Women, Men, and Academic Discourse

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WOMEN, MEN, AND ACADEMIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract

Women, Men, and Academic Discourse

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In the context of studies outlining differences in the psychosocial development of men and women, this thesis examines the evidence for differences between their writings. An analysis of the literature finds some differences in lexical choice, text organization, and content. In general, these differences in writing parallel the psychosocial differences between men and women outlined by various researchers, namely contrasting epistemological orientations which differ in their respective emphasis upon the values of autonomy and connection. However, the evidence for writing differences between men and women is at times contradictory, partly because many studies are restricted to the examination of isolated textual characteristics and partly because most studies are based upon the biological construct of sex (male and female) rather than upon the social construct of gender (masculine and feminine). These problems could be redressed by studies examining a range of writing characteristics as they correlate with differing genders and contrasting models of persuasion.

In the context of different theoretical constructs for teaching composition, this thesis also considers the degree to which a conflict may exist between the writing of some women and academic discourse. Although composition theory has undergone a dramatic shift over the past two and a half decades, the evidence indicates that orthodox practices which stress mechanical correctness, traditional organization, and an adversarial tone persist in many composition classrooms. Two cases are presented which highlight this conflict between theory and practice. It is argued that the potential for conflict between the writing of some women and what is taught as academic discourse is heightened in composition classes which emphasize traditional concerns. To redress this problem, it is proposed that composition instructors employ collaborative writing pedagogies as well as encouraging the development and use of innovative discourse forms where appropriate (while simultaneously helping students recognize how traditional forms function constructively in academia).
Dedication

I dedicate this work to all the women who have so kindly shared their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with me during my time as a crisis line volunteer. Although these women must, of necessity, remain nameless in this thesis, their stories underlie my motives for studying gender differences in writing. More than anything else, their circumstances have persuaded me that all of us — women and men, teachers and students — must work together, in whatever ways we can, to eliminate the inequities which all too obviously exist in our society. To these women I offer a heartfelt thanks for all that they have taught me. They must not be silenced.
Acknowledgements

So many people have contributed in various ways to the on-going genesis of this project that it is impossible to mention everyone. I apologize in advance for failing to mention all the people who have contributed in one way or another. Thank you, nevertheless.

In particular, I would like to thank the members of my supervisory committee, professors Richard Coe and Jaap Tuinman, whose patience and encouragement have helped to keep me on track both with my studies and with this thesis. Their suggestions and criticisms have profoundly influenced my work. I would also like to thank professors Don Wilson, Gordon Turner, Mylar Wilkinson, and Jim Howard of the Department of Languages and Literature at Selkirk College for permitting me to undertake a pilot study in their classes during the Autumn of 1988. And, of course, I would be remiss if I failed to thank the students at Selkirk College who took part in that study.

I also offer a collective thank you to Bill Stewart, Eileen Lennox, Susan Stevenson, and Doug Girling who have provided their support over the past three years in a variety of ways. Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Pat Baron, for her patience while I struggled with the various drafts and revisions of this thesis. Her criticisms and observations have been valuable in more ways than I can count.
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Exordium

The first strategy lies at the very heart of feminist theory, and is best illustrated in my own opening paragraph. I began not with a thesis, the traditional opening for this form of discourse, but with a self-disclosure. It is a very typical example of systematic self-disclosure in that its function is to situate the informant/speaker/writer/teacher as a subject engaged in a process with respect to a subject matter, rather than as an authority who has brought closure to by mastering the material. Naturally, the presentation of oneself as a subject, a person, is designed to engage students as equals insofar as they too are engaging in a process which will only be meaningful if they can find its connection with their own lives as subjects in the world. Acknowledging the dialectical relationship between the self and the material also legitimizes personal experiences for intellectual inquiry and allows women to begin to develop their own relationship to traditional subject areas.

— Fran Davis, “A Practical Assessment of Feminist Pedagogy” (1988, p. 2)

How and why did I, a 36 year old man, come to write a thesis examining sex differences in writing? To fail to address that question would be to leave this study sitting on shaky ground. Perforce, my experiences and motives underpin my choice of topic as well as my methods of dealing with the topic. So this introduction provides a personal context for my study: a context that I hope readers will bear in mind as they consider both the worth and shortcomings of this thesis.

I remember an incident from early in my years as an undergraduate when a professor raised the issue of sexual stereotyping in the plays of Shakespeare, only to be shouted down by several men in the class. I was puzzled by the ferocity of their response when the issue was raised merely as a possibility (and, indeed, a relatively minor digression from the central discussion). I could not understand why anyone would reject an idea without at least hearing it out. And I contrast this rejection with that same professor’s deep concern for another of her students who was too impoverished to feed herself while attending university. I remember with fondness that this professor included me in the discussion of how we could help this student.

I recall another professor who, several years later when I neared the end of my undergraduate studies, permitted me to enroll in her “Anthropology of Women” course. Having the previous experience of confrontation when the issue of sexism was raised, I was somewhat apprehensive that I might be placing myself in the position of being condemned for my sex. And so I was very quiet for the first few weeks of the course. My silence was, I think, a defense. I was both surprised and pleased to
discover that the course evolved in a way that was very very different from any other course I had taken in the past. Criticism was not lacking in the course, but it was constructive criticism, aimed not so much at winning arguments or proving points than at helping all of us examine our own attitudes and assumptions. This course, more than any other, taught me the value of sharing ideas and experiences rather than simply challenging them. And I remember with much fondness the woman who shared her life-story with me for one of the assignments in the course. I never really understood until then how different from one another the experiences of men and women could sometimes be.

These experiences (along with, I suspect, some childhood experiences) led me to realize that I must consider gender, both my own and that of my students, as a factor not only in how I teach, but also in what I teach. And so, as I started to teach college composition courses via distance education, I became increasingly aware that many men were quite comfortable with working in isolation while some women expressed discomfort with that arrangement. This discomfort was alleviated, to some degree, by arranging conference calls and occasional group meetings with those women. From there it seemed a natural progression for me to articulate a "Women's Literature" course for those students who might want an alternative to the usual first-year literature course (even if it now seems to me that the resulting course was a peculiarly masculine approach to teaching Women's Literature — which I suspect the students recognized even if I didn't).

I suppose by this time the conception of sex differences in writing had assumed the status of an idea in my mind. Beyond being an "interesting" idea, however, my sense of the scope and gravity of the issue was limited. My response to writing that did not narrowly match what I understood to be the academic form and method was to point out how the "deficiencies" could be corrected, without reference to any of the writer's personal and social contexts that might cause or require different forms and methods. My experiences after I began my graduate work at Simon Fraser University as well as my experiences coordinating the SFU crisis line have made me all too aware of just how limited my understanding was.

I felt very much like a foreigner — an outsider — when I moved to Vancouver to attend SFU, likely because I had lived much of my life in the small town of Nelson where I attended Notre Dame University. This disconcerting sense of being an outsider was almost certainly heightened by my shift from English to Education. The differences between the conventions, methods, and concerns of English and Education led me, at times, to wonder if I was speaking a subtly different language. Again, my initial response was to be silent, to listen and see if I could learn the academic "dialects" peculiar to the
Faculty of Education. And, of course, I did learn the discourse (although I suspect I still have an odd accent). I became *polyphonic* (perhaps all the more so after teaching writing in the School of Engineering Science at SFU).

These experiences of being an outsider, of being silent, were valuable as I began to study the literature about sex differences and writing. When various commentators related accounts of some women being silenced, of being on the margins of academia, I could at least empathize with the feelings of those women even if I could never experience the full reality of their situations (my silence, after all, was a self-imposed strategy). My initial ideas about sex differences evolved in the light of my personal experiences. I began to realize that discourse which did not match the expected academic form was not necessarily “deficient”, that social and personal contexts were necessarily implicated in the choice of rhetorical form. More importantly, I became convinced that what I am studying matters.

Just how much it matters has been driven home, all too forcefully, by my work on various crisis lines over the past five years. I have heard too many accounts from women who have been sexually harassed, physically battered, and emotionally abused by men to believe that violence against women is a rare phenomenon in our society. Violence against women, in its various manifestations, however subtle, is pervasive and systemic. And it is deplorable. What started as simply an “interesting” idea has evolved into a political conviction — academia must change, men must change. If I, as a white, heterosexual, working-class man, can contribute in some small way to transforming my own community with this thesis then I have accomplished something worthwhile.

Sexism, although undeniably a problem for women in the academy, is more accurately understood as a problem of men. Women should not be forced to confront men in order to achieve equality. As men we have a profound responsibility to work toward changing ourselves and the institutions in which we participate. But we should not conceive of that responsibility as simply some altruistic or noble concession for women. Such a conception is misguided so far as it actually disempowers women. Both academia and academic men stand to gain by opening the canon to alternative forms of discourse, to alternative ways of thinking and researching. Indeed, this thesis is addressed to four distinct groups:

1. *To writing instructors* who, if they hope to teach in a manner which does not inadvertently discriminate against some of their students, need to learn more about the complexities of sex and gender (as well as about issues of ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, etc.);
2. *To feminine individuals* (of either sex) who, at times, may find the formal requirements of certain types of academic discourse alien and/or excessively limiting to what they wish to communicate;

3. *To masculine individuals* (of either sex) who, if they fail to recognize the limitations of certain conceptions about what constitutes “truth” or knowledge, may find their own personal and professional development constrained;

4. *To the academic community* which, insofar as it fails to recognize the value of encouraging a diversity of methods and forms in the search for “truth”, will not optimally fulfill its mandate of generating, testing, and communicating knowledge.

An ambitious undertaking, no doubt, and a risky one at that. Such contradictions as exist in this thesis are perhaps a result of my attempt to address the diversity of interests and approaches which exist in academia. In the words of Walt Whitman: “Do I contradict myself? / Very well then I contradict myself, / (I am large, I contain multitudes)” (1974, p. 1774). You also perhaps contain multitudes — both individually and as members of the academic community.

And so, as you read this thesis, I ask that you do so in a somewhat different way than you might usually read academic discourse: analyze the ideas, certainly, but more importantly, consider how they relate to your experiences, and most importantly, decide what you are going to do about establishing equity in our society.
Chapter One: Psychosocial Correlates of Sex Differences in Writing

If sex equality is what we want, then, knowing what we do, we must start to worry less about the sameness of the education of girls and boys, women and men, and more about its equivalency.

We must also start to worry more than we have in the past about trait genderization. Otherwise we can expect females to continue to be caught in the middle of a war between educational goals and processes based on the assumption that sex is a difference that makes no difference, on the one hand, and cultural images and expectations that assume sex is the difference that makes a difference, on the other.

— Jane Roland Martin, Reclaiming a Conversation (1985, p. 36)

Polemical Introduction

Women and men sometimes behave differently – psychologically, socially, and linguistically. Although hardly a surprising, or even an original observation, it is one which must be persistently asserted because it poses problems of both truth and justice in terms of how we construct our social institutions, our professional communities, and our personal lives. Over the past several thousand years the differences between the sexes have generally been realized through relations of status and power, through subordination and domination. Historically, women have been variously characterized as constitutionally weak, intellectually immature, morally deficient, and idle gossips (Bullough, 1974). Although some might be tempted to simply dismiss these characteristics as misogynistic stereotypes more typical of cultures or times less “enlightened” than our own, within the academic discourse community, at least, most are willing to examine the degree to which these or similar attitudes might still persist. To do otherwise, of course, would be to risk perpetuating them – as well as the injustice and untruth which they assuredly represent.

Silence, invisibility, marginalization – these themes pervade the writing of feminist scholars as the titles of their works indicate: On Lies, Secrets, and Silence (Rich, 1979), Becoming Visible (Bridenthal & Koonz, 1977), Women of Academe: Outsiders in the Sacred Grove (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988). The noted lesbian poet and scholar, Adrienne Rich, suggests that for women silence has “a presence / it has a history / a form / Do not confuse it / with any kind of absence” (1978, p. 17). This absent presence is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the too often unquestioned assumption that has posited the white, heterosexual, middle-class male as the norm in cognitive, developmental, and personality psychologies – psychologies which underpin much of the theory of education and composition practice.
Despite the considerable research into sex differences undertaken during the past two decades, composition researchers have often ignored it as a significant variable. Scardamalia and Bereiter's survey "Research on Written Composition" in the 1986 *Handbook of Research on Teaching* mentions none of the research into sex differences and writing. Of the 206 references cited in their survey, not one is centrally concerned with the issue of sex differences. Similarly, in his 369 page survey *Research on Written Composition*, Hillocks devotes only half a page to considering the issue of sex differences in writing (1986, p. 71). As the philosopher, Jane Martin, notes:

The general expectation that any educational theory worth recording is readily accessible in books or academic journals becomes unreasonable when the objects or subjects of educational thought are considered marginal. Marginal people do not normally have access to established channels of communication, and those channels rarely give equal time to topics concerning marginal people [italics added]. Yet marginal is precisely what society has considered women to be (1985, p. 180).

Silence, invisibility, marginalization.

The absence of sex difference research from the surveys mentioned above is not especially surprising given the cognitivist focus which has, until quite recently, been predominant in education and composition. Despite having had a profound and valuable impact upon the disciplines of education and composition, cognitive psychology lacks a clear theoretical basis to account for sex differences. Although there appear to be sex differences in verbal, quantitative, visual-spatial, and field articulation abilities (Hyde, 1981; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Rosenthal & Rubin, 1982), attempts to explain these cognitive differences in terms of biological differences (brain lateralization, maturity rates, genetic sex-linkage, and hormonal effects) have met with little success (Jacklin, 1979). Further, Rosenthal and Rubin's (1982) meta-analytic study indicates that the sex differences appear to be diminishing over a period of about twenty years, at least insofar as the three areas of supposed male superiority in cognition are concerned (in terms of verbal abilities, the one area favouring females, the difference appears to be increasing). As they note: "females appear to be gaining in cognitive skill relative to males rather faster than the gene can travel!" (p. 711).²

If biological explanations do not account for cognitive sex differences (and their rapid change), then perhaps psychosocial explanations can provide a more adequate theoretical basis for the presence of cognitive differences. Differences in the socialization of some males and females may lead to differences in cognition. An integration of social and cognitive factors may be required to adequately account for gender differences.

The term *gender differences* as used in this thesis (and as used by some other commentators) differs from the term *sex differences*. The *sex* of an individual is anatomical — either male or female. On the other hand, the *gender* of an individual is psychological — masculine or feminine or other. Although
somewhat controversial, several different methods exist for assessing the gender of individuals. For example, Bem (1974) proposes a fourfold scheme in which an individual may be categorized as masculine, feminine, androgynous, or undifferentiated, depending upon that individual’s responses to her test instrument, the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (1978, 1981b).

Three important points must be made about sex and gender. First, although an individual’s gender is sometimes the same as their sex, this consonance is not invariable. Bem’s inventory, for instance, suggests that gender and sex correlate approximately 40% of the time. Some females may be feminine, others may be masculine; some males may be masculine, others may be feminine. According to Bem’s scheme, some males or females may also be considered androgynous or undifferentiated.

Second, an individual’s behavior in any specific context may or may not be consonant with their gender. Depending upon the social context in which the behavior occurs, the individual may choose (either consciously or unconsciously) to act in a gendered fashion which is (stereo) typically associated with masculinity or femininity. In particular, the contexts of audience and purpose with which writing is centrally concerned may well cue gender specific behaviors and thus sometimes mask those differences which exist. If a feminine individual believes the audience is more likely to respond positively to an argument framed in a masculine (or androgynous) fashion, she or he is likely to do so, even though possibly preferring to frame their argument in a feminine fashion (cf. Keroes, 1986, p. 22; Lakoff, 1975, p. 7; Rose, 1986, p. 16). Students are always quick to determine what they believe instructors want and respond accordingly (cf. Ruszkiewicz, 1978). For research into composition and gender differences to be of significant value, it will need to be framed in such a way as to elicit the types of writing with which students are most comfortable, irrespective of the audience’s preferences.

Third, the interaction of factors other than sex or gender must be carefully considered when studying differences in writing. The linguistic and psychological differences between any two individuals, irrespective of sex or gender, may sometimes be greater than the differences between sex or gender-based groups. In addition, differences between groups based on class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and so on, may well be greater than the differences between the sexes or genders within those groups. Thus, the differences between people of different ages (for example, the differences between individuals who are 18 years of age and those who are 40 years of age) may be of more import than gender differences when the age groups are combined. In other words, to fully account for gender differences requires that parallel research be undertaken into the interactions between sex/gender and differences of age, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. Despite these realities, the existence of gender or sex differences has been a topic of interest to researchers for decades, and debate about the precise nature and extent of these differences has increased quite dramatically in recent years.
Unfortunately, with a single exception, past research into this topic has been based upon sex differences rather than gender differences, perhaps because it is easier to categorize individuals on the basis of sex than to test individuals to determine their psychological gender. This approach may have had the result of limiting the validity of experimental results. Given the perspective of gender as socially constructed rather than biologically determined, it seems more appropriate to start undertaking research using the variable of psychological gender rather than that of biological sex.

At issue is the question of how to go about starting with this research. Are researchers simply to reject past sex difference research because of its undeniable limitations in dealing with the true complexity of gender? To do so, leaves researchers in the difficult position of attempting to devise appropriate research questions in a vacuum. Or should researchers make use of the past research while simultaneously acknowledging that it is indeed limited in perspective?

This thesis takes the latter position, that while previous research is undeniably limited, it can be useful, if only as an incomplete and very rough map of ill-defined territory. This territory must be explored with considerable caution. Thus, while the analyses in Chapters Two and Three of this thesis are perforce based upon past sex difference research, the goal is to generate research questions which begin to consider the full complexity of gender differences. In other words, this thesis, like all other research, starts from a state of tentative and incomplete knowledge in order to move toward a somewhat more certain and complete state of knowledge. The conclusions reached in this thesis remain far from certain or complete; they are tentative and open to considerable revision generated by further research.

Differences within the sexes are often more variable than differences between the sexes. Anatomy is not destiny. Some males may write in a feminine style and some females in a masculine style. The differences outlined in this thesis are relative tendencies, not essential characteristics. Further, no claim is made as to the validity of these tendencies either across differing age groups or across differing cultures. Indeed, much of the research reviewed in this thesis is restricted in terms of the participants’ ages (generally 18 to 22 years of age) and cultures (largely American). Thus, any characteristic of writing (or thinking) which might be attributed to a specific sex should be appropriately qualified by the words generally or some. And all these tendencies must continue to be viewed as hypothetical, as merely possible, at least until careful and extensive study either confirms or denies their existence.

When making generalizations in order to generate appropriate research questions, there is always the risk that some readers might consider hypotheses about gender as some sort of description about the essential characteristics of men and women. This is perhaps particularly a risk in the present analysis where past sex difference research is analyzed in an attempt to guide future gender difference research. A word of warning, then, to those who might be tempted to make such an unwarranted leap: Do not!
The past research is both stereotypical and polarized. Although that research can be helpful when generating appropriate research questions, lacking a complete understanding of the true complexities of gender (along with issues of ethnicity and class), the uncritical application of the hypotheses outlined in this thesis, put simply, could be dangerous. Instructors have a responsibility to treat their students as individuals and not as representatives of some essentialist conception of sex or gender. To do otherwise is to risk increasing rather than decreasing the injustices which assuredly exist within society.

As mentioned earlier, an integration of social and cognitive factors may be required to adequately account for gender differences. Indeed, Scardamalia and Bereiter point toward this when they observe that there are two contending approaches in composition research: a contextual approach which studies the various meanings that writing possesses for people in differing contexts, and a cognitive approach, which considers the mental processes required while writing. As they note: "A real synthesis will require research that combines cognitive and ethnomethodological perspectives" (1986, p. 780).

More recently, one of the foremost cognitivists within the discipline of composition, Linda Flower, has called for just such a synthesis in theory; in her terms, an Interactive Theory:

We need, I believe, a far more integrated theoretical vision which can explain how context cues cognition, which in its turn mediates and interprets the particular world that context provides. . . . Currently, our competing images of the composing process reflect a cognitive/contextual polarization that seems to shrink understanding and threatens to break up our vision of writing into floating islands of theory. What we don’t know is how cognition and context do in fact interact, in specific but significant situations. We have little precise understanding of how these “different processes” feed on one another (1989a, pp. 282-283).

However, such an interactive and synthetic theory is still some distance off, at least insofar as it might relate to studies of gender. As Jacklin (1979) argues, studies in socialization and gender differences have been accorded a relatively low status within many psychology departments whereas biologically related work has generally been considered more prestigious (and thus more likely to obtain the funding necessary for research).

Despite this marginalization, evidence for the existence of important sex differences in psychology have begun to accumulate. Since the late 1970’s feminist psychologists have been engaged in an active critique of clearly androcentric psychologies. Sex and gender have been introduced as important variables for research. In terms of personality psychology, Chodorow’s The Reproduction of Mothering (1978) challenges Freud’s psychoanalytic theory. In terms of developmental psychology, Gilligan’s In a Different Voice (1982) challenges Kohlberg’s (1976) theory of moral development, and Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule’s Women’s Ways of Knowing (1986) challenges Perry’s (1968) theory of intellectual development. In terms of cognitive psychology, articles such as Schweickart’s “Reading Ourselves: Toward a Feminist Theory of Reading” (1986), and Crawford and Chaffin’s “The Reader’s
Construction of Meaning: Cognitive Research on Gender and Comprehension" (1986) are just beginning to consider the implications of sex differences to reader-response theory and schema theory. If, as these authors suggest, males and females differ in terms of personality, development, and cognition, then the implications for composition research and practice may well be profound.

In “The Development of Discursive Maturity in College Writers” (1983), Hays proposes that composition instructors use William Perry’s cognitive development model (1968) to assess the relative development of the student’s cognitive processes. Susan Miller (1980) suggests a similar procedure using Lawrence Kohlberg’s model (1976). But both Kohlberg’s and Perry’s models were originally derived from the study of all male samples or samples in which the numbers of females were restricted. Thus, one may question the degree to which the models accurately reflect the developmental patterns of female students. Research by Alishio and Schilling indicates that in relation to Perry’s model, ego development is “highly correlated with intellectual development for men, but unrelated for women” (cited in Rose, 1986, p. 7). Further, Bizzell (1984) suggests that the assumptions underlying Perry’s model are culture bound and that some normal college students may not undergo the pattern of intellectual development which he proposes. Uncritical use of these two models for assessment in the composition classroom raises issues of bias and justice, insofar as women and others are concerned.3

Yet beyond the issue of a sexual bias in the models used for the assessment of discursive maturity, there is reason to suspect that the rhetorical models which are traditionally valued and taught in the composition classroom may be androcentric in themselves. Both Aristotle and Cicero lived in historical periods that were clearly androcentric and, however much their rhetorical models are valued, they probably reflect a male bias. Certainly, many of Aristotle’s statements about women, in the Politics, in the Poetics, and in the Rhetoric, reflect stereotypical beliefs common to the era (cf. Bullough, 1973).

However, leaving aside the obvious stereotypes, there may be other reasons for concern: implicit in Aristotle’s Rhetoric and explicit in Cicero’s De Oratore (cf. Sloane, 1989) is an emphasis upon the adversarial nature of Rhetoric. Debate (pro- and con-), argument (refutio), the contest (agonia) — all reflect the forensic origins of rhetoric. Walter Ong suggests that rhetoric represents a form of ceremonial combat: “It [rhetoric] developed in the past as a major expression on the rational level of the ceremonial combat which is found among males and typically only among males at the physical level throughout the entire animal kingdom, not simply among human beings” (1972, p. 615). As I. A. Richards also notes in this connection:

The old Rhetoric was an offspring of dispute; it developed as the rationale of pleadings and persuadings; it was the theory of the battle of words and has always been itself dominated by the combative impulse. Yet what it has most to teach us is the narrowing and blinding influence of that preoccupation, that debaters’ interest. . . . The review
and correspondence columns of the learned and scientific journals are the places in which to watch this poaching at its liveliest. It is no bad preparation for any attempt at exposition . . . to realize how easily the combative impulse can put us in mental blinkers and make us take another man's words in the ways in which we can down him with least trouble (1936, pp. 24-25).

"Rhetoric," he urges, "should be a study of misunderstanding and its remedies" (p. 3). Yet articles such as Sloane's "Reinventing inventio" (1989), which advocate that the classical adversarial models are "genuinely rhetorical" while the more humanistic New Rhetorical models "may not be rhetoric at all" (p. 470), clearly indicate that the combative and forensic aspects of rhetoric continue to be taught in some composition classrooms — despite Ong's observation that the "art of rhetoric did not and could not survive coeducation" (1972, p. 615).

At issue is the question of whether or not these adversarial models of rhetoric appeal equally to men and women. The work of Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1982), and Belenky et al. (1985; 1986) suggest that "webs of relationships" tend to be more important for women than men whereas "hierarchies of rights" tend to be more important for men. If their work is to be taken seriously, then the answer to the above question would seem to be no. Conceivably, some women might be more comfortable with rhetorical models which are less adversarial and hierarchical: "The lifework of many women is focused on maternal practice where the main goal has been to bring the smallest, least members up into relations of equality while men's work frequently involves maintaining or increasing the status differentials between persons" (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1985, p. 24). Classical models of rhetoric which emphasize adversary and hierarchy may need to be reevaluated in the light of female psychology. Rhetoric and psychology underpin each other.

For example, Chodorow's (1978) feminist critique of Freud's psychoanalytic theory appears to necessitate a critique of Aristotelian rhetoric. Comparing Freudian psychology with classical Aristotelian argument, Bauml and Bauml (1989) point out the correspondence between the ego, id, and superego and logos, pathos, and ethos. Logos, or logical argument, corresponds to the reality-testing mechanisms of the ego; pathos, or emotional appeal, corresponds to the pleasure/pain (desire/fear) principles of the id; and ethos, or ethical appeal, corresponds to the authority projections of the (audience's) superego (cf. Burke, 1969b, pp. 37-39). As the authors further observe:

Mother, lover, witch: how to overcome such automatic, unconscious projections, how to be seen for herself; such is the task of the woman who speaks, writes, or teaches. And it is above all a rhetorical task. It is for this reason especially that feminists typically reject Lacanian/Freudian psychology with its implicit rhetoric of paternal law and relegation of the alien, ego-threatening feminine to the margins of consciousness. Transference, in short, remains an obstacle to the woman speaker who must struggle against the projections which "create" her ethos in an audience's mind. . . . One thing at least is certain: the fashioning of an adequate psychology of the feminine depends on the fashioning of a corresponding rhetoric, and vice versa (p. 256).
It is towards just such a rhetoric that the French feminists, Luce Irigaray and Hélène Cixous are working: "There will not be one feminine discourse, there will be thousands of different kinds of feminine words, and then there will be the code for general communication, philosophical discourse, rhetoric like now but with a great number of subversive discourses in addition that are somewhere else entirely" (Cixous, 1986, p. 137).

To what degree do some males and females (or masculine and feminine individuals) write differently? To what degree do the psycho-social differences between the sexes (or the genders) predict rhetorical differences in terms of both form and substance? To what degree is there a conflict between the rhetorical forms traditionally valued by academia and the rhetorical forms being created and used by some females (or feminine individuals)? These questions must frame any study of gendered writing.

Since the publication in 1975 of Robin Lakoff’s ground-breaking work, Language and Woman’s Place, debate about the nature and role of the “female voice” has steadily increased. Yet, despite the growing interest, the issues raised by Lakoff’s book have remained largely unresolved, partly due to the lack of comprehensive research into differences between male and female communication patterns and partly due to methodological limitations in the research which has been undertaken. Speculation about sex differences in language use abounds, but solid evidence remains sparse.

Nevertheless, the lack of evidence has not deterred some recent commentators from proposing that college and university composition courses should be taught in a fashion which encourages a fuller expression of the “female voice” (Annas, 1985; Bolker, 1979; Caywood & Overing, 1987; Sanborn, 1987; Taylor, 1978). And voice, as Belenky et al. note, represents far more than simply a point of view:

It [voice] is a metaphor that can apply to many aspects of women’s experience and development. In describing their lives, women commonly talked about voice and silence: “speaking up,” “speaking out,” “being silenced,” “not being heard,” “really listening,” “really talking,” “words as weapons,” “feeling deaf and dumb,” “having no words,” “saying what you mean,” “listening to be heard,” and so on in an endless variety of connotations all having to do with sense of mind, self-worth and feelings of isolation from or connection to others. We found that women repeatedly used the metaphor of voice to depict their intellectual and ethical development; and that the development of a sense of voice, mind, and self were intricately intertwined (1986, p. 18).

In addition to calls for pedagogies which are sensitive to sex differences, there are further indications of a growing interest in sex differences and other aspects of socialization within the field of composition. Some recent issues of professional journals have been exclusively devoted to examining the question of teaching writing to women and to exploring the differences between the writing styles of men and women (English Journal, 76.1, 1987; Inkshed, 7.5/8.1, 1988). Indeed, the response to the call for papers on gender related topics by College English (51.5, 1989, p. 540) was so great that two special issues were required to adequately represent the papers submitted (College English, 52.4/52.5, 1990).
Further, the prestigious Conference on College Composition and Communication had a record number of panel discussions devoted to feminist and gender related issues in 1988 (Flynn, 1988). In 1989, of 268 concurrent sessions at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, 25 of the sessions were devoted to the exploration of gender issues in relation to writing. Another 19 were devoted to the politics of language use in relation to class, gender, and ethnicity. A further 21 were devoted to the social contexts of writing, reading, and speaking (Conference Calendar: 1989 CCCC, pp. 12-13). In Canada, the 1990 Inkshed Conference, sponsored by the Canadian Association for the Study of Writing and Reading, was entirely devoted to “gender, border crossing, mapping (as in ‘mapping discourse communities’), other discourses, the definition, protection, and challenging of canons, alternative voices, other ways of knowing” (Inkshed, 8.4, 1989, p. 17). If some departments of psychology have been reticent to support socialization and gender research, the same cannot be said about the discipline of Composition.

This current interest in the writing of women is paralleled by an emphasis upon alternatives to the traditional pedagogy of English Composition. Forms of writing such as freewriting, journals, fiction, poetry, and dialogue — all of which theoretically enable women and men to ground their writing in their personal experience — have been proposed as alternatives. Yet the implementation of such changes are not without intrinsic hazards.

Although the teaching of English Composition may be undergoing a remarkable transformation, even a paradigm shift, as it moves from the so-called “product” or Formalist pedagogy to the so-called “process” or Expressionist pedagogy (cf. Berlin, 1982; Coe, 1987), and this change may indeed accord well with the fuller expression of the female voice, it would be naive to assume that the preference of the university discourse community, as a whole, for particular discourse forms is also undergoing a similar transformation. The demonstrated ability to write in the forms preferred and prescribed by any particular discourse community is frequently an essential precondition of access to that community. Failure to meet that precondition may well have unfortunate consequences. Coe states it cogently:

Learning socially significant forms — and understanding how they function, how to use them appropriately — is a key to success (sometimes even to survival) in a discourse community. This is perhaps particularly so in schools, for schools serve in part to teach such forms, or at least to weed out those who do not know them. As Frances Christie argues, “Those who fail in schools are those who fail to master the genres of schooling: the ways of structuring and of dealing with experience which schools value in varying ways” (24; cf. Heath). So it matters that we continue to teach the basic forms which constitute a condition of access to professional discourse, and hence to professional communities, in modern societies. But it also matters that we discuss these forms, as any others, in terms of their functions in various writing processes . . . : how they serve (or limit) the creative process, how they enable (or disable) communication, how they structure what happens in our minds, how they mesh with social processes (1987, p. 21; cf. Maranda, 1972; Rose, 1986).
The continued implementation of expressionist pedagogies may well have the result of exacerbating the apparent conflict between the female voice and the preferred forms of academic discourse — forms which a number of commentators have suggested represent the "male voice" (Annas, 1985; Farrell, 1979).

If composition instructors emphasize, and thus enable, the expression of alternative values and beliefs through the generation of alternative (or even new) rhetorical forms, they risk their students' futures, at least insofar as the students, sooner or later, may be marked off as foreigners by the mainstream academic discourse community. Further, those instructors who follow that path risk their own credibility, at least insofar as the academic discourse community may accuse them of failing to adequately or appropriately prepare their students for the rigors of academic life.

Yet the alternative of avoiding, or even denying, the apparent conflict between the female voice and the preferred forms of the academic discourse community, in favour of teaching the traditionally valued forms is equally perilous. If composition instructors ignore the diverse values and beliefs of their students, they risk alienating, perhaps silencing, a substantial proportion of their students and thus denying some of them equal access to educational opportunities. Those instructors who follow that path again risk their own credibility, at least insofar as they may open themselves up to charges of indoctrinating, even brainwashing, their students (cf. Freire, 1970; 1985; Sledd, 1983). The dilemma faced by composition instructors who seek to justly teach their female students is a complex and hazardous one.

New rhetorical forms may be needed to express new ideas: "Oppressed social groups often find it necessary to invent new forms because the socially dominant forms will not readily carry their ideas" (Coe, 1987, p. 25). That women have been an often oppressed social group is a truism — an undeniable historical fact. As females become an increasingly powerful group within society, their demands to express their truths — their voices — cannot legitimately be denied. How then, are composition instructors to foster the fullest possible expression of the female voice while simultaneously validating the equal legitimacy of the forms preferred by the academic discourse community?

**The Psychological Context of Sex Differences**

As mentioned earlier, Baumlin and Baumlin (1989) find a theoretical correspondence between Freudian psychology and classical Aristotelian argument: the psychoanalytic constructs of *ego*, *id*, and *superego* correspond to the rhetorical constructs of *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*. If the premise that psychology and rhetoric underpin each other is accepted, then the psychological differences between men and women may well predict specific differences in the rhetorics preferred by men and women.
Even if the relationship between psychology and rhetoric is not as straightforward as Baumlin and Baumlin suggest, there is adequate reason to examine possible psychological differences between men and women, simply because some commentators propose using developmental models for the assessment of discursive maturity (Hays, 1983; Miller, 1980). The uncritical application of certain developmental models (Kohlberg, 1976; Perry, 1968) may represent the introduction of a subtle, but important, source of sexism into the assessment of writing skills.

Further, even if the possibility of sexism in assessment proves unfounded, there is yet another reason why potential psychological differences must be considered. Current practice in composition has been heavily based upon cognitive psychology; a discipline which, until recently, has lacked a theoretical base to account for sex differences. The recent proposal (Flower, 1989a) to develop an interactive socio-cognitive theory of composing necessitates a reappraisal of cognitive psychology in the light of social and psychological sex differences (and, it must be added, differences of class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation).

Finally, at least one modern rhetorical model which has been invented as an alternative to the classical model is itself based on a specific psychology. Young, Becker, and Pike's (1970) rhetorical model for Rogerian persuasion is, of course, derived from Carl Roger's work in psychology. The disciplines of psychology and composition are, if nothing else, inextricably entwined. To fully understand the differences between men's and women's writing, it follows that one must understand the differences between men's and women's psychologies.

Perspectives from Developmental Psychology

At the heart of Chodorow's critique of the psychoanalytic tradition is her observation that "the basic feminine sense of self is connected to the world, the basic masculine sense of self is separate [italics added]" (1978, p. 169). Building upon this observation, Gilligan's In a Different Voice (1982), continues the feminist critique of androcentric psychologies, in this instance Kohlberg's six stage cognitive developmental model of moral reasoning. Gilligan presents a summary of three studies she undertook using Kohlberg's test instrument in order to verify possible differences between male and female patterns of moral reasoning: "Male and female voices typically speak of the importance of different truths, the former of the role of separation as it defines and empowers the self, the latter of the on-going process of attachment that creates and sustains the human community [italics added]" (p. 156).
The six stages of Kohlberg's model can be collapsed into three major levels: the preconventional level, the conventional level, and the postconventional level. These levels are conceived "as three different types of relationships between the self and society's rules and expectations" (1976, p. 33):

The preconventional moral level is the level of most children under 9, some adolescents, and many adolescent and adult criminal offenders. The conventional level is the level of most adolescents and adults in our society and in other societies. The postconventional level is reached by a minority of adults and is usually reached after the age of 20. The term "conventional" means conforming to and upholding the rules and expectations and conventions of society or authority just because they are society's rules, expectations, or conventions. The individual at the preconventional level has not yet come to really understand and uphold conventional or societal rules and expectations. Someone at the postconventional level understands and basically accepts society's rules, but acceptance of society's rules is based on formulating and accepting the general moral principles that underlie these rules. These principles in some cases come into conflict with society's rules, in which case the postconventional individual judges by principle rather than by convention (1976, p. 33).

Gilligan finds two major problems with Kohlberg's work. First, Kohlberg's model was originally based upon the study of 84 males whose development had been followed for more than twenty years. The exclusion of females from Kohlberg's original study, in itself, raises serious questions about the applicability of his model to females. In fairness, it should be noted that in Moral Stages: A Current Formulation and a Response to Critics (Kohlberg, Levine, & Hewer, 1983) Kohlberg cogently responds to Gilligan's criticisms of his work; to his credit, the problem of using an all male sample in his original study has been redressed in subsequent studies. Nevertheless, by initially proposing a universal model of moral development based solely upon the study of males, Kohlberg has perhaps predisposed himself to perceive only confirmatory rather than discrepant information in subsequent studies. Kohlberg's studies are designed to illuminate the similarities between male and female moral development; they are not designed to illuminate the differences.

In turn, Gilligan's study perhaps suffers from the opposite problem and has, in fact, been criticized on those grounds:

Gilligan's support for the sex-linked differences in moral reasoning only are excerpts from interviews that were presented selectively to substantiate the basic premises of the theory. The excerpts themselves also contain examples of reasoning that might be explained in a contradictory manner to Gilligan's interpretations. Such instances, however, were ignored by Gilligan, or explained in line with the theory as "developmental transformation" (Gould, 1988, p. 412).

Gilligan's focus upon the differences in moral development between males and females perhaps predisposes her to minimize the similarities between males and females. Kenneth Burke's conception of terministic screens through which information is filtered would seem to apply to the work of both Gilligan and Kohlberg.
The second, and perhaps the most telling, problem which Gilligan finds with Kohlberg’s model is that females tend to fall into the level of conventional moral reasoning when classified under his model:

At this stage morality is conceived in interpersonal terms and goodness is equated with helping and pleasing others. This conception of goodness is considered by Kohlberg and Kramer (1969) to be functional in the lives of mature women insofar as their lives take place in the home. Kohlberg and Kramer imply that only if women enter the traditional arena of male activity will they recognize the inadequacy of this moral perspective and progress like men toward higher stages where relationships are subordinated . . . to universal principles of justice (1982, p. 18).

By implication, females appear deficient in moral reasoning when compared with males (cf. Chodorow’s critique of a similar assertion by Freud). Gilligan proposes that the appearance of a moral deficit does not lie in a lack of continued moral development on the part of females, but rather in a failure of the model to distinguish between two very different, but equally valid developmental paths. For females, "the moral problem arises from conflicting responsibilities rather than from competing rights and requires for its resolution a mode of thinking that is contextual and narrative rather than formal and abstract" (p. 19).

Gilligan proposes differently constituted, but nevertheless parallel, paths of moral development for males and females. Like Kohlberg, she accepts the three level sequence of moral development from preconventional through conventional to postconventional reasoning. However, for females and males these levels are differently focussed in that the logic which underlies the (female) ethic of care is a logic of relationships while the logic which underlies the (male) ethic of justice is a logic of fairness. Gilligan summarizes her findings about the developmental path of females well:

An initial focus [preconventional level] on caring for the self in order to ensure survival is followed by a transitional phase in which this judgement is criticized as selfish. The criticism signals a new understanding of the connection between self and others which is articulated by the concept of responsibility. The elaboration of this concept of responsibility and its fusion with a maternal morality that seeks to ensure care for the dependent and unequal characterizes the second perspective. At this point [conventional level], the good is equated with caring for others. However, when only others are legitimized as the recipients of the woman’s care, the exclusion of herself gives rise to problems in relationships creating a disequilibrium that initiates the second transition. The equation of conformity with care, in its conventional definition, and the illogic of the inequality between other and self, lead to a reconsideration of relationships in an effort to sort out the confusion between self sacrifice and care inherent in the conventions of feminine goodness. The third perspective [postconventional level] focuses on the dynamics of relationships and dissipates the tension between selfishness and responsibility through a new understanding of the interconnection between other and self. Care becomes the self-chosen principle of a judgement that remains psychological in its concern with relationships and response but becomes universal in its condemnation of exploitation and hurt (p. 74).

Chodorow’s relational constellation becomes Gilligan’s web of relationships.

Although Gilligan’s findings in terms of the differences between male and female moral development generally parallel and support Chodorow’s critique of the psychoanalytic tradition, some criticisms of her
work have been raised. Gould’s (1988) critique of Gilligan’s work is useful (if somewhat overstated) insofar as it points out that the uncritical use of any theory (be it Kohlberg’s or Gilligan’s) may generate more problems than it resolves. Responding to articles by Rhodes (1985) and Davis (1985) which advocate the use of Gilligan’s theory to resolve various ethical problems in the field of social work, Gould points out flaws in Gilligan’s methodology as well as hazards which may lie in the precipitous application of Gilligan’s theory.

First, as mentioned earlier, Gilligan’s work relies upon an interpretive frame which minimizes evidence that may be discrepant with her theory. However, it can legitimately be argued that Gilligan’s approach provides a needed dialectical antidote to Kohlberg’s equally biased interpretations.

Second, Gould asserts that Gilligan did not look for evidence that her subjects were actually behaving in responsible, autonomous, or just ways, instead simply accepting her subjects assertions of those values. This criticism is perhaps somewhat unfair, given Gilligan’s express purpose of critiquing the inherent biases of Kohlberg’s model (and not his methodology). Kohlberg’s test instrument relies upon the response of subjects to hypothetical moral dilemmas; real-life behavior is not measured. In fact, one could argue that Gilligan’s abortion decision study was potentially more indicative of women’s real-life behaviors in real-life contexts than would be their responses to Kohlberg’s standard Heinz dilemma. At the same time, one must acknowledge the accuracy of Gould’s assertion that “because of her psychological orientation, Gilligan did not take into account the oppressive life situations that may have contributed to the abortion decisions (for example, rape while hitchhiking, isolation from supportive relationships, or adolescent pregnancy in an overburdened life)” (pp. 413-414). With decisions of this consequence, the specific context in which an individual might find themself could mandate a preconventional response (i.e., concern with survival), irrespective of where that individual might otherwise be placed in Gilligan’s scheme. To some degree, moral decisions are situational.

Third, Gould accurately points out that Gilligan selects as the female voice only those attributes which are conventionally associated with females — caring, relationship, and responsibility. By framing the (female) ethic of care solely in psychological terms, Gilligan may be contributing inadvertently to the justification of existing institutional and social barriers to the equality of the sexes at least insofar as the ethic of care remains valued only within the domestic and personal domains and not within the professional and public domains. As Gould further argues:

A feminist perspective, on the other hand, provides an alternative interpretation: that while it is true that women’s experiences differ from men’s, a strictly psychological explanation cannot do justice to the political context within which the male and female voices develop. . . . In this model, the identification of certain characteristics as caring are associated with women, not because women are caring, “but rather (1) because women are subordinate and (2) because these traits are of secondary importance, that
these traits are assigned to women as feminine characteristics” (C. C. Gould, 1980, pp. 22-23). This interpretation leads to the conclusion that resisting “the meanings that deny or devalue women through the creation of an alternative discourse is a political activity . . .” (Ferguson, 1984, p. 166). The process involves the recognition that although women's traditional experiences and conventional qualities can provide the collective energies to mold an alternative discourse, one has to separate out “that aspect of [women’s] experience that has its own integrity and offers its own achievements” from femininity as it is defined by the patriarchal order (pp. 166-167). . . . In Gilligan's terminology, it might be said that feminist theorists offer an ethical orientation that conflates the ethic of responsibility with the morality of rights. . . . Moreover, the feminist model avoids polarities by recognizing that both female and male subjects may exhibit a “responsibility” or a “rights” mode in the affective and cognitive domains, depending on the situation (p. 414).

Perhaps (as Gould seems to imply) what is needed is a model of moral development which synthesizes both Kohlberg’s and Gilligan’s perspectives.

If Gilligan can be accused of inadvertently contributing to the “perpetuation rather than [the] transformation of the gender based professional divisions” (Gould, 1988, p. 413) by failing to recognize the social and political underpinnings of sex differences, the same cannot be said of Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule’s (1986) critique of Perry’s model of epistemological development (1968).

Extending Gilligan’s work on female moral development, Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule’s, *Women’s Ways of Knowing*, details evidence for a female pattern of intellectual development which differs from that of males. Like Gilligan, they are concerned about a developmental model designed to illuminate the similarities between men’s and women’s development rather than the differences — in this case Perry’s, *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years, A Scheme* (1968). Although a few women were included in Perry’s study “only the interviews with men were used in illustrating and validating his scheme on intellectual and ethical development” (Belenky, et al., 1986, p. 9). Later, women were found to conform to his scheme when he analyzed the patterns of their development in the light of his findings about men. Unlike Gilligan, Belenky et al. chose only to examine the patterns of development displayed by women, working on the premise that Perry’s model had already adequately illuminated the development of men.

Perry’s model is based upon a progression of the individual through nine epistemological positions. These nine positions may be collapsed into three general levels: *Dualism, Relativism,* and *Commitment.*

In *Dualism*, the individual views the world in terms of polarities such as right and wrong or good and bad; the individual is dependent upon an authority to teach them the absolute truths which distinguish right from wrong. In *Relativism*, the individual grows beyond a dependency upon authority and comes to the position that “everyone has the right to his own opinion and mine is as good as any other” (Belenky, 1986, p. 10); “education is a process of devising persuasive answers, since right answers no longer exist” (Bizzell, 1984, p. 448). In *Commitment*, the individual begins to realize that although the
world is without absolute truths, it is not without order; recognizing that knowledge is contextual, is constructed, individuals commit themselves to the values around which they will order their lives.

Although Perry's model of intellectual development may seem somewhat analogous to Kohlberg's model of moral development (inasmuch as both point toward growth from a position predicated upon an authority's specification of values to a position typified by the social construction of values), they differ in one important respect. Unlike Kohlberg, Perry makes no claim for the universality of his model. To some degree Perry's work is prescriptive as well as descriptive. As Bizzell notes:

Perry aims in his book to convince us that undergraduates in a liberal arts college do pass through the developmental process he describes, but he also does something more. He tries, I think, to persuade us that this development, although not necessary for normal cognition, is desirable. . . . [He] has openly assigned values to his developmental stages: successful completion of a liberal arts education requires moving eventually into the world view of Committed Relativism. . . . Consequently Perry openly states: "The values built into our scheme are those we assume to be commonly held in significant areas of our culture, finding their most concentrated expression in such institutions as colleges of liberal arts, mental health movements, and the like" (1984, p. 449-450).

To the degree that Perry's model privileges certain values and to the degree it is derived from an idealized version of intellectual development only validated by the experiences of men, the model is open to the criticism that it fails to equally privilege alternative value structures — most notably, those which may be generated by the experiences of women.

The study by Belenky et al. is also prescriptively oriented; however, as might be expected, their model is based upon the values revealed in interviews with women. Unlike Gilligan's study, which failed to adequately address the political context of gender (cf. Gould, 1988), the subjects interviewed by Belenky et al. provide ample (sometimes horrifying) accounts about the consequences of the unequal power and status accorded men and women (e.g., Bonnie, cited in Belenky, et al., 1986, p. 159).

Belenky et al. describe five basic epistemological positions revealed in the interviews with their subjects: Silence, Received Knowledge, Subjective Knowledge, Procedural Knowledge, and Constructed Knowledge. The first position, that of Silence, does not parallel any position within Perry's model; rather it is seen as an occasional precursor for the other four stages. Although at the time of the interviews only a few women were found to function from the perspective of this position, others described the position retrospectively. This initial position represents an extreme of self denial and dependence upon external authority. Belenky et al. suggest that those women in this position failed to develop their capacities for representational thought because of extreme social and family environments which were isolated and authoritarian. And, "because the women have relatively underdeveloped representational thought, the ways of knowing available to them are limited to the present (not the past or future); to the actual (not the imaginary and the metaphorical); to the concrete (not the deduced or the
induced); to the specific (not the generalized or the contextualized); and to behaviors actually enacted (not values and motives entertained)” (1986, pp. 26-27). From an extreme position of silence and powerlessness, knowledge of the self and of the world is constricted.

The second position detailed by Belenky et al. is that of Received Knowledge. For individuals functioning within this perspective, knowledge is acquired by listening to authorities: “They equate receiving, retaining, and returning the words of authorities with learning – at least with the kind of learning they associate with school” (1986, p. 39). Like individuals placed within Perry’s position of Dualism, women placed within the position of Received Knowledge, viewed truth in dualistic terms, as true or false, good or bad, black or white. And like Perry, Belenky et al. found that individuals functioning from the perspective of Received Knowledge (especially those attending colleges) tended to abandon this dualistic perspective relatively quickly.

Although Belenky et al. find the position of Received Knowledge to be similar to Perry’s position of Dualism, they found two striking differences. First, the women in their study tended to identify much less with the authorities than did the men in Perry’s study. Whereas Perry’s subjects displayed a perspective of “authority-right-we”, Belenky’s subjects more often displayed a perspective of “authority-right-they”. Belenky et al. propose that the women may hold this perspective, in part, because of a generalized exclusion of women from positions of authority (both academic and administrative) within the colleges these women attended. Second, Belenky’s subjects tended to focus more on listening than Perry’s subjects who tended to focus more on lecturing (hence the name, Received Knowledge).

Belenky et al. also find support for Gilligan’s hypothesis that women follow a moral developmental path which focuses upon an ethic of care. The focus of women at the position of Silence corresponds to Gilligan’s Pre-conventional level of “caring for the self in order to ensure survival” (Gilligan, 1982, p. 74), whereas the focus of women at the position of Received Knowledge corresponds to Gilligan’s Conventional level in which “the good is equated with caring for others” (Gilligan, 1982, p. 74). The intellectual growth of many of Belenky’s subjects seemed to be predicated upon caring for and helping others: “The women who hold the perspective of received knowledge feel quite comfortable with advancing themselves, only if it is clear that self advancement is also a means of helping others” (1986, pp. 46-47).

The third epistemological position detailed by Belenky et al. is that of Subjective Knowledge, a position which they found predominant in almost half of their subjects. Within this position, one’s personal experience rather than the received words of authority becomes the arbiter of truth: “Truth, for the Subjective Knower, is an intuitive reaction – something experienced, not thought out – something felt rather than actively pursued or constructed” (Belenky, et al., 1985, p. 19). This position parallels
Perry's position of Relativism. Again, although there are some similarities between Perry's and Belenky's subjects, there are also some important differences.

First, Perry locates the cause for the shift from Dualism to Relativism in the impact of a liberal education which explicitly reveals competing opinions about truth. Although such may be the case among relatively advantaged subjects, Belenky et al. suggest an alternative cause for this shift, particularly among their less advantaged subjects. Of seventy-five subjects specifically interviewed about whether or not they had been previously "subject to either incest, rape, or sexual seduction by a male in authority over them" (Belenky, et al., 1986, p. 59), thirty-four (about 45%) answered in the affirmative. Although this abuse was not limited to the women in any particular epistemological grouping, Belenky et al. note that "the sense of outrage was most prominent among the subjectivists" (p. 59). In addition to sometimes experiencing physical abuse, many of the subjective knowers had apparently grown up "without the protection of a father due to early divorce, neglect, or abandonment" or "had parents or husbands who belittled them" (1986, p. 57).

Rather than locating the shift to subjectivism in the liberalizing influences of an education, Belenky et al. suggest that the shift for women often resulted from a failure of education:

What comes through most strongly in these stories from women is the picture they paint of failed male authority. Society teaches women to put their trust in men as defenders, suppliers of the economic necessities, interpreters of the public will, and liaisons with the larger community. Women learn that men hold the power and in society's eyes have the ultimate authority. They are the esteemed teachers, the religious spokesmen, the medical, the military, the corporate, the respected creators. But, for many subjectivist women we interviewed, there was an absence of stable male authority in their personal lives. Their sense of disappointment and outrage was pervasive. . . . It seemed as though education - per se - played a minor role in the shift into subjectivism for the majority of women. Instead of opening the world up to them, the kind of education and educators they encountered as children and adolescents were alienating and irrelevant to their lives (1986, pp. 57-58).

Education, for these women, at least, proved a less than liberalizing experience.

A second important difference between Perry's Relativism and Belenky's Subjectivism lies in the differences of tone which epitomize the expression of the individual's personal truths:

The form that multiplicity (subjectivism) takes in these women, however, is not at all the masculine assertion that "I have a right to my opinion"; rather, it is the modest, inoffensive statement, "It's just my opinion." Their intent is to communicate to others the limits, not the power, of their own opinions, perhaps because they want to preserve their attachments to others, not dislodge them (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 66; cf. Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988, pp. 68-70; Rich, 1979, pp. 243-244). The desire to maintain relationships may sometimes play a powerful role in determining how assertively subjective knowers present their perspectives.

The fourth position within Belenky's model is that of Procedural Knowledge in which the individual learns to think critically by applying procedures and methods for analyzing the validity of ideas. And it
is at this position where Belenky’s and Perry’s analyses begin to diverge most extensively. While Perry suggests a single developmental path which involves a deepening understanding of (and, finally, commitment to) personal values through critical analysis and evaluation of those values, Belenky et al. find two distinct paths toward this goal among their subjects. Borrowing the terms from Gilligan (1982), Belenky et al. propose two differently oriented epistemologies: “a separate epistemology, based upon impersonal procedures for establishing truth, and a connected epistemology, in which truth emerges through care [italics added]” (1986, p. 102). Although suggesting that the epistemology of separate knowing has been well elucidated by developmental psychologists such as Piaget, Kohlberg, and Perry, and that it may be a preferred male orientation, Belenky et al. are unwilling to assert that connected knowing is an exclusively female phenomenon. Instead, connected knowing may be a relatively unstudied orientation toward the world. Within their sample, they found women who used sometimes one, and sometimes the other, epistemology.

Belenky et al. note that most of the women who tended to use the separate knowing orientation “were attending or had recently graduated from a traditional, elite, liberal arts college” (1986, p. 103). Within this context it might be expected that the women would learn the preferred methods of critical thinking: “‘how They [the upper case ‘T’ symbolizing authority — here, the professors] want us to think,’ how students must think in order to win the academic game” (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 101). Building upon Elbow’s distinction between the doubting game and the believing game (1973), Belenky et al. suggest that for separate knowers the goal is to question the truth or validity of any proposition, to “look for something wrong — a loophole, a factual error, a logical contradiction, the omission of contrary evidence” (1986, p. 104). Separate knowing, the doubting game, is at heart an adversarial form. Some of Belenky’s subjects described difficulty in dealing with the adversarial role, perhaps in part because it conflicted with their socially constructed role of caring for others; in debate, in argument, someone might get hurt.

From the perspective of separate knowing, one’s feelings and beliefs about a subject are expected to be rigorously excluded by objectively applying the methods of the particular discipline. Although proficient with the forms and methods for critically analyzing ideas, some of Belenky’s subjects describe feeling a lack of ownership of their ideas, particularly when it came to writing papers (cf. Bolker, 1979; Sanborn, 1987). This epistemological orientation separates the knower from the known.

Connected knowing, on the other hand, emphasizes the connection between the knower and the known. As Belenky et al. note:
Connected knowing builds on the subjectivists' conviction that the most trustworthy knowledge comes from personal experience rather than the pronouncements of authorities. Connected knowers develop procedures for gaining access to other people's knowledge. At the heart of these procedures is the capacity for empathy. Since knowledge comes from experience, the only way they can hope to understand another person's ideas is to try to share the experience that has led the person to form the idea. A college senior, discussing The Divine Comedy with us, said, "You shouldn't read a book just as something printed and distant from you, but as a real experience of someone who went through some sort of situation. I tend to try and read the mind of the author behind it, and ask, 'Why did he write that? What was happening to him when he wrote that?'" (1986, p. 113).

Connected knowing parallels Elbow's (1973) conception of the believing game, a procedure he describes as difficult to master. Belenky et al. suggest, however, that believing may be less difficult for many women because "it is founded upon genuine care and because it promises to reveal the kind of truth they value — truth that is personal, particular, and grounded in firsthand experience" (1986, p. 113).

In addition to using empathy to understand ideas, Belenky et al. suggest that connected knowers also tend to take a nonjudgemental stance toward ideas: "When someone said something they disagreed with or disapproved of, their instinct was not to argue but to 'look at it from that person's point of view, see how they could say that, why they think that they're right, why it makes sense'" (1986, p. 117). Belenky et al., however, are quick to emphasize that the connected knower’s use of empathy and a nonjudgemental stance does not simply equate with the stereotype of women as intuitive:

It is important to distinguish between the effortless intuition of subjectivism (in which one identifies with positions that feel right) and the deliberate, imaginative extension of one’s understanding into positions that initially feel wrong or remote. Connected knowing involves feeling, because it is rooted in relationship; but it also involves thought (1986, p. 121).

Both connected and separate knowing are procedural in nature, although the procedures of connected knowing perhaps have not yet been as elaborately codified as those of separate knowing. Belenky et al. note that although some of their subjects were content to operate from the position of Procedural Knowledge, others (particularly separate knowers) yearned "for a voice that is more integrated, individual, and original — a voice of their own" (1986, p. 124) — a way of integrating feeling and thinking that goes beyond procedural knowledge. The fifth epistemological position described by Belenky et al. is that of Constructed Knowledge which parallels the highest level of Perry's model in many respects. In both models there is a recognition that "All knowledge is constructed, and the knower is an intimate part of the known" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 137). Knowledge and the knower are viewed as contextually situated. Perry's personal commitment and Belenky's passionate knowing are also similar; in both there is a dedication to action, to actively constructing knowledge.
Yet, at the same time, there is also an important distinction between the commitments of men and women. For Perry's subjects, commitment generally entailed a single action which helped to define their identity — the choice of a career. For Belenky's subjects the choice was more complex:

Women also foresee that initial act of commitment. But as they go on to describe the context in which their decisions will occur, their descriptions ultimately emphasize the action less than the context. Constructivist women mitigate any single choice by considering the effects it will have on others. Further, all these women are careful to describe not only the commitment to career that they foresee but also the commitment to relationships. Whether they plan to work immediately after their education or delay work for home and a family, they assume they will live at least some part of their lives with another adult and usually as a parent as well. For these women, it is a life foreseen rather than a single commitment foreseen (1986, p. 150).

The social and personal contexts of men and women differ, and to the extent that they differ, men and women will differ in the way they construct their epistemological and moral orientations.

Further, given the generally consistent findings of Chodorow, Gilligan, and Belenky et al., it might be expected that differences between the cognitive processes of males and females would also have been found. And such differences, in fact, appear to exist, at least at a preliminary level of certainty.

**Perspectives from Cognitive Psychology**

Unlike developmental and personality psychologies, cognitive psychology has remained relatively immune to feminist critiques. In part, this is understandable as both developmental and personality psychologies explicitly acknowledge the role of socio-cultural antecedents in their theories whereas cognitive psychology has generally tended to exclude the social context from theory, purporting instead to study universal mental processes in an empirically disinterested fashion. Obviously, it is a far simpler task to critique theories in which the ideological underpinnings are made explicit than those in which the underlying ideology is either hidden or simply excluded from consideration.

Yet by refusing to consider the issues of social processes, cognitive psychology finally leaves itself open to criticism. In “Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class” (1988), Berlin argues that the cognitive rhetoric so prevalent in composition instruction is the heir apparent to “current-traditional rhetoric with its positivistic epistemology, its pretensions to scientific precision, and its managerial orientation” which was co-opted by nineteenth century competitive capitalism (p. 480; cf. Berlin, 1982).

The focus of cognitive rhetoric upon the linear, hierarchical, and goal-driven process of efficient problem solving makes it eminently compatible with the world of corporate capitalism in which the individual’s “work life is designed to turn goal-seeking and problem solving behavior into profits” (p. 483). Even the theoretical foundation of cognitive psychology, dominated as it is by the metaphor of information processing (Carter, 1989) — mind as machine in the popular view — is compatible with the highly
As Berlin sees it, the refusal of cognitive rhetoric to consider issues of ideology leaves it open to being co-opted by modern corporate capitalism.

