue as she challenges every observation Alice makes. Finally when the Queen states that she’s seen hills that would be “in comparison with which you’d call that a valley,” Alice refutes the Queen’s logic. Alice says, ““a hill *ca’n’t* be a valley, you know. That would be nonsense—”” (162). This exchange, with the Queen interpreting life via the logic of the Looking-Glass world and Alice relying upon Victorian perceptions of reason and fact, becomes a cultural clash as each character asserts dominance.

Although Alice is a bit surprised at “contradicting her at last,” she seems to believe that declaring her perspective is a necessary act that outweighs whatever consequences might happen (162). Demonstrated in this conversation is how language furthers or challenges ideology. Bakhtin suggests, “Any ideological product is not only itself a part of a reality (natural or social), just as is any physical body, any instrument of production, or any product for consumption, it also, in contradistinction to these other phenomena, reflects and refracts another reality outside of itself” (1-2). The semantic shift that Alice must reckon with when conversing with the Red Queen explicitly refracts her knowledge of the world, and forces Alice to adjust to the logic of the Looking-Glass characters no matter how frustrating it might be. Instead of considering the Red Queen’s perspective, Alice automatically brushes it aside as an invalid perspective, as many Victorians would have done in her stead. Challenging the Red Queen and engaging in what is nothing more than a linguistic chess game of contradictory perspectives, Alice

attempts to reassert her knowledge with the hopes of either gaining the Queen's respect or reclaiming her global position.

The relationship between positionality and empire becomes evident once Alice realizes that the very topography of the Looking-Glass world is itself constructed like a chessboard. The narrator explains that while standing with the Queen, Alice spent several minutes surveying the Looking-Glass world. She sees that brooks and hedges were positioned so that "squares" were made of the ground. Considering the scene for a few minutes, she finally exclaims, "It's a great huge game of chess that's being played—all over the world—if this *is* the world at all, you know. Oh, what fun it is! How I *wish* I was one of them!" (163). Wishing to be a chess piece, Alice willingly thrusts herself into a game predicated upon winning and losing, power and subordination, the conquering or being conquered.

Even though Alice does recognize that she cannot begin the game as a Queen, being the Queen is her ultimate goal, a strategic move for Alice to gain the power and respect she believes she deserves. Alice remarks to the Red Queen, "I wouldn't mind being a Pawn, if only I might join—though of course I should *like* to be Queen, best" (163). Although a latent phrase, and tacked on to her original thought, Alice instinctively knows being Queen is the best option to "win the game." Her desire to be Queen, the most powerful chess piece, indicates her understanding of power structures and positionality. Massey states, "Different classes in society are defined in relation to each other the spatial structuring of those relationships—the relations of production—which are unequal relationships and which imply positions of dominance and subordination" (87). Alice knows there are only two Queens in a game, and they are the

most powerful chess-pieces that can move in any direction and move any number of squares; whereas, the Pawn can only move one square at a time and only attack on a diagonal.

Like most children, Alice must be continually reminded to adjust her perspective. She has not grasped that the Looking-Glass world does not operate like Victorian England, but this realization is very difficult to remember. Before Alice can adjust to her new place in the chess game, the Red Queen grabs her hand and they run while the “Queen kept crying ‘Faster! Faster!’ but Alice felt she *could not* go faster” (164). Upon realizing that they had been running faster and faster without actually going anywhere, Alice explains, “‘Well, in *our* country,’ said Alice, still panting a little, ‘you’d generally get somewhere else—if you ran very fast for a long time as we had been doing.’” However, the Queen counters, “‘A slow sort of country!’ ... ‘Now, *here*, you see, it takes all the running *you* can do, to keep in the same place’” (165). This is the first time Alice verbalizes the differences between her world and the Looking-Glass world, no longer conflating and confusing the two. I assert it is at this point she is cognizant that the Looking-Glass world is not just a curiosity, as she experienced when talking to the flowers, but it is a place with weirdly different rules and actions. Carroll’s use of the italics to emphasize “our” and “here” positions Alice as the dominant, ethnocentric Victorian judging the world. As well, the here versus there mentality creates a tug-and-pull between Alice and the Red Queen as Alice tries to judge the Looking-Glass world through Victorian English perspectives and the Red Queen defends her own world.

Alice’s utterances create the Looking-Glass world and provide the necessary alternate reality to challenge her knowledge and sense of self. This challenge must

happen outside of her home and away from the Victorian world because “[i]ndividualistic confidence in oneself, one’s sense of personal value, is drawn not from within, not from the depths of one’s personality, but from the outside world” (Bakhtin 5). Being forced to experience her adventures as an outsider unnerves Alice’s perspective of reality and knowledge. Carroll knows too well the entrenched ideologies on the English home front; only by experiencing life outside of one’s comfort zone can real identity construction begin. Therefore, it is imperative that Alice is an outsider in the Looking-Glass world because this position forces her to experience a vastly different Truth—one situated in nonsense—that contradicts her own Victorian ideologies. As a Victorian child growing-up in a culture of English ethnocentric, imperial worldview, Alice superimposes her sense of reality onto the Looking-Glass people and exchanges. Despite being billed as a children’s story, *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* is more than just that. It serves to mirror real-life cultural exchanges and conflict British citizens would have experienced when traveling abroad or relocating to a new colonized land.

