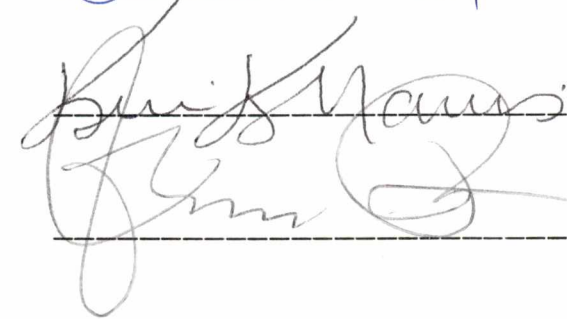


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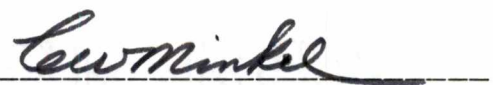
I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Henry L. Wilson entitled "Defining the Boundaries Between Collaborative Writing and Ownership of Text: A Rhetorical Reassessment." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in English.


Michael Keene, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:


Associate Vice Chancellor
and Dean of the Graduate School

Defining the Boundaries Between Collaborative Writing and
Ownership of Text: A Rhetorical Reassessment

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Henry L. Wilson

August, 1993

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ABSTRACT

Distinctions between "plagiarism" and "collaboration" are not always clearly drawn. The resulting zones of overlap give rise to several serious problems for the teaching of writing. This dissertation examines and offers tentative solutions to these problems, based on discussion and historical analysis of the elemental key terms that define at a deep semantic level the paired terms "collaboration" and "plagiarism."

A re-examination of assumptions incorporated into existing definitions of elemental key terms reveals that too many ideological assumptions have been taken for granted, and that these assumptions have been relied upon to produce official academic policies defining plagiarism and collaboration that are no longer workable in the present changing intellectual climate. Definitions of these two concepts--and official policies based on these definitions--need to be revised to place stress more clearly on those qualitative and quantitative differences which do exist. More sharply drawn emphasis can then be placed on these differences--such as inequalities of power and a demonstrated intent to deceive on the part of the plagiarist.

A review of historical attitudes reveals that contingent "truth" produced through imitation, audience awareness, and collaboration has at least as long an intellectual history as "certain" truth produced through the internal, socially isolated

dialectic most commonly employed by the solitary writer. Dialectic itself is shown to be socially and historically situated. Additionally, recent theoretical insights from contemporary rhetoric and composition scholars, critical theorists, and social psychologists give added force to the legitimacy of socially-based epistemologies.

These insights and conclusions offer specific applications to the individual classroom. Most importantly, definitions and policies toward plagiarism and collaboration should be reformulated so that "official" college and departmental policies do not contradict or undermine classroom practice. Ideally, such reformulation should foster successful collaborative writing and group authorship rather than lead inexperienced writers inadvertently to commit "plagiarism." Overall, the theory and practice of collaborative writing and plagiarism policy must be brought into closer alignment. Such a realignment offers a wide range of benefits for writing instruction, and promises to make the teaching of writing a more feasible project.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This dissertation represents an attempt to clarify the boundaries between the often conflicting paired terms "collaboration" and "plagiarism," and to explore the areas of overlap between these two terms. It will also apply fresh, interdisciplinary perspectives borrowed from such areas as social learning theory, social constructionism, and critical theory to selected problems which result from the tendency of these two allied concepts to overlap. Such tasks are more difficult than first appearances might suggest; a vaguely defined structure of elemental key terms comprises the submerged discursive structure of the terms "plagiarism" and "collaboration."

In discussions of the concept of "plagiarism," for example, the long, honorable history of imitation is not always given adequate respect and attention. This resulting tendency to deprecate all forms of "copying" while valorizing "originality" can prevent students from taking full advantage of the potential power of composing techniques which use other texts--and the authors who composed them--as models. Such neglect of modeling and imitative writing strategies can occur if individual authorship is promoted as inherently superior to collaboration and multiple authorship. As a result, writing

instructors and their students may miss opportunities for incorporating into their composing skills the valuable strengths derived from helpful collaboration and the responsible imitation which occurs in conjunction with this collaboration.

One venue where the lack of clear definition between collaboration and plagiarism becomes apparent is the writing center. In "Collaboration and Ethics in Writing Center Pedagogy," Irene Lurkis Clark states that "the kind of assistance which occurs regularly among colleagues might raise questions . . . over issues of ethics" (3). Clark further asserts in this article that:

Writing centers' concern with avoiding charges of plagiarism. . . have generated policies, which, in some instances, may actually be counterproductive to student learning (4).

Such conflicts between the theory and practice of effective collaboration and what might be called "false collaboration" or plagiarism are not limited to the writing center. In fact, as Clark points out, these conflicts extend throughout the academic community, from the individual writing classroom all the way to the highest levels of administration. In Clark's words: "If you take a social-constructionist view . . . we are all plagiarists in some form or another. . . . We get things from all over, and it's the knack for getting these things that we are trying to teach" (personal interview).

This research project has been designed to investigate and clarify such points of confusion which cluster around the twin concepts of collaboration and plagiarism. This first chapter will present the problems inherent in working with these concepts at the most general level, as well as offering tentative, preliminary definitions of "plagiarism" and "collaboration." Chapter two will then place these issues into historical and epistemological contexts that will highlight selected threads and currents drawn from classical and contemporary rhetorical theory. Once these threads have been isolated, potential solutions to the present set of problems will become feasible.

Chapter three will discuss commonly prevailing definitions of the key elemental terms--"self," "originality," "authorship," "text," "collaboration," and "plagiarism"--that comprise the larger and more inclusive concepts of text ownership and production. Because these elemental terms provide the essential conceptual structure for discussions of the more global terms, they must be clearly defined in order to make productive discussion of the global issues possible. These definitions will be framed in a manner which highlights important conceptual inadequacies inherent in the ways the terms are currently used. No attempt at absolute comprehensiveness will be made; instead, stipulative definitions of these elemental terms will be advanced in a

manner that offers potential for reconciling the conflicting demands placed on writing teachers and administrators who must work with the conflict and overlap of these currently ill-defined concepts on a continuing basis.

Chapter four will survey and analyze the general problems which result from current definitions of "plagiarism" and "collaboration," many of which tend to place a premium on individual authorship. Particular attention will be given to the negative effects of a strong preoccupation with avoiding any taint of "improper" collaboration in students' writing. The potential benefits of viewing writing as an essentially collaborative endeavor will also be discussed. Additionally, this chapter will complete the development of a background necessary for discussing key practical issues--such as determining ownership of text and setting plagiarism policies--that presently confront writing teachers, students, and administrators.

Chapter five will show how the theoretical insights and general reformulations developed in earlier chapters can be applied specifically to the classroom, the writing center, and writing program administration. These specific recommendations will be based in part on the author's own experiences in teaching, research, and administration. The primary emphasis here will be practical; the insights reached and advice offered in previous chapters will be set within the

concept of specific students working to complete specific assignments. A major function of this final chapter will be to reiterate the necessity and efficacy of keeping theory and practice in the closest possible alignment. More specifically, detailed recommendations will be made for bringing the views of plagiarism and collaboration as expressed in the classroom into a greater congruence with evolving theoretical definitions of these concepts.

Achieving this congruence will not be easy; what appears to be sensible or even elegant in theory often breaks down in practice. A major global aim of this dissertation will be to integrate successfully theory and practice--or at least to bring them into a closer alignment than what generally prevails at present. Consequently, the author will argue that instructional strategies should reflect an informed awareness of collaborative writing techniques; the final chapter will point to specific measures for achieving this objective.

Present State of Overlap Between "Collaboration" and "Plagiarism"

At present, considerable confusion seems to exist on the definitions of "plagiarism" and "collaboration"--especially as these terms relate to the teaching of writing. Both terms describe composition processes involving more than one author, yet the former is regarded as disreputable or even criminal

while the latter is increasingly advocated as an admirable process. Attempts to distinguish between the two terms should start from the point of most common agreement--that "plagiarism" is a method of text production which involves an element of deception, exploitation, or outright theft, while collaboration produces texts by relying on a more balanced, open, and equitable relationship between authorial agents.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines "collaboration" as "United labor, co-operation; esp. in literary, artistic, or scientific work." But a secondary definition presented is "Traitorous cooperation with the enemy" (vol. 3 469). In "Collaborative Learning and Composition: Boon or Bane?" Donald Stewart points out that these "subversive" connotations can be quite serious for teachers and scholars of a certain age and historical background:

Those of us who lived during that period [World War II] and were old enough to be interested in what was going on remember what ugly connotations attended the word *collaborator*. In the occupied countries, this was a person who assisted the Nazis, even to the point of betraying his or her countrymen (66).

The presence of such negative definitions within our profession shows that "collaboration" is by no means uniformly regarded as a respectable technique for producing writing. In fact, in many contexts, it is portrayed as a somewhat unethical

short cut that is inherently inferior to a more established and "honorable" route to text production: individual authorship. In Singular Texts. Plural Authors, Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede discuss in some detail the professional and scholarly barriers which have been erected against collaborative authorship--including a tendency to devalue group-authored publications as criteria for granting tenure. As Ede and Lunsford point out, however, these barriers continue to exist in spite of the fact that such collaborative authorship has become very common in many disciplines.

The difficulty in adequately defining "collaboration" is compounded by the fact that, as John Trimbur points out in "Collaborative Learning and Teaching Writing," the term is relatively new to composition studies, and first "begins to appear in the late sixties and early seventies, in journal articles, textbooks, conference papers, and professional conversations about teaching writing." In this essay, Trimbur goes on to define collaboration as:

A generic term, covering a wide range of techniques that have become increasingly visible in the past ten years; practices such as reader-response, peer critiques, small writing groups, joint writing projects, and peer tutoring in writing centers and classrooms (87).

Trimbur's definition also stresses the pedagogical value of shifting much of the burden of students' education onto the

students themselves (87). Such an emphasis, while apparently effective in forcing students to take their academic responsibilities more seriously, also raises crucial questions of ideology and political empowerment.

In "Collaborative Learning and the Conversation of Mankind," Kenneth Bruffee reinforces the pragmatic aspects of Trimbur's definition by calling collaborative learning "a form of indirect teaching in which the teacher sets the problem and organizes the students to work it out collaboratively" (638). But Bruffee also recognizes the potential conflicts existing along the boundaries between collaboration and plagiarism; in his "Collaborative Learning: Some Practical Models," he acknowledges that "collaboration [can be] considered irresponsible; in the extreme, collaboration is the worst possible academic sin: plagiarism" (636). Nevertheless, as Richard Behm points out in "Ethical Issues in Peer Tutoring: A Defense of Collaborative Learning," collaboration is by no means a new feature of the academic landscape: "such collaborative learning . . . has a long and honorable history" (4).

A somewhat confusing tendency exists in the literature to conflate "collaborative learning" with "collaborative writing." In the strictest sense, the terms are not interchangeable: the former term applies to a wide range of socially-based learning strategies including but not limited to writing, while the latter is properly applied only to authorial projects in which two or

more agents are working together in some way to write a text. For the purposes of this research project, however, "collaborative writing" will be treated as roughly synonymous with "collaborative learning," with the concept of "writing to learn" as the frequently unstated conceptual bridge between the two terms. That is, "collaborative writing," as one of the more effective manifestations of "writing to learn," often serves as the specific mechanism for realizing the instructional potential offered by the broader concept of "collaborative learning." All these pedagogical strategies are also clearly applicable to discussions of how writing should be taught in the actual classroom.

Contrasted with collaboration, "plagiarism" is a term of ancient lineage; the Oxford English Dictionary defines it as:

the action or practice of plagiarizing, the wrongful appropriation or purloining, and publication of one's own, of the ideas, or the expression of the ideas (literary, artistic, musical, mechanical, etc.) of another
(vol. 11. 947).

The OED's list of citations of the term extends back to the early seventeenth century, and includes usages by Hazlitt, Tennyson, and Samuel Johnson. The common denominator of all the OED's references to plagiarism--and the most important single characteristic that distinguishes this form of group authorship from collaboration--is an element of deception and exploitation.

In "Plagiarism," Peter Shaw further develops these elements of deception by pointing out that:

The poet Martial complained of being plagiarized from the first century A.D. The term *plagiarism* itself entered the English language in the sixteenth century, along with bitter accusations by writers against one another.

The concept of plagiarism, therefore, existed alongside that of imitation, so that there have always been acceptable and unacceptable modes of using the work of one's predecessors. What has not changed through time is the ethic of borrowing. Throughout history the act of using the work of another *with an intent to deceive* [italics added] has been branded as plagiarism (327).

In the same article, Shaw also defines plagiarism as "the wrongful taking of and representing as one's own the ideas, words, or inventions of another," but also admits that "there will always remain certain gray areas resistant to definition. Not every act of copying is the same" (327).

In "Plagiarism: the Worm of Reason," Augustus M. Kolich echoes Shaw's definition by stating that

The word "plagiarism" comes from the Latin *plagiarius* (a person who steals slaves), and was first used by the Roman poet Martial as a literary conceit for the stealing of servants of the imagination (143).

Kolich also asserts that "plagiarists deceive, they are unworthy of our shared virtue, and they are not generally teachable, or worse, have refused teaching" (147). In Stolen Words: Forays into the Origins and Ravages of Plagiarism, Thomas Mallon confirms that "in classical times, a 'plagiary' had been one who kidnapped a child or slave." Mallon also asserts that Ben Jonson was the first to use the term in that sense in English: "Why? The ditt is all borrowed; 'tis Horaces: hang him plagiary" (6).

In "The Renaissance Artist as Plagiarist," Stephen Orgel points out that Johnson tends to cite with disapproval writers in whom one "may find whole pages together usurp'd from one Another, their necessities compelling them to read for present use, which could not be in many books." But, according to Orgel, Johnson "reserves his greatest scorn for those who do *not* plagiarize, but rely . . . exclusively on their own originality" (493).

In a more contemporary context, Alexander Lindey's 1951 Plagiarism and Originality offers a very commonly quoted definition of "plagiarism." Lindey's definition strongly emphasizes the element of deception:

Plagiarism is literary--or artistic or musical--theft. It is the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own. Copying someone else's story or play or song, intact or with inconsequential changes,

and adding one's name to the result constitutes a simple illustration of plagiarism (2).

In The Melancholy Anatomy of Plagiarism, (1988), K.R. St. Onge cites Lindey's definition and then attempts to address the legal aspects of plagiarism by stating that:

A careful reading of Lindey leads inevitably to the conclusion that, in law, to plagiarize means taking the body of a work, the essence of a short composition, such as melody and harmony, the unique component (52).

Onge further develops the legal aspects of plagiarism by citing Black's Law Dictionary, which defines plagiarism as:

The act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts or passages of his writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the products of one's own mind. If the material is protected by copyright, such act may constitute an offense of copyright infringement (1150).

Introducing the concept of copyright raises additional complications. Although copyright infringement is frequently conflated to mean the same thing as plagiarism, the two terms have distinctly different identities and are properly employed in distinctly different contexts. According to Lindey, "copyright" means exactly what it sounds like--the right to make copies and distribute them *as property*. It is therefore primarily an economic right, not a scholastic or academic concept. The

academic environment traditionally values "collegiality" and an open exchange of thought; in keeping with the liberal arts tradition, such expressions of academic freedom transcend materialistic concerns such as the copyright law. The concept of plagiarism, on the other hand, operates most meaningfully in the academic world--in the marketplace of ideas, not of property. Therefore, attempts such as that undertaken by Wallace Bush at San Angelo State to clarify issues of plagiarism in the economic terms of copyright law have not been successful (personal correspondence). The legal opinions that I have examined also seem to indicate that distinct differences exist between how this law treats printed material as property in the economic marketplace, and how it regards *ideas* as in some sense communal within the academic realm.

An examination of the current U.S. legal code casts further doubt on the value of applying copyright law to the establishment and enforcement of official plagiarism policies within the academic realm. While Black's Law Dictionary defines copyright as "the right of literary property . . . granted by statute to the author or originator of certain literary or artistic productions" (336), this same dictionary also cites the "fair use" doctrine as codified in article 17 of the United States Code. As presented in the United States Code Service: Lawyers' Edition, sections 106 and 107 of this article explicitly state that copyright protection for original works of authorship does

not extend to the ideas expressed in such works (76-92). In fact, the provisions of this article as amended in 1976 imply that the academic realm enjoys considerable exemption from copyright law through application of the "fair use" doctrine.

Recent legal opinion further undermines the relevance of copyright protection to the academic realm. In "Reconstructing the Fair Use Doctrine," William W. Fisher III discusses in detail the many problems he sees with "fair use," and claims that the most serious of these problems is that the doctrine "rests on considerations derived from disparate traditions; this incoherent foundation makes the application of the doctrine unpredictable" (1661). In "The Uneasy Case for Copyright," Stephen Breyer makes a similar point, arguing that:

An intellectual creation differs radically from land and chattels. Since ideas are infinitely divisible, property rights are not needed to prevent congestion, interference, or strife. Nor does the fact that a book is the author's *creation* seem a sufficient reason for making it his *property* (289).

Survey Results

In spite of their general theoretical value, such abstract definitions and delineations can carry writing teachers and administrators only so far in attempts to discriminate between collaboration and plagiarism. The boundaries between an open,

balanced exchange of authorial influence on the one hand and unfair deception and exploitation on the other may seem clear in the abstract, yet remain indistinct in practice--especially in the highly specialized rhetorical environment of the composition classroom. Such a lack of clarity becomes increasingly apparent as students make greater use of such uncited and often entirely unacknowledged sources as peer editors, writing center tutors, teacher commentary on evolving drafts, and conversations with colleagues. Increasingly, students are being permitted greater access to such socially-based authorial forces as they complete their writing tasks; ready access to these socially derived forces is effectively re-defining the concept of authorship. Unfortunately, official rules and guidelines on what constitutes ethical authorship do not always evolve at the same rate as classroom practice in these areas.

This lack of clarity and consistency is underscored by the results of a survey of selected colleges and universities. Of the 95 inquiry letters requesting "official" policy statements on "plagiarism" and "collaboration" I sent to a cross-section of colleges and universities, 46 produced a response (see appendix for a copy of this letter). At the most global level, these responses can be broken down into three groups:

- (1) Schools with no written, in-house policy (N=7).
- (2) Schools with written plagiarism policies, but with no

discussion of collaboration (N=29).

- (3) Schools which not only discuss plagiarism, but also address--either implicitly or explicitly--collaboration (N=10).

The first group--schools with no explicit policy on plagiarism or collaboration--comprises a relatively small category. In light of the widespread attention given to the topic of plagiarism both in the media and in the academic environment, the fact that several colleges and universities have no explicit official policy on plagiarism seems remarkable. In at least two instances, the respondents themselves expressed surprise at their discovery of this state of affairs. For example, the University of Wyoming reports that no "official pronouncement" is currently in place for dealing with plagiarism cases; instead, each individual instance is apparently dealt with by instructors on a case-by-case basis. According to the chair of the department, Mark Booth, teachers are also urged to refer to the plagiarism statement in the McGraw-Hill handbook, Prose Style: a Handbook for Writers, and he "carefully review[s] the issue with new teachers" (personal correspondence). The University of Michigan reports a similarly flexible approach. In both cases, the rationale for such an apparently informal approach is not given, but at least two explanations are possible: either the need for a formal, explicit plagiarism policy has not yet become apparent at these particular schools, or such

a position is a realistic acknowledgment of the present fluid state of affairs along the boundaries between collaboration and plagiarism.

A slightly more numerous group of responses were offered by schools that have no official departmental policy toward plagiarism, but which instead rely on statements provided by the larger university. While offering the advantages of homogeneity and contingent structure, this group of statements also poses problems. In most cases, these statements are so sweeping, generic, and all-inclusive that their real-world effectiveness is impaired. Statements of this type are often limited to brief discussions of general academic policies subsumed under such terms as "Academic Honesty" and "Honor Codes," and are frequently combined with discussions of related concerns such as "cheating," "copying," and "cribbing notes."

An illustrative example of this category of plagiarism statements is that contained in the Student Handbook used by North Iowa Community College. In its entirety, the statement reads:

The following shall be subject to disciplinary procedures:

. . . b. Dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating; plagiarism; knowingly furnishing false information to the college, forgery, alteration or misuse of documents or records (Il.D.b., "Student Conduct Code" 58).

While useful in setting out abstract guidelines, such a statement offers little to assist writing teachers in the day-to-day task of dealing with plagiarism.

The largest number of responses comprises schools which address the topic of plagiarism while largely omitting any discussion of collaboration. In many cases, this group's discussion of what does and does not constitute plagiarism can be quite extensive. One major subgroup within this second major category includes an explicit yet somewhat sketchy discussion of "plagiarism." In most cases, these statements spell out--and are often directly derived from--Alexander Lindey's 1952 standard definition of the term: "The wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind and presenting it as one's own" (Plagiarism and Originality 2). This rather minimal statement is often supplemented by the more extensive Modern Language Association definition (as presented in the MLA Style Manual) which states that "to plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from another" (4). In several cases, such dictionary definitions represent the entirety of official policy, while in others, further elaboration of these definitions is also included. Often, this elaboration combines a brief discussion of rather formulaic hypothetical cases of plagiarism with an outline of possible penalties for transgressors. On the whole, this group of statements leaves the impression that plagiarism

has been a long-standing recurring problem, one which can be regulated but never entirely prevented.

Responses from schools with a more extensive, yet somewhat ambiguous plagiarism policy comprise a more numerous group. This group projects an impression of making serious attempts to grapple with the shifting boundaries in the zone of overlap between collaboration and plagiarism, but not entirely succeeding. Often, these attempts to clarify plagiarism begin with definitions similar to those offered in the previous group, and then move to further discussion and elaboration. For example, the University of Illinois' statement defines plagiarism as "the unacknowledged use of someone else's ideas and/or words (including key words or phrases, as well as longer units like sentences and paragraphs)," and, more succinctly, "using the ideas or words of another person without giving proper credit." These brief definitions are supplemented in the statement with several examples of correct and incorrect paraphrasing and quoting.

While these statements offer adequate coverage of issues associated with plagiarism and text ownership, their definition of terms and discussion of procedures could be improved. Considerable discussion of plagiarism, possible prevention strategies, penalties for transgressions, and helpful models and examples may be present, but these statements often stop at a theoretical level that is too superficial to be truly

comprehensive and helpful. For example, the University of Alabama at Birmingham's statement defines plagiarism as "using the words or thoughts of another without proper citation," but does not discuss how writers--in practical terms--can distinguish their thoughts from those of "others. While such statements should not be expected to clarify these complex issues completely, they could be improved if they maintained a somewhat higher degree of explanatory value relevant to the present theoretical environment.

One overall effect of statements such as these is to complicate attempts to distinguish between plagiarism and collaboration. When students engage in such composition strategies as peer editing and tutoring--which are increasingly presented as essential collaborative writing strategies--blanket prohibitions against "using the words or thoughts of others" can plant suspicion in the minds of both teachers and students that something untoward may be occurring in their writing activities, but not enough information is offered to prevent unacceptable developments from actually occurring.

A more effective group of plagiarism policies are those that detail in a consistent and helpful manner the difference between acceptable imitation and unacceptable plagiarism. This category is differentiated from the previous group not only by length and extensiveness of coverage, but also by a different perspective and focus. The primary feature of this perspective

is a demonstrated awareness of the precise forms and manifestations plagiarism cases can take, rather than a merely speculative and hypothetical discussion. For example, the departmental statements of both Northern Michigan and Northwestern University include very helpful discussions of both the theoretical foundations of plagiarism and several detailed classroom examples. Northwestern's pamphlet Some Notes on Plagiarism and How to Avoid It begins with a definition credited to "Harold C. Martin in his essay 'A Definition of Plagiarism'":

The academic counterpart of the bank embezzler and of the manufacturer who mislabels his product is the plagiarist, the student or scholar who leads his reader to believe that what he is reading is the original work of the writer when it is not (1).

The Northwestern statement then discusses in considerable detail how to distinguish between "direct plagiarism," the "mosaic," and the "paraphrase." Concrete, realistic examples are presented of each category.

The final major group of responses to the survey comprises those schools which address both plagiarism and collaboration. These statements are often quite lengthy and detailed, and reflect considerable thought into the nature of the processes involved in plagiarism and collaboration, as well as their relationship to each other. Aside from being extensive and

detailed, statements of this type also tend to work from a strongly specific viewpoint, and explicitly acknowledge that writing is inevitably a socially based process. In several cases, direct references are made to such social constructionists as Kenneth Bruffee and Donald Bartholomae.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's written policy on plagiarism and collaboration is perhaps the best illustration of this type of statement. At least five different sources are in place for UNC-Chapel Hill students and teachers to find information related to plagiarism, ownership of text, and collaboration. UNC starts from a base of statements contained in University-wide honor codes, and then expands and explicates these comments in order to apply them more specifically to the programs and classes offered at this university. Formulations and clarifications of plagiarism policies are contained in a wide variety of sources, ranging from publications targeted toward incoming freshmen to guides for composition teachers.

From each perspective, these formulations offer specific, practical advice on how to distinguish between permissible and unacceptable collaboration, rather than simply stating the rules and expecting all concerned to understand and follow them accordingly. For example, the 1992-93 Staff Manual admits that "there is a fine line between plagiarism and the kind of collaboration that defines writing." Recognizing the reality of this "fine line," the manual proceeds to advise teachers to

"encourage students to seek feedback from people outside of class to help them revise their papers," but to "guard against appropriation [of language] by others and ourselves." This manual also includes a lengthy list of practical ways to carry out this safeguarding, including urging instructors to "Discuss plagiarism early, openly, and with some fervor" (20). UNC-Chapel Hill also provides students with a Guide to Freshman Composition which refers to the Official University Honor Code. This code warns against academic cheating, "including (but not limited to) unauthorized copying, collaboration, or use of notes or books on examinations, and plagiarism (defined as the intentional representation of another person's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own)" (11).

In several responses to the survey, although the term "collaboration" itself is not mentioned explicitly, the concept is clearly implied in references to such collaborative strategies as "peer editing"--a technique that allows students to receive unacknowledged critiques and advice from their fellow student writers. Several statements from this group of responses contained substantial sections on the parameters and practical utility offered by the kind of collaborative assistance available in the writing center. Policies of this sort demonstrate even greater efforts to accommodate collaborative learning strategies into the process of teaching writing, since they have apparently moved beyond mere slogans toward incorporating the

theoretical basis behind these slogans into actual classroom practice. For example, the English Department of the Citadel's 101 Course Information Sheet begins its discussion of plagiarism by defining the term as "the act of using someone else's words or ideas as your own without giving proper credit to the source," but then explicitly states that "peer editing is not plagiarism," and "judicious peer editing is not only permitted, but encouraged for all five major writing assignments" (2).

On the whole, these plagiarism policies represent earnest attempts to deal with a complex, persistent problem within the academic community. Most departmental policies start from a base of college-wide honor codes, and then attempt to refine these general guidelines in order to make them more context-specific to a particular discipline. In so doing, awkward transitions sometimes occur; "plagiarism policy" as stated in the general catalog may become lost in a maze of punishments for students who copy math equations during quizzes or have others do their homework for them.

Other Major Points of Divergence

Aside from a general, large-scale diversity of policies and perspectives, several more specific points of disagreement are also present in the plagiarism policies and statements I examined. Many of these statements do not distinguish clearly

between intentional and unintentional plagiarism--the crucial elements "deception" and "exploitation" are not always explicitly addressed. For example, the University of Illinois' Statement on Plagiarism includes the declaration that "Intentional Plagiarism extends from submitting a paper actually written by someone else to deliberately using an idea or fact or phrase without giving credit to its source" (1). But the possibility that such improper borrowing can also occur *without intent* is not acknowledged, nor are students given any indication of what constitutes "intent."

On the other hand, Central Piedmont Community College's Plagiarism Statement 3 defines plagiarism as "Intentionally or knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e. without proper acknowledgment of the source)," and warns against "collaborating on academic work knowing that the collaboration will not be reported," but also adds the explanatory note that "Collaboration and sharing information are characteristics of academic communities. These become violations when they involve dishonesty" (4-5). Thus, the crucial role played by deception in cases of true plagiarism is acknowledged.

Another point of divergence lies in various statements' suggested measures for avoiding plagiarism. One common response is represented by the University of Alabama at Birmingham's Plagiarism Policy, which advises that "All

members of the educational community must carefully avoid plagiarism by fully acknowledging the source of all statements, studies, projects, and ideas which have been produced by another person" (1). In a similar vein, Temple University's University Statement on Academic Policies and Regulations asserts that "Normally, all work done for courses--papers, examinations, homework exercises, laboratory reports, oral presentations--is expected to be the individual effort of the student presenting the work." This statement concludes by warning that "Everything used from other sources must be cited" (61). Clearly, such an injunction cannot be taken entirely at face value; attempting to attribute "everything" derived from "other sources" would be both pointless and impossible. However, this statement offers no explicit limits which would assist writers in determining where the boundaries lie between their work and the work of others.