Although centrally concerned with **realizing** goals, cognitive rhetoric places no emphasis on **evaluating** those goals, on whose economic, political and social ends those goals meet:

Nowhere, for example, do Flower and Hayes question the worth of the goals pursued by the manager, scientist, or writer. The business of cognitive psychology is to enable us to learn to think in a way that will realize goals, not deliberate about their value: “I have assumed that, whatever your goals, you are interested in discovering better ways to achieve them [Flower, 1985, p. I]”. . . . That the cognitive skills leading to success may be the product of the experiences of a particular social class rather than the perfecting of inherent mental structures, skills encouraged because they serve the interests of a ruling economic elite, is never considered in the “scientific” investigation of the mind. . . . Cognitive rhetoric, then, in its refusal of the ideological question leaves itself open to association with the reification of technocratic science characteristic of late capitalism (Berlin, 1988, pp. 482-484).16

Berlin’s observations, if nothing else, have spurred a lively debate about the assumptions underlying cognitive rhetoric (Berlin, 1989; Flower, 1989b; Schilb, 1989; Scriven, 1989). Possibly his observations have also partly inspired Flower’s recent interest in the interaction of social context and individual cognition.

Flower suggests that, in relation to the writing process, context and cognition construct each other; on the one hand, the cultural and social context directly cues cognition, while on the other, the context is mediated by the writer’s cognition (p. 287). Flower’s analysis of how context cues cognition is useful:

Context guides cognition in multiple ways. In its least visible role, context affects us in the form of past experience that supplies a wealth of prior knowledge, assumptions, and expectations, many of which can operate without our conscious awareness. These conceptual frameworks may even passively determine what it is possible to think or see (1989a, p. 288).17

Given that the social contexts of the family and the school are sex-typed, perhaps in pervasive and powerful ways, and given that these social contexts are factors, perhaps the most important ones, contributing to the development of psychological gender, it seems probable that gender is one of the conceptual frames which cues cognition.

Bem (1981a) theorizes that sex-typing may be accounted for by the existence and operation of a gender schema:

What gender schema theory proposes, then, is that the phenomenon of sex-typing derives, in part, from gender based schematic processing, from a generalized readiness to process information on the basis of the sex-linked associations that constitute the gender schema. In particular, the theory proposes that sex typing results, in part, from the fact that the self concept itself gets assimilated into the gender schema. As children learn the contents of the society’s gender schema, they learn which attributes are to be linked with their own sex and, hence with themselves. . . . It is important to note that gender schema theory is a theory of process, not content. Because sex-typed individuals are seen as processing information in terms of and conforming to whatever definitions of masculinity and femininity the culture happens to provide, it is the
process of partitioning the world into two equivalence classes on the basis of the gender schema, not the contents of the equivalence classes, that is central to the theory. Accordingly, sex-typed individuals are seen as differing from other individuals not primarily in terms of how much masculinity or femininity they possess, but in terms of whether or not their self-concepts and behaviors are organized on the basis of gender (pp. 355-356).

In preliminary support of her theory, Bem describes two studies conducted at Stanford University. In the first study, individuals who were classified as sex-typed or non-sex-typed (using the Bem Sex Role Inventory, 1978 — hereafter, BSRI) were tested for their recall of word clusters which had been variously rated as masculine, feminine, or neutral. Reliably more than non-sex-typed individuals, sex-typed individuals recalled words in gender related clusters, thereby suggesting the possibility of a greater reliance upon gender based schematic processing.

The second study reported by Bem examined the degree to which an individual’s self-concept was implicated in gendered schematic processing. Bem reasoned that the response latencies for sex-typed individuals and non-sex-typed individuals should differ when responding to attributes of gender which may or may not be self-descriptive:

Gender schema theory implies that they [sex-typed individuals] may simply “look up” the attribute in the gender schema and answer in the affirmative if the attribute is sex-congruent; that is, they do not go through the time-consuming process of recruiting behavioral evidence from memory and then judging whether the evidence warrants an affirmative answer. This implies that sex-typed individuals ought to be faster than non-sex-typed individuals when they make schema-consistent judgements, such as, that a sex-congruent attribute is self descriptive or that a sex-incongruent attribute is not. Conversely, sex-typed individuals ought to be slower than non-sex-typed individuals in those few instances when they make schema-inconsistent judgements, such as, that a sex-congruent attribute is not self-descriptive or that a sex-incongruent attribute is (p. 359).

In order to test this reasoning, the response latencies of subjects previously classified as sex-typed or non-sex-typed (see note 20) were later measured against the items from the BSRI (as to the congruency or non-congruency with their self-concepts). Sex-typed subjects were, in fact, found to be reliably faster than non-sex-typed subjects when making gender schema congruent decisions and reliably slower when making non-congruent decisions. This suggests “that sex typing is accompanied by a readiness to process information about the self in terms of the gender schema” (p. 359).

Further support for Bem’s theory comes from several studies of reading and gender. Thompson, Hatchett, and Phillips, (1981) found differences in perception between men and women in relation to the use of interpersonal verbs; women tended to perceive the emotional tones of the language whereas men tended to perceive the implicit power relations. Crawford and English, (1984) examined the use of inclusive language in written materials and found that men had a better recall of material written with the generic he than did women. Women, on the other hand, recalled more information when the material was re-written using neutral, inclusive language. The implications of this study, as regards the use of
inclusive language in lectures and instructional materials, is obvious: the effectiveness of instruction which is framed in generic language may well be lessened for women.

Taken together, these four studies suggest that there may be perceptual and recall differences between men and women linked to differences in gender schema (also see note 5). Flower's suggestion that "conceptual frameworks may even passively determine what it is possible to think or see" (1989a, p. 288) appears to be at least minimally supported, as is Bem's gender schema theory.

One theory which may provide an even broader explanation for some of the possible differences in men's and women's cognitive processes (particularly in respect to language use) is that of muted versus dominant groups as proposed by the anthropologists Shirley and Edwin Ardener (1975). Their theory suggests that women, as a muted group, find it necessary to cognitively translate their experience into language which more accurately represents the experiences of the dominant group - men. Shirley Ardener states it well:

Because the arena of public discourse tends to be characteristically male-dominated and the appropriate language registers often seem to have been 'encoded' by males, women may be at a disadvantage when wishing to express matters of peculiar concern to them. Unless their views are presented in a form acceptable to men, and to women brought up in the male idiom, they will not be given a proper hearing. If this is so, it is possible to speculate further and wonder whether, because of the absence of a suitable code and because of a necessary indirectness rather than spontaneity of expression, women, more often than may be the case with men, might sometimes lack the facility to raise to conscious level their unconscious thoughts. . . . A society may be dominated or overdetermined by the model (or models) generated by one dominant group within the system [italics added]. This dominant model may impede the free expression of alternative models of their world which subdominant groups may possess, and perhaps may even inhibit the very generation of such models. Groups dominated in this sense find it necessary to structure their world through the model (or models) of the dominant groups transforming their own models as best they can in terms of the received ones (pp. viii-xii).

Figure 1, below, is adapted from Edwin Ardener's model (p. 26) and graphically represents the theory. P-structures or paradigmatic structures may be conceived as usually unconscious general frames for interpreting an individual's experience of reality. S-structures or syntagmatic structures may be understood as specific expressions of the meanings an individual attributes to their experience. P-structures cannot be perceived independently of s-structures as they only take form when expressed as s-structures. S-structures are shaped by the more fundamental p-structures. In more concrete terms, the stereotypical phrases "women like to work in groups" and "men like to work alone" may be considered as s-structures which specifically express and have been shaped by the general p-structures - relationship and autonomy. The study of s-structures enables the understanding of the underlying p-structures - the understanding of "the operators necessary to pass from one system to another" (Maranda, 1972, p. 15).
According to the Ardeners' theory, men are able to express their p-structures more directly than women who may be required to translate their experience, their p-structures, into the men's s-structures. The Ardeners' theory coheres well with the New Rhetorical pedagogy which views form and content as interactive in a mutually constraining and generative fashion within various communicative, social, and psychological contexts. The importance of context must be emphasized however, as the above figure may only be valid within contexts which constrain the p-structures of women more than those of men. In contexts which constrain the p-structures of men more than those of women, the situation may be reversed. An approach which emphasizes writing about personal experience may be just such a context. And, indeed, there is some evidence that men do more poorly than women when writing about personal experience (Peterson, 1991).

If women, unlike men, must often translate their experience into the dominant and preferred discourse form, they might become more proficient at monitoring their writing processes than men. The degree to which this might account for the generally consistent findings of slightly greater verbal abilities among women is a point open to debate as well as further study. Does the need for proficiency in both "genderlects" on the part of females lead to a slightly greater dexterity with language?

On the other hand, Robin Lakoff (1975) suggests that the necessity of monitoring their language may interfere in the communicative processes for some women:

> Though her command of both is adequate for most purposes, she may never feel really comfortable using either, and never be certain that she is using the right one in the right place to the right person. Shifting from one language to another requires special awareness to the nuances of social situations, special alertness to possible disapproval. It may be that the extra energy that must be (subconsciously or otherwise) expended in this game is energy sapped from more creative work, and hinders women from expressing themselves as well, as fully, or as freely as they might otherwise (p. 7).
Unfortunately, no empirical studies to date have attempted to confirm the Ardeners' theory, possibly due to the difficulties of testing it in relation to speech. The translating and monitoring processes involved in speech may be too automatic for a pausological study to provide reasonably reliable data. However, the revision process in writing is far less automatic, especially among novice writers, and thus may be a near ideal setting for examining this theoretical difference between men and women.

In sum, Bem's gender schema theory provides a possible theoretical explanation for some gender differences in cognitive processing — an explanation that relies upon differences in the socialization of males and females rather than upon biological differences. Information may be processed in accord with generalized gender schemas resulting in perceptual and recall differences. There is some evidence which supports this theory. Muted groups theory, if empirically supported, may provide an even broader theoretical basis for cognitive gender differences (particularly as relates to language use). Insofar as the experiences and concerns of women differ from those of men, and insofar as language may predominate reflect men's experiences and concerns, women may be required to translate their experiences into the dominant idiom.
Chapter One Summary

This chapter has argued that there are important differences in the psychologies of men and women. It provides the context necessary to understand the significance of possible differences in the writing of men and women. In terms of personality development, subtle differences in the way that parents, peers, and teachers relate to boys and girls may result in the development and reinforcement of different ethical and epistemological orientations toward the world—orientations which have been generally characterized as connected or related versus separate or autonomous ways of behaving and thinking (Belenky et al., 1986; Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982).

In terms of cognitive operations, there is growing evidence that differences in gender schema may result in differences in perception and recall on the part of some men and women (Bem, 1981a; Crawford and English, 1984; Thompson, Hatchett, & Phillips, 1981). Shirley and Edwin Ardener's theory of muted groups (1975) implies that differences in experience may result in differences in the cognitive processes used by some men and women; under some circumstances women may find it necessary to translate (and thus monitor that translation process) their experience into the dominant forms of discourse—forms which historically have been generated and legitimated by men. There is a clear need to study the ways in which social context and cognitive processes interact.

Paralleling this heightened interest in the social and psychological differences between men and women is a heightened interest in possible differences in the writing of men and women. Despite the lack of well established and articulated differences between the writing of men and women, a number of commentators have proposed changes to current pedagogical practices in order to increase gender fairness in instruction (Annas, 1985; Bolkor, 1979; Caywood & Overing, 1987; Sanborn, 1987; Taylor, 1978). However, given the general expectation that students will become proficient with both the rhetorical forms and ways of thinking preferred by the academic discourse community, the implementation of these changes is not without hazard. At the same time, to not implement appropriate changes to pedagogical practice risks leaving academia open to charges of sexism in instruction.

These calls for pedagogical changes in composition instruction are not surprising given the findings of psychological differences between men and women as well as the degree to which composition as a discipline is based upon psychological theory and evidence. And psychology underpins rhetoric in at least four ways. As Baumlin and Baumlin (1989) note, Classical Rhetoric and Freudian Psychology parallel each other (cf. Burke, 1969b, pp. 37-39). As Young, Becker, and Pike (1970) demonstrate, new rhetorics will be derived from new psychologies. As Miller (1980) and Hayes (1983) propose, discursive maturity may be measured by psychological models. And as two decades of focussed research has
shown, composition theory and practice can be guided by cognitive psychology. The degree to which psychology contains a male bias (however subtle) will be directly reflected in the degree to which current composition theory and practice also contains a male bias.

Yet much of the preceding discussion is predicated upon a single assumption — that the psychological differences between men and women will be reflected in some fashion by the types of discourse that they choose to generate. Chapter Two examines the evidence for this assumption.
Notes for Chapter One

1 In *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Virginia Woolf describes a metaphorical Professor Von X who is engaged in writing his monumental work, *The Mental, Moral, and Physical Inferiority of the Female Sex* (pp. 31-32). Her title for the professor's obviously biased tome closely parallels Bullough's analysis of herstorical realities for nearly the past 4000 years. That Woolf so insightfully condenses millennia of history into a few pages is to her credit; that she casts the metaphorical Von X as a professor may be to the discredit of academia. In the sixty years since the publication of *A Room of One's Own*, has her metaphor become any less appropriate — any less an indictment of the university discourse community? Although undeniably there have been changes, many commentators would assert that the biases remain (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988; Annas, 1985; Caywood & Overing, 1987; Dagg & Thompson, 1988; Lakoff, 1975; Martin, 1985; Rich, 1979; Salner, 1985; Sanborn, 1987; Thorne, Kramarae, & Henley, 1983; Whitmore, 1989a). Perhaps the argument about the status of women within the university community finally comes down to the question of whether the university is to be simply a passive custodian of society's accumulated knowledge and values or an active critic of that knowledge and those values which potentially exclude or silence the less powerful within our society. The perspective taken here is that of Young, Becker, and Pike (1970): "that we are all citizens of an extraordinarily diverse and disturbed world, that the 'truths' we live by are tentative and subject to revision, that we must be discoverers of new truths as well as preservers and transmitters of old, and that enlightened cooperation is the preeminent goal of communication" (p. 9).

2 At the same time it would be unwise to argue that the biological differences between the sexes have no effect upon cognition. Biological processes such as menstruation, childbirth, lactation, and menopause undoubtedly generate differences between a woman's and a man's felt experience of life. Consider, for example, George Lakoff's hypothesis that cognition is embodied, that "category structure reflects the bodily nature of the people doing the categorizing, since it depends on gestalt perception and motor movements" (1987, p. 371); or, in terms of writing, Cixous' *l'écriture féminine* which "(over) flows in endless expulsions of blood, milk, child, and orgasms" (Juncner, 1988, p. 426). However, these differences in biological processes likely do not directly cause any significant differences in cognitive processes, instead they may function more indirectly by generating additional (or different) schema upon which the cognitive processes operate. The cognitions of men and women likely differ globally to the degree that their experience differs globally.

3 In fact, it is somewhat questionable as to whether or not any developmental model, as currently formulated, correlates reliably with discursive maturity for females. In an attempt to measure the relationship between Piaget's stage of formal operational reasoning and written language maturity as measured by t-units (minimally terminable units), Lawson and Shepherd (1979) tested 50 high school students aged about 14.5 years. Formal reasoning was found to correlate reliably with mean t-unit length for the boys ($r = .59$), but was unrelated for the girls. In general, the girls did more poorly than the boys on the reasoning tasks, but better than the boys on the measure of discursive maturity. The intercorrelations among the various reasoning tasks was also lower for the girls than for the boys suggesting the tasks were a less reliable measure of reasoning for the girls.

Lawson and Shepherd speculate that because many of the reasoning tasks in their experiment may have appeared scientific or mathematical to the subjects, the girls may have been less motivated than the boys to solve the problems because of a preconception that scientific and mathematical endeavors are masculine concerns. If their reasoning is correct, it lends support to Flower's call for research examining the interaction of cognition and context (1989a). In this case, socially constructed differences between the girls' and the boys' perceptions about the gender appropriateness of the task may have led to differences in the cognitive processes of motivation and, perhaps, attention. Their findings may also support Bem's theory of a gender schema in accord with which information is processed (1981a).

4 Perhaps this need to reevaluate classical rhetorical models in the light of female psychology applies equally to modern rhetorics:

*Man is*
- the symbol-using (symbol-making, symbol-misusing) animal
- inventor of the negative (or moralized by the negative)
- separated from *his* natural condition by instruments of his own making
- goaded by the *spirit of hierarchy* (or moved by the sense of order)
- and rotten with perfection [italics added]

(Burke, 1966, p. 16).
In fairness to Kenneth Burke, it should be noted that he has since revised the above poem to eliminate the non-inclusive language (single page handout, 1989):

Being bodies that learn language
Thereby becoming wordlings
Humans are
The symbol-making, symbol-using, symbol-misusing animal
Inventor of the negative
Separated from our natural condition
By instruments of our own making
Goaded by the spirit of hierarchy
Acquiring foreknowledge of death
And rotten with perfection

5 I have chosen to not detail Chodorow’s *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978) in the body of this thesis for two reasons. First, like many composition theorists and practitioners, I have no more than a passing acquaintance with psychoanalytic theory and thus feel somewhat uncomfortable attempting to explain such terms as object relations and cathexis. The attempt on my part to detail her work is, at best, superficial (and may be, at worst, inaccurate). Second, I do not think it is essential to the validity of the argument being advanced to fully understand psychoanalytic theory. From my perspective, the importance of Chodorow’s work lies in her conclusions. Those conclusions, reached using the methods of psychoanalysis, are strikingly similar to the conclusions of Gilligan (1982) and Belenky et al. (1986) which were reached using the methods of developmental psychology; conclusions, finally, which parallel the results obtained by some composition researchers (cf. Rose, 1987). For those who might be interested, Appendix A briefly summarizes my understanding of Chodorow’s *The Reproduction of Mothering*. (I also think, however, that it is important to consider in detail the work of Gilligan and Belenky et al., if for no other reason than both are critiquing developmental theories which have been advocated, somewhat uncritically, for use in the composition classroom.)

6 Kohlberg distinguishes between the two stages in each level on the basis that “the second stage of each level is a more advanced and organized form of the general perspective of each major level” (1976, p. 33). For our purposes, dealing with the fine distinctions between the stages would be of little value; consequently, only the more general levels of moral development are discussed.

7 Kohlberg’s work makes it abundantly clear that he views his model of moral development as a universal one. For example, “the claim we make is that anyone who interviewed children about moral dilemmas and who followed them longitudinally in time would come to our six stages and no others [italics added]” (Kohlberg, 1976, p. 47). Some skepticism must inevitably greet such claims of universality. Gilligan’s work, if nothing else, should call into question Kohlberg’s assertion of universality: “Although Kohlberg claims universality for his stage sequence, those groups not included in his original sample rarely reach his higher stages” (Gilligan, 1982, p. 18). Notwithstanding the above assertion however, Gilligan also seems to accept the universal applicability of the model, although her interpretation is bipolar unlike Kohlberg’s monolithic interpretation: “By positing instead two different modes, we arrive at a more complex rendition of human experience [italics added] which sees the truth of separation and attachment in the lives of women and men and recognizes how these truths are carried by different modes of language and thought” (Gilligan, 1982, pp. 173-174). All humans? Of all social classes and all ethnic groups?

8 The Heinz dilemma is the classical example of a dilemma used to determine a subject’s level of moral reasoning as measured by an analysis of his or her verbal response to two questions posed following the description of the dilemma. Kohlberg (1976, pp. 41-42) describes the dilemma as follows:

In Europe, a women was near death from a rare form of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors though might save her, a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The druggist was charging $2,000, ten times what the drug cost him to make. The sick woman’s husband Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about half of what [the drug] cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, “No.” So Heinz got desperate and broke into the man’s store to steal the drug for his wife. *Should the husband have done that? Why?*
Perry's model has been broken down in slightly different ways by various commentators. Bizzell (1984) collapses the nine positions into three world views: Dualism, Relativism, and Commitment in Relativism; Belenky et al. (1986) collapses them into four epistemological perspectives: Basic Dualism, Multiplicity, Relativism Subordinate, and Relativism. These different formulations tend to be somewhat confusing as Bizzell and Belenky et al. use the same term, Relativism, to refer to completely different positions. Further, neither Bizzell nor Belenky et al. are perfectly clear as to where some of Perry's positions fall into their formulations. For example, does position 2 and 3 in Perry's scheme fall into Dualism or Relativism in Bizzell's formulation? Or does position 5 in Perry's scheme fall into Relativism Subordinate or Relativism in Belenky's formulation?

In the interests of clearly distinguishing between the positions, the terms used in this thesis generally follow Bizzell's formulation rather than Belenky's. Dualism corresponds to position 1, 2, and 3 (Basic Duality, Multiplicity Pre-legitimate, and Multiplicity Subordinate) in Perry's scheme; Relativism corresponds to positions 4, 5, and 6 (Relativism Subordinate, Relativism Correlate, and Commitment Foreseen); and Commitment corresponds to positions 7, 8, and 9 (Initial Commitment, Orientation to Commitment, and Developing Commitment).

Unlike Perry's subjects who were entirely comprised of students at Harvard College, the 135 subjects interviewed by Belenky et al. came from a more varied background. Ninety were women enrolled in six markedly different academic institutions. Forty-five were women who had sought information about, or assistance with, parenting from social agencies (what Belenky et al. call the invisible colleges). Although to some degree this confounds the comparison between Perry's and Belenky's findings, Belenky's rationale for including the individuals from the invisible colleges is a sound one:

Formal educational programs take relatively little interest in preparing students for parenting and other social roles traditionally occupied by women. . . . Although most institutions in our society are shaped and directed by men and masculine perspectives, the agencies and programs for very young children and programs to support mothers in caring for children are likely to be among the few exceptions; these are usually organized and staffed by women. We wanted to know what kinds of institutions women would create for themselves if they were not so dominated by masculine images, theories, founders, or administrators (1986, p. 13).

The prescriptive intent of Women's Ways of Knowing is evident throughout.

As should be apparent, the individuals who functioned from the perspective of Silence were not found on college campuses, but rather in the invisible colleges, the various social agencies from which Belenky et al. took a third of their sample. Further, "these silent women were among the youngest and the most socially, economically, and educationally deprived of all those we interviewed" (1986, pp. 23-24).

These figures were calculated from the figures provided by Belenky et al.:

Midway into the study we began to survey the women systematically on their history of sexual and physical abuse. Our statistics are based on seventy-five women (fifty-five from the in-school sample and twenty from the social agencies). . . . In our sample of seventy-five women, 38 percent of the women in schools and colleges and 65 percent of women contacted through the social agencies told us that they had been subject to either incest, rape, or sexual seduction by a male in authority over them — fathers, uncles, teachers, doctors, clerics, bosses (1986, pp. 58-59).

In Writing Without Teachers (1973), Peter Elbow details a "set of character traits — both cognitive and affective" (pp. 178) that he sees as associated with the doubting game and the believing game:
Elbow notes that he is presenting “a contrast here between male and female as our culture defines them” (p. 180). As such, it should not be particularly surprising that the believing game parallels some aspects of the female epistemology as detailed by Belenky et al.

14 Belenky et al. suggest that “the kind of self-analysis required for complex connected knowing has been largely excluded from the traditional liberal arts curriculum and relegated to ‘counseling’” (1986, p. 123). It is of some interest to note that Young, Becker, and Pike’s Rogerian persuasion (1970), with its emphasis upon active listening, empathy, and a nonjudgemental stance, is based upon a model of communication sometimes used in counselling and crisis intervention. The degree to which this less adversarial rhetorical model might appeal to connected knowers is a question worthy of investigation (indeed, Chapter Four proposes just such a study).

15 George Lakoff (1987) suggests that the mind as machine metaphor has “taken hold, not only in the popular imagination, but among professional cognitive psychologists as well” even though it is “a view considered silly and overly simplistic by many sophisticated researchers in AI [Artificial Intelligence] and cognitive psychology [italics added]” (p. 338). His argument for a joint body-mind view of cognition utilizing both signal and symbol processing (cf. Coe’s distinction between digital and analogic modes of communication, 1986a, p. 237), provides a needed antidote to the overly simplistic mind as machine metaphor. His study of category structures suggests that, to some degree, cognition is embodied (i.e., is based upon kinesthetic experience and not simply upon an objective reality external to the perceiver).

16 Berlin’s distinction between realizing goals and evaluating goals parallels Brodkey’s (1987) distinction between a male rhetoric of problem solving and a female rhetoric of problem posing. Further, Maltz and Borker (1982) note different attitudes between some men and women in terms of problem sharing and problem solving:

Women tend to discuss problems with one another, sharing experiences and offering reassurances. Men in contrast, tend to hear women, and other men, who present them with problems as making explicit requests for solutions (p. 213).

Does cognitive rhetoric, with its narrow focus on problem solving, operate within a paradigm which might appeal more to men than women? More research is needed to explore this possibility.
Flower qualifies this statement by adding:

However, — and I think this “however” is a strong rebuttal to linguistic determinism — adults possess an enormous repertoire of conceptual frameworks and, in any given situation, we can not predict which will be activated, which quiescent, or how any given framework will be used. In situated cognition it is not what is known, but the knowledge one uses that matters (1989a, p. 288).

At the same time we should consider this: In contexts where one’s writing will be assessed as to the proficiency with the forms required for “success (sometimes even to survival) in a discourse community” (Coe, 1987, p. 21; cf. Keroes, 1986; Maranda, 1972; Rose, 1986), it can be expected that relatively predictable conceptual frameworks will, in fact, be activated. If that context requires using a masculine approach, that conceptual framework may well be activated. If that context requires a feminine approach, then that approach will generally be used. Audience exerts a powerful influence not only over what information is used, but also over how that information is used, especially when survival is at stake. Of course, the degree to which the academic discourse community requires a masculine approach is open to some debate.

The term non-sex-typed as used here is somewhat misleading as the experiment actually tested for differences between four groups: sex-typed, cross-sex-typed, androgynous, and undifferentiated. Reliable differences in the recall of gender related clusters were only found between the sex-typed group and the other three groups. The other three groups did not differ reliably from each other in their recall. Because of this, the other three groups have been conflated under the term non-sex-typed even though the actual difference that was found could, more accurately, be described as one of sex-congruency versus sex-non-congruency in recall. Sex-congruent individuals are those subjects (male or female) in which there is a match between psychological gender (as determined by the BSRI) and biological sex. Non-sex-congruent individuals are those in which there is no match. And it is the congruency between one’s psychological gender and biological sex which is generally understood as defining sex-typing.

Although the phenomenon of cross-sex-typing is certainly worth further investigation, the inclusion of these individuals in studies of sex-typing tends to generate a problem of interpretation. This problem confounds both of the studies Bem reports. In the first study, cross-sex-typed individuals demonstrated the lowest degree of gender clustered recall thereby implying a disinclination to engage in gender based schematic processing. In the second study, the responses of cross-sex-typed individuals were sufficiently inconsistent to prevent meaningful interpretation. Factors other than gender based schematic processing may well be involved with these individuals.

The Ardeners’ theory of muted groups arises from the anthropological tradition and, as such, does not specifically articulate the cognitive processes which implicitly underpin the theory. Originally developed to describe asymmetrical power relationships within a culture, muted group theory suggests that language and the norms for its use generally reflects the experiences and perceptions of the dominant group. In order to be heard, members of the muted group must use a language which more accurately reflects the experience of the dominant group. As a consequence, experiences and perceptions unique to the muted group may be difficult to state, even unstateable, in the dominant idiom (cf. Coe’s observation that “oppressed social groups often find it necessary to invent new forms because the socially dominant forms will not readily carry their ideas”, 1987, p. 25).

Muted groups theory has been widely, and somewhat uncritically, adopted as an explanation for sex differences in language use (Crawford & Chaffin, 1986; Kramarae, 1981; Showalter, 1980; et al.). Although the theory seems intuitively accurate, it has yet to be empirically tested. Framing the theory in more cognitive terms (see Figure 1) indicates that it necessarily relies upon the muted group translating their cognitions into the dominant idiom whereas the dominant group has no need to do so. Given this theoretical difference, it should be possible to design an experiment to test for a difference in the response latencies of subjects classified as muted and those classified as dominant.
This paper needs a purpose.
It needs a thesis. The thesis needs a question.
The question needs an answer. Sooner or later we all must settle down to the business of communicating clearly and concisely.
Look at Sylvia Plath. She wrote poetry thesaurus in hand.
She killed herself.
What do we learn about "real" writers, women
They are very unhappy.
They go crazy.
They kill themselves.
They are deadly serious.

- Marilyn Stern, “Words” (cited in Annas, 1985, p. 369)

Methodology

Raymond (1982) proposes that unlike the methodology of science which is hypothetico-inductive research, the methodology of the humanities is rhetorical in nature. As he notes:

Those who are producing knowledge about language and literature, the arts, history, philosophy, comparative religion, law, individual and social behavior, without the benefit of laboratories or special symbol systems, sometimes work as if they were scientists – insisting on empirical evidence and statistical probability. But their habitual medium is the word, and they often use nonscientific proofs in their discussions: analogies that obviously limp, striking examples rather than random samples, speculations about chains of causality involving human motives that are inscrutable in any scientific sense or variables more numerous than actuaries can account for. . . . They are applying the devices that Aristotle outlined in his *Rhetoric* as a methodology for discovering proofs about questions that neither dialectic nor empirical science can handle (pp. 780-781).

To describe the relationship between the sciences and the humanities, Raymond employs a metaphor of nesting boxes which represent hierarchies of certitude as well as hierarchies of reductiveness.

In the centre lies mathematics and logic, which by virtue of being self-contained rational symbol systems are both the most certain, yet also the most reductive (insofar as the problems with which they can deal must be quite narrowly defined). Next are the empirical sciences, which by using the symbol systems of mathematics as well as observation and inductive evidence are less reductive, but also less certain “because its descriptions are always subject to revision imposed by new data, always limited by
the inaccuracy of measurements" (Raymond, 1982, p. 781). Then rhetoric, which by including the methods of science as well as the enthymeme, (probabilistic reasoning) is even less certain, yet also less reductive in that it can deal with questions of values, of ethics, of motivations, of complex causalities—questions for which the answers are necessarily probable. Finally, the applied sciences and fine arts, which by using all the other methods, are perhaps the least reductive as well as the least certain.¹

Raymond's distinction between the humanistic methodology and the scientific methodology is perhaps most useful inasmuch as it clearly distinguishes between what science and rhetoric can and cannot do, between what questions each can most appropriately address:

The current debate among anthropologists, historians, linguists, and philosophers about the extent to which their research should be limited to empirical data is a false issue. When they are dealing with questions that can be resolved by empirical data, they have a responsibility to employ the scientific method. When they are dealing with questions that science cannot resolve, they have a responsibility to employ rhetorical proofs, and not to pretend that they are speaking as scientists. It would be not only irresponsible, but unnecessarily limiting for these researchers to deprive themselves of either methodology in the name of greater rigor or greater range (p. 783).

In general, the method being proposed here as presently the most appropriate to the study of sex differences and writing is that of rhetoric because it allows the exploration of the common themes, the subtexts, running through the literature, irrespective of methodological or disciplinary origin.

Rhetoric may be understood as a meta-method which provides a way to study ill-structured problems, that is, "problems for which there are conflicting assumptions, evidence, and opinion which may lead to different solutions" (Kitchener, 1983, p. 223). The issue of sex differences and writing is certainly an ill-structured problem. The complex causes and the ethical issues involved in the study of sex differences and writing mandate against a narrowly empirical approach. Nevertheless, a substantial body of literature (forty plus studies, mostly post 1975) has accumulated and its analysis should be of some value if for no other reason than to determine what types of future studies would be most useful.

More specifically, this chapter analyzes the evidence for differences between the writing of males and females with an emphasis upon those differences which have been found among college and university composition students. Insofar as it critically examines the research literature which reports sex differences, the methodology is meta-analytic in nature. One goal of this analysis is to integrate the findings of various studies into a composite picture of the current state of knowledge about sex differences and writing in order to generate theory. A second goal is to determine if the evidence for sex differences in writing is sufficiently coherent to warrant changes to current pedagogical practices.

However, the non-empirical (rhetorical) method of analysis used in this chapter clearly distinguishes it from most meta-analytic studies which use empirical (statistical) methods. The nature of the literature itself mandates against an empirical meta-analysis in at least three ways. First, the studies which are
analyzed use several different methodologies: statistical, case-studies, introspective, ethnographic, rhetorical, and literary. Second, the studies cover a wide range of topics: lexical choice, stylistics, form, and substance. Third, the subjects of the studies often vary widely in age, education, culture, and class. A statistical meta-analysis of overall probabilities or effect sizes would require excluding all the non-empirical studies and would thus severely limit what might otherwise be usefully inferred. Even if these types of meta-analyses could be performed, the variations in terms of the subjects studied would likely yield results of doubtful validity.²

However, simply because a study is not empirical does not mean that it cannot be rigorous. Three general criteria have been applied to the reported differences between the writing of males and females in order to achieve this rigor:

1. The differences reported in any particular study must be reasonable within the general theoretical framework outlined in Chapter One (namely, the differing orientations toward the values of autonomy and connection that have been proposed by Gilligan and Belenky et al.);

2. The differences are considered only if they are reported with some consistency in the literature (in other words, there must exist patterns or themes of difference within the literature);

3. The differences must represent an aspect of writing in which there is sometimes a conflict between academic discourse and the “female voice” (which is to suggest that the issue of sex differences is not only about “truth”, but also about “justice”).

This final criterion is a crucial one, not only in relation to guiding the analysis, but also in relation to the intent of the analysis. This thesis, as well as the sources upon which it draws, is thoroughly interdisciplinary in nature. Linda Brodkey makes an interesting point about interdisciplinary studies:

Interdisciplinary study is not primarily a commitment to a method, but to a topic. Consequently, in interdisciplinary studies a particular axiology rather than a method links one text to another (1987, p. 21).

Because this analysis takes an interdisciplinary approach, it is essential to acknowledge the values which guide the analysis and which, for that matter, are sometimes a part of the subtext of the literature itself.

A key value guiding this analysis is a concern for social justice within the context of academic writing. Thus the intent of this thesis is not merely to describe differences which may exist between the writing of males and females, but also to consider if there exists a bias in how the writing of some
women is received within the academic discourse community. And, inasmuch as a bias exists, this thesis proposes changing how academic discourse is currently constituted; it aims to change the status quo.

Changing the status quo does not only mean eliminating potential biases against the writing of some women. It also means to provide men with information that may help some of them escape certain limiting (and limited) conceptions of what constitutes “truth”. Moreover, genuine change will improve academic discourse. Academia, itself, stands to gain by opening the canon to alternative forms of discourse. If the central concerns of the academic community are to generate, test, and communicate knowledge, then academia can only benefit by encouraging a diversity of questions, approaches, and forms. In other words, encouraging diverse discourses not only represents an opportunity to further the value of justice, but also to further the value of truth — to improve the conditions for acquiring new knowledge. Insofar as academic discourse constrains the ideas which can be legitimately communicated, it limits itself. To reiterate: “Oppressed social groups often find it necessary to invent new forms because the socially dominant forms will not readily carry their ideas” (Coe, 1987, p. 25).

All good intentions aside, however, rhetoric as a methodology relies upon the enthymeme as a form of proof: a proof in which conclusions are based upon premises that are only probable. Bearing in mind the three criteria outlined earlier, certain qualifications must be appended which may alter the probabilities involved in the argument advanced by this chapter. In Language, Gender, and Society (1983), Thorne, Kramarae, and Henley note six limitations from which previous research into sex differences and language has all too often suffered:

1. The results of studies into isolated language variables are complex and contradictory, in part because of the lack of an adequate theoretical base;
2. The findings of sex-differences have been over-reported, especially insofar as they accord with polarized stereotypes;
3. The units of language study are often too small to yield meaningful understandings of patterned relationships;
4. The description of sex-differences is often mistaken for an explanation;
5. The differences which are found are too often located in the women rather than in the larger social context;
6. The genderlect portrayal is overdrawn.

This study attempts to overcome some of these difficulties by synthesizing a wide range of studies that deal with isolated language variables. It is descriptive only insofar as patterned description can help generate theoretical explanations for the relationships between language, gender, and the social context.
At the same time this study must accept a reality of the research which has been undertaken to date — it is inherently polarized and often stereotypical.

Because all researchers are necessarily of one sex or the other, and may have varying genders as well as sexual orientations, they inevitably participate subjectively in their society's construction of what that sex, gender, or orientation means. In relation to this topic, some subjectivity, some stereotyping, must be accepted as a given. For example, Rose (1986) reports a case study involving the analysis of student narratives for potentially different male and female myths of achieving literacy (the substance of her study is more fully detailed later in this chapter). She found significant differences in the way that a male coder and a female coder analyzed both the quality and type of myth involved. As she notes:

First, narrative quality is a subjective evaluation. Second, the identification of a myth is the result of a subjective reading. Neither of these points is earthshattering, so let me rephrase — this description tells us that how readers read is as significant as what writers write. . . . The characterization I have made of differences between women's and men's literacy myths may be nothing more than a representation of my own literacy myths and gender myths. This later stage of analysis — the TA readings — has moved me from reading student writing to reading teachers' readings. As you listen to me, you make yet another reading — we fold and fold again (pp. 14-15).

Insofar as society attaches stereotypes to the meaning of sex or gender, researchers are likely to interpret research findings in accord with those stereotypes. Conceivably, the research questions they initially ask may predispose them to findings generally in accord with their own stereotypes.

Does the perhaps inevitable stereotyping attached to studies of sex or gender really matter in terms of the general validity of the conclusions which may be (tentatively) proposed in this meta-analysis? Given the theoretical framework of this thesis, perhaps not. If, as Bem (1981a) proposes, information is processed in accord with a gender schema, then it is to be expected that the sex and gender stereotypes current within society form part (perhaps the major part) of this schema. If, as Chaffin, Crawford, Mirabella, and Jones (1983) find, some individuals behave linguistically in accord with that schema — those social stereotypes — then the stereotypes assume a formal reality. That previous research findings are stereotyped may be irrelevant, because to a degree some people behave linguistically in accord with those stereotypes.

However, even though the stereotypes which exist in the research findings may not affect the logical validity of the meta-analysis (at this time and in this culture), they cannot simply be ignored. In terms of the ethical validity of sex or gender differences, it can be argued that the schematic stereotypes generate, in part, differences in the status and power of females and males and thus need to be changed. And stereotypes can be changed — through education. In other words, the differences found in this meta-analysis may no longer be valid at some time in the future.
Because the topic of gender differences is often contentious, and easily prone to misrepresentation, it is also important to emphasize what this study does not suggest. It does not propose that there are significant proficiency differences between males and females. The majority of research indicates that females are slightly better writers than are males, but the difference is so slight as to be of little practical importance. In general, males and females are equal in proficiency in the composition classroom. What is proposed is the possibility that some men and women have different preferences for particular styles, rhetorical forms, and subjects.

According to Bem (1974), the construct of gender as uni-dimensional with masculinity at one pole and femininity at the other is an oversimplification. Instead, masculinity and femininity can be viewed as independent dimensions of personality, as separate attributes which can coexist in any individual. Her model suggests that gender is multi-dimensional: masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated. Unfortunately, almost all of the research into the writing styles of males and females has been based upon the biological construct – sex differences – rather than the social construct – gender differences. This may well account for some of the contradictory findings or some of the results which are statistically unreliable. Despite this reality, the previous research is not without value. It can be useful, but only as an incomplete and very rough map of ill-defined territory. This territory must be explored with caution. Anatomy is not destiny.

Academic Writing as Gendered

In “The Female and Male Modes of Rhetoric” (1979), Farrell proposes that “the male mode is the predominant mode of formal academic discourse, for academic discourse is concerned largely with ‘testing out’ ideas, with playing hypotheses off against the evidence” (p. 920). Some of the characteristics he details for this mode are: analytic, formal, distant, explicit, adversarial, concluded, processed, copious, inductive/deductive, and possessing a clear thesis statement. To Farrell’s list, Annas (1985) adds the following characteristics: defended, linear, objective, abstract, logical, and impersonal. Although the contention that the predominant form of academic discourse represents a male mode of rhetoric is, of course, open to debate, the characteristics detailed generally embody the traditionally taught and preferred forms for academic discourse – what might be called generic academic discourse.

However, as noted in Chapter One, there is little doubt that males and females are about equally capable of producing this generic discourse form, at least insofar as studies of cognitive verbal abilities indicate. If anything, females appear to be somewhat more verbally proficient than males. As Macaulay (1978) notes: “Such differences [in the linguistic capabilities of the sexes] as have shown up in tests are
relatively slight and much smaller than those which have been shown to relate to social class, ethnic background, etc." (p. 357). Further, there is even some preliminary evidence that, within freshman composition classes, the writing of women may be preferentially evaluated over the writing of men, irrespective of ability (Meyer, 1982).

Why, after all, study the differences between male and female writers if those differences do not constitute an obvious problem at least insofar as capability and evaluation are concerned? Winne (1985) proposes that the effectiveness of instruction is largely dependent upon the degree of correspondence between the student’s cognitive response to the teacher’s instructional cues and the teacher’s intentions for the student’s cognitive operations. At least four conditions must be met to achieve this correspondence: the students must be capable of completing the cognitive tasks; the students must attend to the teacher’s cues; the students must correctly perceive the teacher’s intentions; and the student must be motivated to perform the task. Capability is clearly not a problem here. Attention, perception, and motivation however, may well be implicated. If, in terms of writing instruction, these three conditions differ for males and females, then the effectiveness of that instruction may also differ. Attitude rather than capability is at issue.

The philosopher of education, Jane Martin, makes a useful distinction between the sameness of the education provided to males and females and its equivalency:

If sex equality is what we want, then, knowing what we do, we must start to worry less about the sameness of the education of girls and boys, women and men, and more about its equivalency. We must also start to worry more than we have in the past about trait genderization. Otherwise we can expect females to continue to be caught in the middle of a war between educational goals and processes based on the assumption that sex is a difference that makes no difference, on the one hand, and cultural images and expectations, that assume sex is the difference that makes a difference, on the other (1985, p. 36).

Instructional models for composition which focus solely upon the student’s capability to complete a given task without considering the social and psychological contexts within which that student is placed, perhaps inevitably fail to consider sex as a significant instructional variable, if for no other reason than the capabilities of males and females are more or less the same. Unfortunately, as Brodkey contends, “just as literary critics have sought to decontextualize literature from the social, historical, and political circumstances of its production, most composition research on testing and evaluation decontextualizes writing” (1987, p. 96). Instructional models which consider the student’s social and psychological contexts, in relation to attention, perception, and motivation, are perhaps more likely to provide equivalent instruction, if for no other reason than the attitudes of males and females appear to differ.
First year students' perceptions about the nature of the discourse form preferred by the academic community have been noted to adversely affect the quality of their compositions. Sanborn (1987) makes the following observations in a case study of composition students:

Every year I have encountered in my Freshman writing classes at least one student, usually but not always a woman, who could write beautifully when he or she perceived the subject to be experiential, but whose writing fell apart totally, even at the syntax level, if the topic seemed academic. I came to suspect that their distress might be rooted in a perception, perhaps unconscious, that their thoughts, their insights, their way of relating to literature and to their experience [italics added], in sum what they wanted to say, could not be conveyed in the traditional thesis/argument paper with its linear organization and relentless demand for categorization of evidence. Their thought patterns were perhaps more circular, built by accumulation of evidence — to use Carol Gilligan's terms, the web instead of the ladder. So they shut off their thoughts and compiled words on paper, words totally divorced from meaning (p. 1).

The linear organization required by the traditional academic essay may constrain the nature of the ideas which some writers wish to communicate — form and content are arbitrarily and artificially separated.

This compiling of words bereft of personal meaning, this artificial separation of form and content, is a phenomenon also noted by Bolker in an earlier case study (1979). She notes that some women wrote technically perfect papers, yet “each of these women describes a lack of personality in her papers, and her sense of non-ownership, and of disappointment at not being able to make herself heard” (p. 906). Bolker calls this phenomenon the Griselda Complex after Chaucer's very kind, but thoroughly dull character of Griselda in the Canterbury Tales.

The Griselda Complex may derive from the writer's desire to produce a paper which will please the audience (i.e., by adhering to the generic form) at the expense of the writer's integrity (i.e., by ignoring personally meaningful content). Taylor (1978) makes a similar point when she suggests that women are often caught in a doublebind in the composition classroom because the demands of argumentative writing conflict with the woman's socially derived role of conciliator. Again, the generic form of academic discourse may constrain the nature of the content which can be communicated within that form.

In Language and Woman's Place, (1975) Robin Lakoff notes the existence of a similar doublebind:

If a girl knows that a professor will be receptive to comments that sound scholarly, objective, unemotional, she will of course be tempted to use neutral language in class or in conference. But if she knows that as a man, he will respond more approvingly to her at other levels if she uses women's language, and sounds frilly and feminine, won't she be confused as well as sorely tempted in two directions at once? (p. 7).

In the traditional composition classroom, women may too often be trapped in a dilemma. Anna's (1985) observes that there are two antithetical flaws commonly displayed in some women's writing: objective, polished, and fluent, but superficial essays versus subjective, unrevised, and scattered, but meaningful essays. Producing writing typical of either extreme has negative consequences for the woman composition student. On the one hand, if she adheres to the dictates of form, then she may find it
difficult to communicate personally meaningful content, thereby risking censure for producing polished, but empty prose.

On the other hand, if she chooses to generate personally meaningful content, then she may find it necessary to write in a form which the academic community devalues, thereby risking censure for producing significant, but scattered prose. That the writing of women has been criticized in this dichotomous fashion is evident in the literature. Bolker's article clearly examines the problem of polished, but empty prose written by women — the Griselda Complex.

Pigott (1979), in a study of 1,000 university writing placement tests, discovered substantial differences in topic choice and argumentation between men and women. She criticizes the women for relying "solely on personal experience in their thinking, in their focusing on topics, and most notably, in their writing, scribbling a world of particulars within which the incident is isolated, individual, non-generalizable, and stunted because it does not relate to universal concepts which could give it meaning" (p. 922). She notes that the essays composed by the men were typically structured deductively, beginning with a generalization (thesis statement) whereas the essays composed by the women were particularistic throughout. The men were more successful in duplicating the preferred discourse form — the generic form — as detailed by Farrell and Annas than were the women. The prose written by the women may have been personally meaningful in content, but is devalued by Pigott on the basis of its form. Taken together, the articles by Bolker and Pigott rather starkly depict the doublebind in which women composition students may find themselves trapped.

As Fort (1971) notes in relation to the literary critical essay:

Teachers give A's to diverse interpretations. Editors accept works with opposing conclusions. But while freedom is permitted in content, formal conformity is rigidly demanded. This contradiction is symbolized by the statement so often made to students: "Sure, almost any interpretation is okay if you prove it." In the implications of "prove" are found not only an insistence on logic but also a required attitude towards literature that results in papers with a prescribed structure (p. 629).

In other words, women students may sometimes find themselves trapped in a doublebind — a doublebind which can be formulated in the following fashion: "You may write about anything you want, but you must write about it using a form that prevents you from writing about it".

The existence of this doublebind, of course, implies that there is a distinct discourse form which some women prefer or need in order to express their ideas — a form which differs significantly from the sort of generic form outlined by Farrell and Annas. Farrell proposes that some of the characteristics of the female mode are: additive, informal, intimate, implicit, conciliatory, open-ended, processing, terse, indirect, and lacking a clear thesis statement. Annas adds the following characteristics: experiential, circular, subjective, particularistic, associative, and personal. Although the characteristics proposed by
Farrell and Annas as representing the \textit{female mode} must be viewed with some degree of skepticism because they are based upon the polar construct of biological sex rather than the more complex and perhaps realistic construct of psychosocial gender, the characteristics nevertheless provide a foundation for analyzing the literature.

**Studies of Sex Differences and Writing**

**Differences in Lexico/Grammatic Features**

Chotlos (1944), in a type-token analysis of free writing by 8 to 18 year old children, found only two statistically reliable differences in relation to sex. The girls used more verb and adverb tokens than did the boys. No differences were found in relation to noun or adjective use. Conjunctions and prepositions were not tabulated. Of some import, Chotlos also notes “that high I. Q. groups are characterized by the use of a proportionally greater number of nouns while the low I. Q. groups are characterized by the use of a greater percentage of verbs and adverbs” (1944, p. 111). Although not statistically reliable, the sex differences in the spontaneous speech of adults found by Gleser, Gottschalk, and John (1959) indicated that the women used more conjunctions and verbs than the men whereas the men used more adjectives and prepositions than the women. As well, they found that substantives (nouns and pronouns) and adverbs were used about equally by both sexes. Again, a greater use of verb and adverb tokens typified the low IQ group. The high IQ group typically used increased adjective, article, and preposition tokens. In a study of grade 9 students, Entwisle and Garvey (1972) found a similar relationship between adjective use and IQ.

In a study of the speech of university students, Wood (1966) found that the exclusive lexical sets varied substantially between the men and women. For the men, 49 percent were nouns, 15 percent were verbs, and 36 percent were modifiers. For the women, 30 percent were nouns, 22 percent were verbs, and 48 percent were modifiers. Whitmore (1987), in a type-token analysis of essays written by college students, found that the women used verb tokens reliably more than the men. Additionally, the women used adverb and conjunction tokens more than the men. Conversely, the men used substantive tokens more than the women. The men also used adjective tokens more than the women. Although the men used preposition tokens more than the women, the differences were not statistically reliable.

Peterson (1986), in her sociolinguistic study of argumentative text, found that the men used 24% more abstract deverbal and verbal nouns than did the women (a deverbal noun is a noun derived from a verb through the addition of suffixes such as -ment or -sion – i.e., argument, persuasion; a verbal noun has the form of a verb, but functions syntactically as a noun – i.e., “Writing is a complex skill”).
Utilizing the methodology of literary criticism, Penelope and Wolfe (1983) note the presence of a distinct style associated with the writing of women—an emergent style that is being deliberately developed. One element of this style involves self-consciously shifting from noun-based writing to verb-based writing. Foremost among the progenitors of this style is Gertrude Stein:

In the Making of Americans a long a very long prose book made up of sentences and paragraphs and the new thing that was something neither the sentences nor the paragraph each one alone or in combination had ever done, I said I had gotten rid of nouns and adjectives as much as possible by the method of living in adverbs in verbs in pronouns, in adverbial clauses written or implied and in conjunctions [italics added] (1957, cited in Penelope & Wolfe, 1983, p. 129).

It could perhaps be argued that this intentional shift to a verb-based form of writing represents Stein’s accommodation to a language style with which she most readily identified. Certainly, the parallels between the findings of the empirical studies and Stein’s self-conscious style are intriguing.

Two points can be made in connection with the above studies. First, the correlation between IQ and lexical choice found in the studies of Chotlos (1944), Gleser, Gottschalk, and John (1959), as well as Entwisle and Garvey (1972) imply that because IQ may act as a confounding variable, it is methodologically important to control IQ in any study of sex differences in language use. This may be achieved either by testing the experimental sample or by choosing the sample from a population in which the IQ range is reasonably restricted (as, for example, in the population of university students).[^7]

Second, the above studies indicate a reasonably consistent pattern of sex differentiated preferences in lexical choice: the males in the studies tended to use more adjective, preposition, and noun tokens than the females, whereas the females tended to use more adverb, conjunction, and verb tokens than the males. There appear to be only three exceptions to this general pattern in the literature. Westmoreland, Starr, Shelton, and Pasadeos (1977) found that women used reliably more adjectives when writing news stories for a university journalism course than did men. At the same time, however, their findings suggest that women may use more adverbs than men.[^6] Entwisle and Garvey (1972), in their study of 9th grade students found that the girls generally used more adjective tokens than the boys. However, their study did not consider total adjective use, but only the use of thirty high-frequency adjectives. A study by Warshay (1972) of the descriptive writing of university students found that the men tended to “refer to events in a verb phrase” whereas the women “referred to events in a noun phrase” (p. 8).

Peterson suggests that the reason for the contradiction between her findings and Warshay’s findings may lie in the different genres which were examined, argumentative text versus narrative text, respectively. Although possibly supported by Whitmore’s findings, which also examined the genre of argumentative text, Peterson’s suggestion does not account for the contradiction between Warshay’s results and the results of the other researchers. In the study by Chotlos, freewriting was the genre
studied. In the study by Gleser, Gottschalk, and John, as well as in the study by Wood, spontaneous speech (i.e., relatively unstructured description) was the genre studied. It could reasonably be asserted that freewriting and spontaneous speech more closely approximate narration than they do argumentation. Consequently, Peterson’s inference is at best speculative, although the effects of different genres upon lexical choices is certainly a topic worthy of further investigation. Perhaps the differences between Warshay’s findings and the findings of the other researchers lies more in the methods of analysis, operational definitions, or the test instruments used. Unfortunately, Warshay’s article does not provide sufficient information to determine the precise reasons for the conflicting findings.

In any event, the general distinction between the lexical choices of males and females, as revealed by the above experiments, aligns quite closely with Wells’ (1960) observation that there are two distinct language styles — nominal or noun based and verbal or verb based. Altenberg (1983, p. 4) notes in this connection that, "‘Verbal’ forms of expression generally have a ‘nominal’ counterpart (and vice versa), and the change from one to the other tends to affect related word-classes in a systematic way: verbs attract adverbs and conjunctions, nouns attract adjectives and prepositions (cf. because his father suddenly died and due to his father’s sudden death)". Based upon several undergraduate studies comparing spoken and written English, Altenberg proposes that spontaneous speech is often verbal in style whereas expository prose is often nominal in style. Devito, in an analysis of the written and oral discourse of ten published academics found a similar difference; the oral samples contained more verbs and adverbs while the written samples contained more nouns and adjectives (1967, in Haslett 1983).

Although Altenberg’s proposal is speculative, it may well possess considerable power to explain some of Annas’ and Farrell’s observations, especially when taken in conjunction with the experiments cited above. Possibly the female mode of rhetoric more resembles speech than the written discourse of academe.

Rubin (1978) observes that speakers, unlike writers, usually share a number of commonalities with their audience; most notably they share a space, time, and environment that enables clarifying questions to be asked. Speakers and listeners are able to interact in a fashion that is impossible between writers and readers. Further, speech is characteristically less detailed, precise, complex, distanced, and abstract than writing (Wilkinson, cited in Schallert, 1977). In a survey of research into the differences between speech and writing, Akinnaso (1982) suggests that, among other things, speech contains fewer complex nominal structures, is less explicit, and is more contextualized than writing. Speech and the female mode of rhetoric share several attributes, most notably their informality, intimacy, and implicitness.

As Belenky et al. note in Women’s Ways of Knowing, the metaphor of speaking and hearing was frequently used by their subjects:
The tendency for women to ground their epistemological premises in metaphors suggesting speaking and listening is at odds with the visual metaphors (such as equating knowledge with illumination, knowing with seeing, and truth with light) that scientists and philosophers most often use to express their sense of mind. Physicist Evelyn Fox Keller (Keller and Grontowski, 1983), tracing the metaphorical uses of vision in the history of Western intellectual thought, argues that such analogies lead to a favored model for truth and the quest for mind. Visual metaphors, such as "the mind's eye," suggest a camera passively recording a static reality and promote the illusion that disengagement and objectification are central to the construction of knowledge. Visual metaphors encourage standing at a distance to get a proper view, removing — it is believed — subject and object from a sphere of possible intercourse. Unlike the eye, the ear operates by registering nearby subtle change. Unlike the eye, the ear requires closeness between subject and object. Unlike seeing, speaking and listening suggest dialogue and interaction (Keller and Grontowski, 1983).

The reliance of some women upon a verbal writing style manifesting characteristics associated with speaking is paralleled by the metaphors sometimes used to describe their way of constructing knowledge. Just as the feminine psychologies proposed by Belenky et al. (1986), Gilligan (1982), and Chodorow (1978) explicitly emphasize relationship, within the style of some women's writing a close relationship between reader and writer may be implicitly assumed even though this intimacy is not generally possible. As Farrell further notes: “The female mode seems at times to obfuscate the boundary between the self of the author and the subject of the discourse, as well as between the self and the audience [italics added], whereas the male mode tends to accentuate such boundaries” (p. 910). A fairly consistent pattern, a theme, begins to emerge from the studies of lexical choice detailed above.

The verbal writing used by some women may represent an unconscious stylistic strategy employed to establish a closer relationship with the reader whereas the nominal writing used by some men may represent an unconscious stylistic strategy employed to emphasize autonomy and distance from the reader. As Akinnaso notes: “technical vocabularies and word definitions are more frequently used in writing than in speech since they are devices commonly employed to enhance the autonomy and explicitness of written discourse [italics added]” (1982, p. 103). Certainly, the stylistic similarities between speaking and the writing of some females is a pattern which runs through many of the analyses of the differences between the writing of males and females.

As such, the key difference between the male mode and the female mode may come down to a difference in the genres employed. And, more importantly, this difference in genre may reflect a difference in how the genres are intended to function socially. As Martin, Christie, and Rothery note:

From a social perspective the answer is again a functional one. *Writing is used to store and consolidate information and interpretations, which need to be organized.* Abstraction is a powerful resource for achieving this. In addition nominalised text codes an alternative and complementary view of reality to speaking (Halliday, 1985b). It treats the world as if it were a thing — to be classified and partitioned, with the relationships between the bits and pieces at the heart of the interpretation. *Speaking tends on the other hand to explore the world as process — a place of dynamism, evolution and change [italics added]* (1987, p. 67).
Given that the main function of academic discourse is to generate, test, and communicate knowledge, it should not be especially surprising that its form differs from that of speech. Insofar as the writing of some women emphasizes different values such as dialogue and interaction, or seeks to change the values of academe, its form will differ from the generic academic form.

In other words, the different forms, the different genres, are related to the different functions of the discourses. And, as Martin, Christie, and Rothery further note:

Genres represent the most efficient ways cultures have at a given point in time of going about their business. It is in this sense that genres are functional. And because they are functional, they evolve. In this way genres, like all meaning systems, introduce stability and flexibility into a culture at one and the same time (1987, p. 62).

To the extent that academic discourse as a generic form is resistant to change, it will be dysfunctional, at least so far as it restricts the kinds of knowledge which can be legitimately communicated. And, it might be added, so far as it specifically constrains the communication of some women's experiences, it will continue to cause a double bind for those women.

In any event, analyses of sex-related lexical differences have not been limited to general comparisons between the traditional grammatical categories. More detailed examinations of lexical choice have been undertaken in relation to the use of the passive voice and the use of conjunctions. In a paper relating some informal observations about sex differences and writing in college composition classes, Ruszkiewicz (1978) notes that the men, unlike the women, tended to produce papers in which the passive voice predominated. Wood's study (1966) also revealed a tendency for the passive voice to predominate among the men while the active voice was more typical of the women.

Peterson (1986), on the other hand, found that the passive voice tended to be predominant in the writing of women rather than in the writing of men. At the same time, she also found that men tended to use the verb to be somewhat more than women.8 Whitmore (1987) found a similar difference between men and women in the use of the verb to be. The men used this verb reliably more than the women. Conceivably, this greater reliance upon the verb to be relates to an increased use of the passive voice on the part of men. Changing from the active to the passive voice requires the addition of the verb to be as, for example, when the active sentence “She wrote an essay” is changed to the passive “An essay was written by her”.9 Given Akinnaso's assertion that the passive voice is more frequently used in writing than speaking, perhaps the findings of these experiments further support a female style of writing similar to speech.

In a study of 100 adult professional writers, Hiatt (1977; 1978) found substantial differences between the types of logical connectives used by men and women in non-fiction writing. The women used causatives (because, since, etc.) and additives (and, as well as, etc.) about 50 percent more
frequently than the men. Conversely, the men used illustratives (*that is, for example,* etc.) and illatives (*therefore, thus,* etc.) about 50 percent more frequently than the women. Adversatives (*however, but,* etc.) were used about equally by both sexes. Overall, the women used slightly more logical connectives than did the men.

Similar in methodology, Scates' study (1981) of college level writing found that the women used more connectives overall than did the men. Her findings differ somewhat from Hiatt's in that she found causatives and illatives were used more frequently by the men. Illustratives, adversatives, and additives were used about equally by both sexes. Both Hiatt's and Scates' findings, in respect to the men's use of illatives, may support Farrell's proposal that the male mode of rhetoric is more concluded in nature. Although contradicted by Scates' results, Hiatt's finding that women used additives more than men, supports Farrell's contention that the female mode is more additive in nature. In a case study of collaborative writing, Brodkey (1987) notes that the woman used *and* much more than the man. Although she did not draw the conclusion herself, Peterson's data indicates that the women in her study used coordinating conjunctions as connecting devices between clauses about 70 percent more frequently than did the men (1986, p. 124, table 12).

If females use additives (and perhaps coordinating conjunctions) more than males, this further reflects a similarity between the female style of writing and speech. Scates notes that the women in her study tended to "over-use the additive *and* and the causative *because*" (p. 113). Altenberg (1984) makes a similar observation about the prevalence of *and* as well as *because* in spoken discourse. Akinnaso (1982) notes that coordinate constructions are more frequently used in speech whereas subordinate constructions are more frequently found in writing. However, the picture is far from a simple one; Whitmore's study (1987) found that, in proportion to total connective use, the men used the coordinating conjunctions *and* as well as *but* reliably more than the women.