Praxis: The First-Year Composition Classroom as a Third Space

The practical application for this interpretation of Carroll’s story can be applied beyond the importance of rhetorically reading literary texts. Clearly, rhetorically reading literature can uncover new interpretations that benefit more than just literature faculty and students. For example, my reading of Alice and her adventures opens conversations about the interrelatedness of cultural studies, history, discourse, and sociolinguistics, just to name a few. Using multiple frames for reading enhances the richness of the interpretation and applicability of the reading. Aside from just the theoretical application, *Through the Looking-Glass* can offer pedagogical *praxis* for the classroom. While rhetorically reading

this story can elicit new presentations of critical literacy discourse, my analysis of Alice's interactions with the Looking-Glass inhabitants also illustrates the difficulties and complexities associated with applying Funds of Knowledge (FoK) literacies from one community to another. "The concept of funds of knowledge refers both to the content and to the social relationships that facilitate the exchange," Luis C. Moll explains (232). FoK encompasses the community-specific knowledge sets people have learned from lived experiences. They necessarily include discourse community-specific literacies, the ways of communicating and knowing how to live and interact in each community.

Particularly, Alice serves as an example of how FoK attained from one community affects how she integrates and relates with members of the Looking-Glass discourse communities. Alice has an especially difficult time recognizing and responding appropriately to the different literacies in the Looking-Glass world. This illustration can inform the complexities experienced within classrooms, and the subsequent difficulties students experience when bring their own FoK into an academic, yet constructed, setting. In an effort to minimize the challenges faced by students with various FoK is to identify the classroom as a third space where students FoK can be valued and utilized in classroom practices.

There is a direct application of FoK research to classroom practices—regardless of demographics or ethnicities. Because classrooms are constructed spaces inhabited by students and faculty with varied FoK, Moll suggests that there must be a way to offer resources to classrooms "in ways that are not only helpful to teachers and students but that in the same time benefit the households, contributing to the households' funds of knowledge" (228). Classrooms may be constructed spaces for learning, but each

participant, student and instructor alike, can contribute valuable FoK that benefits the space while also gleaning FoK that they can take back to their communities.

Too often, as Moll and others have noted, classrooms function as a compartmentalized vacuum without integrating FoK from the outside world—or even the FoK that students bring with them into the classroom. What Vélez-Ibáñez and Moll fail to note is the difficulties associated with applying FoK outside of the home community. Even though Vélez-Ibáñez and Moll rightfully advocate for awareness of community-specific FoK, neither explain nor note how FoK may impede the integration of or adaptation to other communities. For example, what complexities or difficulties arise with the Latino families when they interact with unfamiliar ethnic groups or discourse communities? How do they apply their FoK to assess and respond to social, political, academic, religious, professional situations with members of different communities who carry different FoK?

Examining how Alice applies her FoK to the Looking-Glass world offers one example of the difficulties associated with adapting community-specific FoK to other communities. Because Alice has been raised with a particular upper-middle class Victorian FoK that directly affects her perception of the world and her place in it, she is an example worth studying. As evinced in the first two chapters of the story, she is familiar with household funds—the workings of a fireplace, the mirrors that reflect and create “pretense,” and game of chess—and expects these FoK to function similarly in the Looking-Glass world. As well, she knows how identify any differences that challenge or contradict her FoK.

In one example of such assessment, before Alice ventures through the mirror she

chatters to her kitten about her inquiries and interests in the Looking-Glass drawing-room, and the kitten serves as a silent participant that creates a constructed exchange that allows her to apply her FoK to this mirrored room. These actions are everyday practices that Alice engages with to process and reflect upon her FoK. Important to this process, is engaging in discourse—speaking aloud to the kitten—because it functions as a way to sort and file her knowledge. As Norma González, Luis C. Moll, and Cathy Amanti explain, “Practices are also constructed by and through discourses, the ways of knowing that populate our stream of talk” (“Introduction” 1). In an effort to explore her funds of knowledge, she looks through the mirror and talks out her questions aloud which aids her in discovering the similarities in her drawing-room and the mirrored drawing-room. She looks to see if the fireplace is smoking, or if the furniture is placed similarly. Alice’s efforts to understand the workings of the Looking-Glass house illustrate how she relies upon her household funds of knowledge to assess the world around her.