At the other end of the spectrum, statements such as those presented in the University of North Carolina's Staff Manual offer specific advice to both instructors and students about how to avoid plagiarizing. Under "Some Notes on Plagiarism," this manual informs faculty that "Our goal is to give students an understanding of what plagiarism is about so they will avoid it in their work in your class and in the others that they take" (15). This university also notifies its students

in The Source: The Resource Handbook for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill that students have a responsibility

To consult with faculty and other sources to clarify the meaning of plagiarism: to learn the recognized techniques of proper attribution of sources used in the preparation of written work; and to identify allowable resource material or aids to be used in the preparation of written work (31).

Thus, the responsibility for avoiding plagiarism seems to be equally distributed to both faculty and students in UNC-Chapel Hill's policy statements.

Overall, a wide range of definitions of plagiarism and collaboration is present in official policy statements. These definitions are clearly offered to meet a perceived need to draw boundaries and establish helpful guidelines. But the specific context in which the definitions are presented seems to affect strongly the implied ideological agenda and pedagogical preferences of the authors who present them. If one assumes that individual authorship is in some way "better" than collaborative authorship, one's definitions are likely to imply that plagiarism is simply collaboration gone awry, or more pointedly, collaboration without ethics. If, on the other hand, one wishes to promote collaborative writing, plagiarism may be presented as an entirely separate, trivial issue, quite distinct from collaboration. From this perspective, plagiarism becomes

a rather dirty little vice that can be avoided with the right teacher training--and the accompanying student enlightenment--in collaborative pedagogy. Such radically different perspectives demand some degree of reconciliation.

Summary of Apparent Overall Goals and Objectives

In general, the primary goals, objectives, and rhetorical purposes of the plagiarism policies I examined can be summarized as follows:

- (1) To promote the upholding of the principles of honor and academic honesty at the most general level.
- (2) To give students a clear idea of the distinctions between plagiarism and collaboration, and also to warn them against confusing one with the other.
- (3) To make it possible for teachers and administrators to punish transgressions of official policies.
- (4) To demonstrate to the general public that the college is a respectable institution.
- (5) To improve the teaching of writing by discussing in a helpful and enlightening manner issues associated with collaboration and peer editing, as well as how to use these strategies successfully, and techniques for distinguishing them from plagiarism and other forms of unacceptable imitation.

A clear line of demarcation is apparent between items 1-4 in the above list and item 5; the first four are largely practical and error-based, while the final item is both more theoretical and future-directed. Given the essential constraints on time and methods faced by most composition programs, most institutions seem compelled to focus more on the former, rather than the latter. Perhaps, however, the existence of policies such as those offered by UNC-Chapel Hill, Central Piedmont, and Brigham Young University which address future-based, positive aspects of collaboration indicates that statements show potential for not only warning students against plagiarism and unacceptable collaboration, but also pointing them toward exploiting the instructional potential of acceptable collaboration.

The wide range of definitions, purposes and objectives present in both the general literature on the topic and official policy statements is symptomatic of the current uncertain theoretical climate that prevails in discussions of plagiarism, collaboration, and text attribution. Some degree of flexibility is necessary for dealing with the wide range of administrative issues associated with plagiarism and collaboration. No policy can possibly plan for every eventuality that may arise, nor can these policies--no matter how well written they may be--transfer into writing every conceivable permutation, exception, unstated understanding, and aspect of teacher training.

Nevertheless, these policies should maintain internal consistency and at least a tentative level of comprehensiveness.

This chapter has presented a general overview of the present ill-defined situation along the shifting boundaries between plagiarism and collaboration. It has also raised questions about writing teachers' definitions of such key concepts as "self," "authorship," and "ownership of text." The next chapter will offer historical perspectives on the evolution of these and related concepts, including the role played by imitation, audience, and other social forces in the production of texts. A more historical approach will shed additional light on how these forces interact and conflict with the self, originality, and "expressiveness" in the gray areas between collaboration and plagiarism. Such perspectives will offer an enhanced backdrop for redefining the basic terms which comprise writing teachers' understandings of issues associated with text attribution and ownership.

CHAPTER II: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Introduction

The basic conceptual conflict present in attempts to distinguish between permissible collaboration and forbidden plagiarism arises from fundamentally different epistemological perspectives. The expressionistic and cognitive processing perspectives held by such theorists as Donald Murray, Peter Elbow, and Linda Flower and John R. Hayes imply that truth and knowledge are best obtained within the mind of the individual author who has sequestered him or herself--at least temporarily--from the larger society. This isolation from distracting social forces places individual authors in a better position to glimpse transcendent, ideal truth. The individual mind can then act from this base of social isolation to employ creatively the cognitive process of dialectic to build or "discover" a truth which exists independently of writers until they uncover it.

Social constructionist and neo-sophist perspectives held by such scholars as Ken Bruffee, James Berlin, and Susan Jarratt, on the other hand, conceive of truth as being contingent and emphasize the rhetorical power of socially based language to create truth and meaning. Drawing their initial inspiration partly from the diverse Greek thinkers known today as the "sophists," these theoretical perspectives stress the importance of contextual factors in the construction of knowledge,

including the social forces which they consider a vital part of this complex. Arguing that all knowledge is ultimately contingent and socially based, scholars working from these perspectives assert that ignoring social constraints at any stage of the writing process is an error rather than a virtue; instead of enabling the writer to move closer to "truth," such a perspective is likely to lead to a wide variety of rhetorical shortcomings, including a lack of audience awareness, inconsistent tone and point of view, a poverty of inventiveness, and a confusing lack of structure.

These epistemological concerns are becoming more prominent as such phrases as "social construction," "collaborative learning," and "writing as epistemic" appear with increasing frequency in our journals. A review of the theoretical foundations of such crucial concepts is needed; consequently, this chapter traces selected major historical currents in the conceptual and rhetorical evolution of the global terms "collaboration" and "plagiarism." I will also examine the historical evolution of such subsidiary issues as "originality," "imitation," and "authorship." Additionally, a plausible evolutionary line of historical development will be traced for the concept of contingent, socially derived truth; more specifically, I will argue that this epistemological perspective is as intellectually respectable as the Platonic, idealist epistemology with which it sometimes conflicts.

By stressing those historical threads which value social forces in the construction of knowledge, I will show that individual, creative, and original authorship--which is often postulated as an essential component in the writing process--does not hold the epistemological high ground in relation to collaborative authorship. Although knowledge can also be created through the writing of individual authors, socially based writing is an even more powerful cognitive strategy for generating knowledge. Consequently, this chapter's emphasis on the importance of social forces in shaping epistemology is crucial for demonstrating how collaborative writing--as a locus for these social forces--has equal validity with individual authorship as a method of composition.

More specifically, I will stress the importance of the socially based processes of imitation throughout the history of rhetoric. When skillfully employed, the imitative processes which occur in conjunction with collaborative learning present an effective alternative to writing produced by isolated individuals. Thus, attempts to broaden the base of authorship beyond the individual self--including fostering an informed imitation--should not be met automatically with suspicion or intimations of plagiarism, but rather with carefully regulated guidance which recognizes the crucial nature of social forces at all stages of the writing process.

I will also argue that the process of dialectic--like rhetoric--is ultimately socially based. Establishing connections between dialectic and social forces is important because idealist or expressionistic epistemologies often stress the advantages of such private, creative cognitive processes as mental dialectic in arriving at truth, value, and originality as opposed to more probable and potentially misleading socially based rhetoric. By demonstrating that both rhetoric and dialectic carry an essential, inherent component of social factors, I will point out that attempts to devalue collaborative writing strategies simply because some have implied that these strategies may lead to an inferior or less probable approximation of truth are mistaken. Similarly, attempts to privilege individual inquiry--and single authorship--because such inquiry can better employ rigorous dialectic and logic are also misguided. On the contrary, the validity of such socially isolated inquiry may very well be reduced because of the lack of critical feedback and incorporation of social factors at frequent intervals during its evolution.

Classical Perspectives

Very early in the history of rhetoric, many sophists made a highly significant distinction between what some contemporary scholars refer to as "strong" and "weak" discourse. As Susan

Jarrett points out, these sophists considered strong discourse to be a more powerful rhetorical tool because it represents arguments that have been forced to stand the test of diverse, even hostile audiences. Exposure to such social forces makes these arguments more likely to be "stronger" than unexamined or untested opinions, and thus retain enduring validity. The truths created by these argumentative processes--while admittedly contingent and subject to a ceaseless process of modification--have been strengthened at all stages of their formation by the test of divergent, opposing, and even hostile opinions. Consequently, when the inevitable trial by fire of exposure to audience occurs, these truths will be better able to withstand what might otherwise be withering criticism.

The doctrine of *kairos* also occupied a prominent place in the sophists' writings. This complex doctrine represents more than simply timing. As Cynthia Sheard points out in "Kairos and Kenneth Burke's Psychology of Political and Social Communication":

Kairos encompasses the occasion itself, the historical circumstances that brought it about, the generic conventions of the form . . . required by that occasion, the manner of delivery the audience expects at that time and place, their attitudes toward the speaker . . . and the occasion, even their assumptions about the world around them (292).

Consequently, reconciling a rhetor's arguments with the rhetorical task at hand requires writers to become aware of all the exigencies and constraints of a specific rhetorical situation rather than a select, ideal few. Because these constraints vary from situation to situation and even from moment to moment, no generic set of rhetorical prescriptions or formulas should be mandated and forced to apply to all rhetorical situations *in advance*. Thus, no one set of rhetorical strategies and precepts in the abstract is necessarily valued above any other. As the anonymous author of the Dissoi Logoi states "Everything done at the right time is seemly, and everything done at the wrong time is disgraceful" (II. 20). A full appreciation of this insight requires rhetors to mold their rhetoric to become consonant with the demands of social forces.

In his In Defence of Rhetoric, Brian Vickers claims that:

To the sophists, rhetoric was less an arsenal of verbal devices than a process of interaction in which the norms of justice and social order were worked out by those taking part. For them . . . "discourse is social or it is nothing; its topics and problems are by definition common ones; group notions; the words of men act on other men, and vice versa. There is an exchange of opinion, discovery of common opinion, consensus and decision. It is not a discourse carried out in the private soul" (193).

The teachings of Heraclitus provided a mechanism for bringing about this "exchange of opinion." Heraclitus taught that "opposition brings concord. Out of discord comes the fairest harmony" (Fr. 98). Conflict, flux, and change--including that represented in language--form the very essence of life. Given this fact, negative connotations should not be attached to the necessity of allowing one's arguments to be changed by the demands of audience, and the resulting accommodation of the ever-changing nature of the social context that gives rise to discourse. For Heraclitus, all knowledge is generated by means of the same basic dynamic of flux, change, and dialectic.

Seen from this perspective, discovery of an ideal, unchanging truth which is often postulated as the goal of dialectic does not necessarily hold the epistemological high ground relative to more contingent truth--at least not by virtue of its unchanging nature alone. According to Heraclitus, conflict (including that essential to dialectic and rhetoric) should be welcomed, worked with, and used to work toward "truth" rather than resisted and fought against as if this dialectical process were an avenue for leading language users astray. Heraclitus' emphasis on change and flux appears to lend sanction to the ceaseless interchange of ideas and viewpoints that marks effective collaboration in the contemporary writing classroom. Such a perspective also allows writing teachers to avoid the necessity of forcing students to isolate themselves from social

forces at some stage of the writing process in order to gain an awareness of any sort of pre-existing higher truth or self; even if such an apparent level of epistemological certainty can be reached, no necessary benefit would be derived unless this truth can be placed into a meaningful social context

Protagoras extends Heraclitus' insights more explicitly to the realm of *doxa* or probable truth with his famous dictum that "man is the measure of all things," or as Plato phrases it in Cratylus, "of all things the measure is man [B1], . . . as things appear to me, then, so they actually are for me, and as they appear to you, so they actually are for you" (13 Protagoras, The Older Sophists 10). Thus, the tentative and contingent nature of conclusions produced by "mere" rhetoric does not necessarily place these conclusions in an inferior position compared to conclusions produced through the "transcendent" process of dialectic.

Turning to more specific pedagogical concerns, Isocrates stressed the role of the teacher in setting examples and serving as models for students to imitate; he taught that the teacher "must in himself set such an example that the students who are molded by him and are able to imitate him will, from the outset, show in their speaking a degree of grace and charm greater than the others" (On Imitation). Isocrates also lends further support

to the value of the probable knowledge or *doxa* advocated by such sophists as Protagoras:

Since it is not in the nature of man to attain a science by the possession of which we can know positively what we should do or what we should say, in the next resort I hold that man to be wise who is able by his powers of conjecture to arrive generally at the best course (A 271).

In other words, rhetors must work with *doxa*, "for no system of knowledge can possibly cover all occasions" (Vickers 150).

Isocrates also declined to make any rigid distinction between the public and the private spheres of knowledge. As Vickers points out, Isocrates "validates rhetoric both in the field of open dispute and in individual study." Because no dichotomy is drawn between public and private discourse in Isocrates' system, dialectic is not privileged over rhetoric--both rhetoric and dialectic are granted equal status as ways of knowing (157). Thus, the way is cleared to use dialectic in all its guises--scientific, cognitive, or social--as a tool for reaching truth.

Plato

Plato's emphasis on the essential role played by dialectic in the search for truth implies the incorporation of more than one force or perspective, even if this dialectic is internal within the individual mind. In Plato's epistemological system,

an interplay of differing argumentative forces must first occur within the mind of one rhetor and then eventually be transferred to the mind of another individual rhetor. Thus, some form of internal, individual dialectic prefigures any sort of interaction with the social or public realm.

In the Gorgias 454e, Plato distinguishes between two kinds of persuasion: "one which is the source of belief without knowledge, as the other [dialectic] is of knowledge" (Jowett vol. 2, 541), and also has Socrates define rhetoric in 455a as "the artificer of a persuasion which creates belief about the just and unjust, but gives no instruction about them" (Jowett 542). But even though he placed strong emphasis on the power of dialectic to transcend the merely probable realm of rhetoric, Plato apparently did not retain absolute faith in the ability of dialectic alone to lead to truth. In Gorgias 487a (Jowett 580), Plato reveals this complex metaphysical perspective by arguing that "if a man is to make a complete test of the good or evil life of the soul, he ought to have three qualities--knowledge, goodwill, [and] outspokenness." Apparently, knowledge generated by dialectic is not enough, for as Perelman observes in "Dialectic and Dialogue":

For Plato the metaphysician, dialectics is only a method to transcend hypotheses and to reach the absolute; but the non-hypothetical thesis must be assured by an evident intuition. Dialectics alone cannot establish the theses

and if evidence gives them a firm basis, then dialectics becomes superfluous because it is critical, but not a constructive method (73).

Plato also acknowledged the important role played by modeling in the training of young rhetors. In the Republic, 378e, he argues that: "It is most important that the tales that the young first hear should be models of virtuous thoughts" (Jowett vol. 2, 223). He also asks his interlocutor:

Did you never observe how imitations, beginning in early youth and continuing far into life, at length grow into habits and become a second nature, affecting body, voice, and mind? (395d)

Thus, Plato appears to lend sanction to the "great models" theory of writing instruction, although his discussion seems to be more concerned with the creation of rarified art rather than with more mundane texts such as those produced by student writers.

Plato also makes more explicit references to the important role played by imitation in the creation of art. As Richard McKeon points out in "Imitation and Poetry":

For Plato, imitation is a term of universal scope used to express many shades and sharp differences of meaning and many degrees of approbation or censure. The universe itself is created by a process of imitation. The artificer or demiurge of any object finds his model in

what is uniform, and the model of the universe is eternal (Thought, Action, Passion 109).

In Plato's system, although the process of imitation is clearly important, its prime value lies in its capacity to represent the elusive ideal reflected by art, rather than its potential for dealing with merely probable truth. For example, in the Sophist, the "Stranger" makes a distinction between "the imitation which is accompanied by opinion, the imitation of appearance," and "that which is accompanied by knowledge" (268e). Because it is ultimately grounded in the ideal, only the latter form of imitation can be trusted as a dependable avenue for discovering truth.

Plato also clearly privileges dialectic as a more certain and dependable means of finding truth than the probability-based or contingent reasoning processes of rhetoric. More specifically, the Platonic view of dialectic seems to postulate that the human mind can transcend all historical and contextual forces--a conclusion later refuted by Hegel, who argued strongly for the historical basis of all forms of dialectic.

Not only does Plato place rhetoric in an inferior position in relation to dialectic, but he also places writing itself into an inferior position compared to speech. This critique of writing is especially apparent in the Phaedrus; at one point, Socrates asserts to his interlocutor that:

He would be a very simple person . . . who should suppose

that he had left his "Art" in writings or who should accept such an inheritance in the hope that the written word would give anything intelligible or certain; or who deemed that writing could be any more than a reminder to one who already knows the subject (185d).

The inferior position allotted to writing in Plato's system results in part from his belief that the apparent distance between rhetor and text present in this form of discourse allows greater potential space for deceit--including perhaps, plagiarism--than is the case with speaking. Because of this greater separation between the signified and the signifier, writing is therefore worthy of less trust as a means of finding truth. Also, because Plato seems to take for granted what Derrida calls the "metaphysics of presence," the very fact that writing is necessarily further removed from speech (which is itself one step removed from the reality it allegedly represents) renders writing inferior to spoken language.

Because Plato postulates the self as a transcendent entity distinct from the social environment, the task of the writer working within the Platonic system is fairly clear cut. In the invention stage, at least, writers should sequester themselves as much as possible from the polluting and distorting impact of social forces which may lead them astray in their search for the ideal truth which lies beyond superficial appearances. If one is successful in these attempts at isolation--if a writer is able to

avoid excessive imitation or premature collaboration at crucial stages--then one can perhaps next communicate the newly discovered truth to other essentially isolated selves. The success of these attempts to communicate is largely contingent on finding some way to shield oneself totally from (or cleanse oneself of) the pernicious influences of social forces before establishing contact with the world outside the mind.

In terms of impact on collaborative writing, the most crucial position maintained by Plato is his privileging of dialectic as a means of finding truth. Because the Platonic perspective invests this epistemological approach with the power of discovering the ideal that lies behind deceptive appearances, dialectic is arguably the more valuable and reliable approach to generating valid, enduring knowledge. On the other hand, Plato's assessment implies that probability-based rhetoric--because it relies heavily on untrustworthy writing--is too dependent on ephemeral, constantly shifting social forces, and therefore lends itself too easily to distortion and unethical manipulation of audiences. From the Platonic perspective, therefore, a rhetoric based on the contingent, probable, and *written* is not a suitable or trustworthy avenue for finding truth.

As Vickers has pointed out, however, Plato's attacks on rhetoric are neither fair nor well-balanced; in fact, these attacks violate the very rules by which an ethical philosopher is

alleged to operate. For example, In The Gorgias, Socrates is allowed to cross-examine his interlocutors within a privileged system of questioning selected by only one participant rather than engaging in a well-balanced exchange of ideas between equal partners. A major effect of such a dialogue--in reality, more of a monologue--is to cut off meaningful social dialectic even before it has been given a chance; therefore, only a very limited and distorted range of social exchange is permitted.

Aristotle

Aristotle seems to be of two minds on the subject of imitation. On the one hand, he states in his Poetics that "Imitation is natural to man from childhood; one of his advantages over the lower animals being this, that he is the most imitative creature in the world, and learns first by imitation" (1448b). The first half of the Poetics contains extensive references to the importance of imitation in the creative process. Furthermore, Aristotle distinguishes among three major types of imitation:

- (1) Things as they were or are.
- (2) Things as they are said or seem to be.
- (3) Things as they ought to be (Poetics, 1460b).

Like Plato, however, Aristotle's primary stress is on the crucial role of imitation in the artistic process of *mimesis*, or the reflection of reality. Aristotle differs from Plato, however, by

giving more credence to the power of imitation in reflecting the probable and contingent truths of man, rather than concentrating exclusively on ideal truth.

On the other hand, Aristotle's definition of rhetoric as "the counterpart of dialectic" has the potential effect of separating probable truth--such as that derived from enthymemic reasoning--from absolute truth, and implying that this contingent truth is defined largely in contrast to more certain absolute truth. However, in the Rhetoric, Aristotle asserts that "Neither rhetoric nor dialectic is the scientific study of any one separate subject; both are faculties for providing arguments" (1355a). He also cautions that:

The more we try to make either dialectic or rhetoric not, what they really are, practical faculties, but sciences, the more we shall inadvertently be destroying their true nature; for we shall be fashioning them and shall be passing into the region of sciences dealing with definite subjects rather than simply with words and forms of reasoning (1359b).

Despite such cautions, the ultimate effect of Aristotle's dichotomy between rhetoric and dialectic is to make probable truth seem somewhat less certain and therefore inferior to ideal truth. This distinction tacitly acknowledges the privileged position of some forms of reasoning (dialectical) over others (rhetorical). If rhetors assume from the outset that

they can only approximate truth, while others (such as scientists, logicians, or dialecticians) can actually discover this truth, then the prestige accorded rhetoricians will necessarily suffer.

However, the crucial importance of audience awareness in Aristotle's system provides techniques for avoiding some of these negative consequences; in the Rhetoric, he advises that "we must always take into account the nature of our particular audience. . . . If the audience esteems a given quality, we must say that our hero has that quality" (1367b). This Aristotelian principle of suiting one's arguments to the needs of a particular audience echoes and reinforces the tradition of the Sophistic principle of *kairos*. At the same time, the contingent nature of truth is given a firmer foundation by grounding it in a more comprehensive system of audience analysis, a system that in its fullest development can incorporate the complex social forces acting in every rhetorical situation. The overall impact of applying to audience analysis the classification and taxonomic features of the scientific approach is to bring about the appearance of a closer alliance between rhetoric and dialectic, and to lend the former added epistemological respectability.

Cicero

During the Roman era, Cicero continued the tradition of maintaining strong audience awareness by placing great

emphasis on the social function of the citizen acting within the larger social order. By reminding his readers to be thoroughly conscious of their sacred duties as citizen-orators, Cicero encourages rhetors to expose themselves to the full spectrum of social forces that shape discourse: "No speaker can possibly excite the feelings of his audience or allay their excitement . . . except one who has a thorough understanding of all the laws of nature, the character and motives of men" (On the Orator 51).

As Vickers says:

What was to Socrates the greatest blessing of the philosopher's life, its non-involvement in political affairs and public activities, becomes for Cicero and other exponents of the *vita activa* its very indictment (166).

In Of Oratory, Cicero reveals his views on imitation by having Antonius develop a young man's rhetorical ability through the technique of asking him to imitate good models in both speech and writing (Book IV). This imitation was not seen as a positive end in itself, but rather as a necessary and instructive way-station on the road to the production of effective discourse. As Anne Ruggles Gere explains, "Cicero insists upon the stylistic individuality of orators who, having selected appropriate models and concentrated on their best features, improve upon what they imitate" (8). In this scenario, the optimal role played by the individual rhetor is to build upon a pre-existing *socially constructed* core of texts, rather than to

strive at all times and in every rhetorical situation to generate something original from the mysterious, undefinable core of the isolated self. Of Oratory was an extremely influential text throughout the Renaissance, and Cicero's sanctioning of certain kinds of imitation was at times simplified into a blanket approval of faithful imitation of Classical authors as a good composition practice in itself--an attitude that echoed throughout the Medieval era and extended in some guises into the Neo-Classical Age.

Quintilian

Quintilian carried on the Ciceronian tradition of stressing the need for a rhetorician to maintain close connections with the larger society. For Quintilian, this concern with the social dimension is manifested primarily in pedagogical observations which stress the value of imitation as an effective instructional technique. In this regard, Quintilian reminds rhetors that imitation serves an important function from the teacher's perspective as well as from the student's. According to Quintilian, when used effectively, imitation of selected aspects of teachers' rhetorical efforts can serve as models for students to imitate. Such imitation can spare students much inefficient trial and error by allowing them to observe and initiate techniques for avoiding some rhetorical problems.

Quintilian further recommends imitation as the most effective means of developing oratory, but departs from Cicero in his recommendation to "paraphrase because of its challenge to achieve expression independent of the original" (Gere 10). With this comment, Quintilian appears to lend sanction to the common contemporary belief that the degree of difficulty *in itself* lends value to the pursuit of originality, but the primary emphasis here seems to be urging students to strive to learn--by doing--the differences between acceptable and unacceptable imitation. Overall, however, Quintilian holds as the ultimate objective in this imitation process some form of expression "independent of the original."

Quintilian clarifies his position on the primacy of originality in invention by arguing in Institutio Oratoria that

There can be no doubt that in art no small portion of our task lies in imitation, since, although invention came first and is all-important, it is expedient to imitate whatever has been invented with success. And it is a universal rule of life that we should wish to copy what we approve in others (10.2.1,2).

However, Quintilian also argues that "imitation alone is not sufficient, if only for the reason that a sluggish nature is only too ready to rest content with the inventions of others." (10.2.4)

Use of a phrase such as "sluggish nature" appears to raise the specter of some sort of "mental rigor" or "work ethic"--a theme which other scholars will later expand and develop.

Quintilian clearly recognized the value of improving on what has been borrowed, as is shown by his assertion that "It is a positive disgrace to owe all our achievement to imitation" (10.2.7). Quintilian also asserts that "Whatever is like another object, must necessarily be inferior to the object of its imitation, just as the shadow is inferior to the substance, the portrait to the features which it portrays, and the acting of the player to the feelings which he endeavors to reproduce" (10.2.11). At this point, Quintilian seems rather idealistic in his insistence that the copy must always remain inferior to the original, but his main point here appears to be that imitation in itself is in no way dishonorable; problems arise only in the mechanisms by which this imitation takes place, and in the final condition of the copied product or text--in most cases, such copies should represent some form of improvement.

In spite of his generally social orientation, Quintilian's strong interest in letter writing allowed him to lend limited sanction to occasional isolation from social forces, as is shown in these remarks from the Institutio:

Perhaps the highest of all pleasures is that which we derive from private study, and the only circumstances under which the delights of literature are unalloyed are

when it withdraws from action . . . and can enjoy the pleasure of self-contemplation (2.18.4).

These remarks, however, appear to be directed more toward the enjoyment of literature from the reader's perspective rather than from the writer's.

Quintilian also agrees with Cicero "that nature was a more influential force than nurture in shaping an orator. For it is nature that gives to the speaker his inventive ability" (Golden 85). But this self or pre-existing core of the orator can be greatly modified by social forces once his or her "nature" has been established; no insuperable barrier has been erected that would prevent an orator's nature from being socially constructed. On the whole, Quintilian echoes Cicero by working against unnecessary divisions between philosophy and rhetoric, thus declining to subordinate socially constructed, public knowledge to private or ideal truth. Such an approach leaves the door open to granting rhetoric--and ultimately collaborative rhetoric--equal legitimacy with philosophy and dialectic.

Medieval / Renaissance

The writings of Augustine represent a conditional return to idealism, and therefore a movement away from the social dimension. In Augustine's system of rhetoric, writers seek to imitate idealized forms--in this case religious truth. In Of Christian Doctrine, Augustine argues that "All doctrine concerns

either things or signs, but things are learned by signs" (Book 2.2). Language itself consists of signs of things--which in turn represent God's truth (word). As McKeon says in Imitation and Poetry:

Augustine seems to restrict the use of the word "imitation" (*imitatio*) to the actions of men in this universe constructed of images and likenesses: the arts and sciences, or at least as many of them, consist of imitation joined to reason, and salvation is possible only by imitation of God (124).

It is only through the interior, divinely-infused process of dialectic that man's soul can hope to know the truth offered through our knowledge of God. Even more significantly, God's truth belongs ultimately only to God, not the speaker; only God can therefore be truly original--since He is the maker of all things. For this same reason, "Those with acute and eager minds more readily learn eloquence by reading and hearing the eloquent than by following the rules of the eloquent." Further, Augustine asks "why can men not be made eloquent, not by teaching them the rules of eloquence, but by having them read and hear the expressions of the eloquent and imitate them in so far as they are able to follow them?" (Book 4.3). Such imitation is permissible because all writers are not stealing from others, but are simply acting as mouthpieces for "God's truth." And, in

the interest of furthering the glory of God, the more mouthpieces God has, the better.

Augustine's renewed emphasis on ideal truth also represents a shift away from the probable. As Gerard O'Daly points out in Augustine's Philosophy of Mind, Augustine believed that, although man must often operate within the realm of the probable, one cannot know this contingent truth at all without some foreknowledge of the transcendent truth it seeks to approximate (164). According to Augustine, then, the rhetor's first task is not to draw closer to the truth through the use of probable rhetoric such as that employed in collaboration and social interaction, but to seek the inner enlightenment offered by the transcendent truth which illuminates all knowledge. As Augustine advises in On Christian Doctrine: "For one who wishes to speak wisely . . . it is above all necessary to remember the words of Scripture" (4.4).

In contrast to Augustine's emphasis on the shared nature of transcendent truth, writers during the Renaissance began to stress the importance of their rights as individual authors. Only when the currents of intellectual history gave rise to the concept of the individual and the concomitant idea of individual ownership of property could a text be thought of as a tangible object one could own--or steal. As Martha Woodmanese has pointed out, the concept of ideas as property is a fairly recent development. Individuals first had to perceive of themselves as

in some meaningful sense distinct and separate from the larger society--as they began to during the later Renaissance--before the concept of an individual owning a thought or idea could be realized. Once this concept of individual identity had taken hold, individual authors could then begin to vie for ownership of the textual products they had created.