Just how complex the situation may actually be is suggested in the only two experiments which consider lexical choice in relation to psychological gender rather than biological sex. Chaffin, Crawford, Mirabella, and Jones (1983), using the *Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI)* to classify subjects according to their psychological gender, attempted to verify whether or not the gender schema as proposed by Bem (1981) would affect linguistic choices. In the first experiment, they asked their subjects to join pairs of personality traits selected from the BSRI using *and* or *but.* For example, in the sentences, "Mary is gentle ____ self reliant" or "John is forceful ____ gentle", the selection of *but* would indicate that the subjects see the two traits as incongruent whereas the selection of *and* would indicate that the subjects see the two traits as congruent. The subjects were asked to make this selection on the basis that they were describing an individual typical of their own gender. In accord with gender schema theory, Chaffin
et al. hypothesized that “sex-typed [people] would be more likely than non-sex-typed people to conjoin same-sex stereotype adjectives with AND and different-sex-stereotype adjectives with BUT” (1983, p. 4). The hypothesis was not supported.

In order to explain the unexpected finding that psychological gender does not affect these linguistic judgements, they reasoned that perhaps linguistic judgements are less related to individual personality differences than to societal gender stereotypes. To further explore this possibility, Chaffin et al. performed a second experiment which hypothesized “that and/but decisions are affected by society’s stereotypes about gender, i.e. by the gender schema, but not by people’s views of themselves, i.e. by the self schema” (1983, p. 7). To test this hypothesis they selected from each subject’s individual BSRI, adjectives which had been endorsed as self descriptive (high ratings) or as not self descriptive (low ratings) and then combined them into congruous and incongruous pairs as in the first experiment. In this second experiment they found that sex-typed individuals joined gender congruent adjectives with and as well as gender incongruent adjectives with but reliably more than non-sex-typed individuals. Gender schema appears to interact with linguistic decisions.

The results of the second experiment also suggest a possible explanation for the negative findings of the first experiment. As Chaffin et al. further note:

How then are we to explain the absence of a difference between sex-typed and non-sex-typed subjects in Experiment 1? The important conclusion to be drawn from the absence of an effect in Experiment 1 is that effects due to individual differences are very weak compared to those due to societal stereotypes. This can be seen in experiment 2 which was set up to compare the two types of effect. The size of the gender congruity effect due to the gender schema, which represents societal stereotypes about masculinity and femininity was 43%. The size of the self congruity effect due to the subjects’ self schema was 9%, a fourth of the size. And the difference in size for sex-typed and androgynous subjects was a similarly modest 15%. This indicates that and/but decisions are largely determined by societal stereotypes and that individual attributes and personality have only a small effect. (1983, pp. 10-11).

Although obviously preliminary in nature, and not strictly comparable to studies based upon sex, two tentative conclusions can be drawn from the experiments by Chaffin et al. First, insofar as psychosocial gender may be implicated in writing differences, the individual’s psychological gender may be of less importance than the individual’s beliefs about the social stereotypes and expectations of sex differences on the part of the audience (cf. Keroes, 1986; Lakoff, 1975).

In a paper describing some informal observations about men’s and women’s writing styles, Ruszkiewicz (1978) also underscores the importance of the writer’s beliefs about audience expectations:

The significant common factor in the two styles is, I believe, a sublimation of personality which, in the past, has enabled students to duck criticism or direct it away from themselves. They have adopted a vehicle which 1) fulfills the expectation their early training has placed on their “sexual-linguistic” roles and 2) transforms their individuality into a generalized stance that has been critically acceptable in high school.
Girls are supposed to like language arts and do well at composing, while boys are engaged by the sciences. A simplification perhaps, but one that dramatizes the exploitations and pressures felt by both sexes. They respond differently (according to how they have been taught), but in both cases the students use rhetoric to hide themselves behind convention (pp. 70-71).

Audience exerts a powerful influence not only over what information is communicated, but also over how that information is communicated.10

Second, in any experiment examining writing and psychological gender it is methodologically important that the variable of audience be controlled in some fashion. Otherwise, the more vigorous effect of the gender schema (i.e., audience considerations) may mask the weaker effect of gendered self concepts (i.e., individual preferences). In essence, by devising individual test instruments designed to separate the subject’s self concept from his or her gender schema, Chaffin et al. were able to tightly control the variable of audience. Unfortunately, this degree of control is probably not possible outside of extremely narrow empirical experiments, simply because academic writing generally presupposes an audience of some type.

Nevertheless, it should be possible to broadly manipulate this variable by providing contexts in which the writer’s considerations of audience contrast in the degree to which they constrain the writer’s potential to express his or her preferences for specific forms and content. Possibly, an experiment examining the writing of masculine, feminine, and non-sex-typed individuals across two different genres, such as narration and argumentation (or across two different forms, such as classical persuasion and Rogerian persuasion), would maximize the contrast between audience considerations (gender schema) and individual preferences (self concept). This possibility is further explored in Chapter Four.

Whatever the complexities of the relationship between writing and psychological gender, in respect to sex differences in lexical choice, the evidence is suggestive, albeit somewhat mixed and occasionally contradictory. Some females may prefer to write in a discourse form that is similar to speech — a verbal style. Some males may prefer to write in a discourse form that more closely approaches the expectations of traditional expository prose — a nominal style. It might also be of some value and interest to further investigate whether men also speak in a more nominal fashion than do women. In any event, the sex differences in lexical choice is only one of the two areas examined closely by investigators of this topic; the other area concerns sex differences in sentence length and complexity.

In terms of sentence length, Scates (1981) found a “mild correlation with sex”; the men in her study wrote slightly longer sentences than the women.11 Although the men also wrote marginally longer sentences than the women in Whitmore’s study (1987), the differences were not statistically reliable. Similarly, Hiatt (1977; 1978) found a small difference in length, with the men writing somewhat longer sentences than the women. In a study of freshman compositions written in three different genres
(narration, analysis, and argumentation), Keene (1985) found that men generally wrote longer sentences than did women. Her findings are statistically reliable for the argumentative essays, (and across the three essay forms taken as a whole), but not for the narrative or analytic essays considered individually. On the other hand, Westmoreland, Starr, Shelton, and Pasadeos (1977), in their study of the news writing styles of men and women journalism students, found that the women tended to write longer sentences than the men (however, see note 7).

In “A Cultural Approach to Male-Female Miscommunication” (1982), Maltz and Borker suggest that “verbal aggression” and “argument” are viewed differently by men and women in conversation: “Women seem to interpret overt [verbal] aggressiveness as personally directed, negative, and disruptive [whereas] men seem to view it as one conventional organizing structure for conversational flow” (p. 213). Although speculative, it could be postulated that some women may view argumentative writing as the prose equivalent of verbal aggression in speech. The apparent identification between the writing of females and the forms of spoken communication perhaps increases the viability of this speculation.

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986), in their investigation into the epistemological development of women, suggest that for a woman:

To take a stand against others means to isolate herself socially. She fears that engaging in combative measures in support of her opinion may antagonize and jeopardize her connections to others. . . . Their intent is to communicate to others the limits, not the power, of their own opinions, perhaps because they want to preserve their attachments to others, not dislodge them (pp. 65-66).

Possibly this reticence to engage in argumentation partly accounts for Keene’s finding of reliable differences between the sentence lengths of men and women in argumentative essays. At the least, it suggests an interesting line of investigation: Do males and females have different perceptions of, and attitudes towards, argumentative writing because of underlying differences in socialization?

Notwithstanding Keene’s finding and the speculations stemming from it, the overall differences between the sentence lengths of males and females generally appear to be so slight as to be of negligible import. Although perhaps worthy of further study, no other conclusions can be drawn from the studies.

The available evidence for differences in sentence structure is both scanty and contradictory. Scates (1981) found that men wrote complex sentences slightly more often than women whereas women wrote simple sentences and fragmented sentences more frequently than men. Compound sentences were used equally by both sexes. Peterson, however, found that men used simple and complex sentence structures more than women. Women on the other hand used more compound and compound/complex structures than men. Obviously, no conclusions can be drawn. More study is needed.
Although the evidence for differences in sentence length and complexity is lacking in both quality and quantity, there is coherent evidence for differences in lexical choice between males and females—differences which parallel the differences between speaking and writing. These differences may, in part, account for some of the conflicts which some females confront when writing academic discourse.

**Differences in Rhetorical/Discourse Features**

The shared commonalities between speakers and listeners permit speech to be generally less detailed than writing. Further, the active verbal style is inherently more concise than the passive nominal style. If some females prefer a written discourse form which resembles the spoken verbal style, then one might expect to find a general tendency toward conciseness on the part of females and verbosity on the part of males. Farrell implies this when he notes the male mode of rhetoric is copious whereas the female mode is terse.

Contrary to the popular stereotype of the female as the most talkative sex, Haas (1979) notes, in a survey of spoken language differences, that the evidence is mixed. In terms of writing, the evidence is even more scant and similarly mixed. Keene (1985) only found reliable differences in the narrative essay with the men writing more words than the women. Although the women wrote more words in the argumentative essay than did the men, the differences were not statistically reliable. Given that narrative is a discourse form which more closely approximates speech than analysis or argumentation, Keene’s findings seem at variance with a preference for a spoken style on the part of females and a written style on the part of males, as are the findings of Price and Graves (1980). In their study of grade 8 students, they found that boys used more words in spoken communication whereas girls used more words in written communication.

On the other hand, Whitmore (1987) found that the men wrote more words per argumentative essay than did the women. In her study of university students, Warshaw (1972) found that the women wrote longer narrative responses than did the men. Entwistle and Garvey (1972) similarly found that girls wrote longer stories than boys when studying 9th grade students. In a study of free-written description produced by 12 to 17 year olds, O’Mahony (1986) found that girls produced more items per description than boys.

Finally, neither Scates (1981) nor Lynch and Strauss-Noll (1987), in their studies of university writing, found any overall correlation between sex and length. Clearly, the various experimental results are contradictory in terms of essay length. Farrell’s contention about the male mode being copious and
the female mode being terse is questionable. The only conclusion which can legitimately be drawn from the various studies is that more study might help clarify this issue.

Probably, the overall length of an essay is a poor measure of the writer’s degree of comfort with any particular discourse form. Sanborn’s (1987) observation that some women “compiled words on paper, words totally divorced from meaning” (p. 1), is worth further reflection. Studies which examine essay lengths without regard to the content of those essays may be ignoring an important variable. There might be two different, and opposite, responses to writing in any discourse form with which there is a significant lack of comfort — terseness or copiousness.

To date, there are few empirical studies examining sex differences in essay organization that might confirm or contradict some elements of Farrell’s theory (most notably, his observations about sex differences in the use of thesis statements and conclusions). Other than the research into essay lengths, empirical studies rarely examine the larger scale organizational elements involved in rhetorical structure (i.e., the use of thesis statements, introductory paragraphs, concluding paragraphs, repetition, linearity, generality, coherence, etc.).

To some degree this is an understandable omission because, until recently, the use of these organizational elements in writing has been difficult to quantify and thus measure. Length, on the other hand, is comparatively easy to quantify. However, the development of the discourse matrix as an instrument for measuring the “grammar of passages” (Coe, 1988c) provides a readily accessible method of quantifying these organizational elements. Empirical studies of discourse organization using Coe’s matrix would be of considerable value, particularly in relation to gender differences.

Despite this lack of empirical studies, some coherent indications of sex differences in rhetorical organization are provided by literary critical studies and anecdotal reports. Obviously the conclusions which might be drawn from these studies must be viewed tentatively. Nevertheless, these tentative conclusions can, at the very least, help guide the generation of appropriate research questions.

Paraphrasing a letter from Sarah D’Eloia, Farrell (1979) proposes that “men more characteristically than women begin their oral or written presentations with something like their final conclusion” (p. 909). He goes on to suggest that “the emphasis on explicitness . . . in the male mode seems to support a need for closure, whereas the ‘indirection’ and implicitness in the female mode seem to offer an openness that could be useful in reconciling differences” (p. 910). Yet, to what degree does the evidence support this contention?

Pigott (1979) in an examination of 1,000 university writing placement tests suggests that about 90% of the men drew universal conclusions and “more often than not” began their essays with generalizations (i.e., thesis statements). On the other hand, “many women did not attempt to draw universal
conclusions" (p. 923); and "of the women who chose to write on life expectations, few began their essays deductively" (p. 925). Like Farrell, Pigott sees a difference in the ways that men and women employ thesis statements and conclusions: essays written by men tend to begin with a thesis statement and are more concluded in nature. Essays written by women, she further observes, tend to be particularistic throughout.

In an exploratory study, Flynn (1983) examined differences in the drafts and revisions of the essays of five men and five women. Among other things, she found differences in the revision processes of the men and women — differences which may relate to the use (or not) of thesis statements:

The men wrote more economically and more hastily; usually they located a focus early on and revised by developing it more fully. The women, in contrast, more frequently had greater difficulty finding a focus and often came to see me about their drafts. They tended to revise conceptually. . . . The study suggests, as well, that women cannot write independent of the contradictions they experience daily as members of a disenfranchised group attempting to make it in a man's world. Perhaps the women had greater difficulty achieving focus in their essays because they had greater difficulty minimizing inconsistency and dissonance (p. 9).

Flynn's observation that some women have difficulty finding an initial focus may partly account for Pigott's finding that the essays written by women rarely begin with a generalization. The test situation under which Pigott's subjects wrote their essays provided little opportunity for conceptual revisions — time was limited to 60 minutes.

Moreover, Flynn's observations about differences in the inventing and revising processes of men and women may lend some preliminary support to the Ardeners' muted group theory (1975), as it is in precisely these areas one would expect to find differences if their theory is accurate. Because of the extra translating likely involved as females attempt to express their experience in the male idiom, inventing would tend to be a slower process for females than for males. To reiterate: "women cannot write independent of the contradictions they experience daily as members of a disenfranchised group attempting to make it in a man's world" (Flynn, 1983, p. 9). In the light of muted groups theory, it also follows that the revision processes of some female writers should be more comprehensive, more conceptual, than the revision processes of males which might proceed merely by developing the focus more fully, by adding supporting details. Nevertheless, Flynn's observations run counter to Pigott's (1979) informal classroom observations, which found no differences in the quality or quantity of invention heuristics generated by well-trained men and women.

Flynn's findings, however, do gain some support from Chiseri-Strater's informal observations that her "male students always seemed to select manageable topics to write about, topics that foresaw closure whereas women would take on papers which had no possible closure such as papers about ongoing relationships and their writing therefore felt repetitive to me" (1986, p. 5). Bearing in mind that a thesis
statement is merely a mini-conclusion placed near the beginning of an essay to aid the reader's comprehension and evaluation of the information contained within the essay, it should not be particularly surprising to find that papers which lack an initial focus often also seem to lack closure.

As Taylor (1978) observes about the argumentative writing of some women students: “their papers often begin with disclaimers of authority – ‘It is only my opinion but’ – contain profusions of compounded statements and qualifiers, emphasize their intuitive rather than intellectual resources, and conclude equivocally [italics added]” (p. 387). The issue of thesis statements and conclusions are closely allied. When writing about topics in which the evidence (perhaps most especially when that evidence arises from personal experience) is highly contradictory, equivocal conclusions seem almost inevitable. Psychosocial processes may be inextricably implicated in the different rhetorical forms generated by males and females.

As Taylor suggests, moreover, the use of equivocal thesis statements/conclusions may lead to criticisms that the writing of some women lacks unity: “Such papers we dismiss as personal, uneconomical, disunified, and unconvincing, without considering social causes or pedagogical solutions” (1978, p. 387). Annas also notes a lack of unity in the writing of some women, describing it as sometimes “diffuse and scattered” (1985, p. 368). From the literary critical tradition, Jelinek notes a similar lack of unity in some women's autobiographies:

Irregularity rather than orderliness informs the self-portraits by women. The narratives of their lives are often not chronological and progressive but disconnected, fragmentary, or organized into self-sustained units rather than connecting chapters. The multidimensionality of women's socially conditioned roles seems to have established a pattern of diffusion and diversity when they write their autobiographies as well, and so by established critical standards, their life studies are excluded from the genre and cast into the “non-artistic” categories of memoir, reminiscence, and other disjunctive forms (1980, p. 17).

Perhaps the reader's perception of disunity in the writing of some women can be attributed to the writer's use of equivocal thesis statements or conclusions.

As Coe notes: “it [the thesis paragraph] makes a certain type of critical reading easier because proofs can be evaluated more easily if readers know in advance what they purportedly prove, because information can be taken in more efficiently if one knows in advance the outline of what is to be learned” (1987, p. 22). Given that “the primary function of academic discourse is to create, test, and communicate certain kinds of knowledge” (Coe, 1990b, p. 438), the traditional thesis paragraph serves a useful and important purpose insofar as it supports the primary function of academic discourse. However, rather than serving a useful function, this structure may tend to constrain when one is writing from personal and social contexts fraught with “inconsistency and dissonance”. And, as Fort suggests, varying the traditional essay form does not mean acceding to some sort of formlessness:
I think it is important to recognize that the breaking of the standard form of the essay does not mean replacing it with no form. All expression has form. A standard form with thesis and proof can be either polished or spontaneous. A new form could also. The choice is between forms not between form and formlessness (1971, p. 638).

In other words, the apparent disunity in the writing of some women may reside more in the minds of some academic readers than in the structures employed by the writer, at least so far as using an equivocal rhetorical strategy violates the academic expectation that writers will present or argue a single consistent position, the expectation that the writer will employ a particular genre rather than an alternative.

In the light of Gilligan's work on female psychology, Chiseri-Strater makes an interesting observation about the relationship between the complexity of a topic and its abstractness: "No longer did the abstractness of a topic — which was typical of my male students — translate into a more complex topic over those papers written by females which explored their relationships with others — most often with family members or close friends" (p. 5). Those essays which Pigott devalued as lacking universal generalization, those essays in which the women described themselves and their parents, may have been as complex as the more abstract male essays describing the politics of the school system. In fact, the crucial difference between the men's and women's essays again may have resided more in one academic reader's expectation of specific values, specific generic forms, than in the essays themselves.

One possible explanation for readers occasionally missing the true complexity of women's writing may lie in its implicitness. As mentioned earlier, Farrell suggests that the female mode tends to be implicit while the male mode is usually more explicit (an explicitness, as he goes on to suggest, which supports a need for closure). From a literary critical perspective, Jelinek (1980) also describes an implicitness in women's autobiographies as contrasted with men's autobiographies. The terms she variously uses to characterize women's autobiographies include: oblique, camouflage, elliptical, understatement, omitting. In a chapter significantly entitled "Selves in Hiding" (1980), Spacks describes a similar implicitness in women's autobiographies. Perhaps the seeming absence of thesis statements can be attributed to the thesis being implied rather than overt.

Alternatively, as Davis both argues and demonstrates, the thesis statement may simply be delayed:

The first strategy lies at the very heart of feminist theory, and is best illustrated in my own opening paragraph. I began not with a thesis, the traditional opening for this form of discourse, but with a self-disclosure. It is a very typical example of systematic self-disclosure in that its function is to situate the informant/speaker/writer/teacher as a subject engaged in a process with respect to a subject matter, rather than as an authority who has brought closure to by mastering the material (1988, p. 2).

Davis' thesis statement, in fact, is delayed until the end of the second paragraph, a full quarter of the way through the article. This strategy of first situating the self within a context, prior to stating the thesis, may be a valuable one, at least insofar as it enables the reader to most easily evaluate the premises from which the writer is operating.
However, like Gertrude Stein’s self-conscious use of the verbal style, Davis’ strategy of delaying the thesis statement may represent a deliberate attempt to develop a rhetorical form which contrasts with the more usual form employed within academia. The degree to which women students, in general, utilize this strategy is an issue open both to debate and to further study. But if it is a reasonably common strategy, it might further explain Pigott’s finding that the writing of women often seems to lack an opening generalization. Perhaps the generalizations exist within the essays, but are simply delayed.

If females, more often than males, tend to imply or delay their thesis statements in their writing, how can this be explained? Perhaps, as Belenky et al. suggest in relation to Subjective Knowers, “their intent is to communicate to others the limits, not the power, of their own opinions” (1986, p. 66). This observation is echoed by Aisenberg and Harrington’s description of one professor’s comments about women graduate students presenting papers:

One experienced professor comments: “When a woman, particularly over thirty, is about to give a paper you can allow — I look at my watch — I can pretty much time it. If allowed to go on, maybe seven minutes of apology about why this may not be exactly what she should have done and how if she’d had more time she could have done it better” (p. 69).

These initial explanations may have less to do with apology than with a felt need to firmly place the paper within a personal context which underscores the limits of knowing.

Consider, for example, Adrienne Rich’s remarks in the “Forward” to her collection of essays, *On Lies, Secrets, and Silence*:

I trust the contradictions and repetitions in this book to speak for themselves. I disagree with myself in this book, and I find in myself both severe and tender feelings toward the woman I have been, whose thoughts I find here (1979, p. 18).

This strategy of acknowledging the limits rather than the power of personal opinion seems a common one — a strategy employed by both professional and novice women writers alike — a strategy which may result from a heightened experience of contradiction — a strategy which may generate equivocal conclusions — a strategy which may be perceived as disunifying. A strategy, perhaps, which might prove beneficial for academia to adopt.

In short, there exists some evidence for differences between the ways that males and females employ thesis statements and conclusions. But the evidence for a general lack of thesis statements or conclusions in the writing of females is not especially compelling. Indeed, Peterson’s (1986) analysis of argumentative paragraphs found the opposite. All the paragraphs written by the women in her study had a stated conclusion whereas five of those written by the men lacked a stated conclusion.

Further, Peterson found no appreciable difference between the men and women in terms of the conclusion’s location. In the woman’s writing, 75% of the conclusions appeared in the first sentence,
16% in the final sentence, and 9% elsewhere. In the men’s writing, 76% of the conclusions occurred in the first sentence, 17% in the final sentence, and 7% elsewhere. Given that her study is restricted to single paragraphs which obviously limits the potential placement of the conclusion/thesis statement, the overall evidence for differences in the use of thesis statements and conclusions can only be interpreted as suggesting that males and females perhaps use these rhetorical devices in different ways: explicit versus implicit, initial versus delayed, and definitive versus equivocal. More study is clearly needed to determine the precise nature, degree, and cause of the differences.

In any event, the ways that thesis statements and conclusions may be employed is only one area of rhetorical form in which differences have been noted. Taylor’s observation that the essays written by some women “contain profusions of compounded statements” (1978, p. 387) bears further examination as this characteristic has been noted by several other commentators. Penelope and Wolfe, in their stylistic analysis of women’s literature, state it well:

On the discourse level, we find a discursive, conjunctive style instead of the complex, subordinating, linear style of classification and distinction. It is not that there is no classifying taking place, rather that the syntactic structure must accommodate itself to the shifting perspectives of the writer’s observing mind. In contrast to a subordinate syntax (in which the complexity of experience is embedded in dependent clauses, reflecting experience already categorized, qualified, detached from its happening), the writer tries to order her perceptions through a kind of cumulative syntax, using juxtaposed clauses to express the relationships as they suggest themselves. It is the syntax of women’s consciousness, the rush of perception, the speech that tells all as it emerges (1983, p. 137).

Farrell, in describing women’s autobiographies, echoes Penelope and Wolfe’s observations and notes “the reliance on enumerating detail without explicit analytic commentary or the framework of a thesis” (1979, p. 912). Borrowing the term from D’Eloia, he calls this form of reasoning indirection which attempts “to lead the listener or reader through a set of experiences and/or a line of reasoning, holding off the conclusion until they have made it almost impossible to reject the validity — emotional or logical — of what they say” (1979, p. 909). Juhasz notes a similar form in the autobiographies of some women; a form mirrored not only in speech patterns, but also reflected in the daily routine of many women’s lives:

When you ask a women, “what happened?”, you often get an answer in the style McClelland has labeled circumstantial, complex, and contextual. You hear a series of “he said” and “she said”; you are told what they were wearing, where they were sitting, what they were eating; and slowly the story unrolls. The woman is omitting no detail that she can remember, because all details have to do with her sense of the nature of “what happened.” A man, on the other hand, will characteristically summarize: give you the gist, the result, the point of the event. . . . In their form, women’s lives tend to be like the stories that they tell: they show less a pattern of linear development towards some clear goal than one of repetitive, cumulative, cyclical structure. One thinks of housework or childcare, of domestic life in general (1980, p. 223).

Again, rhetorical forms, speech patterns, and social contexts seem to interact in complex ways.
However, the description of enumeration as a rhetorical form arises from the literary critical tradition and consequently, the degree to which it is prevalent in the writing of composition students is uncertain. Sanborn, in her case study of freshman writing students, suggests that the thought patterns of some students may conflict with the traditional form of academic argument: "Their thought patterns were perhaps more circular, built by accumulation of evidence — to use Carol Gilligan's terms, the web instead of the ladder" (1987, p. 1). Peterson (1986), basing her observations upon the structure of argumentative paragraphs written by first year students, also finds a pattern of coordination and enumeration in the writing of the women. As she states:

Put simply (and perhaps simplistically), the difference between the structure of men's and women's arguments as they are seen here revolves around the difference in the way the two groups employ coordination and enumeration vs. subordination and deductive connections. The difference in the tone of the two group's arguments centers on differences in the place of personal networks vs. abstract generalizations in argument (p. 134).

Albeit limited, there is some evidence that the enumerative and conjunctive rhetorical form characterizing women's autobiographies may also be found in the compositions of some women students. Obviously, however, further study is necessary to clarify the degree to which this pattern is generally employed.

In any event, Sanborn's observation raises another issue which is worth considering. The difference she describes is a theoretical difference in thought patterns as well as a difference in rhetorical form. Obviously, thought patterns are not directly observable, but rather can only be indirectly and incompletely inferred from behaviors. The precise nature of the relationship between an individual's thought patterns and their use of particular rhetorical forms is an unclear one. And suggestions of close parallels should perhaps be regarded with some suspicion. Consider, for example, the following assertions by Farrell:

The conventional textbook distinction between inductive and deductive organization, it seems to me, is simply a distinction between two forms of the male mode which proceed by differentiation and antithesis. Both present the product of thought in a carefully controlled way, although the ordering or arrangement of ideas is different. The "indirection" of the female mode, on the other hand, tries to simulate how one might actually reason to a conclusion, and differentiation and antithesis are not especially accentuated. Deductive and inductive organization denote arrangements of discourse that appear to be planned in advance, whereas the "indirection" of the female mode seems to proceed without a readily recognizable plan. . . . The ideas seem less processed and controlled in the female mode than in the male mode and hence come closer to recreating the process of thinking as it normally occurs in real life, where thinking is as much a matter of unconscious as of conscious processes and certainly does not move in formal logical structures even when it relates to them or reflects them [italics added] (1979, pp. 909-910).

The implication of Farrell’s statement is that the female mode of writing is less logical than the male mode, at least insofar as it is assumed to be closer to the process of thinking which does not follow the rules of formal logic. Although Farrell is quite careful to avoid directly stating that the female mode is
illogical, his conclusion “that students in college composition be required to master the male mode of rhetoric” (1979, p. 918) perhaps further reflects an underlying, if unintended, bias.

Hiatt, on the other hand, takes great pains to point out that the writing of women is not illogical, but rather is differently logical:

The logic of the feminine style would thus seem to depend on reasons and extra information rather than on exemplifications and conclusions. In terms of the low ratio of Illatives — those words indicating conclusions — the logic of the women is less definitive than that of the men. In terms of the high ratio of Causatives, their logic is more self-justifying. Neither the men’s nor the women’s style is, however, “illogical.” Both are logical in different ways (1978, p. 225).

If the rhetorical patterns employed by some women do, in fact, reflect a different form of logic rather than a lack of logic, what is the nature of this logic?

Peterson, basing her argument upon work in the field of informal logic, suggests that the type of logic apparent in the writing of females may perhaps be best described as conduction in contrast to induction or deduction. Conduction has been defined as follows:

[A conductive argument] derives its conclusion from a variety of premises each of which has some independent relevance. Typically, although by no means always, several reasons are given in such arguments; and in those cases where a single reason is advanced, there are others which might have been given as well. Since what is characteristic of this sort of reasoning is the leading together of various considerations, it seems appropriate to label it “conduction” (Govier, 1976, p. 12, in Peterson, 1986, p. 211).

Comparing conduction with deduction, Peterson goes on to suggest “that conduction is characterized by enumeration of premises and uncertainty of the conclusions given the truth of the premises whereas deduction is characterized by subordination of premises to the conclusion and certainty of the conclusion given the truth of the premises” (p. 212).

Although somewhat speculative and, as Peterson herself admits, needing further study, the conception of a conductive logical form appears to possess some power to explain differences in the structure of male and female texts. For example, the “uncertainty of the conclusion” which theoretically typifies conductive argument may well parallel the “equivocal conclusions” sometimes found in the writing of women; the “enumeration of premises” may well parallel the desire to “contextualize the argument” found in the writing of some women.

Finally, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the lexical differences found between the writing of some females and males appear to closely parallel the differences between speaking and writing, a difference in genre. In relation to rhetorical and discourse level features, this theme is equally evident. Writing tends to be more abstract, more explicit, more direct, and more decontextualized than speaking. As Akinnaso further notes, writing relies “on a more deliberate method of organizing ideas, using such
expository concepts as ‘thesis,' ‘topic sentence,' and ‘supporting evidence’" (1982, p. 104). The writing of males seems to manifest these characteristics relatively more than the writing of females.

To reiterate, the parallel differences between the writing of females and males, and the spoken and written genres may indicate that some females attempt to establish and maintain a closer relationship with the reader than do males. In general, speaking assumes an interaction with the listener—a shared space, time, and commonality of referents. Writing usually does not. The stylistic and rhetorical preferences of some females may emphasize relationship and participation with the reader. The stylistic and rhetorical preferences of some males may emphasize autonomy and separation. This same theme appears to hold true for the content of some men's and women's texts.

**Differences in Content/Ideological Features**

Pigott (1979), in the study cited earlier, noted that the women more often chose to write about themselves and their parents than did the men (54% vs. 16%) while the men more often chose to write about the politics of the school system than did the women (50% vs. 18%). In an informal analysis of freshman themes, Waters found that males “were more apt to have mechanical, mathematical, geographical and utilitarian concerns” whereas females tended to write more about “social concerns, human needs and values” (1975 pp. 7-8). Chiseri-Strater (1986), relating some informal classroom observations, notes that first year women wrote about relationships about three times as often as men. In an empirical analysis of autobiographical essays written by two first year composition classes, Linda Peterson (1991) found that 85-90% of the women wrote about “relational” topics while 50-80% of the men wrote about “individual” topics.

In an empirical study of free-written person description by 12 to 17 year olds enrolled in all-male and all-female schools, O'Mahony found that “girls had more to say about persons and this was expressed more in psychological terms; girls qualified and organized descriptions more than boys” (1986, p. 401). In her analysis of argumentative paragraphs, Susan Peterson suggests (largely on the basis of lexical choice) that:

> There is evidence in women's arguments for an attention to networks of personal relationships and the place of the arguer and argument in these networks. . . . Men, by contrast, tend to be more thing- and idea-centered. Men's references to people are less specific than women's. . . . The difference in the tone of the two groups' arguments centers on differences in the place of personal networks vs. abstract generalizations in argument (1986, pp. 132-134).

A study of sex differences in the content of graffiti in university restrooms revealed that “the majority of women's inscriptions dealt with offering advice to the love-forlorn and existential issues
about life, marriage, and happiness" whereas "more erotic sayings, political issues, and competition concerns were noted in men's restrooms than in women's" (Loewenstine, Ponticos, & Paludi, 1982, p. 308). In a similar study, Bruner and Kelso (1980) noted that the women's graffiti tended to be more interpersonal and interactive whereas the men's graffiti tended to be more self-centered and competitive. Both the men's and women's graffiti was found to be centrally concerned with the issue of power, but from opposite perspectives:

Whatever other covert messages may be contained in male graffiti it is clear that they deal with relations of superordination and subordination. . . . Even the imagery of male inscriptions in our examples refer to layers, strata, comparisons, and contrasts. . . . In restroom graffiti, men communicate their deepest concerns about power. . . . Our view is that women write graffiti that ask for and give advice primarily about relationships with men because they are subordinate to men — they support one another in their opposition to men. The underlying meaning of female restroom graffiti is that they express the co-operation of the dominated and reflect the strategy of mutual help employed by those in a subordinate status (pp. 248-250).

In a rhetorical analysis of over 200 personal narratives, Rose (1986; 1987) found fundamental differences between the ways that freshmen men and women understood and explained the process of achieving literacy. The women's narratives emphasized a myth of participation which focused on the process of achieving literacy, on cooperative effort, on shared experiences, and on an awareness of the use of literacy as a way to please others (cf. Bolker, Taylor); conversely, the men's narratives emphasized a myth of autonomy which focused on the products of literacy, on individual achievement, on competitive activities, and on an awareness of the use of literacy as a way to control others.

Flynn's (1988) case study of narratives written by first year university students relates the same themes:

The narratives of the female students are stories of interaction, of connection, or of frustrated connection. The narratives of the male students are stories of achievement, of separation, or of frustrated achievement (p. 428).

Significantly, she goes on to suggest that current models of the composing process may be more descriptive of the ways that men, rather than women, go about writing.

From the literary critical tradition, Jelinek finds similar differences between the autobiographies of men and women:

The consensus among critics is that a good [male] autobiography not only focuses on its author but also reveals his connectedness to the rest of society. . . . On the other hand, women's autobiographies rarely mirror the establishment history of their times. They emphasize to a much lesser extent the public aspects of their lives, the affairs of the world, or even their careers, and concentrate instead on their personal lives — domestic details, family difficulties, close friends, and especially people who influenced them. . . . This emphasis by women on the personal, especially on other people, rather than on their life work, their professional success, or their connectedness to current political or intellectual history clearly contradicts the established criteria about the content of autobiography (1980, pp. 7-10).
As might be expected, a pattern emerges from these studies. In general, females preferentially value participation, connectedness, attachment, and cooperation; their paradigm of reality often seems to be one which emphasizes relationship with others and the world. In general, males preferentially value autonomy, separation, detachment, and competition; their paradigm of reality often seems to be one which emphasizes independence from others and the world.

However, it is important to recognize that these different approaches to writing, these different values, are not sex-exclusive, but rather sex-preferential. Some men may choose to emphasize relationship while some women may choose to emphasize independence. Further, as mentioned earlier, the context in which the writing takes place is likely a critical factor in determining which of the two values are emphasized. Women may prefer to emphasize independence in contexts which constrain by preferentially valuing independence. By the same token, men may prefer to emphasize relationship in writing contexts which constrain by preferentially valuing relationship. The extent to which a discourse form is constraining may depend upon the degree of similarity between the writer’s values and the values generally preferred within the discourse community.

In an attempt to verify Gilligan’s observations about the differences between male and female voices, Keroes (1986) analyzed the content of 200 essays written in response to a university writing proficiency test. As might be expected, the men’s essays were coded by the four raters as 74% autonomous and 26% connected. The men overwhelmingly preferred autonomous to connected responses. Somewhat unexpectedly, however, so did the women. The women’s essays were coded by the raters as 64% autonomous and 36% connected. Although the women preferred connected responses slightly more than the men, the overall preference of the women for autonomous rather than connected responses bears some explanation.

First, the population writing the proficiency test was entirely composed of upper division students, suggesting the possibility that, to a large degree, they had internalized the preferred values of the academic community. Second, the exam context itself implies, as Keroes observes, “that the writers in the study correctly perceived the discourse situation as a test of their mastery of ‘school style’” (p. 22). It is unlikely that the women would express their preferences in such highly constrained circumstances, particularly given the length of their prior experience within the academic community. Rose suggests that, “it would seem that young women who hope for academic success in college must adopt (or appear to adopt) the literacy for autonomy myth — the male myth” (1986, p. 16).
As the anthropologist, Pierre Maranda notes:

Within a semantic universe, some combinations of, i.e. relations between, elements are common, others are permissible but rare, others are poetic or archaic, and others are excluded. . . . Communication becomes increasingly difficult as one moves farther away from the semantic grooves of one’s culture. The interest of comparative analysis lies in the operators necessary to pass from one system to another. . . . We could say, inspired by Rousseau, that human communication is a social contract which rests on subliminal laws, and that a culture’s myths contain its semantic jurisprudence. Whether this can be reduced to an algebra depends upon the power of the analyst. The rules are there at any rate, as evidenced by the fact that those unable or unwilling to abide by them and be conditioned by them are either confined into mental hospitals or marked off as foreigners (1972, pp. 15-16).

To the extent that the academic discourse community represents a distinct culture with its own governing myths and can be defined by its unique semantic universe, it will be necessary for hopeful inductees to adopt those myths — to learn those relationships which are permitted and those which are excluded — to learn the cultural rules.

On the other hand, men who find themselves in a class which emphasizes writing about personal experience or relationships with others may also discover the necessity of learning a different set of cultural myths. In an analysis of the quality of the autobiographies written by first year students, the women’s autobiographies were generally rated as higher in quality than were the men’s (Peterson, 1991). As Peterson notes: “we may need to worry a little (if only a little) about whether the autobiographical essay as a genre privileges the feminine gender — just as we need to worry about whether the formal argument privileges the masculine” (1991, p. 173). Nevertheless, men appear to be only occasionally constrained by the forms required in these kinds of writing contexts whereas women appear to be constrained more frequently by the forms preferred within the much broader context of the academic community in general.
Chapter Two Summary

This chapter has argued that there are patterned differences in the writing produced by some males and females. In terms of lexicogrammatic features, although the experimental findings are somewhat contradictory and limited because of the failure to carefully examine differences across variously constraining contexts, there seem to be indications that females sometimes prefer an active, conjunctive, verbal style whereas males prefer a passive, subordinating, nominal style. In general, these differences seem to break down along the same lines as the differences between the genres of speaking and writing. In relation to sentence length and structure no conclusions can be drawn. More study is needed.

In terms of rhetorical/discourse features, empirical studies of form have largely been restricted to examinations of essay lengths; few empirical studies have examined sex differences in the organization of paragraphs or essays. Unfortunately, the failure to closely examine the interactions between form and content in the studies of essay length limit the utility of those studies.

However, some anecdotal reports as well as studies from the literary critical tradition suggest that there may exist differences in the ways that males and females sometimes organize their writing in terms of using thesis statements, conclusions, contextualization, and enumeration. The possible use by some females of a rhetorical form which involves the logical compounding of ideas, what Peterson calls conduction (as contrasted with induction/deduction), is particularly intriguing. Although the majority of evidence for this different female rhetoric comes from studies of autobiography, the possible use of this form among some female university students perhaps finds qualified support from indications that they use additive and coordinating conjunctions somewhat more than males. Nevertheless, the degree to which this form may be utilized by females in general, and female composition students in particular, is open to debate. More study is needed.

In terms of content/ideological features, reasonably clear distinctions exist between the writing of males and females: Males often seem to communicate a world view which emphasizes autonomy and hierarchy whereas females often seem to communicate a world view which emphasizes relationship and cooperation. This difference, as might be expected, aligns quite closely with the differences between male and female psychologies reported by the various commentators considered in Chapter One. At the same time, a writer’s understanding of the audience’s values and expectations may constrain the degree to which that writer communicates his or her own values.

However, the degree to which these differences in content — in psychology — predict the differences in lexical choice and discourse form remains an issue for further investigation. This chapter hypothesizes that some females may prefer to employ a form of writing that resembles the forms more usually
associated with speaking in an attempt to establish a closer relationship with the reader. Nevertheless, other explanations may well be possible. More study is needed.

Yet all of the above observations about the differences between female and male writing are only significant to the degree that the style and rhetorical forms preferred by some females actually conflict with the preferences of the academic discourse community for rhetorical forms more closely approximating the writing generally produced by males. Chapter Three examines the existing evidence for the preferences of the academic community in terms of rhetorical form and how those preferences may conflict with the alternative rhetorical forms used by some females.
Notes for Chapter Two

1 As Raymond would probably admit, his analogy "obviously limps". He implies that the disciplines contained within the outer boxes use the methods of those disciplines within the inner boxes, but never the reverse:

The empirical sciences use mathematics for proof, but the converse is not true. In other words, the method of science is to describe empirical data in mathematical and logical terms, but the method of mathematics and logic is, in the purest form, indifferent, even inimical to empirical application (p. 780).

Yet the relationship, at least between the empirical sciences and rhetoric, is less straightforward. Insofar as science must use words to report its findings, it engages in rhetoric, it serves a persuasive purpose.

For example, Coe (1990b) describes the response of a psychology professor to the write-up of a laboratory experiment performed by one of his or her graduate students:

It was a mistake to begin with a passive opening sentence. Worse yet, you began with negative findings. While the "Results" is technically an objective statement of the "facts," I have found that it is best to lead with a sentence that biases the reader to accept the "facts." Also it is better to state negative findings parenthetically, instead of as primary findings. Otherwise there is a chance the critical reader will think this is not an important article or was done sloppily. You also reported secondary findings as importantly as the primary finding. We found that the length of time an infant spends with its mother will determine the nature of its immune responses later in life. This has tremendous implications; one would never know it from your version (pp. 440-442).

Clearly, the professor's response demonstrates the engagement between rhetoric and science. The professor's comments are directed more toward using form persuasively rather than simply as a medium for reporting facts.

Indeed, it can be argued that the use of any particular conventional form, any particular way of structuring information, is at heart persuasive in nature. Although the conventions used in scientific reporting serve important cognitive and practical purposes, they also help to establish whether or not the writer is a member of the community of scientists, a member of that particular discourse community. In more Aristotelian terms, the form helps to establish in the mind of the reader the ethos of the writer, the degree to which the authority of the writer may be accepted, even trusted. Language, even when used scientifically, is inherently rhetorical. As Kenneth Burke notes: "You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" (1969b, p. 55). The use of scientific reporting conventions is persuasive, is rhetorical, in part because they help the reader to identify with the writer.

2 Conceivably, the literature could be analyzed by applying a modification of Jackson's meta-analytic method of vote-counting (1980, in Borg & Gall, 1983, p. 196). As originally designed, vote-counting involves classifying the findings of studies as either significant positive, nonsignificant positive, nonsignificant negative, or significant negative. By simplifying this procedure so that studies are simply classified on the basis of positive findings or negative findings in relation to any specific difference, it becomes possible to classify all studies including non-empirical ones. This, in fact, was the approach taken in the handout accompanying my conference paper, "And I Speak, Whereas One Writes: Gendered Writing, Feminist Psychology, and Models of Persuasion" (May, 1989). Although this approach is useful insofar as it provides a general overview of the literature, it suffers from two key liabilities.

First, as Thorne, Kramarae, and Henley note in relation to studies of sex differences and speech, the "findings of sex difference have been over-reported (especially those which accord with polarized gender stereotypes)" (1983, p. 14). The same holds true for studies of sex differences and writing. Consequently, there are fewer studies reporting negative findings than reporting positive findings.

Second, this simplified vote-counting procedure does not address the issue of the quality of the studies. In general, should studies involving few subjects and small writing samples be accorded the same weight as studies with many subjects and large writing samples? Likely not. In general, should informal classroom observations by instructors be accorded the same weight as formal empirical studies by researchers? Again, likely not.

Perhaps a comprehensive set of criteria could be proposed for determining the relative weighting of various types of studies. Yet given the wide range of research methodologies, topics, and subjects, as well as the varying degrees of rigor with which the research has been conducted, any statistics generated
would probably have little intrinsic value. Put simply, the variables which would need to be considered are too many for a generally consistent set of criteria to be devised. Further, the weighting to be accorded various methodological approaches would probably vary from individual to individual, from discipline to discipline. A scientist, ethnographer, and literary critic would perhaps establish differing sets of criteria. Determining the weighting to be accorded to the various studies may be more a matter of personal and disciplinary biases than a matter of applying some putatively objective criteria.

Moreover, the weighting which should be accorded some studies is context dependent. This is perhaps most graphically demonstrated by the section later in this chapter which considers possible differences between males and females in their relative use of the nominal style (noun, adjective, and preposition based) and the verbal style (verb, adverb, and conjunction based). For example, Gertrude Stein provides an introspective account of the verbal writing style which she self-consciously developed (in Penelope & Wolfe, 1983, p. 129). By itself, her account might be considered of little significance and thus not be reported. However, in conjunction with several other studies reporting similar findings, her account becomes an important piece of evidence.

3 There is some controversy surrounding Bem's model (1974; 1978; 1981b) for determining psychological gender. In general, the controversy revolves around two issues: how to score the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) and what the BSRI actually measures. In terms of scoring the BSRI, Bem originally proposed a method which involved subtracting the masculinity from the femininity scores resulting in a distribution of scores along a single dimension with masculinity at one pole, femininity at the other, and androgyny near the median. This scoring procedure, however, contradicted Bem's theory (and the data supporting the theory) proposing that masculinity and femininity are independent dimensions of personality. Subsequently, Bem has adopted the median split method proposed by Spence et al. (1974; 1975; in Spence and Helmreich, 1981) thereby bringing the scoring procedure for the BSRI in line with the theoretical construct.

In terms of what the BSRI actually measures, Spence and Helmreich (1981) argue that the BSRI primarily measures the orthogonal (statistically independent) personality traits of instrumentality and expressiveness and “these trait dimensions have little or no relationship with global self-images of masculinity-femininity, with sex role attitudes, or with sex role preferences or behaviors that do not quite directly call upon instrumental or expressive capacities” (p. 367). From their perspective the orthogonality of the masculinity and femininity scores on the BSRI results from the inclusion of items which measure instrumentality and expressiveness.

Bem suggests that the BSRI may, however, measure different things for different people:

For non-sex-typed individuals, the BSRI may well tap instrumental and expressive traits; non-sex-typed individuals may thus describe themselves as, say, dominant or nurturant without implicating the concepts of masculinity and femininity. When sex-typed individuals so describe themselves, however, it is precisely the masculine/feminine connotations of the items on the BSRI to which they are responding (1981c, p. 370).

Both Spence & Helmreich and Bem present supporting evidence for their respective positions and the issue remains undecided. Further research needs to be undertaken to determine the degree to which the BSRI provides a valid measure of masculinity or femininity rather than simply a measure of instrumentality or expressivity. In addition, studies examining the correlation between masculinity and instrumentality as well as between femininity and expressivity would be of some value. If, in the final analysis, the BSRI is found to be fatally limited in its conception of gender, then new test instruments will need to be developed.

4 Farrell also concludes that the male mode rather than the female mode should be taught to college composition students:

I suspect that one must first master the male mode of rhetoric before attempting the female mode, because the female mode requires an even greater degree of control than that required in the male mode. . . . I advocate that student’s in college composition courses be required to master the male mode of rhetoric (p. 920).

Although Farrell’s advocacy that we teach the male mode in college composition courses makes sense insofar as proficiency in it serves a useful function for students undertaking an academic education, some suspicion must greet his implied conclusion that the male mode is easier to master than the female mode. We might ask, easier for whom — men or women? Bullock’s observations about Farrell’s conclusions
are apt: “I find Farrell’s conclusions extremely disappointing, for they fail to recognize the destructiveness of the predominance, the hegemony, of the male mode, not only in academic discourse, but in the world that discourse mirrors” (cited in Sanborn, *Inkshed*, 7.5/8.1, 1988, p. 4). Although his conclusions may be disappointing, Farrell’s observations are nevertheless useful, if for no other reason than the debate which they have generated.

In general, only studies of writing are included in this analysis, but two studies of speech have been included in this section because they provide additional supporting evidence for differences in the lexical choices of men and women.

There is also some preliminary evidence that the academic discourse community actually prefers the nominal style to the verbal style, despite its statements to the contrary. Under the guise of a different experimental purpose, Hake and Williams (1981) had five high school teachers and five college teachers grade a series of essays written variously in the nominal and verbal styles. The teachers reliably preferred the nominal version to the verbal version of the same paper. As Hake and Williams state:

> Textbooks and most teachers, when asked directly, claim that verbs are usually better than nouns. But teachers apparently value texts that are more like bad mature writing than the writing they and their texts explicitly recommend. And those teachers reward students who produce the nominal style, a style evident in most bad adult writing (1982, p. 642).

Hake and Williams propose that the greater syntactic complexity of the nominal style may lead to an attendant greater difficulty, on the part of the readers, in cognitively processing the nominal text (cf. Coleman, 1964; 1965). As they further note: “the syntactic complexity of a nominal paper seemed sufficient to trigger judgements of a paper’s profundity and of the superiority of its logic and organization” (1981, p. 437). By implication, the writer’s intellectual abilities may be judged as superior on the basis of their use of the nominal style.

As with the findings of Chotlos (1944), Gleser, Gottschalk, and John (1959), and Entwisle and Garvey (1972), Hake and Williams’ findings imply a relationship between evaluations of intellectual ability and the use of the nominal style. The authors of IQ tests might find it of some interest to more closely investigate this relationship in order to determine the degree to which their tests discriminate between a preference for the nominal or verbal styles.

Their research report is so terse that it is difficult to interpret their results adequately. Further, there exists a factual inconsistency within their report. On the one hand, they present a table indicating that the men used more *adverbs* than the women; on the other hand, they state three times in the text of their article that the women used more “ly” *adverbs* than the men. Two interpretations are possible.

First, if the word *adverbs* used in the table and the words “ly” *adverbs* used in the text mean different things, then the men may have used more *adverbs* in general than the women while the women used more of the subcategory “ly” *adverbs* than the men. If so, the authors neither present any figures which support this finding, nor do they distinguish between their definition of *adverbs* and “ly” *adverbs*. Second, if the word *adverbs* used in the table and the words “ly” *adverbs* used in the text mean the same thing, then either the authors have deliberately misreported their findings or the table contains a serious typographical error. Obviously, the latter explanation (a typographical error) seems the most reasonable. At the very least, this problem calls into question their findings in relation to the use of *adverbs* as it is impossible to determine the correct figures.

Peterson’s findings that the men in her study used the verb *to be* more than the women while simultaneously using the passive voice less is decidedly puzzling. In general, increased use of the passive voice results in an increased use of the verb *to be*.

It is worth noting that the change from the active to the passive voice often requires the addition of a preposition. Further, the passive voice is inherently less concise than the active voice. A difference between the ways that men and women use the active or passive voice may represent a partial explanation for the findings that men use more prepositions, more *to be*, and sometimes more words than women.

Although Ruszkiewicz’s paper is perceptive insofar as it analyzes how a writer’s beliefs about the audience may influence the writing styles and strategies employed, his analysis ultimately fails in one crucial respect. He seems to assume that the preferences of academia for specific forms of discourse are gender neutral and thus both the men’s and women’s writing styles which he describes need to be
changed equally for the student to successfully adapt to the university community. Such may not be the case. Chapter Three of this thesis argues that the academic discourse community is not gender neutral, that it rather subtly privileges the rhetorical forms more typically produced by men.

Ruszkiewicz's failure to consider this possibility is perhaps particularly disappointing because in the latter half of his paper he goes on to argue that as teachers of English we often privilege liberal values and beliefs which may result in a subtle bias against students who hold more conservative values. His point is that the teaching of composition is ideological in nature, that the rhetorical models we privilege reflect those ideological concerns. The various values underpinning gender differences, writing differences, are similarly ideological in nature (cf. Whitmore, 1989b).

11 In all of these studies, the sentence length is measured by the number of words and not by clauses or t-units.

12 Simple sentences consist of a single independent clause; fragmented sentences consist of an unattached dependent clause or an independent clause lacking its subject or predicate; compound sentences consist of two or more independent clauses connected by coordinating, adverbial, or correlative conjunctives; complex sentences consist of one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses; and compound/complex sentences consist of two or more independent clauses.

13 Although on the face of it, Pigott's claim to have examined 1,000 writing placement tests seems impressive, there are two obvious limitations to her report. First, she fails to provide complete supporting statistics to back up her claims. Second, the criteria used to define a thesis statement or a universal conclusion are not clearly specified. It is quite possible that the evaluations were entirely subjective. Indeed, the language she uses within the report is sufficiently extreme that it also generates some suspicion about her analysis. Although her account is not entirely without value, it should probably not be accorded too much weight.

14 Davis' thesis statement is: "To the extent that traditional education emphasizes large classes, evaluates students against each other, and excludes the personal and affective from many areas of study, it is clear that males and females are not afforded equal education" (1988, p. 1).

15 At the same time, my own personal experiences and observations while teaching workshops in essay writing to women suggest that the two strategies of either implying the thesis or delaying the thesis are reasonably common ones — common enough that part of one class is inevitably devoted to discussing the rhetorical implications of this style in terms of audience and purpose. However, two qualifications should be appended to this observation. First, my observation is informal in nature and may be colored to some degree by my own expectation of finding this difference.

Second (and perhaps more importantly), the women enrolled in the workshops are usually mature students (i.e., over thirty years of age) who are already quite proficient writers. There may be some developmental issues involved in the use of this strategy. As a group, the women in these workshops may be most representative of individuals at Belenky's level of Constructed Knowledge, in which there is a recognition that "all knowledge is constructed, and the knower is an intimate part of the known" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 137). If such is the case, it perhaps makes sense that these women would prefer to use a rhetorical form which explicitly situates the self in context prior to stating the conclusion.

16 Although most commentators describe the writing of females as less unified than that of males, this is not necessarily always the case. O'Mahony (1986), in his empirical study of person description, found that girls organized their descriptions reliably more than boys. As he states: "This effect was highly consistent and, in every possible instance (i.e., all male-female comparisons at each academic level for each stimulus person; 20 in all), the mean organization score was higher for females than for males" (p. 397). Bearing in mind that the Ardeners' (1975) muted group theory is theoretically reversible (i.e., in contexts which constrain the expression of male values more than those of females, males may be required to translate their experience into the female idiom), it makes sense that females should be more proficient than males at organizing writing involving stereotypically female concerns (i.e., persons). Not only were more organizing items found in the writing of the females in O'Mahony's study, but "girls had more to say about persons and this was expressed more in psychological terms" (p. 401). Further, the descriptions written by the girls were more qualified than those written by the boys. In other words, the quantity and quality of writing produced by males and females may vary according to the nature of the writing task.
Chapter Three: L’Ecriture Féminine & Academic Writing in Conflict

Look at a classroom: look at the many kinds of women's faces, postures, expressions. Listen to the women's voices. Listen to the silences, the unasked questions, the blanks. Listen to the small soft voices, often courageously trying to speak up, voices of women taught early that tones of confidence, challenge, anger, or assertiveness, are strident and unfeminine. Listen to the voices of the women and the voices of the men; observe the space men allow themselves, physically and verbally, the male assumption that people will listen, even when the majority of the group is female. Look at the faces of the silent, and of those who speak. Listen to a woman groping for language in which to express what is on her mind, sensing that the terms of academic discourse are not her language, trying to cut down her thought to the dimensions of a discourse not intended for her (for it is not fitting that a woman should speak in public); or reading her paper aloud at breakneck speed, throwing her words away, deprecating her own work by a reflex prejudgment: I do not deserve to take up time and space.


Sexual Inequities in Academe

Is there a conflict between l’écriture féminine and the discourse forms preferred within academia? (The term l’écriture féminine is used here, as elsewhere, in the broad sense of “a writing said to be feminine” — Conley, cited in Juncker, 1988, p. 426 — and not in the more specific ways popularized by Hélène Cixous’—“writing the body”. ) The evidence presented in Chapter Two suggests that men and women sometimes employ differing rhetorical strategies in their writing. In terms of style, form, and content, these differences broadly parallel the differences in psychological development elucidated in Chapter One — relatively different emphases upon the values of relationship or autonomy. However, if academia fosters both strategies equally, if it does not privilege one emphasis over the other, then the differences between the writing of men and women, while interesting, are of little consequence. The evidence, however, suggests the two strategies, the two emphases, are not equally privileged within academe.

That academia continues to treat men and women differently is relatively easy to demonstrate on at least three counts. First, there are differences in authority insofar as women occupy fewer positions of power than men, both academic and administrative, within the university. Generally, the proportion of women to men decreases as one moves up through the ranks of academe from undergraduate studies to graduate school through untenured lecturers to tenured professors.
Second, there are differences in recognition and status insofar as women are proportionally underrepresented in their contributions to scholarly journals. Even in the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition, where women outnumber men both as faculty and graduate students, scholarly articles are predominantly authored by men, particularly in the more prestigious journals like *College English* and *College Composition and Communication* (Enos, 1990). The lower frequency of women's authorship may, in fact, account for some of the differences in rank between academic men and women. In an American study of 5,000 full-time university and college instructors during the 1972-73 academic year, Bayer and Astin (1975, p. 798) found that the five most reliable predictors of academic rank were the number of articles published \((r = +.559)\), age \((r = +.531)\), years of continuous service at an institution \((r = +.459)\), possession of a doctoral degree \((r = +.443)\), and time spent in administration \((r = +.257)\).

Third, there are differences in academic roles as women seem more frequently to take on the undervalued role of teacher while men more often assume the prestigious role of researcher. Conceivably, this last difference may partly account for the lower number of publications produced by women. Indeed, these three differences between men and women within academe are closely linked. To a significant degree, an individual's status within the university discourse community is dependent upon the number of publications produced by that individual. To some degree, the number of publications produced is dependent upon there existing sufficient time for research and writing.

In *MisEducation: Women and Canadian Universities*, Dagg and Thompson (1988) describe, in some detail, the exclusion and marginalization of women within the Canadian university system. Leaving aside such obvious examples of misogyny (and bigotry) which have been all too frequently displayed in student engineering newspapers as well as the blatant cases of sexual harassment and violence which occur on many university campuses, there is considerable evidence of a more subtle structural bias in academe. The statistics detailing the gender breakdown of Education Faculties across Canada in the 1984-85 academic year provide an apt example. And, Education was the discipline with the highest proportions of women undergraduate and graduate students as well as instructors. Further, Education had greater proportions of women as full, associate, and assistant professors when compared with other disciplines. And, as a percentage of men's salaries, the median salaries of full-time women instructors in Education were among the highest. Yet, as Dagg and Thompson's figures indicate, even the discipline most favorable for women academics is less than an equal opportunity employer.  

Although in 1984-85 women comprised 67.0% of full-time undergraduate, 62.3% of Master's, and 50.6% of doctorate students in Faculties of Education, only 25.8% of the full-time instructors in the discipline were women (Dagg and Thompson, 1988, pp. 8 & 66). Further, this proportion of women
instructors in Education actually represents a decline of 2.9% from 1960-61 (Dagg and Thompson, 1988, p. 66). In terms of professorial rank, 49.3% of lecturers (i.e., untenured positions), 39.0% of assistant professors, 21.8% of associate professors, and 10.9% of full professors were women (Dagg and Thompson, 1988, p. 72). In terms of salaries, the median salaries of full-time women instructors in Education were 82.8% of male salaries (Dagg and Thompson, 1988, p. 74).2

What these statistics indicate is that the higher one moves in terms of educational status or rank (spanning the complete range from that of undergraduate student to full professor), the lower the proportions of women's representation. Further, this trend was not restricted to Faculties of Education in Canada, but was found across all disciplines (Dagg & Thompson, pp. 8 & 72).3 In the ranks of the academy, the positions with the most prestige, the most authority, are held primarily by men.

This inequity in terms of representation and authority is not restricted to academic representation in the university; it also applies to staff. As Dagg and Thompson further note, “a 1985-86 survey of Ontario universities showed that although 57 per cent of full-time non-academic positions were held by women, only 10 per cent of employees in upper-management and 33 per cent of those in middle-management positions were women” (1988, p. 76). Given that time spent in administration appears to be one of the five major factors which predicts academic rank (Bayer & Astin, 1975), women may again find themselves at somewhat of a disadvantage.4 The dearth of women as role models, particularly higher status role models, for undergraduates is obvious. And a message, however subtle, is being communicated: the academy is, by and large, a men's club. A club from which women appear to be systematically, if unintentionally, excluded.

Form and Authority

In Women of Academe: Outsiders in the Sacred Grove, a case study of 37 untenured women and 25 tenured women, Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) also describe this recurring theme of outsiderness, of exclusion from positions of authority:

What we found, however, was that the same themes recurred. Essentially, they are themes that depict an experience of professional marginality and of exclusion from the centers of professional authority [italics added]. Taken together, the stories reveal a continuum of outsiderness — literal in the case of the deflected women but nonetheless real for the tenured women as well (p. xii).

Authority is at issue here; perhaps a further example of what Belenky et al. describe as “failed male authority” (1986, p. 57).5 Yet this failure does not simply represent a deliberate exclusion of women from positions of institutional authority within academe by men (although this almost assuredly does occur). In part, this exclusion may result from differences in the socially constructed roles of men and
women. To some degree, the reward of institutional authority may be conditional upon the expression of a sense of personal authority (particularly as demonstrated by publication).

Some women may have difficulty developing a voice of authority because of socially constructed stereotypes about gender appropriate behavior, what Aisenberg and Harrington describe in traditional terms as the *female marriage or romance plot* (as contrasted with the *male quest or adventure plot*):

To be lovable, the goal of the marriage plot, a woman must be silent. To express professional knowledge and wisdom, the goal of the quest plot, a women must speak, and speak *authoritatively* [italics added] (1988, p. 66).