Despite her FoK, she has difficulty adapting to the Looking-Glass world and the new FoK needed to interact with the inhabitants and travel across the chessboard topography. Alice’s difficulty communicating with the residents demonstrates the social difficulties that arise from community-specific FoK. While the FoK as a Victorian female child from an upper-middle class home benefits her in that socioeconomic circle, the literacies associated with her FoK prevents her ability to smoothly transition from one world to another. As Carroll shows in his story, Alice commits a variety of errors and *faux pas* that inhibit her communication with the Looking-Glass characters: Her assumptions about the garden path impedes her entrance to the garden; she offends the flowers with her assumptions; and she treats the Red Queen as an Other. As evident in

the story, Alice's FoK provides only a narrow perspective of reality, namely that her literacies can be applied to understanding the Looking-Glass world, resulting in her maladaptation.

Like Alice's experiences in the Looking-Glass world, the management and facilitation of multiple FoK in a classroom can become especially challenging for faculty and students alike. The university classroom is a space where students learn to adapt to new FoK used in the academic discourse community. Moreover, they must also navigate the FoK of their peers. And such transitions can be difficult. Therefore, teaching students how to effectively utilize their literacies to adapt to various discourse communities becomes an important task. Moll explains, "We must think of literacy (or literacies) as particular ways of *using* language for a variety of purposes, as a sociocultural practice with intellectual significance" (237). The classroom does not function as an isolated vacuum. Instead, it is a constructed space that should be used to benefit students academically, professionally, and personally. The sociocultural literacies prepare students for their home life and the FoK associated with their communities while the intellectual significance aids students in their professional pursuits.

As is often the case, students leave their home FoK outside the classroom door because either they are unsure their FoK are valued, or they are convinced their FoK are inadequate. This is often the result of the FoK faculty rely upon or cater to. Linda Hogg asserts that many faculty "tend to recognize and draw on knowledge and experiences of white middle class children" while "*disadvantaged* students" remain "*disadvantaged by a fundamental lack of alignment between their own FoK and those of the teacher*" (667, italics in the original). Hogg believes that the underrepresented students' FoK do not

receive equal attention because those students are not members of the dominant discourse community. However, poorly represented FoK are not always a result of favoring one student population over another. As I have argued in this project, the ideologies valued in higher education often promote elitist literacies regardless of class status. Even if many rhetoric and composition faculty believe that academia is a middle class enterprise, the values of higher education and English studies are not necessarily aligned with the middle class. What Linda Hogg implies, I believe, is that the dominant literacies furthered within the classroom suggest that underrepresented students bring with them deficient FoK into the classroom. This deficit model suggests students not proficient in the dominant FoK must be cleansed and retaught.

As Moll et al. have shown in their research, classrooms remain removed from the communities and lives of Latino student populations. This observation can be applied to all academic spaces. Calling for the classroom as an inclusive space for FoK, Moll et al. write, “[C]lassrooms seem encapsulated, if not isolated, from the social worlds and resources of the community” (74). As Moll et al. noticed, classrooms in Tucson were not relying upon the knowledges and literacies of students’ home communities that affected the success of students used to gathering knowledge communally. This observation can also be applied to composition courses—as with any academic space. The agendas, course outcomes, and curriculum planned by composition program faculty can become too programmatic-focused. To aid student success in the classroom, pedagogical practices and programmatic decisions should consider and incorporate the outside world that students live and experience on a daily basis.

There is a disconnect between home literacies and academic literacies that

manifests itself through students' perceptions of academic writing, especially the rigor and instructor expectations. Lee Ann Carroll quotes Susanna, a student who "wrote on a self-assessment that college 'forces' student to change their writing." Susanna explains, "I felt like I had to change the way I was writing in order to kind of fit the professor. I mean, I think this is true in English classes. Every professor is different and so you have to change however you're writing for that professor" (47). This example specifically illustrates Susanna's difficulty understanding the literacies needed in academic writing situations. As indicated in this quote, she struggles with intricacies of more complex writing and automatically assumes she must change who she is and how she writes. At this point, all she sees is that she must change who she is.

Additionally apparent in Susanna's statement is a frustration and confusion over which FoK are needed for academic writing. Susanna's feelings are a representative view of many college students entering the composition classroom who believe they are forced to leave their writing styles—an entrenched part of their own identities—outside of the classroom door. I disagree with Lee Ann Carroll's conclusion that, "as a first step, they [students] must abandon their 'normal' ways of writing to adjust to the demands of a new environment and new roles (47). First, many composition students are not mentally, emotionally, and psychologically prepared to "abandon" what they believe are their normal ways of writing. Second, students oftentimes do not understand why their ways of writing are incongruent with academic conventions and expectations. While Lee Ann Carroll explains that "later in their college careers" students may understand their professors' expectations as genre or disciplinary conventions necessary for successful integration into a particular academic community, I maintain that "later" is too late (L.