The concept of copyright itself also has a complex history. As R. F. Whale points out in Copyright, the term is something of a misnomer, because it has come to represent more than just the right to make copies (1). According to Whale, after the 1709 Act of Anne gave limited legal protection to "Authors or Purchasers of such copies":

Copyright for 150 years was quite simply the right to copy, and, except for the implied right to publish, nothing else. It was accordingly not an author's right but a publisher's right, and indeed it was the booksellers (publishers) who created this right for themselves as a necessary protection for their business (18).

Thus, the concept of copyright appears to have evolved in response to economic considerations, rather than to preserve the integrity of the concept of individual authorship *per se*.

The development of the concept of the individual in Western thought is too complex to be covered in this project. However, writing instructors should remember that this concept has not always served as the only means to conceptualize the

role of the individual student in the writing classroom. Even during the Renaissance, freely appropriating the works of other authors for one's own literary projects was very common. As Alexander Lindey points out in Plagiarism and Originality, "Borrowing flourished in sixteenth century England. . . . The Elizabethans did not bother to devise plots, incidents, and characters; they lifted them from their predecessors and from each other" (72).

Seen in this light, even the alleged "plagiarism" of Shakespeare becomes more understandable. Shakespeare apparently did not place great value on originality as an end in itself; as Lindey points out,

The Elizabethan dramatist was the inheritor of [classical] wealth. That Shakespeare should turn to it was natural; that he should exploit it without compunction was keeping with the spirit of the times. He commandeered everything that suited his purpose--Greek biography, Roman history, the tales of the Middle Ages, long-familiar anecdotes, old farces, the plays of his predecessors--and cast them into forms popular in his day (74).

This rather permissive attitude is best illustrated in the composition of Henry VI, in which, according to Lindey, 1771 of the first 6,033 lines were copied intact, while 2373 had been paraphrased (75).

Many of Shakespeare's literary successors continued this open-minded attitude toward borrowing and imitation. Lindey cites Ben Jonson's Timber as a prime example of this permissive stance toward plagiarism. According to Lindey, this book comprises more plagiarized material than any other book of its size by an author of rank, with the possible exception of Sterne and Stendhal. It has twenty-five excerpts from Quintilian, twenty-one from the younger Seneca, eleven from the elder Seneca, four each from Horace, Plutarch, and the younger Pliny, and a couple from Aristotle and Plato (78).

Lindey also demonstrates that such Neo-classical writers as Dryden and Pope also made free--and often unacknowledged--use of other writers' material.

Major shifts in rhetorical theory occurred in the Enlightenment. During this period, Ramus attempted to separate mere rhetoric from dialectic. In Arguments in Rhetoric Against Quintilian, Ramus asserts that

There are two universal, general gifts bestowed by nature upon man, Reason and Speech; dialectic is the theory of the former, grammar and rhetoric of the latter. Dialectic therefore should draw on the general strengths of human reason in the consideration and the arrangement of the subject matter, while . . . rhetoric should demonstrate the embellishment of speech first

in tropes and figures, second in dignified delivery (86). This attempt to restrict drastically the purview of rhetoric resulted in a truncated, incomplete, and ultimately ineffective discourse. Only style and delivery are left to rhetoric--and delivery occupies a very minor role. The most important knowledge-generating aspects of rhetoric are consigned to the logical processes of dialectic. Epistemology and truth have thus been abandoned to dialectic and science, "while rhetoric is reduced to the analysis and ornamentation of the forms by which these truths are constructed. As a result, the most valuable technique for generating knowledge--dialectical interchange between different voices--is lost to rhetoric; only superficial stylistic devices such as tropes are left for rhetoricians as they attempt to express the truth made available to them by dialectic.

Ramus appeared to think that he was elevating the techniques of argumentation to the level normally enjoyed by dialectic; his position seems to be that effective reasoning on the one hand and effective argumentation on the other follow the same set of principles employed by "more respectable" and more "certain" logical reasoning. As he asserts in Arguments, "Nor should we consider it possible that rhetorical judgement is one thing and dialectical judgement another" (106). His point here seems to be that dialectic incorporates all the useful knowledge-generating powers of rhetoric, and that "rhetorical

argumentation" is just a sloppy and degenerate method of reasoning that is best avoided by rigorous philosophers. Unfortunately, the ultimate impact of this perspective was to permit dialectic to absorb rather than to coalesce with rhetoric. By asserting that all forms of reasoning obeyed the same basic operative principles, Ramus implied that these operative principles were exactly those employed in pure dialectic rather than by a combination of dialectic and rhetoric, and that what was commonly called "rhetoric" was in fact nothing more than an inadequately rigorous form of dialectic. Therefore, rhetoric assumes only a secondary role in communication: the style or ornamentation of the truth found through dialectic.

Ramus' attitude toward imitation is somewhat more complex. In Arguments, Ramus claims that "An art should first of all be described, and then the method of practicing the art . . . should be made clear" (100). This position is presented in sharp contrast to Quintilian's emphasis on the imitation of models as the ideal pedagogical technique. As Ong points out, in Ramus' Ciceronians, imitation is presented as though it were nothing more than simple reproduction of classical means, and the author is thus able to dismiss this imitation as merely the perpetuation of outdated rhetorical strategies (Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue 177). According to Ong:

Practically, Ramus' tactics destroy the possibility of exercise . . . which for Ramus means imitation of an

author, for Ramus annihilates one author after another and leaves nobody to imitate (222).

In the absence of any pre-existing models worthy of imitation, rhetoricians are left with only the ornamental tools offered by rhetoric as they attempt--on their own--to reach an uncertain truth.

Later during the Enlightenment, Giambattista Vico argues that all knowledge--even scientific--is based on argument and thus dialectic. He also criticizes Descartes for, like Ramus, falsely claiming superiority for dialectic--and its scientific product truth--over knowledge gained through argument. In The New Science, Vico claims that "Wisdom is the faculty which commands all the disciplines by which we acquire all the sciences and arts that make up humanity" (I. 364). Therefore, scientific knowledge is simply another specialized body of information, rather than a superior and more certain method of inquiry than, for example, rhetoric. In Chapter XV of "On the Study Methods of Our Time," Vico also raises questions about the common tendency to confer value on something simply because it is new: "The fact that a thing is new is not automatically a recommendation; monstrous and ridiculous things may also be novelties" (80-81).

Vico also shows a ready willingness in "Study Methods" to engage in an open social exchange of ideas between differing and conflicting viewpoints: "I shall be greatly indebted to any one

who wishes to criticize . . . the points that I have brought up, so as to free me from eventual errors" (XV. 81). This willingness to engage in a more socially based dialectic points away from the neo-platonic tendency to conceive of language as most trustworthy within the mind of the isolated "scientific" thinker, and toward placing greater value in the power of probable reasoning to generate reliable knowledge. It also displays a marked departure from the sort of one-sided persuasion--almost amounting to coercion--employed by Plato in his Gorgias.

Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century

Campbell

The nineteenth-century faculty psychologists reiterated the idealistic tendency to promote logical dialectic within the isolated mind of the individual as the preferred method of generating knowledge. In The Philosophy of Rhetoric, Campbell argues that language is only a fallible tool by which mankind attempts to approximate a higher truth or reality: "The art of the logician is . . . universal [while] the art of the grammarian is always particular and local" (34). Furthermore, according to Campbell, we must always remain in doubt about the precise original (or true) meaning of a text; thus any paraphrase must be considered an interpretation. If carried to an extreme, such a position implies that most written work is infected with the taint of plagiarism. By taking such a doubtful attitude toward

imitation, Campbell reflects the strong suspicion of socially generated knowledge maintained by the British Romantics and American Transcendentalists of the nineteenth century, as well as the consequent valorizing of the more "private" discourse of the socially isolated mind. Only such a purified mind will be in a position to employ the difficult cognitive processes of logic and mathematics to arrive at truth.

Campbell also reflects the tendency of many Romantic and Transcendental writers by pointing out the inferiority of even dialectical reasoning to the higher truth revealed through mathematics. According to Campbell, formal logic is based on the faulty model of the syllogism, which reasons "from things less known to things better known, and by things obscure to things evident" (Philosophy of Rhetoric 63). If one cannot trust even the most rigorous forms of logical deduction, very little confidence can be invested in even more contingent forms of reasoning such as merely probable rhetoric and argumentation. The only dependable avenue left for generating knowledge, apparently, is the almost entirely non-social and abstract world of mathematics.

On the other hand, Campbell also grants some value to imitation by implying in Philosophy of Rhetoric that no imitation can occur without some degree of creativity--a term which reflects a renewed emphasis on the individual's unique contribution to a text (3-4). This concept is only a short remove

from the Classical premium placed on improving an imitated text, since the implied source of this improvement is the mind of the individual writer. If such improvement is indeed accomplished, then the specter of plagiarism is largely exorcised; the fact that a writer has in some way made a text better seems to serve as adequate penance for the sin of borrowing this text from the original writer. In this event, the overall result of the process of imitation or collaboration--the production of a valuable text--is privileged over the precise nature of the process by which this end was achieved.

British Romantics

The British Romantics and their New World counterparts, the Transcendentalists, represent the fullest expression of placing such a high premium on the role played by "original genius" in the creation of a text. As Thomas Mallon says in Stolen Words:

Originality--not just innocence of plagiarism but the making of something really and truly new--set itself down as a cardinal virtue sometime in the middle of the eighteenth century and has never since gotten up (24).

This emphasis on "original genius" was most often manifested in promotion of the studied isolation of individuals from larger social forces, an isolation that could free them from the taint of imitation. Once this purification had been completed, a

writer would then be freed to produce material of the highest value: writing that was altogether fresh and original. Working within this system, both the quality and the sheer quantity of originality was taken as a virtue sufficient unto itself.

This cult of the individual finds its fullest expression in the writings of Wordsworth, who attempted to demonstrate that the best, most creative writing is produced by individuals who have isolated themselves from society in order to commune with nature. Ideally, the only contact an original writer should have with the social environment is an antithetical one--that is, writers should strive to free themselves from the societal chains that shackle their creative energies. Only by reacting against these contextual chains forged by a corrupting society can writers produce worthwhile creative and original works.

More specifically, Wordsworth argues in such works as The Prelude that writers should strive toward the ultimate ideal of going beyond a socially constituted self, and unleashing an incorporeal, transcendent self that springs from native sources detached from the day-to-day experience of the lived world--including all forms of social interaction. Freed from the contamination represented by these social forces, the writer is then able to assert the pure, undiluted genius of his or her true self. Any work produced by the purified self through this process of "autogenesis" will necessarily be superior to writing produced while the writer was working in close contact with

contaminated society, simply by virtue of its independence from this contamination.

An examination of the literary efforts of Wordsworth and Coleridge illustrates the conflicting artistic forces at work during the Romantic era. Coleridge himself implies in his Biographia Literaria that a true creative genius should emulate other artists in general rather than in particular; excessively faithful imitation risks a loss of originality. In other words, only the broadest and most general tropes of rhetoric can be borrowed from other writers. The "content" plugged into these frameworks must spring entirely from the individual--hopefully uncontaminated--writer's own original thoughts.

Ironically, as Lindey points out in Plagiarism and Originality, Coleridge himself lifted whole passages intact from a number of writers in order to compose his best-known works:

There are, in the history of literature, few examples of alchemy as vivid and unassailable as "Kubla Khan" and The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. Coleridge poured the essence of dozens of obscure travel books into his masterpieces (84).

Yet the fact that Coleridge apparently felt free to borrow from all these sources without acknowledgement was in no way exceptional; his behavior is quite typical of the practicing plagiarist. As Peter Shaw points out in "Plagiary," many plagiarists not only are, like Coleridge, so talented that they

have no real need to steal the works of others, but their actions also seem to betray a sort of literary death wish--they apparently want, at some subconscious level, to be caught. Consequently, the most accomplished and brazen plagiarists are also in some ways often the most clumsy and obvious.

American Transcendentalists

The American tradition of valorizing individualism and originality in authorship as positive ends in themselves finds its most fully developed expression in the works of Emerson and Thoreau. In these authors' works, the Romantic ideal writer struggling in purposeful isolation from social distractions is given additional emphasis by a strong dose of the American work ethic--including the Puritan value of suffering. Emerson's essays are especially noteworthy for their promotion of independence of thought, creativity, and originality as ideals every writer should strive to reach.

To an extent, the Transcendentalists' view of rhetoric is even more Platonic than that of the English Romantics from whom they derived their primary inspiration. Like the Romantics, the American Transcendentalists urge writers to isolate themselves and commune with nature, but they surpass the Romantics with the zeal they bring to recommending the value of hard work and suffering in building on one's creative experiences while dwelling in the woods. In addition, a peculiar

American component is added which elevates the role of individuality and mental rigor in the creative process to a somewhat mystic level.

Both Emerson and Thoreau further erode the foundations of the power of social forces by calling into question even the ability of the socially learned scientific method to lead people toward truth. In general, "truth" for the American Transcendentalists is an entirely personal, interior awareness that transcends even the power of pure dialectic to reveal the ideal realm. Only by casting aside all pre-conceived means of thought--even that employed by the scientific discourse community--can the mind reach ultimate, ideal truth.

As both a Romantic and an American, Emerson represents an illustrative exemplar of the conceptual evolution of the self, originality, and creativity. Though he can be loosely placed within that group of neo-Platonic scholars who urge others to seek solitude in the natural world in order to find creative inspiration, Emerson's overall rhetoric has long defied categorization. Many scholars have placed him in the Romantic, Expressionistic, or Platonic camp, while others have emphasized the more Aristotelian or distinctly American (and therefore democratic) aspects of his rhetoric.

Critics who attempt to place Emerson's rhetoric in the Romantic or Platonic category often begin with his emphasis on the crucial role played by the ideal in our efforts to understand

the universe. For example, the famous "Transparent Eyeball" passage from "Nature" can be best understood if one accepts the possibility of completely extinguishing one's own pre-existing sense of socially constructed self in order to allow ideal, untainted forms to flow freely into a freshly reconstituted self. Such a metaphor for poetic inspiration seems clearly Romantic in character. The role of prior knowledge, special bias, or implicit awareness of audience is minimal in such a rhetorical paradigm; truth and knowledge simply flow in--untroubled by any local interference--and the rhetor is thus enlightened.

The strongest effort to support this view of Emerson as a Platonist is made by Roberta K. Ray in "The Role of the Orator in the Philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson." Ray argues that Emerson is a philosophical idealist who locates reality in a spiritual realm detached from the workaday material world. For Emerson, Ray claims, "The material world is not of value in and of itself. It is only important to man insofar as it can bring him insight into the spiritual world" (218). And, since the ultimate end of rhetoric must be to "find God" (in the sense of discovering ultimate truths detached from the material world), Emerson's ideal rhetors should not focus their rhetorical efforts in the material world, but should "rely primarily on [their] intuition to provide the higher truths which men seek" (219).

In Ray's assessment, Emerson's view implies that a rhetor should not be concerned with his or her own role in the day-to-

day workings of the material world, and, by extension, the needs of other selves which make up the audience. If finding truth is indeed nothing more than a matter of placing oneself in a right relationship with the ideal (or God, Truth, or the Oversoul), then the responsible rhetor should withdraw from the corrupting distractions offered by the audience or academic environment in order to concentrate on establishing contact with this transcendent ideal.

At the other end of the spectrum stand those critics who emphasize the more Aristotelian aspects of Emerson's view of rhetoric. From this critical viewpoint, Emerson's ideal rhetors are portrayed as writers immersed in the democratic (and subsequently American) ideal of continual active participation in the social world, including both the specific audience of a rhetorical act, and the larger political and social arenas. Strong support for this position can be found in Emerson's "Nature":

Of course the interests of the audience and of the rhetor conspire. It is well with them only when his influence is complete; then only are they well pleased. Especially he consults his power by making instead of taking his theme. If he should attempt to instruct the people in that which they know, he would fail; by making them wise in that which he knows, he has the advantage of the assembly every moment (7. 84).

On the broader social scale, Emerson places great importance on the special duties of the American orator in living up to the weighty role of ideal democratic rhetor. Aside from the "eloquence" essays, this necessity for nurturing such rhetors is expressed in Emerson's essay "The Poet," in which the author issues a clarion call for the "Timely man . . . the reconciler, whom all things await." In issuing such a "clarion call," and in attaching a nationalistic flavor to such responsibilities, Emerson not only echoes the ancient sophistic doctrine of *kairos*, but also provides precedent for the subsequent stress placed on American writers, teachers and scholars to maintain their good citizenship and even patriotism while defining the proper role of the individual self within the larger academic community.

Emerson's two essays "The American Scholar" and "Self-Reliance" further demonstrate his distinctly democratic and therefore American emphasis on the value of originality and independence of thought. Paradoxically, Emerson also echoes and amplifies the Classical emphasis on the duty of the citizen orator to the larger society--but within the distinctive context of American parochial patriotism. In this context, "originality" takes on even greater value by being equated with love of one's country.

Despite such echoes of Platonism, Emerson's blurring of the boundaries between the various modes of verbal expression

represents a limited foreshadowing of major recent trends in rhetoric and composition. As Berlin points out in "Rhetoric and Poetics," Emerson inhabits a different epistemological realm than most of his contemporaries:

Knowledge is not discovered through a careful use of the faculties in responding to external realities because reality is not situated "out there" in the material world. Nor does Emerson locate knowledge in a Platonic heaven of ideas existing independently of the material world. Emerson's epistemology is instead close to the contemporary views of such figures as Ernst Cassirer, Susanne Langer, and I.A. Richards. Knowledge is the product of the interaction of the perceiving subject and the external object (526).

Overall, this Romantic / Transcendentalist perspective postulates the ideal writing situation as one in which writers become isolated from the larger society and then await inspiration. Once this isolation has been achieved, private, creative forces can assert themselves and produce "original," inspired texts. In such an ideal writing environment, plagiarism would become impossible, because writers would become so isolated from other writers that they would not have any significant opportunity to gain access to their thoughts or ideas. The best way to avoid plagiarism, according to this model, would be to take every conceivable measure to ensure that

writers are never poisoned with the taint of the corrupting social world that exists outside their purified, individual self.

Twentieth Century

Expressionists

Although they do not value highly the mentalistic aspects of writing borrowed from the scientific epistemology of cognitive processing theory, contemporary expressionists or neo-romantic theorists tend to exalt the role of the individual, creative author which serves as the focal point for such cognitive processes. Paradoxically, although strictly logical or rational modes of thought are not promoted by the expressionists, their stress on the internal thought processes of the mind reflects an emphasis on the power of logical, rational dialectic to arrive at certainty. Flourishing in a political climate that favored individualism and "doing your own thing," such expressionists as Donald Murray and Peter Elbow advocate strategies such as "freewriting" "looping," and "finding one's own center" as methods of producing more creative--and therefore more valid--texts. As Murray writes in "The Interior View: One Writer's Philosophy of Composition,"

My view of writing is frankly personal. The interior view of the writing act reveals that writing is an individual search for meaning in life. As I have written

about the process of writing, my main resource has been myself (7).

Such an approach, while seemingly progressive at the time, is also clearly resistant to collaborative writing strategies. By advocating a clear stage of self-isolation, these theorists reify the self and assume that such a maneuver is essential to the inventive process. Furthermore, this perspective implies that the self must in some way be protected against premature exposure to corrupting social forces at some distinct stage of the writing process. Only after this reified self has been accessed through heuristic strategies designed to allow its expression can writers reach out to the audience and the larger social world.

Thus, the expressionistic perspective relegates social forces to no more than a supporting role. Modeling, or any form of *imitatio*, is largely exiled from the invention stage. Such a development is significant because writing--from the collaborative perspective--amounts to a continuous drama of invention. That is, if the writing process is indeed infinitely recursive and permits intervention of audience and other social forces at every moment, leaving *imitatio* out of the invention stage is tantamount to leaving it out of the writing process altogether. Justifying such a drastic step by claiming it is necessary for "letting writers find themselves" or "developing their own voice" is a circular argument.

Many of the difficulties inherent in the expressionistic perspective result from the fact that expressive discourse as a mode or genre is largely a compound of conflicting philosophies and viewpoints. In fact, as Jeanette Harris points out in Expressive Discourse, the entire "genre" may in fact be nothing more than a loosely-assembled amalgam of mutually contradictory concepts. According to Harris, the contradictions inherent in what has been called "expressive discourse"--for example, the necessity of promoting an "audience-less" attempt to communicate with an audience--disqualify expressive writing from being a valid, unified category of discourse. This incongruity is further exacerbated by the fact that the term "expressive" is used in many different, often conflicting senses to denote a wide range of discourse. Seen in historical perspective, the "expressive movement" appears to be only a passing moment of intellectual fashion embedded in contextual political forces, rather than a revival of a much-neglected mode of rhetoric with its intellectual roots in Plato.

Perelman

Despite such problems with the expressive perspective, concern for the personal, subjective elements of rhetoric have shown increasing strength during the twentieth century. Such rhetorical theorists as Burke, Toulmin, and Chaim Perelman have stressed the subjective aspects of communication in their

efforts to break down boundaries between rhetoric and logic such as those imposed by Ramus and Descartes. A major effect of these reformulations has been to restore rhetoric and argumentation to a level of respect roughly equivalent to dialectic and logic. Perelman is especially insightful in this regard, stating in The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument that "the dialectical method is thinking in dialogue form" (53). In making this equivalence, Perelman does not imply that rhetorical argumentation is only a defective form of dialectical reasoning. As Zyskind says:

For the new rhetoric [that of Perelman], not logic but the quality of audience is prior. . . . If rhetoric were a mere counterpart of formal logic [or dialectic] and not complementary to it then the standard of rhetoric could be the establishment of what is probable or has verisimilitude. The standard here, however, in the new view is not truth. It is the adherence of the judge (x).

The significance of declaring rhetoric "complementary" rather than a "counterpart" is to elevate rhetoric to the same level of epistemological respect as dialectic. As complements, one is as indispensable and reliable as the other.

The insights of theorists such as Perelman differ from those of the expressionistic scholars in the primacy given to the shaping influences of social forces at all stages of the rhetorical act. For Perelman, this ever-present audience is

represented in his concept of the "Universal Audience." This concept can be understood as a basic tenet of a reasoning process that transcends a search for ideal, ultimate truth. Instead of taking this truth--which some expressionists imply can best be arrived at through isolated cognition--as the foundation of argumentation, Perelman urges rhetors to take the consensus opinions of this universal audience as the point of departure for their reasoning. And one of the best ways to generate and synthesize this consensus is to embody at every stage of the writing process as many qualities of this audience as possible.

Social Constructionists

Social constructionists such as Bruffee, Bartholomae, Charles Bazerman and Patricia Bizzell develop and amplify the importance of consensus in generating knowledge. To a considerable extent, the scholarship of this group represents a revival of the original sophistic view of rhetoric. Like the sophists, this group of theorists stress the contingent nature of knowledge and truth. They also advocate a more democratic view of rhetoric by implying that no one version of truth should necessarily occupy a privileged position in all contexts. Such a position makes possible true collaboration in the classroom by raising the value placed on the discourse of students to an

enhanced level of respectability, as well as politically empowering them.

Unlike the sophists, however, the social constructionists clearly imply that students' realm of discourse is at least contextually inferior to that inhabited by the academic community. Within the social constructionist model, writing teachers' primary responsibility is to assimilate students into "academic discourse," and away from their original community. While these efforts toward assimilation are presented with the explicit motive of empowering students, students may have very little recourse--other than dropping out of the academic realm entirely--if they do not wish their previously learned language skills to be so assimilated.

The social constructionists' position also implies an even more fundamental distrust of language than that expressed by the original sophists. In its most extreme form, social constructionist thought shades into the anti-foundationalism expressed by Richard Rorty in his Philosophy as the Mirror of Nature (even though he denies this similarity), in which language can be used to frustrate or obscure meaning just as easily as it can attempt to communicate this meaning. Such a suspicious perspective seems antithetical to the air of trust and cooperation essential to successful collaborative writing.

By moving in this direction, the social constructionists lend support to Derridean efforts to grant legitimacy to writing

as a form of life in its own right rather than as an inferior derivative of other forms of discourse (such as speech). In this view, writing is not required to define itself in terms of other ways of knowing, and is thus freed of the "metaphysics of presence" in which words are expected to signify a higher Platonic ideal. Thus, not only has "probable" reasoning been granted equal legitimacy with "certain" dialectic, but writing itself--and theoretically, at least, collaborative writing--has been granted equal status with other forms of symbolic action.

Neo-Sophists

Represented by such composition theorists as Sharon Crowley and Susan Jarratt, and such philosophers as John Poulakous, the neo-sophists attempt to restore to legitimacy the most basic tenets of the original sophists. In so doing, the historical line of development which leads through the valorizing of the reified soul or self is bypassed. Among the more relevant points stressed by this group of scholars are the epistemic qualities inherent in writing which produce knowledge through collaboration of writers working within a social context, rather than uncovering it in an objectifying sense.

The single most significant implication of this epistemological point of view is that the signifier and the signified are not separated, but are instead unified within the

same symbol system. This perspective is buttressed by such communication theorists as Susanne Langer, who argues in Philosophy in a New Key that because the act of understanding is inextricably bound up in the interplay of the complex symbol system of writer-reader-text, truth and meaning are best reached by immersing oneself in the social world in which language is fashioned on a continuing, collaborative basis. Thus, the epistemic or knowledge-generating power of writing is stressed over its ability to uncover this knowledge. Writers and texts then become an interactive component--along with the reader--in the creation of knowledge, rather than inert tools to be manipulated by discrete, isolated factors in the rhetorical equation.

Such an epistemological stance has crucial political consequences. If writing instructors are no longer envisioned as guardians of a secret (or sacred) hidden truth, then the distance maintained between teachers and students narrows considerably. Instead of being at opposite ends of a spectrum--one end on guard against plagiarism while the other tries to "get away with something," both students and teachers are cast as approximate co-partners in the generation of knowledge. Thus, one of the potential causes of regarding teachers as enemies has been neutralized, and students can move closer toward conceiving of their instructors as allies--or even collaborators--in the construction of knowledge.

Once fully recognized, such a perspective allows all members of the classroom to assume the role of collaborators rather than adversaries. This fundamental shift frees up what is usually the most experienced writer in the classroom--the teacher--to serve as an agent working for the generation of knowledge rather than restricting him or her to the more limited role of transmitter or guardian of pre-established truth. As both James Britton and Mike Rose have pointed out, such a shift also tends to reduce the level of anxiety or writing apprehension present in students, since they no longer need to be quite so concerned about uncovering the "wrong" truth.

The neo-sophists also transcend both Platonic and Aristotelian rhetoric by, as Poulakous points out, shifting their emphasis more toward the realm of the possible away from the Platonic realm of the ideal and the Aristotelian realm of the actual. Such a shift has profound implications for the development of a fully developed democratic and collaborative writing classroom. If all realms of discourse are ultimately expressions of a possible, then none of these realms should legitimately be advanced as more actual (and therefore privileged) against any of the others within the context of the classroom--unless certain privileged political values are granted. To grant such privileges, however, works against the grain of American democratic ideals. A fairer, more egalitarian perspective would be one which allows all rhetorical

perspectives to be arrayed across a level, collaborative playing field which grants equal epistemological value to a wider range of discourse.

The ultimate development of the initial sophistic assessment of the relative and contingent nature of all truth leaves the teaching of writing with several thorny issues. The final and most difficult of these issues is determining which discourse will be used by all these collaborators, or if none can indeed be privileged above the others. In other words, might it be possible to regard all forms of discourse as complements rather than counterparts of each other? Theory and practice appear to be in conflict on this point. In actuality, no absolute logical or historical basis may exist to support the primacy of any one discourse community--for example, "academic discourse"--over other communities, but political considerations nevertheless make the implementation of such a conclusion impossible on the pragmatic level. That is, one of the major reasons that the university system exists is to nurture a highly educated discourse community; therefore, the academic system itself is unlikely to incorporate radical changes that may undercut the prestige attached to its own peculiar realm of discourse. Consequently, the pedagogical effectiveness or theoretical soundness of such techniques as collaborative writing may ultimately be subordinate to political concerns.

Conclusion

My interpretation of the history of rhetoric leads me to conclude that the knowledge generated by rhetoric, probable reasoning, and social forces has been de-valued unfairly and unwisely in comparison to that produced by logic, dialectic, and the individual mind. In reality, philosophical and rhetorical perspectives which lend sanction to the value of socially based contingent, probable reasoning are not recent developments; such perspectives actually predate the Platonic or expressive perspectives which promote isolation from social forces at one or more stages of the writing process.

Definitions of imitation, originality, and plagiarism have also undergone significant evolution and alteration throughout the course of intellectual history. Most important, histories of such apparently familiar concepts as "imitation" are quite complex. On the whole, these histories lend sanction to the primacy of social and contextual forces in the fashioning of rhetorical acts. The long, honorable history of imitation--dating back to the pre-Socratics and Aristotle--should no longer be downplayed. Because collaborative writing techniques depend so heavily on exposure to and selective imitation of models made available through social interaction, teachers should become more aware of this rhetorical heritage.