Aisenberg and Harrington's analysis of the reason for some of the professional difficulties confronted by academic women is paralleled by Belenky's analysis: "their [women's] intent is to communicate to others the limits, not the power, of their opinions, perhaps because they want to preserve their attachments to others, not dislodge them" (1986, p. 66). Again the different emphases upon relationship or autonomy by women and men appear to be implicated.

Aisenberg and Harrington describe the early university years of some of their subjects in which they report remaining silent. A silence noted by faculty and again implicated with authority:

A senior faculty member says, 'men are much quicker to take an *authoritative* [italics added] stand and the women are still being deferential and apologetic. The women are still doing nods and smiles' (p. 68). This professor's description of "nods and smiles" is perhaps not particularly surprising. Indeed, it may simply represent the continuation of a pattern established in the early grades. As Jacklin reports, girls received most of their positive feedback for nonacademic tasks such as neatness and *quietness* and most of their negative feedback for academic work (1979, p. 362). To reiterate, silence has "a presence / it has a history / a form / Do not confuse it / with any kind of absence" (Rich, 1978, p. 17).6

Yet even when Aisenberg and Harrington's subjects managed to escape from the socially conditioned response of silence, if they adopted different language styles, different forms of discourse, academia sometimes tended to be less than understanding about those differences. As Aisenberg and Harrington further note, the writing of women has often been criticized as either being overly digressive or overly formal in style (cf. Taylor, 1978; Annas, 1985). They speculate that the apparent failure of some women to simply adopt the traditional forms of academic discourse may represent a difference in epistemological orientation:

But by not adopting the male model of professional speech, women may not be manifesting a lack of serious address to their disciplines. Rather, they may be challenging old modes of authority — rejecting *authoritative assertion* [italics added] as the mode for pursuing knowledge and expressing it. The tentativeness of their speaking style may express a belief that what can be known is more tentative than firm assertion makes it seem (p. 76).
As mentioned earlier, Belenky et al. also observed a tentativeness in how some women present their ideas: “The form that multiplicity (subjectivism) takes in these women, however, is not at all the masculine assertion that ‘I have a right to my opinion’; rather it is the modest, inoffensive statement, ‘It’s just my opinion’” (1986, p. 66). In Aisenberg and Harrington’s analysis as well as Belenky’s, there seems to be a close association between attitudes about authority, competing epistemologies, and variant modes of expression.

Yet some caution must be exercised in interpreting these apparent differences in personal authority because they can too easily be misinterpreted as a problem residing in women rather than in the larger society and its institutions, in much the same fashion as one of Aisenberg and Harrington’s subjects describes: “a philosopher, comparing her own with her husband’s attitude when both faced negative thesis reviews, tells us: ‘I think that it is a difference between men and women, that he assumed the negative review was the reader’s fault, and I would assume it was my fault’” (p. 70). It is not so much that women must change, but rather that the way authority functions in academe, and in academic discourse, must change.

In his essay “Form, Authority, and the Critical Essay”, Fort proposes “that the form we have unconsciously assumed to be the best one (if not the only one) for expressing written ideas on literature both reflects and perpetuates attitudes that generate the structures in our society” (1971, p. 629). Basing his arguments upon Kenneth Burke’s theory that form represents a strategy for establishing a particular relation between the self, audience, and reality in order to meet the needs of the self, Fort asserts the standard academic essay form, with its ostensibly objective stance, demonstrable thesis, subordinating structure, and rigid citation conventions, represents a formal tyranny that both demonstrates and generates a particular attitude toward authority: “To insist on the standard form of the essay is to condition students to think in terms of authority and hierarchy” (1971, p. 635).

In Burke’s view, form represents an orientation toward reality, an observable manifestation of attitude which may be understood as the human expectation (and inclination) of finding (and creating) some order in the encounter with reality. As Fort further notes:

In most cases the form that we use is the result of our assessment of a situation, but because form and attitude are equal the control of the formal appearance of an expression will also tend to control attitudes. In general, we cannot have attitudes towards reality that cannot be expressed in available forms (1971, p. 630).

Indeed, all of the formal attributes which Fort details as reflecting and perpetuating academia’s attitudes toward authority are precisely those attributes which are at issue in terms of the hypothesized differences between the discourse forms sometimes preferred by men and women.
For example, Fort argues that one of the key requirements governing the critical essay form is the presence of a thesis which it purportedly proves; its presence "does not necessarily mean that a paper will be successful (an A in the classroom or publication), but its absence guarantees failure" (1971, p. 631). The writer's authority, her or his mastery over the topic, is demonstrated if sufficient evidence has been marshalled to prove the thesis. Further, the form required of the critical essay, by mandating a provable thesis, restricts the attitudes which may be expressed and the topics which may be discussed:

Only those ideas are acceptable that can be proved. If a writer tries to force the "wrong" kind of idea into the right form failure will result. Teachers and editors look with dismay on "big" or very personal topics. Their abhorrence is reasonable so long as the form is fixed because these topics are not provable (Fort, 1971, p. 631).

Yet, if one recalls from Chapter Two, a number of the attributes which have been hypothesized as sometimes characterizing the writing of women involve implicit or delayed thesis statements, equivocal or open-ended conclusions, and unmanageable or personal topics (cf. Taylor, 1978; Farrell, 1979; Pigott, 1979; Flynn, 1983; Chiseri-Strater, 1986; Peterson, 1986; Davis, 1988). The topics chosen by some women may not be provable in the usual sense and as such do not "fit" into the generic academic essay form.

Fox and Woolsey, in their analysis of the characteristics of essays which received an 'A' in English courses at Simon Fraser University, provide some support for Fort's assertion:

If whatever you choose to discuss cannot be proven, you should consider changing your position. It may be better to make such a change than to wander off your topic or produce a weak argument.

Persuading your marker is important, so consider the attitude you adopt. If you give the impression that you are right, your marker will be more likely to believe what you say (cited in Coe, 1990b, p. 448).

In other words, an 'A' paper deals with a provable topic in an authoritative manner.

Beyond this, Fox and Woolsey also note several other characteristics which markers dislike finding in English papers:


Bearing in mind Flynn's observation that some "women cannot write independent of the contradictions they experience daily as members of a disenfranchised group attempting to make it in a man's world" (1983, p. 9), Taylor's observation that the writing of some women "concludes equivocally" (1978, p. 387), as well as Aisenberg and Harrington's observation that the writing of some women has been criticized as "overly digressive" (1988, pp. 78-80), Fox and Woolsey's analysis suggests that the writing produced by some women risks being negatively evaluated to the extent that it does not match the generic essay form expected in academia. In l'écriture féminine, an emphasis upon relationship rather than
autonomy may mean writing about things that are not, in the traditional academic sense, “provable”; it may mean writing about things that are inherently “contradictory”. Part of the conflict between l'écriture féminine and academic discourse may lie in the expectation of academic readers that essays will discuss, in a unified and authoritative manner, topics that are provable.

At the risk of belaboring the point, the other attributes of the academic essay form which Fort discusses — objective stance, subordinating structure, and citation conventions — are also areas in which differences between the writing of men and women have been hypothesized. In terms of the objective stance, for example, reconsider Davis’ observation about the way that women may sometimes employ thesis statements:

The first strategy lies at the very heart of feminist theory, and is best illustrated in my own opening paragraph. I began not with a thesis, the traditional opening for this form of discourse, but with a self-disclosure. It is a very typical example of systematic self-disclosure in that its function is to situate the informant/speaker/writer/teacher as a subject engaged in a process with respect to a subject matter, rather than as an authority who has brought closure to by mastering the material [italics added] (1988, p. 2).


As Penelope and Wolfe note: “in contrast to a [man’s] subordinate syntax, (in which the complexity of experience is embedded in dependent clauses, reflecting experience already categorized, qualified, detached from its happening), the [woman] writer tries to order her perceptions through a kind of cumulative syntax, using juxtaposed clauses to express the relationships as they suggest themselves [italics added]” (1983, p. 137). Yet, in contrast to this cumulative style, Coe points out that “academic prose is highly textured, with lots of embedded modifiers [italics added]” (1990b, p. 447). Finally, in terms of citation conventions, Rose (1989) notes that some feminist scholars use non-standard methods of referencing, perhaps to indicate their outsider status or perhaps to establish new territory. Conceivably, the employment of these alternatives to the more generic form of academic discourse results in some readers questioning the writer’s authority.

Admittedly, academic discourse is less monolithic than the above description might imply. As Peter Elbow points out, academic discourse is actually composed of many different sub-discourses: “Biologists don’t write like historians” (1991, p. 138). Even within the disciplines of English and Composition there exists a wide range of discourse forms (see Elbow’s article for a comprehensive listing of these discourse variations). From his perspective, the term academic discourse represents little more than a linguistic convenience for labelling any writing undertaken by academics. As a consequence,
Elbow resists teaching discourse form in a monolithic and arhetorical manner: "we can't teach academic discourse because there's no such thing to teach" (p. 138).

At the same time that he is unwilling to accept a monolithic interpretation of academic discourse, Elbow nevertheless accepts that academics do, in fact, impose some formal restrictions upon the writing they and their students produce. For example, as he notes in relation to the exclusion of personal details and feelings in academic writing:

It seems to me that many academics seem more nervous about changes in discourse — and especially incursions of the vernacular — than about changes in ideas or content or doctrine. Many happily proclaim that there is no truth, no right answer, no right interpretation; many say they want more voices in the academy, dialogue, heteroglossia! But they won't let themselves or their students write in language tainted with the ordinary or with the presence and feelings of the writer (1991, p. 152).

In other words, although academic discourse is undeniably diverse, what is often taught to students as academic discourse (and, more importantly, what is usually considered acceptable academic writing when submitted by students) is almost certainly less diverse (cf. Fox & Woolsey, cited in Coe 1990b, pp. 448-453). Fundamentally, the conflict outlined in this thesis is less a conflict between l'écriture féminine and academic discourse as employed by scholars than it is a conflict between l'écriture féminine and the generic forms all too often taught to students as academic discourse. This problem is further explored later in this chapter as well as in Chapter Five.

In any case, one of the characteristics which Elbow does identify as typifying academic discourse is the use of language to establish a particular "set of social and authority relations: to talk to each other as professionals in such a way as to exclude ordinary people [italics added]" (1991, p. 146). And, as mentioned earlier, developing a voice of authority may be at issue in terms of how some women fare within the ranks of academe. So too, author-ity may be at issue. Part of the reason for differences in the status of women within academe seems to stem from the differences in the number of articles submitted to (and, in some cases, accepted by) professional journals. Perhaps differences in attitude — differences in form — between the writing of women and men account for some of the inequities in the numbers of published articles by men and women academics.

Dagg provides a telling description of her own difficulties getting a paper published in the field of sociobiology (in Dagg and Thompson, 1988). Her paper discussed some of the sexist theory current in sociobiology and further suggested "that scientists have been changing data to make them fit sociobiological theories" (1988, p. 57). Her paper was positively reviewed by many of the referees; one of them, for example, wrote:
This is an interesting paper and I recommend that it be published in *Animal Behaviour*. This issue of the hidden agenda is an intriguing one that deserves more attention from scientists themselves, rather than remaining the province of sociologists, historians and the like, and I would hope that this paper will stimulate an extended discussion of sexual and other types of bias. In general the paper is well written and presented, although I have a few specific comments (in Dagg & Thompson, 1988, p. 57).

Yet despite this referee’s positive review, the editor of *Animal Behaviour* refused to publish the paper because he viewed it as an attack upon ethologists:

> I feel that you have selected your material in order to attack all ethologists. As one who is dedicated to the investigation of female choice in animals, I feel it is unfair that I should be lumped together with others who, no doubt, do take a sexist approach (in Dagg & Thompson, 1988, p. 57).

While acknowledging the sexism of others in the field, this editor rejected the paper on the basis of his own, obviously subjective, opinions. When women do choose to adopt a voice of *authoritative assertion*, it may be viewed unsympathetically by some readers; in this case, Dagg’s assertions were transformed into an *attack*.11

All told, the editors of *Science, BioScience, Animal Behaviour*, and the *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* turned down the paper for publication. Eventually Dagg was successful in getting the paper published in the *International Journal of Women’s Studies*. Yet, as she points out, few feminist journals are included in the major indexes of journals. For example, she notes that in the *Current Contents: Social and Behavioral Sciences* index, of the over 1300 journals listed, only 7 were specifically devoted to women’s issues (the *International Journal of Women’s Studies* was apparently not among them). By not being able to publish work in mainstream journals, the writing of some women scholars is placed on the periphery and the authors themselves may be further marginalized.

Yet perhaps even more telling than Dagg’s anecdotal account of her difficulties getting her article published is Enos’ (1988) description of women’s lack of publications in the discipline of rhetoric and composition — a discipline in which there are both more women instructors and graduate students than there are men. As she notes: “Men in rhetoric and composition, the minority group, do most of the publishing in the scholarly journals, those recognized by T & P [Tenure and Promotion] committees” (1990, p. 213). Table 1, following, was compiled from a survey conducted by Enos of the major journals in Composition and Rhetoric publishing between 1982 and 1990.
Table 1: Articles Categorized by Sex of Author and Published in Major Composition Journals from 1982 through 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Journal</th>
<th>Male Author</th>
<th>Female Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Composition and Communication</td>
<td>(368) 61%</td>
<td>(227) 39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College English</td>
<td>(335) 69%</td>
<td>(149) 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhetoric Society Quarterly</td>
<td>(134) 81%</td>
<td>(31) 19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Journal of Teaching Writing</td>
<td>(87) 56%</td>
<td>(68) 44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research in the Teaching of English</td>
<td>(86) 66%</td>
<td>(45) 34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching English in the Two-Year College</td>
<td>(77) 60%</td>
<td>(51) 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhetoric Review</td>
<td>(77) 69%</td>
<td>(34) 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Journal of Advanced Composition</td>
<td>(70) 70%</td>
<td>(30) 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman English News</td>
<td>(60) 65%</td>
<td>(32) 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Journal of Basic Writing</td>
<td>(53) 42%</td>
<td>(72) 58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRE/TEXT</td>
<td>(47) 76%</td>
<td>(15) 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Writing Instructor</td>
<td>(42) 40%</td>
<td>(62) 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Breakdown</td>
<td>(1436) 64%</td>
<td>(816) 36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Compiled from Enos, 1988, pp. 211-212)\(^{12}\)

As Table 1 indicates, nearly two-thirds of the articles published by these journals over this eight year period were written by men. Drawing upon her own experience as the Editor of *Rhetoric Review*, Enos suggests that the greater numbers of articles authored by men has less to do with resistance to authorship by women than with the likelihood that the journals receive more submissions from men than women:

I don’t believe that our contributions are buried under a blanket of neglect or rejection. I don’t think we face open resistance and rejection in the belief that we’re not qualified to join the field of publication long dominated by males. What I can tell you is that *Rhetoric Review* gets many more submissions by males, and this is why the number of articles by males dominates *Rhetoric Review*. I cannot, of course, speak for any of the other journals, but I suspect the same is true for all the scholarly journals of writing (1990, pp. 213-214).\(^{13}\)

Enos goes on to suggest that one of the reasons more men submit papers than do women may relate to the differences in the academic roles sometimes undertaken by men and women.

As she points out, the journals which are pedagogically oriented (*The Journal of Teaching Writing, The Journal of Basic Writing, The Writing Instructor*, and *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*) generally have higher proportions of women contributors than the more research oriented journals; in
addition, these "four journals are edited predominantly by females" (1990, p. 212). In fact, when these four journals are considered separately from the other journals, 51% of the articles are authored by men and 49% by women — near parity.

And, as Enos also demonstrates, when the articles in *College Composition and Communication* are divided into two separate groups, major articles (research and theory) and "Staffroom Interchange" (classroom application), the difference between men and women in terms of articles with a pedagogical orientation versus a research orientation is further highlighted. Of the research and theory articles, 63% (256) are authored by men while 37% (150) are authored by women; of the "Staffroom Interchange" articles 59% (112) are authored by men while 41% (77) are authored by women. Yet perhaps her most telling observation about *College Composition and Communication* is that "CCC sends a clear message when it presents research and theory articles in 10 point type and classroom application in 8 point type" (1990, p. 211). Form represents a visible manifestation of attitude.

Nor is this difference between men and women in terms of research versus pedagogy (or for that matter, in terms of numbers of publications), restricted to the discipline of Composition and Rhetoric. As Bayer and Astin (1975) note, in describing their subjects from a wide variety of disciplines:

> Of the women 39 percent reported spending more than 12 hours a week in scheduled classroom teaching, of the men only 29 percent. Only 14 percent of the women but 33 percent of the men reported that they spent more than 8 hours in an average week in research and scholarly writing. These differences are also reflected in publication productivity: of the men 35 percent had published at least five articles and 12 percent at least one book; in contrast, 12 percent of the women had published at least five articles and 7 percent at least one book (p. 801). In a similar vein, Enos describes an analysis of the 1980 survey by the Higher Education Research Institute which indicated that nearly 11% of the women faculty surveyed spent 17 or more hours per week teaching as compared to 7.5% of the men; 13% of the men and only 7% of the women reported spending 21 or more hours per week researching (Simeone, 1987, in Enos 1988, p. 213).

> If more time expended teaching results in less time available to be expended researching and writing, then women may find themselves at a relative disadvantage at least insofar as the number of articles published in professional journals is a major factor in determining academic rank. The findings of Bayer and Astin (1975, p. 799) indicate that time spent teaching correlates negatively with academic rank for women \((r = -.195)\). For men \(r\) was not reported as it was not statistically reliable.

Further, there is some evidence that research which is conducted by women and published in scholarly journals is not always perceived as research by readers. Instead, it may be perceived as pedagogical in nature. Flynn (1990), for example, describes the reactions of one anonymous reviewer to her article "Composing as a Woman" published in *College Composition and Communication* (1988):
In writing "Composing as a Woman," then, I had rather broad professional and research interests. But one of CCC's anonymous reviewers of the manuscript identified the audience as "composition generalists" and observed that "this is just the kind of essay I would like to have most of my teaching colleagues read." This same reviewer also observed, though, that "there is no extensive empirical research presented here. The examples drawn from student writing serve only as illustrations of the points, not as a basis for inductive argument." The message was clear — the essay would probably not be of interest to researchers because it was not research (1990, p. 83).

Yet, as Flynn goes on to assert, she considered the article as research aimed at the composition specialist.

That alternative explanations (i.e., differing academic roles and differing rhetorical forms) for the gap in the number of articles authored by men and women seem equally possible, does not necessarily invalidate either possibility. The two possible explanations, may in fact, simply be manifestations of a larger underlying issue. Bearing in mind Burke's suggestion that form is a visible sign of attitude, the apparent differences between some men and some women in terms of rhetorical forms as well as academic roles may reflect different attitudes toward the epistemologies of relationship and autonomy, different orientations toward reality.

The rhetorical forms, or genres, that are chosen (either consciously or unconsciously) by writers represent potential ways of organizing ideas, ways of expressing author-ity. The academic roles chosen by scholars also represent forms around which they organize their professional careers, ways of finding and creating some order in the encounter with reality. The genres and roles which are valued, to various degrees, by academics both reflect and perpetuate social attitudes. That teachers (and articles about pedagogy) are less valued within academia than are researchers (and articles about research) seems evident. That certain authoritative rhetorical forms are privileged over less authoritative forms within academia also seems evident.

If these problems with getting published result, at least in part, from a conflict between traditional authoritative forms of discourse and the wish of some women to write in a fashion that more accurately represents their epistemology, an epistemology which may be based more upon a recognition of the limits of authority, of truth, then alternative forms of discourse are needed. As Aisenberg and Harrington note:

The problem then, for women who reject the prevailing model for professional discourse is to find a countermodel that commands respect. How can women become insiders and acquire an insider's voice of authority while questioning insider values? Where is the model for new forms of discourse? Not readily available, is the predicable answer (1988, p. 78).

If models of discourse which critique authority while at the same time remaining authoritative do not currently exist, what then is to be done? One radical answer that has been proposed is simply to refuse to participate in academe:
The nature of the profession compels us to explain and describe "writing the body" or feminine discourse, yet in so doing we make of it a criterion, a yardstick with which to measure Woman. Our efforts to systematize *écriture féminine*, like our efforts to define Woman, participate in the phallocentric, homogenizing project of composition as a discipline and thus neutralize its radical potential. By attempting to codify *écriture féminine*, turning it into a pedagogy, forcing it into the frame of the discipline, we paint a portrait of woman that hangs easily in the halls of the academy. Why do we not instead laugh with Cixous, "Let's get out of here!" (Batson, 1990, p. 208).

However, "Let's get out of here", does not represent a solution — simply a silencing of women — again.

The humanization of the discipline of composition does not necessarily require its homogenization. Nor does the effort to describe feminine discourse necessitate generating some static universal criterion with which to measure Woman (and thereby risk perpetuating sexual stereotypes). Instead, the effort may possess the power to re-form academic discourse, to validate and thus author-ize, alternative forms of discourse and alternative conceptions of truth — the university as polyphonic and polylogic.

In *Teaching Writing: Pedagogy, Gender, and Equity*, Caywood and Overing (1987) propose as a less radical alternative that composition instructors emphasize the process approach. As they note:

> The familiar revisionist view of writing as process, which challenges the classical view of writing as product, offers a paradigmatic dialectic also appropriate to feminist discourse. The model of writing as product is inherently authoritarian. The art of writing becomes a suppressed and private activity of the self which is eventually divorced from the product made public. As a result, certain forms of discourse and language are privileged: the expository essay is valued over the exploratory; the argumentative essay set above the autobiographical; the clear evocation of a thesis preferred to a more organic exploration of a topic; the impersonal, rational voice ranked more highly than the intimate, subjective one. The valuing of one form over another requires that the teacher be a judge, imposing a hierarchy of learned aesthetic values, gathered from ideal texts, upon the student texts. The process model, insofar as it facilitates and legitimizes the fullest expression of the individual voice, is compatible with the feminist re-visioning of hierarchy, if not essential to it (pp. xii-xiv).

Unfortunately, such a solution, however well intentioned, may be overly simplistic. As Bizzell suggests:

> "In order to participate in the community and its changes, however, one must first master its language using practices" (cited in Coe, 1990b, p. 412).

If women are to change academe, both for their own benefit and the benefit of academe, it may be necessary to master the old forms as well as generate new ones. Students, in conjunction with the discourse community, also benefit from becoming polyphonic. Writing, when viewed as a social and cognitive process, is context sensitive; both the audience as well as the self must be considered — and honored. Unfortunately, such an approach does not appear to be a common one in the classroom, at least insofar as the following two cases represent current practice.
The Canadian Context: Two Cases

Historically, the teaching of composition and writing in Canada has been a shared responsibility of the elementary school, the secondary school, and the university. In the elementary school, the emphasis was upon grammatical correctness while in the university, rhetorical issues such as arrangement were emphasized. Within the secondary school, attention was paid to both arrangement and grammar (Johnson, 1986). As Johnson further suggests:

The aim of nineteenth century instruction in composition in general was to teach correct techniques and rhetorical strategies and to illustrate how these could be applied to a range of conventional forms of discourse. The courses of study in "English Composition" formalized at all three levels by the late nineteenth century set patterns for composition instruction in modern Canadian education. . . . Despite the growing popularity since the 1960's of the "Growth Through English" movement in Language Arts and the "process" approach to writing in high school and university English studies, the traditional model for writing instruction with its focus on correct and effective structure and usage has yet to be displaced from a century-long dominion over the teaching of "English Composition".

If the nineteenth century model for composition instruction has retained a firm hold on English studies it is due, in part, to the longevity of the traditional assumption that *grammatical and rhetorical conventionality is the superordinate characteristic of literacy* [italics added] (1986, p. 23).

This traditional approach to composition in Canada originated in the nineteenth century and, at the university level, appears to have changed little.

Further, within many Canadian universities composition instruction has traditionally been the purview of English Departments and this has supposedly resulted in a course of instruction combining the study of both literature and composition. As Johnson further notes: "In contrast to the much documented 'Freshman Composition' course in English departments in the United States, the twentieth-century Canadian academy has never embraced the curricular concept of the 'comp' class per se; and, with remarkable hegemony, has persisted into the present decade in offering introductory English courses founded on a synthesis of composition instruction and training in critical analysis [i.e., literary criticism]" (1988, p. 869). However, McKendy (1990), suggests that in practice the attention paid to teaching composition is minimal:

Few in my post-war generation, however, will remember much instruction in composition from the introductory English courses to which Johnson alludes; to my knowledge these were inevitably historical surveys, of the Beowulf-to-Virginia-Woolf variety, with occasional practice in essay writing. My first exposure to composition as a college discipline came when I was asked to teach Freshman Comp as a graduate student at an American university (p. 102).

This practice of teaching composition simply as an adjunct to first year literature remains widespread; The University of British Columbia's English 100 is a good example.
That some English Departments would, in fact, prefer to not teach composition is clearly evident in statements such as Kerpneck's:

I think I have a unique perspective on the question of literacy. I am a professor of English at the University of Toronto, which is, as you probably know, a place where we assume literacy in our students; in other words, we find the teaching of effective writing both difficult and demeaning and confine ourselves to the teaching of works of literature [italics added] (1980, in McKendy, 1990, p. 102).

This desire on the part of English Departments to assume literacy in first year students is echoed in Coe's analysis of why UBC instituted its mandatory English Composition Test in the mid-seventies:

In 1974 (and to a lesser extent, to this day), UBC English professors were by preference and training, literary critics. In first-year English classes, however, they found it increasingly necessary to teach writing, a subject most of them had neither the inclination nor the ability to teach properly. Not surprisingly, they wished to avoid both the teaching of writing and complaints from colleagues in other departments that writing was not being taught. The solution was to make certain that entering students were already minimally competent writers. With logical consistency, therefore, the department dealt with the literacy “crisis” in part by abolishing its remedial writing courses (1986b, p. 277).

The upshot of historical composition practices in Canada is that writing instruction at the university level is all too often either neglected by English Departments in favor of teaching literature and/or is relegated to teaching sentence mechanics and the arrangement of conventional formal structures. As Coe further suggests “the traditional Anglo-Canadian approach to composition, well epitomized by Kerpneck’s statement, is conservative and elitist” (1990a, p. 105).

The following two cases illustrate some of the implications of this conservatism in composition practices with respect to gender differences; by emphasizing the mastery of certain generic forms, constraints are placed upon the generation of the alternative forms which are needed to express different attitudes and values. The first case is that of UBC, the largest university in British Columbia, which merely by virtue of its size (and consequently, the large number of English MA’s and Ph.D.’s it produces) may be assumed to have a significant impact upon the teaching practices of its graduates from English. This impact upon teaching practices, in fact, is particularly evident in the second case — Douglas College — a medium-sized college in New Westminster.

The University of British Columbia: The Standardized Writer

English 100 at the University of British Columbia is a first year composition and literature course compulsory for all students entering the university. In addition to passing the course, all students are required to pass the English Composition Test which is an examination “intended to test a student’s reading comprehension and to assess his [sic] competence in writing” (English Composition Test:
Guidelines for Markers, Circa 1985a, p. 1). Further, even those students who possess the appropriate transfer credits to avoid taking English 100 are still required to write the English Composition Test. And any student who fails the test is required to rewrite it until such time as it is passed. Although there is undoubtedly some variation from instructor to instructor, English 100 generally focuses upon teaching the writing of argumentative and descriptive essays with an emphasis upon the study of literature. Indeed, many English 100 instructors apparently spend a significant amount of their time specifically “teaching to the exam” in order to enable their students to achieve the requisite pass.20 Appendix C, English 100: Some Criteria for Grading Essays (Circa 1985b), provides the criteria established by the UBC English Department for grading the essays submitted in English 100. Appendix D, English Composition Test: Guidelines for Markers (Circa 1985a), provides the criteria for grading the English Composition Test.

What becomes immediately evident in English 100: Some Criteria for Grading Essays (Circa 1985b) are the contradictions contained within the document. Although the first sentence of the document asserts that “grading is not a mechanical application of rules, and a marker must do more than catalogue errors” (p. 1), the rest of the document, in fact, goes on to catalogue all the errors which should result in the failure of an essay:

1. “We should fail essays that are badly organized, lack development, or are full of padding”;
2. “The most serious errors are those that obscure or distort meaning. It is our policy in English 100 to fail students who cannot make their meaning clear”;
3. The various mechanical and stylistic errors which are considered serious enough to warrant failure of the essays are clearly enumerated: “run-on constructions”, “sentence fragments”, “comma splices”, “dangling modifiers”, “misspellings”, “misuse of words”, and excessive use of simple sentences (pp. 1-2).

Although the document goes on to state that “a student should not be excessively penalized for the kinds of errors that may result from intellectual adventurousness, and liveliness of language” (p. 2), the mere length of the list of criteria for failing an essay suggests that in English 100 the grading of essays is the mechanical application of rules, the cataloguing of errors — a position consistent with the traditional approach to teaching composition outlined by Johnson (1986).

Perhaps of greatest concern is the degree to which English 100: Some Criteria for Grading Essays falsely emphasizes the essay as a product unconnected with its author: “A marker must take into account the whole essay (not the whole student; we are judging the work, not its author [italics added])” (p. 1). The particular processes by which a writer may have generated the product, the specific social contexts which may be involved, are of little relevance in English 100. In reality, of course, the students are being judged, at least insofar as they are able to duplicate the writing processes necessary to produce an essay adhering to the stylistic and formal values privileged by the English Department at UBC.
That many English 100 instructors spend a significant amount of time teaching students to write essays enabling them to pass the *English Composition Test* is not especially surprising; *English 100: Some Criteria for Grading Essays* (Circa 1985b) and *English Composition Test: Guidelines for Markers* (Circa 1985a) emphasize precisely the same stylistic values and are equally concerned with mechanical correctness. The *English Composition Test: Guidelines for Markers* details some of the criteria for failing an essay as follows:

More serious errors (e.g. run-on constructions, sentence fragments, errors in verb formation or in subject/verb agreement, comma splices, frequent misuse of words) are likely to interfere with the sense of an argument or reduce its effectiveness. Three or four errors of this kind are sufficient grounds for failing an essay if there are no compensating strengths in other aspects of expression or organization (p. 2).

An essay may also be failed if it contains more than three or four spelling errors, faulty idioms, or shifts in tense and voice.

Given these criteria, it is not particularly surprising that ESL students find the *English Composition Test* especially problematic. Indeed, it can be argued that failing essays on the basis of "errors in verb formation or in subject/verb agreement" is, in practice, racist. As Coe (1986b) queries in relation to the situation at UBC from the mid-seventies to early eighties:

Why, then, is "grammar" the bottom line? Why, on the UBC minimal literacy test, must an essay fail if it contains serious subject - verb disagreement even if it is in every other respect clear coherent, and even brilliant? The answer is to be found, among other places, in *Pygmalion*, which ironically enough was taught in that same UBC English program. One of Shaw's main themes in that play is that a large part of traditional education is devoted not to the real basics, but to trivia — the trivia that signify social status. . . . Whatever their lack of effectiveness in teaching composition, grammar drills have a clear function in the hidden curriculum of socialization. The "Back to the basics" movement was correct to focus on them — because they are the precise contrary of the "creative" values-clarification composition curriculum (pp. 280-281).

And as he points out earlier in this article, one of the motives for UBC instituting the *English Composition Test* was “to pressure certain English professors, who had been emphasizing quality of thought and values clarification, into putting less emphasis on substantive criteria and more on mechanical correctness” (p. 276).

In other words, the UBC *English Composition Test* was, in part, initially designed to discourage students and certain professors from exploring alternative forms in both writing and teaching (and, of course, the values and attitudes those alternatives might represent). Indeed, the *English Composition Test: Guidelines for Markers* makes it quite clear that a specific essay form is privileged over alternatives. In addition to the focus upon mechanical correctness, a passing essay must state a thesis, present a logical and unified argument, and support generalizations with explanations and illustrations.
And like its focus upon mechanical correctness, the specific discourse form privileged by the *English Composition Test* may pose yet another problem for some ESL students (most notably Chinese students). In an analysis comparing the discourse structure of Chinese newspaper editorials and English newspaper editorials, Chen discovered that “the Chinese used more clauses in developing coordinate subtopics, rather than in developing subordinate details under a generalization” (1986, p. 132-133). She interpreted this as confirming Kaplan’s contention (1967; 1968) of a “spiral” pattern (repetitive discussions of a topic) in Chinese discourse. Insofar as some ESL students may have initially learned and internalized a discourse form which (for some native speakers of English) may not appear logical or unified because it does not support generalizations with explanations and illustrations, those students will find themselves at a considerable disadvantage when writing the *English Composition Test*.

Even if it seems apparent that the concern with mechanical correctness and a specific discourse form in English 100 and the *English Composition Test* poses heightened difficulties for students with an ESL background, it is less clear as to whether or not the emphasis upon that essay form poses particular difficulties for women (although the so-called “spiral” form of Chinese discourse does bear an intriguing resemblance to the coordinating discourse form which various commentators have suggested typifies some women’s writing — what Meridel LaSueur “has called circular rather than linear writing” — cited in Annas, 1985, p. 371). Bearing in mind that women and men do not seem to differ substantially in their writing capabilities, it seems improbable that an analysis of failure rates for English 100 and the *English Composition Test* would reveal any significant differences between the sexes.

But the central issue is whether men and women differ in terms of their attitudes toward the rhetorical forms generally privileged by academia. Given the previously outlined evidence suggesting differences in the ways that men and women sometimes choose to organize their essays, it seems clear that the rhetorical form which UBC expects their students to master more closely approximates what Farrell (1979) has called the *male mode* than it does the *female mode*. Insofar as form represents an attitude, and insofar as the socially constructed attitudes of men and women differ, there is a conflict between the generic form of academic discourse privileged at UBC and *l’écriture féminine*.

**Douglas College: Readers and Writers as Adversaries**

If the UBC case provides a general sense of the conservative attitudes toward composition practices and rhetorical forms which are prevalent within some English departments in Canada, the case of Douglas College provides a more specific and concrete example of the implications of this conservatism, especially in terms of how it may conflict with the socially constructed roles of women. And the two
cases are not unconnected. In one of the two classes examined at Douglas College, the instructor obtained her MA at UBC and used as part of the course materials a "textbook" written by a colleague who also obtained his MA at UBC.

Although McKendy asserts that the dialogue about the effective teaching of writing "is often most lively in the smaller institutions where traditions change most easily" (1990, p. 103), his assertion is questionable. Given the reality that many of the instructors at smaller institutions must of necessity obtain their graduate degrees at larger institutions — institutions like UBC which continue to emphasize practices of teaching writing which are conservative and traditional in approach — likely they will emulate the practices with which they are most familiar. Such, in any event, appears to be the case at Douglas College. Even if some instructors do attempt to adopt innovative approaches, those innovations may come to resemble more traditional pedagogies simply due to institutional pressures and familiar schooling habits (Ulichny & Watson-Gegeo, 1989).

Appendix E and Appendix F provide reproductions of the course syllabi given to the students enrolled in two sections of English 130 (Academic Writing) offered at Douglas College during the Spring Semester of 1990.21 Instructor Y's syllabus (Appendix E) makes it abundantly clear that his course is primarily concerned with teaching the writing of academic argument essays — so much so that he repeatedly boldfaces the term argument:

This course concentrates on the process of writing academic argument essays. It includes assignments and exercises on the development, style, and mechanics of the academic argument essay and instruction in the general principles of composition. It also includes instruction in the reading and use of source material in the development of the academic argument essay (1990, p. 1).

These first three sentences excerpted from Instructor Y's syllabus follow, word for word, the course description of English 130 contained in the Douglas College Calendar (1989-90, p. 143). In fact, the only difference between the two documents is that the term is not boldfaced in the calendar. The consonance between the two documents indicates that this approach to teaching composition is the general policy of the Douglas College English Department.

As Appendix F indicates, the first three sentences of Instructor X's syllabus are also closely adapted from the course description contained within the calendar. There are, however, some intriguing differences. Her syllabus deemphasizes argument and instead adds a concern with persuasion:

English 130 is a first year course, concentrating on the process of writing academic essays. It includes assignments and exercises on the development, style, and mechanics of the expository and persuasive essays, and instruction in the general principles of composition. The course also includes instruction in the reading and use of source material in the development of the academic essay (1990a, p. 1).
Even though she chose to deemphasize argument in her syllabus, she has not completely abandoned this particular approach to writing an essay. In one of the assignment sheets (Research Essay Topics) which she provided to her students later in the semester, she advised her students to “focus your essay by giving it what Sheridan Baker calls ‘an argumentative edge’” (1990b, p. 2). And, as Instructor Y’s syllabus indicates, the required text for his course is also Baker, Ledbetter, & Gamache’s *The Canadian Practical Stylist with Readings* (1987). Indeed, Sheridan Baker’s text, and the approach to writing which it represents, appears to be common at Douglas College; the endorsement of Baker’s text by both instructors suggests that they ascribe to his approach.

Conceivably, it could be contended that the emphasis upon *argument* in these two courses does not necessarily imply an approach to writing essays based upon the vernacular meaning of *argument* (i.e., to dispute or to quarrel), but rather, only represents the traditional classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument. For example, in the “Preface” to *The Canadian Practical Stylist with Readings*, Baker describes the traditional divisions of discourse:

> I continue to emphasize argument because argument indeed subsumes all other expository principles and teaches easily the firmest organization of one’s ideas. To the chapters on paragraphing, I have added the inductive and deductive structures, and what I call the “hybrid,” the more open-ended arrangement of many seasoned essayists, but I also include the classic modes of description, narration, and exposition (1987, p. xx).23

In the traditional interpretation, *argument* simply means to give reasons for or against a viewpoint or to persuade by providing supporting evidence.

Further into the text, however, Baker’s description of the argumentative edge makes it clear that he also views *argument* as disputation; he conflates the traditional and vernacular meanings of *argument*:

> When you have something to say about cats, you have found your underlying idea. You have something to defend, something to fight about: not just “Cats,” but “The cat is really a person’s best friend.” Now the hackles on all dog people are rising, and you have an argument on your hand. You have something to prove. You have a thesis. “What’s the big idea, Mac?” Let the impudence in that time-honoured demand remind you that the most dynamic thesis is a kind of affront to somebody (p. 35).

Baker’s description of the argumentative edge makes it clear to the reader that to write an argument paper is to defend, to fight, to prove, and to affront.

In two sections of his text (rather significantly entitled “Middle Tactics” and “Acknowledging and Disposing of the Opposition”), Baker’s emphasis upon argument as disputation is made explicit by his frequent use of military metaphors: “sounded the challenge”, “oppose your forces”, “more triumphant”, “one side pitted against the other”, “get rid of the opposition”, “attack your opposition”, “demolish it”, “knocks it flat”, “adversaries”, etc. (1987, pp. 62-66). Walter Ong suggests that rhetoric “developed in the past as a major expression on the rational level of the ceremonial combat which is found among males and typically only among males at the physical level throughout the entire animal kingdom, not simply
among human beings" (1972, p. 615). In a particularly extreme fashion, Baker's language reflects this view of rhetoric.24

Baker claims in his text to be following in the traditions of Aristotle: "I am simply describing the natural linguistic facts discovered again and again by the heirs of Aristotle, in which lineage I seem inescapably to belong" (1987, p. xxi). Yet, as Berlin and Inkster (1980) submit, his claims do not stand up to close scrutiny. Underpinning Baker's text is an epistemology which differs radically from that of Aristotle. For Aristotle, Berlin suggests that:

Like dialectic — the method of discovering and communicating truth in learned discourse — rhetoric deals with the realm of the probable, with truth as discovered in the areas of law, politics, and what might be called public virtue. Unlike scientific discoveries, truth in these realms can never be stated with absolute certainty. Still, approximations to truth are possible. The business of rhetoric then is to enable the speaker — Aristotle's rhetoric is preeminently oral — to find the means necessary to persuade the audience of the truth. Thus rhetoric is primarily concerned with the provision of invention devices whereby the speaker may discover his or her argument, with these devices naturally falling into three categories: the rational, the emotional, and the ethical. Since truth is rational, the first is paramount and is derived from the rules of logic albeit in the relaxed form of the enthymeme and example. Realizing that individuals are not always ruled by reason, however, Aristotle provides advice on appealing to the emotions of the audience and on presenting one's own character in the most favorable light, each considered with special regard for the audience and the occasion of the speech (1982, p. 768).

However, unlike the probabilistic reasoning adopted by Aristotle in the form of the enthymeme, Baker's approach is thoroughly positivistic — truth is empirically verifiable in external reality.

And unlike Aristotelian rhetoric which is centered around a system of inventing arguments to persuade the audience, Baker deemphasizes invention and considerations of audience. Out of the 518 pages in his text, Baker devotes slightly more than one page to explicit considerations of audience (1987, pp. 4-5). His inventional system seems to reside mainly in the advice "Find your thesis" (p. 35). As Berlin and Inkster note in their analysis of an earlier version of Baker's text:

Because the reality that concerns current-traditional rhetoric is not probabilistic, as it was for Aristotle, or problematic, as it is for us, neither are knowledge and meaning. . . . The current-traditionalist's conception of the composing process as mysterious and unteachable is, however, in the main implicit. When composing is dealt with explicitly, it reflects the reduction of knowing to an objective mechanical activity. . . . Since meaning inheres in external reality, it follows that not only the content but also the organization and indeed even the thesis of a composition would likewise inhere in external reality. Hence the writer is advised, "Find your thesis". . . . The thesis exists outside the writer. It becomes something which the writer casts about in search for, rather than something that grows internally and is the motivating force behind the writing in the first place (1980, pp. 2-4).

Moreover, Berlin and Inkster also note that associated with this positivistic epistemology is a particular view of what constitutes "error": "error, in this scheme, is thus simply the result of inadequate observation or emotional perverseness" (1980, p. 2).
Given this particular conception of "error", it should not be especially surprising that the one element of Classical Rhetoric which Baker does adopt is that of *refutio* (refutation), as the subtitle, "Acknowledging and Disposing of the Opposition", so clearly indicates. If error only results from "emotional perverseness" or "inadequate observation", then the proper concern of Rhetoric is the unmasking of such errors. In short, the concern of Rhetoric becomes the demonstration of how one position is wrong while an alternative position is correct — the adversarial approach.

In part, the forensic origins of rhetoric may be accounted responsible for the development of adversarial models; when acting as an advocate for someone in the law courts, it would be inappropriate to agree with the advocate for the other side of the dispute. Yet refutation was not at the centre of Aristotle's Rhetoric; it was simply one element. As Burke notes in his analysis of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*:

> You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his. . . And you give the "signs" of such consubstantiality by deference to an audience's "opinions." . . . True, the rhetorician may have to change an audience's opinion in one respect; but he can succeed only insofar as he yields to that audience's opinions in other respects (1969b, pp. 55-56).

At the same time that Burke stresses the importance of identification within Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, he is nevertheless fully aware of the importance of division:

> Since persuasion so often implies the presence or threat of an adversary, there is the "agonistic" or competitive stress. Thus Aristotle, who looks upon rhetoric as a medium that "proves opposites," gives what amounts to a handbook on a *manly art of self-defense* [italics added]. He describes the holds and the counter-holds, the blows and the ways of blocking them, for every means of persuasion the corresponding means of dissuasion, for every proof the disproof, for every praise the vituperation that matches it. . . . This "agonistic" emphasis is naturally strong in Cicero, much of whose treatise [*De Oratore*] is written out of his experiences in the Senate and the law courts (1969b, pp. 52-53).

Implicit within Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and explicit within Burke's *A Rhetoric of Motives* is the view that persuasion involves a balancing act between the motives of identification and division.

Baker's emphasis upon an adversarial approach to essay writing is unbalanced. He does, indeed, follow in a classical tradition — that of Cicero. The same may be said of Sloane (1989) who advocates a revival of Ciceronian adversarial rhetoric in the classroom. The emphasis by Baker and Sloane upon division distorts Aristotle's intent.

Unfortunately, as Taylor suggests in "Women in a Double-Bind: Hazards of the Argumentative Edge" (1978), this model of writing as adversarial may well conflict with the socially constructed role of conciliator adopted by some women. As she notes, some women's papers "often begin with disclaimers of authority — 'It is only my opinion but’" (p. 387); not unexpectedly, this characteristic is one which Baker demands the writer eliminate:
“In my opinion,” the beginner will write repeatedly, until he seems to be saying “It is only my opinion, after all, so it can’t be worth much.” . . . Generalize your opinions and emotions. Change “I cried” to “The scene is very moving.” The grammatical shift represents a whole change of viewpoint, a shift from self to subject. You become the informed adult, showing the reader around firmly, politely, and persuasively.

Once you have effaced yourself from your assertions, once you have erased to me and in my opinion and all such signs of amateur terror, you may later let yourself back into the essay for emphasis or graciousness (1987, p. 7).

The adversarial and impersonal form of writing emphasized in these two courses is perhaps somewhat more troubling than might otherwise be the case simply because about half of the students enrolled in English 130 at Douglas College were Psychiatric Nursing students, which is to say, generally women and particularly well trained in empathy, warmth, and respect. Further, students in General Nursing, again a program with a high proportion of women, are also required to take this course. In other words, in these courses there are more women than men. Yet by unduly emphasizing the motive of division, these courses take an adversarial approach which seems guaranteed to generate conflicts for some women.

Underpinning the conflict between an adversarial discourse form and socially constructed gender roles, lies the traditional approach to the teaching of writing with its heavy emphasis upon the written product and minimal emphasis upon the processes involved in generating the desired product. As Berlin notes about the traditional approach:

An equally significant departure in this . . . rhetoric is that it contains no invention system. Truth is to be discovered outside the rhetorical enterprise — through the method, usually the scientific method, of the appropriate discipline, or, as in poetry and oratory, through genius . . . The emphasis in this rhetoric is on adapting what has been discovered outside the rhetorical enterprise to the minds of the hearers. The study of rhetoric thus focuses on developing skill in arrangement and style (1982, pp. 769-770).

The focus of the traditional approach upon mechanics and arrangement rather than upon the processes of writing is a natural consequence of its positivistic epistemology.

Although both Instructors X and Y do mention the writing process in their syllabi, their emphasis is clearly upon the usual conventions of written discourse:

More specifically, you should learn to write well-structured, unified, and coherent essays, with suitable and effective introductions and conclusions. In following the conventions of academic essays, you will learn to articulate a clear and significant thesis, a thesis for which you systematically argue, thus a thesis governing the development (including diction and tone) of the whole essay. You will also learn how to present evidence supporting your argument according to the guidelines established by the MLA Handbook. Indeed, you will learn to format your entire essay according to these guidelines (Instructor Y, 1990, p. 1).

Instructor X also emphasizes the formal conventions of written discourse. Indeed, in some respects her emphasis upon correct form may be more extreme then Instructor Y’s. The last two pages of her syllabus list in great detail her grading criteria for assessing student essays. It is almost assuredly not coincidental that her grading criteria represent precisely the same stylistic values as the grading criteria for the UBC
English Composition Test; she obtained her graduate training at UBC. The heavy emphasis (fully 35% of the assignment weighting) upon literary criticism which is found in the “Assignment Schedule” section of her syllabus also reflects the traditional, bellettristic approach to teaching writing.

The claim by both instructors to be using a “process” approach when in fact more heavily emphasizing the conventions of written discourse as well as mechanical correctness parallels a similar claim by Sheridan Baker. For example, in Baker’s text about 30 pages, out of a total of 518 pages, address the processes of inventing and drafting (in his peculiarly adversarial fashion). The remainder of his text focuses upon the process of revising (mainly as editing for mechanical correctness), structure and mechanics, or provides essays which students are presumably expected to model. Similarly, both instructors heavily emphasize the process of revising (again, it seems, mainly as editing). To their credit, both instructors do at least mention the process of inventing. Instructor Y, for example, states that the students will “spend a good deal of time in exercises designed to assist . . . in the various stages of essay writing, from ‘pre-writing’ through to polishing the final draft” (1990, p. 1); Instructor X notes that “the student will learn to read and discuss written material in a spirit of intellectual research, and to generate thoughts and ideas on the material” (1990, p. 1). Unfortunately, the actual process of drafting, it seems, does not appear to be an issue of concern for either instructor. In English 130, revising (as editing) is emphasized, inventing is deemphasized, and drafting is eliminated.

This emphasis upon revising (as editing) is not surprising given the degree to which the courses and text are concerned with conventional forms and mechanical correctness. If the main intention of composition instruction at Douglas College is simply to teach the students to mechanically reproduce certain prescribed forms (forms, it should be added, which will prove of little professional utility), then it follows that the most important instructional goal will be to teach them to identify and eliminate errors. Nor is it surprising that inventing is dealt with minimally while drafting does not exist. Revising is seen as a mechanistic activity, drafting as unteachable, and inventing as the finding of a suitable thesis. Both Instructor X and Y’s courses operate from the traditional approach to teaching writing.

In sum, the cases of English 100 at UBC and English 130 at Douglas College suggest that composition instruction continues to focus upon traditional essay structure and correct sentence mechanics while virtually ignoring that the psychosocial contexts and processes of some writers may conflict with those traditional forms. Yet beyond the general concern that this focus upon the traditional forms provides little room for the generation of alternative forms, the practices at Douglas College emphasize the specific rhetorical form which seems most likely to conflict with the socially constructed roles of some women — even within programs where women far outnumber men.
Chapter Three Summary

This chapter has presented evidence that there are gender inequities within academe in terms of faculty representation and authority. The institution of the university has proportionally more men than women faculty and administrators, particularly within the higher ranks. And even allowing for the difference in the numbers of men and women within the academy, women publish proportionally less in scholarly journals than do men. In disciplines such as Composition, this discrepancy is particularly striking; even though there are more women than men faculty members in Composition, they only author slightly more than one-third of the total articles (and less than a third in the more prestigious research-oriented journals). There is a clear relationship between publication in scholarly journals and academic rank: more author-ity equates with more authority.

However, within academe (as perhaps elsewhere) some women may have difficulty adopting a voice of authoritative assertion, precisely the voice required within the traditional essay form to demonstrate mastery over the subject. The traditional essay represents a formal tyranny insofar as it restricts the attitudes toward a subject which may legitimately be expressed. Differences in the socially constructed attitudes of some men and women may lead to differing epistemologies and finally to the desire to generate and use different forms of expression. All too often, unfortunately, composition instruction prevents the generation and expression of these different forms, these different attitudes — mechanical correctness and formal conventionality remain the central criteria for evaluating student writing. And these formal conventions appear to converge with those characteristics hypothesized for the male voice and diverge from those characteristics hypothesized for the female voice. This may well represent a particularly subtle form of silencing.

Further, there are some particularly obvious conflicts between certain models for traditional academic discourse and the female voice. The requirement within some classes that an essay begin with a thesis which is "a kind of affront to somebody" (and the adversarial stance implicit in that requirement), may well do outright violence to the self-concepts of some women. To the degree that some women may wish to communicate the limits rather than the power of opinion, to the degree that the psychosocial development of some women stresses relationship rather than separation, they may prefer a rhetoric which emphasizes identification rather than division.

Not surprisingly, some critics have suggested that there is little point in trying to further feminist discourse within the university, that to do so is to risk losing the radical potential of l'écriture féminine. At the same time, to just give up on academia resolves nothing; it simply perpetuates the obvious inequities. In order to resolve these inequities, other commentators have suggested using more process-
oriented approaches. Although such approaches are beneficial insofar as they positively encourage values-exploration and self-discovery, they fail to recognize that academic discourse, whatever its limitations, also serves useful functions. And, to some degree, the proven utility of academic discourse in addressing certain types of problems may be accounted partly responsible for its persistence, if not its hegemony.

Ultimately, the issue raised by the conflicts between academic discourse and *l'écriture féminine* is a simple one to define, albeit far less simple to resolve. Is the academy solely to be a conserver of past traditions or is it to be a generator of new traditions? The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that it continues to adopt the former role — at the expense of the second. At the expense of justice for some within the academy. If there is a genuine desire for equality of opportunity, then it becomes necessary to re-form-ulate attitudes — the ways that academics think about form.

This chapter has argued that the rhetorical forms generally preferred within academe conflict with the forms sometimes preferred by women. However, before any radical changes are undertaken in order to transform the way that composition is taught to students, both women and men, research must necessarily be undertaken into gender differences (rather than sex differences) and academic discourse. The probability that there is a conflict does not imply that the current understanding about the nature or degree of the conflict is in any way sufficient. Assuredly, it is not. Chapter Four proposes an experiment aimed at testing some of the hypotheses generated both in this chapter and the preceding one.
Notes for Chapter Three

1 The Faculty of Education is used as an example precisely because it is one of the most egalitarian of the traditional disciplines and not, in any way, to suggest that it is particularly unfair in its treatment of women. (In fact, if any discipline is to be singled out as blatantly unfair in terms of its treatment of women, that “honor” must go to Engineering and the Applied Sciences in which about 11.9% of their undergraduates and 2.0% of their faculty were women in 1984-85). Indeed, Dagg and Thompson's figures indicate that in the 15 years between 1970-71 and 1984-85 the Faculty of Education has increased its proportion of women as full-time faculty members from 20.1% to 25.8% (1988, p. 66).

The decrease in the proportion of women between 1960-61 and 1970-71 from 28.7% to 20.1% may perhaps be accounted for in several fashions. First, Education as a discipline became increasingly prestigious during this period and thus more likely to attract men to its ranks. Second, society's increasing concern with education during the 1960's ensured that more funds were made available to Education faculties, thereby furthering the likelihood that men would be attracted to the discipline. The drop in the proportion of women full-time professors during the sixties was perhaps more the result of more men deciding to enter the discipline rather than any increased biases in terms of hiring. More men than women may have applied for the available positions. Nevertheless, the fact remains that in 1984-85, only one quarter of full-time university teachers in Education were women (Dagg and Thompson, 1988, p. 66). Given that in 1984-85 women comprised 50.6% of the full-time doctoral students enrolled in Education (Dagg and Thompson, 1988, p. 72), we can only hope that the inequity in the proportion of women to men professors will continue to decrease.

2 Although the statistics relating to salary levels that are detailed by Dagg and Thompson (1988) do not control for the qualifications and experience of the professors (and thus are not a reasonably accurate measure of a bias), a more recent analysis of the salary levels of men and women faculty at Simon Fraser University does control for those factors and still finds a sex-based salary differential. The findings of that study are worth quoting at some length.

1. Based on the current salaries paid to faculty members at SFU, the data shows that female faculty salaries are, on average, 85% that for males (approximately $10,000 less).
2. When adjusting for qualifications, market and experience, the differential in average salary is reduced to approximately $4,000 with female faculty salaries on average 94% of male salaries.
3. An examination of salary progress within rank and salary increase upon promotion to rank found no significant differences between males and females.
4. The remaining salary differential is due to the following:
   a. The salaries upon initial appointment to rank for females have been lower than that for males.
   b. Females are disproportionately represented in the higher ranks, particularly at the full professor rank. A further examination shows that:
      i. In comparison to males, females have been hired predominantly into the lower ranks.
      ii. All faculty (with one exception) hired into the full professor rank are males and 50% of these were hired prior to 1975.
      iii. Females are promoted to associate and full professor ranks at lower rates than males (Wattamaniuk and Gurr, 1989, p. 1).

Although Wattamaniuk and Gurr are unable to conclusively determine the reasons for the differences in promotion rates, they imply that it may be related to differences between men and women in research productivity (p. 23). And, as they further note: “If females had been promoted at the same rate as males with similar years in rank, an estimated 13 additional females would have been promoted (5 to Full Professors and 8 to Associate Professors)” (1989, p. 21).

3 In a somewhat different context (i.e., Australia), Poynton notes that this trend of a steadily decreasing number of women the higher one moves within the educational hierarchy, actually exists from kindergarten through university (1985). Poynton also points out that paralleling this shift from female to male instructors are several other changes. First, as one moves up the ladder, the specialization of knowledge steadily increases and specialized knowledge is viewed as more prestigious than generalized knowledge. Second, the mode of communication steadily shifts from dialogue to monologue. And third,
the basis of the teacher's power shifts from authority to expertise — from ethos to logos. Although Poynton's observations are informal, they certainly bear further examination.

Unfortunately, there may sometimes be a double-standard operating with women who have managed to achieve administrative success. While time spent in administration may be a positive factor for men, Dagg and Thompson provide one example where it has been a negative factor for a woman:

The few women who have done extensive research and then been accepted into administrative posts in the academic hierarchy may face more discrimination than men. One such woman found that some of her grant proposals had referee's comments indicating that a woman so high in administration would not be able to do much good research because of her other commitments (personal communication, June 16, 1987). None of her male colleagues in the same situation had received such comments from reviewers (1988, p. 59).

Although this single anecdote in no way conclusively demonstrates the operation of a double standard within academe in terms of administrative experience and rank, it is a topic worthy of further research. What this anecdote does represent is another piece of an admittedly incomplete and very complex puzzle. The true complexity is perhaps further indicated by Bayer and Astin's (1975) finding that time spent in administration remained a positive predictor of rank for both men and women when separate analyses were performed for each sex (p. 799).

As mentioned in Chapter One, Perry (1968) suggests that men move from the position of Dualism to Relativism due to the influence of a liberalizing education. Among the women in their study, Belenky et al. found that a parallel shift from Received Knowledge to Subjective Knowledge often resulted from a failure of liberal education, from "failed male authority":

What comes through most strongly in these stories from women is the picture they paint of failed male authority. Society teaches women to put their trust in men as defenders, suppliers of the economic necessities, interpreters of the public will, and liaisons with the larger community. Women learn that men hold the power and in society's eyes have the ultimate authority. They are the esteemed teachers, the religious spokesmen, the medical, the military, the corporate, the respected creators. But, for many subjectivist women we interviewed, there was an absence of stable male authority in their personal lives. Their sense of disappointment and outrage was pervasive. . . . It seemed as though education per se — played a minor role in the shift into subjectivism for the majority of women. Instead of opening the world up to them, the kind of education and educators they encountered as children and adolescents were alienating and irrelevant to their lives (1986, pp. 57-58).

In a different context, Over (1982) examined a sample of 396 male and female psychologists who, between 1967 and 1972, published research based upon their dissertations. Dividing the sample on the basis of number of articles published during this six year period and the number of times these articles were cited in the 1978 Social Sciences Citation Index, Over classified the psychologists into four groups: prolific scientists, perfectionist scientists, silent scientists, and mass-producer scientists. The following table with its accompanying note is reproduced from Over’s article (1980, p. 29):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentages of Male and Female Psychologists in Four Categories Based on Research Output and Citations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
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</tbody>
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*Note.* Prolific scientists are those with 10 or more senior-author publications and more than three citations per publication; perfectionists are those with fewer than 10 senior-author publications and more than three citations per publication; silent scientists are those with fewer than 10 senior-author publications and fewer than three citations per publication; mass producers are those with more than 10 senior-author publications and fewer than three citations per publication. Values are in percents.
Although Over's classification is somewhat arbitrary insofar as the cut-off values for the number of publications and citations could be established at relatively higher or lower levels, his findings intriguingly parallel the findings of Aisenberg and Harrington.

Men appear somewhat more likely than women to be mass producers or prolific writers whereas women appear somewhat more likely to be silent or perfectionist writers. The response of silence amongst Aisenberg and Harrington's subjects has already been adequately discussed, but they also note a tendency toward perfectionism among some of their subjects:

Sometimes a real writing block sets in, as this French Scholar remembers. "Unless I felt [my work] was wonderful, and the very, very best I could do, I wouldn’t submit anything that anyone else could read. . . . I was afraid of not being good enough. He would pass a lot of people, but it was difficult to be considered very, very good by him. And rather than be seen as something less than very, very good I couldn’t write.” The refrain of “I decided it wasn’t good enough,” “I didn’t submit it,” “I redrafted and redrafted it thirty-seven times” appears in dozens of stories (1988, p. 69).

As Rich notes, silence has a form. So too does perfectionism. And both silence and perfectionism may have the same net result—a reduction in the number of articles submitted for publication by women.

7 Perhaps a more concrete example would help clarify Burke's representation of the relations between form and attitude (as well as Fort's interpretation of the implications of the academic essay form). As Burke notes (1969b, p. 137):

Let us try again. (A direct hit is not likely here. The best one can do is to try different approaches towards the same center, whenever the opportunity offers.)

The following description is presented, to use Burke's term, as a representative anecdote, an anecdote which I hope illuminates his theory as well as some of the issues discussed in this chapter.

Over the past two years, I have had the pleasure of teaching writing to two very different groups. The first group was primarily composed of middle-aged men in the engineering profession while the second was comprised of middle-aged women contemplating a return to school. The substance, the information, provided to these two diverse groups largely remained constant—the social and cognitive processes of writing as well as the formal conventions of writing. But at the same time, in order to persuade these two audiences to re-evaluate their own current processes of writing, it was necessary for me to adopt very different approaches to teaching them (or, at least, I believed it was necessary). These differences included such obvious things as wearing a suit and tie in order to project a more professional (i.e., authoritative) persona to the men while wearing a sweater and jeans to project a more comfortable (i.e., non-authoritarian) persona to the women—relatively different orientations in terms of ethos.