Carroll 47). First-semester students can learn how academic communities function and they will be more successful if they learn it earlier instead of later. Therefore, to aid student success in the classroom, pedagogical practices should consider and incorporate the outside world that students live and experience on a daily basis.

To value both household and academic literacies, pedagogies should include classroom practices and curricula that incorporate “lifeworld use values” (Zipin, Stellar, and Hattam 181). “Lifeworld use values” are FoK that aid and improve personal lives of those who are exposed to or taught them. Even though academic FoK must be taught to ensure students’ transition from academic outsiders to insiders, curricula and pedagogies should also find ways to value students’ FoK. Lew Zipin, Sam Stellar, and Robert Hattam assert there is a “pragmatic need to engage learners with, most importantly, an *ethical* imperative to honour their cultural-historical lives.” This vital aspect can be achieved “through knowledge content (curriculum) and ways of transacting knowledge (pedagogy) that resonates meaningfully with cultural use-values in people’s lifeworlds” (181). Pairing the teaching of FoK needed for academic success while simultaneously valuing the FoK from students’ lifeworlds not only prepares students for academe but challenges the deficit model often associated with student populations, especially those underrepresented and marginalized. FoK is transactional and situational, but it also must enhance—not replace—already established use values. Particularly for people who may be wary of academia and what it can offer, the classroom needs to be a space that does not compete with students’ FoK but enhances it.

Creating a FoK exchange within the classroom can be achieved by crafting the classroom space as a “third space” where students and faculty’s FoK can be equally

embraced. This hybridized space can function as a conceptual venn diagram with FoK overlapping to grapple with the messiness of everyday lifeworlds. Elizabeth Birr Moje et al. suggest the third space “demands looking beyond the binary categories of first and second spaces of the physical and social; ... the first and second spaces constructed in opposition to one another might be the everyday and the academic, primary and secondary Discourses” (42). Any FoK typically perceived in opposition or as separate from one another would qualify as constructed spaces that may need a third space. In the context of this chapter, primary and secondary discourses include household and academic FoK that may need a third space in order to engage in effective transactions and exchange.

The benefit of a third space is that “what seem to be oppositional categories can actually work together to generate new knowledges, new Discourses, and new forms of literacy. Indeed, a commitment to third space demands a suspicion of binaries” (Moje et al. 42). Therefore, the classroom as third space neither encourages competition between FoK, nor privileges academic literacies over household literacies. Instead, utilizing the classroom as a third space for student and faculty’s FoK alike can hedge the concerns raised by FoK researchers noted in this chapter: That household FoK and literacies are often underrepresented or devalued by dominant discourse communities and academic institutions. I am not suggesting that academic literacies and their FoK should not be prioritized in the composition classroom. I suggest, rather, that allowing the composition classroom to serve as a third space helps students learn to share their FoK while learning how to adapt those literacies to academe.

Helping Student Transition Their Funds of Knowledge Through Literacy-based Classroom Discussion and Writing Assignments

In *praxis*, rhetoric and composition faculty can integrate assignments that value students' FoK and literacies in order to aid their transition to academic literacies and FoK. For example, a first-year composition instructor may assign a literacy or discourse community sequence at the beginning of the semester to help prepare students for the academic communities they will enter while simultaneously valuing students' own literacies. For example, in my first-semester composition course, I teach a literacy map sequence that requires students to identify their home communities (see Appendix A). This sequence teaches students to articulate their own FoK as well as and learn about the literacies of discourse communities.

I introduce students to this sequence by teaching them about discourse communities and how discourse communities function as communities with explicit and implicit boundaries. Within communities there are "rules" about membership, including but not limited to clothing, ideologies, worldviews, common interests, location, traditions, etc., that help define insiders from outsiders. For example, as a member of the Fallout 3 discourse community, a first-person shooter XBOX game, I am familiar with the accessories (weapons, clothing, money), the places (Vault 101, Megatron), and the characters (the junkyard dog, the Enclave, the Brotherhood of Steel Scribes). Because I completed the game, I can speak with authority how to successfully finish. Insiders of this discourse community must be familiar with the literacies used in Fallout 3. While such boundaries that define Fallout 3 insider from outsider, these definitions are not necessarily malicious. Instead, the distinctions serve to construct a community between people who are likeminded (like those ascribing to a church or particular religious

beliefs), to productively achieve an end result (like the successful election of a political candidate), or to further culture and language (like an ethnic community practicing ancient traditions).

In order to help students grasp the idea of discourse community, as a class we identify different communities—World of Warcraft community, skateboarding community, Catholic church community—and how we know who belongs to such community (language, dress, location, etc.) and the implicit and explicit boundaries associated with each community. Essential to this sequence is asking students to pull from their experiences in their home and social communities. It is necessary for students to look inward at their own communities before they can identify and analyze the communities they are unfamiliar with, such as academic or professional communities. As well, this sequence allows for students to share their own literacies and FoK when describing their discourse communities within the classroom or in writing assignments. The following provides a brief explanation of my sequence.