This chapter has applied an historical approach to issues broadly related to general theories of authorship and text production. Chapter three will apply a more contemporary and specific perspective to the elemental sub-terms that comprise our understandings of such global concepts, including "plagiarism" and "collaboration." The ultimate goal of this next chapter will be to re-define these terms in light of the historical perspectives presented in Chapter II. Thus, a return to this research project's starting point--definitions of key concepts--is now necessary.

CHAPTER III: DEFINITION OF ELEMENTAL TERMS

Introduction

Clarification and eventual resolution of the conflicts present in the zone of overlap between "collaboration" and "plagiarism" cannot occur until the elemental terms that comprise these more global concepts are redefined. These elemental terms--self, originality, authorship, and text--form the fundamental conceptual structure of the more global terms prominent in discussions of text attribution and ownership. However, many of these basic and familiar terms are sometimes discussed as if their precise meanings were clear across all contexts. By taking so much for granted, writing teachers may find themselves in perilous territory; accepted, unquestioned definitions may clarify some matters, but these same "common sense" definitions can also lead teachers astray on several key pedagogical points--especially when these definitions trend toward reductionism.

This chapter will present a brief survey of definitions of the elemental terms that stand at the core of this research project. Because of the complexity of these terms, no attempt at absolute comprehensiveness will be made; instead, the focus in this chapter will be on summarizing the prevailing definitions of these elemental terms *as they are most commonly formulated within the context of the writing classroom*, and

pointing toward helpful redefinitions of these terms. Such an appraisal is not only essential for providing new perspectives, but is also crucial for helping writing instructors and administrators differentiate more effectively between collaboration and plagiarism.

A secondary aim of this chapter is to offer one writing teacher's general perspective on the nature and scope of the problems caused by prevailing definitions of the elemental key terms under consideration. I will also offer preliminary recommendations for redefinitions and re-conceptualizations of these key terms. In formulating these recommendations, I will apply an internally consistent interpretive schema to a complex of concepts and theories. The overall intent is to provide a new perspective for examining major issues--particularly how to establish more workable boundaries between plagiarism and collaboration--associated with this research project.

The "Self": Brief Working Definition

From a common-sense perspective, the "self" can be defined in terms of isolation from the larger environment that provides the context within which a given individual functions. This internal self represents the private realm which is in some way distinct from the public world outside the self. According to the OED, this entity can be defined as:

That which in a person is really intrinsically he (in

contradistinction to what is adventitious); the ego (often identified with the soul or mind as opposed to the body); a permanent subject of successive and varying states of consciousness.

Thus, the self is postulated to be a sort of irreducible, incorporeal essence that makes each individual distinct from all other selves. According to this model, the self forms the core of our identity and the focal point of our awareness, and serves as the measuring stick against which we measure and appraise everything outside the boundaries of the self. The "self," therefore, is roughly equivalent to--and ultimately derived from--the Platonic "soul" in that it is granted an existence prior to significant forms of social interaction. The effects of this subsequent social interaction are restricted to exerting a modifying or shaping influence on a pre-existing entity.

Such a conception of the self as a distinct, identifiable entity has occupied a central role in the evolution of Western thought. As psychologist M. Brewster Smith writes in "Perspectives on Selfhood":

Selfhood . . . is a label for the critical features of the human condition, and over the millennia since people became self-consciously aware of their special place in the world it has been the prime puzzle . . . to which myth, religion, and philosophy have been addressed (1053).

Basically egocentric in emphasis, this perspective on the self can limit writers' access--at least at certain stages of the writing process--to key exigencies and shaping forces that would otherwise be available. Most significantly, a clear sense of the complex concept of audience as embodied in other selves can be denied the writer who is urged to "get in touch with your thoughts" before starting to write. Once the separate existence of this objectified, reified self is granted, writing teachers must seek ways of bringing this self into closer contact with the larger social environment that forms the boundaries of the self, and which will ultimately receive communication from this self. Eventually, such a process results in a discrete, completed product represented by the written text.

Such an objectification of the self--while offering the advantage of clearly delineating one end of the writing equation--also takes for granted the primacy of the communication model which postulates a sender, message, and receiver. The self, according to this model, is equivalent to the sender, and can be thought of as an irreducible essence which gives rise to communicative utterances in the form of discourse acts. Once a given discourse act is released into the larger social world that surrounds the sender, he or she essentially can relinquish control of this discourse. The self may be clearly expressed, but it may also be reduced to a discrete point in the communicative process, and may therefore no longer be

available for further involvement and interaction with either a text or the social context that surrounds the self. If this communicative model is accepted, some forms of recursiveness--such as interaction with other selves--are ruled out for at least some parts of the rhetorical equation, since some segments of this equation are already completed entities.

Components of the Self

A reformulation of the components of the self requires an attempt to construct explanatory models for its creation and development. The most direct way to ascertain exactly what creates the self is to reify the concept and then treat it as an axiom. With this approach, the need to break the concept down into its constituent parts disappears, since the self has no parts at all, but is instead a single entity. Such a position is held by few writing teachers at present, but this tendency to treat the self (or "soul") as some sort of spiritual, non-corporal, hidden entity has the potential to make analysis of its qualities and components very difficult. As Roy Baumeister explains in "How the Self Became a Problem: A Psychological View of Historical Research":

An abstract, hidden self is harder to know and define than is a concrete, observable self. Therefore, the belief in a real self that is hidden, that is not directly or clearly contained in one's actions, can be regarded as a critical complication of self-knowledge (165).

complication of self-knowledge (165).

Origin of the Self

As shown earlier in discussion of the British Romantics and the American Transcendentalists, conceiving of the self as essentially asocial in origin holds considerable political and ideological appeal--it conforms well to the American ideal of rugged individualism. In addition, this view of the self is ideologically consistent with the positivistic epistemology which is often dominant in the classroom environment. Such an epistemological system implies that individual students should first incorporate into their own cognitive domain tangible information from the "real world"--as transmitted from their teachers and other authoritative sources--before they begin to write. As a result of conformity to this instructional model, attempts to found conceptions of the self in social terms often meet resistance from opponents of such "radical" education theory. For example, we are warned by such scholars as Alan Bloom that any movement away from the conventional, teacher-centered classroom--a movement which collaborative techniques facilitate--can cause breakdowns in discipline and further erosion of students' "basic skills." Bloom argues in The Closing of the American Mind that "nature needs the cooperation of convention," because "Today's select students know so much less, are so much cut off from tradition, are so much slacker

intellectually, that they make their predecessors look like prodigies of culture" (51).

If advocates of collaborative learning wish to make significant headway toward validating their pedagogical techniques, they must develop ways to bypass or overcome such political and ideological opposition to less traditional "student-centered" approaches to teaching. Calling into question established definitions of such essential concepts as "self" is not enough; at some point, the next step of proposing and developing alternative definitions of these terms must also be taken. These alternative definitions should not only be in some way theoretically "superior," but should also lend themselves to improvements in actual classroom pedagogy.

George Herbert Mead's definition of the self is a good starting point for these re-definitions. According to Mead, "The self . . . is essentially a social structure, and it arises in social experience" (140). Mead also concludes that "it has been the tendency of psychology to deal with the self as a more or less isolated and independent element, a sort of entity that could exist by itself" (164). The remedy for this misconception, says Mead, is to conceive of the self not as a static entity, but rather as a process or activity: "Since it is a social self, it is a self that is realized in its relationship to others" (204). Susanne Langer extends Mead's emphasis on the fluid and active aspects of the self by arguing that "the conception of the 'self,' which is

usually thought to mark the beginning of actual memory, may possibly depend on this *process* of symbolically epitomizing our feelings" (124). Wayne Booth further develops this theme of symbolic action by arguing in Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent that the self is "essentially rhetorical, symbol exchanging, a social product in process of changing through interaction" (126).

Another issue that should be addressed is the ultimate source, nucleus, or catalyst for what we have been in the habit of calling the "self"--the core around which subsequent layers of "selfhood" coalesce, grow, and develop. An alternative perspective might be that no such catalyst exists at all; the core of a writer's identity may be better conceptualized as an expression of eternal change such as that promoted by Heraclitus, rather than as a constant. Mead sums up this perspective well:

The self is not something that exists first and then enters into a relationship with others, but it is . . . an eddy in the social current and so still a part of the current. It is a process in which the individual is continually adjusting himself in advance to the situation in which he belongs and reacting back to it (182).

Steps and Stages Through Which the Self Develops

If the point is granted that the self develops rather than appears, the next issue to be addressed is mapping out the stages by which this redefined self develops. A writing teacher's concept of the evolutionary processes of the self is somewhat related to the system of psychology which he or she grants primacy. Most currently popular systems, including those of Freud, Piaget, Kohlberg, and William Perry, chart the development of the self through several discrete stages. Taking a prescriptive view of any of these systems may cause writing teachers to view the evolution of the self as a process that must pass through a rigid set of invariant stages. If, on the other hand, these stages are viewed as a set of descriptive guidelines that vary from one specific instance to another, considerable flexibility can be maintained.

If writing teachers take a perspective more compatible with social learning theory, such as that formulated by the Russian scholars Luria and Vygotsky, they may see the self as an array of individual parts appropriated from the social world that surrounds the student writer. One function of the writing teacher under this rubric should be to demonstrate to the student ways to give voice to the many aspects of the self that lie un-integrated within the "mind" of the student. Vygotsky holds that the individual mind is never entirely isolated from environmental factors; instead, he argues that the mind is

actually created and given definition by a continuous interplay between the individual mind and the larger social environment existing outside this mind. According to Vygotsky, the self owes its very existence to the social realm, and continuous interplay between the individual and society forms and gives identity to the entity we call the "self." As Vygotsky says in Thought and Language:

The primary function of speech, in both children and adults, is communication, social contact. The earliest speech of the child is therefore essentially social. . . . We prefer to use the term 'communicative' for the form of speech that Piaget calls socialized as though it had been something else before becoming social. From our point of view, the two forms, communicative and social, are both social, though their functions differ (19).

Although Vygotsky himself notes important differences between his thought and that of Piaget, the two theorists' discrepancies are not as sharp as they may seem. While in Thought and Language Vygotsky was critical of Piaget's strong emphasis on the epigenetic nature of his developmental scheme, this criticism was based largely on Vygotsky's reading of Piaget's early works--which were indeed almost exclusively oriented toward a biological point of view. In his later and more important works, Piaget modified his initial positions to place more emphasis on the social environment in which the

developing individual mind is embedded, thereby making his positions more compatible with those of Vygotsky. As Rita Vuyk points out in Piaget's Genetic Epistemology:

When "social" development became fashionable in psychology, the interest in egocentrism was revived. With it came the misinterpretation that the Piagetian child is "completely" egocentric and gradually or in stages loses his egocentrism The question always was "to what extent" children are egocentric and . . . "in what situations" (359).

Overall, it is unfair to Piaget to conclude--as many writers do--that his system of psychology sanctions egocentricity. While this system does indeed stress the necessarily egocentric component of "inner speech," the ultimate source of this "inner speech" is not in some dark recess of the individual, isolated mind; instead, this interior dialogue develops only in close contact with the social environment. Therefore, when writing teachers call on students to project this inner speech outward in the form of writing, both Piaget and Vygotsky seem to imply that they are not asking the students to perform an unnatural act of distortion. On the contrary, when writers are asked to write, they are being asked to turn their attention outward *once again*, thus returning some of these socially created thoughts to their original realm of operation: the social world.

However, a view of the self such as that held by Vygotsky holds dangers as well as promise. If the "self" is indeed broken down into smaller, socially derived parts, what ultimately becomes of the basic concept of students' responsibility for their texts? If individual students are no longer held solely accountable for the quality of their responses to writing assignments, will a corresponding erosion of individual duty and responsibility also occur? The answer to these questions might be to postulate a broader, more inclusive social self that has its parts spread out among several members of the discourse community. If what has been traditionally thought of as the socially isolated, individual "self" is no longer conceived of as a bundle of selves integrated within a given individual, but is instead conceptualized as a collection of selves spread out among several individuals, the self that has previously served as the locus of responsibility for the creation of texts can be reconstituted as a more social or communal concept. More specific pedagogical strategies for dealing with these alternative perspectives will be discussed in chapter four.

Self: Redefinition

A comprehensive re-definition of the self might build from a fundamentally different epistemological base than what has most commonly prevailed in the writing classroom. This new base could be conceived of as being composed largely of

social forces instead of individual or isolated factors; rather than building upon a pre-existing, non-social core, the self could be postulated to owe its genesis and existence to social forces. Additionally, the self could--in tagmemic terms--be conceived of as more wave than particle; it may constantly be in flux, and in the process of evolution. Working successfully with this shifting entity toward the goal of generating socially aware discourse requires acknowledgement of its essentially social nature. The self might also be reformulated to designate a multiplicity of perspectives rather than a single, atomistic entity.

Overall, the self may be conceptualized as having its origin, definition, and *meaning* in the interaction of the individual with the social. In fact, the "individual" mind can be considered as intrinsically social, and therefore need not be treated in complete isolation from this social realm. Instead, the "self" can be regarded as one special, local manifestation of the social, rather than as an entity which is in some way antithetical to the larger social world. Such a conception is consistent with our newly emerging knowledge that language abilities are constructed from an early age by interaction with parents, siblings, and other members of discourse communities. And since language is a major factor in construction of the "private" self--and in our awareness of this self--the fact that language is created through interaction with others lends

further support to a social view of the self. As Wittgenstein points out in Philosophical Investigations, any sort of "private language" is ultimately impossible (275). Thus, even the language which makes awareness of the self possible can be conceived of as socially based.

Originality

Often, originality is considered to be one of the more highly valued qualities produced by the self. At the present historical moment, originality generally carries a positive flavor; texts that are honored with the label "original" are considered superior to texts which are regarded as mere copies or imitations. "Original" implies that a text contains an unprecedented authorial contribution, since the origin of this contribution lies within a writer's distinctive self. Because this self is not only to some extent socially isolated, but also in some way distinct from what has previously existed, and thus to some extent original, it is theoretically invested with the capacity to produce truly original texts.

Additionally, originality tends to be promoted as a worthy ideal in itself; if writers can achieve a high degree of originality in their works, these works will often be deemed worthy by virtue of this fact alone--quite apart from such factors as readability, stylistic elegance, and structural integrity. In fact, a strong correlation is often implied between

the level of originality present in a text and its worthiness. As Daryl Anderson writes in "Writing as Illusion":

Critics of writing often perceive honesty and originality in excellent writing and dishonesty and triteness in shabby writing, but *honesty* and *originality* only very imprecisely describe the qualities in question, which more properly are the appearance of honesty and the appearance of originality (5).

Seen from this perspective, even the appearance of originality has a value in and of itself. However, as Thomas McFarland points out in Originality and the Imagination, such attempts to conceive of originality as a discrete, measurable quality rather than a complex, fluid relationship can be questioned:

The conception of originality is constantly and unavoidably involved in paradox. That involvement is essential, not accidental. It stems from the larger paradox of human existence, whereby we always hear and necessarily respond to the ineradicably conflicting claims of our social natures on the one hand and our individual natures on the other (31).

In addition to a tincture of virtue, "originality" as popularly conceived also incorporates the ideal of progress--works created in the present must in some way surpass what has been written before. Otherwise, the need to create new

works would dissolve--a successful writer could simply imitate the ancients, and produce an endless series of slightly modified copies of already esteemed texts. The concept of originality also allows writers to maintain a teleological view of intellectual history--work in writing continues to display progress, and only under the current intellectual climate has the present high level of quality work been possible.

Such a teleological view of writing is not entirely without foundation. Many topics are likely to change over time, and therefore so should the treatments and perspectives directed toward these topics. However, no virtue naturally inheres to denying oneself--or one's students--access to the perspectives of other writers at any stage of the writing process. In fact, de-emphasizing at some point the traditional stress on "originality" might allow composition instructors to better accommodate what appears to be a contemporary shift in intellectual history away from an individualistic, expressionistic perspective toward the more social and contextual theories of learning represented by such scholars as the social constructionists and neo-sophists.

On the other hand, the traditional definition of "originality" does retain several distinct advantages. A fresh and unprecedented appraisal applied to a subject can enable writers to break free from misleading or debilitating perspectives and ideologies that dominated their thoughts

before this appraisal. In breaking from these cognitive shackles, writers are also sometimes apparently freed to develop their own distinct "voices" or perspectives. Such idealized perspectives might form worthwhile targets or goals to strive toward in the writing classroom, especially if one of the major goals of a specific writing class is to promote the ability to work with fresh, divergent ideas and perspectives.

Helping students develop complex modeling strategies based on greater awareness of the classical technique of *imitatio* and more contemporary definitions of originality might also be productive. In the classical view, "originality" was most often formulated as a constant interplay between writers' "original genius" and the powerful shaping influence of earlier authors. In Young's Conjectures on Original Composition, such imitation is disparaged as a means of composition. According to Young:

A spirit of imitation hath many ill effects. . . . First, it deprives the liberal and politer arts of an advantage which the mechanic enjoy: in these, men are forever endeavoring to go beyond their predecessors; in the former, to follow them. And since copies surpass not their originals, as streams rise not higher than their spring, rarely so high; hence, while arts mechanic are in perpetual progress and increase, the liberal arts are in the retrogradation and decay (53).

In addition to these faults, according to Young, a "spirit of imitation" leads writers to "counteract nature and thwart her design"; makes us "poor and proud," causes us to "think little and write much," and "gives us huge folios which are little better than more reputable cushions to promote our repose" (54).

Returning to the contemporary classroom, creating a set of conditions that would ensure the sort of "original" and unprecedented work idealized by Young--that is, writing purged of all traces of imitation--can be quite difficult. While retaining value as a perspective for working with texts, "originality" in itself is not always either possible or even desirable; trying to guarantee the absolute originality of a text can, under certain conditions, be counter-productive to writers' effectiveness by diverting their attention to the pursuit of impractical goals. Depending on the context of a particular rhetorical act, an almost purely "original" work can be markedly inferior in quality to a heavily imitative one. This message is not always clearly transmitted to students.

Sources of the Truly Original

Whatever virtues may be attached to the presence of originality in a text, speculations about the sources of this virtuous quality have a long history. Adding to Young's promotion of originality as virtue in itself, the English Romantics and the American Transcendentalists placed

considerable value on the role played by such sources of inspiration as The Muse and the Divine Afflatus in helping writers develop their own original voice. In general, originality has most often been portrayed as an elusive, mysterious force that by its very nature defies formulation. Many portrayals of these sources tend to promote the elusive, mysterious, and therefore noble power of the isolated individual to produce an original text--as opposed to the tendency of social forces to produce "easy," predictable, and therefore less valuable imitations.

More tangible and pedagogically manageable sources of "originality" have also been isolated. Modeling is one possibility, but the preferred types, patterns, and degrees of modeling have never been clearly determined. One of the more pervasive approaches to modeling exposes students to texts on the principle that they will thereby learn to imitate and then replicate effective prose styles. The most obvious problem with this modeling strategy is that the models presented for imitation are most often seen by the students only in completed, polished, and often forbidding form, with few clues present for deducing the processes by which originality was used to create such effective texts. Ideally, this process of studying models to incorporate the strategies and techniques used by "good writers" should enable students to model their own writing behaviors more closely on those of highly skilled authors; sometimes,

however, student writers become frustrated, tense, and even apprehensive about their inability to generate polished prose as readily as the masters they are being urged to emulate.

Location of the Boundaries Between the Original and the Non-Original

Identifying the sources of originality is complicated by the difficulty inherent in establishing clear, distinct boundaries between the original and the non-original. Most likely, no distinct, field-independent boundaries exist between the pure original and the impure imitation; the former is largely a hypothetical abstraction while the latter may be best understood as a new combination of previously existing imitations. Nevertheless, one common response to this issue has been to draw boundaries with language in the form of written statements defining plagiarism, spelling out honor codes, and establishing guidelines for setting course policies. As demonstrated in chapter one, a major problem with these written guidelines is that the very tools--language and social conventions--used to draw boundaries are susceptible to the same distortions displayed by these unclear definitions in the first place. Therefore, attempts to clarify these matters often inadvertently help perpetuate the same flaws they are intended to address.

Most likely, the boundaries between originality and imitation can be defined accurately only in the contextual terms

that apply to specific writing situations. Trying to define the boundaries in abstract, theoretical terms that hold true in all cases may be impossible; functional definitions--in terms of what individual texts do or in how they are most often manipulated in specific instances--might prove to be the best approach to defining these terms. For example, one issue that should be addressed is whether or not a text betrays an attempt or intention to misrepresent itself to the reader. Only by looking at the text in its most comprehensive sense--and at the entire rhetorical complex of which this text is a part--can such questions be answered productively.

The measures intended to bring about "original" texts are highly evolved and complex. Often, writing teachers have attempted to ensure the production of original texts by to some extent isolating individual students--by urging them, for example, to find their center or "one true voice"--at some stage of the writing process. After adequate development and refinement, this voice should enable the student to form and express original ideas. Aside from being of questionable pedagogical value, such an approach may be ultimately impossible. Because the individual self is best understood as a composite of several selves constructed during the course of social interaction, the only way to guarantee a pure, truly original self is to deny an individual all forms of social contact from birth.

But perhaps other, less drastic approaches to ensuring the production of truly "original" works are also possible. Along these lines, some teachers emphasize the importance of proper research methods and accompanying documentation forms in distinguishing their own work from that of others. The theory here seems to be that if writers can learn to recognize the differences between "original" and "borrowed" material, they will be less inclined to commit plagiarism. In keeping with this theory, considerable class time can be spent on reviewing documentation forms, classifying sources, filling out index cards, and the like--in other words, becoming more fully aware of the surface features which signify the influence of others on student work. If too much emphasis is placed on such research conventions, students may conclude that these surface signs are indeed the crucial determinants of originality.

The major problem with this approach to promoting originality is that it fails to distinguish between "knowing that" and "knowing how." That is, students are often asked to memorize a great deal of information regarding how to work with sources without being allowed sufficient opportunity to apply this information immediately within a suitable context. Learning theorists have repeatedly demonstrated the necessity of keeping theoretical instruction and more practical application of this instruction in close chronological proximity. For the "traditional" term paper, however, the lag time between

classroom instruction on these points and actual application to the students' own writing can be quite long--perhaps most of a semester.

Probably the only effective way to internalize the basic distinctions between "original" and "stolen" material is for students to actually deal with specific examples of these materials in valid rhetorical situations. In other words, methods should only be taught in a meaningful context that allows writers to apply these abstract methods to concrete writing situations. As most teachers already know, reviewing "proper documentation form" and the like will often serve only to put a student's final product in correct typographical form, while not necessarily serving to give students any long-lasting insights into the nature of originality on the one hand, and the social construction of knowledge on other hand. Students need to be made as aware of this fact as the teachers are.

Originality: Redefinition

Because the self which is often postulated as the source for originality is ultimately socially based, "originality," like the self, can be conceptualized as having its genesis in the social rather than the individual. All individual components of a text--including language and the combinations of language commonly called ideas--have pre-existed in their individual form before these building blocks were re-combined into a new,

creative work. "Originality," therefore, is an expression of relationship rather than a tangible, static entity that can be quantified. Writing teachers should not allow the apparently unavoidable, yet somewhat hobbling, tendency to label and reify a concept to mislead them into assuming that "originality" can be weighed, measured, and tabulated as if it were a discrete, tangible force.

Seen from this perspective, the degree of originality present in a text is not contingent on its agreement or divergence from an ideal state of pure, untainted creativity, but rather on the degree of novelty exhibited in the combination of its parts into its overall structure. Relationship and context are the core concepts here; "originality" is a global, large-scale feature that can be assessed only by taking into account the overall context of the rhetorical situation. As is the case with the self, "originality" is best considered as a wave or a binding energy rather than as a particle.

Authorship

"Authorship" has normally implied agency, and, by extension, a separation between the author and the text that is authored. In The Concept of Authorship, Lisa Ede summarizes this sense of agency by defining an author as "One who struggles with and through language to create something new, a text that embodies, however imperfectly, the writer's intentions." Ede

also states that "The word 'authorship' . . . reflects an appropriate connection between authors and their texts" (2).

A certain mystique is often attached to the concept of authorship--being an author is hard work, and this "hard work" also entitles the author to claim a certain air of prestige. Often, "authors" are thought of as a somewhat superior group, by virtue of the fact that they have attained their exalted status, while non-authors have not. Authors who work alone have been an especially honored caste since they evidently worked harder than co-authors to produce their texts. And, according to a perspective that values "mental discipline" and "intellectual rigor," people who work harder at their tasks are often considered inherently nobler than people who use an "easier" way--in this case, collaboration with other authors--to achieve these ends.

Because they have not yet achieved a suitable level of competency, students in a writing classroom are often considered to be merely apprentice authors rather than true professionals. However, authorship might best be conceptualized as a process rather than as a static state of being; that is, people are continually at work on the projects they are authoring--at no point is an author ever a completed fact, any more than a text can at any time be said to be irrevocably complete. Such advocates of "critical reading" such as Wayne Booth have argued convincingly that all elements of a

text--including the inferred author--are re-created in a different incarnation every time a text is read. From this perspective, all literate individuals (including, one hopes, students enrolled in writing courses) are entitled to participate in the craft of authorship at almost any time simply by attempting to produce a text. The quality or literary value of the text--while certainly important--should be a secondary consideration to the attempt itself.

Perhaps authors are best conceived of as agents who postpone closure--false, premature or otherwise--on their evolving texts for as long as is prudent or realistic within a specific rhetorical situation. For example, applying grades to an assignment might be delayed until the teacher is reasonably certain that *effective* closure is being reached or approximated, and that the appropriate time has indeed arrived for such closure. Ultimately, authorship may imply an infinitely recursive, *active* interaction with the exigencies and constraints that shape and give definition to an evolving text, rather than as an abstract, detached force that can be reified into a discrete subject for analysis and classification.

Authorship can also be understood as the result of the interplay within the writer between the forces of original "true genius" and a universal and often productive tendency to imitate other writers. Defining the degree to which each individual writer should be aware of this dynamic interplay is a complex

project. Complicating the situation still further is the question of how many and what kind of internalized social voices are involved in the construction of the "true genius" within all writers, and how all these discordant voices can be integrated successfully--or whether they in fact must *always* be so integrated.

If originality is redefined in more social terms, a re-definition of authorship also seems necessary. Traditionally, the term "author" has been applied to the primary *individual* source of originality in a given text. As Lunsford and Ede point out in Singular Texts / Plural Authors:

Because the concept of authorship as an inherently individual activity is so central to our Western cultural tradition, it appears at first sight transparent, obvious . . . especially, perhaps, to writing teachers (73).

But if originality is no longer thought of in exclusively individual, private terms, no solitary primary author can be assumed to lurk behind every text; in fact, the definition of originality that coalesces within the context of this research project demands a reformulation of "authorship" as a more social and somewhat diffuse enterprise.

Just as originality is more a functional than it is a static entity, so is the relationship of authors to their texts. This author-to-text relationship should be allowed to fluctuate from one rhetorical context to another. One writing situation might

require a strongly paternalistic relationship between the writer and the text, while another might require a more distant and detached communal atmosphere. Writers may also need to bring to bear different author-text relationships at different stages in the writing process; in the early stages, they may need to distance themselves from the text, while maintaining the option of closing up this distance later in the writing process.

Other possible author-to-text relationships should also be considered. As collaborative authorship continues to gain prominence and respect--and Lunsford and Ede claim in Singular Texts that it already is "a fact of life" in the seven professional associations they studied (72)--new metaphors might be used to represent the special demands of this form of writing. Both writing teachers and students should avoid the trap of becoming servants to their own metaphors; the familiar paternalistic metaphor could easily lead authors to force texts to be "obedient" to their individual demands, rather than serving as a framework for finding the most powerful and effective way to formulate this relationship.

The balance and dynamics of this interplay of social voices, as well as the rules by which it operates, are yet be fully worked out within the specialized realm of writing instruction. Within the composition classroom, collaborative writing techniques such as peer editing, co-authored papers, team writing projects, and informal conversations with

colleagues can give writers a more tangible and fully embodied vision of what it means to be a socially constructed author. For example, in Invention as a Social Act, Karen Burke Lefevre has characterized invention--that most "expressive" and "creative" segment of the writing process--as a social phenomenon. Such a position is a clear departure from the familiar position that tends to separate invention from the larger process of composition. If even this most "private" stage of the writing process can be framed in collaborative terms, then perhaps discussion of subsequent, more explicitly social stages can be as well.

The Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin further extends this theoretical perspective. In "The Problem of Speech Genres" and The Dialogic Imagination, Bakhtin conceives of the process of authorship as a continual interplay between the individual writer and the social world; language is where the word and the world meet. But since the apparently "individual" mind owes its ultimate origin in an internalized social dialectic that is constantly subject to flux and modification, no distinct, inviolable boundary exists between the public and the private. The "private" only appears private; in reality this realm is only a restricted, temporary snapshot of the public realm from which it is derived. According to Bakhtin, writing teachers should work along the frontier between this small snapshot of the public and the broader public itself to teach their students a

new sense of authorship that strikes a balance between the "inner world" of the student mind and the "outer world" of the social environment.