On a more subtle level, the two workshops differed in terms of the teaching strategies used. With the men, I acted primarily as a lecturer, standing at the front of the class (in a position which might be called one of power), and delivered information to them. Paulo Freire's description of the banking approach to education comes to mind (1970, p. 58). With the women, I acted primarily as a facilitator, usually sitting to one side of the class (in a position which might be called one of equality), and explored both ideas and feelings with them. In this workshop, I intentionally emulated Carl Rogers' nondirective (or perhaps less-directive) approach to education (1969).

At heart, the two approaches differed in terms of where authority resides (within the instructor or within the learner) as well as in terms of the relationship between instructor and learner (distant versus close). Indeed, the language used in the workshop descriptions for the two groups (see Appendix B) indicates this difference. The “Essay Writing Workshop” (1990a) — for an audience primarily comprised of women — is written from the perspective of you and we (the I is effaced); the “Written Communication Skills Workshop” (1990b) — for an audience primarily comprised of men — is written from the perspective of you and I (the we is effaced). Participation versus separation.

Even the metaphors employed in the workshops differed. In describing one element of the drafting process, a graph was used to demonstrate the concept to the men. For the women, the Taoist yin-yang symbol was used to elucidate the same concept. This difference in metaphor perhaps had less to do with the sex of the participants than with their respective orientations in terms of education. The men, as engineers, were expected to respond most favorably to (and thus be most persuaded by) positivistic metaphors (graphs and statistics). The women, on the other hand, were mainly interested in pursuing careers in the social sciences and humanities and thus were expected to respond most favorably to humanistic metaphors (symbols and abstractions). However, it should be borne in mind that these
differences in metaphor represent relative (not absolute) differences in focus for the workshops; some symbols were used with the men, some graphs with the women.

These differences in form ultimately reflected and reinforced the differing foci for the two workshops. As the workshop descriptions indicate, the essay writing workshop focused more upon the women's comfort and confidence with writing (issues of affect) while the written communication skills workshop focused more upon the men's efficiency and effectiveness (issues of performance). In the essay writing workshop, more than half of the time was expended discussing our feelings about writing and devising strategies for dealing with anxiety, anger, even anguish, insofar as these emotions interfered with, or blocked, our writing processes. In the written communication skills workshop, the majority of time was expended describing heuristics for efficiently analyzing audiences and presenting documents for maximal effectiveness. Form and content interact.

Obviously, I am presenting a dichotomy here and, in a few ways, I intentionally taught the two courses on the basis of my understanding about how sex and gender interacts with the writing process. However, lest I be accused of reinforcing sexual stereotypes, I must point out that I also discussed both my own views and biases in relation to gender, and, as with all courses that I teach, I responded to the participants as individuals, not as representatives of a specific sex or gender. Moreover, I was not just imposing my own preconceptions upon the two groups; the two groups were in fact dichotomous, not only in terms of sex, but also in terms of their respective orientations to positivistic or humanistic interpretations of reality.

In any event, let us return to Burke's theory which this anecdote is primarily intended to illuminate. First, consider his assertion that form represents a strategy for establishing a particular relation between the self, audience, and reality in order to meet the needs of the self (which in this case means simultaneously meeting the needs of the audience). By wearing attire which appeared formal or informal, by establishing space which encouraged separation or participation, by employing pronouns which implied exclusion or inclusion, and by utilizing metaphors which were positivistic or humanistic, I self-consciously generated particular relations of authority between myself and the audiences (authoritative versus non-authoritarian).

Second, consider Burke's suggestion that form represents an orientation toward reality, an observable manifestation of attitude which may be understood as the human expectation (and inclination) of finding (and creating) some order in the encounter with reality (or, in more etymological terms, a leaning). In this case, the dichotomous forms of instruction which I used represent, to some degree, relatively different orientations toward reality. One orientation implies that knowledge is generated through logical operations upon a (presumably) objective and stable external reality. Proof consists of evaluating truth claims against that external reality. A separation is thus assumed between the knower and the objects of knowledge. In this epistemology, truth resides in patterns of reality external to the observer. The other orientation assumes that knowledge is generated in the dialectical relationship between external and internal realities. Proof consists of evaluating truth claims within their relational contexts. The knower is actively engaged with the objects of knowledge. In this epistemology, truth resides neither solely in the external world nor solely in the internal world, but rather in the human experience of patterns generated by the interaction between object and subject.

This distinction between epistemologies, between attitudes, parallels the distinction made between foundationist and realist approaches to science as posited by Manicas and Secord (1983; cf. Lakoff, 1987). And as Salner (1985) argues, the realist perspective may be more compatible with the sense of self that some women express:

The basic epistemological assumption about object relations in the realist critique—that self and world are "contextualized"—is exactly the assumption that characterizes the "feminine" sense of self described by Chodorow and Keller. It expresses itself in field dependence (Witkin, 1962), empathy (Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983), and forms of reasoning and choosing (Gilligan, 1982) that weave contextual and relational factors into the self stance. It is for this reason that we see a compatibility between feminist scholarship, which assumes that the self of the inquirer is context-bound, and disciplines which rely primarily on nonempirical methodologies. What makes these disciplines nonempirical is not any disregard for the value of intellectual rigor. Rather their nonempirical status devolves from a view of the self (the inquirer) as involved in rather than separate from the objects about which she or he is developing knowledge. As I have stated earlier, there is evidence that women, as a group, are more likely than men, as a group, to adopt an epistemology of subject/object continuity rather than subject/object separation (p. 55).

Kenneth Burke's description of attitude is compatible with the realist critique.
To return to Fort’s (and Burke’s) assertion that “the control of the formal appearance of an expression will also tend to control attitude” (1971, p. 630), it was apparent that this also occurred within my two workshops. Discussing issues of affect as they related to the writing process was not possible with the men for at least two reasons. First, the establishment of a *foundationist* orientation toward reality, of that particular *attitude*, resulted in the establishment of criteria for generating and evaluating knowledge which excluded personal and subjective experiences involving feelings. Second, the form of the workshop, as a visible manifestation of that attitude, created such distance between myself and the participants (both in terms of space and expertise) that talking about feelings would be a risky undertaking for either myself or the participants. *Ethos* can be understood as a way of encouraging the audience to trust the speaker. Within the two workshops the nature of that trust, that *ethos* differed. With the men, the utility of the workshop seemed to be at issue; with the women, the empathy present in the workshop seemed to be at issue. The key point here is that *form* demonstrates an *attitude* towards both reality and the audience; an attitude which can constrain the content that may usefully be communicated.

8 Fort’s discussion about the importance of a thesis should not be taken to imply that the thesis of an essay is necessarily stated in a single sentence. Fox and Woolsey, in their analysis of the differences between ‘A’ and ‘B’ papers written for English courses at Simon Fraser University, while noting that “a thesis is the most crucial part of your paper—without it you have no position to argue from” (cited in Coe, 1990b, p. 450), also point out that the thesis of an essay may be developed in an extended manner:

If you do not have a thesis sentence, then your thesis must be stated in some other way. About half of the papers we looked at followed a tacit method of development in which their theses were developed over the course of one or several paragraphs. . . . So a thesis sentence is a thesis statement, but a thesis statement is not always a thesis sentence (cited in Coe, 1990b, p. 451).

Indeed, as they note earlier in their paper, blindly following the practice of placing the thesis into a single simple sentence may unnecessarily cause problems for the writer:

Despite what you may have considered to be a general rule, if you make a habit of focusing your subject by putting your whole argument into one sentence, you may be causing yourself problems. If that sentence is not long enough to show the "art" and "development" of your ideas, you're probably limiting your reader's expectations for the whole paper. In fact, an "A" paper may not have a thesis sentence at all. If it does, the sentence is usually long and complicated (cited in Coe, 1990b, p. 450).

9 It is perhaps fitting that this section should follow Fort’s interpretation of how a thesis statement is related to authority, if for no other reason than the argument being *conducted* (cf. Peterson, 1986) here is hypothetical in nature. It is not (currently) possible to demonstrate a clear causal link between the death of articles published by women and their possible preferences for rhetorical forms which may be unacceptable in many journals. Alternative explanations relating to differences in academic roles and parenting roles are also possible. Nevertheless, the mere possibility that differing rhetorical forms may restrict the number of articles authored by women, is in itself sufficient cause to investigate the issue.

10 Dagg’s accusation that some scientists have been changing their data to make them fit theory should not come as a particular surprise. A recent television broadcast of *Nova* (Buckner & Whittlesey, 1988) suggests the practice may be more widespread than we would perhaps like to admit. Instances of misrepresentation discussed ranged from outright fraud to omitting contrary data to simple sloppiness. As mentioned in Chapter Two (footnote 1), scientific reporting is not simply a *presentation* of the relevant data, it is a *re-presentation* of the data; it is inherently persuasive in nature. As Kamin notes:

*If you want to impress people with how good your science is, if you want to get tenure in a modern university, if you want to get a research grant, you can't afford to come and say well I think this might be the case but there are all sorts of indications here that it might not be the case and it's all sort of confused. People always tend in science, as elsewhere, to sharpen up and clean up a story. You frequently note that there have been discussions about what we can tell them, what shall we leave out. It's not actually that you want to leave out something in order to mislead people about the data you're presenting, it's really that you don't want them to know how far you have got [italics added] (in Buckner & Whittlesey, 1988, p. 14).*
As the program goes on to suggest, the pressures upon scientists to obtain tenure and research grants may increase the likelihood of them misrepresenting data.

Yet perhaps more to the point, the program also notes the negative consequences which may befall an individual who "blows the whistle" on deliberate misrepresentations of results: "What I suppose distresses me about the scientific community's reaction to whistle-blowers is that the emotional reaction to defending the herd against somebody who is perceived upon as attacking them, namely the whistle-blowers, seems to be at a deeper, more permanent, and less thinking and more automatic level than any emotional reaction to, or any emotional commitment to truth, honesty in science" (Rennie, cited in Buckner & Whittlesey, 1988, p. 24). The refusal by four journals to publish Dagg's paper may have been more an emotional response to whistle-blowing than a response to the content of the article. As Dagg and Thompson note: "Although various university biologists who acted as referees expressed a desire to highlight sexism and sloppy reporting in science, these journals would not publish work that cast a shadow on predominating attitudes" (1988, p. 58). Feminist scholarship often criticizes the prevailing attitudes in the academic discourse community. Perhaps the sometimes emotional and negative responses of journal editors to this criticism represents yet another cause for inequities in publication.

11 One word in particular seems almost guaranteed to generate hostility on the part of many men (and some women) — feminism. In an article significantly entitled, "The Other 'F' Word: The Feminist in the Classroom", Bauer (1990) notes:

Consider the following student comment: "I think works should be more well-rounded without a continual stress on feminism." "Well-rounded" and balanced are set off against "feminism" — that locus of imbalance, fanaticism, eccentricity (p. 386).

What may be perceived as authoritative assertion when voiced by a man seems to be perceived as fanaticism when voiced by a woman. Not only is a voice of authority perhaps more difficult to achieve for women scholars, it is also seems more likely to be negatively received. Dagg (1988) describes how this sort of attitude can result in self-censorship:

One anthropologist at a conference on gender at Wilfred Laurier University in January, 1987, noted that she had never had any trouble getting her books and articles on Native women published: "I make sure I never use flag words like 'feminism' and 'patriarchy,' of course," she said. "That would turn everyone off right away."

"But how can you do a feminist analysis of your work, if you can't use such words?" another woman asked.

A man then broke in: "Of course you have no trouble getting published. If I were a publisher, stories about Indian women wouldn't bother me. But books that threaten me and other men, no way." (p. 59).

In the same vein, Flynn (1990) describes the reactions of anonymous reviewers to her article "Composing as a Woman" (1988) which was originally quite critical of the field of Composition and Rhetoric:

The reviewers of the piece seemed to be offended by my criticisms of the field, though, so I decided to shift the emphasis of my discussion, focusing on the positive rather than the negative. But I did not acquiesce when one reviewer found the term "feminist" to be problematic (p. 88).

This sort of self-censorship, controlled as it is by the author's concerns about audience reaction, may represent a particularly insidious form of silencing. To reiterate: "Unless their [women's] views are presented in a form acceptable to men, and to women brought up in the male idiom, they will not be given a proper hearing" (Ardener, S., 1975, p. ix).

12 Lest anyone wonder how a survey of the major composition journals published from 1982 through 1989 could be presented in a journal bearing the date of 1988, PRE/TEXT is two years behind. As a consequence, volume 9, numbers 3-4, of PRE/TEXT bears an issue date of 1988, but was actually published in, and bears a copyright date of 1990. The issue date rather than the copyright date has been used throughout in order to assist those who might be interested in actually locating the journal. Given their rather poor track record for publishing works by women scholars (24%), and in the interests of updating the journal, perhaps the editors should consider publishing several special issues devoted solely to feminism and writing over the next few years.
Obviously, the experiences of Dagg and Enos differ and thus their interpretations of what those experiences might mean will differ. Dagg seems to locate the problem within the socially constructed attitudes of (primarily men) editors as well as within academia in general; Enos, on the other hand, locates the problem within the socially constructed attitudes of academic women. It is neither necessary, nor I think desirable, to choose between one interpretation or the other. Both are valid. Attitudes, both masculine and feminine, are socially constructed. The reasons for the difference in the number of articles authored by men and women may stem from many causes: differing rhetorical forms, differing academic roles, differing parental roles, differing perceptions of “truth”, and sometimes, to be sure, outright bias.

All told, when the four pedagogically oriented journals as well as the “Staffroom Interchange” section of CCC are removed from consideration, the total gender breakdown of articles for the remaining research oriented journals is 69% by men and 31% by women. If nothing else, this figure is somewhat embarrassing for a discipline in which the women outnumber the men.

In fairness to the editors of *College Composition and Communication*, the difference in type size between the research and the classroom articles has been eliminated in the first edition of 1991.

However, it should be pointed out that an $r$ of -.195 indicates that only 3.7% of the variance in the measures of teaching and rank is common to both. As a practical matter, this indicates a rather slight relationship, particularly when compared with the $r$ of +.559 which indicates that 31% of the variance in the measures of publications and rank is common to both—a moderate relationship. Despite the small size of the relationship between teaching and rank, it is intriguing that teaching experience is at all related to rank for women when it is not for men.

There is also some evidence, albeit slight, that differences in parenting roles between men and women may also be related to differences in academic rank, although perhaps not to differences in the number of publications. Bayer and Astin (1975) find that having children correlates positively with academic rank for men ($r = +.057$), but negatively for women ($r = -.164$). Although again these are rather slight relationships, the difference in direction between males and females is intriguing. In terms of publications, however, Cole found in a “12-year follow-up of graduates who completed doctorates in 1958, [that] women with one or two children published at higher rates than women without children or women with three or more children” (in Over, 1982, p. 30). His results suggest little or no relationship between parenting roles and number of publications.

The comments suggesting that university English Departments would prefer to teach literature rather than composition, along with the evidence suggesting that secondary schools seem more willing to adopt contemporary models for composing than are universities could be used as grounds for advancing an argument that the teaching of university composition might be more effectively undertaken by Faculties of Education than by English Departments. As Brent (1990) notes:

> The theory and methodology of teaching composition is firmly centred in the Faculty of Education, invisible to any English students but those who already care enough to cross disciplines and take a few options outside their departments. These courses are mainly taken not by students who might one day want to apply for positions like the one that the U. of A. has been advertising [Assistant Professorship specializing in Rhetoric and Composition for the English Department at the University of Alberta] but by students who want to be school teachers. Those students who take these courses and go on to work in universities are almost certain to end up in the Faculty of Education, researching how school-age students learn to write. Can you imagine a Ph.D. in English Education applying for the U. of A. position? Or being accepted if she did? (p. 2).

Although such an argument could perhaps be credibly advanced, it is almost certain to be strongly opposed by most English Departments, simply because the majority of students taking courses from the English Department are those taking first-year composition/literature. Given that enrollment is a major factor in determining the level of funding (and number of faculty positions) provided to a particular department, it is unlikely that English Departments would be willing to further what might amount to their own demise (I wonder, for example, how many English professorships and teaching assistantships would be eliminated at UBC if English 100 ceased to be mandatory). Perhaps what could more realistically be accomplished is to educate some of the students and faculty in English Departments by encouraging them to take courses about teaching composition from the Faculty of Education.
It is worth noting that not only is the discipline of composition perhaps more conservative in Canada than in the United States, but also the entire academy may be more conservative, at least insofar as gender equity in employment is concerned. As Dagg and Thompson note:

In the United States there is much consternation because only 28 per cent of all faculty positions are held by women. In Canada the number drops to 17 per cent. At the current rate of increase, it will take over one hundred years for women to gain full equality as professors (1988, p. 65).

In terms of gender and writing, one need only peruse the “Letters to the Editor” section of any major newspaper to find ample instances of diatribes deploring the use of gender neutral language (see, for example, Felton or Carlile, The Vancouver Sun, April 16, 1990, p. A9) or berating news writers for non-standard usage (generally deemed ungrammatical) in English. Indeed, the two issues of gender neutral language and non-standard usage appear to be conflated by some authors. Consider, for example, the rather common sense solution of using plural pronouns (they, them, their) to refer back to singular antecedents (everyone, everybody, someone) as in the sentence, “Everyone should avoid gender stereotypes in their use of language.” Although this solution is common in informal speech and is acceptable to the (American) National Council of Teachers of English as well as many US publishers (Coe, 1990b, p. 216), some Canadian writers of textbooks deplore this solution on the grounds that it is ungrammatical. For example, Messenger and Taylor’s text (which is often used in English 100 at the University of British Columbia) states: “Don’t lamely accept the ungrammatical their as a way out” (1989, p. 127).

The general information about English 100 contained in this paragraph was obtained from a personal conversation (25 May 1990) with Susan Stevenson, a Communications Lecturer in the Simon Fraser University School of Engineering Science. From 1978 to 1986, she taught English 100 at UBC. In addition to providing some general information about the course, she noted that the English Composition Test at UBC poses particular difficulties for students with an English as a Second Language (ESL) background. Many ESL students found themselves required to write the English Composition Test several times before they finally passed. In an extreme example that she mentioned, one UBC engineering student wrote the test 16 times and had his graduation delayed by three years due to his failure to achieve a passing grade on the test. (And, should you find her example incredible, I can add that in September and October of 1991, I worked with an engineer who wrote the UBC English Composition Test 13 times before he finally passed. He is a native speaker of English and, as far as I was able to ascertain, he is an average to above-average writer.)

I have retyped the two syllabi contained in Appendices E and F in the interests of readability (as well as to maintain consistency of format with the rest of this thesis). The documents I received from the students enrolled in the courses were photocopies of generally poor quality. The same is true of Appendix C, English 100: Some Criteria for Grading Essays, and Appendix D, English Composition Test: Guidelines for Markers. Although it was impossible to duplicate the precise fonts used in the original documents due to printer limitations, all instances of capitalizing, italicizing, boldfacing, and underlining have been faithfully reproduced in order to accurately capture the emphases of the original documents. All errors contained within my reproductions existed within the original documents.

You will also note that I have removed all information from the two syllabi which might be used to identify the instructors concerned and I have used pseudonyms (Instructor X and Instructor Y), rather than their real names, throughout my thesis. I feel that little is to be gained by identifying the specific instructors involved (other than the rather dubious end of perhaps embarrassing them). My intent is not to fault the teaching of these two instructors in particular; rather it is to examine how their courses reflect the traditional approach to teaching composition current at certain (many?) institutions, and how specific applications of that traditional approach may conflict with the writing of some women.

We might speculate that the boldfacing of argument in Instructor Y’s syllabus indicates a certain level of comfort on his part both with the term and its implications while the elimination of argument from Instructor X’s syllabus indicates a certain level of discomfort on her part with the term and its implications. Admittedly, this is pure speculation; nevertheless, the differing adaptations of a common document (i.e., the college calendar) represents an intriguing, if perhaps coincidental, contrast between a male instructor and a female instructor.
The hybrid structure which Baker mentions in his text may represent an attempt on his part (or more likely, on the part of his Canadian co-authors, Ledbetter and Gamache) to come to grips with a rhetorical form that does not assert an authoritative thesis. As he notes:

Halfway between, many essayists blend deduction with induction. They trim a fully assertive thesis about welfare to "We need some system to help those in need." They ask, "How should one plan a vacation?" They have the answers, as we know, and they feed them to us in successive steps of significance: "First, decide where you want to go." But the essential mode is deductive. The essayist knows, or discovers, what he believes, and persuades with successively convincing points. His thesis is open-ended, merely implied by a leading question, or suggested indirectly in the first two paragraphs or so, as in the opening of Margaret Atwood's "Canadians: What Do They Want?" (1987, p. 73).

It may not be coincidental that some of the characteristics listed (open ended, implied or delayed thesis) are those used by Farrell (1979) to describe the female mode of rhetoric. Unfortunately, the text only devotes slightly more than a page to considering this rhetorical structure (most of which is devoted to the example of Margaret Atwood's essay).

Although Baker's language represents an extreme example, the use of militaristic metaphors and language to describe rhetoric may represent a pervasive terministic screen for the discipline. See, for example, Coe's use of the term strategy in "Strategy and Structure: A Formal Explication of Rogerian Persuasion" (1988a, cited in Chapter Five of this thesis). Or see a similar use in my course syllabus "Essay Writing Workshop" (1990a) - Appendix A. Although the etymology of a word does not necessarily imply its connotation, the roots of the word strategy are interesting, arising as they do from the Greek, strategia (generalship), strategos (general), stratos (army), and agein (to lead). What makes this particularly intriguing is that Coe's essay describes a rhetorical form which is intended to minimize confrontation (Rogerian Persuasion) while my syllabus was intentionally designed to minimize my authority in the classroom (or so I thought at the time). Even when intentionally trying to escape from some of the adversarial and authoritarian models of writing and teaching common in the discipline, our use of language repeatedly demonstrates that we always write from within particular historical and social contexts (in this case, one which seems to associate rhetoric with combat).

Although this analysis of Douglas College English courses was not intended to elicit student opinions about how the courses were being taught, it is worth pointing out that the woman who provided me with Instructor Y's course syllabus was particularly apprehensive about employing the argumentative edge in her writing (not to mention at somewhat of a loss about how to actually do so). She seemed trapped in the doublebind which Taylor described.

Not only are these students required to take this course, but it runs from the 15th to 18th month of a 24 month program (i.e., too late to be of much value to the students given that the 20th to 24th months of the program are devoted to a practicum). Further, because the course stresses academic discourse, it may prove of little practical utility in the Psychiatric Nurses' professional careers. Even the format and referencing conventions taught in this course are inappropriate (those of the Modern Language Association - MLA). Should any of the nurses go on to graduate study in their discipline or should they wish to submit an article for publication in a professional journal, they will be required to master a different set of conventions (those of the American Psychological Association - APA). In other words, these types of required composition courses, insofar as they are based upon the instructor's personal background in writing (i.e., English Literature) and ignore the specific contexts of the students (i.e., Psychiatric Nursing), may simply waste students' time.
Chapter Four: Testing Hypotheses about Gendered Writing

Sherlock Holmes was always clever enough to keep his own counsel until he had proven beyond the shadow of a doubt that his hypotheses were correct; only then did he astonish Watson and enrage the reader by his lucid account of how elementary all his deductions were. I cannot help thinking, as I begin to do precisely the opposite — talk about hypotheses which we have only just begun to investigate — that the style of Holmes is the quintessential model of western patriarchy: it is hierarchical, competitive, and intellectual. It is no coincidence that as a feminist teacher and researcher I have agreed to write about being in the middle of what may turn out to be a muddle and to confess that I am quite content with the fact that at the end of the research we will probably astonish no one, and if there is rage it will have little to do with us.


General Considerations

The previous three chapters clearly indicate the need for further research. Although the literature reveals patterned differences between the writing of men and women and also suggests that the writing of some women may conflict with the norms of academic discourse, the precise nature and causes of those differences remains inadequately understood. In part, these limitations in understanding may stem from a general failure on the part of researchers to examine the social construct of gender in relation to writing. This chapter proposes several hypotheses about gender differences and suggests, provisionally and tentatively, a research experiment that could be undertaken in order to test those hypotheses.¹

Nevertheless, the sex difference research undertaken in the past is not entirely without value; as argued previously, it can be used as an approximation, as a tentative guide, for generating hypotheses about gender differences in writing. Given that the meta-analysis in Chapter Two finds some consistent patterns of sex differences in relation to writing, some inferences can be reasonably drawn about gender differences (at least provisionally). In other words, the proposed experiment aims to determine whether such differences as have previously been found are more closely related to the gender of the writer than to the sex of the writer.

Obviously, a wide range experiments employing very different methods could be undertaken, but any single experiment necessarily represents a selection among possibilities — a decision about what is important to study. By selecting certain variables to test, other variables are excluded. Although it is possible (and, indeed, initially useful) to explore writing differences using a “shotgun” approach (i.e., examining dozens of variables), such approaches typically lack the power to explain the significance of those differences. The existence of any particular difference, in and of itself, while often intriguing and
perhaps suggesting potential avenues for future research, does not help composition instructors determine what changes might be necessary in the classroom. What, for example, is the utility of the finding that some women make "more precise discriminations in naming colors than do men" (Lakoff, 1975, p. 8, cited in Lynch and Strauss-Noll, 1987, p. 91)? Lacking any evidence for a conflict between academic discourse and those "more precise discriminations", such a finding is of little help to instructors.

By examining a selected set of variables within the context of a broad theoretical framework, the goal of the proposed study is to confirm some of the sex/gender differences detailed in the literature in order to more clearly highlight potential areas of conflict between academic discourse and l'écriture féminine. The specific dependent variables used to measure possible differences have been devised on the basis of three criteria:

1. The variable must test the validity of a sex/gender difference found consistently in the literature;

2. The variable must represent some aspect of writing in which there is an apparent conflict between academic discourse and the "female voice";

3. The variable must be reasonable within the general theoretical framework outlined later in this chapter.

Necessarily, the proposed research represents a compromise between utility and possibility. Even in its most condensed form, this research will require collecting about 400 student writing samples and analyzing about 180 of them.

While the choice of variables necessarily limits what may be explored, it is important that the choices not so restrict the experiment that it cannot be usefully generalized to the typical composition classroom. It is worth keeping in mind Thorne, Kramarae, and Henley's (1983) observation that in much of the previous research into gender differences and language, the units of language study have often been too small to yield meaningful understandings of patterned relationships. That some females may use more verbs in their writing than males (Chotlos, 1944; Gleser, Gottschalk, and John, 1959; Penelope and Wolfe, 1983; Whitmore, 1987) is not, by itself, very enlightening. However, using that finding to develop a variable which measures the degree to which a text is nominal or verbal in style may be useful, particularly given the apparent preferences of academia for the nominal style (Hake and Williams, 1981).

In general, the proposed study combines some of the smaller units of language study into higher level measures of stylistic, formal, and substantive variability — measures of variability that may be observed and utilized in the composition classroom.

In order to further ensure that the proposed study can be easily generalized, the writing samples which are collected and analyzed should represent some of the typical writing tasks which university
students are expected to undertake. Although a study such as Susan Peterson's (1986) study of differences in argumentative paragraphs written by first year students represents a useful exploration, it ultimately raises more questions than it answers, in large part because it is restricted to the study of short paragraphs (50 to 200 words). With the exception of some types of examinations, university students are rarely expected to write isolated argumentative paragraphs. Peterson's study is difficult to generalize simply because the student writing samples are limited in length and scope. To increase the utility of the findings for composition instructors, the proposed study would be based upon essays of 600 to 900 words (this length more accurately reflecting the size of essays often assigned to first year students).

**Theoretical Framework**

On the bases of Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1982), and Belenky et al. (1986), it is theorized that women and men sometimes differ in their ethical and epistemological orientations toward the world — orientations which have been characterized as connected or related (feminine) versus separate or autonomous (masculine) ways of thinking. Although these orientations are not exclusively restricted to one sex or the other (as certainly some men are oriented toward connection and some women are oriented toward separation), it is proposed that women are more often oriented toward connection while men are more often oriented toward separation (in the "mainstream" North American social context).

Like any other behavior, the act of writing reflects, albeit imperfectly, the general orientations (or, to use Kenneth Burke's term, the attitudes) of men and women toward the world. This is perhaps especially evident in relation to substance. As indicated in Chapter Two, the vast majority of content studies find substantive differences between men's and women's writing which closely parallel the theoretical differences outlined above. The relationship between differing orientations toward reality and differing rhetorical forms (and styles), however, is less obvious.

In Kenneth Burke's view, rhetorical forms are observable manifestations of attitude, of orientations towards reality. Further, rhetorical forms represent strategies for responding to various situations, ways of shaping information in accord with attitude. To the extent that attitudes towards reality differ for some men and women, they may employ different rhetorical forms, different strategies. The difficulty lies in teasing out how a particular form manifests a particular attitude, how it functions strategically.

For example, the apparent employment of a more verbal style of writing by some women (as contrasted with the more nominal style sometimes employed by men) does not obviously reveal an orientation or attitude which emphasizes connection. The attitude is implicit within the form. Given the apparent parallels between the verbal style and speaking, along with the prevalence of some women's
metaphors emphasizing speaking and listening, the use of a verbal style may represent a strategy for establishing a closer connection with readers than a more nominal style permits. The relationship between form and attitude may be most evident when the strategy underlying the form is considered.

What this all implies is that the different orientations of some men and women toward the world which theoretically might be expected in their writing will be most obvious in studies of substance. Indeed, the specific variables used to test the theory in relation to substance can be directly derived from the theoretically predicted differences. In studies of form, the specific variables used to test the theory cannot be so directly derived. Instead, strategies which might account for some of the formal differences must first be postulated. Then it is possible to derive variables for studying specific elements of form. The correlation between the variables used to measure form and those used to measure substance should reveal the degree to which the theoretical difference in orientation accounts for the differences in form.

**Experimental Design**

**Plan of Analysis**

A $3 \times 2$ multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) could be used to statistically test the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables. The first independent variable would be that of sex-role identity (masculine, feminine, and other) as determined by the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (1978). The second independent variable would be that of the assigned discourse form (Rogerian and Classical). The dependent variables would measure selected aspects of style (ratio of nominal to verbal tokens), form (ratio of subordinate to coordinate propositions), and substance (ratio of autonomy to connection propositions). The derivation of all these variables is discussed more specifically in the various sections detailing them later in this chapter. Appendices H through J provide sample texts analyzed using the various measures.

**Reliability Levels**

Assuming a reasonably significant effect size, the proposed experimental design should provide sufficient statistical power to detect interactions between variables at the .05 level of reliability. Although it might be desirable to establish a more rigorous level of statistical reliability, such would be overly unrealistic. Lower than desired levels of reliability are a frequent problem in research involving textual analysis. This, of course, is a consequence of the fuzzy nature of the texts themselves, which results in some degree of "subjective" analysis on the part of researchers (cf. Lakoff, 1987; Rose, 1986).
That texts may be interpreted by researchers in somewhat subjective ways, however, should not be taken as implying that textual analysis is entirely solipsistic. Common texts are rarely interpreted in completely different fashions by different readers. If such were the case, written communication would clearly be impossible. A general similarity of interpretation, not a perfect identity, is the expectation.

Although the putative meaning that might be ascribed to any given text is not some perfectly stable characteristic of that text, neither is it a matter of totally idiosyncratic interpretations on the part of readers. As Stanley Fish argues, the meanings of texts "are not embedded in the language (where they may be read out by anyone with sufficiently clear, that is, unbiased, eyes) but inhere in an institutional structure within which one hears utterances as already organized with reference to certain assumed purposes and goals" (1980, p. 306; cf. Bakhtin's description of authoritative discourse, 1981, pp. 342-345). The meanings of texts are contextually constituted, which is simply to say that there are institutional or communal norms for generating and interpreting texts. Common texts are understood in similar ways by the members of a given interpretive community (to use Fish's term) because of the contexts which they share.

Despite the undeniable limitations of textual analysis, the research should attempt to be as rigorous as possible. In order to ensure that the various analyses are reasonably reliable, ten to twenty percent of the essays should be re-analyzed by other raters. A measure of inter-rater reliability can then be calculated. Given the nature of this study, these raters should not be all of the same gender. Although this may lower inter-rater agreement due to differences in perspective, it should also minimize inadvertent gender bias in coding on the part of the raters (as might be the case with all masculine raters or all feminine raters) or at least make the presence of such a bias apparent.

Experimental Sample

For the statistical analysis to be reliable at the .05 level, there should be approximately 10 subjects per dependent variable per cell. Given that there are six cells and three dependent variables, the minimum number of subjects required would thus be 180 (6 × 3 × 10). However, this calculation assumes that the subjects would split evenly into the categories provided by the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (1978). Unfortunately, such is not the case. Bem's figures (using the median-split method for classifying subjects) indicate that for women about 39.4% fall into the feminine category, about 12.4% fall into the masculine category, and about 48.2% fall into the androgynous and undifferentiated categories (for the purposes of the proposed study these categories are collapsed into a category labelled other). For men,
about 11.6% fall into the *feminine* category, about 42.0% fall into the *masculine* category, and about 46.4% fall into the *other* category (Bem, 1981b, p. 31).\(^3\)

If, as Bem’s figures suggest, approximately 40% of the women fall into the feminine category and approximately 40% of the men fall into the masculine category, then 300 subjects would be needed to achieve the requisite number per cell for three dependent variables. Table 2, below, summarizes the number of subjects per cell for each of the independent variables (using Bem’s figures as a guideline).

Table 2: Required Subjects per Cell 3×2 MANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Masculine Males</th>
<th>Feminine Females</th>
<th>Other(^4)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rogerian Persuasion</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical Persuasion</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the minimum, the experimental sample would thus need to be composed of 300 first year university or college students enrolled in first year composition classes (split equally between men and women).\(^5\) Unfortunately, even this sample size is overly optimistic because it would be necessary to eliminate some subjects in order to control potentially confounding variables.\(^6\) Perhaps a more realistic experimental sample size is about 400 subjects (14 to 16 classes).

**Controlling Confounds**

In addition to the *Bem Sex-Role Inventory* and the essay assignment, the subjects should be asked to complete a brief questionnaire which could enable controls for potentially confounding variables, such as age differences, educational level differences, and second language differences, primarily through the elimination of exceptional cases. Any subjects who speak English as a second language, who are older than 23 years of age, or who have taken a post-secondary composition course would be eliminated.\(^7\)

Because current theory suggests that gender roles may well be culturally determined, it would be inappropriate to include individuals whose cultural background is other than “mainstream” North American (and, of course, there is the additional consideration that ESL speakers may behave in a different linguistic fashion than native speakers of English; cf. pp. 90-91 of this thesis). Similarly, it seems apparent that traditional definitions of gender appropriate roles are, to some degree, undergoing
changes in contemporary society. A large age range increases the likelihood of there operating somewhat different assumptions about gender appropriateness between younger and older subjects. Individuals who have previously taken a post-secondary composition course are excluded simply because there is a heightened chance that they would have internalized some understanding about the nature of academic discourse, thereby decreasing the contrast between the two discourse forms (and again, there is the possibility they would behave in a linguistically different fashion than less experienced subjects). In general, the intent behind eliminating these individuals is to make the sample reasonably homogeneous in terms of language and culture.

**Independent Variables**

Typically, the results of previous research into sex differences in relation to writing are contradictory and (in the case of empirical studies) are troubled by low levels of reliability as well as by small effect sizes. This could be taken as evidence that the notion of sex differences in writing is fallacious. Nevertheless, the persistence of research into this topic affirms that many instructors and researchers continue to believe that writing is related to sex and/or gender in some fashion or other. As Chapter Two indicated, nearly all the previous research has been based upon the biological construct of sex (male and female) rather than the psychosocial construct of gender (masculine and feminine). This suggests another possible explanation for the contradictory results of previous research: perhaps the construct of biological sex is an inappropriate one in the study of writing.

An additional reason for some of the contradictory results may lie in the general failure of most research to compare possible differences across contrasting discourse forms. The majority of research restricts itself to the analysis of a single form such as narration, argumentation, description, fiction, or freewriting. The one notable exception to this is Keene’s study (1986), which examined possible differences across the discourse forms of narration/process, classification/analysis, and argumentation. In general, Keene’s results were inconclusive, perhaps in part because the measures used were those of essay and sentence length as well as overall lexical variability (for neither of which exists any compelling theoretical rationale for expecting sex/gender differences).

The following independent variables of psychological gender and discourse form have been chosen on the basis that they should provide the maximum possible contrast between treatment groups and thus increase the possibility of illuminating such differences as may exist.
Psychological Gender

The Bem Sex-Role Inventory provides an alternative construct for assessing gender differences in writing. Bem makes the following observations about the theoretical assumptions of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI):

First, largely as a result of historical accident, contemporary American culture has clustered heterogeneous attributes into two mutually exclusive categories, each category considered both more characteristic of and more desirable for females or males; these cultural expectations and prescriptions are well known by virtually all members of the culture. Secondly, individuals vary in the extent to which they use these cultural definitions as idealized standards of femininity and masculinity for evaluating their own personality and behavior. In particular, the sex-typed individual is highly attuned to these definitions and is motivated to keep her or his behavior consistent with them, a goal she or he presumably accomplishes both by selecting behaviors and attributes that enhance the image and by avoiding behavior and attributes that violate the image. In contrast, the androgynous individual is less attuned to these cultural definitions of femininity and masculinity and is less likely to regulate her or his behavior in accordance with them. The BSRI is thus based on a theory about both the cognitive processing and the motivational dynamics of sex-typed and androgynous individuals (1981b, p. 10).

The phenomenon of gendered language may be generated more by the tendency of some individuals to write and speak in ways that maintain consistency between their self-concepts and a socially constructed gender schema than it is by some narrow congruence between language and biological sex.

Some men might write in a masculine fashion while others might write in a feminine fashion, and still others might write in a mixed, or androgynous, fashion. Similarly, some women may write in a feminine fashion, others in a masculine fashion, and still others in an androgynous fashion. If such is the case, this may well account for the small effect sizes of previous studies of gendered writing. As noted earlier in this chapter, only about 40% of men and women will be classified as masculine and feminine, respectively, by the BSRI. By implication, the characteristics which theoretically typify either type of gendered writing may only be found in approximately 40% of the population.

Testing the subjects using the BSRI is intended to maximize the contrast between individuals whose writing might typify the so-called feminine style and masculine style. Men who score high on the masculinity scale and low on the femininity scale would comprise one group (masculine); women who score high on the femininity scale and low on the masculinity scale would comprise a second contrasting group (feminine). Those subjects, both men and women, who score high on both scales (androgynous) and those who score low on both scales (undifferentiated) would form a third group (other). If sufficient subjects who score as androgynous are present in the sample (i.e., over sixty), the undifferentiated subjects would be eliminated from consideration and the third group would be comprised solely of androgynous subjects.
Utilizing this procedure for classifying subjects, of course, leaves out those individuals who are cross-sex-typed (men scored as feminine and women scored as masculine). This group poses a particular problem. Do cross-sex-typed individuals behave in ways that accord with their psychological gender? Or are other factors not currently understood at work with these individuals? Because these questions cannot be answered at this time, these individuals would be excluded from formal analysis simply because their inclusion in any particular category might well contaminate the data.\textsuperscript{12}

Models of Persuasion

Just as the variables of gender are devised to maximize the contrast between groups, so too the variables of discourse form aim to provide a strong contrast between groups, in this case between a form which may approximate academic discourse (Classical Persuasion) and an alternative form (Rogerian Persuasion). The subjects would be asked to write and submit an essay of between 600 and 900 words in length on any topic of interest to them.\textsuperscript{13} Half of the classes would be asked to write their essays using the model for Classical Persuasion while the remaining classes would be asked to write their essays using the model for Rogerian Persuasion. Appendix G provides a general description of the two models (these models are loosely adapted from Coe, 1990b, pp. 380-411). In addition to the description of the models, both classes would be provided with detailed instruction about how to use the models they are respectively trying to emulate.\textsuperscript{14}

The contrast between these two models lies most obviously in the ways that they are structured and the tone of the arguments each permits. As should be evident, Classical Persuasion and Rogerian Persuasion generally differ in terms of the placement of the thesis statement (i.e., the writer's position). In Classical Persuasion the thesis statement is generally placed near the beginning of the essay (before the "proofs") and is usually quite explicit (i.e., it is "strongly" asserted) while in Rogerian Persuasion, the thesis statement is more typically located later in the essay and is sometimes implicit (i.e., it is often understated). This contrast also reflects a difference in the overall organization of these two discourse forms: in Classical Persuasion, the arguments supporting the writer's position are structurally subordinate to that position whereas in Rogerian Persuasion, the arguments supporting the writer's position are structurally coordinate with the arguments supporting another position.\textsuperscript{15}

As detailed in Chapter Two, 2 of the hypothetical gender differences in writing lie in the ways that thesis statements may be employed (\textit{explicit} or \textit{immediate} versus \textit{implicit} or \textit{delayed}) as well as in the ways that essays may be organized (\textit{subordination} versus \textit{coordination}). Because Classical and Rogerian Persuasion also differ on those grounds, the planned contrast between groups should be heightened.
The second major difference between the two discourse forms lies in their difference in tone. Classical Persuasion permits (although it does not necessarily demand) a more adversarial tone than does Rogerian Persuasion. This is also an area in which men and women hypothetically differ. As Maltz and Borker suggest "Women seem to interpret overt [verbal] aggressiveness as personally directed, negative, and disruptive [whereas] men seem to view it as one conventional organizing structure for conversational flow" (1982, p. 213). Consequently, the planned contrast between groups should again be heightened.\textsuperscript{16} Because the differences between Classical Persuasion and Rogerian Persuasion have important pedagogical implications, this topic is further detailed in Chapter Five.

**Dependent Variables**

Obviously, there is a vast range of dependent variables which could be proposed, but in order to avoid a "shotgun" approach, only those potential differences would be examined which are theoretically defensible and which are found consistently in the literature (generally, across different discourse forms). In addition, there should be an apparent conflict between the usual conception of academic discourse and the putative "female voice". Applying these three criteria restricts the experiment to three specific dependent variables: first, a measure of stylistic variability (ratio of nominal to verbal tokens); second, a measure of formal variability (ratio of subordinate to coordinate propositions); and third, a measure of substantive variability (ratio of autonomy to connection propositions).

**The Analysis of Style**

1. **Previous Findings:**

The findings of Chotlos (1944), Gleser, Gottschalk, and John (1959), Wood (1966), Penelope and Wolfe (1983), Peterson (1986), and Whitmore (1987), suggest that males and females may differ somewhat in their lexical choices: males tended to use slightly more adjectives, prepositions, and nouns in their writing while females tended to use slightly more adverbs, conjunctions, and verbs in their writing. These differences were found across the discourse forms of freewriting, spontaneous speech, argumentation, and narration.

The differences between the sexes found in these studies accords with Well's distinction between a nominal or noun based language style and a verbal or verb based language style (1960). Although the findings of the above researchers are at variance with the findings of Entwisle and Garvey (1972), Warshay (1972), and Westmoreland, Starr, Shelton, and Pasadeos (1977), in balance the evidence
supporting the proposition that some females write more verbally while some males write more nominally outweighs the contrary evidence.

2. Theoretical Rationale:

Given the broad theoretical context suggesting that some women and men differ in their psychosocial orientations toward the world (connected and separate ways of behaving and thinking), their production of comparatively nominal or verbal texts may represent contrasting stylistic strategies for establishing relatively close or distant relationships with the reader. This proposition turns on the distinction between spoken and written discourse insofar as speech requires an interaction between the speaker and the listener — a shared space, time, and commonality of referents. In written discourse, such an interaction is usually not possible. Moreover, speech seems to be more verbal in style while writing is more nominal in style (Akinnaso, 1982; Altenberg, 1983; Haslett, 1983).

More so than the writing of men, the writing of women seems to manifest some of the characteristics typically associated with speech. This association is perhaps further supported by the prevalence of some women's metaphors emphasizing speaking and listening (Belenky et al., 1986). The parallel differences between the writing of women and men as well as the spoken and written genres may indicate that women sometimes attempt to establish and maintain a closer relationship with the reader than do men. The stylistic preferences of some women appear to emphasize connection with the reader. The stylistic preferences of men appear to emphasize separation.

3. Conflict with Academic Discourse:

A study by Hake and Williams suggests that some composition teachers appear to prefer the nominal style to the verbal style, despite their statements to the contrary (1981). As they note: “the syntactic complexity of a nominal paper seemed sufficient to trigger judgements of a paper’s profundity and of the superiority of its logic and organization” (p. 437). The studies by Chotlos (1944) and Gleser, Gottschalk, and John (1959) also point out this apparent connection between ability and the nominal style. In both those studies it was observed that the use of a verbal style correlated with lower scores on IQ tests. By implication, a writer's abilities may be inadvertently judged by some instructors as superior on the basis of their use of the nominal style, or inferior on the basis of their use of the verbal style.

Further, Johansson suggests that scientific prose more so than writing in the humanities is typified by the nominal style (1975). It can be inferred that members of the scientific discourse community might, therefore, also expect their students to write in the nominal style. But women may be less likely
to use such a style than men. The degree to which writing in a verbal style may actually result in low
grades or assessments of low ability is unclear. What is clear, however, is that there is sufficient cause to
investigate the issue.

4. Operational Definitions:

Altenberg describes the distinction between the nominal and verbal styles in the following way:
"'Verbal' forms of expression generally have a 'nominal' counterpart (and vice versa), and the change
from one to the other tends to affect related word-classes in a systematic way: verbs attract adverbs and
conjunctions, nouns attract adjectives and prepositions (cf. because his father suddenly died and due to
his father's sudden death)" (1983, p. 4). Guided by Altenberg's description, it is possible to derive a
measure of the relative nominality of a text using the token as the unit of analysis.\(^{17}\)

a) Classify all the tokens in the text into the six traditional grammatical categories
   (nominal, verbal, prepositional, conjunctive, adjectival, and adverbial);

b) Correct for the length of the text by dividing the total number of tokens in
each category by the total number of tokens in the text (i.e., calculate the
percentage of the total tokens found in each category);

c) Calculate sub-ratios by dividing the percentage of each nominal category by
   the percentage of its verbal counterpart (nominal/verbal, prepositional/
   conjunctive, and adjectival/adverbial);\(^ {18}\)

d) Sum the three resulting sub-ratios in order to obtain the text's overall
   nominal/verbal ratio.

Appendix H provides examples of a nominally styled text and a contrasting verbally styled text, both
of which were analyzed using the procedures outlined above. Tables H1 and H2 summarize the
differences between the two texts.

5. Hypotheses:

It is hypothesized that the feminine groups will obtain lower nominal/verbal token ratios than the
masculine groups across both discourse forms. The nominal/verbal token ratios for the other (or
androgyrous) groups are predicted to fall between those of the feminine and masculine groups. This
main effect is expected to be statistically reliable at the .05 level. It is further hypothesized there will be
an interaction effect between gender and discourse form (i.e., classical or Rogerian) which will also be
reliable at the .05 level.
The Analysis of Form

1. Previous Findings:

The literature provides some evidence for differences in the ways that men and women employ thesis statements as well as differences in their use of rhetorical forms built upon subordination or coordination. The issues of thesis statements and overall rhetorical form are closely associated. The thesis statement represents an initial generalization to which the rest of the essay is structurally subordinate (leaving aside any digressions on the part of the writer). If the thesis is implied or delayed, then the structure of the essay may change to one built less on subordination and more on coordination.

The observations of Taylor (1978), Farrell (1979), Pigott (1979), Flynn (1983), Chiseri-Strater (1986), and Davis (1988) suggest there may exist differences in the ways that women and men use thesis statements: in the writing of some women the thesis was implicit or delayed while in the writing of men the thesis was explicit and placed near the beginning of the essay. The observations of Hiatt (1977; 1978), Taylor (1978), Farrell (1979), Juhasz (1980), Penelope and Wolfe (1983), Annas (1985), Peterson (1986), Brodkey (1987), and Sanborn (1987), suggest that women and men may differ in the ways they structure their texts: the organization of texts written by women has been variously described as compounded, conjunctive, repetitive, enumerative, associative, cumulative, and coordinating while the organization of texts written by men has been described as linear, hierarchical, deductive (inductive), and subordinating. These differences in structure were found across the discourse forms of argumentation, autobiography, and fiction.

Although there is little evidence at variance with the differences outlined above, this may have less to do with the inherent quality of the evidence than with the reality that most of the observations are quite informal and tentative in nature. To date, no empirical studies have attempted to ascertain the general validity of the various observations. In part, this has been due to the lack of an appropriate method for analyzing the organization of written discourse. Such is no longer the case. Coe’s “Discourse Matrix” (1988c) provides an instrument which can be used to study differences in the organization of text.

2. Theoretical Rationale:

Given the theoretical context suggesting that women and men differ in their psychosocial orientations toward the world (connected and separate ways of behaving and thinking), their production of texts structured in comparatively subordinate (thesis explicit) or coordinate (thesis implicit) fashions may represent contrasting strategies for establishing a relatively authoritative or non-authoritative relationship with the reader. As Aisenberg and Harrington suggest:
By not adopting the male model of professional speech, women may not be manifesting a lack of serious address to their disciplines. Rather, they may be challenging old modes of authority — rejecting authoritative assertion [italics added] as the mode for pursuing knowledge and expressing it. The tentativeness of their speaking style may express a belief that what can be known is more tentative than firm assertion makes it seem (1988, p. 76).

Their suggestion closely parallels Belenky’s observation of a tentativeness in how some women present their ideas:

The form that multiplicity (subjectivism) takes in these women, however, is not at all the masculine assertion that “I have a right to my opinion”; rather it is the modest, inoffensive statement, “It’s just my opinion”. Their intent is to communicate to others the limits, not the power, of their own opinions, perhaps because they want to preserve their attachments to others, not dislodge them (1986, p. 66).

Insofar as asserting a thesis in an authoritative manner might be perceived by some women as potentially jeopardizing their connections with others, they may prefer to imply or delay the thesis. As a consequence, they may employ rhetorical forms structured more in a coordinated fashion and less in a subordinated fashion. More so than the rhetorical forms employed by men, the rhetorical forms employed by women appear designed to maintain their connection with the reader.20

3. Conflict with Academic Discourse:

If, in fact, women tend to imply or delay the thesis more than do men, then the conflict with academic discourse is fairly apparent. Fort makes it quite clear that negative consequences accompany the absence of a thesis:

In the essay it would seem that this key rule is that there must be a thesis which the essay proves. The first question always asked about a prospective paper is whether the idea is “workable” or can be “handled.” As I understand these terms, they mean “do you have a thesis that can be proved?” This formal requirement is a sine qua non for a paper. Meeting it does not necessarily mean that a paper will be successful (an A in the classroom or publication), but its absence guarantees failure [italics added] (1971, p. 631).

Evidence for the accuracy of Fort’s assertion about the necessity of a thesis in academic discourse can be found in the UBC English Department’s English Composition Test: Guidelines for Marker’s (Appendix D), Instructor Y’s English 130 — Academic Writing (Appendix E), as well as Instructor X’s English 130 — Academic Writing (Appendix F).

Of particular interest are the lists of grading criteria attached to Instructor X’s syllabus: the first criterion in each list details the nature of the thesis necessary to obtain a particular grade. If the “thesis is potentially present (implied) but not clearly stated or well-placed”, then the essay would be awarded a “P” (pass); quite obviously, the strategy of implying or delaying the thesis is not one likely to achieve high grades. If there is “no real thesis or potential for development as stated”, then the essay would be awarded an “F” (fail); it can only be hoped that the marker is able discern an implied thesis or find a
delayed one. There exists an obvious conflict between academic discourse and the alternative rhetorical form which some may use.

4. Operational Definitions:

The "Discourse Matrix" as developed by Coe in *Toward a Grammar of Passages* (1988c) represents a significant advance over earlier methods of analyzing discourse structure. Based upon the methods pioneered by Francis Christiansen and further developed by Ellen Nold and Brent Davis, Coe's discourse matrix is less time consuming to use than the earlier methods and, most importantly, can provide data which is amenable to statistical analysis.\(^\text{21}\) Coe notes that "the matrix is essentially a way of representing the relationships among levels of generality/patterns of modification; it is useful because it allows us to abstract one set of relationships and represent it schematically, thus emphasizing patterns and allowing easy comparison/contrasts" (p. 62). The matrix is based upon the principle that "textual" coherence can be represented by three basic relationships between propositions: subordination, coordination, and superordination.\(^\text{22}\)

In essence, the matrix is a two dimensional representation of the contrast between the *depth* of meaningful propositions within a segment of discourse and the *breadth* of meaningful propositions within the same segment of discourse. Depth may be considered as the extent to which ideas are expanded by subordination within a passage. Breadth may be considered as the extent to which ideas are expanded by coordination within a passage. Depth is measured by the mean lengths of *idea strings* within a passage. An idea string is a series of statements which represents the linear development of a single point by subordination.

Two measures can be abstracted from the lengths of the idea strings. First, the mean length of the idea strings is determined by counting the number of propositions (clauses or T-units) per idea string, summing them across the passage, and then dividing by the total number of idea strings within the passage. The ratio which results provides a measure of the extent of subordination within the passage (*Subordination Ratio*). Second, the mean length of the idea strings is determined by counting the number of generality levels per idea string, summing them across the passage, and then dividing by the total number of idea strings within the passage. The ratio which results provides a measure of the extent of development within a passage (*Development Ratio*).

Breadth is measured by the mean lengths of *node strings* and mean number of subordinate propositions per node string within a passage. A node string is a series of propositions above the lowest level of generality which are related by any form of coordination with the exception of restatement.
Restatement is excluded in order to be able to measure the number of different subtopics within a passage. Again, two measures can be abstracted from the analysis of the node strings. First, the mean length of the node strings is determined by counting the number of propositions (subtopics) per node string, summing them across the passage, and then dividing by the total number of node strings within the passage. The ratio which results provides a measure of the extent of coordination within a passage (Coordination Ratio). Second, the mean number of subordinate propositions is determined by counting the number of subordinate propositions per node string, summing them across the passage, and then dividing by the total number of node strings within the passage. The ratio which results provides a measure of the extent of elaboration within a passage (Elaboration Ratio).

By dividing the Subordination Ratio by the Coordination Ratio, a fifth measure can be abstracted (Subordination/Coordination Ratio). This measure indicates the overall use of subordination in relation to coordination. A high Subordination/Coordination Ratio would reveal a preference for subordination in relation to coordination within a passage. A low Subordination/Coordination Ratio would reveal a preference for coordination in relation to subordination within a text. It is this particular measure which would be used as one of the dependent variables in the proposed experiment. 

Taken together, these five ratios provide a detailed description of the fine structures or “texture” within a passage in terms of the depth and breadth to which ideas are developed.

Appendix I provides a sample text analyzed in the fashion outlined above. Tables I1 and I2 summarize the data from which the various ratios in Table I3 are calculated.

5. Hypotheses:

It is hypothesized that the feminine groups will obtain lower subordination/coordination ratios than the masculine groups across both discourse forms. The subordination/coordination ratios for the other (or androgynous) groups are predicted to fall between those of the feminine and masculine groups. It is also hypothesized that the Rogerian groups will obtain lower subordination/coordination ratios than the classical group across all three genders. These main effects are expected to be statistically reliable at the .05 level. It is further hypothesized that there will be an interaction effect between gender and discourse form which will also be reliable at the .05 level.
The Analysis of Substance

1. Previous Findings:

The findings of Waters (1975), Pigott (1979), Bruner and Kelso (1980), Jelinek (1980), Loewenstine, Ponticos, and Paludi (1982), Chiseri-Strater (1986), O'Mahony (1986), Peterson (1986), Rose (1986; 1987), and Flynn (1988) suggest that females and males differ in the content of their writing: females wrote more about interpersonal relationships, participation with others, and personal concerns while males wrote more individual achievement, competition with others, and political issues. These differences were found across the widely disparate discourse forms of argument, narrative, description, autobiography, and restroom graffiti. With perhaps the exception of Keroes' findings (1986), the evidence is highly consistent and accords well with the theoretical differences in male and female psychologies that have been outlined by various commentators.

2. Theoretical Rationale:

Based closely upon the social-psychological theories of Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1982), and Belenky et al. (1986), it is proposed that women and men differ in the degree to which the content of their writing emphasizes the contrasting orientations (or to use Burke's term, the attitudes) of connection with others or separation from others. The content of texts written by women emphasizes connection with the reader. The content of texts written by men emphasizes separation.

3. Conflict with Academic Discourse:

The potential conflict between academic discourse and the content of women's writing is less clear than the conflicts in terms of style and form. Nevertheless, there are some indications of a conflict. Fort, for example, notes that "teachers and editors look with dismay on 'big' or very personal topics [italics added]" (1971, p. 631). The evidence for a conflict turns on the labelling of personal topics (i.e., papers that emphasize family and friends) in negative terms, as stunted or immature.

Pigott's criticisms of the writing of her women students seem to bear out Fort's observation; she views personal topics with evident dismay: "They [female students] rely solely on personal experience in their thinking, in their focussing on topics, and, most notably, in their writing, scribbling a world of particulars within which the incident is isolated, individual, non-generalizable, and stunted because it does not relate to universal concepts which could give it meaning" (1979, p. 922). Later in her paper,
she notes that “of the papers written by female students on life expectations, all but fifty of the 270 were intensely personal; many women did not attempt to draw universal conclusions” (p. 923).

In a similar vein, Baker et al. suggests that writers should efface themselves from their texts:

“In my opinion,” the beginner will write repeatedly, until he seems to be saying “It is only my opinion, after all, so it can’t be worth much.” He has failed to realize that his whole essay represents his opinion — of what the truth of the matter is. Don’t make your essay a personal letter to Diary, or to Mother, or to Teacher, a confidential report of what happened to you last night as you agonized upon a certain question. ... Generalize your opinions and emotions. Change “I cried” to “The scene is very moving.” The grammatical shift represents a whole change of viewpoint, a shift from self to subject. You become the informed adult, showing the reader around firmly, politely, and persuasively (1987, p. 7)."  

By implication, an individual who writes about highly personal topics without generalizing or categorizing is not an adult.

Admittedly, this evidence for a conflict is somewhat sketchy, perhaps in part because academic discourse does not require that the writers completely efface themselves from their writing. The footnote, for example, is one convention sometimes used in academic discourse to relate personal anecdotes to the reader. Nevertheless, academic discourse does seem, at the very least, to limit the manner in which highly personal content can be expressed.

4. Operational Definitions:

Based upon the theoretical distinctions in men’s and women’s psychologies outlined by Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1982), and Belenky et al. (1986), two categories of substance may be devised using the clause as the unit of analysis: connection clauses and autonomy clauses. Connection clauses are those propositions which clearly state or imply participation with others, cooperation with others, sharing with others, pleasing others, attachment to others, or relationships with others. Clauses containing references to family, friends, peers, etc., will often fall into this category. For example, the following two propositions would be categorized as connection clauses: “Good writing will help me to get high grades by pleasing the teacher” or “Skillful writing is a good way to convince people to work with you”.

Autonomy clauses are those propositions which clearly state or imply independence from others, competition with others, individual achievement, controlling others, separation from others, or detachment from others. For example, the following two propositions would fall into this category: “Good writing will help me to get better grades than other students” or “Skillful writing is a good way to get other people to do what you say”.

Obviously, not all propositions will fall into these two categories. A third category, neither clauses, is needed for those propositions which do not fall into the previous categories or in which the intended
meaning is unclear. For example, the following two propositions would be categorized as neither clauses: "Good writing helps with grades" or "Skillful writing communicates information".

A measure of the degree to which a text emphasizes autonomy or connection can be derived using the following procedures.

a) Classify the clauses in the texts as autonomy, connection, or neither clauses; 29
b) Correct for the length of the texts by dividing the total number of clauses in each category by the total number of clauses in the text (i.e., calculate the percentage of the total clauses found in each category);

c) Divide the percentage of autonomy clauses by the percentage of connection clauses in order to obtain the text's overall autonomy/connection ratio.

Appendix J provides contrasting texts (one written by a woman and the other written by a man). Both texts were analyzed using the procedures outlined above. Tables J1 and J2 summarize the differences between the two texts.