Literacy Sequence Minor and Major Assignments

In this sequence there are two low stakes (or minor) writing assignments that require students to identify and define several discourse communities they are members of. The first low stakes assignment, Short Writing Assignment #1, is a memo describing four selected discourse communities. Student should describe in a) the members of the community, b) the types of communication (written verbal, or otherwise) used and valued, c) the typical words or phrases used by members, d) the physical or geographical boundaries of the community, and e) how an insider is different from an outsider. At the end of the memo, student reflect in two paragraphs to explain a) what they learned about

themselves and their communities that was unexpected or enlightening, and b) explain how a map can help class peers and the University of New Mexico community understand him/herself and their community membership. This memo simply intends for students to think about and articulate their community memberships.

The second low stake memo, Short Writing Assignment #2, asks students to reflect upon (1) how students' newfound understanding of discourse communities might help them understand the academic discourse communities at University of New Mexico, and (2) explain what academic discourse community(ies) students will need to become members of while at UNM as well as describe what students will need to do to figure out which FoK expected is of them. Finally, students reflect upon how this assignment helps them think of their world and the language(s) they use in a new, different, or interesting way.

The major assignment is a graphic, visual representation of four discourse communities students are members of. I encourage a spatial illustration of the relationships between communities—their similarities and differences linguistically, ideologically, topically, etc.—often represented via maps of the city, state, or world. For example, one student created a literacy map using the city map of Albuquerque. He selected communities that were located in various spots around the city based on where his family and friends lived. Other students prefer to create circles or charts showing relationships between communities. Imperative to each map is that students define the literacies of each discourse community; these literacies can include languages, texts, jargon, knowledge sets, skills, etc.

This first sequence not only teaches students about discourse communities, but it helps them learn to identify the literacies and knowledge associated with communities. Such skills are essential as students become members of communities they are unfamiliar with because they need to learn how to analyze the communities around them. The ability to recognize and articulate the literacies within their home communities is a necessary first step to productively assess and engage with more unfamiliar communities, such as those in academe. Helping students learn how to become members of the academic community teaches them to navigate academic literacies and the “demands of schooling” (Deans 69). Additionally, this literacy sequence values students’ own literacies and FoK. As students learn about discourse communities, they also learn that they have specialized knowledges to share with each other. Trading knowledge between classmates and the instructor gives them a sense of pride and agency about their communities. Furthermore, students and faculty in like communities can share FoK and expand upon their shared knowledge. Because classrooms are constructed spaces, situating them as third spaces encourages students’ transition into the academic community.

As a cultural artifact, *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* captures the conflict between discourse communities and the struggle to value literacies that are perceived as dominant. Additionally, it shows the complicated transition from insider to outsider as Alice experiences when her dominant discourse and way of seeing the world becomes topsy-turvy. As Alice attempts to move from outsider to insider, she must learn to navigate—literally and figuratively—the FoK that are entirely foreign to her. The difficulties Alice experience as she tries to transition from insider to outsider similarly illustrates how many students feel when they enter academe and a new set of

literacies and FoK. Like Alice, many college students must learn how to adapt to new academic and professional discourse communities and accompanying FoK. Faculty can help students transition smoothly. The composition classroom can become a third space where all FoK are valued and shared. This is not to suggest that academic literacies are not equally valuable or privileged. Instead, rhetoric and composition faculty can better prepare their students for academe by using students' home literacies as a stepping-stone to academic success.

Conclusion: Looking Forward

My aim in this dissertation is to provide new ways of talking about rhetoric in Departments of English and first-year writing classrooms. I blend literature, rhetoric, and composition discourses to denote how rhetoric and composition faculty might want to broach rhetorical theory with their literature and creative writing colleagues as well as their first-year students. In order for “outsiders”—that is, people unfamiliar with or resistant to rhetorical theory—to fully understand why rhetoric is important, rhetoric and composition faculty must find accessible methods for introducing it.

Literature and creative writing colleagues, and first-year students, may not know what “rhetorical awareness” means. Jo, Dracula, and Alice are apt examples for explaining the term because they exhibit varying degrees of rhetorical awareness. They all have varying skills to analyze the communities around them, the audience expectations, and the genres in which they must engage. These literary characters frame these chapters because their stories are accessible and relatable. Humans connect with stories, whether fictional or fact, and stories are powerful methods for conveying themes, topics, or messages that may otherwise go unheard or unnoticed.

While many rhetoric and composition faculty may already espouse the best practices I advocate for in my project, they are encouraged to adopt literary stories as new ways of illustrating, demonstrating, and articulating rhetoric and composition pedagogy. My hope is that through literary characters rhetoric and composition instructors, particularly those invested in first-year composition, can use Jo, Dracula, and Alice as case studies and models for Funds of Knowledge scholarship, the Celebration of Student Writing, rhetorical awareness, genre theory, sociolinguistics, and critical pedagogy.