Bakhtin's concepts of "heteroglossia" and the "polyphony of language" reflects his contention that all discourse is essentially a shuttling forth between the "private" and the social, and that the basic components of communication can best be comprehended as an aggregate of differentially focused social forces. Thus, according to Bakhtin, discourse should not be conceived of as an attempt by a socially isolated writer to communicate with a social audience--all aspects of the rhetorical situation are ultimately social in nature.

Bakhtin's point that language represents the intersection of the public and the private is crucial. The words comprising a text are like two-sided coins that incorporate essential portions derived from both writer and reader; consequently, in order to communicate effectively, writers must be equally aware of both their own stance in a given rhetorical situation, and the stance of their readers. Thus, in Bakhtin's system, the perspective of the individual, "private" writer is not given priority over the complex perspectives held by the social, public world. All these perspectives are in fact aspects of the comprehensive public world.

Michel Foucault agrees with Bakhtin that text and authorship are concepts situated entirely in the social realm;

thus, attempts to attribute the production of a text to an isolated individual would seem to be both technically incorrect and pedagogically ineffective. According to Foucault, the process of authorship can never occur without an essential contribution of social factors in the form of historically derived political and ideological forces.

In Foucault's view of how writing takes shape, the concept of individual authorship of text ultimately disappears. Instead, texts are envisioned as evolving through a complex process of social interaction that can best be analyzed in terms of depersonalized historical forces that transcend the limited personal histories represented by individual agents. Since an individual author is inherently situated in a historical context, trying to deny these historical forces by postulating some form of ahistorical authorial agency will create problems in the form of insufficient awareness of the shaping power of audience and other social forces.

Foucault's emphasis on larger-scale historical currents in the production of discourse raises crucial questions of responsibility and accountability; if a given discourse act cannot be attributed to a single individual, what happens to ethics in language? Who must ultimately take responsibility for the production of a text, and consequently, its message, effect, and moral value? According to Foucault, however, such questions are not of crucial importance, for if texts are created

only by the impersonal currents of history, every member of a discourse community ultimately shares responsibility for the creation of all discourse produced by the "individual" authors who make up this community. While persuasive in theory, such a conclusion poses problems for the day-to-day operation of the writing classroom, which is often deeply embedded in the very political and ideological structures that Foucault's system tries to deny. These problems will be addressed in greater detail in the concluding sections of this research project.

Authorship: Redefinition

Authorship may best be redefined in terms of activity and relationship rather than as a static entity or endpoint. Seen from this perspective, "authorship" can be thought of as an integral part of the entire rhetorical complex; consequently, any redefinition of the concept should avoid reifying it as a detached, elemental force immune to recursive, contextual, and historical forces. Like originality and the self, the complex of authorship may be conceptualized as socially based. One possible advantage of collaborative writing techniques is that they offer abundant opportunities for both student writers and instructors to enter into this highly fluid and constantly evolving rhetorical complex as it evolves.

Fully acknowledging this redefinition makes the persistent glorification of the isolated writer working alone

seem unwarranted. As Ede reminds us in The Concept of Authorship: An Historical Perspective, "this concept [of individual authorship] that seems so obvious and necessary to us is a relatively recent invention" (3). A broader-based, more historical perspective implies that no matter how determined writers may be to achieve the rarified state of individual authorship, as long as they attempt to produce a text, social forces will continually intrude into all facets of the rhetorical act.

Text

"Text" can be understood as a particular, and restricted, configuration of symbols that comprises some sort of meaningful structure. Most commonly, this configuration has been thought of as almost exclusively written, and in some sense autonomous from the authorial forces that produced it. But in her recent Rescuing the Subject: A Critical Introduction to Rhetoric and the Writer, Susan Miller defines "textuality" as

The concatenation of texts that have accumulated and formed discourse communities over time, [and] has provided us with this metaphor of the writing self, who is not predetermined to be either inconsequential or an author (16).

Such a socially and historically conscious perspective is typical of contemporary formulations of textual concerns, many of

which present a more expansive vision of the essential features of a "text" than is permitted by confining definition of the term to a strictly graphic sense.

If, on the other hand, one employs the most straightforward communicative model that envisions acts of communication as direct, linear transactions along the axis, writer>text>reader, the function of a given text may be limited to communicating the thoughts of writers (via the text they generate) as clearly as possible to readers at the other end of the communicative arrow. In such a definition of "text," the symbolic value of a given configuration is crucial. Implied in this symbolic value is the principle that a text must represent some deeper, underlying reality. In this sense, most conceptions of text can be classified as what Richard Rorty calls "foundational"; that is, the configuration of symbols that comprise a given text is presumed to be grounded in another configuration--reality--that is somehow behind or beyond words. Such a perspective reflects what Derrida calls the "metaphysics of presence"--the belief in the separate existence of a "hidden" reality quite apart from the symbol system (text) which represents it.

According to this communication model of language, the primary function of a text is to bridge the gap between reality and our knowledge of this reality. A text, then, is best described as primarily a functional entity--a distinct, detached

symbolic configuration designed to meet certain goals and objectives. James Kinneavy's Aims of Discourse represents one of the more fully developed embodiments of this perspective which focuses on the primacy of a text's objectives and purposes in shaping this text.

Such a perspective as Kinneavy's--while useful as a scheme for classifying discourse--also has the potential of leading instructors to view texts as completed artifacts rather than as evolving entities. If excessive attention is given to the ultimate purpose or endpoint of a text, such texts may be treated primarily as tangible objects that exist only near the final stage in which closure is reached. Since a text has no real existence until it is completed, this perspective can be read to imply that the finished product is the only tangible representation of a writer's work, and therefore the only material available for response and evaluation. This materialist perspective can also be used to lend support to the possibility that a textual "object" can be stolen or plagiarized in the same sense that other material possessions may be unfairly appropriated.

Reaching Closure in Text Evolution

Determining the point of closure for a published book or essay available for possible plagiarism seems quite clear-cut, since this endpoint has apparently been attained through the

very act of publication. In the most familiar classroom environment, determining when a text has reached closure and is therefore available for literary theft is also a fairly simple matter: final closure is reached when the paper assignment is due--a date set in advance by the instructor. Most often, the very form and structure of classroom assignments carry within themselves an inherent determination of what this point of closure will be and when it will be reached; closure will be achieved when the conditions of the assignment have been satisfied. Thus, the point of closure for a classroom essay is often preordained from the beginning of the writing task--only limited room has been left open for the writing process (including changes in the larger social context) to modify the point of closure.

The arbitrariness of this end point is apparent. Even when a given piece of student writing is turned in and therefore "finished," it remains to be read. Collaborative pedagogies permit the application of text-shaping processes at any point up to and even *past* the assignment due date--if student co-authors (including peer editors as well as writers working in pairs and teams) are permitted to respond critically to each other's work. Such a perspective effectively blurs the boundaries between reading and writing so that they become--as Bakhtin might phrase it--two sides of the same coin rather than distinct, separate processes. Seen from this perspective, closure would

be redefined as a stage significantly beyond its current endpoint.

The endpoint defined by this closure could be redefined in several ways. One possibility might be to measure closure at all times only against the background of the complete rhetorical context. From this point of view, the demands of a given audience--as enacted through the skillful use of collaborative learning techniques at all stages of the writing process--are conceptualized as integral components of the entire rhetorical act. The audience is then defined more as an amalgam of changing forces and demands rather than as a static, unchanging entity--a perspective which requires constant attention from the writer to audience demands.

In light of the socially based redefinition of the self, originality, and authorship, the artifact produced by the interaction of these forces--the text--must also be reformulated. Rather than limiting ourselves to an ahistorical stance toward the graphic presence of written characters on the page, this re-definition should include elements of the larger, more comprehensive rhetorical situation. Because originality and the presence of the self in a text should transcend a strictly elemental formulation, the end result of the fluid process of authorship can be defined in much more complex terms than what has been traditionally labelled a "text."

Most commonly, the writing teacher who sets the paper due date has been the primary judge of when a given piece of writing is complete--and has thus qualified as a text. But other criteria are also available to determine closure; for example, students themselves may apply their own criteria for closure and turn in their paper before the due date. Another possible variation might be to determine by class consensus when a given paper is "complete" or ready for grading. This consensus can be brought about by a combination of factors, including the teacher's expectations, the students' needs and abilities, and the constraints of the particular rhetorical situation in which the assignment is embedded. Such a complex perspective has the potential to make the classroom a more accurate mirror of writing conditions outside the academic community, since closure is not always determined neatly in the "real world."

Setting up clear, coherent criteria for closure in the writing classroom could be a productive exercise in itself. These criteria might include defining the point of closure as the point at which the triad of writer, text, and social context (including audience) has reached a good "fit," as well as setting standards for determining when this mesh has been achieved. Clarification of the parameters of all these variables can best be achieved by incorporating a clear awareness of the shape of the social context attendant to a specific rhetorical act. But no matter how carefully such considerations might be formulated,

these definitions must contain within themselves potential for fluctuation and adjustment as the rhetorical act evolves.

Relationship of Author to Text

As the text evolves toward an uncertain and undefined point of closure, abundant opportunities will arise for the forces of collaboration to enter into the writer-reader-text relationship. One sort of relationship might be more conducive to the production of "good writing" at one stage in the writing process, only to be replaced by a different relationship at a latter stage in the process. For example, a strong attitude of material possessiveness might be promoted as the consensus-derived point of closure draws near in the evolution of a text, while a much more "open family" approach might be more effective in the earlier drafting stages of a writing project. More specifically, what Peter Elbow calls in Writing Without Teachers the "believing game"--in which a number of possible options for development are considered--might be promoted early on while the "doubting game"--in which these various options are submitted to more critical scrutiny--might be reserved for the later stages of the writing process (176).

Crafting the steps by which writers move along this spectrum of authorial relationships can be difficult. The writing teacher is faced with the challenge of striking a balance between being too vague and permissive at one extreme and too

rigid and inflexible at the other. Certain invariant rules governing the relationship of author to text may exist, but these rules are almost certainly not comprehensive. Selected elements will inevitably fluctuate as the relationship itself fluctuates; in fact, such flux is probably essential to the very relationship itself. Early in the composing process, this relationship is typically not very paternalistic, but as the text develops and gains substance, the natural tendency of writers is often to become more and more possessive of "their" text. If collaborative writing techniques prove to warrant further emphasis and respect, clearer definition and description of these fluctuations must be worked out, and methods need to be developed which will enable instructors to overcome this tendency to objectify and reify the text.

Ultimately, at least within the highly specialized rhetorical classroom environment, the text should not be thought of as having any existence independent from the other major elements--writer, reader, and social constraints--of the rhetorical situation. The advantage of collaborative writing strategies is that these techniques should make this interdependency more accessible and apparent at every turn. For example, if constant student interaction during the evolution of a given text prevents closure from occurring prematurely, the strong role played by the various co-authors and collaborators in the shaping process of the text should allow the shaping

influences of both authors and text to merge almost imperceptibly.

Text: Redefinition

Perhaps the most useful definition of "text" within the writing classroom allows the concept to transcend what Derrida calls the "metaphysics of presence." That is, "text" can be conceived of as a complex configuration of symbols, author, and reader that never reaches a state in which reality is faithfully represented, but is instead permanently maintained by social forces in a state of flux. What has traditionally been called "closure," therefore, is never finally and irrevocably reached. Instead, an infinite number of textual combinations are possible within the context of a writing situation, and an infinite number of opportunities are also available for the intervention of social forces--including collaboration--into the construction of this text. As Susanne Langer has pointed out, the most primal use of language is to allow humans the opportunity to manipulate symbols, rather than to make these symbols "represent" something beyond language. Therefore, at least within the classroom environment, the concept of "text" should refer to a momentary instant of stasis in the constantly fluctuating chimera of the elements of the rhetorical situation. Outside the classroom--for example in the bound periodicals section of the

library--texts can reach a firmer stage of closure, and therefore remain somewhat more vulnerable to outright theft.

Under this definition, true "literary theft" of a text within the classroom becomes a much more difficult proposition. Because the text is a constantly shifting configuration always in process rather than a completed product, potential plagiarists who wish to be completely successful in their theft are faced with an enormously complex task. In order to carry out the most blatant form of "pure" plagiarism, a student would not only have to steal the hard copy of the text, but also the entire process that went into its construction, including invention, collaboration, and exposure to various audience--as well as the drafting, revising, and final editing. Such a daunting task seems beyond the capabilities of even the most determined student plagiarist. Of course, lesser degrees of plagiarism are quite possible within the writing classroom; these more common categories will be discussed later in this chapter. Before these categories are discussed, however, a redefinition of collaboration seems necessary.

Collaboration

"Collaboration" can best be defined within the enhanced social context outlined earlier as an approach to the teaching of

writing that makes explicit efforts to include more than one author and a diversity of social perspectives in the production of discourse. Such collaborative efforts can involve not only other students within the writing classroom, but also writing center tutors, as well as teachers acting in specific, clearly defined roles. More specifically, collaborative writing strategies include having students work in pairs or groups to draft, revise, and edit texts as opposed to requiring students to work alone and produce these texts entirely by "individual," socially isolated labor.

The very notion of starting from the baseline of individual authorship in attempts to define collaborative learning strategies has caused these techniques to be viewed with suspicion; once this baseline has been acknowledged, any departure from individual authorship into collaborative writing implies a lapse from the established ideal of how writing has been or even *should* be taught. Such suspicions lack persuasive power unless the writing produced by isolated individuals can be demonstrated to be superior to writing produced by students working collaboratively.

Most commonly, "collaboration" in writing classrooms implies that students are working together at an equal or nearly equal level on their assignments. These assignments can require several students to invent, draft, revise, edit, take responsibility for, and receive a grade on a single, common

document. However, absolute equality is very difficult to achieve in any context; writing classrooms are no exception. Fortunately, however, effective collaboration can occur between writers working at appreciably different levels of skill, experience, or cognition. In fact, many collaborative combinations are possible. These combinations include:

(1) Skilled teacher to skilled student: Most often occurs in advanced composition, upper division writing-emphasis classes, and graduate seminars, but can also take place in writing classes at any level--if the student-teacher relationship is properly formulated. In this scenario, because neither teachers nor students are working from an inordinately privileged position of power, all agents are able to work together as *roughly* equal partners in collaboration. Thus, the tendency to force one agent to carry the primary load in the production of a common text is averted.

(2) Skilled teacher to unskilled student: Most often occurs in effective freshman composition courses or in a writing center which employs well-trained or highly skilled tutors. This situation necessarily places the teacher in a privileged power position, and in primary control of the agenda in terms of making collaboration work effectively. Even here, however, some latitude in determining goals and objectives of the task

environment can be reserved for the student. The amount and type of this latitude is contingent on the specific writing task in progress, as well as the precise degree of skills possessed by the authorial agents involved.

(3) Unskilled teacher to skilled student: Can occur in ineffective composition classes in which the instructor has received insufficient training in the teaching of writing, or in the writing center when inexperienced tutors work with competent students. This scenario can lead to major problems including student boredom, resistance, or even hostility toward collaborative writing efforts. A chaotic writing situation in which cohesiveness and communication has broken down because of an instructor's lack of skill or familiarity with collaborative techniques can, when combined with accompanying student hostility, lead writing teachers to conclude that collaboration simply will not work under any circumstances. Such a conclusion can forestall any future attempts to use these techniques effectively. This collaborative scenario also holds great danger in terms of potential plagiarism, because the primary "gatekeeper" against the offense--the teacher or tutor--can, because of an inability to deal with complex issues of text attribution, become the inadvertent instigator of what is commonly referred to as plagiarism.

(4) Skilled student to less skilled student: Often displayed when peer tutors in the writing center work with inexperienced student writers and in effective peer editing groups in composition classrooms. Because of the rough equivalence of the writers involved in this tutoring situation--both in terms of writing skills and political agenda--this scenario has the best chance of promoting true collaboration and a sense of shared endeavor, and thus of creating what Bruffee calls a "discourse community."

Power Relationships

Because collaborative techniques are so heavily dependent on social considerations, any re-definition of collaboration cannot ignore the political ramifications of such a pedagogy. In Singular Text / Plural Authors, Lunsford and Ede cite five crucial "political" questions raised by increased use of collaborative writing techniques:

- (1) How should the teacher's role in any collaborative classroom be carried out?
- (2) What constitutes empowerment of students both as individuals and as members of a group, in a collaborative project or a classroom?
- (3) How does and should collaboration challenge or resituate the attitudes, values, beliefs, and ideological assumptions students and teachers

bring to the writing class?

(4) How do issues of gender, race, and class impinge on collaboration? To what extent can or should collaborative activities attempt to highlight or address inequities of gender, race, and class?

(5) How are and should power and authority be constituted or achieved in collaborative work?

(125).

Selecting the most effective power structures for the collaborative writing classroom is especially crucial. Within the framework of the student-teacher relationship, a relatively limited range of options is present. These options vary significantly only in degree: the teacher will likely retain the preponderance of power within the context of our educational system. As Bruffee says in "Collaborative Learning and the Conversation of Mankind," collaboration is "a form of indirect *teaching* in which the *teacher* [my italics] sets the problem and organizes the students" (638). Ideological resistance to changing such basic power structures as who sets the classroom agenda can be intense; individual teachers may reduce imbalances by introducing such techniques as shared or group grades, but basic classroom dynamics place limits on how far these adjustments can go within the existing educational system.

But within the framework of these limitations, considerable freedom remains. Writing instructors need not feel compelled to retain all the power in every collaborative writing situation; at times the teacher's editorial word may amount to a direct order, while at other times a truly balanced collaborative situation may develop in which the critiques of students and other audience components are given roughly equal status with the teacher's evaluations. Depending on the context of a specific rhetorical situation, the teacher's role in the collaborative classroom can range all the way from a "senior collaborator" whose word is final, to just another voice in the collaborative cacophony.

Within the general framework of peer group collaboration, a wide range of specific collaborative relationships is possible. According to the rhetorical demands of each given writing assignment, the instructor might structure a peer group along several different lines: in some cases, a group might be designed to allow certain members to assume primary control of the form and direction of the collaborative work at hand, while in other cases, a balance of collaborative forces might be promoted. Once again, the rhetorical demands and exigencies of a particular writing assignment should guide the selection of collaborative priorities.

A key question to be addressed in this area is just how concerned writing instructors need to be about inequalities of

power. Although one possible response might be to try to neutralize them, another equally valid reaction might be to accept and work with these inequalities. Guidelines for this sort of classroom environment have yet to be fully worked out, but a sliding scale of power distribution that strikes a balance among the many levels of collaboration within most classroom writing situations could be developed. The most important point, if one favors a collaborative system, is to exploit opportunities to bring to bear the social forces embodied by increased collaboration rather than to resist the inroads made by these forces.

Possible Theaters of Operation for Collaborative Writing

Collaborative writing can occur both inside and outside the formal writing classroom. Within the context of the traditional classroom environment, collaborative strategies can be applied through the use of such techniques as peer groups, peer critiques, and group writing projects. Such applications do not necessarily require the wholesale reconstruction or overturning of traditional classroom structures; but in many cases, such a fundamental restructuring is called for. One major pitfall that should be avoided here is automatically accepting as a given a cumbersome set of structures, and then attempting to add levels of "new and improved" structures upon this shaky edifice. The unfortunate effect of such classroom reconstruction could be an awkward hybrid set of assignments

that satisfies no one, while confusing and exasperating students who try to respond to them. More specific suggestions on how to strike this delicate balance will be presented in chapter five.

The writing center provides significant opportunities for restructuring of instructional strategies. A facility which originated primarily as a remedial "lab" serving as a supplement to standard classroom writing instruction, the writing center's role and functions within the academic environment have broadened steadily and been redefined. At present, many writing centers not only feature individualized instruction in the form of peer-tutoring, but also serve as a locus for writing all across the curriculum. Because of their essential peer-tutoring component, the instructional activities promoted by the writing center offer significantly different operating guidelines, as well as enhanced opportunities for collaboration; the presence of a tutor introduces a third element to the teacher-student relationship and transforms it into a triad. When skillfully managed, the dynamics of this triad work strongly toward facilitating effective collaboration. As a fairly new entity, the writing center also maintains a relatively high potential for significant redefinition. Consequently, the writing center offers the best long-term hope for changing the structure of assignments in order to move away from a strong emphasis on individual authorship toward greater accommodation of social factors such as collaboration and audience awareness.

Collaboration: Redefinition

A re-definition of collaboration should take into account the fact that such an approach to writing need not take its justification or definition from other models of the writing process. That is, collaborative writing strategies should not be portrayed as some sort of distortion, deviation, or perversion of other writing strategies--such as those which promote social isolation--but should instead be granted equal status with other models. Seen from this perspective, collaborative writing can be defined as a fully developed manifestation of the complex array of social elements involved in the production of discourse, an array that is not always fully embodied or best mobilized in models of writing that downplay these social forces while valorizing individual authorship.

From this enhanced perspective, collaboration transcends the status of "just another theory." Instead, the term can be defined as "the realization and explicit enactment of the full complex of social forces essential to the production of writing." Re-defined along these lines, collaboration thus shows promise for approaching the level of what Kenneth Burke calls a "terministic screen." That is, rather than being thought of as just one more approach or technique to toss in as we teach writing, collaboration could be thought of as an architectonic and highly heuristic metaphor that gives structure to and

embodies the social forces that are always present in rhetorical acts.

Boundaries Between Collaboration and Plagiarism

Even with the complex interpersonal dynamics inherent in collaborative writing situations, at some point tentative boundaries must be drawn. These boundaries between "collaboration" and "plagiarism" are perhaps most effectively portrayed as constantly in flux. On the most basic level, these two terms can be conceptualized as existing along the same spectrum; that is, plagiarism and collaboration--although often thought of as diametrically opposed--are quite possibly different names for the same process. Seen in this light, much of what has been labelled "plagiarism" could be seen as simply too much of a good thing, as collaboration gone awry, rather than as a distinct and clearly immoral act in opposition to the "honorable" process of collaboration. Except for the crucial element of deception essential to true plagiarism, no qualitative difference may exist between collaboration and plagiarism; the only significant distinctions between the two may be quantitative.

Such a viewpoint makes it possible to establish workable boundaries between the two terms. At the most fundamental level, collaboration can be defined as the process and result of acceptable forms of social interaction during the act of writing,

while plagiarism can be thought of as the process and result of unacceptable social interaction. These definitions make the task of distinguishing between plagiarism and collaboration primarily a matter of determining what is meant by "acceptable" and "unacceptable" *within this context*. As the situation currently stands, however, this determination is somewhat circular and incomplete, since "unacceptable" and "plagiarism" are approximately synonymous. Consequently, greater efforts are needed to unpack the more fundamental components of the term "acceptable." Within this context, "acceptable" might be defined as involving imitative processes or other forms of social appropriation which are neither deceptive nor exploitive.

Plagiarism

The most fundamental common denominator in definitions of plagiarism seems to be that of dishonesty or deception--the true plagiarist often appears to be motivated by an intent to deceive. Consequently, the most useful conceptualization of the term should incorporate the essential inequalities of the power relationships involved. That is, plagiarists operate from a privileged position of power in relation to the unwilling co-authors from whom they have stolen. Like collaborators, plagiarists appropriate words and ideas from other authors, but unlike collaborators, plagiarists take this material

surreptitiously rather than sharing willingly, and some degree of exploitation is involved.

But within this general framework, many variations are possible. For example, my own classroom and administrative experience indicates that students sometimes appear to think of plagiarism as a failure to observe certain important rhetorical conventions, such as putting one's bibliography in correct form, and adding a proper acknowledgements page. This perspective adds a sense of social awkwardness to the concept, making the offense a lapse in etiquette as well as a criminal offense. Students may need to be occasionally reminded that the serious criminal aspects of plagiarism are of much greater concern than superficial conventions of typography.

Who Plagiarizes from Whom?

Whatever definitions are attached to plagiarism, the question eventually arises as to exactly who can plagiarize from whom. Most often, plagiarism is conceived of as the process by which unethical writers steal the words, thoughts, ideas, or brainpower of writers who are either more talented or industrious than they are. However, this ideal situation does not always prevail--in day-to-day working reality, almost any writer can steal from almost any other writer, given sufficient motive and opportunity. In fact, a wide range of potential plagiarism scenarios and permutations is possible. Closer

examination of these possibilities is needed to help sort through the range of plagiarism scenarios so that we may isolate and clearly define the more serious transgressions. While the following list is by no means complete, my experience indicates that the most likely scenarios include:

(1) Less skilled from more skilled: Occurs when writers so admire the work of others that they attempt to claim it as their own. In these cases, the motive itself is not always reprehensible or unethical--imitation in such cases can indeed be interpreted as a form of flattery. The crucial test is whether or not the "plagiarist's" literary appropriation allows him or her to gain profit at the expense of the offended party. In the absence of any clear unfair advantage, the basis of punishment for such a "victimless" crime can be quite vague or indistinct. At the very least, however, offenders should be made fully aware of the nature of their transgressions--including, for example, whether or not their offenses should indeed be labelled as "plagiarism"--so that they will not repeat them blindly. Students who commit this type of offense should also be reminded that plagiarism is never entirely victimless--even "excessive collaboration" can defraud teachers and other students by disrupting the discourse community and skewing evaluative criteria.

(2) Lazy from industrious: Most often occurs when students simply do not put forth the necessary work demanded by text production--collaborative or otherwise. The basis for assessment of penalties for this category of plagiarism is quite clear: the offenders are guilty of laziness or sloth, and they should be taught to act more industriously in the future. Theoretically, such punishment will also teach the offenders a lesson in the value of mental discipline and "intellectual rigor."

(3) Unethical from ethical: Occurs when writers intentionally try to pass off an effective text produced by someone else as their own. Since the alleged "author" did not truly participate at all in the production of the text he or she is claiming as "theirs," such an act is clearly dishonest and therefore can be punished with the goal of teaching the student to act with greater honesty and integrity in the future. This type of plagiarism is closest to falling into the realm of criminality and outright theft, because the offender is not only being dishonest, but is also trying to secure gain at the expense of others. However, determining student motives can be quite difficult; establishing the probability of intentionality based on the specific circumstances of a given case and documented student behavior might be sufficient criteria for prosecuting such cases.

(4) More skilled from less skilled: Can occur when a student relies too heavily on the advice of a roommate who happens to be a poor writer, or can even occur when a competent student writer steals from an inept academic writer. In these cases, teachers may need to instruct their students not only in how to improve their awareness of what does and does not constitute their own work, but also their judgements about what constitutes *good* work. Because excessive attention diverted toward clarifying overlapping definitions reduces time available for instruction in more global concerns, such improvement can most likely be facilitated by instructors equipped with a clear, comprehensive understanding of the distinctions between collaboration and plagiarism.

(5) Sloppy from better organized: A form of "literary theft" that can take the form of "I had a good essay, but I lost it, so I stole someone else's essay." This sort of behavior is often punished on the basis of enforcing intellectual rigor or "mental discipline": instructors must teach their students to be more mature and responsible, or at the very least, better organized. Such a lesson has moral value, but has limitations in terms of making students into better writers; no direct correlation has yet been established between being organized and being a good writer. However, if instructors determine that one of the major goals of a specific course is to instill in their students some

degree of discipline or commitment, plagiarism violations can also be punished according to these criteria.

Not only can plagiarism spring from a variety of motives, but these motives can also manifest themselves in a wide range of processes. Simple xeroxing of someone else's completed essay is only one of the more straightforward plagiarism processes. An array of more subtle manifestations of literary theft is also possible, including word-for-word imitation, close paraphrase, the "creative pastiche," reproducing distinctive organizations and arrangements, minor yet strategic lifting of important concepts, thoughts, and ideas, and wholesale theft of ideas and "brainpower." Determining which of these processes is in any meaningful sense "plagiarism," and which are more usefully classified as "excessive collaboration," "improper documentation," or some other phenomenon is a complex process. Unfortunately, this complexity cannot always be given an appropriate level of time and attention within the constraints of the writing classroom. My own assessment is that a great many of the processes named above tend to be lumped into the catch-all category of "plagiarism"--even though, on closer inspection, many clearly do not qualify as this phenomenon.

What Exactly is Stolen?

Defining exactly what is stolen in the process of plagiarism is nearly as uncertain as the motives behind this

theft. For the most part, my research has shown that attempts to clarify this issue have focused on the concept of "theft of ideas." Along these lines, unacceptable appropriation of content is generally considered to be a more severe--or at least threatening--crime than stealing the form, organizational pattern, or graphic representation of a text. While some authorities do restrict their definition to the latter, simply copying other writers' work word-for-word is generally regarded as a rather clumsy attempt at plagiarism, and partly because of its clumsiness, fairly easy to police. Most definitions and policies that I have examined try to broaden the concept of plagiarism beyond word-for-word copying.

But attempts to define plagiarism in such broader terms as "theft of ideas" also present problems. Such definitions--while often useful in a shorthand sense--are inadequate on at least two counts. First, no clear, absolute distinction can always be drawn between form and content--in practice, the two are combined into an interlocking complex that, together with the writer and the reader, presents itself as "text." Additionally, attempting to maintain a sharp, distinct identity for sources of "ideas" relies too heavily on the unquestioned separate existence of individual creativity and "originality" within the thought processes of the isolated mind. Because the concept of "idea" is heavily suffused with an element of personal involvement, such a reliance has the additional side

effect of perpetuating the view of the writing process as a lonely act carried out by largely isolated individuals.