5. Hypotheses:

It is hypothesized that the feminine groups will obtain lower autonomy/connection ratios than the masculine groups across both discourse forms. The autonomy/connection ratios for the other (or androgynous) groups are predicted to fall between those of the feminine and masculine groups. This main effect is expected to be statistically reliable at the .05 level. It is further hypothesized that there will be an interaction effect between gender and discourse form which will be reliable at the .05 level.
Chapter Four Summary

This chapter has proposed a study aimed at providing some answers to the following question: Are there differences in the writing of masculine and feminine individuals? The literature suggests that there are indeed some differences in the style, form, and substance of texts produced by women and men. Unfortunately, most previous studies examining this issue suffer from one of two key deficits. First, they are generally based upon the biological construct of sex differences rather than the (more complex) psychosocial construct of gender differences. Sex and gender do not correlate narrowly. Second, previous studies rarely examine sex differences across contrasting discourse forms. The strategies demanded by different writing tasks may interact in important ways with sex and gender. These deficits in previous studies may perhaps be accounted responsible for some of the contradictory findings of earlier research. By measuring selected differences of style, form, and substance across three genders (masculine, feminine, and androgynous) and two discourse forms (Rogerian Persuasion and Classical Persuasion), the proposed study aims to create the maximum possible contrast between groups and thus overcome some of the limitations of past research in this area.

In terms of theory, the proposed study is broadly based upon the work of Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1982), and Belenky et al. (1986) which suggests that women and men often differ in their ethical and epistemological orientations toward the world — orientations which have been characterized as connected or related (feminine) versus separate or autonomous (masculine) ways of behaving and thinking. The analysis of style explores the hypothesis that feminine and masculine individuals differ in the degree to which they use relatively verbal or nominal styles; the analysis of form explores the hypothesis that gendered individuals differ in the degree to which they employ relatively coordinate or subordinate structures; the analysis of substance explores the hypothesis that gendered individuals differ in the degree to which they emphasize connection or autonomy in their writing.

However, while it is clearly essential to undertake further research, this only represents part of what currently needs to be done. There seems to be sufficient evidence of a conflict between academic discourse and l’écriture féminine to start making some changes in how composition is taught. Chapter Five details some pedagogical changes which may help to increase gender equity in academe.
Notes for Chapter Four

1 Please note that the approach outlined for this experiment remains quite tentative; further refinements (even some changes in method) are almost certainly required. Recent reflection suggests that my proposed experiment suffers from at least two flaws. First, as it is currently defined in the proposal, the variable of gender conflates sex and gender in a way that undercuts the intent of the experiment (i.e., to examine the social construct of gender in relation to writing rather than to examine the biological construct of sex in relation to writing). Before undertaking the proposed experiment, it will be necessary to deal with this potential confound. Second, by proposing a rigorously empirical experiment, I have undoubtedly over-simplified the true complexity of gender. In order to restrict the number of subjects required in the proposed experiment (thereby making it less cumbersome), I have eliminated from consideration individuals who might be categorized as cross-sex-typed or undifferentiated (using the Bem Sex-Role Inventory). At the very least, it will be necessary to undertake parallel case studies of these individuals to determine how their writing might differ from the writing of masculine, feminine, and androgynous individuals. At worst, the approach that I have taken in this chapter should be abandoned.

Although the topic of gender differences and writing is difficult to study using empirical methods (and the attempt to do so is somewhat controversial), I am hesitant to entirely abandon those methods because I believe that an empirical approach might prove valuable in terms of its persuasive impact. As Chapter Two should have demonstrated, the majority of studies about sex differences and writing do not use empirical methods; indeed, most employ ethnographic, literary, and rhetorical methods. Even though I believe these methods provide evidence for the existence of sex differences equivalent in value to that which might be provided by empirical approaches, some within the university community find empirical evidence more persuasive than other kinds of evidence. Keeping in mind that Composition as a discipline has been heavily guided by Cognitive Science for the past two decades, that Cognitive Science relies upon empirical methods, and that cognitive scientists routinely look for sex differences and fail to find them (perhaps because they are looking at the wrong construct), I submit that non-empirical methods will prove less than persuasive to a substantial group in the discipline of composition.

In other words, my approach to this topic serves a persuasive end as well as a “truth-seeking” end. Assuming I were, indeed, to find important gender differences using a non-empirical method, I suspect I would simply end up persuading those who are already persuaded that the sex/gender constructs have important implications in our society. On the other hand, if I were to find important gender differences using a rigorously empirical method, I might manage to persuade some of those who continue to ignore the implications of the sex/gender constructs in our society and, more to the point, in the university and the composition class. As teachers and researchers, we obviously have a responsibility to use a method which best enables us to discover “truths”; I believe that we also have a responsibility to use a method which best enables us to further “justice”. And, fundamentally, persuasion is not only about truth, it is also about justice. The research that I propose in this chapter is intended to be persuasive (albeit for a restricted audience).

Having said all of that, I also have a responsibility to ensure that you, as readers, do not misconstrue the value of this chapter. I remind you that the approach I have taken here is provisional as well as tentative, and it only represents part of my process for investigating the issue of gender and writing. Early in the process, I undertook a pilot study of the proposed research and, as you will see, what I learned from the participants in that study has led to major changes in the study. Recent conversations with colleagues have led me to reconsider other aspects of the proposed method. In other words, consider this chapter for what it is: in process.

2 Some of the methods for statistical analysis were developed in consultation with Dr. Nand Kishor (Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University).

3 Bem’s figures are partly confirmed by the results of a pilot study I conducted at Selkirk College, Castlegar, B. C. in the autumn of 1988 in order to determine the logistics of the experiment and assess the adequacy of the independent variables. In this study, the Bem Sex-Role Inventory was administered to 151 subjects (87 women and 64 men) in six sections of English 110 and was scored using the median-split method. After eliminating those born prior to January 1st, 1966 (17 women and 8 men), it was found that for women about 42.9% fell into the feminine category, about 17.1% fell into the masculine category, and about 40.0% fell into the other category. For men, about 7.1% fell into the feminine category, about 42.9% fell into the masculine category, and about 50.0% fall into the other category.

Although my figures and Bem’s do differ, they are more or less the same in terms of men categorized as masculine (42.9% versus 42.0%) and women categorized as feminine (42.9% versus 39.4%). These two contrasted categories are the ones of most interest, as least insofar as the direction of the measured differences across the two discourse forms should be predictable from theory (in other
words, it is not possible to predict on theoretical grounds the direction of the differences for the other category). Because these two categories are each smaller than the other category, they determine the minimum number of subjects required for the experiment. (For the moment, this leaves aside the issue of what to do about those individuals who are cross-sex-typed. Should they be included in the masculine and feminine categories, in the other category, or simply excluded?)

As Table 2 indicates, it is possible to divide this other category into two distinct categories other female and other male. Once the data has been collected, it should be examined to see if these categories differ significantly in terms of the dependent variables. If such is the case, then a 4 x 2 MANOVA could be used. Within the theoretical construct under consideration, however, there is little reason to expect them to differ significantly. In fact, if they were found to differ, it would seem to imply that sex rather than gender be used as the independent variable.

If each student provides a text of between 600 and 900 words in length, this sample size would furnish a total corpus of between 180,000 and 270,000 words.

Of course, the essays written by those subjects who are eliminated do not need to be analyzed. And limiting the number of essays which must actually be analyzed is an issue which needs to be seriously considered. Even using computers quite extensively in order to streamline the analysis of the essays, the data analysis is by far the most time consuming task; the time required for data collection is relatively minor. One way to minimize the analysis required is by randomly selecting 60 essays in the other category (30 for each of the discourse forms). This would restrict the total number of essays to be analyzed to 180 (excluding the statistical analysis of the resulting data, it is estimated that each essay requires about six hours for analysis — about 1080 hours). A sample of 180 essays would provide a corpus between 108,000 and 162,000 words.

Rather than randomly selecting the essays from this category, however, it might be more interesting to select only those essays written by men and women categorized as androgynous (thereby eliminating those categorized as undifferentiated). Bem's figures indicate that 30.3% of women and 19.5% of men will be categorized as androgynous which provides a sufficient number of subjects per cell for the analysis (about 74 subjects total). However, in my own pilot study only 15.7% of women and 17.9% of men were categorized as androgynous, slightly less than the number required to permit this analysis (about 50 subjects total). Obviously, the data must be collected before a more specific plan of analysis can be formulated.

The degree to which controlling potential confounds increases the number of subjects required was demonstrated in the pilot study conducted at Selkirk College. Of the 151 subjects who completed the Bem Sex-Role Inventory, 38 (about 25%) would have been eliminated on the basis of age, prior composition courses, or English as a second language. Assuming the information collected at Selkirk College is representative, a total of 400 subjects would be needed in order to obtain the requisite number of subjects per cell.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the studies of Chotlos (1944), Gleser, Gottschalk, and John (1959), as well as Entwisle and Garvey (1972) suggest there may be a correlation between IQ and lexical choice. As such, IQ differences among the subjects may represent another potential confound. Although it is possible to eliminate this confound by testing all the subjects, this may not be necessary as the population from which the sample would be drawn should be reasonably restricted in IQ range. In general, the admission criteria of universities and colleges (insofar as they require a high grade point average) likely restrict the IQ range of students to average and above.

Ideally, it might seem preferable to control all potential confounding variables in the experiment. In the real world, however, this is impossible; there will always be some subjects whose unique personal characteristics "contaminate" the data in one fashion or another. The goal is not so much to control all potentially confounding variables as it is to selectively control those variables which most threaten the validity of the experiment. At the same time, it is important to not control so many variables that the results cannot be usefully generalized to the larger population from which the sample was drawn. Any experiment represents a number of compromises between validity and generalizability.

Beyond that, there are sound pragmatic reasons for not administering an IQ test to all the subjects. The expense and time involved in administering and scoring such a test are probably not worth the results: eliminating a few high IQ subjects. It might, however, be worth administering such a test to a few representative classes simply to confirm that the IQ of the population from which the subjects would be drawn is, in fact, reasonably restricted in range.
As mentioned earlier, there is some controversy surrounding Bem's model for measuring psychological gender. The central issue seems to be whether the Bem Sex-Role Inventory provides a valid measure of the degree to which an individual's self-concept accords with a socially based gender schema or whether, as Spence and Helmreich argue (1981), it simply taps into the personality traits of instrumentality and expressiveness. Bem proposes that the BSRI may well measure both; non-sex-typed individuals may be responding in terms of their own instrumentality and expressiveness while sex-typed individuals are responding in conformity with the gender schema (1981c).

If Bem's reasoning is sound, it suggests a good reason for not including cross-sex-typed individuals (i.e., masculine females and feminine males) in the same categories as those individuals whose biological sex and psychological gender is congruent (i.e., feminine women and masculine men) as their inclusion might confound the results. In any event, the issue appears unresolved at this writing and requires more thorough investigation. If, in the balance of probabilities, Spence and Helmreich are correct, it may be necessary to develop a different test to measure psychological gender.

Lest anyone rather absurdly suggest that we should not be concerned if "only" 40% of our students write in ways that are gendered, I must point out that this represents 12 students in an average class of 30. If 12 students in a class of 30 had an ESL background, were of a different racial/ethnic origin, or were physically challenged, and teachers failed to respond to those different personal and social contexts, then they might rightly be accused of discrimination. In other words, 40% of the students in a class represents a significant group which must be addressed when teaching.

Although there are several ways to score the BSRI, a subject's score on the BSRI is generally determined by separately summing the items comprising the masculinity scale (the first adjective and every third one thereafter) as well as the items comprising the femininity scale (the second adjective and every third one thereafter), and then dividing each of these two scores by twenty to obtain the subject's average scores. These average scores are then compared to the medians in order to categorize the subject. The particular medians used can be that of Bem's normative data derived from students at Stanford or can be one derived by calculating the medians for the particular sample under study.

Those subjects who score above the femininity median (4.90 using the normative sample) and below the masculinity median (4.95 using the normative sample) are classified as feminine; those who score below the femininity median and above the masculinity median are classified as masculine; those who score above both medians are scored as androgynous; and those who score below both medians are scored as undifferentiated. Thus an individual who scored 5.5 on the femininity scale and 3.4 on the masculinity scale would be classified as feminine (using the medians for the normative sample).

Simply as a matter of interest, it would be worthwhile analyzing the essays provided by cross-sex-typed individuals. However, they would likely comprise such a small percentage of the total sample (approximately 12% using Bem's figures derived from the Stanford sample) that no statistically meaningful conclusions could be drawn. Nevertheless, the analysis might at least provide some sense about the degree to which their linguistic behavior accords with their psychological gender, if at all.

In the pilot study conducted at Selkirk College, the topics about which the subjects were asked to write were assigned: "Why is writing useful?" (formal essay assignment) and "How is writing useful to you?" (informal essay assignment). These rather neutral topics were used in an attempt to ensure that the topic itself would not inadvertently elicit a gendered response. However, as several subjects pointed out, this topic was not very interesting and probably lowered their motivation to participate in the experiment (indeed, of the 151 subjects tested with the BSRI, only 87 actually chose to submit the essays — about 58%). By allowing the subjects to freely choose their own topics in the future, the motivation of the participants should be enhanced while at the same time avoiding the assignment of topics which might intrinsically appeal more to one gender or another. In fact, by allowing topic choice to freely vary, the participants might be more likely to produce writing which more accurately represents their inclinations in terms of substance.

The two discourse forms which have been proposed for this experiment represent a substantial change from those which were used in the pilot study. In that study, the discourse forms used were formal writing (more accurately, argumentation) and informal writing (more accurately, narration). Formal writing was defined for the subjects as follows:
A formal essay argues a particular viewpoint by providing supportive evidence and by refuting counter arguments in order to persuade the reader that the viewpoint taken is correct. Your essay may be based upon research or upon your personal beliefs, but in either case you should write in the third person style (i.e., one, he, she, it, they) and not in the first person style (i.e., I, we, you). You may argue any viewpoint you wish, but try to argue your viewpoint carefully and logically.

In contrast, informal writing was defined as follows:

An informal essay is like a letter to a friend in which you explain something you have discovered or observed. You should consider your own personal experience with writing and may write your essay in any style you choose. Try to draw some personally meaningful conclusions about the uses writing has for you. Research is not necessary for this essay assignment.

At the time the pilot study was conducted, it was felt that the contrasting discourse forms described above would adequately capture any gender differences which might exist. Later reflection, however, suggests this may not be the case (if nothing else, the pilot study has proven quite useful in locating the potential weaknesses of the proposed study).

As the above definitions indicate, the intended contrast was between argumentation and narration. In part, this contrast was chosen because it was assumed the subjects would be generally familiar with these two discourse forms from their prior education. The context of the experiment (i.e., conducting the study with classes taught by other instructors) only permitted my interaction with the classes for about two hours; consequently, it was not feasible to instruct the classes in discourse forms with which they likely would not be familiar. By choosing discourse forms with which the subjects were already familiar, I attempted to accommodate the requirement that the study not be excessively intrusive while at the same time collecting the needed data.

Unfortunately, the contrast between argumentation and narration (as defined above) may be relatively ineffective on at least three counts. First, the two discourse forms differ rather substantially in their central intent. Argumentation primarily serves to persuade while narration primarily serves to inform. But in the present study, it is the possible gender differences in persuading which are at issue, not possible differences in informing. In other words, any gender differences found in narrative writing, while perhaps interesting, may not illuminate the subject under consideration. By basing the planned experimental treatment upon two contrasting models of persuasion, any gender differences found can be more usefully compared.

Second, the use of contrasting discourse forms with which the students are already quite familiar might tend to mask some of the gender differences under study. As mentioned earlier, our students are always quick to determine what they believe we want and respond accordingly (cf. Ruszkiewicz, 1978). Assuming the students have been well trained in how to produce the discourse forms of argumentation and narration in high school (and have been provided some degree of critical feedback about their success in producing these forms), the students are likely to simply reproduce these forms as they have been previously taught, irrespective of their comfort or discomfort with the form. By asking the students to model their essays upon two contrasting forms of persuasion — models with which they are unlikely to be familiar — any gender differences which exist are less likely to be masked by their prior experiences with writing. (In addition, the students would perhaps gain more educational benefit by learning new models for writing than they would by the reiteration of models with which they are already quite familiar.)

Third, the essay assignments which were used with the pilot study may have inadvertently introduced a potential confound into the experiment. By permitting research to be undertaken with the formal essay assignment while more or less excluding it from the informal essay assignment, the intended contrast between argumentative writing and narrative writing may have been conflated with a contrast between researched and introspective writing. In the study under consideration, it is proposed that neither of the treatments permit research.

However, the proposal to contrast Classical Persuasion and Rogerian Persuasion rather than argumentation and narration does have one inherent drawback: it requires that the experimenter have greater control over the classes involved in the experiment than permitted in the pilot study. In the pilot study, about two hours of class time was required in order to test the subjects and explain the assignment; in the proposed study, an additional two to four hours of class time would be needed in order to teach the subjects how to apply the model they are attempting to emulate. Moreover, in order to enhance the educational merit of the experience for the subjects, they should probably be taught the alternative model after they have completed their initial writing assignments. This would require a further two to four
hours of class time. Because the proposed experiment would require about ten hours of class time, it is more or less a given that the researcher must also be the course instructor. (Beyond considerations of experimental validity, of course, I prefer the more “situated” experimental condition because it allows me to work with the students as individuals rather than as generalized representatives of Bem’s categories. This sort of situated research allows a much more complete understanding of the individual student’s context when undertaking the sort of textual analysis outlined in this chapter.)

Note that I am describing the structure of an argument here and not its logic. In logical terms, an essay following the model for Classical Persuasion could be either inductive (a general conclusion drawn from specific evidence) or deductive (specific consequences drawn from a general principle). Structurally, however, both types of logic tend to follow the general form of thesis statement plus proof (Coe, 1990b, pp. 129-133). Depending upon the particular logic used in an argument, the thesis statement may be a preliminary statement of the conclusion (inductive) or a general principle used to guide the argument (deductive). In other words, the thesis statement of an essay typically precedes the evidence supporting it or the consequences flowing from it, irrespective of the essay’s logic. There are, of course, good cognitive reasons for using this structure: readers find it easier to comprehend specific information when they are provided a general framework in which to situate the information. To some degree, a general framework is also provided in Rogerian Persuasion, at least insofar as the initial problem statement frames the rest of the discussion.

The general distinction being drawn here is between a rhetorical form based upon the vertical organization of propositions (superordination and subordination) and a rhetorical form based upon the horizontal organization of propositions (coordination). Of course, this is not meant to imply that these different organizational principles are mutually exclusive. As mentioned, the problem statement of Rogerian Persuasion is structurally superordinate to the rest of the essay. Likewise, the proofs and refutations typically found in Classical Persuasion may be structurally coordinate with each other. It is a matter of degree as to which organizational principle governs any particular text. This issue is more fully explored later in this chapter in the section which details the discourse matrix (Coe, 1988c).

Conceivably, the planned contrast could be even further accentuated by using Sheridan Baker’s (1987) explicitly confrontational rhetorical model in place of Classical Persuasion. Employing his particular approach, however, may be somewhat questionable on ethical grounds. As Taylor argues “Baker offers outright violence to the socially dictated female mentality when he describes the adversarial author/reader relationship defined in an essay’s concluding paragraph” (1978, p. 387). By insisting upon narrowly adversarial approaches, instructors may risk inadvertently causing (or exacerbating) writer’s block among those students who find this type of approach limiting. On the other hand, the model for Classical Persuasion permits, but does not demand, an adversarial approach to a topic. Those students who find an adversarial approach offensive are free to minimize this element of the model. Hypothetically, at least, we might expect to discover that the essays written by the subjects in the feminine classical group more closely resemble the essays written by the subjects in the masculine classical group.

A token differs from a word in that some tokens are comprised of more than one word. In the sample analyses presented in Appendix H, for example, compound prepositions (instead of), compound conjunctions (less than), and infinitives (to show) are each counted as a single token. Although not required for the sample analyses, additional rules which more narrowly define a token would be used in the proposed research (e.g., titles of books would be counted as single tokens, contractions would be counted as two tokens, etc.).

In addition to the rules defining a token, several rules were used in order to assist with categorizing the various tokens in the sample analyses: articles (a, an, and the) were not counted; pronouns (this, it, they, etc.) were considered nounal; modal auxiliary verbs (might, would, could, etc.) and plain auxiliary verbs (be, do, and have) were considered verbal.

Separately calculating the sub-ratios permits a more detailed analysis of the degree to which the various grammatical elements contribute to the nominality of the text (assuming that the groups are found to differ significantly in respect to the overall ratio).

The one finding which contradicts the various observations is that of Peterson (1986). Her results indicate little difference in the location of thesis statements (she describes them as conclusions) in argumentative paragraphs written by men and women. Further, all the paragraphs written by her women students possessed an explicit thesis whereas five of the paragraphs written by her men students lacked a
thesis. However, given that her study is restricted to short paragraphs (50 to 200 words in length), the potential placement of the thesis is rather obviously limited.

Beyond this, it could also be argued that the implicit theses and coordinate constructions which may typify the writing of some women reveals yet another parallel between their writing and patterns often found in speech. Akinnaso notes that coordinate constructions are more frequently used in speech whereas subordinate constructions are more frequently found in writing, and further, that writing relies "on a more deliberate method of organizing ideas, using such expository concepts as 'thesis,' 'topic sentence,' and 'supporting evidence'" (1982, p. 104).

Although Coe's discourse matrix is easier to use than previous methods, it still requires a tremendous amount of work on the part of the researcher because it entails drawing the matrix by hand, counting the various relationships, and then calculating the ratios. The amount of work involved currently limits its utility as a research instrument, particularly when applied to a large number of texts. However, the matrix is relatively amenable to computer adaptation. A computer version of the matrix would eliminate the majority of the work (limiting the effort on the part of the researcher to "tagging" the relationships between propositions in the raw text). Prior to undertaking the proposed experiment, such a program must be developed. (A computer program already exists which facilitates the analysis of style and the analysis of substance: DISCAN, Maranda and Nadeau, 1988a; 1988b).

Coe (1988c) further defines the three types of relationships in the list reproduced below (p. 32):

Coordination:
- contrasting
- contradicting
- conjoining
- repeating (on the same level of generality)

Subordination:
- defining
- exemplifying
- giving reasons
- deducing (i.e., deductive conclusion)
- explaining (i.e., making plain by restating more specifically)
- qualifying

Superordination:
- drawing conclusion, generalizing (inductive inference)
- commenting (on a previously stated proposition).

As this list implies there is a distinction between cohesion and coherence. Cohesion is created by certain linguistic structures which the writer uses to explicitly communicate a relationship between propositions. Traditionally, cohesive ties are divided into three types: referential and conjunctive cohesion which depend upon syntax to indicate the relationship, and lexical cohesion which depends upon semantics to indicate the relationship. Coherence, on the other hand, represents a pattern of meaningful relationships which readers construct within their minds in response to the text. To some degree, cohesion will correlate with coherence, as cohesive ties communicate coherent relationships to the reader. But many relationships within a text are implicit and rely upon the reader to understand the implied relationships, to actively create a logical coherent pattern of meaning.

Because the discourse matrix is based upon coherence, it is possible for different readers to construct somewhat different patterns of meaning (and thus, to generate somewhat different analyses of form). These differences between readers may have the effect of lowering inter-rater reliability. In her study using the discourse matrix, for example, Sun-I Chen (1986) achieved an inter-rater reliability of 71.4%, somewhat lower than the usually accepted level. Such must be accepted as a matter of course in any study which depends upon the analysis of meanings.

These four measures were developed by Sun-I Chen (1986) in order to compare the discourse structure of Chinese newspaper editorials and English newspaper editorials. Her analyses revealed, among other things, that "the Chinese used more clauses in developing coordinate subtopics, rather than in developing subordinate details under a generalization" (p. 132-133). She interpreted this pattern as confirming Kaplan's contention (1967; 1968) of a "spiral" pattern (repetitive discussions of a topic)
within Chinese discourse. It might be speculated that this so-called “spiral” form is similar to the associative, enumerative, coordinating discourse form which various commentators have suggested typifies some women’s writing.

24 Calculating all of the ratios, rather than just the subordination/coordination ratio, permits a more detailed analysis of the structure of the text (assuming the groups are found to differ significantly in respect to the overall subordination/coordination ratio).

25 In addition to the four measures mentioned earlier, Sun-I Chen (1986) developed three other measures which examine discourse at a less fine level of detail. Briefly, these measures are: the generality level count divided by the number of propositions (Generality Ratio); the node string count divided by the number of propositions (Node-string Ratio); and the idea string count divided by the number of propositions (Idea-string Ratio). Taken together, these three ratios provide a description of the large-scale structures or “arrangement” of a passage in terms of the depth and breadth to which topics are developed.

26 This additional main effect is expected due to the structural differences which exist between Rogerian and Classical Persuasion (see Appendix G).

27 The comments of both Pigott and Baker et al. provide some evidence for Fort’s assertion that the formal requirements of the essay may restrict the type of ideas which can be communicated. They both link the presence of highly personal content with the absence of a thesis in an essay. If form and substance are related in this fashion, it may be hypothesized that there should be a relatively high correlation between the dependent variable measuring formal differences and the dependent variable measuring substantive differences in the proposed study.

28 The unit of analysis which has been selected is the clause, on the grounds that it permits the most precise isolation of semantic propositions. This precision has the advantage of eliminating a “mixed” category, which would be a category of units expressing a meaning that is about both connection and autonomy as would be the case if the T-unit or the sentence were used as the unit of analysis.

29 As of this writing, the precise criteria which would be used to label a clause as one of autonomy or one of connection have not been detailed; obviously, these criteria must be detailed prior to undertaking the analysis.
Chapter Five: Pedagogical Implications of Sex Differences in Writing

And when the telling is done and the voices of the voiceless are heard, does storytelling not invoke a call to action?


The Need for Change

“Identical educational treatment of males and females may not yield identical results so long as that treatment contains a male bias”: Thus concludes the philosopher, Jane Martin, in “The Ideal of the Educated Person” (1982, p. 109). Does the educational treatment afforded our female composition students contain a male bias? The answer appears to be yes. As Chapter One indicates, there is some evidence for differences between the psychological orientations of men and women — orientations which have been characterized as connected versus separate ways of behaving and thinking.

Chapter Two presents evidence for patterned differences in the ways that men and women write, differences that parallel the differences in male and female psychologies. Women, moreso than men, write in ways that emphasize dialogue, the tentative nature of knowledge, and connection with the reader and others. Men, moreso than women, write in ways that emphasize monologue, mastery over knowledge, and separation from the reader and others. These differences are manifested in all aspects of writing: content and imagery, organization and tone, even style and lexical choice.

Chapter Three argues that academic discourse, as generically constituted and taught, possesses characteristics more typical of the writing of men and less typical of the writing of women. In particular, the traditional requirement of employing an authoritative voice or demonstrating mastery over a topic, as evidenced by the presence of a provable thesis, may well act to constrain some women writers. The cases of Douglas College and the University of British Columbia highlight this apparent conflict (among other things) between l’écriture féminine and academic discourse. However, this conflict does not simply represent a global problem for student writers in the process of being socialized into the academic community. There is also evidence that women academics publish less than men even in disciplines where women scholars outnumber men. Although there are probably several causes underlying this phenomenon, the conflict between forms of expression, between ways of knowing, cannot be ruled out.

While the first three chapters of this thesis outline the nature of the problem, Chapter Four attempts to provide part of the solution — undertake further research. Yet such research is almost certainly a
long-term proposition; the questions posed are complex ones and any answers proposed are likely to be equally complex. Research, although necessary, is by itself an insufficient response to the issues raised earlier in this thesis. What should be done while awaiting the results of on-going research?

Given recent events on Canadian university campuses, there is a certain urgency to answering this question. At the University of British Columbia, for example, seventeen male students composed and delivered obscene, often threatening, notes to the female residents of a dormitory in the autumn of 1990. And, beyond highly publicized episodes such as the UBC incident, there are many other less well known instances of harassment and violence against women on Canadian university campuses (see, for example, Dagg & Thompson, 1988). Undeniably, attitudes toward women within the academy must change.

Obviously, changing how composition is currently taught, opening the canon to alternative forms of discourse, will not entirely resolve the larger societal problem of the physical and economic violence committed against women, but it does represent something that composition teachers can do to work towards that goal. And there is a relationship between the forms employed in academic discourse and the larger societal problems. In a recent analysis of 46 journal articles about the battering of women by men, Lamb (1991) found differences in how clearly the men and women authors attributed violent acts against women to the agency of men. Unlike the women writers, the men tended to describe violence against women in a manner which obfuscated the sex of the perpetrators (i.e., men), through the use of such linguistic devices as the passive voice, nominalizations, and diffuse terminology.1

Lamb's outline of the problem is a good one:

Given that authors were working within certain written (e.g., American Psychological Association, 1988) and unwritten guidelines for scholarly writing, such as use of passive voice and the need to vary descriptions of acts and people, we were still surprised at how rarely the language projected an image of a man harming a woman. . . . The issues here are whether we find this kind of writing used to deny women's experience, and whether it is used more often by men. At least half of the sentences about abuse refused to hold the man responsible for the violent acts he committed against the woman who was his wife, lover, or partner. Feminist theorists would claim that a style of writing so advantageous to violent men is neither accidental nor the product of editorial demands (1991, p. 255).

As mentioned in Chapter Three, “the form we have unconsciously assumed to be the best one (if not the only one) for expressing written ideas . . . both reflects and perpetuates attitudes that generate the structures in our society” (Fort, 1971, p. 629). Composition instructors have both a responsibility and an opportunity to help change those attitudes, those structures.

Paulo Freire's (1970; 1985) work in literacy instruction suggests that teaching is not simply the disinterested presentation of information to learners; teaching is inherently political in nature, no matter whether it merely functions to maintain the status quo or functions as a liberating instrument of change. Education, when viewed as a political activity, necessarily treats with Rhetoric insofar as it aims to
persuade learners to adopt (or, for that matter, to abandon) particular ideas, values, and methods. As Kenneth Burke points out "rhetorical language is inducement to action (or to attitude, attitude being an incipient act)" (1969b, p. 42). Attitudes must change before action follows.

Composition instructors have a special role to play in helping to change attitudes. First, composition specialists are sometimes called upon by instructors within other disciplines to assist with solving specific writing problems (of student and instructor alike) or to help design writing courses to be used within particular disciplines (e.g., writing across the curriculum). Composition instructors have an opportunity to inform instructors in other disciplines about the nature of writing as a social process as well as the interaction of rhetorical form with that process. To some degree, composition teachers are uniquely situated in terms of raising issues of social justice with other teachers.

Second, the field of Composition lies at the methodological confluence of many different disciplines: Education, Anthropology, Literature, Cognitive Science, Social Psychology, Women's Studies, and Rhetoric (to name but a few). As such, composition instructors are often exposed to different rhetorical forms, different research methods, and different sets of values. Composition instructors have an uncommon window upon the diversity to be found within the world of academe; a window, it is hoped, which enables them to encourage and accept a similar diversity among their students.

Third, Composition is one course that many university and college students are required to take irrespective of their major. As such, it represents a good, although certainly not the only, locale for the discussion of major social issues like gender, class, and race. This, however, is not to suggest that these social concerns should become the sole focus of composition courses, only that they should be an important component.

Kennedy (1991) foregrounds the danger of turning the composition classroom into a forum narrowly restricted to advancing one social agenda or another in her response to Bauer's "The Other 'F' Word" (1990). Kennedy points out that instructors must always consider the social context of their audience and accordingly "balance the personal, the political, and the professional in the teaching situation" (1991, p. 103). In his critique of Berlin's, "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class" (1988), Fulkerson makes a similar point about the classroom context:

What Berlin and Shor describe strikes me as not so much a writing course but a course using writing to promote a single social agenda. Berlin says its goal is "to externalize false consciousness" (491), and that's a revealing remark: one would expect the goal of a writing course to at least refer to writing (1990, p. 421).

Kennedy's and Fulkerson's points are well taken: there are indeed problems with turning the composition classroom into a narrowly ideological forum, not the least of which is the danger of
alienating those students who may disagree with the particular beliefs and values advanced (cf. Ruszkiewicz, 1978).

On the other hand, given that one of the goals of education is to promote critical thinking, simply refraining from discussing ideological and social issues in the composition classroom accomplishes nothing. Implicitly, language both reflects and perpetuates attitudes toward various social structures and values. By making explicit some of these attitudes (for example, resistance to feminist approaches), the teacher may enable students to critically explore the social consequences of their own and other's attitudes. Writing must not be misconceived as some neutral means of communicating information; writing is a way of interpreting the world, of generating meaning in the encounter with reality. Writing is inherently ideological. As such, the composition instructor must necessarily deal with ideology.

All of which is to point out that a balance is needed in the classroom. Effective teaching rarely involves either/or approaches; the classroom should be neither a forum solely for the active promotion of a single social agenda nor should it be solely dedicated to the supposedly disinterested study of rhetorical forms. Both social processes and rhetorical form should be discussed within the composition classroom because social contexts and rhetorical forms interact in ways that are simultaneously constraining and generative. (The conflict between Fulkerson's and Berlin's positions will be further explored later in this chapter as it illuminates an issue of critical importance in composition studies: how is an appropriate balance to be achieved between the competing interests of the writer and the reader?)

As the foregoing implies, along with a heightened opportunity to effect change within the university discourse community also comes a heightened responsibility. Some caution is advisable if hasty and simplistic solutions are to be avoided. In the words of H. L. Mencken, "for every problem, there is a solution that is simple, plausible and wrong". The tentative state of knowledge about sex differences and writing (not to mention our lack of knowledge about gender and writing) preclude radical actions to change current practices in composition instruction. And, in any case, some reticence will assuredly greet the suggestion of broadening the rhetorical forms currently preferred within academe. Expectations and attitudes will not change overnight (nor for that matter, are composition instructors alone capable of generating such change).

But this tentativeness, this reticence, does not preclude moving towards changing attitudes. It does not preclude dialogue between women and men, between teachers and students, about how gender and sex may relate to the educational and rhetorical models preferred within academe. Students, both male and female, need to know where it is appropriate to use one form and where it is appropriate to use another; students also need to know the consequences of using certain forms within contexts where those forms may receive a less than enthusiastic reception. And teachers, in all disciplines, need to know how
various rhetorical forms and educational models may assist or constrain the search for and communication of information.

Working towards change in current practices and current attitudes represents both an opportunity and a responsibility, not just to ensure that women and feminine individuals are treated equitably by academe, but also to ensure that academe gains the knowledge that is being generated by those scholars. Although, it seems obvious that some changes in composition instruction are needed for both women and the academic community to benefit, it is less than obvious what should be the precise nature of those changes. This final chapter considers some of the changes to composition instruction that have been proposed by various commentators, changes that address two key issues: *how* composition is taught and *what* is taught.

**Changing Theories about Teaching Writing**

Recently there have been an increasing number of calls for pedagogies which are gender sensitive (Annas, 1985; Belenky et al., 1986; Caywood & Overing, 1987; Sanborn, 1987). Approaches to writing such as freewriting, journal-writing, and collaborative writing — all of which theoretically enable writers to ground their writing in their personal experience — have been proposed as alternatives to more traditional pedagogies. These changes are not only aimed at people who encounter difficulties with academic discourse, but also aim to challenge the underpinnings of the traditional disciplines of academe.

Over the past 25 years the theoretical basis (if not the pedagogical practice) of English Composition has undergone a remarkable transformation, even a paradigm shift, as it moves from an emphasis upon the Formalist approach to an emphasis upon the Expressionist approach (and most recently, the New Rhetorical approach). Within the context of the Formalist approach to teaching composition, there has been little need to examine the possible differences between the writing of women and men writers as the evidence indicates that women are able to produce texts at least equivalent, and possibly slightly superior, to those produced by men. But rather than questioning the relative *capabilities* of men and women to generate products equivalent in quality, perhaps researchers should instead be questioning the degree to which the discourse forms preferred in academia may differentially constrain the *attitudes* women and men wish to express (or perhaps feminine and masculine attitudes).

In terms of theory, the Formalist approach to teaching composition has been partly superseded, first by the Expressionist and later by New Rhetorical approaches, and this transformation seems likely to continue. Within these theoretical paradigms, the study of gender differences in writing is not only relevant, but also perhaps essential. That the experiences of men and women have usually differed seems
incontrovertible, yet until recently, the resulting differences in attitude, in form, have largely gone unstudied. Possibly the transformation from a constraining Formalist approach to an enabling Expressionist approach has had the effect of more clearly revealing the distinctions between the writing of some women and men — the existence of which researchers have long suspected, but which proved elusive when studied in Formalist contexts. Of some methodological interest, the differences in form and attitude revealed in Chapter Two seem most clear in Expressionist (less constrained) writing contexts.

The Formalist Approach

The Formalist approach to teaching composition typically emphasizes the forms of writing (e.g., sentence structure, paragraph structure, and essay structure) by posing an often ill-defined ideal form upon which the students are expected to model their writing — an ideal form frequently derived from the study of literature. Young further defines the principle features of Formalism as follows: “Emphasis on the composed product rather than the composing process; the analysis of discourse into words, sentences, and paragraphs; the classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument; the strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation) and with style (economy, clarity, emphasis); the preoccupation with the informal essay and the research paper; etc.” (cited in Stewart, 1978, p. 171).

In the Formalist approach, the text is privileged relative to the writer or the reader. The student’s success in duplicating this preferred discourse form is the paramount criterion upon which evaluation is based; the issue of generating ideas with which to “fill” this preferred form is typically neglected: “The traditional formal approach avoided questions of substance by defining ‘content’ as outside the field of composition, i.e., either as unteachable art (as in ‘inspiration’) or as the proper concern of other disciplines (‘content’ courses, as contrasted with ‘skills’ courses)” (Coe, 1987, p. 15). Form simply becomes a container for ideas (cf. Richards, 1936, p. 12); its persuasive and generative functions are down-played.

In the terms of classical rhetoric, the Formalist approach emphasizes dispositio (arrangement) at the expense of inventio (invention). As Berlin notes:

An equally significant departure in this new rhetoric [i.e., Formalism] is that it contains no inventional system. Truth is to be discovered outside the rhetorical enterprise — through the method, usually the scientific method, of the appropriate discipline, or, as in poetry and oratory, through genius. . . . The emphasis in this rhetoric is on adapting what has been discovered outside the rhetorical enterprise to the minds of the hearers. The study of rhetoric thus focuses on developing skill in arrangement and style (1982, pp. 769-770).

The Formalist approach further deemphasizes the processes of writing by only specifying what form is preferred and generally not specifying how to accomplish the preferred form: “For any process
approach, by definition, concerns itself with one or more of the *hows* formalists traditionally ignore: *how* writers create; *how* writers think, feel, and verbalize to enable writing; *how* writers learn while writing; *how* writing communicates with readers; and *how* social processes and contexts influence the shaping and interpreting of texts" (Coe, 1987, p. 14).

By sharply dichotomizing form and content, the interactive nature of form and content is ignored. As Fort notes: “since a relation always exists between form and content, it [the thesis statement] also imposes broad restrictions on the kind of topics that may be chosen” (1971, p. 631). The nature of the preferred form constrains the nature of the acceptable content just as the nature of the preferred content prescribes the nature of the acceptable form. A different content may legislate a different discourse form.

New rhetorical forms may be needed to express new ideas: “Oppressed social groups often find it necessary to invent new forms because the socially dominant forms will not readily carry their ideas” (Coe, 1987, p. 25). That women, at least until recently, have been an often oppressed social group is an undeniable fact. As women become increasingly powerful and visible within society, their demands to express their truths — their voices — will not be denied. Yet within the Formalist paradigm, some degree of silencing seems an almost inevitable consequence. As Berlin notes: “In Current-Traditional Rhetoric [i.e., the Formalist approach] the writer must efface himself; stated differently, the writer must focus on experience in a way that makes possible the discovery of certain kinds of information — the empirical and rational — and the neglect of others — psychological and social concerns” (1982, pp. 775-776).

As Berlin’s comment implies, underpinning the Formalist approach to composition is a particular epistemological paradigm — a particular attitude toward reality (sometimes described as *foundationism*, e.g., Manicas & Secord, 1983, or *objectivism*, e.g., Lakoff, 1987). Based upon “eighteenth-century Scottish Common Sense Realism as expressed in the philosophy of Thomas Reid and James Beattie, and in the rhetorical treatises of George Campbell, Hugh Blair, and to a lesser extent, Richard Whately” (Berlin, 1982, p. 769), Formalism locates truth outside the individual; truth is discovered through observation. Berlin and Inkster further note:

> For current-traditional rhetoric, reality is rational, regular, and certain — a realm which when it is not static is at least in a predictable, harmonious, symmetrical balance. Meaning thus exists independent of the perceiving mind, reposing in external reality. Knowledge is readily accessible because of the consonance between the world and the faculties of the mind. Since reality is rational, it is best apprehended by the understanding. Imagination also is useful because it makes possible the production of the sensory qualities of an object or event. Emotion, on the other hand, does not contribute to our knowledge of the world because it is not rational. Because the reality that concerns current-traditional rhetoric is not probabilistic, as it was for Aristotle, or problematic, as it is for us, neither are knowledge and meaning. Error, in this scheme, is thus simply the result of inadequate observation or emotional perverseness (1980, p. 2).
Yet this positivistic epistemology, by artificially separating the knower from the knowable may be less compatible with a feminine sense of identity which sees "the self (the inquirer) as involved in rather than separate from the objects about which she or he is developing knowledge" (Salner, 1985, p. 55).

This contradiction between a feminine epistemology which positively values the relationship between the knower and the knowable and an academic epistemology which positively values the formal separation of the knower from the knowable may, in part, account for the double bind some women students encounter. Coe defines a double bind in the following manner:

A double bind is a situation in which a person is faced with a paradoxical command which is important and cannot, apparently, be avoided. The term is often used loosely to designate any awkward choice, but a genuine double bind is more than a you-can't-have-your-cake-and-eat-it-too contradiction; it must involve a genuine paradox, that special type of contradiction which follows correct deductions from a single set of consistent premises such that either correct deduction seems to be invalidated by the other (1975, p. 5).

In the case of the composition class, the premise upon which the double bind often operates is the injunction (often implicit) that "you can write your essay about anything you want, but you must write it using a specific form" (which, of course, prevents the student from writing about what they want). On the one hand, if students adhere to the formal dictates of academe, then they may find it difficult to communicate personally meaningful ideas. On the other hand, if students choose to communicate personally meaningful ideas, then they may find it necessary to write in a form which the academic community devalues (or, at the least, does not positively value).³

In order to redress this double-bind, various commentators (Bolker, 1979; Caywood & Overing, 1987; Sanborn, 1987; Taylor, 1978) have proposed encouraging forms of writing in the composition classroom which enable the students to ground their writing in their personal experiences. Suggestions such as freewriting as well as writing journals, fiction, poetry, and dialogues indicate that these commentators see a possible resolution to the double bind confronting some women in more Expressionist approaches to teaching composition.

The Expressionist Approach

The Expressionist approach to teaching composition is one of the two methods comprising the so-called process approach to writing. In many respects, the Expressionist approach is antithetical to the Formalist approach and, in fact, developed during the mid to late 1960's as a reaction to Formalist rhetoric (Berlin, 1982). Based upon a Platonic conception, wherein truth is discovered by internal contemplation (cf. Thoreau and Emerson), Expressionist rhetoric emphasizes the process of discovering truth by teaching the use of various techniques for invention (e.g., freewriting, brainstorming, even
meditation). Within the classroom, the relative development of the student's cognitive processes sometimes becomes a criterion for evaluation; cognitive developmental models such as William Perry's (1968) or Lawrence Kohlberg's (1976) may be used as yardsticks to measure the student's growth (e.g., Hays, 1983; Miller, 1980). In the Expressionist approach, the writer is privileged relative to the reader or the text.

Typically, the issue of form is neglected in this approach to teaching composition; form is viewed as growing organically to fit the content. In the terms of classical rhetoric, the Expressionist approach emphasizes inventio at the expense of dispositio, expression at the expense of communication:

There is little need to teach form except as an afterthought (along with punctuation) late in both the teaching and writing processes. Thus the Expressionist process approach and the traditional formal approach are indeed opposites: where the traditional approach ignores content to teach form, Expressionist process writing enables content, allowing form to develop organically. Interestingly, Ken Macrorie's pragmatic description of "good form" represents the same stylistic values (and often the same particulars) as does Strunk and White's; but Telling Writing presents them as secondary, to be dealt with during revision, while in The Elements of Style they are virtually the whole ball of wax (Coe, 1987, p. 16).

Like Formalism, the Expressionist approach also suffers from the liability that it arbitrarily dichotomizes form and content. Again, the persuasive and generative functions of form are down-played.

And, like the Formalist approach, the Expressionist approach also avoids issues of substance:

The Expressionist process approach, taking its cue from the derivation of education (to lead out, to draw forth), also avoided questions of substance but by placing "content" within students; this process approach begins by removing constraints, creating contexts and processes through which students can express themselves, can articulate (hence, on another level, discover) what they want to say, can ex-press what is presumably already "inside" them (Coe, 1987, p. 15).

Perhaps inevitably, then, the Expressionist approach fails to adequately acknowledge the communicative context of writing by neither clearly specifying what forms are preferred within the academic discourse community nor by explaining how these preferred forms are of utility within that community. As Berlin notes: "In Neo-Platonic Rhetoric [i.e., the Expressionist approach] the writer is at the center of the rhetorical act, but is finally isolated, cut off from community, and left to the lonely business of discovering truth alone" (1982, p. 776).

Yet at the same time that the Expressionist approach possesses obvious limitations, it is not entirely without merit. As Coe notes: "Expressionist process writing enables content. . . . and the very act of enabling content, of encouraging student writers to write about what concerns them, does create the potential of writing as a liberating social act of self-discovery" (1987, p. 16). The content which the Expressionist approach enables will differ for men and women to the extent that our society's myths, values, and expectations differentially shape the social and psychological experiences of men and women.
Caywood and Overing’s observation that “the process model, insofar as it facilitates and legitimizes the fullest expression of the individual voice, is compatible with the feminist re-visioning of hierarchy” (1987, p. xiv) bears further reflection. To the extent that one of the goals of a liberal education is to humanize, or “to externalize false consciousness” (Berlin, 1988, p. 491) through the agency of critical thinking, the values clarification enabled by the Expressionist approach must be accounted worthwhile.

However, encouraging only Expressionist writing in the composition classroom may do as great a disservice to the students as encouraging only Formalist writing in the classroom. The theory of English Composition may be undergoing a transformation, but it would be quite naive to assume that the preference of the academic community for specific forms is also undergoing a similar transformation.

Although anthologies such as Caywood’s and Overing’s, Teaching Writing: Pedagogy, Gender, and Equity (1987), are well-intentioned and serve a useful role in that they may foster the discovery of new truths — new forms — they are perhaps also somewhat misguided in their outright rejection of old truths — old forms. On the one hand, the preferred forms of the academic discourse community are not without value and cannot simply be dismissed (nor are they likely to be). Coe’s observation about the utility of certain traditional academic discourse forms (e.g., the thesis paragraph) is relevant:

When teaching such standard forms as the thesis paragraph . . . it matters that we explain the importance of this form in academic (and other professional) discourse, make clear why it predominates in certain types of discourse (academic, scientific, professional — and textbooks). We should validate (and limit) this form by showing that it makes a certain type of critical reading easier because proofs can be evaluated more easily if readers know in advance what they purportedly prove, because information can be taken in more efficiently if one knows in advance the outline of what is to be learned (1987, pp. 21-22; cf. Coe, 1990b, pp. 437-467).

On the other hand, to simply teach students to reproduce these preferred forms, even if instructors explain why these forms are useful, does not really solve the problem, but simply perpetuates it (as well as the injustice it may well represent). The Formalist approach is, after all, only one element of the dialectic. The Expressionist is another.

Clearly, if composition is to be taught in a manner which furthers (and perhaps reconciles) both the values of academe and the values of women students, then a synthesis is required, not only between the Formalist approach and the Expressionist approach, but also between form and content. Such a synthesis may, in fact, be offered by the New Rhetorical approach which resolves some of the contradictions between the Formalist and the Expressionist approaches by viewing rhetorical structures as strategies artificially separated from the communicative context — as means invented to serve specific ends (Coe 1988b).
The New Rhetorical Approach

The second strand of the so-called process pedagogy is the New Rhetorical approach in which "form may be generative insofar as it motivates a search for more information; but any form also biases the direction of the searching and constrains against the discovery of information that does not fit the form" (Coe, 1987, p. 20). Based in large part upon the rhetorics of Richards (1936) and Burke (1969a; 1969b), the New Rhetorical approach contends that meaning is generated through the dialectical transactions between the writer, the audience, and the world within varying communicative, psychological, and social contexts. As Berlin suggests:

For the New Rhetoric, knowledge is not simply a static entity available for retrieval. Truth is dynamic and dialectical, the result of a process involving the interaction of opposing elements. It is a relation that is created, not pre-existent and waiting to be discovered. The basic elements of the dialectic are the elements that make up the communication process — writer (speaker), audience, reality, language. Communication is always basic to the epistemology underlying the New Rhetoric because truth is always truth for someone standing in relation to others in a linguistically circumscribed situation. The elements of the communication process thus do not simply provide a convenient way of talking about rhetoric. They form the elements that go into the very shaping of knowledge (1982, p. 774).

In the terms of information theory, information is without meaning until it is processed; which is to say, until it is structured and organized — formed — or more accurately, transformed. And information can only be processed or formed in relation with various contexts.

Coe's summary of Kenneth Burke's concept of the relationship between structure and strategy helps clarify the interactions between form, content, and context:

Rhetorical structures are prepared ways of responding, frozen in synchronicity. They embody our social memory of standard strategies for responding to types of situations we encounter repeatedly. When we see past the uniqueness of a particular situation and recognize it as familiar, we activate (at least provisionally) a structure we have previously decided is generally appropriate to that type of situation. New and radically different types of situations call for new strategies, which may be embodied in new structures (cf. Young, Becker, and Pike on Rogerian persuasion; also Coe, "Rhetoric 2001", 1974). Though the reduction of strategies to structures is convenient and perhaps efficient, it creates an historical abstractness that masks the connection to what the anthropologist Stanislaw Malinowski called "context of situation". It also interrupts the logical flow which should take us from consideration of strategies to consideration of the ends those strategies serve — and hence from rhetoric to ethics. To understand and explain rhetorical structures we should remember the strategies they embody, the types of situations to which they cor-respond, and the ends they are structured to serve (1988b, p. 1).

By recognizing the interactive nature of form and content, the New Rhetorical approach unifies inventio and dispositio.

In that, the New Rhetorical approach is more useful than the other two approaches. It teaches both what form is preferred and how to achieve that form. Further, it both accepts and facilitates the invention of novel forms while at the same time acknowledging the values and limitations of more
traditional forms. The dialectical nature of the New Rhetoric proffers the hopeful possibility of sublating some of the contradictions between form and content, between dispositio and inventio, between old and new, between professor and student, between feminine and masculine values. The New Rhetorical approach, by affirming the value of preserving traditional discourse forms while simultaneously affirming the need to generate new discourse forms, may offer a possible way of re-form-ing the way that composition is taught within the university discourse community and, eventually, the way that form is understood by that community.

Although the foregoing taxonomy of composition theories captures some important distinctions between general approaches to teaching composition, it also oversimplifies the situation to a significant degree. Rarely does reality perfectly fit any taxonomy; instead, a taxonomy represents an attempt to understand reality by classifying various elements on the basis of generally shared characteristics. The rather fuzzy nature of taxonomies is perhaps nowhere more obvious than when attempting to impose some order upon the various competing approaches to teaching writing.

Fulkerson (1990) suggests that a complete theory of writing involves four constituent components: an axiological element, a procedural element, a pedagogical element, and an epistemological element. He defines these components as follows:

1. A full theory necessarily includes a commitment about what constitutes good writing — not necessarily a simplistic one, but some analysis of what we want student writers to achieve as a result of effective teaching. This is an axiological component. . . . Without some such aim, it is useless to teach composition since you can’t know whether a change in student writing represents progress. . . .

2. A full theory also necessarily includes a conception of how writers go about creating texts, and perhaps a conception of how they should go about it. That is, the theory has a procedural element describing the means by which writers can reach the ends specified by the axiology.

3. A full theory must include some perspective about classroom procedures and curricular designs suitable for enabling students to achieve the sort of writing one values, a pedagogical component. This component also concerns means, but the teacher’s means rather than the writer’s.

4. Although ontologically different, a forth element is necessary, an epistemology: our perceptions of how texts are created and of what classroom methods are effective depend on assumptions about what counts for knowledge. Moreover writing itself requires epistemological assumptions, so teaching writing implicitly involves teaching epistemology (1990, pp. 410-411).

In other words, a complete theory of writing would specify the nature of good writing, the process of generating that writing, the method for teaching that writing (and that process), and the kinds of thinking involved in that writing (and that process).

Fulkerson goes on to assert that over the past decade there has developed a general consensus in terms of axiology within the discipline of composition: “Good writing, the sort of writing that we hope to enable students to produce, is contextually adapted to, perhaps even controlled by [italics added], its
audience (or discourse community), addressed or invoked, or both" (1990, p. 417). In other words, *good writing* as currently defined is *reader based* rather than *writer based* or *text based*. In Fulkerson's view, then, the reader is privileged relative to the writer or the text.

At the same time that he contends there is a general consensus in terms of axiology, Fulkerson suggests that no such consensus exists in terms of process, pedagogy, or epistemology. Although he perhaps rightly critiques Berlin's taxonomy as proposed in "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Classroom" (1988) on the grounds that it conflates axiology, epistemology, and pedagogy, Fulkerson's analysis understates the degree of consensus which currently exists in terms of process, pedagogy, as well as epistemology, and overstates the degree of consensus which exists in terms of axiology. Berlin could respond to Fulkerson's critique by pointing out that Fulkerson has entirely failed to consider the ethical component implied by any writing theory — especially those theories which overtly ignore the ethical stance they imply.

As Berlin suggests in relation to cognitive rhetoric, the problem with composition theories which fail to consider whose interests are being served is that they leave themselves open to being co-opted by various dominant groups in society:

Nowhere, for example, do Flower and Hayes question the worth of the goals pursued by the manager, scientist, or writer. The business of cognitive psychology is to enable us to learn to think in a way that will realize goals, not deliberate about their value: "I have assumed that, whatever your goals, you are interested in discovering better ways to achieve them [Flower, 1985, p. 1]". . . . That the cognitive skills leading to success may be the product of the experiences of a particular social class rather than the perfecting of inherent mental structures, skills encouraged because they serve the interests of a ruling economic elite, is never considered in the "scientific" investigation of the mind. . . . Cognitive rhetoric, then, in its refusal of the ideological question leaves itself open to association with the reification of technocratic science characteristic of late capitalism (Berlin, 1988, pp. 482-484).

Berlin's analysis, of course, cannot help but fail to consider Linda Flower's more recent call for a composition theory which synthesizes social and cognitive aspects of writing (1989a).

Beyond briefly mentioning that *ethics* is a sub-category of *axiology* (p. 411), Fulkerson indicates no awareness that writing involves an ethical dimension. His use of the term *axiology* throughout the article seems only to encompass the *aesthetic* of writing. The axiological consensus in composition theory, at least as posited by Fulkerson, solely consists of producing writing that is *addressed* to an audience of some form or another, that is, writing which takes into account the need to persuade the reader. Further, when he later attacks Berlin's taxonomy of writing theories, he does so explicitly on the basis of Berlin's consideration of ideology in writing (i.e., who's ends are served by particular conceptions of writing).

The inadequacy of Fulkerson's conception is apparent when one considers the (admittedly extreme) example of propaganda in the light of his definition of good writing. Propaganda would be considered
good if it effectively addresses the reader, that is, if it persuades the reader. Almost certainly, however, most composition instructors would respond that propaganda is not Good on ethical grounds. In other words, effective writing is not necessarily ethical writing. Fulkerson errs when he defines the ends of writing solely in terms of effectiveness and fails to consider what ends that writing serves. By the same token, it could also be argued that the pedagogical and procedural components of writing theories also require a consideration of ethics. Brainwashing as a pedagogy may be effective, but is it ethical? And plagiarism, as a procedure for producing a text, is effective (or at least efficient); nevertheless, most composition instructors frown upon the practice.

The key point here is that Berlin and Fulkerson differ radically in which component of writing theory they each choose to privilege. Berlin, quite obviously, foregrounds social justice in his taxonomy (and thus places the issue of audience in the background); good writing is ethical writing insofar as it is concerned with the humanistic function of writing. Fulkerson, on the other hand, privileges considerations of audience (and thus devalues issues of social justice); good writing is effective writing insofar as it is concerned with the persuasive function of writing.

Fulkerson’s perspective is perhaps most obviously indicated by his rather odd description of Sheridan Baker’s text, The Practical Stylist, as possessing a rhetorical axiology:

Baker, too, now adopts an overtly rhetorical orientation by including for the first time a section called “Consider Your Readers” (4-5). Of course, Baker’s stress on the “argumentative edge” for all writing, which makes even exposition into persuasion, has always been an explicitly rhetorical focus, even though a number of features in his endpaper checklists suggest a perhaps inconsistent formalism (such as “Each paragraph begun with topic sentence?” and “Paragraphs four or five sentences long?”) (1990, pp. 415).

That the “overtly rhetorical orientation” which Baker supposedly adopts represents a rather thin patina becomes quite apparent when one recognizes that Baker’s discussion of audience occupies less than 2 pages out of a total of 518 pages (1987, pp. 4-5). Put simply, Baker’s text is not representative of an “inconsistent formalism”; more accurately, his text is almost entirely consistent with a Formalist approach to writing.

The degree to which Fulkerson’s article entirely ignores the ethical dimensions of composition theory and practice is further highlighted by his failure to consider how the “argumentative edge” advocated by Baker may conflict with the socially constructed roles of some women (cf. Taylor, 1978). To the extent that Baker’s adversarial approach represents a formal expectation of the academic audience (cf. Frey, 1990; Ong, 1972; Sloane, 1989) and to the extent that “good writing, the sort of writing that we hope to enable students to produce, is contextually adapted to, perhaps even controlled by, its
audience" (Fulkerson, 1990, p. 417), the "emerging axiological consensus" may well continue to pose a problem for some writers.

If, in fact, Fulkerson's analysis is accurate, that composition instructors now define good writing on the basis of how effectively it is addressed to the audience (with minimal reference to ethical and social issues), then addressing the audience has simply become another formal requirement for good texts. In other words, the "emerging axiological consensus" may devolve into the old rhetoric — Formalism. As Berlin notes about Formalism: "the emphasis in this rhetoric is on adapting what has been discovered outside the rhetorical enterprise to the minds of the hearers" (1982, pp. 769-770). Although Fulkerson's "emerging consensus" may be rhetorical, it is not New Rhetorical. And, to the extent that this supposed rhetorical consensus downplays the ethical and humanizing functions of writing, it risks being co-opted by Formalists like Sheridan Baker (cf. a similar observation about cognitive rhetoric by Berlin, 1988, pp. 482-484).

At heart, the conflict between Fulkerson's position and Berlin's position lies in differing conceptions of the appropriate relationship between the writer and the reader. Fulkerson's position by emphasizing issues of audience (from the aesthetic perspective that good writing is centrally concerned with readers), fails to adequately consider the implications of ignoring the psychosocial context of the writer — alienation from one's own values. His position easily devolves into Formalism. Berlin, on the other hand, by emphasizing the social context of the writer (from the ethical perspective that Good writing is centrally concerned with writers), fails to adequately consider the implications of ignoring the reader — failure in the community. His position may well devolve into Expressionism. To a significant degree, both theorists overstate their positions and, in so doing, risk losing the dialectic potential of the New Rhetoric — an approach which contends that good writing is both ethical and persuasive.

The conflict between the different perspectives of these two theorists highlights the problems which may be faced by some women students as well as the problems faced by instructors who hope to teach composition in a fashion which is equitable. The conflict between writer and reader as mediated by the text is one which must be addressed. Annas (1985) implies the importance of discovering and promoting a synthetic resolution to the contradictions facing women writers when she insists women must learn to write rigorously in a style which is authentically their own. As she notes: "The kind of writing I finally want these students to be able to do brings together the personal and the political, the private and the public, into writing which is committed and powerful because it takes risks, because it speaks up clearly in their own voices and from their experience, experiments with techniques of argumentation and skillful organization, and engages, where appropriate, with the insights of other writers" (p. 370). Rose (1986) echoes that sentiment: "Our women students must be prepared to recognize the values of academe and
find ways of reconciling the inevitable conflicts they will face” (p. 17). Writing, when authentic and rigorous, will honor both the self and the audience.

But do current instructional practices help students meet this goal?

Unchanging Practices for Teaching Writing

Although the preceding discussion of the conflicts between theoretical models might be misconstrued as an exercise in setting up and then toppling straw men, the continued separation between theory and practice in the field of composition suggests otherwise. Fulkerson’s assertion that there is no consensus in terms of composition pedagogy may be true insofar as it only addresses pedagogical theories found within the professional literature. In terms of classroom practices, current composition instruction appears predominantly to remain within the Formalist paradigm.