First-year students are often a “needy” group who are scared, nervous, and overwhelmed by the university-level challenges before them. Many students are underprepared or incorrectly anticipate the expectations of academic communities. In light of the varying experiences and literacies students bring with them to campus, first-year composition can function as a space that either ushers students into the community or treats students as infected. Some rhetoric and composition faculty, like Lynn Z. Bloom, believe composition should be the place to “disinfect” first-year students. Bloom writes, “Like swimmers passing through the chlorine footbath en route to plunging into the pool, students must first be disinfected in Freshman English” (656). Bloom’s language furthers the deficit narrative that composition functions as the sole gatekeeper, granting composition with the responsibility to heal the infected and prepare them for academia. Such ideology reinforces the existence of a binary between valuable and invaluable literacies. As a result, teachers “are caught between a rock and hard place, between their commitments to egalitarianism and their commitments to intellectual discipline and achievement” (O’Dair 598).

Instead of espousing an “us versus them” perspective, rhetoric and composition faculty should continue to work toward helping first-year students learn how to become academic insiders. Rhetoric and composition faculty need to think carefully about the messages they are sending to students—about academic preparedness, about academic expectations, about valued literacies, etc. Linda Adler-Kassner articulates there needs to be a “crafted message” that consciously considers the implications of that message (142-143). She specifically refers to the message writing program administrators and

instructors are sending to society, politicians, stakeholders, and others, but crafting messages to students are equally important.

Likewise, rhetoric and composition faculty should work to craft the message to their English studies colleagues that rhetoric *does* matter. But this can only be achieved if rhetoric and composition faculty use the “language” their literature and creative writing colleagues do. In my experience as a student, teaching assistant, and graduate administrator in two different Departments of English, I have learned that non-rhetoric and composition faculty often feel ignored and unheard by rhetoric and composition. Rhetoric and composition faculty often use case studies, ethnographies, cross-institutional research and other methods for conveying tenets of the field. I do not believe such examples are accessible to all literature and creative writing faculty. Instead, I encourage rhetoric and composition faculty to pull examples from what their English studies colleagues know—literature—to best explain why rhetoric is important. The health, productivity, and future of English studies relies upon continued conversation, communication, and collaboration. Adler-Kassner notes that change and activism cannot happen without “listening—to what fires people up, what makes them mad, how they understand the world” (126). In English studies, literary texts remain the anchor of the discipline. One way to “hear” English studies faculty is to anticipate their needs and values. Adapting literary texts as a frame for composition *praxis* quite literally demonstrates that other English subfields are “heard” but that their literacies are accounted for, respected, and valued.

In the current economic climate English studies must find a way to remain relevant to stakeholders—parents, taxpayers, politicians, students, administrators—and

find creative methods for asserting that relevance. While many English studies faculty may resent or despair at the business model of education, as I have shown in chapter one and two, economics has influenced higher education for over a century. The business model will continue to affect how higher education is organized, financed, and perceived. If English studies hopes to compete with this model, and the accompanying emphasis on STEM majors, the discipline needs to productively work toward addressing the demands of the increasingly consumer-focused student population. English studies can reassert its relevance by adopting rhetorical and genre centered pedagogy in all classrooms and curricula. Rhetorical awareness and genre analysis serve as “umbrellas” to discourse community and Funds of Knowledge scholarship. For students to become productive and successful members of the academic and professional communities of their choice, they need transferrable skills that will teach them how to analyze, evaluate, assess, and communicate with the diverse communities on campus and off. English studies, and particularly composition courses, can apply these pedagogical methods so first-year students learn early in their academic careers how to fluidly transition between communities.

Finally, rhetoric and composition, literature, and creative writing faculty can collectively work together to change conceptions about English studies. Blending the best of both the literature and rhetoric and composition worlds will strengthen the discipline against the increasing challenges the field will continue to face. Perhaps some Departments of English may be so completely fractured that such cross-collaborations or common understandings may seem impossible to achieve. I submit that healing and collaboration *may* be possible if rhetoric and composition faculty work to include the

voices and literacies of English studies subfields in composition pedagogy and research. We should be willing to include the other voices in our own conversations; such cross-collaboration and interdisciplinarity may also help our students and other faculty gain a better understanding of the important work we do.

APPENDIX A

2011 Celebration of Student Writing Interview Questions

- What did you learn from the Celebration of Student Writing?
- What do you think you were meant to learn from the Celebration of Student Writing?
- Do you think this event is related to the learning outcomes from your course? (And how?)
- Did you gain anything from participating in the Celebration of Student Writing?