The most common conventional definition of plagiarism as the unauthorized theft or appropriation of other writers' ideas without due attribution does not fully take into account several other crucial elements of "literary theft." At a more basic level, true "plagiarism" involves stealing even more than a writer's "ideas"; a part of a writer's self is also stolen. Since a rhetorical act actually transcends the mere placing of thoughts upon paper, and taps into the deepest levels of a writer's concepts of identity, it can be an intensely personal act. Within this context, "pure" plagiarism becomes an even more serious offense--but one that is defined in different terms and on different grounds.

Seen against this background, the intense antipathy often felt toward plagiarism becomes more understandable. Writers often feel insecure, defensive, and apprehensive; consequently, any attempt to violate their privacy by trying to appropriate aspects of their very identity is likely to set off strong counter-reaction. Instructors who detect evidence of plagiarism in their students' texts may well feel a strong sense of identification with the writer from whom a text has been stolen. Consequently, writing instructors should proceed with caution as they enforce the principles of literary integrity and

ownership of text to ensure that they are in fact attempting to uphold and promote ethical behavior.

Plagiarism: Redefinition

A more workable definition of plagiarism should take into account more fundamental factors than those revealed by superficial analysis of the surface features of two similar--and most often, completed--texts. As Kenneth Burke says in A Rhetoric of Motives, "writers can either crudely imitate one another's actions as revealed on the surface, or subtly imitate the underlying principles of such actions" (131). In order to make progress toward addressing such concerns as plagiarism and ownership of text, and toward relating these concepts effectively and consistently to collaboration, teachers and scholars of writing should focus on the fundamental rhetorical forces that produce writing. More specifically, they must develop a clearer understanding of the distinctive characteristics of student writing that at the most basic level give rise to unacceptable imitations--plagiarism--of other, pre-existing texts.

Seen from such a perspective, much of what has most commonly been classified as "plagiarism" should be conceived of as a failure to acknowledge and work fairly with the essential

rhetorical forces and agents working to produce texts, rather than as an unpardonable, willful sin, the sign of which is a completed "stolen" text. If our discussions of plagiarism are framed more in terms of how to prevent negligence in acknowledging the inevitable social forces which always lie at the root of "originality," then perhaps writing instructors can begin to make headway in preventing such transgressions. Once the "self" is acknowledged to be but one variation of these social forces, and "authorship" has been effectively redefined as an active combination of many of these selves, theft of a text becomes a significantly different--and in some ways more difficult--act. And because such a redefinition of terms makes the concept of "text" itself more transitory and mutable, only the relatively small number of "true" classroom plagiarism cases--verbatim copies which spring from a genuine intent to deceive and then to profit from this deception--should be treated as criminal cases of misconduct or even outright theft, rather than as some more vaguely defined breach of academic honesty or etiquette.

But at a more fundamental level, such a complex and politically loaded concept as "plagiarism" will be useful in the teaching of writing only if its definition is sharp and consistent enough to clarify rather than complicate important questions of text ownership and attribution. The alternative of a chaotic definition of plagiarism--which is what occasionally prevails in

some contexts--only serves to send mixed messages to students as they try to strike a balance in their writing between the rarified ideal of the lonely, isolated self, and an almost equally amorphous "socialized" self working within the larger academic community. If we do indeed want our students to learn to recognize and act out in their work the distinctions between permitted and forbidden imitation, writing teachers must first be clear in their own minds about these distinctions.

As important as such distinctions are, however, their ultimate form is less crucial than the fact that better consensus reformulations are indeed reached. Such revised definitions may be both more limited and based on different criteria than those writing teachers have grown accustomed to. If this is indeed the case, significant changes must occur in a wide range of areas--including the goals and objectives of a writing course, how these goals are accomplished, and how assignments are graded.

In any event, the credibility and morale of writing teachers would be enhanced by clarification of such crucial and highly visible overlapping concerns as the basic differences between an officially sanctioned process (collaboration), and a forbidden one (plagiarism). One specific question that might be asked is "Why should one all-purpose concept--plagiarism--be forced to assume such a loose assemblage of meanings and functions?" The mere fact that "plagiarism" has come to stand

for for a certain set of unacceptable practices during one rather brief period of intellectual history does not mean that it must continue to serve these functions in all conceivable historical periods.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to combine an enriched awareness of rhetorical and intellectual history with contemporary theoretical insights to re-define the elemental key terms that comprise writing teacher's understanding of the comprehensive terms "plagiarism" and "collaboration." Such re-definitions of the conceptual sub-terms involved are essential if we are to extract and more fully examine the many hidden, untested assumptions that comprise prevailing definitions of the more global terms, and which often lead writing teachers astray. Even more important, such an awareness should enable writing teachers to act on an updated and more broadly based appreciation of these assumptions in the functioning classroom.

On the larger scale, all these re-definitions are crucial to the shaping of administrative and classroom policies because they force them into closer alignment with fundamental shifts in the theoretical underpinnings of writing instruction. Such a realignment is essential for enabling writing teachers to explain successfully to their students the intricacies involved in distinguishing between plagiarism and collaboration. Once re-defined, these terms can serve as building blocks for more

meaningful discussion and debate, while offering additional potential for helping students avoid the crime of literary theft.

From an even more global perspective, these conceptual readjustments are essential if we are to bring theory and practice into a more coherent and productive alignment. An ever-present danger in the expanding field of rhetoric and composition is that theorists may lose contact with actual classroom teachers. Because the very justification of our field can be considered pedagogical in origin, such a loss of contact should not be allowed. Theory and practice should act in concert--or at least in conversation--at all times. The next chapter will examine the general problems associated with excessive emphasis on a vaguely defined "plagiarism," and point to more specific measures writing teachers, scholars, and administrators can take to ensure a closer fit between theory and practice.

CHAPTER IV: PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Introduction

The basic disjunction between theoretically consistent definitions of the elemental key terms discussed in the previous chapter and functional applications of these terms in specific educational contexts has produced several serious problems. Because of the tendency of theory to move slightly ahead of practice, and of what Gerald Graff refers to in Professing Literature as the endemic process of "routinization," academic perceptions of the boundaries between collaboration and plagiarism are sometimes markedly out of line with the reformulation of these boundaries currently implied in composition theory. In turn, the official policies that express these perceptions are also not always consonant with a consistent theoretical perspective. Unfortunately, this gap between theory and practice appears to be narrowing very slowly--if at all. The slow pace of this adjustment allows for numerous conflicts and contradictions between day-to-day classroom practices and the underlying theoretical justification and policies behind these practices.

For example, one standard definition of plagiarism--derived from Alexander Lindey and modified by the Modern Language Association in the MLA Style Manual--as "taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own"

(4) could be considered a partial description of what social constructionists consider the laudable process of assimilating apprentice writers into the academic community. Such disjunctions between theory and practice on issues of this nature are apparent at many levels of the academic hierarchy, ranging from the highest strata of administration--as represented by the official policy statements discussed in chapter one--to the individual writing classroom.

Such gaps between theory and practice have produced a number of consequences that obstruct effective writing instruction. These consequences can be attributed broadly to a basic lack of clear distinctions between the overlapping terms "plagiarism" and "collaboration," and to a failure to incorporate the pedagogical advantages offered by extensive use of collaborative learning techniques into writing program policy and the day-to-day practice of classrooms and writing centers. This failure has led in turn to a somewhat distracting and awkward perpetuation of fear that classroom "collaboration" will shade too readily into "plagiarism." The fact that the boundaries between these two often overlapping and conflicting processes are at present somewhat vague serves to further complicate matters, and sometimes to leave writing teachers confused, frustrated, and adrift.

Developing solutions to the range of problems stemming from this basic disjunction is a difficult process. The political

and ideological climate that surrounds the teaching of writing can occasionally retard the application of pedagogical techniques that embody "non-traditional" theoretical perspectives--regardless of potential effectiveness.

Theoretical and pedagogical superiority is not always enough to ensure the full acceptance and incorporation of new techniques into the academic community; in many cases, underlying political and institutional considerations that tend to work against innovation must also be taken into account.

For example, explicit study of some form of proscriptive "grammar" remains a feature of writing instruction in many composition courses, even though, as Edward M. White points out in Developing College Writing Programs, "for twenty-five years, research studies have consistently demonstrated that formal grammar instruction does not help students write better" (73). According to White, two separate studies by Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer in 1963, and Hillocks in 1986 concluded that the teaching of formal grammar has at best a negligible effect on the improvement of writing in the classroom. In White's judgement, the persistence of such an archaic instructional method apparently results more from strong, vaguely defined pressures from outside the classroom to "teach the students good grammar" than it does from any sound basis in theory and research. At times, such practical, political arguments as "What else can we teach them?" or "If writing teachers don't

teach students grammar, who will?" are advanced by both the general public and high school teachers. Based on my own experience, these appeals sometimes extend into the college environment as well. Such practical appeals can be more persuasive than even the most solid theoretical arguments. Additionally, such perspectives frequently enjoy the advantage of conforming more smoothly with existing classroom structures and systems, and therefore allow for better short-term functioning of these systems.

This chapter will outline the range of problems that can result from excessive reliance on unclear and incoherent definitions of the paired terms "collaboration," and "plagiarism," as well as the related elemental concepts that give structure and meaning to these terms. The primary focus in this chapter will be on general writing program and classroom considerations. Throughout this section, I will discuss multiple options for different contexts, instead of single, sweeping recommendations for all cases and circumstances. Because the discussion in this chapter is based primarily on my personal experience in teaching and administration, the observations and analysis are not intended to be either comprehensive or exclusively reflective of any one type of teacher or specific writing program.

Different Administrative Levels

Establishing official policies toward collaboration and plagiarism is complicated by the multiple layers of administration present in higher education. The head of the English Department may hold a slightly different view of what constitutes plagiarism than the director of composition, who, in turn, may hold a different perspective than faculty and staff. Because of their more specialized knowledge and experience in the field of writing instruction, members of the English department at all levels often maintain different perspectives on these questions than do members of the academic hierarchy, such as deans, college presidents, and other administrators, whose knowledge of the field may be restricted to a "need to know" basis.

These differences in perspective range from the most abstract and theoretical to the most specific and personal. For example, a Dean of Liberal Arts who received his Ph.D. at a university with a very firm, traditional policy against plagiarism, peer editing, and collaboration may find him or herself employed at a college with a very active writing center and a strong emphasis on collaborative writing in all its guises. Such a conflict may produce occasionally inconsistent and even contradictory official policies relating to text production and ownership. Similarly, a somewhat inconsistent university-wide official policy may be arrived at by faculty from several

departments, each of which may have a slightly different view of plagiarism and collaboration.

Necessity of Dealing with a Wide Range of Staff

Another problem faced by administrators--especially at the departmental level--is the fact that many writing instructors who received their initial training in previous eras see little or nothing wrong with the established definitions of plagiarism. Although many of these instructors are not only good teachers, but also well-meaning people of goodwill, they are also frequently either not entirely current on recent research into rhetoric and composition or are inclined to dismiss this information as the result of shoddy or insignificant scholarship.

Beyond such personal antipathies, this group of instructors is also often overworked, overburdened, and overstressed. Many of these writing teachers sincerely believe that they don't have the time to make the necessary "corrections" called for by collaborative writing advocates in their teaching style and grading techniques in order to accommodate a redefinition of plagiarism. Given the essential time constraints of teaching four or five sections of composition, these instructors are often more inclined to assimilate changes in such definitions into their existing teaching style rather than accommodating this style to meet what may amount to just another passing fad in writing

instruction. Such an assimilation tends to strip collaborative writing of its most essential and effective features. Also, many of these instructors have taught successfully for years using the pedagogies and definitions that their younger colleagues often view as either outmoded or obstructionist.

Necessity of Meeting a Wide Range of Objectives

Aside from such basic incongruities of teaching methods, disjunctions also exist in the formulations of the comprehensive objectives of a writing course. From a global perspective, the overarching goals which administrators envision for their writing programs should be considered before coherent, workable policies can be established toward plagiarism and collaboration. One question which must be addressed is whether administrators want teachers to focus exclusively on working with their students to produce "good writing" in the form of texts that clearly communicate a hidden and then revealed meaning, or if other goals are envisioned. For example, instructors may hope to give students more wide-ranging training in how writing is produced in a diversity of contexts, and thus prepare them for writing in business and the professions. If such an approach is indeed promoted, administrators need to find ways to allow students the opportunity to gain more experience in the collaborative writing techniques--such as group writing projects--that are commonly

employed in these contexts, while at the same time ensuring that both student and teacher stay on the "right" side of the boundaries between plagiarism and collaboration.

Quite apart from establishing workable guidelines on such complex issues as collaboration and plagiarism, simply reaching consensus definitions of such generalized yet indispensable concepts as "good writing" presents difficulties for teachers of writing. If the primary meaning of "good writing" is agreed upon to be "writing that communicates the writer's message to the reader," then perhaps pedagogies which stress the role of the individual writer in the composing process can be adequate. But if, on the other hand, additional rhetorical concerns--such as clarity of audience or general persuasive effectiveness--are also given priority, collaborative writing strategies may become essential. For example, if one of the major goals of an assignment is to encourage students to exhibit a high level of audience awareness, collaborative writing pedagogies which hold promise for being useful in achieving this objective would seem to be called for.

From a practical perspective, the most apparent viable option for dealing with issues such as how to distinguish plagiarism from collaboration is to establish general, comprehensive guidelines such as those discussed in chapter one--even if these standards are acknowledged to be inadequate *by themselves* for dealing with every single case fairly and

accurately. Such an administrative decision does not normally reflect an indifference toward fairness and sound pedagogy; it is most likely an unavoidable consequence of time constraints. The alternative of directing a disproportionate share of attention toward the single issue of plagiarism in order to clarify in advance all possible points of confusion could lead to a steady stream of "clarifying" memos, endless committee meetings, and the neglect of other vital concerns.

Difficulty of Communication Between Levels

In formulating such guidelines, the complexity of the academic hierarchy must be considered. Often, what seems totally, and perhaps even excessively, clear at one level of academia may seem obscure and confusing at another level. For example, memos may be issued to clarify or even entirely redefine "plagiarism," but essential points may become garbled or lost in translation as a directive or manifesto is passed along through the faculty. Different levels in the academic hierarchy tend to develop and perpetuate their own local dialects, and these hierarchical levels also tend to establish their own specialized goals and priorities. Trying to communicate roughly the same message to such a wide range of audiences can be difficult.

Complicating matters still further are the differences in priorities often held by teachers and administrators working at

different levels of the academic hierarchy. Instructors facing the problem of grading and evaluating ninety freshman research papers before next Monday may not be as concerned as their administrators about locating and dealing effectively with every single instance of plagiarism exhibited in their stack of papers. Alternatively--depending on the particular individuals involved--some instructors may place greater emphasis on preventing plagiarism than their supervisors. Administrators and instructors may also disagree on the importance of incorporating collaborative writing techniques into the classroom.

Additional obstructions to clearly defining "plagiarism" arise from the fact that the conditions under which the "original" definitions or conceptions of "plagiarism" developed are no longer valid in all academic settings and writing situations. Earlier in this century, recognizing, controlling, and policing plagiarism in the academic community was a somewhat different matter--especially from the administrative perspective. Schools were normally smaller, English departments were often more close-knit, student bodies were frequently more homogeneous, and the concept of writing centers had not yet developed. Within these more somewhat restrictive environments, designing and enforcing a single, generic definition of "plagiarism" that could meet the demands of most conceivable contexts might indeed be feasible. At the

very least, maintaining the illusion of distinct boundaries between ethical collaboration and unethical plagiarism was still possible.

Under such conditions, the sort of sweeping, all-inclusive definition of the concept of plagiarism often presented today could easily become enshrined and institutionalized (or as Gerald Graff calls it, "routinized"). But what is valid under one set of conditions is not necessarily valid under a different set; the overarching theoretical framework and intellectual milieu of writing instruction has now changed--as it always does. Academicians often reach stability and equilibrium working within one set of conditions, only to have the theoretical precepts underlying these conditions change right out from under them--the changing status of grammar instruction alluded to earlier is one example of this phenomenon. However, official policy often tends to lag behind classroom practice until some sort of crisis breaks the stalemate.

Gerald Graff's description of the process of "routinization" is especially relevant to these phenomena. According to Graff, a general tendency within academia is for any new area of study--such as rhetoric and composition--to be gradually and perhaps inevitably swallowed up and made a functioning part of the larger university system. Under such conditions, any traits held by this field of study that resist inclusion within the academic community will be altered to make the assimilating system

function smoothly and efficiently. Thus, since collaborative writing requires several fundamental changes in the methods by which papers are assigned, completed, and evaluated, the natural tendency of academia probably will be to erode gradually and render ineffectual the distinguishing characteristics that make using these techniques worthwhile in the first place. Only by being fully aware of these routinization forces and then taking specific counter-measures against them can advocates of collaborative writing hope to succeed.

Another obstruction to modifying official policies toward plagiarism and collaboration is the inertia and lengthy lag time endemic to complex bureaucracies such as academia. Even if everyone in academia were to become totally convinced *right now* that prevailing definitions of plagiarism and collaboration were wrong, and that these definitions should be changed to make them more consonant with effective collaborative learning strategies, these changed policies would take a year or two to work their way completely through the academic pipeline. Catalogs would have to be rewritten, new policy statements would have to be drafted, teachers would have to be retrained, and--perhaps most difficult of all--student attitudes would have to be altered accordingly. While such changes could be effectively enacted at an official level within a reasonable time frame, "unofficial" student and teacher attitudes might take somewhat longer to alter.

Variation of What is Meant by "Plagiarism" from One
Context to Another

The difficulties inherent in attempts to modify definitions of plagiarism are further increased by the largely contextual nature of this literary theft. Plagiarism is best conceptualized not in terms of a single, instantaneous action, but rather as a complex interaction between the writer, text, and social forces. Since this action takes place over time, the conditions that gave rise to it are also likely to undergo change. The social context will be especially subject to this fluctuation. Thus, any definition of plagiarism--no matter how carefully thought out and theoretically sound--should be conceived of as tentative and necessarily restricted in its application. Any redefinitions should retain within themselves the flexibility to adapt to inevitable fluctuations in theory, as well as to the appearance of unanticipated new complications from the practical realm.

Another potential obstacle to re-formulation of the elemental terms underlying discussions of collaboration and plagiarism is the lack of theoretical consistency within the field of rhetoric and composition. If leading authorities in the field cannot be consistent among themselves on questions associated with collaboration and plagiarism, and if they cannot clearly show how to distinguish between the two allied terms, classroom teachers will continue to be left in the lurch. Such a lack of consensus may lead teachers of writing to conclude they

would be better off with existing definitions of these issues--which were, while not always consistent, at least familiar and often workable within a particular context.

Possible Responses to Disjunctions

One alternative response to directly confronting and resisting flawed policies toward plagiarism might be for writing teachers to work around or circumvent what they consider obstructionist policies. Often, these policies were developed under different conditions: either in other academic environments or in other eras. Under such circumstances, continuing such policies in the face of major theoretical and pedagogical changes is manifestly indefensible. However, this situation is often further complicated by the lack of consensus among the academic community toward the issues in question, a factor that often forces practicing teachers to cut their own paths through the thickets of pedagogical confusion.

But such an approach presents major hazards for the intrepid writing teacher. Any attempt to redefine plagiarism along individual or idiosyncratic lines--no matter how "enlightened" such a definition is--may cause the independent teacher or scholar to be labeled a maverick or trouble-maker. Once effectively marginalized, this "maverick" may be unable to alter larger-scale policies within the still prevailing system. The only strategically sound option left to the "maverick" under these conditions is to wage a difficult, and sometimes even

destructive, campaign against an empowered system from the often powerless "outside."

But even if an official decision is made to implement revised definitions of plagiarism and collaboration, accommodating the needs of more "traditional" instructors without hopelessly watering down the essentials of collaborative learning remains a concern. The range of possibilities is somewhat limited here; some options are ruled out from the beginning by undeniable political and pedagogical constraints. For example, wholesale firing of teachers who refuse to follow a new party line on collaborative authorship and ownership of text is not a likely option, simply because of the legal and political realities of the marketplace.

Such a response is more than just politically unwise; it also amounts to unfair discrimination against a sizable group of writing teachers whose sole "offense" may be to continue to teach using methods which they have found successful. Because of the ever-shifting nature of the theoretical underpinnings of writing instruction, any "party line" will likely be revised quite soon--in fact, a strong argument could be made that such policies should remain ill-defined in order to give the various contending forces an opportunity to produce the most efficacious resolution.

Perhaps the best approach to dealing with this problem of indeterminacy is to demonstrate convincingly that greater

employment of collaborative writing techniques not only makes students better writers, but also that these techniques do not, in fact, demand greater investments in time and energy than more established teaching techniques. Assertions that greater employment of collaborative techniques will not lead to more frequent plagiarism also need additional support. These demonstrations can best be carried out through the gathering of data which supports the effectiveness of collaborative writing--a task which has scarcely begun. Such an approach has the advantage of presenting solid persuasive reasons to more traditional-minded instructors, thus allowing them to choose for themselves a more favorable attitude toward collaborative learning techniques. Thus, the very appeals--hard numbers--that are most likely to prove convincing to traditionally trained instructors who often remain somewhat resistant to collaborative writing strategies would be used to demonstrate the value of these techniques. An added benefit of this approach is that people who are persuaded willingly are more likely to remain persuaded than those who are converted against their will.

Once such convincing demonstrations outside the classroom have been accomplished, considerable work still remains to be done inside the classroom. Meeting the complex objectives called for in the contemporary collaborative writing classroom requires juggling and overturning a great many

matters of policy, definition, and procedure. These changes in policy may imply that some classes should be taught in significantly different ways. Priorities will also have to be assigned to various competing objectives, such as developing originality and "voice" as opposed to promoting multiple authorship.

On a more specific level, administrators will have to decide how to best juggle and weight their priorities in those instances in which cases of "plagiarism" and "collaboration" closely overlap and conflict. The balance that is struck will necessarily reflect this complex array of interactive factors. At the very least, administrators should be granted the right to exercise minimal survival skills in their positions; asking them to become martyrs on such fuzzy issues would be unfair. But by the same token, these administrators should allow their practitioners enough latitude to adjust their teaching strategies to bring them more in line with fundamental changes along the shifting frontiers between collaboration and plagiarism.

Removing "Regressive" Views

Even if the present definitions of plagiarism and collaboration are demonstrated to be fundamentally flawed, convincing the wide range of academic professionals of the reality and existence of these flaws remains a challenge. At the very least, sceptics of collaborative writing will have to be

shown why they are "wrong," and they will also have to be shown reasonable and workable alternatives to teaching techniques which rely more heavily on individual authorship. Possible approaches to accomplishing these objectives include:

(1) Anecdotal. This approach has the advantage of being most direct and "user-friendly," as well as less cognitively forbidding. Such information is also the easiest to compile; often, all one has to do to is sit around the faculty lounge and listen to what teachers are doing in their classrooms. Somewhat more rigorous--and therefore "respectable"--forms of anecdotal evidence also exist; structured discussions with colleagues from within the profession and even from across the curriculum can also occur on issues associated with collaboration and plagiarism. For example, informal, open-ended surveys asking for definitions of "plagiarism" could be distributed.

Unfortunately, this information often sacrifices reliability in exchange for clarity and ease of access--much of the information gained is difficult to validate in even a pseudo-scientific sense, a flaw that can weigh heavily in the minds of teachers, scholars, and administrators who value "the scientific method." In fact, Stephen North concludes in The Making of Meaning in Composition: Portrait of an Emerging Field, that this sort of "lore" is not only epistemologically unsound, but is a fatally flawed, archaic, and obsolete method of inquiry.

(2) Theoretical. This approach has the greatest potential power, since it relies heavily on the most persuasive forces (rhetorical research and scholarship) available to professionals actually in the field of writing instruction. In addition, the relatively high prestige of this type of argument holds--at least, in principle--the greatest promise for convincing the academic community's most influential decision-makers and administrators to promote long-lasting changes.

However, the persuasive value of theoretical scholarship is not always effective across the full range of audiences which must be reached, nor are these "scholarly" approaches uniformly applicable to the specific issues and concerns in question. More specifically, practicing teachers may not place a great deal of faith in what Aristotle might have said about preventing students from plagiarizing term papers from the fraternity file--no matter how cherished these insights may be to those presenting them. Similarly, these teachers may not always be fully current on Bakhtin and Foucault's apparently tangential observations on composition and authorship, nor will they invariably consider themselves to be deprived because of this lack of knowledge.

From the standpoint of redefining plagiarism and collaboration, promising approaches to gathering theoretical support include broadening our base of scholarship to include a greater range of interdisciplinary fields. Although the history

of rhetoric itself still contains considerable untapped potential, one of the reasons our definitions of such terms as "plagiarism" and "collaboration" are presently inadequate is that our scholarly efforts have been restricted to an excessively narrow base. Recent efforts to cross disciplinary lines have resulted in fruitful borrowings from such fields as psychology, critical theory, philosophy, and information processing theory. In order to continue to make progress in reformulation of definitions, and in consequent attempts to better mesh theory with practice, these borrowings should continue and accelerate.

(3) Empirical. This approach to gathering data has the advantage of being hardest to "refute." Unfortunately, very little empirical research to date has focused on the issue of what actually distinguishes "plagiarism" from "collaboration." Perhaps one approach to redressing this lack of empirical data is to design studies which assess student attitudes and perceptions toward collaboration and plagiarism. Such studies might enable writing teachers to determine which points of confusion between the two terms seem uppermost in their students' minds. Once this knowledge has been gained, specific instructional steps can then be taken to resolve these points of confusion. Additionally, further studies of "official" policies held by the academic community need to be carried out.

Overall, resistance arising from the broad scale phenomenon of routinization is best counteracted not by fighting directly against the existing structures that function according to the rules of "routinization," but by finding ways to carefully work selected elements of collaborative pedagogy into the functioning administrative routine itself, while ensuring that the existing structure accommodates as well as assimilates. Such an approach has the advantage of making possible selective introduction of collaborative techniques while avoiding the dangers of piecemeal incorporation in which essential new features lose their identity and usefulness. Such haphazard incorporation only invites more frequent accidental plagiarism. Methods of ensuring that selective introduction occurs include requiring peer group work and critiques in departmental course syllabi, and including explicit revised statements requiring classroom teachers to inform their students of the existence of the writing center, as well as arguing forcefully for this facility's value in supplementing and reinforcing collaborative writing techniques.

But whatever form such shifts in perspective may take, they will produce lasting improvement only if they are accompanied by modifications of overall departmental policy reinforced by the openly solicited, voluntary support of the teaching faculty. Such an approach has a much better chance of succeeding than if these changes are simply imposed from above

with no feedback or consultation with the lower levels, a strategy which tends to produce only highly visible short-term changes which quickly founder on the rocks of faculty resentment. As potentially powerful as collaborative writing strategies are, they require long-term commitment in order to prove themselves successful; both teachers and students need time to learn how to make these "new" strategies work, while simultaneously avoiding encouragement of some forms of plagiarism.

One of the more vital approaches to promoting collaborative writing as a legitimate pedagogical technique is to support the growth and development of the writing center, a place which--because of its essential reliance on peer tutoring and the co-authorship which results from this tutoring--ensures that fully developed collaboration occurs during the writing process. The most distinctive advantage of the writing center as a forum for collaboration is that it may be grounded on a political base outside the mainstream of the highly routinized English departments, and thus retains more freedom of action and room for innovation. From a political perspective, more fully realized and enduring establishment of collaborative pedagogies is possible with the support of the tutoring that occurs in the relatively autonomous realm represented by the writing center.

This element of potential autonomy also creates additional friction points for the advancement and full employment of collaborative techniques. Often, the tutors and administrators in the center--as a "hotbed" of collaborative writing--find themselves at odds with the teachers and administrators of the larger English or Humanities department. Experience gained by working in various writing centers has made me personally aware of the often dubious and occasionally even hostile attitudes expressed by some instructors toward what they regard as the "plagiarism" facilitated by the presence of unacknowledged co-authors (tutors) in the writing center. A few instructors seem to conceive of the writing center as a place which their students can sneak away to and cheat on a paper, rather than write it by themselves.

Perhaps the best approach to defusing these potential conflicts is through the extensive use of outreach, workshop, and public relations activities originating in the writing center. Ideally, these programs will bring about closer agreement between conflicting perspectives on issues related to collaboration. Some of the more promising of these outreach programs include voluntary classroom presentations offered by experienced tutors. At the University of Tennessee, for example, these hour-long presentations were quite effective in demonstrating the value of the writing center in meeting the overall course objectives of a given composition class *no*

matter what these goals may be. In order to avoid alienating instructors from the outset, the UT writing center carefully sounds out the preferences and general teaching philosophy of instructors before the actual presentation is formatted.