In order to determine the degree to which composition textbooks published in the early to mid 1970’s had incorporated some of the insights gained into writing processes from the mid 1960’s, Stewart (1978) surveyed thirty-four texts with sales exceeding 100,000 copies. Eleven of these texts were published between 1970 and 1974, while the remaining twenty-three were published between 1975 and 1977. Of the thirty-four, 27 (79%) remained “strictly current-traditional in their discussions of invention, arrangement, and style” (p. 174). Stewart ascribes the willingness of composition instructors to purchase textbooks based upon “outdated theory” to their lack of training in composition:

Who buys these books with outdated theory? English teachers do. English teachers whose knowledge of composition history and theory is not up-to-date. In many cases, it has never existed. Why? Because the professional training of the English teacher has been in literature. And in literary history, theory, and criticism, most English teachers know their stuff. I have known English teachers whose sophistication in literary criticism and theory was equalled only by their ignorance of composition history and theory (1978, p. 175).

Although Stewart is probably correct in his analysis that many English teachers are more familiar with literary critical theory than with composition theory, he is perhaps somewhat naive in expecting an immediate and radical change in the familiarity of composition instructors and textbook writers with contemporary composition theory and research (moreover, there is often a 4 to 5 year lag between the initial work on a text and its publication). As Lundsteen notes about the field of composition, there may be a “lag of twenty-five to thirty-five years between the discovery of new knowledge and putting that knowledge into action” (cited in Burhans, 1983, p. 639). If Stewart’s survey were repeated for the period of 1985 to 1990, the results would probably be different (as almost assuredly some information about the writing process is being incorporated into writing texts). Nevertheless, Stewart’s survey
provides a useful baseline, suggesting that minimal changes in composition instruction occurred over the first ten or so years since the publication of Rohman and Wlecke’s study of pre-writing in 1964.8

In 1980, Covino, Johnson, and Feehan conducted a survey of faculty and graduate students in 31 university English Departments throughout the United States and Canada to identify their attitudes about teacher education in composition, their methods for handling errors in student writing, and their awareness of composition theory and research. In terms of teacher education, they note:

Instead of literature, the subject matter which the majority of faculty [and graduate students] labeled “most essential for preparing teachers of composition” is that named by Classical Rhetoric and General Linguistics. . . . A strong preference for both Classical Rhetoric and General Linguistics might at first seem an unusual coupling of the ancient and the modern. But it may be that the two subjects are related insofar as they are both “traditional.” For many, Classical Rhetoric prescribes an always orderly attention to invention, arrangement, and style in written composition. . . . General Linguistics is nearly as popular as Classical Rhetoric insofar as both subjects seem to address the traditional concerns of the writing teacher: grammar and formal organization (1980, p. 392).

This concern with grammar and organization is further reinforced by the respondents’ apparent practices of dealing with mechanical errors:

In general, then, those faculty instructors [and graduate students] we questioned seem to approve of marking several student errors per paper, preferably through the use of marginal notes, and they definitely include mechanical errors as legitimate targets for criticism. Improving literacy is thus identified with a mastery of Standard Written English, and not with the student’s ‘voice’ or ‘feelings,’ terms usually associated with style or content. . . . Overall, it appears that good writing is closely identified with correct writing (pp. 394-395).

Clearly, the attitudes expressed by both the graduate students and faculty surveyed accord closely with the focus of Formalism upon arrangement, grammar, and correctness.

Roughly 15 years after Rohman and Wlecke’s study, composition instruction still appears to be changing slowly. At the same time, the survey is not entirely pessimistic in outlook. The graduate students were slightly more aware of current composition theory and research than were the faculty and were perhaps also slightly less concerned with issues of correctness. Nevertheless, the respondents in both groups identified their own composing processes as far more important factors in influencing their attitudes toward writing (and, one might also infer, their practices) than theory and research. Further, neither the faculty nor the graduate students identified “Current Theories of Composition” as a particularly important consideration for teacher preparation.

Although the attitudes held by the graduate students are perhaps slightly more informed and slightly less rule-bound than those of the faculty, Covino, Johnson, and Feehan’s conclusions appear to apply to both the faculty and graduate students alike:
To summarize, we should remark once more that most of our respondents are active composition teachers. Their attitudes thus reflect the emphases in writing classrooms at present. What emerges from their responses is the widespread approval of a writing pedagogy grounded in respect for grammar and organization and stressing correctness over style and content. Such a pedagogy is largely shaped by personal experience rather than by the research and theories of others (p. 398).

To paraphrase part of their conclusion: *the attitudes of the graduate students thus reflect the emphases in writing classrooms in the future.* Given that the attitudes held by many of the graduate students were largely Formalist in nature and given that those graduate students would by now be teaching in North American colleges and universities, it should not be particularly surprising to discover that composition practice continues to change rather slowly.

In a 1982 survey of practices in writing instruction among 135 grade seven to twelve English teachers in central and western Pennsylvania, Tighe and Koziol found that 62 percent of the teachers indicated that they lacked formal training in teaching composition skills (p. 78). This lack of training is perhaps further substantiated by their relatively limited use of pre-writing activities with their students as well as their minimal encouragement of more Expressionist forms of writing such as journals, diaries, and autobiographies. As Tighe and Koziol observe:

> It is discouraging to see the relative paucity of use of journal or diary writing especially given the amount of attention devoted in the professional literature to pointing out the values of such writing experiences for writers at all levels of development. Claims that English teachers spend too much time having the students write “creatively” have little substantiation in these data. Indeed, it would appear that English teachers devote little more attention to these types of writing experiences than do teachers in social studies and science (1982, p. 81).

Further, Tighe and Koziol note that the typical Formalist focus upon correctness and mechanics was predominant in terms of the teacher’s emphasis upon skills: “Quite clearly, English teachers seem to place a very high priority on specific aspects of form – i.e., using correct mechanics and grammar, using topic sentences, making transitions, editing, and sentence structure” (pp. 81-82). In terms of evaluating student writing, little use was made of conferencing or peer and self evaluation.

Although Tighe and Koziol’s study suggests the continued existence of a gap between theory and practice within the secondary school, the situation is not entirely bleak, particularly within the Canadian context. The 1982 *Composition 11 Curriculum Guide and Resource Book for Teachers*, issued by the British Columbia Ministry of Education, takes a process approach which is more in accord with current theory. Appendix K provides a copy of the “Philosophy” and “Instructional Implications” contained within this guide (pp. 5, 9-10). As these excerpts suggest, the stress of this curriculum guide upon humane relationships between teacher and student, peer revising groups, and the publication of student writing distinguish it from more traditional Formalist approaches. The lessened emphases upon marking mechanical errors, and upon teaching grammar and the traditional essay form also situate this guide
within the process approaches to teaching composition. Yet the guide does not simply assume the Expressionist stance of neglecting form in order to enable content. Form is considered important, but it becomes a focus rather than the focus of composition instruction: “The mechanics of expression, although important, should be emphasized less than ideas, images, and the general effectiveness of the communication” (1982, p. 9). A New Rhetorical approach to the teaching of form appears to be the one taken. Indeed, the broad consideration of writing contexts, in terms of audience and purpose, as well as social contexts, in terms of family and school, further suggest that this curriculum guide is New Rhetorical in nature.

Conceivably, the appearance of this curriculum guide in 1982 with its New Rhetorical approach could be viewed as an aberration from more traditional approaches to teaching composition in the secondary school. Much of the guide was drafted by Richard Coe, a New Rhetorical theorist at Simon Fraser University, whose views about the writing process and the nature of form have been detailed at some length in this thesis. Perhaps the progressive approach taken by the curriculum guide is due more to his involvement in the writing of the guide than it is reflective of a general change in composition practice within the secondary school.

However, an alternative explanation is also possible. Perhaps there is a wider gap between theory and practice within the university context than within the secondary school context. Perhaps secondary school teachers are more willing to adopt new approaches to teaching composition than are their university and college counterparts. Willinsky (1988), in a case study of composition practices in a Nova Scotia High School (grades 10 and 12) undertaken during the 1981-82 school year, describes a still evolving change in orientation from a Formalist approach which emphasized grammar and mechanics to a process approach which emphasized “using language to make sense of experience” (Language for Learning, p. 2, in Willinsky, p. 41). Evidently, the particular process paradigm underpinning the changes in practice at this school was an Expressionist one:

Expressive language is vital and rich and close to the self. It is directed to the self without a concern for audience. From this language grows our public language (Language for Learning, p. 2, cited in Willinsky, p. 41).

Unfortunately, this more process oriented approach to teaching composition had only just begun to be implemented, and only in the academic classes (i.e., classes for students likely to go on to college); in the general classes (i.e., those for students unlikely to go on to college), the emphasis remained upon formal correctness in mechanics and instruction in grammar.

Although obviously scant, there does appear to be some evidence indicating that by 1982 some high school teachers had begun adopting instructional practices more in accord with composition theory. In
the university context, however, practices appear to have remained generally immune to theoretical advances. In a rather disheartening survey of 263 American college and university calendars for the 1982-83 and 1983-84 school years, Burhans (1983) found that between 83% and 89% of current writing courses were based upon the current-traditional (Formalist) approach whereas between 1% and 5% were based upon more contemporary approaches. Between 8% and 16% were indefinite in their approach (the range of percentages relates to a further breakdown of the courses into remedial, basic, intermediate, and advanced levels).9

As Burhans freely admits, one possible weakness of his study is that “catalogs, like dictionaries, may lag behind usage; that is, teachers could be revising requirements and rewriting course descriptions, even changing directions, years before this movement is reflected in the current catalog” (1983, pp. 643-644). Nevertheless, the substantial size of his sample, 263 calendars representing 9.3% of the total published (and all fifty states), and his use of the most recent calendars adds a certain veracity to his statements. And, as Burhans further observes:

I surmise from my own experience that most schools take their course descriptions very seriously. They are usually written by individuals or committees expert and experienced in the courses they are describing; indeed, course descriptions are usually written or at least approved by senior staff. Except where they are simple titles or indefinite statements, course descriptions usually develop from multiple drafts revised until each word reflects clearly and accurately what a department wants done in that course (1983, p. 644).

It is also worth pointing out that the consonance between Instructor Y’s course syllabus (Appendix E) and the course description in the Douglas College Calendar provides further support for Burhan’s contention that the course descriptions he studied were, in fact, representative of current practices.10

Insofar as the course descriptions written by composition instructors represent the degree to which those writers, as members of the academic discourse community, are in touch with the stylistic and ideological preferences of academia, those descriptions may be viewed as representative anecdote in the Burkean sense. As such, these course descriptions provide a set of myths — the subtext — upon which current practice is based. Using the descriptions from various catalogs, Burhans suggests that these myths present writing as:

Communication skills with emphasis on exposition;
A tool for testing what has been learned, not a vital way of learning, of generating meaning;
Discrete and sequential surface skills;
“Rules” of grammar, mechanics, and usage to be learned in lectures, practiced in workbook exercises, and applied in assigned topics — usually in one shot final drafts;
Analysis of models to be imitated;
Divorced from purpose and reader;
Text to be evaluated apart from the process of producing it by correcting errors for students to revise (1983, p. 651).
As should be evident, this set of myths is consonant with the approaches to teaching composition current at both UBC and Douglas College as discussed in Chapter Three.

Even if it is assumed that some of the course descriptions did not accurately reflect the actual nature of the current approach for the course, the figures are not encouraging. Nearly 20 years after Rohman and Wlecke’s study of pre-writing, composition instruction appears to have changed little. A replication of both Burhans’ study and Stewart’s study would be particularly valuable in ascertaining the degree to which there has been a change in approach over the past seven years. Although such studies have yet to be undertaken, the evidence presented in Chapter Three (the cases of Douglas College and the University of British Columbia) suggests that Burhans’ observations may well remain valid today. Despite much research and theorizing over the past 25 years, the Formalist paradigm for composition instruction seems to have remained paramount. As Sharon Hamilton-Wieler despairs, the “paradigm shift described in the rhetoric of [our] journals . . . is simply not a day-to-day reality in the majority of classrooms” (cited in Fulkerson, 1990, p. 424).

**Alternative Practices for Teaching Writing**

Into this context of a wide disparity between the theories and the realities of composition instruction, various means of increasing gender fairness have been advocated. Caywood and Overing (1987), for example, propose that composition instructors emphasize the process approach to writing:

> The familiar revisionist view of writing as process, which challenges the classical view of writing as product, offers a paradigmatic dialectic also appropriate to feminist discourse. The model of writing as product is inherently authoritarian. The art of writing becomes a suppressed and private activity of the self which is eventually divorced from the product made public. As a result, certain forms of discourse and language are privileged: the expository essay is valued over the exploratory; the argumentative essay set above the autobiographical; the clear evocation of a thesis preferred to a more organic exploration of a topic; the impersonal, rational voice ranked more highly that the intimate, subjective one. The valuing of one form over another requires that the teacher be a judge, imposing a hierarchy of learned aesthetic values, gathered from ideal texts, upon the student texts. . . . The process model, insofar as it facilitates and legitimizes the fullest expression of the individual voice, is compatible with the feminist re-visioning of hierarchy, if not essential to it (pp. xii-xiv).

Given the evidence that the Formalist approach continues to dominate current instructional practice (as well as the danger that narrow considerations of audience can all too easily devolve into simply another formal requirement for student papers), their assertion that instructors must further emphasize process approaches to writing *does* provide a needed dialectical antidote to current practices. Insofar as Caywood and Overing call for a renewal in how composition is taught, their anthology must be accounted valuable.
At the same time, however, their approach oversimplifies by placing the so-called process approach in narrow opposition to the so-called product approach. As Coe points out, some caution needs to be exercised with the terms process and product. The Formalist approach has often been (incorrectly) called the product approach:

These days, it has become commonplace to juxtapose process writing with a so-called “product approach.” Rather than defining what the traditional approach is, this inadequate and derogatory title shifts our attention to what it is not (i.e., not process). Properly termed, what the past two decades saw was a conflict between a (traditional) formal approach and a (renewed) process approach (Coe, 1987, p. 14).

This dichotomy between process and product is somewhat misleading insofar as all approaches for writing must deal, in some fashion or other, with both the process and the product. Outlining, for example, is one process often emphasized by Formalist textbooks. As Berlin indicates: “Everyone teaches the process of writing, but everyone does not teach the same process” (1982, p. 777). The differences between the various approaches can perhaps be more usefully understood as differing interpretations about the nature of, and relationship between, form, substance, and process.

The particular process explicitly emphasized in Caywood and Overing’s anthology is, by and large, an Expressionist one. And like most Expressionist approaches: “much more emphasis is given to the act of writing, to both revealing and examining the private process of discovery [italics added]” (Caywood and Overing, 1987, p. xii). Invention is emphasized in their anthology — at the expense of arrangement, of form. Not surprisingly, of the twenty articles in their anthology only two deal primarily with form (and one of those articles considers form almost exclusively in terms of its potential for encouraging self-expression).

In other words, the anthology puts forward an arhetorical view of writing; a view of writing which ignores rhetorical issues such as audience, purpose, form, and social context: “the writer is at the center of the rhetorical act, but is finally isolated, cut off from community, and left to the lonely business of discovering truth alone” (Berlin, 1982, p. 776). As such, the overt Expressionist epistemology which Caywood and Overing propose to adopt conflicts with the epistemology implicit in feminine psychology (i.e., isolation versus connection). If composition instructors are to take seriously the implications of feminine psychology as outlined by Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1982), and Belenky et al. (1986), then naively accepting pedagogies which stop at the “private process of discovery” hazards increasing rather than decreasing gender inequities in the classroom. In effect, such approaches risk creating an expressivist-feminine ghetto, at least insofar as this approach solely governs the classroom.

Of course, the extent to which any classroom applications are likely to be purely Expressionist in approach is open to some debate. Almost certainly, some instructors operating from within this
paradigm will also recognize the need to explicitly teach the forms traditionally valued by academia. Further, given the surveys suggesting the majority of composition departments within universities and colleges continue to take a Formalist approach (Burhans 1983; Raines, 1990), it seems a reasonable assumption that even those instructors with a strong preference for an Expressionist approach will be required to pay some attention to the traditional forms. In other words, the realities of the classroom and university context may well mandate against a purely Expressionist approach. The practices of teaching rarely fit neatly into the theories about those practices.

By sharply dichotomizing process and product — invention and arrangement — Caywood and Overing’s anthology oversimplifies not only current practices, but also how those practices should be changed in light of recent theory. An approach which simply ignores the utility of traditional discourse forms (however diverse) within academia is not likely to be received well by student or teacher alike. What Caywood and Overing have to say is valuable insofar as it focuses attention upon the differences between men and women, but is less than helpful insofar as it ignores rhetorical form. By not explicitly teaching how to produce the forms valued in various ways by academe (or by paying minimal attention to them), a heavily Expressionist approach may place students, both women and men, at some risk in terms of their academic and professional success. Irrespective of composition instructors’ wishes about how other academics should consider the function of discourse, academics will continue to judge the success or failure of their students, at least in part, on the basis of their ability to successfully reproduce the various forms preferred within academia.

Given these observations, what alternative practices in teaching composition might help to minimize gender inequities (or for that matter, inequities of race and class)? The following set of principles, although in no way exhaustive, focuses on encouraging the social aspects (which is to say, the humanizing aspects) of education in the composition classroom, with a specific emphasis upon gender.

1. Encourage students to use inclusive language in their writing (and sensitize instructors to potential biases in their teaching).
2. Explore the psychosocial and linguistic differences among genders (as well as among different races, classes, and sexual orientations).
3. Evaluate the social contexts of students on an individual basis (paying particular attention to issues of gender, race, class, and sexual orientation which might result in axiological or epistemological conflicts with academe).
4. Utilize expressionist approaches as needed (in order to assist those who might be operating from what Belenky et al. call the “position of silence”).
5. Encourage both “connected” and “separate” ways of knowing.
6. Organize classes using collaborative pedagogies (thereby emphasizing that writing and knowing are socially constructed activities).
7. Decrease the authority of the instructor and recognize the authority of the learner.
8. Allow students to experiment with alternative collaborative writing processes.
1. **Encourage students to use inclusive language in their writing.** Although in some sense the following points should be obvious, they are nevertheless worth repeating. Instructors have a responsibility to teach their students not only *how* to write using inclusive language, but also *why* they should do so. Beyond the ethical issue (i.e., language both reflects and perpetuates attitudes), issues of cognition and persuasion are also involved. As Crawford and English (1984) found, men recall information presented using generic language better than do women. This difference disappears when the same information is presented using inclusive language. And, in terms of writing with a persuasive intent, there is always the possibility that women might find discourse that is framed in generic language less persuasive than discourse that is framed using inclusive language.

Obviously, instructors must avoid using examples or otherwise behaving in ways which demean either sex. There is no place in the classroom for sexist jokes or harassment. On a more subtle level, however, instructors also have a responsibility to provide a selection of writing topics (and literature) that appeals to both men and women.

Moreover, instructors should ensure that the methods which they use for evaluating students are not biased against either sex. The developmental models proposed by Perry (1968) and Kohlberg (1976), and which are sometimes used for the assessment of discursive maturity (Hays, 1983; Miller, 1980), are based upon studies from which women were excluded or in which their numbers were limited. At the very least, the work of Kohlberg and Perry needs to be informed by the complementary work of Gilligan (1982) and Belenky et al. (1986).

2. **Explore the psychosocial and linguistic differences among the genders.** When discussing inclusive language, instructors also have an opportunity to help their students explore some of the psychosocial and linguistic differences between masculine and feminine individuals (not to mention issues of race, class, and sexual orientation). One way this can be accomplished is through the reading and discussion of short articles such as “Style as Politics” (Annas, 1985), “Gender Differences in Graffiti” (Bruner & Kelso, 1980), and “A Cultural Approach to Male-Female Miscommunication” (Maltz & Borker, 1982), etc. Aside from being a topic of perennial interest to many students, discussions of sex/gender differences provide an opportunity for students to question their assumptions and stereotypes about sex/gender as well as the ideological implications of sex/gender in society.

However, these discussions must be sensitively and perceptively handled by instructors as there is always the danger that such discussions could lead to the reinforcement rather than the challenging of sexual stereotypes. Such discussions must be framed in ways that ask students to consider whether or not the *hypothetical* differences are accurate, whether or not these differences are beneficial, whether or not
they are changing. Moreover, instructors need to point out that men and women share more similarities than differences and that individual differences are often greater than sex/gender differences.

3. Evaluate the social contexts of students on an individual basis. Just as instructors need to point out to students that individual differences are often greater than gender differences, instructors also need to consider the individual social contexts of their students in order to remediate any conflicts between the values and epistemologies of some students and those values and epistemologies that are privileged in various ways by the university discourse community. The issue of how to deal with basic writers is a case in point. Annas' suggestion that some women need to learn how to write in a way that “brings together the personal and the political, the private and the public” (1985, p. 370), if they are to flourish within the academic discourse community is supported in a case study by Hunter et al. (1988):

We turn to Barry Brummett, who differentiates three types of epistemologies: mechanical, subjective, and intersubjective. He rejects the mechanical because “Observation cannot be value-free” (26). Though mechanical epistemology is the dominant world view of the academic community, it is now being challenged in many fields, both in the sciences and in the humanities. Brummett also rejects the subjective because “in its pure form [it is] solipsism” (30). In the group of female basic writers we studied, we observed dependence on subjective epistemology, but we observed that it was a pragmatic subjectivism focusing on their relationship with others, not the “pure form” of subjectivism which Brummett rejects as focusing on only the self. In their writing, the female basic writers struggle to bridge the gap between their own subjectivism and the mechanical expectations of the academic discourse community, but for most the gap is not bridgeable. Brummett proposes the third, intersubjective (or “process”) epistemology, as the most appropriate for our age. “Participation in shared meanings” (31), Brummett writes – participation which reconciles the private and the public [italics added] – is the hallmark of intersubjectivity (p. 74).

Although they describe their findings as tentative and based upon a small sample (20 subjects), Hunter et al. suggest that women basic writers may encounter difficulty “respond[ing] successfully to topics which may seem to come from ‘another world’ – that is from a discourse community with a different epistemological base” (1988, p. 80).

How frequently is this conflict between epistemologies likely to occur? Although it is worth bearing in mind the observation by Belenky et al. that nearly half of their subjects fell into the epistemological position of subjective knowledge (1986), this conflict between epistemologies is not necessarily restricted to women basic writers; it may be a common experience among many basic writers, irrespective of sex or gender. In a broader treatment of the subject, Bizzell (1986) hypothesizes that:

Basic writers, upon entering the academic community, are being asked to learn a new dialect and new discourse conventions, but the outcome of such learning is acquisition of a whole new world view. Their difficulties, then, are best understood as stemming from the initial distance between their world-views and the academic world view, and perhaps also from the resistance to changing their own world-views that is caused by this very distance (p. 297).
Annas' suggestion that writing instructors need to teach writing in a fashion that helps the student bring together "the private and the public" may well apply whenever there are competing epistemologies.

Although to some degree these potential conflicts between the values of academia and the values of some students must be dealt with on an individual basis, the general pedagogical approach that is taken also has a role to play. The analysis by Hunter et al. (1988) and the findings of Belenky et al. (1986) seem more compatible with a New Rhetorical approach than with an Expressionist approach. As Belenky et al. note: "Truth, for the Subjective Knower, is an intuitive reaction — something experienced, not thought out — something felt rather than actively pursued or constructed" (Belenky et al., 1985, p. 19). Within the context of this perspective, the pedagogical issue may be less one of helping students to explore what they feel or think than it is of helping them reconcile that with what others may think or feel. The New Rhetorical approach aims to reconcile the values of the individual (the writer) with the values of the community (the audience) through the medium of the text while the Expressionist approach often involves using the text only as a means of self-exploration for the writer. In other words, the New Rhetoric aims to "bridge the gap" between competing world views or epistemologies.

4. Utilize expressionist approaches as needed. Even though New Rhetorical approaches may be more broadly useful than Expressionist approaches, instructors need to be aware that with some individuals Expressionist approaches may prove helpful. Bearing in mind the observations by Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) and Belenky et al. (1986) about the response (or position) of silence by some women, it can be argued that Expressionist approaches may have a crucial role to play in helping those individuals initially find their own voice (and explore their own feelings) without the additional considerations of rhetorical form or audience. As Coe notes: "Expressionist process writing enables content. . . . and the very act of enabling content, of encouraging student writers to write about what concerns them, does create the potential of writing as a liberating social act of self-discovery" (1987, p. 16).

5. Encourage both "connected" and "separate" ways of knowing. As pointed out in Chapter One, Belenky et al. suggest that the developmental stage following Subjective Knowledge is that of Procedural Knowledge, a stage in which the learner begins to think critically by applying methods for analyzing the validity of ideas. They further assert that this stage consists of two distinct epistemologies, what they call (borrowing the terms from Gilligan) separate versus connected knowing. From the perspective of separate knowing, one's feelings and beliefs about a subject are expected to be rigorously excluded by "objectively" applying the methods of the particular discipline. Belenky et al. also note that
most of the women who tended to use the separate knowing orientation "were attending or had recently
graduated from a traditional, elite, liberal arts college" (1986, p. 103). Some of Belenky's subjects
described difficulty in dealing with the adversarial role sometimes required by this approach, perhaps in
part because it conflicted with the socially constructed role of caring for others; in debate, in argument,
someone might get hurt. Although able to reproduce and utilize the forms and methods for critically
analyzing ideas, some of Belenky's subjects also describe feeling a lack of ownership of their ideas,
particularly when it came to writing papers (cf. Bolker, 1979; Sanborn, 1987). This epistemological
orientation separates the knower from the known and may well engender alienation.

Connected knowing, on the other hand, emphasizes the connection between the knower and the
known. As Belenky et al. note:

Connected knowing builds on the subjectivists' conviction that the most trustworthy
knowledge comes from personal experience rather than the pronouncements of
authorities. . . . Connected knowers develop procedures for gaining access to other
people's knowledge. At the heart of these procedures is the capacity for empathy.
Since knowledge comes from experience, the only way they can hope to understand
another person's ideas is to try to share the experience that has led the person to form
the idea (1986, p. 113).

In addition to using empathy to understand ideas, Belenky et al. suggest that connected knowers also tend
to take a nonjudgemental stance toward ideas: "When someone said something they disagreed with or
disapproved of, their instinct was not to argue but to 'look at it from that person's point of view, see how
they could say that, why they think that they're right, why it makes sense'" (1986, p. 117). On the face
of it, connected knowing might appear to lack authority (to those operating from within a context which
formally values the separation, or the apparent separation, of the knower from the known).

And this, in some sense, is the crux of the issue. Pedagogical approaches which emphasize the
development of an authentic voice (i.e., Expressionism) may fail to help students speak authoritatively
within the academic community. Pedagogical approaches which emphasize the development of an
authoritative voice (i.e., Formalism) risk alienating the student. The problem, of course, is to find (or
invent) pedagogies (and rhetorical forms) which balance the competing interests of the individual and the
community, of the writer and the reader, of authenticity and authority. One approach which may help
students learn to balance these competing interests involves writing collaboratively.

6. Organize classes using collaborative pedagogies. In addition to detailing the differences
between separate and connected knowing, the work of Belenky et al. also provides some hints about
where to begin in terms of furthering connected knowing: "trustworthy knowledge comes from personal
experience"; "develop procedures for gaining access to other people's knowledge"; "share the experience
that has led the person to form the idea” (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 113). Although not specifically designed to address the issue of gender, in “Writing as Collaboration” (1989), Reither and Vipond propose a pedagogy that may meet some of the objectives which Belenky et al. outline; a pedagogy based rather broadly upon the conception of writing as a social process.

One element of Reither and Vipond’s approach involves dividing the students into teams which report to the larger class about the progress of their research into the particular question they are studying. As they note:

When the students report to one another (both orally and in writing) on what they have found out, they are functioning as knowing scholars, as literate persons who can contribute to what others know and believe. That is, they are functioning as teachers. Other students respond by telling them what is understandable and what isn’t, what fits and what doesn’t, which questions are answered and which ones are raised, and by what is, when it happens, the most powerful feedback of all — using, citing, and building on what they learn from them (1989, p. 865).

Although their contexts rather obviously differ, Reither and Vipond’s workshops and Freire’s (1970) cultural circles are strikingly similar in one way. Both Reither and Vipond’s approach and Freire’s approach are structured around the use of dialogue to explore the significance of ideas rather than the more traditional monologue necessitated by the lecture setting. Through dialogue, the students not only determine what information is socially (academically) significant, but also they learn how to make that determination. This use of dialogue, as Adrienne Rich has pointed out, is often found in courses specifically designed for women: “a style has evolved in the classroom, more dialogic, more exploratory, less given to pseudo objectivity, than the traditional mode” (1979, p. 143).

By encouraging the personal engagement of the students with knowledge as well as by encouraging dialogue and interaction in the classroom, collaborative approaches such as Reither and Vipond’s provide more of an opportunity for students to apply some of the elements of connected knowing than do more traditional pedagogies. However, as Karen Burke LeFevre points out: “reconceiving invention as a social act does not mean that we assemble a group of atomistic individuals — ‘add people and stir’ — who later resume their private search for knowledge” (cited in Reither & Vipond, 1989, p. 855). Such an approach does not so much help the student to reconcile the private and the public as it encourages them to clearly separate them. This is perhaps most particularly true in those classrooms where students are expected to undertake a few group activities, but where their grades are still based, by and large, upon their individual abilities or progress (this might be called pseudo-dialogue). Reconceiving the composition classroom as a social enterprise necessarily entails reconceiving how instructors employ authority within the classroom. Along with the shift from monologue to dialogue comes a concomitant shift in the locus of authority, from teacher to student.
7. Decrease the authority of the instructor and recognize the authority of the learner. Like Freire's approach to literacy, Reither and Vipond's concern with the process of education radically transforms how authority functions within the classroom. Unlike the teacher centered classroom wherein the teacher acts as the authority who determines what knowledge is needed and then provides it (what Freire describes in Pedagogy of the Oppressed as "the banking concept of education"), in the collaborative classroom, the teacher acts as a facilitator who initially assists the class with defining the goals of their research and then with the on-going process of achieving those goals:

As the course progresses and the project takes on logic, direction, and necessity of its own, students must be given greater and greater responsibility for determining what comes next. Decisions about gathering, organizing, and disseminating information and ideas are then given over to the students (Reither & Vipond, 1989, p. 865).

In the classroom built upon this teaching strategy, the responsibility for organizing the process of learning resides less with the instructor and more with the students.13

This shift in classroom authority, in the educational process, inevitably leads to a change in what is taught in the classroom: "except on an ad hoc basis, at 'teaching points,' the instructor does not attempt to teach research or writing skills explicitly" (Reither & Vipond, p. 863). By shifting the responsibility for learning from the instructor to the student, the potential is created for students to personally discover how knowledge is socially constructed and how rhetorical form is dependent upon context:

By reading the literature of a given field of study, students learn the values, conventions, forms of argument and evidence of that field. They learn that writing and knowing consist in using and building on others' writing and knowing. In short they learn to write by reading. Or, more accurately and importantly, since there is no such thing as knowing how to write (there is only knowing how to write in certain genres for certain audiences on certain subjects in certain situations), they learn how to learn how to write (1989, p. 866).

Through the process of working with the literature from various disciplinary communities, students learn what counts for knowledge within those communities, and, perhaps more importantly, they learn how to contribute to that knowledge by working cooperatively within their own classroom community.

8. Allow students to experiment with alternative collaborative writing processes. Although on the face of it, collaborative writing appears most consonant with the feminine developmental psychologies outlined by Gilligan (1982) and Belenky et al. (1986), the situation is not quite so straightforward. While researching the issue of collaborative writing, Lunsford and Ede (1990) found two distinct approaches to collaborative writing: a goal or product driven, hierarchical mode (what they call a masculine mode of discourse) and a process driven, dialogic mode (what they call a feminine mode of discourse). They describe the hierarchical mode in the following way:
This form of collaboration is linearly [sic] structured, driven by highly specific goals, and carried out by people who play clearly assigned roles. These goals are most often designated by someone outside of and hierarchically superior to the immediate collaborative group or by a senior member or leader of the group. Because productivity and efficiency are of the essence in this mode of collaboration, the realities of multiple voices and shifting author-ity are seen as problems to be overcome or resolved. Knowledge in this mode is most often viewed as information to be found or a problem to be solved. The activity of finding this information or solving this problem is closely tied to the realization of a particular end product. This mode of collaborative writing is, we would argue, typically conservative. It is also, need we say, a predominantly masculine mode of discourse (1990, p. 235).

As Lunsford and Ede further note, this mode of collaborative writing sometimes generates among the writers a “dissatisfaction with collaborative writing in proportion to their senses of loss of control over the documents they were charged with initiating and ‘authoring’” (1990, p. 237). Perhaps this dissatisfaction parallels the “lack of ownership” of their ideas which Belenky et al. suggest is sometimes experienced by separate knowers.

In contrast to the hierarchical mode, Lunsford and Ede describe an evolving dialogic mode:

This dialogic mode is loosely structured, and the roles enacted within it are fluid; one “person” may occupy multiple and shifting roles as the project progresses. In this mode the process of articulating and working together to achieve goals is as important as the goals themselves. Those who participate in dialogic collaboration generally value the creative tension inherent in multivoiced and multivalent ventures. What those involved in hierarchical collaboration see as a problem to be solved, these individuals view as a strength to be capitalized on and emphasized. In dialogic collaboration this group effort is seen as essential to the production — rather than merely the recovery — of knowledge and as a means of individual satisfaction within the group. This mode of collaboration, we argue, is, potentially at least, deeply subversive. And because our respondents had no ready language with which to describe such an enterprise, because many of those who tried to describe it to us were women, and because this mode of collaboration seemed so much the “other” — we think of this mode as predominantly feminine (1990, pp. 235-236).

Lunsford and Ede’s observations imply that so far as collaborative writing pedagogies focus solely upon solving a specific problem or generating a specific product, they do not necessarily lead to gender fairness in the classroom. Moreover, their observations further indicate the importance of shifting authority from the teacher to the learner. Students not only need information about alternative collaborative writing processes, they also need to be given the authority to experiment with the texts that they generate.

Alternative Discourse Forms

In his article, “An Apology for Form; Or Who Took the Form Out of the Process?” (1987), Coe argues that the shift from Formalism to Expressionism resulted in devaluing the importance of form within the composition classroom — a devaluing that may place students at risk insofar as some academics will evaluate the success or failure of the students on the basis of their use of the rhetorical
forms (and the ways of thinking those forms reflect) that are preferred within the academic community. To address this problem, he advocates that instructors put the form back into the process, that is, they need to focus more upon the generative aspects of form. In a Burkean fashion, however, it may be worthwhile embracing the contrary proposition — that of putting the process back into the form. Changing how composition is taught also requires a change in what is taught. And part of that what includes rhetorical form.

"Rhetorical structures are pre-prepared ways of responding, frozen in synchronicity" (Coe, 1988b, p. 1); as such, any given rhetorical model represents a generalized strategy for responding to a particular audience, for a particular purpose, in a particular context. Yet therein lies a problem. No one rhetorical model, when narrowly followed, can be used to respond effectively to all situations. Audiences change. Purposes change. Contexts change. In other words, to respond effectively to the variety of possible situations, rhetorical models need to be adapted by writers to fit their specific situations. Yet, despite vast changes in the social context over the past several thousand years, an adversarial approach reflecting the forensic origins of rhetoric has remained remarkably immune to change.

As Kenneth Burke indicates, Aristotle's Rhetoric balances the motives of division and identification:

Since persuasion so often implies the presence or threat of an adversary, there is the "agonistic" or competitive stress. Thus Aristotle, who looks upon rhetoric as a medium that "proves opposites," gives what amounts to a handbook on a manly art of self-defense. He describes the holds and the counter-holds, the blows and the ways of blocking them, for every means of persuasion the corresponding means of dissuasion, for every proof the disproof, for every praise the vituperation that matches it. . . . [But] you persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his. . . . And you give the "signs" of such consubstantiality by deference to an audience's "opinions." . . . True, the rhetorician may have to change an audience's opinion in one respect; but he can succeed only insofar as he yields to that audience's opinions in other respects (1969b, pp. 52-56).

Unfortunately, few modern rhetorical forms seem to achieve a similar balance. For example, Sloane (1989) advocates a revival of Ciceronian pro and con debate (and, it should be added, he employs this approach in his classes). But as Burke notes, the "'agonistic' emphasis is naturally strong in Cicero, much of whose treatise [De Oratore] is written out of his experiences in the Senate and the law courts" (1969b, pp. 52-53). Sheridan Baker's (1987) argumentative edge, of course, provides one of the most blatant examples of this adversarial emphasis.

Perhaps not unexpectedly, the professional literature similarly reflects the predominance of this approach. In "Beyond Literary Darwinism: Women's Voices and Critical Discourse", Frey laments the pervasiveness of the adversarial method she found while surveying PMLA:
What I have seen, nevertheless, is that in literary criticism there are several levels of arguments, and some of the arguments are even of the bad kind — some writers get nasty and say things that hurt other writers’ feelings. I have also seen that other debates that seem innocent and in the good spirit of scholarly exchange (Is this like a “limited nuclear exchange”?) are actually not quite so innocent if one looks a bit more closely at the implications of the words that scholars use in answering their colleagues’ counterarguments, as well as the general argumentative stance of the discipline as an institution. Walter Ong has suggested in Fighting for Life that the “agonistic edge of oratory [and by implication rhetoric] is dulled” in the present world of academe (142). But from what I have seen, it is as sharp as ever. What troubles me the most is the basic unexamined assumption that the best way to know things about literature and to help others know things about literature is by presenting a thesis and making a case for it by answering counterarguments. Words like “careful,” “painstaking,” “effective,” and “clear” are invariably held to be synonymous with descriptive phrases like “tightly argued” and “persuasive,” the implication being that if one does not argue well or argue at all, the writing is unclear, ineffective, and unconvincing, although referees and editors, after rejecting an article, may use nicer words like “loosely constructed” or “undeveloped” (1990, p. 511). In her survey, Frey found only two exceptions to this adversarial method (p. 512). Although she did not undertake a similar survey of composition journals, such a survey would probably yield similar results.

Yet as several commentators have suggested, the type of authority relations which this kind of adversarial approach establishes with the reader may conflict with the psychological orientation of some women (Taylor, 1978; Belenky et al., 1986; Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988). As Belenky et al. note:

At times, particularly in certain academic and work situations in which adversarial interactions are common, constructivist women may feel compelled to demonstrate that they can hold their own in a battle of ideas to prove to others that they, too, have the analytical powers and hard data to justify their claims. However, they usually resent the implicit pressure in male dominated circles to toughen up and fight to get their ideas across (1986, p. 146).

One of the advantages of putting the process back into the form, of encouraging students to experiment with form, is that it may enable women to work on the task of creating a rhetoric of the feminine — a rhetoric which honors both the reader and the writer — a rhetoric which is both rigorous and authentic.

What might such a rhetoric look like? Although answers to this question are, of course, speculative, some of the potential characteristics of this rhetoric can be deduced from recent feminist scholarship:

1. A feminine rhetoric might well be multifaceted and deeply subversive (Batson, 1990; Cixous, 1986; Frey, 1990).
3. A feminine rhetoric might stress that knowledge stems from dialogue and interaction (Lunsford & Ede, 1990; Lyons, 1976; Penelope & Wolfe, 1983; Peterson, 1986).

1. A feminine rhetoric might well be multifaceted and deeply subversive. This subversity of discourses, this shift in how authority functions within discourse, will probably not be willingly accepted by many in academia, if for no other reason than one of its key goals is to change the status quo, to upset
the existing order of things. In other words, the process of change may be a slow one partly because this change may be seen as threatening by some academics.

As Elbow points out, there is a certain resistance among some academics to proposals that academic discourse change:

Yet it seems to me that many academics seem more nervous about changes in discourse — and especially incursions of the vernacular — than about changes in ideas or content or doctrine. Many happily proclaim that there is no truth, no right answer, no right interpretation; many say they want more voices in the academy, dialogue, heteroglossia! But they won't let themselves or their students write in language tainted with the ordinary or with the presence and feelings of the writer (1991, p. 152).

This resistance to changes in form, this expectation that students will write in particular ways, implies that in some circumstances there will be negative consequences for those students who choose not to employ the standard rhetorical forms (cf. Coe, 1987; Fort, 1971; Maranda, 1972). In other words, students need to develop sufficient expertise in audience analysis to recognize when not to experiment with form. Yet, it is not only students who need to be educated, academics also need to be provided with more information about how form, content, and context interact.

Part of the reticence among some academics to accept alternative rhetorical forms may stem from a sense that if their students choose not to use traditional forms, their writing will degenerate into some sort of formlessness. However, as Fort points out, this is not the case:

I think it is important to recognize that the breaking of the standard form of the essay does not mean replacing it with no form. All expression has form. A standard form with thesis and proof can be either polished or spontaneous. A new form could also. The choice is between forms not between form and formlessness. And the choice of forms should be made with understanding of the implications and meanings of forms.

But there is no doubt that formal freedom, if permitted, would demand a major shift in attitude on the part of those who evaluate essays. The need for authority, the view of criticism as product, the competition for mastery over art would all have to be regarded not as the goals but only as one kind of goal. Conclusions, if they were reached, would be of secondary importance (1971, pp. 638-639).

As was the case with employing collaborative writing pedagogies, permitting "formal freedom" in writing requires a change of attitude, a shifting of authority.

Frey, for example, suggests that one way of achieving this "formal freedom" is by employing the adversarial method to subvert itself (indeed, her article is structured on that basis):

The issue means so much to me that I will use whatever weapons (yes, weapons) I have to convince my profession that we must open up. And so, ironically, the adversary method may have been useful here, if only as a means to its own destruction. If my argument is convincing enough, later generations of writers will have more freedom to write about literature in alternative forms and to be rewarded for it: the dissertation topics supported, the articles published; the writers hired, tenured, promoted (1990, p. 524).
Although one of her ends is laudable, namely opening up literary critical discourse to alternative forms, the means she proposes to use to accomplish that end may be problematic. By adopting the weapons of the adversary, is there not a risk of becoming the adversary? And does her approach imply that one of the implicit ends of current forms of literary discourse, namely winning the argument, is in itself acceptable?

Batson's approach of abandoning academia, "Why do we not instead laugh with Cixous, 'Let's get out of here!'" (1990, p. 208), and Frey's approach of fighting it are counterpoints. Insofar as academia ignores the call for changes in the nature of academic discourse, choosing between the alternatives of retreat or combat seems an almost inevitable consequence. Unfortunately, these two radically different approaches to achieving formal freedom also risk achieving a less desirable result: the status quo remains unchanged or perhaps only changes slowly. Batson's approach may diminish the impetus for change; Frey's approach may invite resistance to change. However, these two approaches are not the only alternatives. A third approach, one which accommodates the needs of some women writers while simultaneously benefiting academia, has been proposed by Fran Davis (1988).

2. A feminine rhetoric might recognize the tentative and experiential nature of truth. Rather than abandoning or fighting academic discourse, Fran Davis (1988) takes an approach which involves modifying academic discourse by incorporating some elements from feminist discourse. As she both suggests and demonstrates in "A Practical Assessment of Feminist Pedagogy", the use of self-disclosure in writing is both valuable and practical:

The first strategy lies at the very heart of feminist theory, and is best illustrated in my own opening paragraph. I began not with a thesis, the traditional opening for this form of discourse, but with a self-disclosure. It is a very typical example of systematic self-disclosure in that its function is to situate the informant/speaker/writer/teacher as a subject engaged in a process with respect to a subject matter, rather than as an authority who has brought closure to by mastering the material. Naturally, the presentation of oneself as a subject, a person, is designed to engage students as equals insofar as they too are engaging in a process which will only be meaningful if they can find its connection with their own lives as subjects in the world. Acknowledging the dialectical relationship between the self and the material also legitimizes personal experiences for intellectual inquiry and allows women to begin to develop their own relationship to traditional subject areas (1988, p. 2).

However, beyond being valuable in terms of helping women to find connections between their personal experiences and various academic disciplines (and thus legitimizing those connections), Davis' strategy also represents a profoundly valuable addition to academic discourse.

Just as the thesis paragraph "makes a certain type of critical reading easier because proofs can be evaluated more easily if readers know in advance what they purportedly prove" (Coe, 1987, p. 22), the use of an initial self-disclosure makes another type of critical reading easier because the self-disclosure
enables the reader to more easily evaluate the premises (or motives) upon which the writer is operating. In other words, this strategy helps to focus the attention of the reader not only upon the "truth" of the ideas that are being communicated, but also upon the values which underpin those ideas.

Moreover, by clearly situating the writer "as a subject engaged in a process with respect to a subject matter" (Davis, 1988, p. 2), this strategy focuses the attention of the reader upon the process of acquiring and testing knowledge in a way that traditional academic discourse does not. In other words, it remedies the misconception of knowledge as some static entity that is, to use Coe's terms, "frozen in synchronicity". Knowledge evolves over time; it changes in response to social needs and demands. In some sense, like rhetorical form, knowledge can be considered strategically. Conceiving of knowledge in those terms helps explain why it is so important to include works by women author's in the traditional literary canon. Given the social necessity that gender equity be established, one strategy for achieving this is to expand the knowledge base.

3. A feminine rhetoric might stress that knowledge stems from dialogue and interaction. In "Beyond Argument in Feminist Composition", Lamb suggests developing forms of writing based upon negotiation and mediation as ways to help the reader and writer reach equitable resolutions to conflicts. As she notes:

What quickly became apparent, in both negotiation and mediation, is that the goal has changed: it is no longer to win but to arrive at a solution in a just way that is acceptable to both sides. Necessarily, the conception of power has changed as well: from something that can be possessed and used on somebody to something that is available to both and has at least the potential of being used for the benefit of both (1991, p. 18).

Although currently her proposal has not evolved beyond the stage of a potentially useful addition to collaborative pedagogies, her approach does focus attention upon the value of dialogue in a way that traditional academic discourse does not.

Another strategy for encouraging dialogue is Gracie Lyons' model for constructive criticism which follows the general formula: "when you do A (observation), I feel B (emotion), and I want you to do C (action - want), because of D (purpose)" (1976, p. 78). Coe suggests that he finds this model useful in the classroom and, as he further notes:

This formula has two virtues: (a) it encourages constructive criticism (rather than blaming criticism) by helping to keep criticism specific, making it clear that a particular action (not the whole person) is being criticized, focusing attention on the effect of the criticized action and forcing the critic to indicate what can be done about the criticism; and (b) by providing an appropriate structure, the formula makes it easier for people to express criticisms. Indeed, if one looks at feminist assertiveness training, one sees that providing appropriate forms is one of the most important techniques for enabling a new kind of communication (1987, p. 25).
Although, as with Lamb’s proposal, this formula has yet to be fully articulated as a rhetorical form, such a form might help address some of Frey’s concerns by providing an alternative to the adversarial methods she finds in some literary journals: “some writers get nasty and say things that hurt other writers’ feelings” (1990, p. 511).

Like Lyons’ formula, Davis’ strategy of self-disclosure also possesses the potential for encouraging dialogue between student and instructor:

Another interesting aspect of self-disclosure is its use in evaluating writing. Expressive and interactive assessment of student writing, in which the reader/writer acknowledges and communicates in writing her/his reading process of the student text, democratizes the communication exchange and validates the particularity of the student writing. It is a collaborative rather than a hierarchical writer-reader connection and allows for affective modes of interaction; such strategies legitimize the collaborative and affective qualities of female learners and allows them to profit from these characteristics rather than suffer them as disadvantages (1988, p. 2).

And, as with the other strategies, her model necessarily requires changing how authority functions in academic discourse.

4. A feminine rhetoric might emphasize conciliation and connection with others. The model which has been most fully articulated as an alternative to more adversarial approaches is that of Rogerian Persuasion (see Appendix G for outlines of Rogerian and Classical Persuasion as well as example memos based upon the two forms). Originally invented as an alternative to Classical Persuasion and loosely based upon the work of Carl Rogers, “Rogerian argument rests on the assumption that out of a need to preserve the stability of his image, a person will refuse to consider alternatives that he feels are threatening, and hence, that changing a person’s image depends on eliminating this sense of threat” (Young, Becker, & Pike, 1970, p. 274).

The underlying intent of Rogerian Persuasion, unlike the intent of more adversarial forms of persuasion which generally aim to find the weaknesses or flaws in another position, is to define the strengths or valid points in both positions in order to reach an accommodation. The different intents are reminiscent of Peter Elbow’s distinction between the doubting and believing game (1973, pp. 147-191). And, as Belenky et al. point out, the believing game parallels some aspects of connected knowing.

On the face of it, at least, Rogerian Persuasion appears more consonant with the self-concepts and epistemological orientations of some women which emphasize connection or conciliation. Yet Rogerian Persuasion has not been immune to a wide range of criticisms over the past twenty years (Brent, 1991; Ede, 1984; Lassner, 1990; Lunsford, 1979). Although there are certainly some problems with Rogerian Persuasion, Brent is unwilling to simply abandon it (nor, for that matter, are many within the discipline of composition):
Despite its profound limitations, the idea of a new rhetoric that incorporates some of Rogers' insights refuses to be shaken from the collective mind of our discipline. Even the persistent need to denounce Rogerian rhetoric every few years testifies to its attractiveness. This attractiveness, I believe, stems from the fact that we still do not have anywhere else such a well-articulated combination of dialogic principles combined with a practical set of techniques for implementing them [italics added] (Brent, 1991, p. 462).

Brent suggests that rather than simply abandoning Rogerian Persuasion, it may be more useful to revise it by incorporating "a more social approach to invention and a less dichotomous approach to evaluation and description" (p. 465). In any case, Brent's point that "the direction set by Rogers focuses the dialectics of rhetoric on cooperation in a way that even a rehabilitated, dialectical version of classical rhetoric does not" (p. 463) seems an accurate assessment.

However, one recent criticism of Rogerian Persuasion suggests that this model must be used with some caution. In "Feminist Responses to Rogerian Argument", Lassner (1990) describes her surprise and disappointment when, after giving a class of 16 women students an assignment involving Rogerian Persuasion, they responded in a negative fashion. For example, one of her students reacted to the assignment in the following manner:

I hated it. The Rogerian model is male, masculinist, and denialist. It leaves no space to be persuasive with anger. It denies that women have a right to be angry at being left out of most methods of persuasion and that anger is worth listening to, even if it's threatening, because for women to be recognized, everyone needs to know how they feel (1990, p. 221).

Or, as another of her students wrote:

Because I feel it's so necessary to eliminate violence against women from our society, it is very easy to overstate my point through sheer emotion. Although the con side may be covered clearly and factually, it is overpowered by the overwhelming emotion coming through from me. I guess the trick is to try to find and represent the emotion of those on the con side. The choices are: divorce all emotion or charge both sides with equal emotion (p. 226).

What both of these responses indicate is that Rogerian Persuasion can, in some circumstances, result in a denial of the writer's sense of self by falsely dichotomizing thought and feeling. In other words, Rogerian Persuasion could represent another way of silencing women if it is employed incautiously.

However, the comments of Lassner's students reveal something else about Rogerian Persuasion, something that should be a common-place when teaching any rhetorical model: No rhetorical model is universally adaptable to all contexts or topics. Lassner describes the sort of topics that the students were attempting to write about: "The student's papers showed attempts in every step to recognize and understand the positions of those who oppose abortion on demand, who vote against the right to private consent of homosexuals, who will not include language expressing women's experience in prayer, who will not consider pornography a civil offense, and several other positions of concern to women today" (p. 225). If the central intent of Rogerian Persuasion is to discover the common ground between two
perspectives in order to work toward a mutually agreeable resolution, then it is an inappropriate approach when no such common ground exists.

Where is the common ground between rapist and prey, between bigot and victim? Attempting to apply Rogerian Persuasion in contexts where outrage and revulsion are appropriate responses is absurd. In other words, part of the negative response of Lassner’s students may have resulted from their very natural frustration at attempting to apply Rogerian Persuasion in contexts where it was inappropriate. Coe makes a good point in this connection:

As there are rhetorical contexts in which Classical persuasion offers a more effective structure and rhetorical contexts in which Rogerian persuasion offers a more effective structure, so there are contexts in which it seems ethically most important to be direct and out front, contexts in which it seems ethically most important to be gentle and empathetic. There are even extreme contexts in which it seems ethical to lie (1988b, p. 19).

The consideration of rhetorical contexts raises both the issue of effectiveness and the issue of ethics. And the issue of ethics in writing has two sides (at least): that of the writer and that of the reader. The writer’s comfort or discomfort with particular rhetorical forms as well as the impact of those forms upon the reader are issues which are only just beginning to be explored.

In other words, Lassner makes a valid point: Rogerian Persuasion, if used inappropriately, risks perpetuating the historical silencing of women. So too, as has been argued elsewhere in this thesis, does the uncritical use of Classical Persuasion (or more accurately, its modern permutations). Given its obvious limitations, Rogerian Persuasion is not the alternative, however, it is an alternative. The persistence of Rogerian Persuasion, despite its shortcomings, reveals a profound discomfort on the part of many with the agonistic and forensic heritage of Classical Persuasion (or at least a discomfort with the adversarial emphasis which exists in all too many modern applications of the classical form). By no means is Rogerian Persuasion appropriate for all people in all contexts. But then what model is?

Composition students should be encouraged to experiment with form, to learn how to adapt or develop the forms appropriate to what they specifically desire to communicate. If, as Peter Elbow suggests, students need to become broadly polyphonic in order to deal with the range of discourses found in academia, then it follows that they will benefit by learning heuristics for analyzing rhetorical form:

I cannot teach students the particular conventions they will need for particular disciplines (not even for particular teachers within the same discipline), but I can teach students the principle of discourse variation — between individuals and between communities. I can’t teach them the forms they’ll need, but I can sensitize them to the notion of differences in form so they will be more apt to look for cues and will pick them up faster when they encounter them (Elbow, 1991, p. 152).
In *Process, Form, and Substance*, Coe presents just such a heuristic for analyzing discourse variation — “Metaheur” (1990b, pp. 412-437). Indeed, the process of learning rhetorical forms by indwelling, as proposed by Reither and Vipond (1989), is perhaps best facilitated by teaching such heuristics.

As the foregoing examples are intended to indicate, a number of alternative forms for academic discourse are being actively investigated and constructed. Yet, with perhaps the exception of Rogerian Persuasion, these models are only just beginning to be articulated. Aisenberg and Harrington’s observation about a key problem for some women writing within the academy still rings true: “Where is the model for new forms of discourse? Not readily available is the predictable answer” (1988, p. 78). Providing our students with the opportunity to experiment with rhetorical forms, both old and new, can only help to hasten the changes that must come about.
Chapter Five Summary

This chapter has argued for changes to the teaching of composition in order to ensure that instructional practices are fair to both men and women (as well as to individuals of different genders, cultures, sexual orientations, and social classes). At issue is the question of whether or not current instructional practices in composition privilege separate ways of knowing over connected ways of knowing. Although caution is advisable due to the incomplete and tentative state of knowledge about sex and gender differences in relation to writing, the answer to this question appears to be a qualified yes.

This chapter has also suggested that there remains a wide gap between theory and practice in the discipline of composition. Despite some composition theorists pointing out the need to shift to New Rhetorical paradigms for writing instruction, the evidence indicates that many composition practitioners continue to teach in Formalist ways. Current theory stresses that writing is not some putatively neutral skill for communicating information. Writing is also an interpretive act, a way for writers to generate meaning in their encounters with reality. Yet current practice, by and large, emphasizes an epistemology which artificially separates the knower from the known, the writer from the communicative context.

In order to redress the apparent bias in current instructional practices, the gap between theory and practice, this chapter has proposed a range of changes both to how composition is taught and to what is taught. Although far from exhaustive, the changes to the how of teaching of composition involve assisting students with becoming more aware of the psychosocial, political, and linguistic implications of differences in sex, gender, culture, and class. In addition, it is proposed that the social contexts of students be evaluated individually in order to mediate any potential axiological or epistemological conflicts between specific students and academe. Moreover, this chapter has suggested that collaborative writing pedagogies are most appropriate inasmuch as they help engage students in activities that emphasize the socially constructed nature of writing and knowing.

The proposed changes to the what involves helping students become aware of how various traditional rhetorical forms (classical persuasion, the "argumentative edge", etc.) function constructively within the academy insofar as they provide time-tested frameworks for generating certain kinds of knowledge. At the same time, students should be informed about how those traditional rhetorical forms both reflect and perpetuate attitudes, how they constrain the generation of certain kinds of new knowledge. This might be accomplished by outlining such modern forms as Fran Davis’ model for self-disclosure, Gracie Lyons’ model for constructive criticism, or Young, Becker, and Pike’s model for Rogerian persuasion. And, above all, students must be provided with opportunities to experiment with form in order to learn to evaluate the various rhetorical contexts in which particular forms are most appropriate.
Notes for Chapter Five

1 Lamb details the three ways in which texts can be written to obfuscate that men are the perpetrators of violence against women:

[1.] The greatest culprit in the diffusion of responsibility in this area is the ubiquitous passive voice of social science, which presents acts without agents, harm without guilt. When writing about men battering women, an author can use the passive voice in such a way that a woman is presented as the object of acts that have no specified agents (i.e., the sentence has a verb and an object, but lacks a subject) as in the following sentence: "Wives in America have been raped, choked, stabbed, shot, beaten, had their jaws and limbs broken, and have been struck with horse whips, pokers, bats, and bicycle chains."

[2.] An author can also nominalize the act of violence so that no agent is necessary at all, thus avoiding the issue of responsibility: e.g. "the violence," "the battering." Such nominalization removes the graphic quality that a verb (active or passive in voice) would give and makes it possible to write about violence without naming men as perpetrators.

[3.] Authors can also construct the sentence so that the agency and thus the responsibility for the act are quite obscured. The subject of the verb may, for instance, be written as "the couple" or "the family." In one article, the authors described a brutal scene of a husband beating his wife over the head with a cane and whipping her arms and legs with a hose, then asked, "How could a couple inflict such a situation upon one another?". . . . There are also ways of writing that minimize the gender issues involved, using words like "mate" or "people who batter," although it is, in reality, men who do most of the battering. When an author speaks of "violent exchanges," the terminology diminishes the differences in physical, financial, and social power between men and women in relationships, as well as the possibility that a woman may respond defensively to violence.

Of the "problem sentences" found in the 46 journal articles, diffusion of responsibility (number 3, above) was the most common problem (46%), use of nominalizations was the next most common problem (24%), while use of the passive voice was the least common problem (1.2%). The remainder (28%) was comprised of sentences which employed the term "battered women"; these sentences were tallied but, as Lamb points out, a case can be made for excluding these sentences from analysis: "it ['battered women'] has ambiguous connotations; it may evoke identification with a strong feminist movement to protect women and hold men responsible, or it may conjure up images of brutalized and isolated victims with no victimizers anywhere to be seen" (1991, p. 253).

Indeed, it can be argued that Lamb's study demonstrates the need to change l'écriture masculine.

2 The terms used to classify the various theoretical approaches to composition vary from commentator to commentator. In order to maintain consistency as well as avoid an unnecessary and confusing proliferation of terms, I have adopted the terms used by Coe (1987) — Formalist, Expressionist, and New Rhetorical — which in themselves are partly based upon those of Berlin (1982) — Current-Traditionalist, Expressionist, and New Rhetorical.

These three general approaches do not represent fully coherent and unified theoretical positions. The Formalist approach, for example encompasses two distinct approaches, what Berlin calls Neo-Aristotelian and Current-Traditionalist (1982). The New Rhetorical approach also encompasses two distinct approaches, what Faigley calls the Cognitive View and the Social View (1986); further, another New Rhetorical approach may well be emerging from the work of researchers such as Flower (1989a) — a Socio-Cognitive Synthesis. That the theoretical underpinnings of composition are quite diverse (and frequently contradictory) is not particularly surprising given that composition is still evolving as a discipline distinct from the study of literature.

The point of this section on competing composition theories is not so much to detail the wide range of approaches to composition as it is to outline the broad implications of theory and practice in relation to gender differences and writing. Within certain theoretical approaches to composition, the study of sex/gender and writing is a legitimate pursuit; within others, it is not. As Young notes, the theoretical paradigm of a discipline "determines, among other things, what is included in the discipline and what is excluded from it, what is taught and not taught, what problems are regarded as important and unimportant, and, by implication, what research is regarded as valuable in developing the discipline"
practices in both Canada and the United States are all too frequently based upon theoretical (and
alternative ways into a double bind. One method for escaping the potential double bind of academic
discourse is to formally announce in the introduction to a paper (or an initial note) that one is
(cited in Berlin
young friend (who was taking a literature course at UBC and who detested the formal conventions of the
discipline) to do precisely that. I suggested she footnote her first sentence and state that she was ignoring
the usual referencing conventions because as a feminist writer, she was indicating her status as an
outsider to masculinist discourse and was thus trying to establish new territory (cf. Rose, 1989). Given
that she was already ignoring the conventions (and suffering the consequences of low grades), there
seemed no harm in trying this out. In addition to following the tradition of explaining why one is
violating conventional form, this approach had an additional advantage. From her description of the
instructor, we deduced that he would probably be unwilling to challenge her if she used such terms as
“feminist” and “masculinist”. In effect, she would create a counter doublebind which might prevent the
instructor from giving her a low grade (cf. Coe, 1975, p. 10).

And, as mentioned in Chapter One, the use of these models to measure the students’ cognitive
development may, in themselves, inadvertently perpetuate a gender bias, at least insofar as both
Kohlberg’s and Perry’s models were originally derived from the study of all male samples or samples in
which the numbers of females were restricted. Obviously, Gilligan’s (1982) and Belenky’s (1986)
feminist critiques of these two models should be carefully considered by those instructors who choose to
measure the cognitive development of their students.

Indeed, bearing in mind the observations by various commentators (e.g., Aisenberg & Harrington,
1988; Belenky et al., 1985) about the response (or position) of silence by some women, it can be
legitimately argued that Expressionist approaches have a critical role to play in helping those individuals
initially find their own voice (and explore their own feelings) without the added consideration of
rhetorical form. Similarly, students who are writing incoherently may well benefit initially from a
Formalist approach involving grammatical drills and an emphasis upon editing skills. In other words, no
one approach is, in and of itself, always sufficient. With basic writers (i.e., those writing from the
perspectives of silence or incoherence), both Expressionist and Formalist approaches serve useful
functions. To reiterate, teaching is rarely an either/or proposition.

Nevertheless, leaving aside certain specific contexts, the evidence does suggest that the New
Rhetorical approach to teaching composition is generally more effective than either the Formalist
approach or the Expressionist approach. In a meta-analysis of 60 experimental studies conducted from
1963 to 1982 which employed pre- and post-tests, Hillocks (1986) found that the “presentational” mode
of instruction (i.e., the Formalist approach) was the least effective with a mean effect size of .02. He
found the “natural process” mode of instruction (i.e., the Expressionist approach) next most effective,
with a mean effect size of .17. The “environmental” mode of instruction (i.e., the New Rhetorical
approach) was found to be the most effective with a mean effect size of .44. In the same study, Hillocks
also found that teaching grammar was the least effective focus of instruction (indeed, he found it actually
had a deleterious effect upon writing) while inquiry learning (teaching specific strategies) was the most
effective focus. Freewriting, the use of models, sentence combining, and criteria specification fell
between the extremes of teaching grammar and inquiry learning.

In any event, the issue here is not so much to demonstrate that one approach or the other is more
effective in inculcating specific skills, but rather to suggest that the different epistemological orientations
of the three approaches lead to different e-value-ations of the relationship between form, substance, and
process – evaluations which may variously enable or constrain the expression of socially constructed and
reinforced attitudes.

For example, in terms of process there is a widespread consensus that the writing process consists of
several sub-processes: inventing (or planning), drafting, and revising. Many current writing texts
address these issues, although, admittedly, in different ways and with slightly different emphases. In
terms of epistemology, there is a growing consensus that neither naively foundationist nor subjectivist
epistemologies adequately describe the world in which we live. What Manicas and Secord (1983)
describe as the realist critique and what Brummett (cited in Hunter, 1988) describes as an intersubjective
epistemology is becoming increasingly common within the literature (particularly within feminist
approaches to composition). In terms of pedagogical theory, we find a growing number of articles which
emphasize collaborative approaches to teaching. Although, as Fulkerson points out, collaborative approaches can be used within the context of any particular axiology, there is nevertheless more of a consensus than he would lead us to believe. This is not to suggest that composition theories are perfectly unified; most assuredly they are not. The point is that there are a number of key points about which we do agree, even if we disagree in terms of specifics. And, as we will see, there also remain important differences in terms of axiology (not to mention a wide separation between our theories about pedagogy and our classroom practices).

7 For a tongue-in-cheek discussion about how to apply the pedagogy of brainwashing in the classroom, see Joyce and Weil, Models of Teaching, 1986, pp. 493-496.

8 Young (1982) describes Rohman and Wlecke’s 1964 study, “Pre-Writing: The Construction and Application of Models for Concept Formation in Writing” as one which helped overturn the Formalist approach to teaching composition (in Faigley, 1986, p. 529). As such, their study represents a convenient initial landmark in the development of the so-called process approaches. Another landmark sometimes used for identifying the initial shift from formalism to more process oriented approaches is the Dartmouth Conference of 1966 (Berlin, 1990, p. 209-210).

9 In order to categorize the various course descriptions in the calendars, Burhans used Richard Young’s description to provide the criteria for the current-traditional (Formalist) approach:

1. Emphasis on the composed product rather than the composing process;
2. The analysis of discourse into words, sentences, and paragraphs;
3. The classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument;
4. The strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation) and with style (clarity, emphasis);
5. The preoccupation with the informal essay and the research paper (cited in Burhans, 1983, p. 642).

In addition, he used Maxine Hairston’s description to provide the criteria for the contemporary approach:

1. It focuses on the writing process; instructors intervene in students’ writing during the process.
2. It teaches strategies for invention and discovery; instructors help students to generate content and discover purpose.
3. It is rhetorically based; audience, purpose, and occasion figure prominently in the assignment of writing tasks.
4. It views writing as a recursive rather than a linear process; prewriting, writing, and revision are activities that overlap and intertwine.
5. It is holistic, viewing writing as an activity that involves the intuitive and non-rational as well as the rational faculties.
6. It emphasizes that writing is a way of learning and developing as well as a communication skill.
7. It includes a variety of writing modes, expressive as well as expository.
8. It is informed by other disciplines, especially cognitive psychology and linguistics.
9. It is based on linguistic research and research into the composing process.
10. It stresses the principle that writing teachers should be people who write (cited in Burhans, 1983, p. 641).

Those course descriptions which lacked sufficient information to be categorized as current-traditional or contemporary were termed indefinite.

10 A 1988 survey of writing programs in 236 American two-year colleges (representing 19% of the total accredited institutions) provides some recent corroboration of Burhan’s observations. In describing respondent’s answers to the question “What are the primary purposes of the writing program?”, Raines lists the following figures for instructional approaches which seem to reflect contemporary concerns:
Sixteen percent mentioned writing to encourage expression, for enrichment, for personal growth, for life-long learning, or as a way of making knowledge. . . Eight percent mentioned communication process or skills. . . Five percent mentioned something very specific about writing processes (1990, pp. 164-165).

Although Raines' findings are somewhat more difficult to interpret than are Burhan's (her experimental purpose differed from his and consequently her operational definitions were not designed to carefully separate Formalist from more contemporary approaches), they do provide further support for his contention that relatively few institutions of higher education have adopted a "process" approach to teaching composition. Even if we assume that the figures provided by Raines do not overlap (and they almost certainly do), only 29% of the colleges surveyed are using approaches in accord with contemporary theory.

11 One of the two articles which deals with form suggests using journal writing as a way of exploring issues which cannot be easily (or comfortably) discussed within the classroom context as well as a way of providing further writing practice (Perry, 1987, pp. 151-156). Journal writing, of course, has been widely used as a technique in Expressionist classes to encourage self-exploration and thus is not especially remarkable. The other article, "Teaching Digression as a Mode of Discovery" (Quinn, 1987, pp. 123-133), is somewhat more intriguing because it may represent an attempt to accommodate one element of form, namely digression, that some commentators have suggested more typifies the writing (and speaking) of women than men (Annas, 1985; Jelinek, 1980; Juhasz, 1980). Given that most Expressionist approaches underrate the importance of form (including the generative aspects of form), Quinn's article represents one of the few attempts in this anthology to move beyond an Expressionist approach (although in relation to class discussion rather than writing).

12 However, these same realities do not seem to mandate against using the traditional approach involving the study of literary essay forms to teach writing to Engineers (as is the current practice in English 100 at the University of British Columbia) or to Psychiatric Nurses (as is the current practice in English 130 at Douglas College). Unlike the Expressionist approach, the Formalist approach to writing seems remarkably immune to considerations of the real needs of students.

13 Similarly, the authority for evaluating the student's contribution to the project (i.e., assigning grades) may also be partly given over to the students. In Reither and Vipond's approach, for example, the grades are determined equally on the basis of a quantitative criterion assessed by the teacher (how much does each student participate) and a qualitative criterion assessed by the students (how valuable was each student's contribution).

14 Beyond being theoretically interesting, the accuracy of Lunsford and Ede's distinction between the hierarchical and dialogic modes of collaboration was partly verified in my own personal experience teaching collaborative writing during the summer semester of 1990. During this period, I taught project documentation to a class of 3rd year engineering students at Simon Fraser University. In this class, the students formed eight teams in order to undertake various engineering projects and produce the documentation associated with such projects. At the beginning of the term, the students were provided with two models for engineering and writing as part of a team, one in which the participant's roles were hierarchically organized (i.e., based upon formal authority relations) and fixed at the beginning of the course and one in which the roles were collectively organized (i.e., based upon consensus among the participants) and fluid throughout the course. Of the eight teams, only one chose the model for collective organization. I think it is significant that this was the only team which had any female members (two of six team members) as well as the one team which focussed quite intensively upon group dynamics and also expressed the most satisfaction with what they learned from the process (at least so far as I could ascertain from my conversations with the various groups). Perhaps not coincidentally, the quality of their products (i.e., the device they created, along with its accompanying documentation) were judged by both myself and another instructor as the highest of the eight groups.

15 In "Aristotelian vs. Rogerian Argument: A Reassessment" (1979), Lunsford argues that "the major tenants of Rogerian argument have clear counterparts in Aristotelian doctrine" (p. 149) and "that Rogerian argument is not at all opposed to traditional Aristotelian argument" (p. 150). In "Is Rogerian Rhetoric Really Rogerian" (1984), Ede suggests that Rogerian Persuasion differs, in important ways, from the three essential conditions of Rogerian Therapy: genuineness, unconditional acceptance, and empathy (p. 44). In "Rogerian Rhetoric" (1991), Brent points out two flaws in the theoretical underpinnings of the model, that language can be used in a non-evaluative fashion and that invention is
an individual activity rather than a dialogic process. Although all these criticisms are accurate, they do not impair the utility of Rogerian Persuasion as an antidote to the adversarial approach sometimes fostered in the classroom and often employed in the literature. Lassner’s criticisms of Rogerian Persuasion, on the other hand, are more serious and so are detailed later in this section.

Indeed, in these extreme types of situations an attempt to apply Classical Persuasion is equally absurd. I remember a program on the Knowledge Network in which, as part of their rehabilitation, convicted rapists were confronted by the victims of rape (unfortunately, I do not remember the name or broadcast date of the program). On some level, there is a persuasive intent underlying this attempt at rehabilitation, at least so far as demonstrating to the rapists the horrific consequences of their actions might dissuade them from committing rape when they are released. (Similar attempts at rehabilitation are being undertaken with convicted drunk drivers who are also confronted by their victims). The type of persuasion demonstrated in this program involved extremes of anger and confrontation on the part of the women. And given the context, these extremes are perfectly appropriate. The point here is that the context determines the appropriateness of any given model of persuasion.

In fairness to Lassner, she notes at the beginning of her article that it is exploratory and, further, she makes no claim that her student’s responses are universal. Like her, I have also taught Rogerian Persuasion to women, but the responses I have received to the model were precisely the opposite of the ones she received. The students I was teaching responded positively, at times enthusiastically, to the model. That our experiences are at such odds is interesting and bears some consideration. I can think of four possible reasons for the difference (the first two of which intentionally undercut my position).

First, that Lassner is a woman and I am a man may have some bearing on the matter. The atypical situation of a man taking (or perhaps I should say attempting to take) a feminist and non-authoritarian approach to writing, may unintentionally lead to some restriction of the attitudes which are communicated to me by the students. Just as I would not take a red pen and mark all the minor grammatical slips in papers submitted by students who were making genuine progress for fear of discouraging them, the students in my course might view my attempts at dealing with gender as better than no attempt at all. (Intriguingly, when I inadvertently made an over-generalization about gender in the course, it was a man rather than a woman who took me to task.) In other words, it is possible that Lassner’s students were more honest with her about their reactions to the model than mine were with me.

Second, I am quite enthusiastic about Rogerian Persuasion (in part, because it provides me with an alternative to the more adversarial models I have been taught throughout my time at university) and I undoubtedly communicate that enthusiasm to the students. They may be responding more to my enthusiasm than to the model itself. As I have noted previously, our students are often quick to determine what we want and then give it to us. Further, because there is no requirement that my students produce a paper based upon Rogerian Persuasion (rather they are asked to produce a paper that is appropriate to the specific rhetorical context they define), their responses to the model are not always based upon the experience of actually following the model. In other words, the reactions of Lassner’s students may be based more upon experience while those of my students may be based more upon belief.

Third, our audiences were perhaps very different. As the title of her article implies, her audience was feminist in composition (which from the context of her article I take to mean as committed to exploring and challenging the ideological underpinnings of the sex/gender construct within our culture). My audience, on the other hand, was perhaps more diverse in terms of its composition: although some described themselves as feminist, others were suspicious of the term and the radicalism they felt that it implied (nevertheless, one of the individuals who was most enthusiastic about Rogerian Persuasion was also a self-described feminist). Lamb makes a good point, I think, when she describes Rogerian Persuasion as feminine rather than feminist (1991, p. 17). To the extent that my students might have described themselves as feminine rather than feminist, Rogerian Persuasion might be more consonant with their self-concepts than more adversarial models (almost all of them, for example, expressed some distaste for Baker’s argumentative edge).

Fourth, and the point upon which I base my criticisms of Lassner’s article, I believe there was a crucial difference in what we were teaching. One issue I deal with very explicitly near the beginning of my course is the nature of the rhetorical context (audience, purpose, and occasion) and how it relates to the form, content, and processes of writing. I cannot imagine suggesting that the students attempt to apply Rogerian Persuasion if writing about the sorts of issues that Lassner’s students were writing about; instead I would suggest that Classical Persuasion (or even some new form they might choose to invent) would be more appropriate given the rhetorical context. Perhaps part of the difference in our approaches stems from Lassner’s use of Maxine Hairston’s (1977) adaptation of Rogerian Persuasion which is clearly based upon the false conception of a non-evaluative or objective language while the approach I am using is Coe’s (1990) adaptation of the model which views language (and form) as both generative and
constraining and which proposes that Rogerian Persuasion is simply one model that might be of use depending upon the rhetorical context.

Nevertheless, I take Lassner’s comments quite seriously because if her findings prove generally accurate, they call into question the ethics of teaching Rogerian Persuasion. Of all the criticisms that have been advanced about Rogerian Persuasion, hers is the only one that is potentially fatal to the model. I look forward to investigating this issue with my future classes within the context of the research proposed in Chapter Four.

In what sort of context might it be ethical to lie? Consider, for example, an individual who phones a crisis line and who is quite intent upon committing suicide. When the caller asks, “Are you tracing this call?”, does the counsellor respond with the truth that the call is indeed being traced (and thus risk that the caller will hang up before the trace is completed)? Or does the counsellor lie in order to complete the trace and perhaps save the caller’s life? In this situation (which, by the way, is not at all hypothetical), the end — saving a life — certainly justifies the means — telling a lie.
Peroration

At any rate, when a subject is highly controversial — and any question about sex is that — one cannot hope to tell the truth. One can only show how one came to hold whatever opinion one does hold. One can only give one’s audience the chance of drawing their own conclusions as they observe the limitations, the prejudices, the idiosyncrasies of the speaker.

— Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own* (1929, p. 5)

I have posed two basic questions in this thesis. First, do people write in ways that reflect the psychosocial construct of gender? Second, does academic discourse, as generically constituted and taught, privilege one of those gendered ways of writing? Although the evidence is sometimes contradictory, I believe the answer to both questions is yes. Given that answer (however we may choose to qualify it), if we are truly serious about establishing gender equity in the academy, then we need to change how we teach composition. We also need to change what we teach. Admittedly, the changes I have proposed are tentative and almost certainly not the only ones needed. But, I submit, they at least provide us with some places to start.

Being sensitive to how the social constructs of gender, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation interact with the forms of writing and the kinds of knowledge we privilege in academe is one thing that we can do. Changing our pedagogy from the monologue of the lecture format to the dialogue of collaborative learning is another. Teaching our students how to create new forms as well as how to use the old forms is yet another. And, informing our colleagues about all these issues is still another thing we can do.

Yet doing all of that may still be insufficient to create genuine change. Having answered my first two questions (however tentatively), I would like to pose a third question — a question that, even as I pose it, I know I cannot answer. Do we, as academics, have the will to undertake the changes that are required? I cannot answer that question because it is not for me alone to answer; scholars and administrators, at all levels of the university community, must collectively provide the answer. But I do know that attitudes must change if action is to follow. And, I also know that as rhetors, we can change attitudes, both our own as well as those of our students and our colleagues.

Our goal when teaching composition should not be to prescribe a generic rhetorical form; instead students need to become aware of how form can be both generative and constraining, of how form functions cognitively and socially. And we can help our colleagues and students, both women and men,
both masculine and feminine, become aware that there are alternatives to the generic essay form, that one of those alternatives includes developing new forms for new truths. At the same time, however, we must avoid misinterpreting the creation and use of these alternative forms as only accruing to the benefit of women students and feminist scholars. Such a misinterpretation risks further marginalizing those students and those scholars. Indeed, that misinterpretation also risks undercutting the value of the entire effort. In the end, all of academia stands to benefit from those new forms and the new kinds of knowledge those forms will make possible.

As Hélène Cixous suggests: “There will not be one feminine discourse, there will be thousands of different kinds of feminine words, and then there will be the code for general communication, philosophical discourse, rhetoric like now but with a great number of subversive discourses in addition that are somewhere else entirely” (1986, p. 137). The differences between l’écriture féminine and academic discourse does not mean that women must abandon academia. Such a move will accomplish nothing. Nor do these differences necessarily require that women engage in combat with academic discourse. Such a move simply perpetuates adversarial approaches. Instead, as Fran Davis demonstrates, perhaps academic discourse can be beneficially reformed by incorporating elements of feminist discourse.

Academic discourse has proven to be a powerful way of generating and testing knowledge. Helping students to speak in the voices of the academy is necessary — they gain authority. Helping students to speak in their own voices is also necessary — they gain authenticity. L’écriture féminine, in all its diverse forms, may prove equally powerful as a way of generating change, of reconciling authority with authenticity, of reconciling the feminine with the masculine, of men with women. Of justice with truth.
Appendix A:

Sex Differences and the Psychoanalytic Tradition
In *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* (1978), Chodorow argues that the phenomenon of *mothering* is a product of "social structurally induced psychological processes" (p. 7). Legitimating ideologies, as well as the institutions which foster those ideologies — the school, the media, and the family — are seen as contributing to the social reproduction of mothering, at least insofar as they generate expectations about what is appropriate and normal behavior for males and females. Founded upon these key assumptions, Chodorow's work attempts to account for an underlying asymmetry in the social reproduction of gender: "men are socially and psychologically reproduced by women, but women are reproduced (or not) largely by themselves" (p. 36). In our culture, at least, many women undertake the mothering of children whereas men rarely do so. Although, in recent years, this asymmetry may be decreasing, it nevertheless remains a key difference between the sexes.

Basing her analysis upon clinical studies, Chodorow suggests that subtle differences in the ways that mothers relate to their male and female children, particularly in infancy and early childhood, “cut off or curtail relational possibilities for parenting in boys, and keep them open and extend them in girls” (p. 91). During the child's *preoedipal* period, the mother's recognition and experience of her daughter as being of the same gender as herself leads to a more intense and more prolonged identification with the girl whereas the mother's experience of her son as being of the opposite gender leads to increased differentiation from the boy. The mother's greater sense of identity between herself and her daughter protracts, in turn, the daughter's preoedipal period and amplifies the daughter's primary relationship with her mother in a way that does not occur with sons. The son's preoedipal relationship with his mother more quickly becomes oedipally focussed upon competition and rivalry with the father for possession of the mother. The outcome of these asymmetric preoedipal relations is well stated by Chodorow:

> From the retention of preoedipal attachments to their mother, growing girls come to define and experience themselves as continuous with others; their experience of self contains more flexible or permeable ego boundaries. Boys come to define themselves as more separate and distinct, with a greater sense of rigid ego boundaries and differentiation. *The basic feminine sense of self is connected to the world, the basic masculine sense of self is separate* [italics added] (p. 169).

Built upon the differing preoedipal relationships between the mother and her son or her daughter, the oedipal and post-oedipal periods reinforce the asymmetry between male and female relational capacities. In the psychoanalytic view, the son gives up his oedipal attachment to the mother in order to avoid punishment by the father, but then comes to identify with the father "because he can then gain the benefits of being the one who gives punishment, of being masculine and superior" whereas the daughter "identifies with her mother in their common feminine inferiority" (Chodorow, p. 113). Accepting the psychoanalytic account as a given (at least insofar as it explains the development of heterosexuality), Chodorow argues that most accounts have nevertheless failed to adequately describe how the daughter
finally comes to identify with the mother by minimizing the importance of the relations between mother and daughter during the oedipal stage.

Unlike boys, in which the oedipal attachment and its subsequent resolution generally occurs quickly and straightforwardly, Chodorow argues that girls develop oedipal attachments to both the mother and the father: "A girl's love for her father and rivalry with her mother is always tempered by love for her mother" (p. 127). In part this ambivalence is the result of the longer more intense identification with the mother which occurs during the girl's preoedipal period. However, it may also result, in part, from the minimal availability of the father as a primary (or for that matter, co-equal) caretaker in our culture:

A girl's father does not serve as a sufficiently important object to break her maternal attachment, given his physical and emotional distance in conjunction with a girl's desperate need to separate from her mother but simultaneous love for her. . . . This "failure" is because of his own emotional qualities, because he is not her primary caretaker but comes on the scene after her daughter's relationship to this caretaker (her mother) is well established, and because he is not so involved with his children, however idealized and seductive he may be. . . . Deutsh argues and offers abundant clinical examples in her *Psychology of Women* that the oedipal girl alternates between positive attraction to her father as escape from her mother, and reseeking of her mother as a safe and familiar refuge against her father's frustrating and frightening aspects (pp. 128-129).

Chodorow proposes that the more complex, slowly resolved oedipal attachments of girls and the more simple, quickly resolved oedipal attachments of boys may result in important underlying differences in personality between adult males and females:

From their oedipus complex and its resolution, women's endopsychic object-world becomes a more complex relational constellation than men's, and women remain preoccupied with ongoing relational issues . . . in a way that men do not. Men's endopsychic object-world tends to be more fixed and simpler, and the masculine heritage of the oedipus complex is that relational issues tend to be more repressed. Masculine personality, then, comes to be defined more in terms of denial of relation and connection (and denial of femininity), whereas feminine personality comes to include a fundamental definition of *self in relationship* [italics added] (p. 169).

To whatever degree Chodorow's work may be open to dispute and revision, it represents a ground breaking work insofar as it critiques the masculine bias found in the psychoanalytic tradition and recasts misogynistic stereotypes about the psychological development of females in more positive ways. Rather than being negatively portrayed as possessing an inadequate sense of justice (which in the traditional Freudian account is supposedly due to the female's weak superego development resulting from incomplete resolution of the oedipal complex), Chodorow argues that females possess the positive personality attribute of the *self in relationship*. 
Appendix B:
Course Syllabi (S. Whitmore)
Essay Writing Workshop

Time: Saturdays, 9:30 am - 12:00 pm
Facilitator: Steve Whitmore
Phone: 939-4562

The primary goal of this workshop is to assist you in understanding how you presently write by exploring your writing processes within the context of a specific writing project which you define. During the first three sessions of the workshop, we will examine the processes of inventing, drafting, and revising in order to help you discover and apply strategies for increasing your level of comfort and confidence with composing. As well, we will consider the potential audiences and purposes for your writing in order to enhance your flexibility with writing.

A secondary goal is to increase your awareness of the styles and structures which you tend to use when writing. Through analyses of various paragraph and sentence structures, you can learn to strategically tailor your writing styles in order to most clearly and effectively communicate your ideas to your readers. In addition, we will consider how format conventions are related to the reader's expectations and thinking about a subject. The final three sessions focus on these considerations.

Session 1 (January 20): Inventing
Discussion of writing processes
Audience and purpose
Strategies for inventing

Session 2 (January 27): Drafting
Discussion of "Invention Exercise"
Strategies for drafting
Organization and description; writer's block

Session 3 (February 3): Revising
Discussion of "Description Exercise"
Strategies for revising
Using words effectively

Session 4 (February 24): Style
Turn in first draft
Discussion of "Revision Exercise"
Style analysis; paragraph analysis

Session 5 (March 3): Format
Turn in style and paragraph analyses
Discussion of drafts; specific revision strategies
Format conventions; reader expectations and cognitions

Session 6 (March 10): Goals
Turn in second draft (will be returned by mail)
Discussion of style analyses
Goal setting for future writing; wrap up
Written Communication Skills Workshop (Session VII)
NRC Business Management Skills Seminar

Facilitator: Steve Whitmore

The Written Communication Skills Workshop will focus upon teaching you, as an Industrial Technology Advisor, how to most efficiently produce effective technical reports and letters. In particular, it will detail two strategies for enhancing the efficiency of your drafting process when using word processors as well as a dozen techniques for effectively revising various types of documents. The workshop will also examine how the considerations of audience and purpose impact upon the form, content, and tone of technical documents. Finally, the workshop will detail how to appropriately format documents for readers with varying degrees of expertise in order to increase their comprehension and memory of technical information.

The instructional approach taken in this workshop will be a combination of interactive lecture, group discussion, and directed writing. In the lecture component, I will provide information about drafting strategies, revising strategies, audience analyses, and format considerations. In the group discussion component, you will be asked to perform an audience analysis upon the individuals to whom you will be presenting the CREO case study. The directed writing component will require that you provide a two page written description of your own unique writing process. These descriptions will be returned by mail to you, along with my comments and specific suggestions for making your processes more effective, more efficient, and more comfortable.

The following are the instructional objectives for the workshop:

1. To develop an increased awareness of the writing process in general and your own writing processes in particular;
2. To learn how to perform an audience analysis;
3. To learn how to change your drafting process in order to increase your efficiency and comfort with writing;
4. To refine your revising process in order to optimize the coherence, clarity, and conciseness of your writing;
5. To learn how to format technical documents in order to maximize comprehension on the part of the reader.

Pre-reading: Excerpts from the ENSC Communication Handbook (Stevenson & Whitmore, Simon Fraser University, 1989).
Appendix C:
Grading Criteria for UBC’s English 100
Grading is not a mechanical application of rules, and a marker must do more than catalogue errors. Markers are also looking for positive evidence. They are looking for signs of intellect and imagination, developed thought and feeling, strength of syntax, vigorous language and trenchant, at times passionate, argument. There is not merit in mindlessly "tough" grading, just as there is no merit in mindlessly "soft" grading. Grading is a matter of judgement, which is arrived at by practice and discussion; at the same time, when awarding grades, a marker should bear in mind the English Department’s statement on Grading Standards. A marker must take into account the whole essay (not the whole student; we are judging the work, not its author). Comments should, where appropriate, give advice, encouragement, praise or criticism.

1. Markers should reward such qualities in essays as coherence, clarity, substance, energy of language and argument, a sense of proportion and appropriate emphasis, reason as well as feeling, economy, fresh insight and imaginative flair.

2. We should fail essays that are badly organized, lack development, or are full of padding.

3. The most serious errors are those that obscure or distort meaning. It is our policy in English 100 to fail students who cannot make their meaning clear.
   a. Run-on constructions and sentence fragments are serious errors (apart from the occasional fragment that is clearly used as a stylistic device).
   b. Comma splices are serious errors, in the sense that a student whose writing is full of them should fail the composition examination. One must distinguish, though, between "She looked through the window at the autumnal garden, she saw her life decaying before her" and "You will have to choose your vocation yourself; however, you should think about it carefully." The first reads well and could have been written by a good writer, while the second is clearly the result of incompetence and because it creates an unwanted and unwarranted ambiguity should be regarded as a very serious error.
   c. Dangling modifiers are serious errors, but here again the error must be seen in its context. A dangling modifier may make a sentence ambiguous, or it may affect one's reading very little.
   d. Spelling errors should always be taken into account in marking, and when a student has access to a dictionary his essay should be failed if it is full of misspellings. In the final examination, errors in spelling must be numerous and gross to justify a failure, if other aspects of his writing are adequate.
   e. It is our policy in English 100 not to fail students solely on the ground of occasional errors in idiom, unless meaning is obscured. Students (particularly non-native speakers) may write quite acceptable English in spite of the odd error in idiom.
   f. The misuse of words is a serious error. Consider the following example: "My likeness for him increased as the year went by." Repeated errors of this sort should fail an essay.

5. An essay that is syntactically simple to the point of absurdity should fail, even if it is free of errors. E.g., "I am a student. I attend U.B.C. My faculty is Arts. My favourite subject is English."

6. A student should not be excessively penalized for the kinds of errors that may result from intellectual adventurousness, and liveliness of language should always be taken into account. We are not trying to turn out linguistic bores who can put their readers to sleep with their error-free prose.

7. An essay that attempts to say good things in bad prose presents special difficulties in grading. Some instructors ask students to rewrite such essays, and then they record the new grade. Others grade the essay according to its level of prose, indicating through encouraging comments that the ideas deserve better development and expression.
Appendix D:
Marking Guidelines for UBC’s English Composition Test
This examination is intended to test a student's reading comprehension, and to assess his competence in writing.

The ability to read with understanding and to abstract the principle points of an argument is fundamental to the pursuit of any intellectual discipline; in the first part of the Test, therefore, the student is asked to read a passage of prose approximately 500 words in length, and to summarise its main points in no more than 120 words, using his own words as far as possible.

In the second part of the Test, the student is expected to demonstrate that he is capable of writing a short (300 words) but coherent piece of prose on an unprepared topic, with the minimum of outside help (the use of a dictionary is permitted). His essay should show that he can formulate a thesis, support it with a logical argument, and express himself in clear and correct English. Here too the student is involved in an activity common to academic study at every level and in every discipline: the organization and expression of ideas in written form for the purposes of conducting an argument, developing an hypothesis, or communicating information. The formal essay on a general topic enables us to determine whether the student, whatever his special field of interest, understands the basic principles of written discourse, and has a command of English that will enable him to communicate his ideas effectively on any subject.

**Comprehension question (Part A):**

The student should summarize the main points of the passage, preferably in the order in which they appear in the passage; however, he may change the order if this enables him to give a more coherent or emphatic summary. The summary should be written in complete sentences, not in note form, and should not exceed the stated word limit. It should not introduce ideas or opinions not found in the original. The student may make use of words or phrases from the original; but if the summary is little more than a reshuffling of sentences taken from the passage, it should be failed. Markers should also penalize the answer if it contains errors of expression (see below); more than three or four mistakes in a paragraph of 100-120 words would be unacceptable.

**Essay question (Part B):**

A passing essay should present a unified argument that is a coherent and reasoned response to the question. It should state a thesis, and develop its position in a clear and logical discussion. The essay should demonstrate the writer's ability to:

a) develop an argument through an effective and logical ordering of his materials;

b) write unified paragraphs, each of which explicitly or implicitly focusses on a major point in the writer's argument;

c) support general statements with explanation and illustration;

d) connect successive stages in the discussion by means of effective transitions;

e) write in clear, correct, and idiomatic English.

An essay may be failed if it presents an argument that is illogical, self-contradictory, or repetitious; if it does not address itself to the topic in hand; if it is too short; if the discussion remains on the level of vague generalities; if the paragraphs lack unity or coherence; if there are numerous errors of expression (see below); if the level of writing falls below an appropriate university standard (e.g., if the discussion is conducted primarily in short simple sentences).
An essay that is deficient in some of these areas may still pass if the readers agree that its strengths clearly outweigh any weaknesses. We should be prepared to overlook some errors, provided that the essay as a whole demonstrates clarity of thought and competence in expression. At the same time, we should not accept confused, careless, or ungrammatical writing; to pass an incompetently-written essay would be no favour to the student in need of further instruction in composition.

Errors in expression:

The student’s ability to express himself in clear and correct English must be a major factor in our evaluation of his performance in the test. We should not fail an otherwise competently-written 300-word paper if it contains no more than three or four minor errors that do not obscure the sense or create ambiguities (e.g. errors in spelling, the occasional faulty idiom, an unnecessary shift in tense or voice). However, an accumulation of such minor errors is at least an indication of carelessness, and must be penalized.

More serious errors (e.g. run-on constructions, sentence fragments, errors in verb formation or in subject/verb agreement, comma splices, frequent misuse of words) are likely to interfere with the sense of an argument or reduce its effectiveness. Three or four errors of this kind are sufficient grounds for failing an essay if there are no compensating strengths in other aspects of expression or organization.

Awarding a grade:

Since the English Composition Test carries no marks, it is graded C ("complete," i.e. pass) or F. The marker’s decision is based on an evaluation of the paper as a whole; however, greater importance is attached to the student’s handling of the essay than to his performance in the comprehension part of the Test.
Appendix E:
Course Syllabus (Instructor Y)
ENGLISH 130--ACADEMIC WRITING

Instructor: Instructor Y  Office Hours:

Course Description: This course concentrates on the process of writing academic argument essays. It includes assignments and exercises on the development, style, and mechanics of the academic argument essay and instruction in the general principles of composition. It also includes instruction in the reading and use of source material in the development of the academic argument essay.

Course Objectives: Generally, this course should teach you to write in the rhetorical modes appropriate to academic discourse, to read the written work of students and others carefully, and to criticise it honestly but in a spirit of helpfulness. It should also help to inculcate in you a respect and yearning for academic integrity.

More specifically, you should learn to write well structured, unified, and coherent essays, with suitable and effective introductions and conclusions. In following the conventions of academic essays, you will learn to articulate a clear and significant thesis, a thesis for which you systematically argue, thus a thesis governing the development (including diction and tone) of the whole essay. You will also learn how to present evidence supporting your argument according to the guidelines established by the MLA Handbook. Indeed, you will learn to format your entire essay according to these guidelines.

Course Method: Although we will occasionally study the writings of seasoned essayists in class, this workshop is organized on the principle that we acquire writing skills principally through the practice of writing. You will be required to submit four short essays, but will be graded only on the three best. In addition, you will have to submit a substantial research essay. Workshop sessions will provide an opportunity for you collectively to critique and improve upon a selection of other students' work. We will also spend a good deal of time in exercises designed to assist you in the various stages of essay writing, from "pre-writing" through to polishing the final draft.

Evaluation:

1) *4 short essays, due second class in weeks 3, 5, 7, 9: 40%
2) **Class participation and pop quizzes: 15%
3) Test, probably in week 6: 15%
4) 2,000 word research paper (due last class): 30%

N. B. *All essays must be typed and double spaced. They are due in class on the assigned date. All late essays will be heavily penalized. Illness, documented by a medical certificate (or the equivalent), provides the only exemption from penalty.

**You should think of this course as a workshop and plan to attend. Your attendance, naturally, will contribute to your class participation evaluation.

Appendix F:
Course Syllabus (Instructor X)
Instructor X
Office:
Telephone:
Office Hours:

Course Description

English 130 is a first year course, concentrating on the process of writing academic essays. It includes assignments and exercises on the development, style, and mechanics of the expository and persuasive essays, and instruction in the general principles of composition. The course also includes instruction in the reading and use of source material in the development of the academic essay.

Course Objectives

The student will learn to read and discuss written material in a spirit of intellectual research, to generate thoughts and ideas on the material, and to express these ideas in clear, unified, and well-developed academic prose. Students will read the written work of their peers carefully and criticize it honestly but in a spirit of helpfulness. The student will learn to write papers which follow the conventions of written, academic discourse:

(a) the development is controlled by a thesis;
(b) the thesis is significant;
(c) the evidence is relevant, specific, and sufficient;
(d) the evidence derived from external sources is quoted or paraphrased and documented according to the standard conventions found in the latest MLA Handbook;
(e) the format of the essay accords with accepted style as illustrated in the latest MLA Handbook;
(f) the diction and tone are suitable to written, academic discourse.

Class Format

Classes will include lectures, discussions, small group discussions, writing workshops, in-class writing, and exercises. In-class peer editing sessions are a mandatory activity of this class.

These marks will be converted into letter grades as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>87 to 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>82 to 86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77 to 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>72 to 76</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>67 to 71</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>62 to 66</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>53 to 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 to 49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Important Points to Note

It is advisable to make a copy of each essay before submitting the original, and your essays are to be submitted to me in person or to ______________, the English Dept. secretary. Assignments are due in class on the date they are called for; papers turned in outside of that class will receive a late penalty. Extensions will not be granted unless the student has a valid excuse (a medical certificate, for example) or has seen me several days prior to the essay due date.

All assignments must be submitted and accepted to obtain credit for the course, regardless of the total mark achieved.

If papers are given to a tutor or an outside reader for "proofreading," both the final copy and the rough draft must be submitted to me in order for the paper to receive a grade.

Late assignments will be penalized up to 5% per day unless an extension has been approved. Late assignments will not be accepted once the assignments have been graded and returned to the class, or after discussion has begun on a work for which a preliminary assignment was given.

An (Unofficial Withdrawal) will be given to students who withdraw from the course without completing the official withdrawal procedures. The UN grade counts as 0 in calculating your grade point average (i.e. it is equivalent to a fail grade).

Plagiarism will result in an automatic F (Fail) grade for the course, with no possibility of makeup or rewrite.

Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss their progress in the course, as well as to discuss the grading or pre-writing of their essays.

Texts


Academic Writing Assignments. Main. Douglas College. (These will be distributed during the first week of classes.)

Several informal quizzes and exercises will be included throughout the term. Although these assignments will not be graded, student performance on them will be taken into account, especially in borderline grade situations.

Remember: Assignments are due in class on the date indicated. No extensions (unless the student has a valid excuse and has seen me several days prior to the due date).

Good luck. I hope you enjoy the term, and even if you don’t enjoy it, I hope you will have learned something at the end of these classes.
GRADING CRITERIA

The following offers some grading criteria for a 500-1000 word essay at the first year level. Keep in mind that not all essays will fit easily into any one of these categories. These are descriptions of typical papers.

"A" range essay:

1. THESIS: Clear thesis, interestingly presented, allowing for development and indicating some depth of thought about the material.
2. ORGANIZATION: Well organized. Paragraphing clear and logical; relation of parts to whole clear throughout.
3. DEVELOPMENT: Well-developed. A series of incisive points or insights made and supported with appropriate concrete detail (supporting evidence, examples, reasons, etc.) Some complexities of thought unfolded.
5. COHERENCE: Ideas lucid and flowing.
6. STYLE/LANGUAGE: Some stylistic control demonstrated. Presence of some vivid or lively language. Excellent to good vocabulary; control of diction.
7. SENTENCE ERRORS: No major sentence faults (i.e., fused sentences, comma splices, agreement errors, etc.).
8. MECHANICS: One or two small mechanical errors allowable especially if they do not affect meaning.
9. FORMAT: good.

"B" range essay:

1. THESIS: Clear thesis, allowing for development. Content not as profound, striking or fresh as "A" work, but discussion should illuminate the subject and present a valid argument.
2. ORGANIZATION: Well organized. Organization and paragraphing clear and logical.
3. DEVELOPMENT: Well developed. A few more concrete examples needed, or further implications to be drawn, but evidence is adequate and relevant.
4. UNITY: Unified. Each paragraph tied to thesis and internally unified. Transitions could be improved but the logical relation of parts to whole is evident.
5. COHERENCE: Ideas clear and coherent. No really unintelligible passages.
6. STYLE/LANGUAGE: Stylistic Control. Good vocabulary and diction. Language somewhat less vivid and lively that "A" work but clear and purposeful.
7. SENTENCE ERRORS: One or two sentence errors allowed if the errors do not indicate a failure to understand the dynamics of the sentence or obtrude on meaning significantly.
8. MECHANICS: One or two mechanical errors allowed.

"C" range essay:

1. THESIS: Thesis present, but may need qualification, focussing, broadening, etc. Content may be fairly commonplace, but the ideas are the student's own and show some degree of perceptiveness.
2. ORGANIZATION: Organization and paragraphing could be more consistent and logical, but there is an organizational scheme.
3. DEVELOPMENT: Some development of ideas present. Several points may need to be amplified or modified.
4. UNITY: Mostly unified, but some extraneous or irrelevant ideas present. Thesis usually kept in sight.
5. COHERENCE: Mostly coherent and clear. Some occasional lapses.
6. STYLE/LANGUAGE: Style may be pedestrian and vocabulary limited, but there are occasional passages that show potential for vitality.
7. SENTENCE ERRORS: Three or four basic sentence errors allowed but must be corrected in future if student is to sustain the "C." Fused sentences and fragments cannot be pervasive.
8. MECHANICS: Mechanics may need work, but student must have made an effort to be correct. Flagrant carelessness not allowed.
9. FORMAT: Format acceptable.
"P" range essay:

1. THESIS: Thesis potentially present (implied) but not clearly stated or well-placed. Material lacks potential for in-depth development.
2. ORGANIZATION: Organization and paragraphing present but inconsistent or incomplete.
3. DEVELOPMENT: More development needed. Quite a few points require further explanation, qualification, support, etc.
4. UNITY: Unity incomplete. Essay jumps from idea to idea; sometimes writer loses sight of purpose. Some good ideas, but not welded into a unified whole.
5. COHERENCE: Some incoherent passages. Lack of flow from idea to idea. Much incoherence at the sentence level.
6. STYLE/LANGUAGE: Lack of stylistic control. Language pedestrian; vocabulary limited; diction inexact.
7. SENTENCE ERRORS: Five or more major sentence errors repeated throughout the essay. Pervasive grammatical problems.
8. MECHANICS/FORMAT: Mechanics and format need work.

"F" range essay:

1. THESIS: No real thesis or potential for development as stated.
2. ORGANIZATION: Weak organization or lack of such.
3. DEVELOPMENT: Undeveloped ideas.
4. UNITY: Lack of unity.
5. COHERENCE: Incoherence (many unintelligible passages).
6. STYLE/LANGUAGE: Absence of stylistic control.
7. SENTENCE ERRORS: Many (six or more) major sentence errors running throughout the essay.
8. MECHANICS/FORMAT: Mechanics and format incorrect.
9. Usually there is a sense that a genuine effort has not been made. Essay appears to be thrown together at the last minute and not proofread.
Appendix G:
Models for Classical and Rogerian Persuasion
Classical Persuasion

Classical Persuasion originated in the courts of ancient Greece approximately 2,500 years ago and since then has been employed as the traditional model for organizing an argument. In essence, it involves providing arguments in support of your position and refuting those viewpoints which disagree with your position. Classical Persuasion is perhaps at its best when used to persuade a third party (e.g., a judge or members of a discourse community) to adopt a particular course of action or interpretation rather than other possible alternatives. It may not be a particularly effective approach when you are actually attempting to persuade the person who disagrees with you.

Three different types of appeal are traditionally used in this model of persuasion: ethos, pathos, and logos. Ethos, or ethical appeal, is based upon persuading your audience that you are a sensible, honest, and unselfish individual (often used implicitly in the first and second stage of the model). Pathos, or emotional appeal, is based upon inciting the feelings or desires of the audience (rarely used explicitly in professional and academic discourse). Logos, or logical appeal, is based upon persuading the audience to accept the apparent validity of your interpretation of the facts or reality (generally, the type of argument most emphasized in professional and academic discourse).

It is worth keeping in mind that this model is only intended as a general guide and that various stages may be omitted or combined depending upon the specific context. In academic discourse, for example, the first three stages are generally combined into the initial one or two paragraphs of an essay or research paper.

1. Introduce the topic you will be considering.
2. Explain the facts and issues involved and define any specialized terms you will be using.
3. State the central issue or point of the topic and explain how your argument will be organized.
4. Detail the arguments and evidence which support your position.
5. Refute any other viewpoints by indicating their flaws or shortcomings.
6. Summarize your arguments and refutations.

Example Memo: Robert: I must have your part of the proposal no later than tomorrow afternoon. The boss has demanded that I have the completed proposal on his desk by Friday morning and everything is finished except your part. As I have repeatedly told you, this project is more important than any of the other things you are working on. Our company stands to lose a major contract if the proposal is late. A week ago you promised me that your part of the proposal would be completed in a day. Since then you have given me nothing but excuses. I am running out of time and patience. As it stands now, I will have to work late tomorrow evening just to revise and format your part of the proposal. I don’t want to hear any more excuses. Get me your part of the proposal by tomorrow even if you have to work on it all night. Your job depends upon it.
Rogerian Persuasion

Rogerian Persuasion was invented in the early 1970's and is loosely based upon the work of the psychologist Carl Rogers. It is grounded in the principle that arguing with someone tends to increase the psychological threat felt by the other person. The more threatened an individual feels, the more likely he or she is to adhere stubbornly to their position. By listening empathetically to the other person's position and by communicating that you understand how they could reasonably hold that position, you increase the chances that they will adopt some elements of your position. Rogerian Persuasion is generally used when you actually hope to persuade the person who disagrees with you and is particularly appropriate when dealing with a hostile audience or a controversial topic. This model can also be useful when the person you hope to persuade holds a position of power relative to you.

1. Present the conflict as a problem to be solved rather than as an issue to be disputed.
2. Give a fair and complete summary of the other person’s position; show that you understand the other person’s position by accurately restating it.
3. Describe the contexts in which the other position is valid; demonstrate that you understand how the other person could reasonably hold that position.
4. Give a fair statement of your own position, but be especially careful to not overstate or exaggerate your claims.
5. Describe the contexts in which your position is valid.
6. Describe how the other person would benefit by adopting some elements of your position. Alternatively, seek a third position which meets the needs of both people.

Example Memo: It sounds like we are going to run into some problems with meeting our deadlines for this proposal. I understand you have a lot of other work to do which is interfering with you completing your part of the proposal. I know your other commitments are very important and normally it wouldn't matter if you were a bit late. But I really do need your part of the proposal as soon as possible. Perhaps the deadline we face has slipped your mind. The boss has told me that the entire proposal must be completed by Friday morning because our company stands to lose a major contract if it is submitted late. If you will get me your part of the proposal by tomorrow afternoon, I will let him know that you really went out of your way to complete it. Even a rough draft would help. Remember that both our jobs may depend upon getting this contract. Thanks Bob.
Appendix H:
Sample Analyses of Nominal and Verbal Styles
Sample Analyses of Nominal and Verbal Styles

The following texts provide examples of the nominal and verbal styles. The source for these texts is Hake and Williams (1981, pp. 448-449). It should be pointed out that these two texts represent extreme examples of the nominal and verbal styles because they were written for the express purpose of testing how composition instructors would rate texts which were identical in organization and substance, but which contrasted strongly in terms of their style. It is not expected that the contrast between the groups in the proposed experiment would be anywhere near this extreme.

Key:  
N = Nounal Token  
V = Verbal Token  
P = Prepositional Token  
C = Conjunctive Token  
Aj = Adjectival Token  
Av = Adverbial Token

Sample Analysis of Nominal Style

A dress code in the public schools might result in
the prevention of student competition with each other in
their dress, but it would be an inhibition to their
freedom in expressing their personalities. If a dress code
were in operation, students would not have the ability
to/show their superiority to their friends in their dress.
They would not be able to/exhibit flamboyance in their
dress. The selection of their clothes would have to/fit
the rules set by the schools. This could be simple outfits like skirts and blouses or sweaters and dresses. They would not have permission to/attempt to/make impressions on other students.

This would have the result of changes in what students thought was of importance. They would not have such great concerns with surface things. Maybe they would have the realization that people should always take cognizance of the fact that they should not make judgements of other people by their clothing. Judgements should be based on more personal qualities. The basis for judgements should be on their competence or their sensitivity of feelings to other people.

But there is the possibility that the importance of all this is less/than its affect of the personality of the individual. When a person is given an order about what to/wear, they are being told about their presentation of themselves to other people. But a person's clothing gives
us information about their personality. And the individual expression of themselves provides them with status. They are individuals instead of just numbers.

Everything in this world of today has the requirement of conformity to some standard. There is the requirement for everybody to be alike in what they see on TV and in their beliefs. If there are differences in ideas, people think you are an oddity. The expression of our thoughts about things in our surroundings makes us afraid. We have to be like our neighbors or our friends. It is my thought that there are so few things we can do to be individuals that the imposition of a dress standard would be a mistake and be one more loss of the few ways they have to express individuality.

So in conclusion, I say that there would be an improvement in neatness and fewer distractions from studies with a dress code, but there would be inhibitions in their development as individuals, and that is of importance.
A dress code in the public schools might prevent students from competing with each other in the way they dress, but it would inhibit them in how freely they expressed their personalities. If a dress code were operating, students would not be able to/show how superior they were to their friends in the way they dressed. They would not be able to/dress flamboyantly. They would have to/select clothes that fit the rules set by the schools. This could be simple outfits like skirts and blouses or sweaters and dresses. They would not be permitted to/attempt to/impress other students. This would result in the students changing what they thought was important. They would not be so concerned with surface things. Maybe they would realize that people should always try to/be cognizant of the fact that other people should not be judged by their clothing. They should be judged by how competent they are, or by how sensitive they
can be to the way they feel about people.

But possibly all this is not important as how it would
effect the personality of the individual. When a person is
ordered what to wear, they are being told how they should
present themselves to other people. But the clothes that
a person wears often inform us about their personality. And
the individual way they express themselves provides them
with status. They are individuals instead of just numbers.

Everything in this world of today requires people
to conform to some standard. Everybody is required to be
alike in what they see on TV and in what they believe. If
you have different ideas, people think you are odd. We are
afraid to express what we think about things surrounding us.

We have to be like our neighbors or our friends. I think
there are so few things we can do to be individuals that it
would be a mistake to impose a dress standard on students
and lose one of the few ways they can be individuals.

So I conclude by saying that even though a dress code
might make a school look neat and would make sure that
students were not distracted from their studies, it would
inhibit them in the way they developed as individuals, and
that is important.

Table H1: Token Ratios for Nominal Style

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<td>Verbal Tokens</td>
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<td>2.61 P/C</td>
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Table H2: Token Ratios for Verbal Style

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nounal Tokens</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>34.39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verbal Tokens</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>31.79</td>
<td>1.08 N/V</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepositional Tokens</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10.40</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Conjunctive Tokens</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>1.64 P/C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjectival Tokens</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbial Tokens</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6.94</td>
<td>1.46 Aj/Av</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summed</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>4.18</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix I:
Sample Analysis Using the Discourse Matrix
Sample Analysis Using the Discourse Matrix

The following provides an example of text analysis using the discourse matrix. The source for the text and for the matrix is Coe (1988c, p. 39). Note that this example uses the *t-unit* — minimally terminable unit — as the unit of analysis whereas in the proposed study the clause will be used as the unit of analysis.

Sample Text for Discourse Matrix

(1) There is an amazement proper to the experience of all great art, (2) but the special amazement which War and Peace revives in me while I am reading it is like that of a child. (3) The child does not expect the unexpected; (4) that would already be a preparation against it. (5) He does not for an instant doubt that a certain event had to happen; (6) such a doubt obscures. (7) He many even have been told before hand that it was going to happen; (8) such foreknowledge is as little a part of him as a label in his cap. (9) He is able to look at the thing itself. (10) The event reaches him radiant with magical causes but not yet trapped in sufficient cause. (11) Tolstoy does not, as many do, achieve this freshness by transforming the reading into a never-never land. (12) On the contrary his fictional mode is realistic; (13) the people in his novel appear and behave like possible people in the world we daily live in. (14) His achievement is the greater because he uses the mode of realism, (15) for realism offers a threat to which other literary modes are not subject, the encroachment of mediocrity.

Figure II: Discourse Matrix of Sample Text
The preceding matrix (4 levels of generality and 15 propositions) can be analyzed to yield the statistical information presented in Tables 11, 12, and 13 below.

### Table 11: Idea Strings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idea Strings</th>
<th>Propositions</th>
<th>Generality Levels</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-3-2-1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-5-2-1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-7-2-1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-9-2-1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-12-11-1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-14-1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 12: Node Strings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Node Strings</th>
<th>Propositions</th>
<th>Subordinate Propositions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-5-7-9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-12-11-2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
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</table>

### Table 13: Calculated Ratios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subordination Ratio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development Ratio</td>
<td>3.667</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordination Ratio</td>
<td>4.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration Ratio</td>
<td>5.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordination-Coordination Ratio</td>
<td>0.958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generality Ratio</td>
<td>0.267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Node-String Ratio</td>
<td>0.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea-String Ratio</td>
<td>0.400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix J:
Sample Analyses of “Autonomous” and “Connected” Texts
Sample Analyses of “Autonomous” and “Connected” Texts

The following narratives provide examples of texts which contrast in terms of the writer’s orientation (or in Burke’s terms, the writer’s attitude) toward connection and autonomy. The source for these texts is Rose (1987, pp. 14-15). These texts have been analyzed on the basis of general principles rather than using specific criteria because the criteria remain to be precisely defined. As a consequence, my reading is probably somewhat more individual than might otherwise be the case. Alternative readings are certainly possible (although I doubt they would vary so greatly as to eliminate the difference between the autonomy/connection ratios for the two texts). In order to assist the reader, I have underlined the specific words in each clause which triggered my judgement as to whether the clause implies connection or autonomy.

Key:  
(A) = Clause implying autonomy  
(C) = Clause implying connection  
(N) = Clause implying neither autonomy nor connection

Narrative Representative of the Male Myth of Literacy for Autonomy

Unlike many other students, my education didn’t begin until the very end of the second grade (A). My father was given a job overseas in Brazil (N). When we finally got settled into the social aspect of a foreign country (C) /I realized that it wasn’t for me (A).  

I started off going to school regularly (N). But as time wore on I began to skip classes (A). I confided in my mother and told her what I had been doing and how I felt about the schooling I was receiving (C). Foolishly she agreed with me and told me that I no longer had to attend (A). She said she was planning on leaving the country anyhow (N).  

We arrived in the United States in the middle of my second grade year (N). My mother immediately enrolled me in the second grade (N). Within a couple of days the
school had contacted my mother (C) and told her that I should be placed back into first grade due to my inability to read and write (A).

My mother and I discussed this major decision at length (C). We both decided that it would be rough on me psychologically being so old and not being able to be with friends my own age (C). So my mom asked what she could do to help get me back on tract (C).

By the end of my second grade year I was in the highest reading group (A). With the help of my mother and my second grade teacher I also excelled in my other areas of education (C).

When I reached highschool (N) I was placed in all the advanced reading and writing competency classes (A). I received high grades in all of these subjects (A).

I guess I have become disallusioned (A). I thought that this great success would continue into the higher echalon of college (A). But I have come to realize quite the contrary (A). For the first time in my life I am being considered an average student in the area of English (A).

In this freshman English class we have turned in several in-class essays (N). I have always had a terrible time with in class essays (N). When I write, (N) I write from the heart not from an English textbook (N). I sometimes get carried away and forget about fragments and comma splices (N). I always thought of these as mistakes that could be corrected in a final copy (N). But I guess I am not going to be able to show my imagination in writing anymore (N). I will have to resort to being "correct," and using "formal" grammar (N).

I hope to someday be able to be both correct and imaginative and not make any mistakes on an in class essay so I can once again be realized as a good writer (A).
Narrative Representative of the Female Myth of Literacy for Participation

I remember one incident from when I was younger (N). The extent of my reading and writing career was still short (N). Bound and determined, I sat down with my sister’s "Dick and Jane" book and read (C). I continued to read, and read (N). I read all day, and finished all one hundred or more pages (N). My pride and my sister’s pride were boiling over that day (C). History had been made (N). My first book was finished (N). I had read the entire story without giving up to boredom or frustration (A).

I have to admit that my first story was not conquered without any wounds on my part (A). I must have stopped reading, twice every page, to ask my sister how to pronounce the longer words, which I thought were a different language (C).

That was my first reading experience (N). I guess, as you learn to read, you also learn to write (N). Spelling and general grammar are learned, (N) /but my first experience of actually writing something came when I was in the forth grade (N). By saying writing, I mean creating something (N). I mean pulling ideas from my head and putting them onto paper (N). That experience was when I wrote a poem for my mother (C). It said something about her living in a big house, being beautiful, and not being afraid of a mouse (C). The reaction I received from her, made me truly enjoy writing (C).

I learned to read because it was a challenge (A). I learned to write because when I did I influenced people’s feelings and thoughts (C). The idea of being able to create something from nothing, and having the power to get people thinking, fascinated me (A).
Table J1: Autonomy/Connection Ratio for "Male Myth"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy Clauses</td>
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<td>38.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection Clauses</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20.59</td>
<td>1.86 A/C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Clauses</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>41.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summed</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table J2: Autonomy/Connection Ratio for "Female Myth"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy Clauses</td>
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<td>17.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection Clauses</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30.43</td>
<td>.57 A/C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Clauses</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>52.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summed</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>99.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K:

Excerpts from the Composition 11 Curriculum Guide
The traditional writing curriculum has heavily emphasized essay writing. Academic educators rate essay writing as the most important communication skill. Essay writing is important. The critical thinking abilities developed and demonstrated through essay writing are a keystone of any humanistic education.

But other types of writing abilities must be developed also. Only 20% of our students go on to further academic education after leaving secondary school. Employers rank essay writing as the least important communication skill.

Evidence from recent assessments indicates that B.C. students, at least when taught by the traditional methods, do not transfer the abilities they developed while writing essays to other writing situations. A formula for the five-paragraph essay will help students organize their writing to pass a university examination. It will *not* help them produce the type of well-organized writing they need in other contexts.

In addition, traditional teaching strategies which may have been adequate for the traditional curricula and our "best" students are not adequate for what needs to be done today. The increased importance of writing and speaking abilities for the average person means we need strategies that will work with the students who previously dropped out or were relegated to courses where they often did grammar drill *instead of* learning to write. The broadening of our curricular goals means we need instructional strategies that put more emphasis on writing as a communicative ability.

The set of strategies that is called "the process approach" meets these needs and will work with all types of students. The process approach, it should be emphasized, is not totally new. It includes methods English teachers have been using for a long time. It also includes some techniques that will be new to many teachers. Most important, it pulls together a variety of methods and techniques, old and new, under a unifying and coherent instructional philosophy. The approach is defined in detail on pages 19 to 35 of this document.

The process approach means that it is not good enough *just* to show this wide range of students what "good" writing is, ask them to imitate its good qualities, and mark them down if they fail. What research we have indicates that analyzing models of good writing helps students improve their reading skills but not their writing abilities. The process approach includes helping students develop the cognitive, affective and verbal abilities that underlie effective writing and speaking. The process approach means treating writing and speaking as creative and communicative processes. It means guiding students through the writing process, not merely marking their written products. It means helping them learn to communicate effectively in various literary situations. Thus it recognizes that the average British Columbian of today has literacy needs different from and more varied than the needs of previous generations.
Instructional Implications

The primary emphasis of Composition 11 is on whole writing tasks and on the writing process as the student performs it and as the teacher guides it. Skill development and textbooks perform support roles and should be integrated within this primary emphasis.

Some important teaching considerations include:

1. The teacher's relationship with students is crucial. A positive, humane relationship will allow students to accept criticism constructively, not defensively. The response to student writing, in all contexts, should be affirmative. The primary response should be to what the student is communicating and how clearly. Every piece of writing has its good points. These should be applauded before weaknesses are criticized. The mechanics of expression, although important, should be emphasized less than ideas, images, and the general effectiveness of the communication.

2. Students should write often and in a number of forms, for a variety of purposes and audiences. A wide variety of writing experiences is crucial to developing effective writing.

3. Rather than "red penciling" all errors in a composition, teachers should consider the use of setting "targets" for improvement of an individual student's writing. This is done by isolating one or, at the most, two errors for the student to eliminate in the next writing task.

4. Marking loads can be reduced and learning enhanced through the use of peer groups for revising student work. In The Writer's Workshop, John Parker discusses this technique.

5. Knowledge of grammar is useful, but too much time spent on grammar steals time from writing practice. Students do not need a full understanding of grammar before they start to work on compositions.

6. Publication of student writing in school newspapers, literary magazines, local newspapers or displays makes writing tasks real. In a broader sense, "publication" occurs any time anyone else other than the teacher reads students' writing.

It should also be remembered that this course cannot by itself solve the literacy problem. Nor can English teachers do the job alone. This course must exist in an appropriate context which means, among other things, the following:

1. What happens at school is more effective if appropriate things are happening at home. Parents should be informed of what they can do to help.

2. What happens in the English composition class is effective if it is reinforced in other classes. If students are not being asked to write sentences, paragraphs and essays about science, history and other school subjects, this reinforcement is not happening. All teachers, across the curriculum, have a responsibility to help students improve their communicative abilities.
References


College Composition and Communication, 42.1. (1991).


Inkshed, 8.4. (1989).