2011 Celebration of Student Writing Student Survey

1. What grade level are you? Select One.
 - High School
 - UNM Freshman
 - UNM Sophomore
 - UNM Junior
 - UNM Senior
2. Overall, I felt the Celebration of Student Writing (CSW) was (choose one):
 - Successful
 - Unsuccessful
3. Check all that apply. To work on our CSW project:
 - I (or my group) worked mostly in class
 - My group worked together outside of class
 - I worked alone outside of class
4. Check all that apply. Before the Celebration of Student Writing (CSW), I felt:
 - That I was part of the UNM community

- That my English class was a community
- That the UNM campus took an interest in me and my work
- That my teacher took an interest in me and my work
- Excited to show my work to the UNM community
- Excited to do something other than writing in a writing class
- Eager to work with my classmates
- Eager to see the work of other classes
- Apprehensive about doing group work and working with different people
- Nervous to show my work to the UNM community
- Confused as to the CSW's purpose
- Convinced the CSW was a bad idea

Optional Comment: Other Responses

5. Check all that apply. After the CSW, I felt that:

- My class project represented everyone's voice
- My voice and ideas were valued
- I learned about my peers
- I was part of the UNM community
- My class had created a sense of community
- Seeing other classes' projects was interesting
- I gained a new perspective on first-year writing at UNM
- My teacher took an interest in me and my work
- I learned more about working in groups and with different people
- Participating in the CSW taught me more about the writing process and writing

- Participating in the CSW has built community between my classmates, my instructor, and myself

6. Please rate the following statements “do not agree,” “somewhat agree,” “agree,” “strongly agree”:

- My teacher was enthusiastic about the CSW
- My teacher’s expectations about class participation in the CSW were clear
- I knew how I was being graded for my participation in the CSW
- My teacher gave us class time to work on our project for the CSW
- Our class project for the CSW was entirely up to us

7. What did you learn from the Celebration of Student Writing?

Comment Box

8. What do you think you were meant to learn from the Celebration of Student Writing?

Comment Box

9. Do you think this event is related to the learning outcomes from your course? (And how?)

Comment Box

10. Did you gain anything from participating in the Celebration of Student Writing?

Comment Box

Appendix B

English 101 Expository Writing: Sequence One Literacy Map

The Task

In this assignment, you will be presenting information that you are familiar with—your own literacy and discourse communities—in a way that might not be familiar to you: You’ll be creating a **map**.

What is a map? A map is a visual and verbal text that conveys information, often very complex information, to the people who view it. Consider this quote:

Maps are an important source of information from which people form their impressions about places and distributions. Each map is a view of the earth that affects the way people think about the world. Our thoughts about the space in which we live and especially the areas beyond our direct perception are largely influenced by the representations of space that we see, and the way we think about our environment influences the way we act within it. (Michael Peterson, “Cartography and the Internet: Implications for Modern Cartography”)

Purpose

The information that you will convey through your map has to do with your own discourse communities, and the literacy practices of those communities. The map you create will be both personal and public, because it will convey your impression of and interaction with the world(s) that you live, write, and communicate in.

Audience

Your audience for this map is your peers in this class and the rest of the UNM community, including other students, staff, and administrators. Think about how you want these people to understand you and where you come from. This map is both a geographic (shows relations between places) *and* a concept (shows relations between ideas) map. *Be creative!*

Assignments

There will be three assignments part of this sequence: Short Writing Memo (SWA) #1, an Annotated Bibliography, and the Local Issue Research Essay. This document includes all of the prompts and rubrics for the entire sequence. A rubric for each assignment can be found on page 5 and 6 of this document.

1. Short Writing Assignment Memo #1 (1.5-2 pages, single-spaced)

Due: On WebCT “Assignments” February 1 by 9:30am

Think about the various discourse communities that you belong to. You might think about these communities in terms of languages spoken, but even if you don’t have a multilingual background, you are still a member of a number of different communities with different communicative expectations. To refresh your memory about discourse

communities, re-read “Understanding Discourse Community And its Importance.” For this assignment, you will choose four discourse communities you are a member of and unpack the types of communication, words and phrases, the physical or geographical boundaries, and how an insider is identified from an outsider.

The format and content of the memo will follow this example:

MEMORANDUM (type this word at the top of the document in all capital letters)

DATE: Date Assignment is Due
 TO: Genesee Carter
 FROM: Your First and Last Name
 SUBJECT: Short Subject of the Memo

A two or three sentence statement explaining the memo’s purpose and contents.

Name of Discourse Community 1: Describe in a paragraph a) the members of the community, b) the types of communication (written verbal, or otherwise) used and valued, c) the typical words or phrases used by members, d) the physical or geographical boundaries of the community, and e) how an insider is different from an outsider.

Name of Discourse Community 2: Describe in a paragraph a) the members of the community, b) the types of communication (written verbal, or otherwise) used and valued, c) the typical words or phrases used by members, d) the physical or geographical boundaries of the community, and e) how an insider is different from an outsider.

Name of Discourse Community 3: Describe in a paragraph a) the members of the community, b) the types of communication (written verbal, or otherwise) used and valued, c) the typical words or phrases used by members, d) the physical or geographical boundaries of the community, and e) how an insider is different from an outsider.

Name of Discourse Community 4: Describe in a paragraph a) the members of the community, b) the types of communication (written verbal, or otherwise) used and valued, c) the typical words or phrases used by members, d) the physical or geographical boundaries of the community, and e) how an insider is different from an outsider.

Reflection: In two paragraphs explain a) what you learned about yourself and your communities that was unexpected or enlightening, and b) explain how a map can help your peers and UNM community understand you and your community membership.

A brief closing, indicate to Ms. Carter that if she has questions about the analysis, she may contact you. Include your email and cell phone number.

2. Short Writing Assignment Memo #2 (1-1.5 pages, single-spaced)

Due: On WebCT "Assignments" February 8 by 9:30am

The format and content of the memo will follow this example:

MEMORANDUM (type this word at the top of the document in all capital letters)

DATE: Date Assignment is Due

TO: Genesea Carter

FROM: Your First and Last Name

SUBJECT: Short Subject of the Memo

A two or three sentence statement explaining the memo's purpose and contents.

Section 1 (Create a Heading Name): Explain in a paragraph how your newfound understanding of discourse communities might help you understand the academic discourse communities at University of New Mexico.

Section 2 (Create a Heading Name): Explain in a paragraph or two what academic discourse community(ies) you will need to become a member of while at UNM (you might want to choose the community connected to your major or perspective career). Describe what you'll need to do to figure out how to become a member (think about written and oral genres, ways of communicating, behavioral patterns).

Reflection: How did this assignment make you think of your world and the language(s) you use in a new, different, or interesting way?

Outcomes: In a paragraph a) explain how you found information for this memo, b) how you evaluated what information to use for this memo, and c) what composition and presentation choices you made in this memo to meet the assignment requirements and Ms. Carter's expectations.

A brief closing, indicate to Ms. Carter that if she has questions about the analysis, she may contact you. Include your email and cell phone number.

3. Literacy Map

Due: February 15 by 9:30am in class

Create a map on a presentation board, thick display poster, or similar medium (should be rollable or foldable or digital) that spatially shows the relationship between the four discourse communities. You might want to **place your communities on an actual map** (or maps) of the city, state, country, or globe to represent how far removed each of your communities is from one another or where they actually exist. You should also think about how you might represent the similarity of discourse communities that are not close to one another in real space. For virtual communities, you should think about how to relate them to real communities.

Your map should include

- Your name
- Headings with names of each four communities
- Names and examples of literacies each community uses
- A map key helps your readers navigate the document and explains any visual symbols
- Visual relationship between communities (arrows, lines, circles, etc.)
- Visually pleasing design and image choices

RUBRICS FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS

Short Writing Assignment Memo #1

| Points Possible | Points Earned | |
|-----------------|---------------|--|
| 50 | | Content: The descriptions of each discourse community answer the questions in the prompt specifically and descriptively. |
| 20 | | Organization: Your paragraphs are reader-friendly: They are organized, don't jump around in thought, and include transitions between ideas. |
| 10 | | Style: The memo writing style and word choice is appropriate to your audience and rhetorical purpose. |
| 10 | | Format: The memo is in proper MLA format (see Purdue OWL), follows the memo format guidelines, and includes clear headers. |
| 10 | | Surface Features: There are few spelling, grammar, or typing errors. No errors lead to confusion. |

Short Writing Assignment Memo #2

| Points Possible | Points Earned | |
|-----------------|---------------|--|
| 50 | | Content: The descriptions of each discourse community answer the questions in the prompt specifically and descriptively. |
| 20 | | Organization: Your paragraphs are reader-friendly: They are organized, don't jump around in thought, and include transitions between ideas. |
| 10 | | Style: The memo writing style and word choice is appropriate to your audience and rhetorical purpose. |
| 10 | | Format: The memo is in proper MLA format (see Purdue OWL), follows the memo format guidelines, and includes clear headers. |
| 10 | | Surface Features: There are few spelling, grammar, or typing errors. No errors lead to confusion. |

Literacy Map

| Points Possible | Points Earned | |
|------------------------|----------------------|--|
| 40 | | Content: The literacy map comes with descriptions of four different discourse communities. Each discourse community is labeled on the map and correlated to the revised descriptions, which answer all the relevant questions about the discourse community from short writing assignment #1. |
| 35 | | Organization: The map shows the relationship between both places (geographic) and ideas (concept) and the communities represented on the map are labeled and placed at a distance or proximity to one another for obvious and intuitive reasons. |
| 15 | | Visual Features: Visual symbols (colors, pictures, etc.) show the bounds of each discourse community and the major types of communication and literacy required by those communities. There is a key for all visual symbols used. |
| 10 | | Surface Features: There are few spelling, grammar, or typing errors. No errors lead to confusion. |

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