Teachers

"Thought Police" Mentality

One specific danger that an excessive focus on plagiarism can have from the teacher's perspective is the projection of an unfavorable and counter-productive image of the writing instructor. If teachers expend too much energy in attempts to guard against and prevent a poorly defined concept of plagiarism, they may cast themselves into the role of "thought-police" rather than writing teacher. Such a rhetorical stance leads to several problems. Most significantly, this stance places the instructor into what James Britton calls the "teacher as adversary" role. This stance can often obstruct rather than encourage effective student writing because it presents the student with a distorted and limited view of audience. Britton argues persuasively that a more effective general teaching pedagogy is that of facilitator rather than censor; writing teachers should normally work to open up possibilities by appearing receptive or tolerant throughout most of the writing process, rather than closing off these options prematurely by appearing hostile.

Unfortunately, my personal experience indicates that attempts by instructors to police plagiarism sometimes translate--in student minds--into a more generalized, counter-productive mindset that restricts writing along several broad fronts related to text ownership. And because of the current ill-defined nature of the boundaries between plagiarism and collaboration, any attempt by writing teachers to define theft of text may be hobbled by a lack of clear understanding of the processes by which someone gains or is granted "text ownership." We need a clearer--or at least more workable--definition of what texts are within the context of the writing classroom in order to punish confidently students for plagiarizing them.

This perpetuation of the "teacher as enemy" role can be a significant barrier to effective collaborative writing techniques. While reasonable attempts to uphold standards of text attribution are essential to the maintenance of ethical standards in the writing classroom, overzealous prosecution of plagiarism cases can embitter teachers to their students. The dynamics of what might be called the non-collaborative classroom intensify these negative consequences; one empowered teacher faces off against a swarm of inexperienced writers working in isolation and announces a series of invariant prohibitions. If presented superficially or otherwise incorrectly, the "rightness" or "wrongness" of these prohibitions

can become secondary to the rhetorical message conveyed by the act itself.

Such an attitude forecloses on a great many writing options, and thus restricts the instructor's repertoire of potential pedagogical strategies for the great diversity of writing contexts faced in the classroom. Rather than benefitting from the more experienced--and often more varied--writing viewpoints and skills of other working writers, students may conclude that the only worthwhile writing is that produced alone and after intense personal struggle. A meta-message of this nature is not only inaccurate but potentially deadening. When students crash into momentary obstructions in their writing processes, they may interpret these blocks as personal failings; instead of reaching outward toward a "trusted advisor" or other potential embodiment of audience for help in regenerating or revitalizing their writing, they may turn inward and blame the personal failings and shortcomings of their inadequate "self." Such a response creates a vicious cycle by perpetuating many of the same problems--such as an inability to develop an effective level of audience awareness--that often give rise to ineffective writing in the first place.

Aside from creating problems for their students, writing teachers who de-emphasize or de-value collaborative techniques in favor of focusing on the individual writer often make their own jobs unnecessarily difficult. Instead of setting

up the classroom environment so that the powerful social constraints of the rhetorical situation--such as audience awareness--present themselves naturally and inevitably to student writers, teachers who valorize individual authorship are often forced to devise ingenious methods for manufacturing artificial versions of these constraints and exigencies. While such tasks can indeed be accomplished, the teacher's time could probably be spent more constructively and efficiently--such as by having the students cover a wider range of assignments.

Excessive reliance on individual authorship also tends to distance students from sources of beneficial collaborative advice--such as peer editors, tutors and writing teachers. Consequently, students working on assignments can wander great distances down the wrong pathways before this collaborative advice reveals problems and offers solutions. And the longer students persist down a wrong pathway, the harder placing them onto the right path may be. Operating from within this scenario, teachers can find themselves placing excessive emphasis on discovering the negative aspects of what has gone wrong with student texts--including improper imitation or plagiarism--rather than focusing on the positive features that hold the most promise for further development.

Prevented from Teaching Writing as a True Process

Excessive emphasis on whether or not a text was "plagiarized" can also strongly focus attention on analyzing an essay as a finished product rather than as an evolving process. Most often, only finished texts are examined for evidence of plagiarism; therefore, if determining the degree of originality (as opposed to imitation) present in a piece of writing is a high priority, less attention may be directed toward the textual features that exist before closure is reached.

Intense attention to preventing plagiarism may obstruct the teaching of writing in several other ways. False perceptions of the relationship between originality and imitation are often presented; such perceptions may suggest that determining the difference between an "original" idea and a "borrowed" one is a worthwhile goal in itself. But as Weinsheimer points out in Imitation:

It is impossible to determine the essence of any particular imitation because an imitation has no independent or autonomous essence. It consists in a relation to something else which . . . both is and is not the same as itself, between identity with and unrelatedness to this other; imitation is doubly ambiguous, for it is neither a copy nor an original (2).

Susan Miller makes this same point in Rescuing the Subject:

"Both theory and our own experience of textual worlds make it

clear that writers are simultaneously always derivative and always original" (39).

Focusing too strongly on trying to uphold an unreasonable standard of originality can also rule out using imitation as a legitimate tool in the process of composition from the beginning--an unwise exclusion, given the classical heritage of this technique. If "imitation" is indeed excluded or severely sanctioned in the early stages of completing a writing assignment, teachers should be as clear as possible--both in their own minds and in their explanations to students--about exactly what kinds of imitation they are excluding from their students' writing processes.

Frustrations felt by students as they attempt to sort through the imitative options available to them are often compounded by the lack of clear answers to the question of where collaboration ends and plagiarism begins--an uncertainty that permeates many levels of the academic community. The frustrating lack of clarity on these points present in official policy statements has already been discussed, but the implications for actual classroom teachers are also important. For example, already overworked writing instructors may grow so weary of the monotonous routine of checking their students' citations and xeroxed journal articles for proper authorial attribution and correct documentation that they may be tempted

to throw in the towel and simply hope that their students are managing not to plagiarize.

Apparently, a common tendency in establishing and enforcing standards of this type is to formulate one official, all-purpose definition rather than several flexible ones. Such a tendency leads to several difficulties in distinguishing collaboration from plagiarism. For example, essays are drafted in a great variety of contexts, both inside and outside the classroom. Clearly, opportunities for collaboration--and plagiarism--will be greater for out-of-class writing assignments than for those completed in-class. The question faced by administrators then becomes whether they must draft separate policy statements on plagiarism and collaboration for both these rhetorical situations, as well as for the full range of writing contexts in between--such as take-home exams.

Students

The lack of clarity on issues associated with collaboration and ownership of text also presents problems from the students' point of view. In its most extreme development, student response to confusing policy guidelines transforms the avoidance of plagiarism into a non-productive "fool the teacher" game. Such a game involves elaborate ruses to disguise stolen texts, including exploiting relatives who have taught English courses, deceptive paraphrasing, or resorting to fraternity term

paper files. All these responses share a bypassing and neglect of processes that could be used to give students a working understanding of not only how to avoid plagiarizing texts, but also how to use collaboration skillfully. If students can leave writing classes with a clear understanding of the appearance and general nature of the boundaries between collaborative writing and plagiarism rather than with a pervasive fear of going astray in some nebulous manner, then the present ill-defined state of these boundaries could be made to work for teachers rather than against them.

"Teacher as Enemy" View Perpetuated

From the student's perspective, the "teacher as enemy" concept which can be nurtured by excessive concern with plagiarism holds several dangers. Rather than asking their teacher for advice on how best to deal with the often voluminous research they must sort through in order to write a term paper, students may instead decide to consult their often equally confused fellow students on how to avoid plagiarizing. Even worse, these confused students may decide to act on their own ill-formed judgements about what does and does not constitute plagiarism. In extreme cases, students may decide to do without research entirely if they become too confused and overburdened by considerations of complex, arcane "correct documentation form," and "proper acknowledgement of sources."

Even more seriously, if excessive concern with preventing plagiarism causes students to be denied access to the full range of audiences--such as peer groups and writing center tutors--promoted by exposure to collaborative learning pedagogies, their view of audience may become restricted to only their teachers and themselves. Such a perception may appear to work well within the limited short-term context of the classroom, but will most likely prove inadequate for the world at large, or even the more limited realm of the student's own discourse community.

Additionally, if writing teachers are excessively zealous in prosecuting plagiarism cases, students can form an impression of a hostile, closed-minded audience, as personified by their teacher. The common denominator in these situations is hostility: students are being asked to work hard at developing texts for audiences that are only too willing and eager to find something wrong with their efforts. Such a situation is a much more appropriate recipe for generating high levels of stress and writer's block, rather than for producing effective, audience-aware discourse. Mike Rose's work with writing apprehension is relevant to these concerns. In Writer's Block: The Cognitive Dimension, Rose lists five major reasons for "why some writers block":

- (1) The rules by which they guide their composing processes are rigid, inappropriately invoked,

or incorrect.

- (2) Their assumptions about composing are misleading.
- (3) They edit too early in the composing process.
- (4) They lack appropriate planning and discourse strategies or rely on inflexible or inappropriate strategies.
- (5) They invoke conflicting rules, assumptions, plans, and strategies.
- (6) They evaluate their writing with inappropriate criteria that are inadequately understood (4).

All these potential scenarios for writing apprehension can result either directly or peripherally from excessive concern with avoiding a poorly defined offense such as plagiarism.

This emphasis on the potential dangers inherent in the rhetorical situation can be easily transferred to related areas. For example, students who become convinced of their inability to document properly--and therefore of avoiding plagiarism--may generalize to conclude that they simply cannot write research papers at all. In fact, my personal classroom experience indicates that inexperienced writers tend to see the research and documentation component of the "term paper" as the primary distinguishing feature of this kind of writing assignment; from the students' perspective, these components are what make term papers different from writing tasks with which they are more familiar.

If many of the established definitions of plagiarism are allowed to stand unchallenged, student access to such effective and widely employed composing techniques as peer groups, group writing projects, and writing centers will continue to be unwisely restricted, since these techniques by their very nature infringe on traditional concepts of text ownership.

Collaborative techniques clearly promote varying forms of corporate ownership of text and group authorship. Continuing to valorize individual ownership of text as a positive good in itself will thus inevitably detract from the legitimacy of such non-traditional pedagogical techniques as those requiring co-authorship.

Excluding such techniques from student writers exacts a high price both by increasing the difficulty of successfully completing assigned writing tasks and by diminishing the clarity and diversity of the intended audiences for these tasks. More specifically, students can be forced to work hard to create from a near-vacuum the very rhetorical exigencies and constraints that would have been presented to them inevitably in the normal course of the collaborative writing process. While it is true that shifting toward collaborative writing techniques might in some way make completing writing assignments "easier," it is also true that no correlation has been established between the degree of difficulty of a writing task and its ultimate value.

Tendency for Students to Get a Distorted View of the Writing Process

One strongly negative consequence of excessive emphasis on preventing plagiarism is that such an emphasis tends to focus writers' attention on the end-point or product of their writing tasks. Plagiarism is rarely alleged while a work is in progress; such accusations are normally leveled only after a writing task is completed. If too much attention is given to analyzing why a textual product qualifies as an unacceptable imitation, the subtext transmitted to the writer might be that plagiarism is a concern that should be addressed only after a process has been concluded.

A more comprehensive view of plagiarism is also needed in the classroom. The concept of plagiarism is sometimes presented to students as if it were a mere surface-level manifestation of certain ill-defined structural dynamics of a text. In reality, however, a complex interplay of writer, text, and social context underlies the concepts of improper documentation and authorial attribution. Even within the limited domain of the text, continual interaction occurs between the forces of originality and imitation. In the course of normal responses to plagiarism, however, attention is often given only to the superficial signs or symptoms of plagiarism rather than to the more important and complex internal dynamics that give rise to these symptoms.

Student-Teacher Relationships

An environment that foregrounds the dangers and punishments of plagiarism makes the favorable teacher-to-student relationship that James Britton calls "student to trusted advisor" hard to maintain. The primary value of this relationship is that it presents student writers with a more positive embodiment of the social context of their writing. Additionally, addressing a less hostile audience allows students to turn off--at least temporarily--their writing monitors, a significant component of which may consist of safeguards against committing such ill-defined offenses as plagiarism. Collaborative teaching techniques can also provide students with a more explicit embodiment of the forces and constraints that would normally be maintained by the student writer's monitors. Once these forces are clearly embodied, students can move beyond initial anxieties and begin channelling their cognitive energies to other concerns, such as clarifying and giving structure to their content, and improving the overall rhetorical effectiveness of this content.

Once an air of trust or cooperation is established between student and teacher, the teacher can serve as both an aid to effective collaboration and as an advisor for avoiding plagiarism. Such a role seems to be a significant improvement over the perception of an enemy intent on catching students in

the act of committing a crime, or even worse, as a sort of hanging judge bent on stringing up as many offenders as possible. Thus, students and teachers should be able to collaborate even on the very act of collaboration--a cooperative effort that not only permits students to benefit from collaborative learning techniques in the short term, but also allows them to internalize and use these skills later in their writing careers.

In contrast to the benefits of clarifying students' attitudes toward plagiarism and collaboration, my personal experience in teaching composition has convinced me of the futility of fighting against incoherent perceptions of "plagiarism." After devoting entire class periods to the topic of documentation form, I was often rewarded with a stream of trivial questions from students on the merits of "putting the period before or after the parenthesis." I received only slightly less banal response when I read aloud the official injunction against "using the brainpower of others without giving due credit"; without additional explanation, the complexities submerged within such seemingly innocuous terms as "brainpower" and "due credit" are enough to keep students befuddled for an entire semester.

Within the classroom itself, I responded to the typical typographical questions by referring students to their trusty grammar handbooks--which, unfortunately, often contain only

the same rather hidebound definitions of "plagiarism" discussed in chapter one. But, from the students' perspective, the issue of plagiarism often seemed to boil down to concern with observing such trivialities as typographical conventions--which the handbook deals with quite neatly. With such apparently clear-cut concerns as these uppermost in their minds, students often display little patience for complex discussions of the abstract, archaic-sounding term "plagiarism," tending to think of it as something that might not creep into their writing if they behave themselves, brush their teeth, and maintain a good relationship with their teacher.

While it is true that such information on how to avoid "improper documentation form" and the like is by no means useless, the hard reality of the writing classroom is that more pressing priorities are normally present. When the deadline for a term paper approaches, classroom time might be spent more wisely by trying to find an effective fit between the writing task currently in progress and the demands of the audience to whom the paper is addressed, rather than trying at this late date to slog through all possible permutations of the relationship between acceptable and unacceptable forms of imitation. Such a fit could be more easily attained if the major social features--including the dynamic interplay between "collaboration" and "plagiarism"--associated with a rhetorical act are incorporated, from the earliest stages of the writing

process, into the drafting of the text that reflects this rhetorical act. The alternative of examining the surface features of a nearly complete paper for evidence of improper collaboration or plagiarism makes this editing task much harder to carry out successfully.

Opportunity for Providing Students with Sufficient Training
in More Realistic "Real-World" Writing that Employs
Collaboration

Even if instructors conclude that collaborative writing techniques are not the best approach to producing effective writing within their own classrooms, or that clarifying the boundaries between collaboration and plagiarism is not justifiable in its own right, they may want to remember that students will not always be writing in the highly specialized academic context. Devoting at least some instructional efforts to developing student writers' collaborative writing capabilities may well provide these students with benefits that extend beyond their college experience, including providing them with an increased awareness of the social forces that give rise to all rhetorical acts, whether within, across, or outside the curriculum. Such an awareness could be a highly valuable aid for students who later write within the professional and technical contexts which make extensive use of these strategies.

As discussed earlier, efforts to give students an enhanced awareness of collaborative writing strategies often meet considerable political and ideological resistance. Contrary to the implicit moral virtues of "rugged individualism" and ownership of intellectual property as advocated by such literary figures as Emerson, Thoreau, and Wordsworth, collaboration normally does not lend itself very well to prevailing political fashion. Carrying with it such longstanding connotative baggage as cooperation with the enemy and Marxist collectivism, the very term itself might have to be redefined in order to downplay the elements of "socialism" which it implies.

One possible response to this dilemma is to reframe "collaboration" more in terms of its distinctive American characteristics. Rather than stressing its "un-American" features--such as collectivism and an emphasis on social forces--proponents of collaborative writing might advocate these strategies in terms of the potential benefits they hold for helping to re-build our faltering educational system, thereby helping the next generation of citizens to improve both themselves and the society they will lead. Similarly, because collaborative writing techniques feature such inexpensive instructional resources as student peer editors and writing center tutors, advocates of collaboration might want to stress the traditional American values of thriftiness and cost-

effectiveness offered by these techniques--a crucial concern in difficult economic times.

Aside from such basic appeals to the common good of society, collaborative writing techniques can be advocated by stressing their potential for providing more effective alternatives to a linear approach to writing. If the social context of a rhetorical act is conceptualized as a complex array of factors that remains subject to modification throughout the course of a rhetorical act, setting up in advance a pre-determined "set-point" of closure to march toward is discouraged. Instead, all elements of the rhetorical act--including its point of closure--remain subject throughout the course of this act to the constraints and shaping influences of the entire rhetorical situation. Seen from this perspective, none of the elements of the rhetorical act need to be reified in advance as static, unchanging elements in themselves, but are instead seen as complex, interactive forces accessible to constant interplay until the writing task is completed or abandoned.

Advantages of Group Assignments Over Individual

On the broader scale, modification of specific composition assignments should be accompanied by parallel development in overall course design. In order to meet coherent global objectives, a writing course should feature a cumulative and

reinforcing effect between the individual writing assignments offered to the students and the overall design of the course. Once again, however, this mesh can be ensured only by reformulations at the most basic conceptual levels; the overall goals and objectives of writing courses must be modified to meet the requirements of a collaborative-oriented approach as distinct from an approach that portrays writing as a primarily individual activity hobbled by an ever-present risk of plagiarism.

Once the entire course is re-designed to foster more essential and integral collaboration, the next stage is to ensure that the format and objectives of the individual assignments within the large-scale framework of the course are consistent with this redesign. In Singular Texts / Plural Authors, Ede and Lunsford list six common characteristics of successful collaborative writing assignments:

- (1) They allow time for group cohesion (but not necessarily consensus) to emerge.
- (2) They call for or invite collaboration; students need to work together in order to complete the assignment effectively.
- (3) They allow for the evolution of group norms and the negotiation of authority and responsibility.
- (4) They allow for and encourage creative conflict and protect minority views.

- (5) They allow for peer and self-evaluation during and after the assignment.
- (6) They call on students to monitor and evaluate individual and group performance and to reflect on the processes that made for effective--or ineffective--collaboration (123).

The first step toward consistently meeting these objectives is to recognize the fundamental differences that exist between assignments targeted at individual writers working alone and writing tasks designed for collaborative work. In the former, social factors are often conceived of as largely extrinsic or secondary to some stages of the writing process. In the latter, these essential social factors are an integral part of both the design and completion of the assignment, as well as prominent concerns at all stages of the writing process. Consequently, the successful completion of assignments designed for collaborative contexts demands a significant social component rather than merely incorporating or tolerating this component; the assignments must be not only reformatted, but reformulated at the deepest and most basic conceptual level to meet new objectives.

The redesign of writing assignments along collaborative lines should consequently be from the ground up. Attempts to modify the existing structure of assignments in order to incorporate collaboration will most likely produce only

hybridized assignments that will not be effective in either the collaborative or the more traditional classroom. Such results will be satisfying to neither the opponents nor the proponents of collaborative writing, and may even inadvertently lead to greater frequency of "plagiarism," since students may have additional levels of confusion regarding text ownership heaped upon them. When fashioning "new and improved" collaborative assignments, therefore, writing teachers should incorporate--from the very beginning--an awareness of how these writing assignments are fundamentally different from those which valorize the role of the individual writer.

More specifically, placing students into a collaborative writing environment, which intrinsically includes a strong component of appreciable audience presence, makes audience more than an incidental consideration in the planning and development of a response to a writing assignment. Instead, social forces become the crucial shaping factor in student response to such assignments from the outset. Thus, the need to emphasize "audience awareness" as if it were a special concern apart from the composition process as a whole is eliminated.

The foregrounding of audience in this manner leads to several important consequences. By privileging the demands of audience in the overall course design, the goals of the course are inevitably redefined; rather than attempting to sequence assignments in order to first teach students how to "get their

thoughts straight" within their own heads before starting to write and therefore communicate, students are encouraged to start from the base of a social conception of knowledge even in their earliest writing efforts. Consequently, they may transcend the either / or reductionist paradigm represented by Linda Flower's distinction between reader-based and writer-based prose, and into a more holistic view of various rhetorical stances and modes of discourse. Working from this enriched and expanded base, writers can move more quickly and fluidly along the spectrum of increasing levels of audience awareness.

The same seamless approach presented by well-designed writing assignments that fully integrate and foreground social concerns can also be transferred to the evaluation and assessment of these assignments. If writing teachers foreground the evolving nature of audience in students' developing texts, they will be more fully aware of the need to assess the progress of this awareness at several stages rather than at only one or two pre-determined points. Similarly, students can be freed of the erroneous notion that "audience" is just another in a series of factors they must at some point consider and deal with; instead, it becomes an ongoing, relentless process that cannot be discontinued until the text reaches closure--however that may be defined.

My Personal Administrative Experience

During my two-year period of service as Assistant Director of Composition at the University of Tennessee, I had frequent opportunities to view the attitudes expressed toward plagiarism and collaboration by a wide range of students and instructors. Most commonly, the "plagiarism" cases that crossed my desk were better understood as reflections of a lack of clear understanding of the complex concepts of collaboration and plagiarism rather than examples of outright dishonesty or literary theft.

My administrative position between students, instructors and higher-level administrators allowed me to view the overlapping boundaries between plagiarism and collaboration from several different perspectives. Students accused of plagiarism were not always very elusive or apologetic about their offenses; quite often, they seemed surprisingly willing to confess their crimes--whatever these "crimes" were. In general, many offending students seemed willing to do whatever was required of them so that they could escape from the "plagiarism police" and get on with their lives.

For the most part, students' attempts to escape were complicated by the fact that they were somewhat in the dark about the nature of the charges leveled against them. The most common student attitude toward plagiarism seemed to be that only English teachers knew exactly what this odd word

"plagiarism" really denoted, so if this group of scholars had decided, for whatever arcane reason, that students had plagiarized, then the students probably had done so. Exactly what this "plagiarism" had or had not entailed in terms of concrete behavior often remained unclear to these students; many seemed to have developed a vague notion in high school that plagiarism was some sort of risky business that could get them into trouble, but they really hadn't given the concept much thought. In any event, these students' fallback position often seemed to be that they didn't really "mean to plagiarize"--whatever that was.

The other common student response I observed to charges of plagiarism was an all-purpose, blanket denial, which took the form of "I have no earthly idea about what you are charging me with, but whatever it is, I categorically deny doing it." This response frequently manifested itself as a shifting of the argument: if I accused the student of committing one offense--such as xeroxing and pasting whole articles into his or her essay without attribution--he or she would deny ever going near the library; if I accused the student of having his or her dorm mates write a paper, he or she would state that this would have been impossible because he or she had been in the library every waking moment for the last two months. Implicit in all these denials was the same basic thread that ran through the previous

set of alibis: a lack of awareness of what exactly is meant by the term "plagiarism."

Having access to the teacher's side of plagiarism cases was also enlightening. Several instructors clearly placed a great deal of importance on preventing students from committing plagiarism. This concern often manifested itself in elaborate, highly detailed, and eloquently written descriptions, definitions, and policy statements on the subject of "literary theft." Most often, however, these statements focused on punishments for plagiarism, with an occasional leavening of advice on how to avoid committing the offense. Only rarely were students presented written information on ways to use collaboration, peer editing, and the writing center effectively--both in terms of avoiding plagiarism and improving the general quality of their writing.

Significantly, a direct correlation seemed to exist between the time and effort spent in trying to prevent plagiarism and the number of plagiarism cases that cropped up. Often, those instructors who apparently devoted the most effort to fighting against plagiarism also appeared most often in my office to discuss plagiarism committed by their students. This situation was further complicated by the high degree of frustration often exhibited by these instructors--several seemed to be quite world-weary and despairing of ever being able to put a stop to this plague of plagiarism.

Official UT Policy

On a more official level, the plagiarism policy maintained by the University of Tennessee's English department is an illustrative example of a generally successful plagiarism policy. While not always perfect, the plagiarism policy at UTK has maintained a satisfactory level of effectiveness in recent years. To an extent, many of the features of this policy are typical of those I examined in chapter one. However, my personal experience in administration, combined with conversations with UT's Director of Composition, Dr. Linda Bense-Meyers, allowed me to gain a more detailed working understanding of this particular policy. In general, the plagiarism policy at UTK is a response to a situation in which an academic unit with a special stake in maintaining academic integrity--the English department--strives within the framework of the University system to accommodate and assimilate the demands of the larger academic community. The results of this interaction are a mixture of explicit written policy presented to students and instructors, implicit unwritten understandings between administrators and teachers, and essential human trust--not always upheld--between instructors and students.

The first element in this mixture--explicit written policy--is itself a combination of two disparate sources. Basically, the English department at UTK relies on the

University's honor code as published in Hilltopics, a free and widely distributed publication available to all entering students, to provide a general policy of "academic honesty." Within this framework, the Director of Composition assumes responsibility for promoting and enforcing this academic honesty as it relates specifically to questions of plagiarism, text ownership, and collaboration within the context of English Department courses.

This responsibility is discharged in several ways. First, teacher training through pre-semester workshops serves to familiarize prospective teachers with practical problems that may arise within the writing classroom before they occur. Next, the composition director works in the required tutorial for inexperienced teachers to reiterate and reinforce these initial attempts at familiarization, and to impress upon new teachers the necessity of including clear, specific, and workable statements on plagiarism in their syllabi. Finally, specific written documents--including the University honor statement as outlined in Hilltopics--are provided to instructors for distribution to their students.

The second major component of the UTK English department's plagiarism policy--unwritten, implied understandings between administrators and instructors--is somewhat more nebulous. Because these understandings are by their very nature implied rather than formulated, attempts to

make them explicit are likely to prove subjective and imprecise. Based on my own assessment, the first understanding seems to be that writing instructors will indeed take the time to discuss in detail individual plagiarism policies with their students, rather than simply passing out "official" statements, hoping for the best, and moving on. And, for the most part, this is indeed the case; few plagiarism cases seem to stem from basic dereliction of this duty by the instructor.

Secondly, instructors are assumed to be wise and prudent enough to take precautions in designing their assignments so that plagiarism is not encouraged by flaws in the basic assignment design itself. On this score, problems often arise, perhaps because of the tendency of hard-pressed instructors to rely occasionally on proven or canned assignments--such as "symbolism in Hawthorne"--rather than on writing tasks tailored specifically for the individual student and a distinct classroom situation. At the most basic level, the success of such implied understandings as these rests on whether individual teachers take their responsibilities as gatekeepers against plagiarism seriously enough to actually address such concerns, and work them into their already busy schedules.

The final major component of the UTK English Department's plagiarism policy is the most nebulous and hardest to manage. Essentially, no plagiarism policy can be effective without an element of goodwill and cooperation among the

student body. Certainly, draconian penalties can be used to punish transgressors, but such penalties can deal with the issue only at a superficial level by reacting to a completed product and attempting to make examples of students. Such a response can at best address only symptoms rather than causes, and can at worst create a strongly adversarial relationship between students and teachers. Ultimately, the crucial factor in determining the effectiveness of such plagiarism policies is whether or not students bring into the classroom a basic awareness of what does and does not constitute honest human behavior, as well as a willingness to enact this honesty within the actual classroom context.

In the absence of these essentials, a writing teacher can be faced with a situation such as that faced by a UTK graduate teaching associate during Spring Semester, 1992. During this semester, this GTA was faced with a group of students in second semester Freshman Composition who all followed the same basic pattern of plagiarism. According to the instructor, both the general assignment design and explicit plagiarism policy should have been adequate to prevent "accidental" plagiarism in his class; the only contingency he didn't allow for was outright, intentional dishonesty on the part of his students.

While this particular instructor admits that he could have fine-tuned both his assignment design and his written plagiarism policies, in his judgement the driving force in these

cases was an active intent to deceive on the part of the offending students--who blatantly attempted to recycle old research papers and pass them off as their own. When confronted with accusations by their instructor, most of the students simply dug in their heels and denied all until the bitter end. Ultimately, only one of these students "confessed"--but not until pressure was brought to bear from outside the English department by the office of Student Conduct.

Conclusion

Problems are often easier to isolate than solutions. In this chapter, I have attempted to bring to writing teachers' attention several of the more serious practical problems resulting from confusion over the basic terms existing in the areas of overlap between "collaboration" and "plagiarism." I have also offered my own assessment of the possible causes of these problems. A preliminary effort has also been made to point the way toward possible solutions to these problems; more specific efforts to resolve these concerns will be made in Chapter Five. But the focus throughout this chapter has been to offer several options rather than any one "best" option; a major theme of this research effort has been the necessity of maintaining the flexibility needed to deal with defining terms and designing policy in the teaching of writing--an enterprise that is heavily dependent on context. In any event, the state of

writing instruction at present is too nebulous to arrive at any one solution to the complex set of problems under discussion. The teaching of writing--like the process of writing itself--should never lose touch with vital social forces.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Making transitions from an error-based pedagogy that stresses the dangers of a vaguely defined "plagiarism" to one that emphasizes the learning potential and rhetorical effectiveness of more clearly defined "collaboration" will produce a variety of problems, as a series of questions caused by the overlap of these paired terms confronts writing teachers and administrators. I will argue in this chapter that solutions to these problems either already exist or can be worked out within a reasonable time frame. Resolution of the conflicts along the boundaries between collaboration and plagiarism is at least partly contingent on the decision of writing teachers to work toward more effective use of collaborative writing techniques.

Once a decision of this nature has been made, educators can make significant progress in clarifying points of confusion. But because writing in all its guises is heavily dependent on context, no one set of guidelines can be practical and effective for all contexts. However, specific problems often do have specific solutions. In this chapter I will discuss a few of these specific problems, using them as exemplars and scenarios to show how socially based composition strategies can be used to improve the teaching of writing while reducing the dangers of plagiarism.

One specific classroom problem is the tendency of students to think of plagiarism as a pernicious phenomenon detectable only after the fact. This mistaken impression can be counteracted by examining evolving texts for illustrative evidence of the principles by which both plagiarism and acceptable imitation are governed. In this scenario, instructors would not wait until a text had been "completed" before they take appropriate measures to channel the student's writing efforts in the most effective direction. Such an approach should allow students and teachers to detect signs of developing plagiarism in an evolving text while time remains available to deflect the essential social forces of the composition process onto a more appropriate collaborative course.

This strategy could be enacted by scheduling several specific "plagiarism checkpoints" during the evolution of a writing task--especially tasks such as research papers, which often seem to lead students astray into plagiarism. For example, as a supplement to the standard revision routine, one of the priorities on a workshop day might be to discuss with students sources of imitation being drawn upon in their drafts, as well as any potential problems with plagiarism relevant for that specific draft of the specific assignment then underway. Once these problems are identified in "midstream," and therefore granted a more tangible, specific existence, they should be easier to deal with. Additionally, such an approach

gives student authors opportunities to internalize the often standardized distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable imitation--to learn the difference between "knowing that" and "knowing how."

More Tangible Audience Present at Every Stage

Placing students into a collaborative writing environment which inherently includes a strong component of appreciable audience awareness can transform "audience" into more than an incidental factor in the planning and development of responses to writing assignments. Instead, "audience awareness" becomes the crucial shaping factor in students' writing activities from the outset. Thus, any tendency to emphasize awareness of audience as if it were a special concern apart from the normal composition process is reduced.

The foregrounding of audience awareness in this manner leads to several important consequences. By foregrounding the demands of audience in the overall course design, the goals of the course are necessarily redefined; rather than attempting to help students "get their thoughts straight" before starting to write and therefore communicating with others, teachers who use this approach encourage students to start from the base of social construction of knowledge. Consequently, they are freed to move beyond the reductionist paradigm represented by Linda Flower's distinction between reader-based and writer-based

prose. Such a perspective, while a valuable heuristic, can also cause students to think of the writing process as a one-way, linear system with no appreciable opportunity for feedback. Conceiving of collaboration as a comprehensive model which allows for multiple entry of varying shades of audience awareness during the writing process promotes a more holistic view of various rhetorical stances and modes of discourse. Working from this enriched and expanded base, writers can move more quickly and fluidly along the spectrum from their initial efforts at "writer-based prose" to increasing levels of audience awareness--as expressed in several stages of "reader-based prose."

The same seamless approach presented by a well-designed collaborative writing assignment based on the awareness and skillful manipulation of social forces can also be transferred to the evaluation and assessment of these assignments. If writing teachers foreground the steadily evolving nature of the presence of audience in students' developing texts, they should be more fully aware of the need to assess the progress of this awareness at several distinct stages rather than at only one or two pre-determined points. Similarly, students should be better prepared to avoid the erroneous notion that "audience" is just one more factor in a long series which they must consider, deal with, and then forget about during the course of a writing class. Instead, meeting the demands of an audience becomes an ongoing

process that cannot be discontinued until the text reaches closure--however that may be defined.

Follow-up and Response to Assignments

The constant, more fully integrated participation of teachers and students as they grapple with social concerns at several stages of the writing process encourages a broader and more inclusive view of writing. By involving all participants in the inception, shaping, and evaluation of a text, teachers can use the classroom environment to simulate the larger rhetorical realm in which all texts are fluid and constantly evolving. A more complex dialectic can thus be created, rather than a one-way communicative arrow. Because the fully incorporated collaborative model can be used to allow students more room to thrash about productively in their quest to meet the rhetorical constraints and exigencies of a given rhetorical situation, a possibly oppressive power structure is thus altered as well. That is, a strongly collaborative approach reduces the danger of teachers cutting off prematurely a student's line of inquiry and development. Thus, this line of development is more likely to be maintained long enough for social forces to enter fully and constructively.

At present, official policy generally dictates that student writers must at some point be asked not just to examine and offer some form of evaluation of each others' evolving texts, but

also to make these texts available for more formal evaluation by their instructors--they must be held accountable and *graded* based on the quality of the work they produce. In the case of a text produced "individually," assigning grades seems simple and straightforward: each paper receives one grade according to its own distinctive merits. But in the collaborative writing classroom, new complications are presented--multiple authors are often involved in the production of a text, and some form of multiple, group, or shared grades often seems to be called for.

But this conclusion assumes that assigning responsibility and receiving credit is always necessary in all kinds of writing assignments. Such a conclusion may not be fully warranted. At least within the context of the writing classroom, evaluations in response to rhetorical acts are not always necessary or even constructive. The persistence of an assumption that all texts must receive a valid individual grade reflects the materialistic perspective which takes for granted that all rhetorical acts must at some point be grounded in the "real world" of tangible reward or penalty. Perhaps some rhetorical acts--such as invention drafts--have sufficient justification for their creation and existence on their own terms, and no attempt to evaluate or assess these acts from a context outside the rhetorical act is necessary. Therefore, the question of how to grade group writing efforts of this sort may lose much significance.

Relation of these Concepts to the Production of Writing

One response to a call for writing courses to meet the demands of "real-world" writing is to carefully examine what is meant by this term. Even if one assumes that the only legitimate application of writing skills outside the classroom is to communicate a writer's thoughts directly along the axis writer-text-reader, the enhanced access to audience awareness at all stages of the writing process provided by collaborative techniques can be used to justify their use. At the very least, skillful employment of these strategies has considerable potential of enabling writers to communicate their thoughts more clearly to readers.

However, justification on these grounds may not be essential. The range and application of writing in the "real world" is more diverse than is generally acknowledged; communicating one's meaning clearly and directly is only one of many possible applications for students' writing skills. Consequently, collaborative writing can also be justified by pointing out that these techniques expose writers to a greater variety of writing contexts and strategies than those approaches which stress individual authorship. The effective employment of collaborative writing strategies better equips student writers to successfully complete a wider range of rhetorical tasks, including those functions common in business and professional writing--such as writing in teams.

Collaboration within the writing classroom thus enables students to derive benefits that extend far beyond the parameters of the standard classroom environment.

Possible Approaches to Dealing with Collaborative Grading Problems

Redesigning the assignments that prompt final grades is essential to meeting the demands of the changed grading environment occasioned by collaborative writing strategies. Such a step will often require a major overhaul of the initial conception and design of writing assignments. As pointed out earlier, incorporating a few minor, mid-course corrections into the framework of pre-existing assignments is not enough; if collaborative writing techniques are to have a fair chance to work, the specific assignment must be "collaborative" from the pre-writing stage through the moment the assignment is turned in. In addition, assignments should be designed so that the evaluation and response of the instructor, peer editors, and tutors can also be developed from within a collaborative framework.

Knowledge of the basic principles of group dynamics is essential for the incorporation of such effective collaborative work. An atmosphere that fosters dialectic but avoids destructive confrontation is ideal, but such a perfect atmosphere is often difficult to maintain. Often, a vocal

minority--or even a single student--can be a dominating or even suffocating presence in what should be a balanced peer group environment which reflects a larger collaborative context. In "Consensus and Difference in Collaborative Learning," John Trimbur acknowledges these problems by pointing out the need to "Distinguish between consensus as an acculturative practice that reproduces business as usual and consensus as an oppositional one that challenges . . . [and offers] a critical instrument to open gaps in the conversation through which differences may emerge" (27).

One possible approach to dealing with design difficulties inherent in peer group interaction is to replicate within the framework of these groups the dynamics of the larger discourse community within which a writing assignment is designed. For example, elements of a hypothesized audience that would be hostile to the viewpoint expressed in an essay could be represented in a given peer group; such elements could serve as an embodiment of specific real-world components of a paper's audience. Designing such "micro-audiences" requires a more precise and detailed understanding of both the rhetorical exigencies of a rhetorical act and the techniques for replicating these exigencies in the specific context of the collaborative writing classroom.

An important principle in redesigning and reformatting the responses given to student writing in a collaborative context is

to remember that a wider range of assignments should necessarily call forth a wider range of evaluative responses. Considerable adjustments need to be made in writing teachers' evaluative responses to evolving drafts as compared to their reactions to finished products; since closure has not yet been reached on a given text, the bulk of instructor comments should be directed to how students can improve their texts by more successfully accounting for social and collaborative concerns as the text evolves.

A major benefit of a collaborative perspective is this essentially future-directed nature of instructor comments on student writing. This orientation toward what remains to be done rather than on what has already been completed counters a common tendency among instructors to focus comments on the past rather than on the future. Since closure has in fact--rather than merely in principle--been delayed by the application of collaborative techniques, evaluative comments made during this strategic delay should consequently take into account future textual concerns. The tendency to neglect future concerns or limit such comments to a merely pro-forma condition is thereby avoided.

A potential additional criterion for assigning grades in the collaborative classroom is the degree of skill and knowledge of collaborative writing techniques demonstrated by students. If instructors do indeed decide to make collaborative learning

techniques a major component of their classes, they will probably want to ensure that their students make serious efforts to learn these techniques. One way to accomplish this goal is to devote several class meetings to instruction in the basic skills and techniques--from the student's perspective--of collaborative learning strategies, and then to evaluate these students on their ability to work with these strategies.

But instructors need to be careful on this point; collaborative learning strategies should rarely be promoted as ends in themselves. Instead, they should be presented as means toward the more crucial objective of producing "effective writing"--however *that* may be defined. Thus, lessons in collaboration versus plagiarism should rarely be delivered in a contextual vacuum; in general, these lessons should be carefully connected to "live" writing assignments tied to specific social contexts. In so doing, instructors should be able to ensure that collaboration is not presented as any kind of universal good any more than plagiarism has often been thought of as some form of universal evil.

Alternative Strategies for Determining Plagiarism

An alternative structure for determining what constitutes permissible imitation might be to draw boundaries between collaboration and plagiarism by consensus. This consensus would involve not only those traditionally empowered--teachers and administrators--but also the students themselves. After

all, students are often the most directly involved parties in these issues. Since they are most often the recipients of penalties for transgressing the boundaries between collaboration and plagiarism, these same students also stand to derive the greatest benefits from clear illustration, explanation, and understanding of how to avoid committing the crime of plagiarism. Perhaps such awareness can be promoted most effectively by student participation in the actual drafting and enforcement of consistent plagiarism policies.

Involving students so intimately in this process can also lead to several dangers. For example, if all students--or even just a simple majority--fail to take their responsibilities as writers seriously enough, then the quality of writing produced in the collaborative writing classroom might not only fail to improve, but even decline. Such an air of sloppiness could potentially poison the atmosphere of the entire course, as well as lead to distorted understandings of the processes of collaborative writing that could remain with students long after the semester ends.

The key to preventing such negative outcomes is to provide students specific training in the theory and practice of collaborative writing. Ideally, once students have received such training, they should be nearly as capable as their instructors in determining the boundaries between permissible and forbidden forms of imitation. Once this level of expertise has been

reached, the instructor can then work with the students to establish workable, effective boundaries within the context of the specific discourse community represented by a given classroom environment.

The type of training students receive to prepare them to make informed judgements about what constitutes plagiarism is crucial. This training should not emphasize a prescriptive, superficial definition by negation, which merely points out what sort of texts should *not* be produced or which research strategies are *not* allowed within the classroom environment. Instead, students should be taught to evaluate the writing of their peers to determine if this writing is closer to plagiarism or collaboration at deeper levels which take into account comprehensive perceptions of redefined concepts such as authorship, originality, and imitation. This "learning by doing" has the potential to give students skills they will continue to find useful long after they have left the writing classroom.

A major question remaining to be addressed is determining the extent to which a specific text can control and define the collaborative limits of a given rhetorical situation. If the standards for acceptable collaboration actually precede and are independent from the conditions, shape, and form of a given text, then the guidelines for distinguishing this acceptability can take a general or comprehensive form that crosses context boundaries. If, on the other hand, the relationship between the

text and the social forces that shape it is so intricate that continual interplay occurs between these forces and the text throughout its evolution, defining the limits of acceptable collaboration becomes more complex.

Determining the dynamics of this interplay between writer, text, and social context is difficult; the configuration of these dynamics most likely changes from moment to moment in a ceaseless interplay. Consequently, the failure of any one, all-inclusive definition of plagiarism to work in all cases becomes easy to explain--such an attempt at definition excludes the very situational elements that are essential to valid definitions of plagiarism. Therefore, any useful redefinition of plagiarism must contain within itself enough adaptability and flexibility to allow it to prove useful in the ever-shifting realm of writing.

But even if the intertextual dynamics of plagiarism and collaboration are indeed as complex as we can imagine in the most intricate scenario, specific guidelines for certain invariant elements of the collaborative writing context can be specified. Collaborating on the production of texts always implies greater and more explicit involvement of social forces than what has been commonly referred to as individual authorship. A more complex dynamic of power relationships is also clearly present--the borderline between an isolated author and a discrete reader must be rendered much more ambiguous. Additionally, a given text tends to remain more plastic and

flexible during the course of a collaborative writing situation than it normally does during the production of a text in a more individualized and "socially isolated" environment.

If and when new boundaries between collaboration and plagiarism are established, their appearance will probably fluctuate according to the constraints and exigencies of each specific rhetorical situation. Consequently, no distinct, invariant set of recognizable features is likely to be isolated at any time in the foreseeable future. Developing functional definitions based on exactly how a text interacts with the other elements of the rhetorical situation is probably the most promising avenue for establishing new boundaries. In some writing situations, more "plagiarism" might be permissible--or even desirable--while in others, a more traditional, by-the-book prohibition against excessive collaboration might be appropriate. Such a flexible approach offers the potential of opening up possibilities for later definition and conclusions rather than closing them off prematurely.

Illustrative Scenarios for Distinguishing Between Collaboration and Plagiarism

Several typical--albeit fictional--scenarios in which the boundaries between collaboration and plagiarism become problematic illustrate the relevance of the general guidelines discussed earlier. The following fictional scenarios have been

structured to highlight the importance of working within the shifting contexts of evolving texts, as well as stressing the crucial importance of deception and other inequalities of power in determining plagiarism. All four of these scenarios represent what could be called plagiarism under certain definitions of the term, but only two would qualify under the revised definitions recommended in this research effort.

Scenario One

Classroom collaboration--peer critiques received in class workshop create multiple authorship.

In this scenario, a teacher has structured a class so that each day represents a step in the writing process--day one represents an invention workshop, day two is a drafting workshop, day three offers a chance for revision, and so on. Midway through the semester, a student submits a final draft of a paper for evaluation. While reading this paper, the instructor notices a startling shift in tone. Knowing that the student who has submitted the paper is a struggling writer who has previously demonstrated major problems with organization, the instructor is amazed at the complex and professional manner in which the middle four paragraphs of this paper are organized.

Upon questioning, the student admits that not only was the organizational pattern of the paper borrowed wholesale after reading the well-organized draft of another student during a

peer editing session, but several of the sentences which appeared in the final draft were word-for-word transcriptions written in the margins of an earlier draft by the student colleague who "just wanted to speed things up a little." The student also explains that he borrowed his paper's structure after his colleague pointed out that "readers like to be able to follow along in a one-two-three sort of structure because it seems to make the writer more friendly." The student apologizes for any misunderstanding, but states that he thought "this was what was supposed to happen during peer group work."

This instance does not qualify as plagiarism because the student's argument is essentially sound--what happened to his paper is supposed to happen during peer editing. One could argue about the precise mechanics of the imitative and collaborative processes which were involved in this scenario--for example, the awkward manner in which the "helping" student took matters into his or her own hands--but these mechanical details are not of crucial importance. The instructor might take advantage of the student's confusion by delivering a brief contextual explanation of how he could improve his collaborative skills in similar future situations, but the essential determining factors in this situation are that students were successfully exposed to embodied social forces in the form of peer editors while the text was still fluid and in the process of evolution. Thus, the information exchanged during the peer editing session was for

all practical purposes still in the public domain, and is therefore subject to the judicial principle of "fair use." After exposure to the collaborative forces presented during this classroom editing session, the primary author still had to develop his power of judgement to select which social forces to incorporate into the text and which to disregard. Because the power relationships throughout were generally well-balanced and equitable, because the "borrowing" occurred before the text reached closure, and because no intent to deceive on the part of the student is indicated, this case represents successful collaboration--even though the student's work was not entirely "his own."

Scenario Two

Writing center collaboration--multiple authorship resulting from participation of textually unacknowledged tutors

On the first day of a freshman composition course, an instructor advises her students to visit the writing center as often as possible, and even promises some form of "extra credit" for these visits. During the final month of the semester, a student who has been making a steady stream of "C's" turns in a well organized, clearly written essay full of perceptive observations and intelligent discussion. The instructor doesn't feel comfortable assigning the "A minus" that the paper appears to deserve, so she summons the student to a conference.

During the course of the conference, the student explains that he had recently begun to receive severe pressure from his parents to raise his grades. Consequently, he decided to seek "extra help"--in accordance with his teacher's earlier advice--by visiting the writing center. Once in the center, he was so impressed by the wide range of services available that he subsequently worked through three drafts of his recent essay with one of the center's more accomplished tutors. This tutor worked for several hours on improving the student's writing skills, and offered multiple options for many specific improvements to incorporate into the essay. To an extent, the tutor's deep involvement in the production of this text makes him an unacknowledged co-author.

Nevertheless, this scenario should not be classified as plagiarism because all parties involved were essentially acting in good faith within the boundaries of collaboration. That is, the instructor advised the student to get extra help in the writing center, the student acted in accordance with the advice of his senior collaborator (the teacher), and the tutor carried out his job as peer collaborator to the best of his abilities. Therefore, no intent to deceive was present. The fact that the student's work showed a sudden quantum leap in quality should not deprive him of the grade earned by honest use of the resources at hand--even though, as in the previous case, much of the work submitted was not strictly "his own."

Scenario Three

True Plagiarism--Text stolen from library to avoid doing work in response to assignment: "Symbolism in American Literature"

On the final day of the semester, a teacher of second semester freshman composition receives a term paper written in response to the assignment: "Discuss the use of symbolism in the works of a major American author." This term paper not only displays considerable insight and sophisticated analytic powers, but also is written in a rather stuffy academic jargon. Suspecting that the paper is too strongly derivative of articles published in professional journals, the instructor checks the student's bibliography, which, while it contains the minimum number of requisite sources, seems inadequate for such a finely crafted and polished work of literary criticism. These suspicions are strengthened when the instructor reviews the student's previous work and notices a consistent inability to use other writers' work to support his own analysis.

Suspecting that the student garnered more "outside help" than is indicated by the brevity of the "Works Cited" page, the instructor accuses the student of plagiarizing. The student denies any wrongdoing, pointing to the three sources cited in her "bibliography" page as evidence that she did indeed properly credit her sources. The student also attributes her sudden improvement to last minute editorial help from "her father's

secretary." But after discovering that several paragraphs in the paper are reproduced word-for-word from an article not listed in the Works Cited and that the student's father doesn't even have a secretary, the instructor formally accuses the student of plagiarism.

This incident does in fact qualify as plagiarism because the student has apparently willfully deceived the instructor and purposefully abused the collaborative and social resources available. Thus, an intent to deceive has been demonstrated. If the student had at least taken the trouble to fashion a pastiche of several critical authors and then vaguely listed them in the works cited page, this incident could have been written off as faulty documentation form. But, as best as can be reasonably determined, the cause of this failure to properly attribute credit to essential co-authors was not lack of time or knowledge, but an attempt to profit--receive a good grade--without completing the necessary work to earn this profit. Even more important, the plagiarist short-circuited the vital learning process of using her own judgement to effectively incorporate imitation and other social forces into her collaborative writing skills. Instead, the authors of the critical works unfairly appropriated and the teacher who was deceived have been manipulated in an unbalanced power situation.

Scenario Four

True Plagiarism: Overloaded student pays roommate to write complete essay for him

A student who has maintained a "B" average throughout the semester must take five exams within one week. Even though this student believes he has the ability to write a passing essay for his English class, he decides that he just does not have the time. Knowing that his roommate is a competent writer with a "C" average--and that he is desperately in need of cash--the original student skips the required peer-editing sessions and then offers the roommate ten dollars if he will write the essay for him.

After reading this essay, the instructor notices major shifts in tone, diction, and syntactic structures compared to other work submitted in this student's name. A perceptible drop in quality is also present--instead of the solid "B" level of work the instructor had expected, the paper is at best a "C minus." Finally, the instructor decides to summon the student to a conference after realizing that several of the political opinions expressed in the paper are diametrically opposed to the opinions expressed in earlier papers written by this student.

During the conference, the student--fearing punishment for his plagiarism--denies any wrongdoing and storms out of the instructor's office. He rushes to a telephone, calls his roommate and extorts a promise from the second student to

"cover for him." However, the fear expressed by the original student has an opposite effect from that intended; concerned by the apparent gravity of the situation, the second student goes to the instructor and confesses everything.

This scenario qualifies as plagiarism on at least two grounds. First, it violates the rules of the collaborative classroom because the plagiarizing student neglected opportunities available for legitimate incorporation of social forces--peer editing--in favor of a forbidden means of gaining access to these forces--hiring someone else to do the necessary work for him. Second, several inequalities of power are present: the student's roommate is exploited and then threatened, and the instructor is lied to. Once again, an intent to deceive has been demonstrated beyond a reasonable doubt. In this situation, no alternative to punishment for plagiarism appears to exist.

Recommendations and Assessment for Adjusting Policies

On a broader scale, the data in response to the survey of selected colleges and universities examined in chapter one points toward measures which would make the "official" plagiarism policies necessary to regulate such cases as those described above more effective, comprehensive, and constructive. First, English departments need to make greater efforts to ensure that official plagiarism policies which address most conceivable--or at least the most probable--scenarios are actually on the books in official documents in

writing. Secondly, efforts should be made to ensure that all crucial aspects of policies are spelled out explicitly in order to avoid loopholes and misunderstandings that can lead to legal complications--experience has shown that once these legal complications become a reality, the written word often becomes the deciding factor. Third, revisions need to be made in these policies to reflect a contemporary theoretical and pedagogical perspective that takes into account the rapid changes in writing instruction currently underway.

Specifically, clear and more positive reference should be made to the effectiveness of writing centers, peer editing, and collaboration, and clear advice should also be presented so that writing teachers will be encouraged to use these strategies rather than to just acknowledge their existence. Any negative references to these collaborative strategies should also be deleted. Finally, less emphasis should be placed on punishment and penalties--at least until the "crime" of literary theft is more clearly delineated, or until a more solid consensus evolves. At the very least, a concerted effort should be made to separate the relatively small component of "criminal" plagiarism committed with a conscious intent to deceive and profit from the more common--and ethically less offensive--accidental plagiarism. Once such distinctions are made, those cases of plagiarism in which someone clearly benefited at the expense of another can be dealt with more sternly and consistently.

In general, the academic realm's plagiarism policies--both inside and outside the classroom--should be adjusted so that they evolve at roughly the same rate as do the theoretical foundations of these policies within the field of rhetoric and composition. Toward this end, teachers and administrators should realize that the most useful and practical plagiarism policies are those which acknowledge that "dictionary definitions"--while a valuable shorthand--are too static and inflexible to be totally comprehensive and universally applicable to all writing contexts. Room to accommodate and adjust should be built into plagiarism policies so that these policies will have the greatest potential for dealing effectively with issues associated with plagiarism and collaboration. Efforts should also be made to ensure that the written manifestations of these policies are not only useful in preventing the "crime" of plagiarism, but also in encouraging more effective teaching--particularly in terms of promoting collaborative writing.

In making such transitions and adjustments, educators should be guided by considerations of how they can best keep pace with the large-scale currents of intellectual history, rather than by discerning how to cling to a misplaced semantic loyalty toward the increasingly outmoded concept of "plagiarism." The latter response places these instructors in the untenable position of defending a concept (plagiarism)

whose time may have passed against irresistible forces presented by an idea whose time has come--collaborative writing. A response that essentially reduces to "this is the way it has always been done" is not only indefensible but--as a review of rhetorical history shows--historically inaccurate. In reality, a perspective that valorizes the individual writer working in social isolation is not an accurate representation of how most effective writing has been produced in any age.

Collaborative writing is sometimes portrayed as a radical new pedagogy that has the potential for undermining the foundations of our rhetorical and educational heritage. However, a careful analysis of the present state of the profession, together with a more fully developed awareness of the rhetorical heritage that lies behind this state, produces a different conclusion. Far from being a radical new pedagogy, the conceptual and ideological roots of collaborative writing reach back to the most distant recesses of classical rhetoric, extending to many of the sophists.

Given this reality, writing teachers should resist the urge to defend collaborative writing strategies as departures from established and approved norms. The epistemological perspective that conceives of knowledge as essentially socially constructed is by no means a recent development; in fact, the valorizing of originality, "native genius," and individual authorship is largely a relatively recent development in the

history of rhetoric. Consequently, writing teachers should not feel obligated to justify collaborative techniques against the backdrop of romantic and "expressionistic" models of discourse which tend to promote originality and individualism at the expense of imitation and group authorship.

In more specific terms, educators need to work toward fuller incorporation of collaborative learning techniques into the writing classroom. With the modifications of definitions of "self," "originality," "authorship," "text," "collaboration," and "plagiarism" offered by this research project in mind, writing teachers should take advantage of the pedagogical opportunities presented by application of collaborative learning strategies for every stage of the writing process. The steps which appear to have the greatest potential for producing effective writing within the context of each particular classroom writing situation should now be taken, without the handicap of speculating at every turn about whether the increasingly archaic standards of plagiarism have been violated.

As for plagiarism itself, the term should be reserved exclusively for reference to those cases of multiple authorship in which unequal power relationships--including deception, exploitation, and theft of text--are present. Therefore, the participation of more than one author in the creation of a text should never serve as grounds *by itself* for accusations of plagiarism. Instead, this multiple authorship must be

accompanied by abuse of the standard conventions of collaborative writing in order to qualify as unethical. Without all the obscuring cases of excessive collaboration and improper documentation form shrouding our vision and diverting our attention, the relatively small remainder of student writing situations which are clear instances of outright theft and dishonesty can be dealt with more effectively.

Essentially, the major task of this research project has been to bring about a closer alignment between theory and practice. The relationship of these two fundamental factors of writing instruction is in no way opposite or contradictory, but rather reciprocal--practice should inform theory in the same way that theory informs practice. One of the central points made in this project is that practice indicates that the prevailing, most commonly accepted definitions of plagiarism and collaboration need to be modified. Failure to bring theory and practice into closer alignment on these issues may lead not only to ineffective instruction, but also to increasing isolation of the academic realm from the "real world" that supports and lends meaning to this realm.

Once clearer and more workable definitions have been advanced, supported, and refined, the next task will be to ensure that practice keeps pace with a well-informed, broadly based, and consistent body of theory. Thus, the burden of effective writing instruction shifts back to where it should always rest:

classroom teachers and their students. Equipped with a more congenial fit between theory and practice, writing teachers should be better prepared to allow their students--without needless apology or justification--access to the full range of social forces that play crucial roles at every stage of the writing process. In so doing, new avenues may open for ensuring a more efficacious fit between the "private" world of the student writer, and the "public" world of the discourse community.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Dear _____

I am currently working on a research project which deals with definitions of plagiarism and collaboration, and how these definitions often overlap. As part of this process, I am gathering data from a variety of schools on official definitions of these terms within English and Communication Departments, Schools of Liberal Arts, and the larger University as a whole. More specifically, I am interested in official policy statements, guidelines, honor codes and the like which address the question of what does and does not constitute plagiarism within the academic community.

Would you please send me any information that might be helpful in furthering my research? I am most interested in Departmental statements on "plagiarism" and honor codes. A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. I would greatly appreciate your cooperation as I continue my research toward my dissertation.

Sincerely,

Henry L. Wilson

VITA

Henry Wilson was born May 23, 1956 in Knoxville, Tennessee. After entering the University of Tennessee in 1982, he completed a B. A. in English with a concentration in creative writing in June, 1985. He remained at UT-Knoxville until June, 1987, when he received his Masters degree in English, with an emphasis in writing. After graduation, Mr. Wilson accepted a position as an English instructor at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina. In August, 1989, he returned to the University of Tennessee, where he served as assistant director of composition while completing the PH.D. requirements. At UT-Knoxville, Mr. Wilson worked in the writing center, taught freshman composition and technical communication, and tutored MBA students. After earning his doctorate, Mr. Wilson accepted a position as Assistant Professor of English at Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois.