

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF AUTHORSHIP:
AN INVESTIGATION OF SUBJECTIVITY AND RHETORICAL AUTHORITY IN
THE COLLEGE WRITING CLASSROOM

by

JOHANNAH RODGERS

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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Sondra Perl

Date

Chair of Examining Committee

Steven Kruger

Date

Executive Officer

Ira Shor

David Greetham

Sondra Perl

Supervisory Committee
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

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by

Johannah Rodgers

Advisor: Dr. Sondra Perl

Although we use the term *author* on a daily basis to refer to certain individuals, bodies of work, and systems of ideas, as Michel Foucault and other critics have pointed out, attempting to answer the question “What is an Author?” is by no means a simple proposition. And, starting from the position that there is no single, or definitive answer to this complex question, my dissertation seeks to contribute to the ongoing discussion of the genealogy of authorship by investigating the ways in which conceptions of the author have informed models of the writing subject in the field of rhetoric and composition and the ways in which composition students define and relate to these models.

Drawing on the work of literary critics, cultural theorists, legal scholars, and book historians, the dissertation first reviews the major theoretical frames offered by to interpret the unique status and history of the term *author*, and the ways in which rhetoric and composition scholars from a range of theoretical positions--current-traditional, expressionist, cognitivist, new rhetorical/social-epistemic—have relied on models of the author to describe student writing subjects.

Secondly, the dissertation presents and analyzes the findings from a 2005 qualitative study of ten composition students at The City College of New York. Key issues that are investigated include: 1) How students define the terms *author* and *writer*; 2) The reasons why

students consistently apply, or do not apply, these terms to themselves; 3) If those students who conceive of themselves as *writers* or *authors* have a different relationship to writing, or various aspects of writing, than students who do not, i.e., a different relationship to audience, rhetorical strategies, technical writing issues; 4) Specific moments in which students achieve an authoritative relationship to writing and how they describe the conditions and circumstances of such moments; 5) If publication and distribution of student work may facilitate a change in a student's relationship to writing, or the conception of him- or herself during the writing process.

**The Social Construction of Authorship:
An Investigation of Subjectivity and Rhetorical Authority in the College Writing Classroom**

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Introduction

AUTHOR. *n. s.* [*auctor*, Lat.] The first beginner or mover. *Hooker*. The efficient. *Shak*. The first writer of any thing. *Dryden*. A writer in general. *Shakespeare*.

—Samuel Johnson’s *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755)

[I]n our culture, the name of an author is a variable that accompanies only certain texts to the exclusion of others: a private letter may have a signatory, but it does not have an author; a contract can have an underwriter, but not an author; and, similarly, an anonymous poster attached to a wall may have a writer, but he cannot be an author. In this sense, the function of an author is to characterize the existence, circulation and operation of certain discourses within a society.

—Michel Foucault, “What is an Author?” (1969)

There are few terms or concepts as central to literary and composition studies as the *author*. However, to ask the question of what an *author* is raises a number of questions that have yet to be definitively answered:¹ Is an author the same thing as a writer? Is everyone an author? Is anyone an author? The apparent simplicity of these questions makes them all the more unnerving, while the inextricable importance of the term *author* to academic discourse makes them all the more pressing. At the center of contemporary critical debates about authorship lies the question of whether an author is best described as an individual solely responsible for the creation of a unique body of work, or as a cultural function that emerges out of the circulation and interpretation of work attributed to one individual. Although it has been almost forty years since Roland Barthes pronounced the “death of the author,” there is hardly critical consensus regarding the issue. On one side are those critics who reject the very possibility of the “death of the author,” and who cannot conceive of the

¹ In fact, even the etymological root of the word *author* is the subject of some debate. See Appendix D for a discussion of this issue.

discipline of English as being organized around any concept except The Author as originary genius. On the other side are those critics who continue the poststructural critique of authorship initiated by Barthes and Foucault by illustrating the variability of the status and definition of the author in different historical periods, and by proposing that the author is best defined as a convenient fiction, or character, produced by various discourses to organize the study, circulation, and interpretation of texts.

The relevance of the authorship debates to the study and interpretation of literature, to the discipline of English, as well as to copyright law and to critical legal studies is quite clear. However, the relevance of these debates to the study and teaching of rhetoric and composition continues to be a subject of inquiry. Since the late 1980s various critics, notably David Bartholomae, Karen LeFevre, Lisa Ede, Andrea S. Lunsford, and Susan Miller, have been investigating the relationship between poststructural critiques of the author and the field of rhetoric and composition. More recent work by Timothy J. Murnen, John Logie, and Rebecca Moore Howard has continued to address issues related to authorship and the study and teaching of writing. This dissertation considers how and why the authorship debates matter to the discipline of rhetoric and composition by first analyzing the ways in which conceptions of the author have informed models of the writing subject in composition theory and pedagogy, and secondly by investigating how college writing students define and relate to the terms and suppositions deployed by these models.

Though I am fascinated by historical variations in conceptions of the author, as well as by the ongoing theoretical debates concerning the issue, it was a much more concrete dilemma that initiated the inauguration of a dissertation devoted to authorship. I became interested in the term *author* as it related to the teaching of writing at the college level and to whether there might be some relationship between defining oneself as an author and one's

ability to write authoritatively. In the course of my research, I would be informed by the students I interviewed as part of a qualitative study that my hypothesis was fundamentally flawed. No one, I was told, writes as an author. Nevertheless, the interviews and my ongoing research into the topic of authorship led to the investigation of several important questions related, though different, from the ones that initiated my inquiry: First, how has the *author* been defined and applied in the field of composition and rhetoric; secondly, how do conceptions of the *author* relate to suppositions that inform models of the writing subject and practices of teaching writing at the college level; thirdly, how do students define and relate to the term *author* and other terms used to designate or describe the writing subject; and finally, is there a relationship between a student's ability to apply these terms to him or herself and his or her ability to establish a sense of authority in an academic writing context.

In the first chapter, I review the major theoretical positions of the authorship debates with a focus on explaining the poststructural critique of the Romantic author and the ways in which models of the author have been applied in current-traditional, cognitivist, expressionist, and social constructivist theory and pedagogy.

Providing an overview of the theoretical and practical methodology followed to develop and conduct the qualitative study, the second chapter describes the process of designing the study, conducting the interviews, and collating and analyzing the data collected.

In the third chapter, I offer a profile of myself as researcher, writer, and teacher of writing. I review my educational history, as well as the ways in which my research relates to my own experiences with writing and publishing.

The fourth chapter assembles profiles of the students interviewed, each of which includes a brief biographical sketch; selected comments from the interviews on issues related to definitions of the writing subject presented in the writing classroom, self-conception

during various writing processes, audience, authority, and publication; and a sample of student writing.

The fifth chapter provides one reading of the interview data collected by assembling student responses to specific questions and comparing them both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The sixth chapter reflects on the findings from the interviews, discusses the possible implications of these findings for the study and teaching of writing, and proposes questions for further research.

Chapter 1: Author: Mapping the Dimensions of the Term

In 1995, in a well-known exchange with Peter Elbow regarding a number of current issues in composition theory and pedagogy, David Bartholomae poses a question that the field of rhetoric and composition continues to struggle with: “Should composition programs maintain a space for, reproduce the figure of, the author at a time when the figure of the author is under attack in all other departments of the academy?” (“Writing With Teachers” 487). In order to respond to this issue, as I plan to, it is necessary to consider several questions related to Bartholomae’s own: First, why does Bartholomae call attention to the “figure of the author” in his exchange with Elbow? Secondly, how are this figure and the critical debates surrounding it relevant to the field of rhetoric and composition and to suppositions that inform various theories and practices of teaching of writing at the college level? Thirdly, what are the implications for the field of composition and rhetoric of re-thinking the usage and application of this figure?

The Authorship Debates

There are few concepts as central to the interpretation of texts and the production of knowledge as that of the *author*, which continues to structure the ways in which works of literature are discussed, literary history written, and much college writing taught. And, while, in the last fifty years, there have been, and continue to be, important critiques of this figure, the debate over authorship remains highly unresolved.² Involving topics as complex as the

² As a result of the theoretical and sometimes divisive nature of the debates over authorship, as well as the ongoing power of the author as an organizing concept in the field of literary studies, in the vast majority of contemporary literary critical discourse, the term *author* is used without explicit consideration of the ongoing critical debates about the term.

history of subjectivity and the relationship between subjectivity and language, the debate can, nevertheless, be rather neatly divided into two camps.

The first, which I will refer to as the Romantic, posits the existence of the author as an individual, organizing consciousness, whose work originates from a centered, coherent self. Though this concept has its roots in the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and is not fully articulated until the nineteenth century, this concept of the author is so embedded in our culture that it is not only often presumed to have existed since classical times, but is often used as a model for discussing the work of both ancient and contemporary writers. In the last twenty years, critics writing in support of a Western canon that they believe is under attack, notably Harold Bloom and Allan Bloom, have practiced and authorized a kind of criticism that places the Romantic author and his (or very occasionally her) genius at the center of any discussion of textual interpretation and literary history. Such an approach is based on the notion that the Western canon—and the author as genius—begins with Homer and, spanning two millennia, ends either with T.S. Eliot or Wallace Stevens.³

The second, which I will refer to as the poststructural, conceives of the author not as an exemplary consciousness, but as a moniker for a consciousness that is socially produced. The author is then, for poststructural critics, a name attached to the “unconscious determinations that bring a consciousness into being and speak through it” (Saunders and Hunter 479).⁴ Roland Barthes’ 1968 essay “The Death of the Author,” though perhaps not

³ Bloom’s *The Western Canon* includes discussions of twenty-two male and five female authors (Austen, George Eliot, Dickinson, and Woolf). It is worth noting that the chapter on Austen also includes a section on Wordsworth and that Eliot’s work is discussed alongside that of Charles Dickens. In his *Genius: A Mosaic of One Hundred Exemplary Creative Minds*, eleven authors confirmed as female are included; if, as Bloom believes, Jane Austen was a woman, there are then twelve female writers worthy of inclusion in his pantheon of literary genius.

⁴ For a discussion of definitions of socially constructed subjectivity, see David Saunders and Ian Hunter, “Lessons from the Literary: How to Historicise Authorship,” *Critical Inquiry* 17.3 (Spring 1991): 479 and Raymond Williams, *Keywords*, 193.

the first poststructural critique of Romantic authorship, is often cited as the text that inaugurates its wide-spread discussion and has become something of an erstwhile manifesto for the critique of authorship.⁵ In the essay, Barthes considers the place of the author by applying the work of structural and poststructural theorists, notably the work of Claude Levi-Strauss, and challenges the concept of the author as the originator of language by positioning the author as a function of language: “We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning (the ‘message’ of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture” (146).⁶

Barthes’ use of theological terms and images in the essay are not merely figures of speech. Rather, as Seán Burke explains in *The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida*, “[For Barthes] the author is to his text as God, the *auctor vitae*, is to his world: the unitary cause, source and master to whom the chain of textual effects must be traced, and in whom they find their genesis, meaning, goal, and justification” (23). Just as Nietzsche announced the death of the “old God,” Barthes announces the death of the Romantic author with its explicit or implicit ties to divine inspiration.⁷

In the pluralistic textual world that is inaugurated with the “death of the author,” it is, according to Barthes, the reader who is then privileged as the redactor of a text:

⁵ Pierre Macherey’s *Pour une théorie de la production littéraire*, which is another important text in the poststructural critique of authorship, was published in France in 1966.

⁶ Though Barthes also explicitly refers to New Critical methods of literary interpretation in his essay, he clearly diverges from the New Critics in his refusal to situate the text as an isolated locus of meaning and one that is the product of an exemplary consciousness. W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley, founders of the school of New Criticism, published, in 1946, “The Intentional Fallacy,” an essay that strenuously argued against authorial intention as a viable approach to literary criticism. Nevertheless, the New Critics, by consistently figuring the author as exemplary of a certain historical period and his work as that of an individual organizing consciousness fall on the Romantic side of the authorship debate.

⁷ See particularly Nietzsche’s *The Gay Science*, *The Birth of Tragedy*, and *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*. Prior to the Renaissance, inspiration and originality, which were associated with the concept of the author, were both posited as divine, not human, attributes. See my introduction for a discussion of the shift from divine to human attributions of authorship in the modern period.

The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination.... Classic criticism has never paid any attention to the reader; for it, the writer is the only person in literature. We are now beginning to let ourselves be fooled no longer by the arrogant antiphrastical recriminations of good society in favour of the very thing it sets aside, ignores, smothers, or destroys; we know that to give writing its future, it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author. (148)

In its dual focus on the status of the author and the reader, Barthes's text not only offers a critique of authorship, but later becomes a seminal text in the school of reader-response criticism. Though many of the core ideas associated with reader-response criticism have a long history in the United States, as a critical methodology it received new attention after the publication of Barthes' essay and discussions of it by American literary critics, particularly Stanley Fish's *Is there a Text in This Class?* (1980) and Jane Tompkins *Reader Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism* (1980).⁸

Since the late-1980s, however, scholars involved with reader-response criticism have tended to focus their work more on the status of the reader, rather than on the problematics of the author. And, while reader-response criticism continues to have ties to the continental critique of authorship, that discussion has been more fully taken up by New Historicist critics, whose interpretive approach to literary texts and history have been shaped by the work of Michel Foucault.

In his 1969 essay "What is an Author?" Foucault develops the discussion of authorship initiated by Barthes and more fully explores the author as a cultural function.

⁸ In 1938, Louise Rosenblatt published *Literature as Exploration*, which advocated a reader-based, "transactive" approach to reading and interpreting literature. This book, which was republished by the MLA in 1995, explores the importance of the reader in literary pedagogy and is now seen as an important work in the history of reader-response criticism.

Proposing that it is not the author who precedes the text, but the text that precedes the author, Foucault goes so far as to replace the term *author* with an “author-function”:

The “author-function” is tied to the legal and institutional systems that circumscribe, determine, and articulate the realm of discourses; it does not operate in a uniform manner in all discourses, at all times, and in any given culture; it is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a text to its creator, but through a series of precise and complex procedures; it does not refer, purely and simply, to an actual individual insofar as it simultaneously gives rise to a variety of egos and to a series of subjective positions that individuals of any class may come to occupy. (130-31)

Rather than join the lengthy and involved discussion over the specifics of Foucault’s definition of the author-function, as well as the ongoing debate as to whether Foucault’s category of “initiators of discursive practices” actually reinstates the primacy of certain aspects of the Romantic author, I am interested instead in tracing the ways in which Foucault’s work has been taken up by literary critics, book historians, and legal theorists, all of whom have worked to ground Foucault’s theoretical discussion of authorship in specific historical periods and in particular disciplines.⁹ These scholars develop Foucault’s critique of the Romantic author and describe the specific discourses and historical circumstances that contributed to the formation and rise of this concept.

The literary critic Martha Woodmansee has been at the forefront of a group of scholars rigorously investigating the economic, legal, and cultural discourses that contribute to the rise and eventual domination of the Romantic author. In her 1984 essay, “The Genius and the Copyright,” Woodmansee discusses the manner in which, through the course of the eighteenth century, and contrary to earlier notions of authorship, the author became endowed not only with “originary genius,” but is established as the owner of

⁹ For a discussion of various critiques of Foucault’s “author-function,” see particularly John Logie’s 1999 dissertation “The Author’s Property: Rhetoric, Literature, and Constructions of Authorship” (12-22) and Sean Burke’s *The Death and Return of the Author*.

particular ideas (447). Tracing the changes that occur from pre- to post-Enlightenment conceptions of authorship, Woodmansee describes the manner in which concepts such as originality and inspiration are re-conceived and made the domain of the individual:

Whether as a craftsman or as inspired, the writer of the Renaissance and neoclassical period is always a vehicle or instrument: regarded as a craftsman, he is a skilled manipulator of predefined strategies for achieving goals dictated by his audience; understood as inspired, he is equally the subject of independent forces, for the inspired moments of his work - that which is novel and most excellent in it - are not any more the writer's sole doing than are its more routine aspects, but are instead attributable to a higher, external agency - if not to a muse, then to divine dictation. Eighteenth-century theorists departed from this compound model of writing in two significant ways. They minimized the element of craftsmanship (in some instances they simply discarded it) in favor of the element of inspiration, and they internalized the source of that inspiration. That is, inspiration came to be regarded as emanating not from outside or above, but from within the writer himself. Inspiration came to be explicated in terms of original genius, with the consequence that the inspired work was made peculiarly and distinctively the product - and the property - of the writer. (426)

Establishing the historical contingency of terms that are often viewed transhistorically, for instance "originality" and "genius," Woodmansee examines the ways in which these terms are imbricated in legal, economic, and cultural discourses of a particular period to establish the proprietary relationship between an author and his work. This was accomplished in part by positioning the work of art as the "revelation of a specific author's personality" (447), as well as by defining aspects related to the creation of the work, including inspiration, as the unique property of the individual.¹⁰ In a later essay Woodmansee explains:

The notion that the writer is a special participant in the production process—the only one worthy of attention—is of recent provenience. It is a by-product of the Romantic notion that significant writers break altogether with tradition to create something utterly new, unique—in a word, 'original.'

¹⁰ John Locke's philosophical discussion of property as a natural right and an individual's person as one's property in his "Two Treatises on Government" (1690) clearly informed eighteenth century discussions of originality, the relationship between the author and his work, and copyright debates .

First sketched out in Edward Young's *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759), this new way of thinking about writing was elaborated by an emerging profession of writers from Herder to Goethe to Coleridge and Wordsworth.... We owe our modern idea of an author to the radical reconceptualization of writing which came to fruition in [Wordsworth's] essay of 1815. ("On the Author Effect" 17)

By historicizing authorship, a concept which is sometimes perceived by literary critics as a transhistorical entity, Woodmansee ultimately hopes to draw attention to the collective nature of book production before the Enlightenment, the ways in which changes in the economics of the book trade after the advent of print alter how authors are conceived, and the dialectical relationship that exists between Romantic authorship and copyright laws. For, these laws regulated—and continue to regulate—literary property on the basis of a Romantic conception of authorship that was developed to instantiate the creation of copyright laws.

Woodmansee further suggests that it is not only legal discourse that exists in a dialectical relationship with a Romantic conception of authorship that posits the individual as the sole proprietor of a work of art. Explaining the import of Romantic authorship for literary criticism, Woodmansee writes that it:

[set] the stage for the entire spectrum of the "man-and-his-work criticism" . . . as well as for the theoretical tradition that undergirds it: hermeneutics from Schleiermacher and Dilthey to a contemporary theoretician like E. D. Hirsch. Despite their many differences, all of these critics share the belief that criticism has essentially to do with the recovery of a writer's meaning, and they all take for granted the concept of the author that evolved in the eighteenth century. What we tend to overlook is the degree to which that concept was shaped by the specific circumstances of writers during that period. (447)

The "specific circumstances" to which Woodmansee refers include the advent of print, the creation of the business of book publishing that developed from this invention, as well as the copyright debates that then emerged from the need to regulate business interests. In

other words, with the professionalization of writing and the creation of a marketplace for written works came the need to establish the author as owner.¹¹

The aestheticization of the traits of the Romantic author are related not only to copyright debates, but also result from cultural anxiety about the professionalization of letters. One example of the tension between the aesthetic and commercial aims of writing is expressed by James Ralph in his *The Case of Authors by Profession or Trade* (1758), which was written in response to John Brown's attack on authors who write for money in *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*. Responding to the hyper-critical stance of critics of professional writing, Ralph writes:

[A] Man may plead for Money, prescribe or quack for Money, preach and pray for Money, marry for Money, fight for Money, do any thing within the Law for Money, provided the Expedient answers, without any the least Imputation. But if he writes like one inspired from Heaven, and writes for Money, the Man of *Touch*, in the Right of *Midas* his great Ancestor, enters his Caveat against him as a Man of *Taste*; declares the two Provinces to be incompatible; that he who aims at Praise ought to be starved; and that there ought to be so much draw-back upon Character for every Acquisition in Coin. (Ralph 2)

In a collection of essays, which were first presented as part of a 1991 meeting of the Society for Critical Exchange organized around the topic of "Intellectual Property and the Construction of Authorship," Woodmansee and her co-editor, the legal scholar Peter Jaszi, bring together scholars from a range of disciplines whose work addresses the "specific circumstances" involved in the rise of the Romantic conception of the author. Published in 1994 as *The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature*, the collection includes essays that consider the economic, legal, and socio-cultural issues involved in the

¹¹ Though it is primarily the rights (and profits) of booksellers that are being fought for in eighteenth-century debates over perpetual versus limited copyright, the legal discourse is centered around the author's rights. See Mark Rose's *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright* (14-17) for a discussion of when authorial rights, as opposed to bookseller or Stationers' rights, became the focus of legal discourse related to copyright.

emergence of the Romantic author, including copyright debates, the development of the book trade, and the institutionalization of literary studies.

For the scholars whose work is collected in the Woodmansee and Jaszi volume, to describe the history of copyright is to trace the rise of possessive individualism as a dominant cultural model. Discussing the history of copyright in England, John Feather explains:

An author's right to be treated as the creator and owner of literary property is not defined in any English statute before the Copyright Act of 1814.¹² That Act, however, was to some extent a formal codification of long-standing practices that had arisen partly because books are commercially viable properties only after they pass through the hands of publishers, printers, and booksellers. Indeed, the real history of copyright in Britain, as opposed to its formal legal history, can never be dissociated from the organization and structure of the book trade. That was as true in the sixteenth century as it was in the nineteenth, for it was in the sixteenth century that the concept of a book (or text or work) as property began to evolve. ("From Rights in Copies to Copyright: The Recognition of Authors' Rights in English Law and Practice in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries" 191)¹³

¹² Regarding the 1710 Act of Queen Anne, which is customarily pointed to as the first legal codification of copyright, Feather writes, "English copyright has its origins in the Crown's need to control the press. This need led to the development of a system in which control could be exercised by restricting the number of printers and booksellers, and by ensuring that even within that number there were close controls on who might print what books. Such a system rapidly outgrew the capacity of the Crown to administer it, so that it was, in effect, handed over to the book trade. The leading members of trade seized upon it for their commercial advantage, and in so doing confirmed the idea that a copy was unique and that the right to print it was also unique. This, in turn, led to the gradual realization that unique copies had unique creators, and that those creators also must be deemed to have some share in the rights which they had created. In the later seventeenth century and beyond into the eighteenth, the rapid expansion of the book trade, and a changing cultural climate in which there was an insistent and almost insatiable demand for new books, created a situation in which authors were better placed to negotiate with their publishers. Even so, rights remained trade rights. The so-called Copyright Act of 1710 mentions neither copyright nor authors; it was little more than a codification, an inadequate and inaccurate codification as it proved, of existing book trade practices" (208-209).

¹³ David Saunders, whose work is not included in the Woodmansee/Jaszi volume, offers an important contribution to copyright studies with his book *Authorship and Copyright*. Clearly working from Feather's work, Saunders then ties the history of copyright to the history of subjectivity, "With the Act of 1710, as I have already suggested, the English legal apparatus was not attempting to recognise the presence of the writer's subjectivity in the work but regulating a novel and unstable sphere of cultural, commercial and technical activity by delineating and attributing a right to trade in mechanical duplicates of the work. As with the criminal liability for obscenity, it is important to register the fact that the law's interest attached not to the act of writing but to that of publication and sale" (12). Going on to explain the relationship between the legal and aesthetic spheres, Saunders posits that though "we might habitually assume that legal personality itself ought ideally to equate or approximate to subjectivity. There is, however, an important historical sense in which the Act of 1710 could not assume a relation of equivalence between the legal person of the copyright owner and the moral or aesthetic person of the writer. . . . We begin to see two important truths: not only are the pertinent forms of

Mark Rose explains how, in the debates between perpetual and limited copyright, the relationship between author and work are re-conceived to position the text as a possession of an author-owner:

The proponents of perpetual copyright focused on the author's common-law right. Those who argued against it focused on the work. Thus the two sides established their positions by approaching the issue from opposite directions. Yet, however approached, the question centered on the same pair of terms, the author and the work, a person and a thing. The complex social process of literary production consisting of relations between writers and patrons, writers and booksellers, booksellers and readers, was rendered peripheral. Abstracting the author and the work from the social fabric in this way contributed to a tendency already implicit in printing technology to reify the literary composition, to treat the text as a thing. From the classical period to the Renaissance, the dominant conception of literature was rhetorical. A text was conceived less as an object than as an intentional act, a way of doing something, of accomplishing some end such as "teaching and delighting." Likewise, both the old copyright of the Stationers' Company and the limited copyright provided in the Statute of Anne were not so much property rights, in the sense of rights of possession of an object, as personal rights to do something, namely to multiply copies of a particular title. Now, however, in the course of the literary property struggle, a transformation would be wrought in which copyright would come to be thought of not just as a regulatory system but as an absolute right of dominion over a property in principle little different from a parcel of land. (36)

In this essay, Rose suggests that changes in copyright law reflected larger, societal changes. And, in his book *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright*, Rose more explicitly lays out this claim: "What I want to suggest is that in the seventeenth century a gap was beginning to develop between the institution of stationers' copyright, which was based upon a traditional conception of society as a community bound by ties of fidelity and service, and the emergent ideology of possessive individualism" (14-15).

Also involved in the critique of solitary, Romantic conceptions of authorship, though not included in the Woodmansee and Jaszi collection, are bibliographers focused on the

legal status or person historically variable; so too is the ethical subject that has been taken to be their ground or anchorage" (13-14).

sociology of the book. These scholars, including Roger Chartier and Jerome McGann, are interested in the nature of the production of published works in specific historical periods and the material aspects of textuality. Though their projects are each unique, both Chartier and McGann, like Woodmansee, explore the ways in which interpretive methods and theories often fail to take into account the historical specificity of key critical concepts, particularly originality and intention.

In *The Order of Books*, Chartier traces the genealogy of authorship after the advent of print, arguing, like Woodmansee, that a dialectical relationship existed between the legitimation of literary property and the aesthetic terms in which the work and the author were discussed:

The legitimation of literary property was ... based on a new aesthetic perception designating the work as an original creation recognizable by the specificity of its expression. This concept, which combines the uniqueness of form, the author's genius, and the inalienability of his ownership, was argued during the conflicts engendered in England by the 1710 Statute of Anne, in particular by William Blackstone in *Tonson v. Collins* in 1760. It found its most radical formulations in the open polemics which occurred in Germany between 1773 and 1794 in which (as was also true in France and England) arguments about book-trade privileges were linked to a debate about the very nature of literary creation.... Thus in the second half of the eighteenth century a somewhat paradoxical connection was made between the professionalization of literary activity (which should provide direct remuneration in order that writers should be able to live by their pens), and the authors' representation of themselves in an ideology of their own genius founded on the radical autonomy of the work of art and the disinterestedness of the creative act. (15)

The connection between book-trade privileges and the ideology of literary creation is certainly, as Chartier points out, paradoxical. The effects of the coupling of commercialization and aesthetic creation continue to be wide ranging in terms of the ways in which the act of writing and writers are conceived both within and outside the academy. For, the legal discourses that were created to make the printing industry commercially viable

radically reconceive the relationship between author and work, i.e., self and object, not only for professional writers but, in time, for student writers.

The textual scholar Jerome McGann connects methodological issues involved in textual editing with historical and theoretical discussions of Romantic conceptions of authorship in *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (1985). Showing how the ideology of the autonomous author stems from a literary theory of final intentions as well as the methods of textual scholarship developed for pre-modern, particularly Classical, texts, McGann strongly advocates re-thinking the idea that authors create their texts in isolation. McGann cites not only the contribution of professional editors or publishers as providing evidence of collaboration in the creation of modern literary works, but numerous instances when amanuenses and acquaintances have actively contributed to a literary project. McGann even suggests, like Foucault, that a literary work only achieves its specific identity in response to an audience: “Because literary works are fundamentally social rather than personal or psychological products, they do not even acquire an artistic form of being until their engagement with an audience has been determined” (44).

Despite the cohesion of critiques across disciplines that the Romantic author is a construction conceived in reaction to specific material and historical circumstances, as opposed to a transhistorical model of creative consciousness, this figure seems in no way about to disappear. The rise of digital technology and the Internet has galvanized interest in intellectual property and, even in the analog world, there is no shortage of public and media anxiety about issues of authenticity and authorship.¹⁴ Within the academy, the strength of the Romantic concept of authorship can be attributed to a number of factors in addition to

¹⁴ In the first months of 2006 alone, the following issues of authorship and authenticity have been in the news: James Frey’s “fraudulent” memoir, the revelation of JT LeRoy’s fictional biography, fears that digitally edited photos are being used in scientific journals to instantiate experimental results, and finally the questionable provenance of six recently discovered paintings attributed to Jackson Pollack.

the influence of certain literary critics, notably Harold Bloom, writing in its defense. These include, its dominance as a cultural narrative, the fact that in courts of law and in the commercial marketplace the rights of real individuals are being regulated, and, finally, the difficulty involved in conceiving of the individual and the social not as mutually exclusive, but mutually informing categories.¹⁵ This last issue is particularly apparent when theoretical and pedagogical concerns meet, as is the case in the field of rhetoric and composition.

Authorship in Rhetoric and Composition

To consider the ways in which models of authorship have been situated and defined in the majority of process and post-process composition theory and practice means first to acknowledge the extent to which the history of composition and its relationship to departments of English have shaped the field of rhetoric and composition. The development of composition studies has been well documented, and I will not relate it here in detail.¹⁶ For the purposes of my argument, what is most relevant is the separation of instruction in written composition from rhetoric, which began in the nineteenth century, and the sometimes contentious, or what the critic Susan Miller describes as the dialectical, relationship between rhetoric and composition as a discipline and Departments of English.¹⁷ Though the responsibility for managing the staffing and content of composition courses provides English departments with a seemingly endless fount of required courses, in order to protect the disciplinary integrity of English, full-time faculty have often distanced themselves

¹⁵ See Raymond Williams' discussion of the individual in his chapter on "Authors" in *Keywords*, particularly pp. 193-94.

¹⁶ See John Brereton's *The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College, 1875-1925: A Documentary History* and James Berlin's *Rhetoric and Reality Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1900-1985*.

¹⁷ Susan Miller writes in *Textual Carnivals: The Politics of Composition*, "Composition is a cultural practice whose illegitimacy is so important for maintaining quasi-religious values around writing that validated forms of social, cultural, and textual inquiry studiously ignore the emblem and active intervention that it might offer their own concerns"(13).

from both the teaching and study composition. As a result, rhetoric and composition has, when housed within departments of English, become something of the step-child of these same departments. Providing a much needed institutional rationale for funding large English departments, composition courses are generally staffed by graduate students who, like their faculty mentors, often establish an imaginary boundary between the “real” work of literary criticism and the “grunt” work of teaching written composition. From the nineteenth century to today, such issues, along with the ongoing shared interests and backgrounds of faculty in both disciplines, have created a unique relationship between departments of English and the field of rhetoric and composition that continues to shape the theoretical and practical dimensions of teaching writing. Influenced by literary studies in its interpretive and theoretical approaches, rhetoric and composition at the same time must react against, or alter, these to establish and protect its own disciplinary goals. And this struggle is nowhere more evident than in the definition and treatment of authorship in rhetoric and composition studies.

Prior to the 1960s, what is now referred to as current-traditional-rhetoric or composition-rhetoric dominated approaches to teaching writing at American universities and continues to have followers today.¹⁸ This approach focused on written products rather than writing processes, and it was therefore largely around elements of textual correctness and imitation that instructors of composition structured their teaching. Richard Young describes the current-traditional pedagogy as emphasizing “the composed product rather than the composing process; the analysis of discourse into words, sentences, and paragraphs; the

¹⁸ In his book *Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, and Pedagogy* (1997), Robert Connors proposes that the term “current-traditional rhetoric” is a misnomer and should be replaced by the term “composition-rhetoric,” which more accurately describes “the developing tradition of written rhetoric” from 1830 to 1995. I prefer the term composition-rhetoric, however, when citing the comments of composition scholars on composition-rhetoric, I retain the use of current-traditional rhetoric since this was the term they were critiquing.

classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument; the strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation) and with style (economy, clarity, emphasis)” (31). Andrea Lunsford explains how current-traditional rhetoric encouraged students to “achieve access to culture through assimilation, through absorption of such literature,” at the same time “warn[ing], however, against trying to ‘do’ literature oneself” (“Intellectual Property” 62). And, Victor Villeneuve offers a compact summary of the aims and methods of a current-traditional approach to teaching writing when he likens them to “having students watch and discuss a videotape of a prima ballerina, having the students attempt the same dance, then evaluating students on how well they approximate the ballerina’s performance” (1).

In the 1960s and 70s, the process movement changed the focus of writing instruction from written products to the stages in which individuals write in order to help foster and develop successful writing practices. This movement constituted a radical departure from current-traditional approach(es) to teaching writing not only in its method and focus, but in the way in which it situated the relationship between writer and text, as well as that between authorized versus unauthorized writing practitioners. Process theorists were interested in establishing similarities between student writers and accomplished writers rather than focusing on the insurmountable differences between the two groups. In tandem with this, an emphasis was placed upon reading the works of published writers from the perspective of textual production, rather than textual interpretation.

While the connections between current-traditional-rhetoric and Romantic models of authorship appear to be well established, the ways in which such a model of authorship informs both expressionist and cognitivist approaches to composition pedagogy and their

underlying rhetorical assumptions continue to be a subject of discussion.¹⁹ The reasons why the Romantic author may have retained a place in expressionist and cognitivist rhetoric(s), which explicitly rejected current-traditional approaches to teaching writing, relate to what Miller has described in *Textual Carnivals* as a dialectical relationship between English and rhetoric and composition, one result of which is the increasing separation between the critical interpretation of literature and the teaching of writing. This separation, along with the ongoing influence and adaptation of literary criticism in rhetoric and composition, result in the application of certain key aspects of a Romantic concept of the author in expressionist and cognitivist theory and pedagogy at the very same time that poststructural critiques of authorship are being developed.

In the introduction to her landmark book, *The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders* (1971), Janet Emig lays out and discusses the “three broad types” of data predominately used to understand composing processes in the field in the late 1960s (1). These include comments and interviews with published authors, “dicta and directives about writing by authors and editors of rhetoric and composition texts and handbooks,” as well as “research dealing with the whole or some part of what has been called ‘the creative process’; or with a particular kind of creative behavior—the act of writing among adolescents” (1). She then points out the difficulties presented in using these sources to gain insight into different composing processes because they are, as data, often unsystematic, at times, contradictory and, finally, do not reflect the context in which student writers compose, or the unique resources and background that students bring to their relationship to writing.

¹⁹ Writing in 1973 on the relationship between current-traditional-rhetoric(s) and the Romantic author, Richard Young writes, “the main difficulty in discussing the current-traditional paradigm, or even in recognizing its existence, is that so much of our theoretical knowledge about it is tacit. Such is the case with the vitalist assumptions, inherited from the Romantics, that underlie so many of its overt features” (31). Bartholomae’s question to Elbow in 1995 appears to raise the possibility that the “vitalist assumptions” that Young associates with current-traditional-rhetoric(s) may also apply to expressionist rhetoric(s).

Emig's own research focuses on the writings and comments made by student writers in order to study their composing processes in a context-specific and systematic manner. In her case studies, Emig observes and records writing processes as they occur in the real world, which, she suggests, may be quite dissimilar to the ways in which these processes are described in the idealized world of a composition textbook. Emig's use of a scientific/quantitative rhetoric in her book, as well as her emphasis on empirical data to study writing processes are both significant. For, both begin to move the study of writing towards one requiring a social science paradigm and away from a focus on textual interpretation.

At the same time, Emig establishes a model for treating literary texts as data, albeit incomplete and often problematic data. Myriad issues contribute to the unreliability of an author's comments as data about writing processes. For instance, the fact that they are written in different modes, that some of these modes, such as the critical essay and autobiography require "amenities aiding an audience," not to mention the fact that authors are often working in the "imaginative modes," or providing accounts of writing experiences retrospectively (3). Though Emig's discussion of published authors serves primarily to emphasize the importance of considering comments made by student writers to understand writing processes, it also establishes a precedent for discussing published authors as individuals who, like all writers, must grapple with issues of audience, modes, and revision.²⁰

As the process movement evolved, two schools emerged, the expressionist and the cognitivist, which, although often paired together because of their shared focus on the actions of the writing subject, each have unique approaches to conceiving of this subject and to applying these conceptions to the teaching of writing. For the cognitivists, the author

²⁰ In her earlier, 1964, study, Emig collected "data from professional writers regarding their planning practices."

becomes a model of the writing subject that can be applied, while for the expressionists, the author, as original creator, is a subject position that any writer can occupy. Thus, while both, posit authors as autonomous, self-defining individuals rather than cultural functions, and while both ultimately level out differences between individual subjects and emphasize, the first through a scientific positivism, the second through a humanist positivism, sameness between individuals, the reasons why each utilizes and reinforces concepts associated with Romantic authorship are distinct.

The cognitivist school, as it was conceived in the 1970s and early 1980s and represented primarily through the work of Linda Flower and John Hayes, sought to create a scientific model of the writing process. Based on the methods of experimental psychologists, this work attempted to schematically represent the cognitive fields that were accessed by experienced writers and which, presumably, would also be accessed by student writers. For the cognitivists, even the stage models of Rohman and Britton were too focused on “modell[ing] the growth of the written product, not the inner process of the person producing it” (253 “A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing”).

The early work of Flower and Hayes emphasized the fundamental similarities between writers regardless of the kind of text they were producing or their position in a larger cultural context. Focusing primarily on the relationship between an individual consciousness and textual production, this work placed to one side the ways social and institutional issues may shape the production and reception of written texts. The premise that the writing processes of individuals, regardless of their experience or station, are similar, is highlighted by the choice Flower and Hayes make to profile the writing process of an English professor, as opposed to a writing student, in their article “A Cognitive Process

Theory of Writing.” It is also apparent in their consistent use of the term “the writer,” as opposed to “a writer,” in the same article.

Though expressionist theorists do not attempt to establish a single model for understanding the relationship between the individual and the production of texts, by asking each writer to explore their individuality and uniqueness, they do, in fact, model an approach to the writing process. And, like the cognitivists, the expressionist theorists often use the comments of published authors to describe aspects of a successful writing process and push to one side the ways in which socio-cultural factors shape a subject’s relationship to language and writing. What differentiates expressionist from cognitivist theorists is their more explicit reliance on Platonic rhetoric, as evidenced by their discussion of language as the possession of the individual, their emphasis on originality, and the merging of the individual and his or her work. As a result, these theorists incorporate not only concepts allied to Romantic authorship, but actual characteristics of the Romantic author, such as self-revelation, interiority, and the sublimation of self and text into their discussions of the writing subject.

In his introduction to the second edition of his book *Writing Without Teachers*, Peter Elbow connects the act of writing with self-revelation:

It wasn’t until after I wrote *Writing Without Teachers* that I discovered something remarkable: everyone in the world wants to write. I was surprised that so many people, when they heard the title of my book, told me, “I’ve always wanted to write a book,” or “Someday I’m going to write the story of my life” or, “I need to find words for what it’s like to be me and put those words on paper.” (*Writing Without Teachers* xi)

Although this is only the first paragraph of the introduction, embedded in it are certain ideas that Elbow will investigate throughout: the emphasis on “finding words,” which are inside each individual; the idea that writing leads to discovery; the very notion that there is some essential connection between the self and putting words on paper.

Implicit in Elbow's work is the humanistic wish that "we" are really all much more similar than unique as far as "our" struggles with writing are concerned. This belief grows out of a populist, encouraging impulse, and, like Elbow's early work, reflects the ideological currents dominating the cultural moment in the late 1960s and early 1970s when Elbow was first developing his approach to teaching writing.

Tropes that Elbow will utilize throughout *Writing Without Teachers* emphasize the natural and organic nature of language and writing. He writes: "think of writing as an organic, developmental process in which you start writing at the very beginning—before you know your meaning at all—and encourage your words gradually to change and evolve" (15); "think of [the writing process] as trying to 'help words grow'" (23); "think of writing then not as a way to transmit a message but as a way to grow and cook a message. Writing is a way to end up thinking something you couldn't have started out thinking" (15).

Elbow has struggled with writing and he wants to share the lessons from these struggles with others. He exhorts students of writing to use language in an organic manner, not merely to "transmit a message," but "to grow and cook a message" (23). And in so doing, he echoes certain tenets of Romantic authorship. In his "Conjectures on Original Composition" (1759), a key text in the copyright debates of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and an early prototype for Wordsworth's writings on originality, Edward Young explains the difference between original and imitative prose in terms that are strikingly similar to Elbow's:

The mind of a man of Genius is a fertile and pleasant field, pleasant as *Elysium*, and fertile as *Tempe*; it enjoys a perpetual Spring. Of that Spring, *Originals* are the fairest Flowers: *Imitations* are of quicker growth, but fainter bloom. . . . An *Original* may be said to be of a *vegetable* nature; it rises spontaneously from the vital root of Genius; it *grows*, it is not *made*: *Imitations*

are often a sort of *Manufacture* wrought up by those *Mechanics*, *Art*, and *Labour*, out of pre-existent materials not their own. (10-12)

Like Young, Elbow's work is based on the idea that language is the possession of the individual, who can mine and explore his or her relationship to this system of expression and, in so doing, further reveal aspects of a unique self.

In applying the model of Romantic authorship to the student writer, in other words, by positing that the same kind of originality associated with the works of canonical authors can be made available to student writers, Elbow is at once borrowing from the work of the literary critics and historians, particularly the New Critics, while at the same time modifying certain fundamental premises of their work. And, in adapting, rather than rejecting, the Romantic author, Elbow's powerful and important work is a reflection of the often complicated relationship between composition and rhetoric and English studies. Elbow reacts against the manner in which the Romantic author has been deployed in current-traditional pedagogy and theory, not by aligning himself with the new generation of poststructural literary critics who were his contemporaries, but by resuscitating the Romantic author as a model for students involved in the production of written texts. In doing so, his work further distances the study of the interpretation of written texts from the study of the production of written texts.²¹

Donald Murray's work models the writing process for students based not only on his own experiences with writing, as Elbow does, but on those of published authors. In his essay "Teaching the Other Self: The Writer's First Reader," Murray comments, "We command our students to write for others, but writers report they write for themselves. 'I write for me,' says Edward Albee. 'The audience of me.' Teachers of composition make a

²¹ This establishes a gap between English Studies and Rhet Comp, which I believe is increasingly manifested in the disconnection between theory and pedagogy in Rhet/Comp even today.

serious mistake if they consider such statements a matter of artistic ego alone” (“Teaching” 140). Murray uses Albee’s comments to theorize about audience, emphasizing that students need to become their own first readers and editors, and that writing teachers can aid them in developing these characteristics as they nurture student identities as writers.

Murray’s insistence that there is something essential connecting all writers and their writing processes is one way in which his work echoes Romantic conceptions of the author. However, it is his understanding of language and inspiration as the domain of the individual that most reveals his reliance on the Romantic author as a model for student writers:

Instead of teaching finished writing, we should teach unfinished writing, and glory in its unfinishedness. We work with language in action. We share with our students the continual excitement of choosing one word instead of another, of searching for the one true word. This is not a question of correct or incorrect, of etiquette or custom. This is a matter of far higher importance. The writer, as he writes, is making ethical decisions. He doesn’t test his words by a rule book, but by life. He uses language to reveal truth to himself so that he can tell it to others. (4)

In passages such as these Murray clearly echoes Wordsworth’s own comments on the act of writing: “if [the Writer] were not persuaded that the contents [of his work] evince something of the ‘Vision and the Faculty divine’; and that, both in words and things, they will operate in their degree, to extend the domain of sensibility for the delight, the honour, and the benefit of human nature...he would not, if a wish could do it, save them from immediate destruction” (“Essay Supplementary to the Preface 1815” 37).

It may appear somewhat paradoxical that it is just at the moment in the late 1960s and 1970s, when so much theoretical work on the constructedness of the author is taking place in literary criticism that the centered, originary subject, in other words, a subject very much like the Romantic author, dominates discussions of the student writer. However, the increasing distance between rhetoric and composition and English studies—with the former

focused on the production of texts and a social science paradigm, and the latter concentrated on the interpretation of texts and a hermeneutic paradigm—is one significant reason for the emergence of this paradox. For, had rhetoric and composition maintained a close connection to the interpretive community of literary critics, their use of key characteristics of the Romantic author to discuss and describe the student writer, as well as the linguistic and rhetorical assumptions informing this decision would have been challenged by critics writing in support of the Romantic author, as well as by those hoping to deconstruct it. Literary critics writing in defense of a standard Western tradition of high literature would have balked at the idea that there is any connection between mere writers, particularly student writers, and the authors whose works constitute the Western canon. Poststructural literary critics would not only have questioned the cognitivist and expressionist descriptions of language as the domain and possession of the individual, but also taken issue with the merging of the terms *author* and *writer*, since, for these critics, these terms and the functions they describe are entirely distinct.²²

As rhetoric and composition as a discipline has matured, questions have been raised about expressionist and cognitivist models of the writing subject. Since the early 1980s, critics associated with what is called the New Rhetoric have been pushing the field of composition and rhetoric away from models of a writing process focused on the internal psychology of the individual, or the revelation of a unique self, and towards a consideration of the socio-cultural dynamics involved in any writing situation. Describing the epistemological positioning of the New Rhetoric, James Berlin writes:

²²The repurposing of the model of the Romantic author for student writers may, I believe, be evident in Elbow's use of the terms *author* and *writer* interchangeably. Though never explicitly defining either the term *author* or the term *writer*, Elbow consistently uses one as a synonym for the other, thus establishing a lack of differentiation in terminology that the field continues to struggle with. See Elbow's "What is Voice in Writing" in *Writing Without Teachers*.

For the New Rhetoric, knowledge is not simply a static entity available for retrieval. Truth is dynamic and dialectical, the result of a process involving the interaction of opposing elements. It is a relation that is created, not pre-existent and waiting to be discovered. The basic elements of the dialectic are the elements that make up the communication process—writer (speaker), audience, reality, language. Communication is always basic to the epistemology underlying the New Rhetoric because truth is always truth for someone standing in relation to others in a linguistically circumscribed situation. The elements of the communication process thus do not simply provide a convenient way of talking about rhetoric. They form the elements that go into the very shaping of knowledge. (“Contemporary Composition” 242)

By placing an emphasis on the rhetorical situation of writing and the ways in which socio-cultural factors shape particular discourse communities, New Rhetoricians like Berlin and Patricia Bizzell necessarily question the idea of a universal cognitivist model of “invariant thought processes called into play whenever one is confronted with a writing task” (Bizzell, 371). The quote from Bizzell is taken from her essay critiquing the limitations of psychological models for understanding the writing subject, an approach that has informed the work of both cognitivists like Flower and Hayes and expressionists like Elbow and Murray. Bizzell refers to both the cognitivists and the expressionists as representing the “inner-directed school;” Bizzell’s “outer-directed school” includes the work of the New Rhetoricians.²³ For Bizzell, “what’s missing [in the Flower/Hayes model] is the connection to social context afforded by recognition of the dialectical relationship between thought and language” (Bizzell 373). Bizzell’s inner-directed and outer-directed schools match quite readily to the Romantic and poststructural schools in the critical debates surrounding authorship, and several different composition theorists associated with the New Rhetoric

²³ Though Bizzell goes on in the same essay to write that she believes “answers to what we need to know about writing will have to come from both the inner-directed and the outer-directed theoretical schools if we wish to have a complete picture of the composing process” she will not, in this particular essay clearly show what the result of a productive dialogue between the two theoretical positions might look like (370).

have explored these connections, as well as the implications of moving away from a Romantic and toward a poststructural understanding of the writing subject in the composition classroom.

In his essay “Inventing the University,” Donald Bartholomae explores the complex network of issues related to student writing by addressing the issue not of the *author* or *authorship*, but of authority. Proposing that the terms of authority are specific to each discourse community, Bartholomae suggests that basic writers are those who are unable to adopt an authoritative voice or persona in an academic writing context:

It is very hard for [basic writers] to take on the role—the voice, the persona—of an authority whose authority is rooted in scholarship, analysis, or research.... Our students, as I’ve said, have to appropriate (or be appropriated by) a specialized discourse, and they have to do this as though they were easily or comfortably one with their audience. (591, 594)

In proposing that to write effectively and successfully in an academic context—or in any discourse community—a subject must adapt to its conventions and play a role, Bartholomae challenges the expressionist and Romantic position that self and voice are—at least when one is writing well—identical and singular. Thus, while Bartholomae’s essay revolves around the term authority rather than *the author*, it is very much involved with issues of authorship and the implicit and/or explicit assumptions made about student writers in expressionist and cognitivist rhetoric(s).

From the late 1980s to today, a number of critics have more explicitly addressed the issue of authorship and have attempted to bring poststructural discourses about the author in dialogue with rhetoric and composition theory and pedagogy. In their book *Singular Texts/Plural Authors: Perspectives on Collaborative Writing*, Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford connect the dominance of the individual in approaches to teaching and studying writing to

the “commonsensical view of the nature of authorship...that is directly related to the Western philosophical tradition defining the autonomous individual as the source or foundation of all knowledge” (73). Following Lunsford and Ede’s theoretical and historical discussion of Romantic authorship, which explores the reasons why the model of solitary authorship is perceived as “inevitable” as opposed to “constructed,” they relate the results of an extensive survey of real-world writing practitioners that reveals collaborative, rather than solitary writing, as the norm:

After a lengthy research project and eight years of study, we feel confident in saying that the traditional model of solitary authorship is more myth than reality, that much or most of the writing produced in professional settings in America is done collaboratively, and that, in fact, much of what we call ‘creative’ writing is collaborative as well, though it almost always flies under the banner of single authorship. (418)

Ede and Lunsford caution, however, that even collaboration can, depending on how it is structured, replicate traditional solipsistic models. Offering descriptions of what they refer to as “dialogic,” as opposed to “hierarchical” collaborative writing, Ede and Lunsford lay out the differences between two types of collaboration, one that relies on and replicates the model of the autonomous self and one that challenges it:

The dialectical tension between hierarchical and dialogic modes of collaboration mirrors the historical tension between the individual and society; the psychological tension between individual cognition, with its traditional focus on the inner, and the relational, the recognition of an “enssembled” self; the pragmatic tension between goal-directed work and process-oriented play. Because the phenomenon of collaborative writing calls up all of these dialectical tensions, we find it a particularly fruitful site of paradox and of promise. (136)

Lunsford offers another critique of Romantic authorship, focusing on the concept’s dominance in writing pedagogies in her 1992 article “Intellectual Property, Concepts of

Selfhood, and the Teaching of Writing.” Envisioning a “postmodern composition studies,” which she defines as encompassing “a thorough exploration of cooperation and collaboration,” and an attempt to move “beyond the centrality of a unified self or subject, ” Lunsford begins to incorporate poststructural conceptions of language and the subject into the study and teaching of composition (69).

Whether it is possible to conceive of the writing subject not just as part of an ensemble, i.e., working collaboratively, as Ede and Lunsford propose, but as assembled, i.e., the subject as constituted by the social, is one that Karen LeFevre, in her book *Invention as a Social Act* (1987) and Susan Miller in *Rescuing the Subject: A Critical Introduction to Rhetoric and the Writer* (1989) both consider.

LeFevre traces the solipsism evident in cognitivist and expressionist discussions of the writing subject to what she refers to as the “Platonic view of rhetorical invention,” which defines “invention as individual introspection” (1). This view is founded on the notion that “ideas are created in the mind of an atomistic individual and then expressed to the rest of the world. Invention is regarded as an unfolding, a manifestation of an individual’s ideas, feelings, voice, personality, and patterns of thought” (1). Arguing that the Platonic view is both incomplete and, possibly, limiting to the process of invention, LeFevre explores what it might mean to conceive of invention as a “social act, in which an individual who is at the same time a social being interacts in a distinctive way with society and culture to create something” (1).

Pointing to the fact that language is itself a socially created symbolic system, that writing occurs in response to various audiences, and that the ideas presented in writing are themselves social constructs, LeFevre makes a strong case for the social aspects involved in the inventive act alongside the experience of collaboration, which is also involved in many

acts or moments of invention. Rather than conceiving of the individual and social as existing in opposition to one another, LeFevre advocates “that they be regarded as dialectically connected, always codefining and interdependent. A change in the individual influences social dimensions, which in turn influence the individual. Since every act may cause a reaction that in turn prompts another adjustment or action, it is impossible to say which is first, or which predominates” (37).

In her discussion of the unique aspects of what she calls a “textual rhetoric,” Susan Miller in *Rescuing the Subject: A Critical Introduction to Rhetoric and the Writer*, considers, like LeFevre, the writing subject not as container of language but as a subject who is not only formed by language, but is always in the process of forming him or herself in language. In light of this, Miller is interested in figuring out how to reconceive of the rhetorical speaker based on the specific relationship between a subject and language during the writing process:

[N]either theoretical traditions nor practical applications of an oral rhetorical model allow us to explain fully the particular phenomenon we have taken to be our object of study, writing. . . . We rarely acknowledge how writers uniquely mediate between actual and symbolic linguistic domains in ways that place them in a separate and hitherto undescribed textual world. (10-11)

The underlying premise of both Miller’s and LeFevre’s work is similar in that both are trying to reconceive of a writing subject as something other than autonomous. There are, however, differences in the ways in which each approaches their discussion of the writing subject with LeFevre focusing more on sociological and anthropological theory to rethink the autonomous writing subject and Miller relying more on literary and linguistic theories. As a result, Miller, unlike LeFevre, will directly address the issue of the Romantic author, referring to the work of textual and literary scholars, including McGann and Foucault in her discussion of the differences between orators, authors, and writers:

[T]he text that we describe in a broader space of personal, historical, political, and social concerns—whether it is a literary or a ‘rhetorical’ piece of writing—takes in a ‘place’ of origin, the descriptive space that only a clear image of the mediating action of a writer can map. In this broader space, an originating presence to a text, the forgotten writer, is more complex than the individual and imaginatively ‘masculine’ subject, whom we conceive of as an independent, potentially totalizing, univocal source of statements. It has been a relief, not just a logical linguistic and theoretical conclusion, to proclaim the recent ‘death’ of that figure. The writer who enlarges our vision of what it means specifically to explain written discourse lives (as student writers do) in a complex textual world. The writer knows especially about convention, precedents, and ‘anxieties of influence,’ the control of already written language over both the meaning and the further actual results of writing. (15)

Similarities in the ways in which LeFevre and Miller conceive of a socially situated writing subject include the emphasis each places on writing as action. The ways in which Miller and LeFevre articulate the relationship between this verb *to act* and the writing subject are distinct. Miller takes a much more metaphoric approach in her discussion of the relationship between the writing subject and the verb *to act*, as evidenced by her conception of the writing subject as *actor*.²⁴ In contrast, LeFevre takes a more literal approach in her interpretation of the verb and its relevance to reconceiving the writing subject and rhetorical invention as socially constructed. Referring to the Latin and Greek roots of the verb *to act* and to Hannah Arendt’s discussion of the word *action* as involving two parts or participants, “the beginning made by a single person and the achievement in which many join by ‘bearing’ or ‘finishing’ the enterprise,” LeFevre hopes to recuperate the sense of collaboration that, at least in contemporary usage, is no longer connoted by the verb *to act* (38). As a result, rather than seeing the dependent relationship that exists between the actions of a self and others, these entities are understood to be acting independently.

²⁴ Miller compares the writing subject to “an actor who concretizes a script when performing in the face of unstable but enabling theatrical conventions” (15).

Applied to rhetorical concerns, LeFevre suggests that the *act* of invention has two parts, “the initiation of the inventive act and the reception or execution of it” (38). Thus, the inventor “requires the presence of the other. This ‘other’ may at times be another part of the rhetor herself—an internalized construct that she makes from social experience—or it may be a perceived audience of actual readers. It may be a collaborator with whom one invents or a reader whose participation in constructing a text ‘finishes’ the enterprise” (38). And, in terms of the manner in which speaking and writing are connected, LeFevre suggests that by taking a “more rhetorical view of the entire process of invention instead of focusing on the production of a text, we may be more inclined to regard talking and acting as part of the process, as surely they should be” (31).

More recent work devoted to issues of authorship, authority, and identity in the composition classroom include Kay Halasek’s *A Pedagogy of Possibility: Bakhtinian Perspectives on Composition Studies* (1999), which discusses the implications of encouraging students to consider themselves *writers*.²⁵ In her chapter entitled “Reimagining the Student Writer,” Halasek notes the prevalence of composition textbooks stressing the importance of students imagining themselves as writers. Questioning this practice and discussing the possible dangers involved in such an act, Halasek writes:

In foregrounding (and therefore privileging) “writer” in the classroom, expository writing teachers assume an identity for their students that the students themselves are often unwilling or unable to imagine (or choose) for themselves. Furthermore, claiming the persona of writer as a means of defining our students marginalizes and renders subordinate students’ other subjectivities and self-representations. Students cultivate their voices not as writers, but as people engaged in the act of writing about their lives and their beliefs—as mothers, chicanas, historians—as people immersed in and

²⁵ Halasek does not distinguish between the terms *author* and *writer* in her work and uses the two terms interchangeably. Her critique of the hegemony of the term *writer* is centered around the characteristics of Romantic authorship that are embedded in the term *writer* as it is used by expressionist theorists.

struggling to make sense of the tensions between and among the worlds they inhabit as they come to our writing classrooms. (46)

Although the composition textbooks that Halasek cites as examples are somewhat dated, the expressionist call to consider students—and more importantly to have students consider *themselves* writers—is one that many teachers of composition and theorists in the field continue to adhere to.²⁶

In his 2002 dissertation “Constructing Authorship in the Composition Classroom; An Ethnographic Approach,” Timothy Murnen investigates the construction of student subjectivities in the writing classroom with a focus on authorship as a category that is, for students, at once present and yet restricted. Like Halasek, Murnen is keenly aware of the difficulty students experience establishing any connection between the texts that they produce and those of published authors:

[While] authorship is the implied goal of the composition course...authorship is unattainable because, well, students aren't authors. Furthermore, this concept of authorship, where the literary author is valorized as a solitary genius and the student is conceived as non-author, not only disenfranchises composition students, but serves to legitimize the gulf between literary and composition studies.... (3)

²⁶Evidence of contemporary composition instructors encouraging students to consider themselves writers is based on conversations I have had with these instructors, as well as a search of NCTE journals, which resulted in 264 incidents of the phrase “student author” in articles published between 1996 to the present and 511 instances of the phrase “student writers.” Though Halasek cites Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff’s *A Community of Writers: A Workshop Course in Writing* (1995) and Pamela Gay’s *Developing Writers: A Dialogic Approach* (1995) as examples of works that exhort students to consider themselves writers, she also stresses that the issue of naming students as writers is not evident solely in these two textbooks, but rather “the practice of naming students as writers in our classrooms is systemic and logical. It makes sense on some level to refer to the students in writing classes as writers because they are writing. (Interestingly, though, we do not refer to students ‘doing’ history in a first year history course ‘historians’ or in first-year math classes ‘mathematicians’)” (48). A review of more recent composition textbooks appear to suggest that there is now less of a focus on referring to students as writers and more on the act of *writing*. See, in particular, Lisa Ede’s *Work in Progress: A Guide to Academic Writing and Revising* (2004), which begins with a section on collaborative writing and actively eschews any use of the word *writer* to refer to students; Kathleen McWhorter’s *Successful College Writing* (2006); and Lee Odell and Susan Katz’s *Writing in a Visual Age* (2006). However, ample evidence also exists indicating the continuing use of the word *writer* to refer to students: see Andrea Lunsford’s *The Everyday Writer* (2005) and *EasyWriter* (2006).

Murnen goes on to suggest that “what counts as authorship in literary studies is not the same as what counts as authorship in composition,” and, reflective of this, to propose the existence of two distinct types of authorship (31). The first, “literary authorship” is “invisible and untouchable, silently reinforcing its stashed position” whereas “student authorship [is] held under a microscope. Student texts [are] publicly sifted with a fine-tooth comb for errors, inconsistencies, lack of ‘cohesion’ between the introductory paragraph and the body of the essay” (257). To clearly differentiate between these two types of authorship, Murnen, based on his research with students, suggests that authorship must be conceived as being composed of two distinct elements, *authorship as status* and *authorship as creative process*. And, whereas *authorship as status*, which refers to someone who has taken original ideas and turned them into a literary work, has achieved authority through publishing, and has assumed an identity granted by others, is not available to student writers, *authorship as creative process*, which refers to a certain relationship to material or language during the actual act of writing, is available to student writers.

Placing the work of these various critics in dialogue, it becomes clear that although all are investigating the rhetorical situation of a constructed writing subject, each does so in a unique manner and that their interpretations might be productively brought together through the verb *to act*. For instance, the act of collaboration (Ede and Lunsford), the act of participating in a specific discourse community (Bartholomae), the negotiation and expression of various subjectivities through the act of writing and textual representation (Halasek and Murnen).

Furthermore, the emphasis on writing as rhetorical action allows the work of critics in the field of rhetoric and composition to be brought together with poststructural critiques

of authorship and language. For, both are advocating a move away from a model that posits self-revelation and possession as the defining characteristics of the relationship between a subject and language, and towards one that is defined by context-specific action. Language is not defined then as one's possession, but as an entity that even in its most basic signifying functions requires participation. This idea of meaning-making as participatory, or dialogic, is discussed by the linguist Volosinov, who writes, "The word is a two-sided act; it is a bridge thrown between myself and another" (quoted in Halasek 44) and by Bakhtin, who explains, "The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention" (*Dialogic Imagination* 293). Applying such a dialogic framework to the act of writing, every written text becomes a site of freely circulating communal concepts inflected by a subject's use of words in a unique place and time, rather than a unique expressive commodity. As a result, the entire economy of written production changes, becoming one based not on possessive ownership, but on the free exchange—and often the sharing—of common property. This model is not only theoretically compelling, but is one that may actually better represent the reality of student writing in an academic context.

Theory Meets Reality in the Writing Classroom

Despite the various discussions of the constructedness of the writing subject and critiques of the Romantic author in rhetoric and composition studies both before and after Bartholomae poses his question in 1995, this figure persists as a dominant model for conceiving of student writers. While I cannot offer any definitive answers as to why the

critique of authorship and postmodern conceptions of a writing subject have not—even in 2006—been fully integrated into composition theory and pedagogy, I can point to the institutional, pedagogical, and theoretical issues that have contributed to the persistence of the figure of the author. The first relates to the divide between theory and practice in the discipline of rhetoric and composition, the second to the continuing strength of current-traditional and expressionist pedagogical methods, and, the third, to a lack of a clearly defined terminology or conceptual framework to distinguish *authors* and *writers* in the field of rhetoric and composition.

A consideration of the first two issues—the divide between theoretical and pedagogical practice in rhetoric and composition and the continuing influence of current-traditional and expressionist methods--which are clearly related, go well beyond the scope of this study. For, these stem primarily from institutional staffing practices that rely on adjunct instructors and graduate students, who have not been trained in the field of composition and rhetoric, to teach the majority of composition classes. As a result, even though the most recent theory in composition and rhetoric emphasizes the importance of re-conceptualizing the writing subject in light of social concerns, this approach has continued to be overshadowed by current-traditional and expressionist pedagogy and theory.

My study can, however, provide evidence of a lack of a clearly defined conceptual framework for distinguishing *authors* and *writers* in current rhetoric and composition theory and consider why this is the case. A review of the work discussed reveals that even theorists whose positions are informed by new rhetorical theory continue to use the term author to refer to student writers. Ede and Lunsford: "This constructed nature of authorship--and challenges to the traditional concept--appear in many contemporary sources in the sciences and the humanities, in corporations and in libraries. These challenges have great suggestive

power for writing teachers, who deal every day with *student authors* producing texts " (Ede and Lunsford 102, my emphasis). Kay Halasek: "Agency, intentionality, resistance, transformation, possibility—these are the terms around which a pedagogy of possibility revolves. The *student as author* is an agent in her own ideological becoming, a person whose intentions and responsibility for learning determine and define what personal and cultural structures she chooses to resist and transform" (193, my emphasis). Timothy Murnen: "Many theorists (Miller, 1991; Faigley, 1992; Welch, 1997; Halasek, 1999) argue that *student authorship* is shaped to a great extent by the subjectivities provided to students within the discursive activities of the classroom" (4, my emphasis).

The persistence of the term *author* to refer to students appears to reflect the fact that for theorists in the field of rhetoric and composition—including those who investigate poststructural and postmodern conceptions of language and subjectivity--the term *author*, as opposed to the term *writer*, may connote a privileged subject position, encompassing a sense of making or creating something, as opposed to the term *writer*, which, for many, stresses the mechanical or technical aspects of the act of writing.²⁷ This results, I believe, not merely from custom, but from the selective integration of critiques of Romantic authorship in rhetoric and composition theory. While the socio-historical and poststructural critiques of Romantic authorship have been applied in the field of rhetoric and composition, the material and textual scholarship aspects have not. The integration of these aspects will, I believe, allow the term *author* to then be defined and understood as existing in a distinct rhetorical context from that of the term *writer*.

²⁷Stuart Greene is another critic who privileges the concept of authorship and conflates the terms author and writer in his article "Making Sense of My Own Ideas: The Problems of Authorship in a Beginning Writing Classroom."

A complete separation of the terms *author* and *writer* in the field of rhetoric and composition will not only more adequately align the field with the critiques of Romantic authorship, it will, I believe, allow the field to establish more of a common theoretical ground with departments of English and amongst its own theoretical schools. For, I would like to propose that authorship in rhetoric and composition as applied to students' engagement with writing is for current-traditional, cognitivist, expressionist, and post-structural critics alike, a contradiction in terms. Whether one adheres to a Romantic conception of authorship, in which the author precedes the work, or a poststructural conception of authorship, in which the work precedes the author, the economic, cultural, indeed even the material conditions involved in the making of authors are not available to students.²⁸

I therefore advocate a complete separation of the terms *author* and *writer* for the field of rhetoric and composition. Such a move is, of course, purely semantic if the concept of a solitary, originary author is merely replaced with the idea of the solitary, originary writer. Instead, I would hope that both of these terms are understood as socially constructed, with the term *author* being reserved for those writers whose works are not only published but circulated to a larger reading public.

²⁸The material conditions of a work include its editing, printing, and distribution. Student interviews, which are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, suggest that even when student work is subjected to the same material conditions, i.e., editing, printing, and distribution, as those of authors, students do not then consider themselves authors. Instead, students distinguish the material conditions of an author's versus a writer's work based on the specific rhetorical situation available to authors and writers.

Chapter 2: Project Background and Research Methodology

Project Background

My interest in developing a qualitative study to investigate how students conceived of themselves during the academic writing process stemmed from both theoretical and pedagogical concerns. I was curious to know more about the terms students used to describe these conceptions, as well as to investigate whether a change in a student's conception of him- or herself during the writing process might alter a student's overall relationship to writing, or the quality of the writing he or she was able to produce. Designed to respond to contemporary discussions of authorship in rhetoric and composition, while at the same time seeking ways to expand current research, my study sought to find out from students not only how they conceived of themselves during their writing processes, but how these conceptions of themselves function during the writing process, where they emerge from, why they may differ from individual to individual, and whether they had any relationship to conceptions, or models, of authorship presented in the composition classroom.

Though some rhetoric and composition scholars have posited the existence of “an Author/student binary,” this finding has been based more in theory than in fact, and very little primary research has been conducted related to this issue.²⁹ The research conducted by Timothy James Murnen in his 2002 dissertation “Constructing Authorship in the Composition Classroom: An Ethnographic Approach” begins to redress the lack of primary

²⁹ See Horner and Stygall for a discussion of the topic of Author/student binaries. Earlier work related to authorship has been concerned with 1) the asymmetrical power relationship that exists between students and teachers and between student texts and authorized texts (Miller, Fox, Sommers, Stygall, Knoblauch, Brannon), 2) the investigation of how professional and corporate authors write (Murray, Lunsford, Ede), 3) the role of discourse communities in student writing processes (Bartholomae, Berlin, Bizzell, Lin); and 4) the various ways in which audience may function in the writing process (Pfister and Petrick, Kroll, Ong, Brannon and Knoblauch, Elbow).

research dedicated to the topic, and has been accompanied by more recent work of composition and rhetoric theorists who are reconsidering the ways in which both the terms *author* and *writer* might be conceived of by students, and applied by theorists and instructors in the field of composition and rhetoric.³⁰

My initial working hypothesis, in other words, what it is that I set out to “prove” (it is difficult, though important, to admit that I did, initially, plan on proving something definitive about the use of the term *author* in the composition classroom) was that students who were comfortable referring to themselves as *authors* had a different awareness of, and relationship to, audience than those who did not and were, as a result, able to decenter or split their identities in the writing process, thereby functioning as both writers *and* readers of their own work. Thus, I further hypothesized, students who considered themselves authors might be able to *see* their writing with a greater degree of clarity and objectivity and therefore be better able to attend to the rhetorical structure and technical characteristics, i.e., grammar, punctuation, of their writing than those students who did not consider themselves authors. This hypothesis stemmed from my own work as a published writer, as well as from my work as a teacher of writing and was a very flawed answer to what I still consider a very good (and complicated) question: “Why is it that some students attend to the needs of their audience better than others?”

My hypothesis, though based on the work of several different composition theorists (Murray, Flower and Hayes, Elbow), made explicit in a way prior work had not, the importance of the relationship between self-definition and writing ability. My goal in undertaking a qualitative study was not “simply” to prove my hypothesis, but also to

³⁰See Chapter 1 for a detailed discussion of Murnen’s and other recent work on issues related authorship in rhetoric and composition.

investigate whether it was possible to move or change the self-definitions of students who *did not* readily conceive of themselves as authors.

Though, it is important to note, my original hypothesis was very much divorced from my own theoretical concerns about authorship, and may seem now incredibly naïve or, possibly worse, informed by the most current theory in composition and rhetoric in 1972, it stemmed from a sincere and democratic belief that not only, to borrow Peter Elbow's phrase, "everyone can write," but that everyone can write at a competent level of standard written English given the proper pedagogical and mechanical intervention. Such pedagogical intervention included encouraging students to think of themselves as authors, and offering positive feedback on their written work; the mechanical intervention related to the printing and circulation of student writing.

During the course of my research, I came to realize that embedded in my original hypothesis was a key premise of Romantic conceptions of the authorship, namely that the term *author* designated a subject position identical between individuals.³¹ As a result, I would begin not only to question my original hypothesis, but to question the assumptions underlying the application or use of other definitions in the composition classroom that relied on the existence of identical subject positions, for instance, "we are all writers."³² Thus, even before the study was initiated, I revised the goals of the project, placing a greater emphasis on exploring definitions, rather than, as I had initially set out, on *proving* the existence of one specific identity, that of *author*, which certain students may have access to and others might be moved towards. Concomitantly, I found that the most current research

³¹ Regarding definitions of *author* as individual, see Martha Woodmansee's definition in "The Genius and the Copyright": "In contemporary usage an author is an individual who is solely responsible - and therefore exclusively deserving of credit - for the production of a unique work." Also Timothy James Murnan's definition: "Authorship implies the *ownership of ideas*, the *act of meaning*, and *social recognition*" (29).

³² See Chapter 1 for a discussion of this issue.

and theory in composition and rhetoric was focused on a similar exploration of terms and definitions students might use to conceive of themselves during the writing process.³³

In light of both considerations, I expanded the scope of my project to include an exploration not only of the terms *author* and *writer*, but also of the ways in which students define and describe themselves during the writing process and in various scenes of writing, including, but not limited to, an academic writing context. Key issues to be investigated included: 1) How students define the terms *author* and *writer*; 2) Where these definitions emerge from, i.e., the college composition classroom, early literacy or educational experiences, etc., and the relationship between the study of authorized texts in the writing classroom and student conceptions of authorship; 3) If those students who construct themselves as *writers* or *authors* have a different relationship to writing, or various aspects of writing, than students who do not, i.e., a different relationship to the revision process, audience, voice, rhetorical strategies, technical writing issues; 4) If it is possible and/or beneficial to encourage students to conceive of themselves in new ways during the writing process and whether publishing student work may be one way to achieve such a change in a student's conception of him or herself.

³³ See Halasek.

Methodological Approach

The work of Clifford Geertz, Michelle Fine, Max Van Manen, and Hans Jurgen Habermas greatly informed the design of the interview guide, as well as the manner in which I conducted the interviews, analyzed the data collected, and presented my findings. From these scholars, I learned that rather than approaching the project from a position of singular authority, I wanted to position myself as an observer open to multiple perspectives. In her essay “Working the hyphens: Reinventing the Self and Other in Qualitative Research,” Michelle Fine “suggests that researchers probe how we are in relation with the contexts we study and with our informants, understanding that we are all multiple in those relations” (72). In order to engage in such a process, which Fine refers to as “working the hyphens” between the researcher and the subjects, content, and context of a qualitative study, I decided to ask questions to generate a dialogue in the interviews, while at the same time collecting responses that could be compared to one another. And, in order to position myself as a subject in this research, I decided to relate the findings from the study as a master narrative subject to the critique that I am “othering” my students, or creating yet another ethnographic text that can be deconstructed because of its lack of self-awareness stylistically and formally. Instead, I planned to self-consciously position the analysis from the qualitative study as one possible narrative among many.³⁴ My inclusion of an autoethnography describing my own literacy narrative, as well as my responses to the interview guide, which are included in Chapter 3 and Appendix D respectively, highlight the fact that all of the data presented is filtered through a very specific interpretive lens.

³⁴ See Clifford, James and George E. Marcus, eds. *Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

The work of Clifford Geertz shaped not only the design of the study, but my approach to conducting the interviews, as well as the analysis and presentation of the information collected. As someone who has been trained primarily in the study of literature and literary criticism, the idea of applying close readings to cultural situations and acts, as Geertz suggests the anthropologist studying culture must do, is one that seemed quite natural. In *The Interpretation of Culture*, Geertz explains the import of textual interpretation to both the making of culture and its analysis:

[T]he concept of culture I espouse . . . is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.
(Geertz 5)

Although I knew that I did not possess the same degree of textual literacy in relationship to cultural situations as I did to works of literature, the model of close reading was one that was familiar to me. And Geertz, in fact, compares doing ethnography to an act of reading:

Doing ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of “construct a reading of”) a manuscript—foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behavior. (Geertz 10)

Geertz refers to this kind of analysis as “thick description” and illustrates the complexity and nuances of such a method of interpretation in his now famous discussion of three boys winking. Though the event, as related by Geertz, may at first appear to an ethnographer or anthropologist as constituting a cultural ritual or rite, when placed in context, the actions are, in fact, motivated discretely and do not have any particular cultural significance at all. One boy winks, the second boy winks because he has a tic, and the third is imitating the second

boy's tic. For the ethnographer to write that, based on the evidence recorded, winking is culturally significant is to completely miss the point. It is, what Geertz calls "thin description," by which he means identifying and reporting events without understanding what motivates them.

Another important concept presented by Geertz that has guided my qualitative study relates to the incompleteness and contestibility of all cultural analysis. He writes:

Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And, worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is... There are a number of ways of escaping this—turning culture into folklore and collecting it, turning it into traits and counting it, turning it into institutions and classifying it, turning it into structures and toying with it. But they *are* escapes. The fact is that to commit oneself to a semiotic concept of culture and an interpretive approach to the study of it is to commit oneself to a view of ethnographic assertion as . . . "essentially contestable." Anthropology, or at least interpretive anthropology, is a science whose progress is marked less by a perfection of the consensus than by a refinement of debate. What gets better is the precision with which we vex each other. (29)

This passage is particularly relevant to a dissertation that is about the constructedness of authorship and knowledge, as well as one that seeks to say something about student writing processes. For, these two endeavors are often perceived to be essentially at odds with one another, with the first seeking to destabilize the notion that there is ever any stable ground from which to interpret an act or text, and the second seeking to establish an authoritative ground for interpretation and pedagogical action. By bracketing my findings as but one possible interpretation of the data collected, I am attempting not only to narrow the distance between the two aims of my project, but to suggest that these two areas—the theoretical and the pedagogical—can be brought closer together.

In the data analysis and interpretation phases of my project, along with the work of Geertz, the work of Max Van Manen and his discussion of hermeneutic phenomenological

research, as well as Jurgen Habermas's writings on phenomenology and interpretation, have both been important. Phenomenology is the study of how meaning is made in the world.

Or, as defined by the Stanford Philosophical Dictionary:

The discipline of phenomenology may be defined initially as the study of structures of experience, or consciousness. Literally, phenomenology is the study of "phenomena": appearances of things, or things as they appear in our experience, or the ways we experience things, thus the meanings things have in our experience. Phenomenology studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view. (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/phenomenology/>)

In his work, Van Manen asks how, as researchers and interpreters and writers, we can describe phenomena that are difficult to represent, in which category he includes both the experience of teaching and the experience of learning.³⁵ Questions that I pose implicitly, if not explicitly, in this study and that, I believe, can only be investigated through a hermeneutic phenomenological method of research and interpretation include: How do the stories that we tell ourselves when we write matter?; What does it mean to inhabit a subject position of a writer or author?; At what moments and under what conditions do students access this subject position?; When students do, does it change their writing, in terms of their attention to it, their execution of it, their ability to learn from it, or their thinking in it?

³⁵ Geertz poses the same challenge for the ethnographer when he describes the three characteristics of ethnographic research: "it is interpretive; what it is interpretive of is the flow of social discourse; and the interpreting involved consists in trying to rescue the 'said' of such discourse from its perishing occasions and fix it in perusable terms" (20).

Methodology

One of the first steps in the research process was to decide which students to include in the qualitative study. Having taught composition and literature classes at The City College of New York's Center for Worker Education (CWE) since 1998, I decided that I would interview students enrolled there. CWE is an extension campus of The City College of New York founded for working adults seeking to complete their Bachelors degrees. Classes are offered in the evenings and on Saturdays, and the registration and advising processes are tailored to fit the lives of working adults. Founded in 1981 by The City College of New York (CCNY) in collaboration with public employee unions, CWE has approximately 800 students in attendance. Approximately 80 percent of the student body is female, the students' average age is 40, and a large number of students enroll with some transfer credit, either from 2-year or 4-year colleges. The student body is made up of a diverse, multicultural student population and many CWE students are not only returning to school after a long absence, but are commonly the first members of their families to attend college.³⁶

Based on the model of a small, liberal arts college, CWE's curriculum was designed to be highly interdisciplinary. As a result, all CWE students must enroll in what are called "core courses," which are comprised of two semesters each of Core Humanities, Core Social Science, and Core Science. Although there is an English Composition course offered at CWE, it is not a required course. Instead, the college's formal introduction to college

³⁶ Timothy James Murnen's dissertation "Constructing Authorship in the Composition Classroom; An Ethnographic Approach" also collects student definitions of the term *author*. Interviewing and observing undergraduates at the University of Michigan, Murnen's work has been very valuable to my own research. And, because my study focuses on a very different demographic sample, the two studies are highly complementary.

writing, or composition, is included in Core Humanities 100 and 101, a sequence of courses, which are focused on the study of literature from a range of genres and historical periods. Though somewhat different in the types of literary works studied and in the scope of essay assignments, both courses include an introduction to academic writing.

A major step in the design of my study was deciding which subjects to interview. Would I interview students whom I had taught or those whom I had never taught? And, if I decided to interview students whom I had taught, which students would be selected? I decided to interview students who were not currently being taught by me, but who had been enrolled in my Humanities 101 course in the fall, 2003 or spring, 2004 semester.³⁷ I made the decision to interview students whom I had taught for several reasons. First, I felt that because I had some relationship with these students and had worked with them as writing students, they would feel more comfortable discussing their thoughts about writing with me. Second, I had essays from these students that I could then consider in relation to their comments about writing. Third, the ability to talk about specific texts--Homer's *Odyssey*, Shakespeare's *Othello*, Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*—that we had read, specific classroom experiences that we had shared, and specific essays that students had written, would enhance my understanding of a student's comments in the interview. Fourth, one goal of the project was to offer a rich profile of these students and their relationship to writing, both of which were facilitated by my having an established relationship with them. Finally, there was the logistical consideration that adult students are very busy and juggle academic studies with full-time jobs and family responsibilities, meaning that having some relationship with students would facilitate the scheduling and completion of interviews.

³⁷ A copy of the course syllabus is included in Appendix B. I used the same syllabus, course schedule, and assignments for both semesters since I intended to structure my dissertation research around these two courses.

The major drawback of interviewing students who had participated in my courses related to the fact that the study could not offer an outside perspective on the course material, nor on my actions as an instructor. Though students were comfortable discussing their feelings about the course, and several offered a comparison of my teaching style versus that of other instructors, since I was conducting the interviews these comments cannot be treated as objective. It would be extremely valuable to bring the research that I have conducted into dialogue with observations about my course, particularly regarding the ways in which issues related to authorship and the works of published authors were presented in the classroom. However, given that the focus of this study is firmly on student perspectives, I continue to feel that the decision to interview students whom I had worked with was a very good one, since it gave me a fuller and more well-rounded understanding of the interview participants, and the ability to explore and discuss specific essays and texts with them.

In deciding which students to contact for the study, I hoped to include both students who would be considered advanced writing students based on their control over various aspects of Standard Written English, as well as those who would be considered less advanced. I also wanted the interview sample to be representative of the make-up of the student body at CWE. My decision to interview students from the Humanities 101 course, as opposed to another Humanities or Composition course, related to the fact that I was particularly interested in probing how student identities as writers and/or authors might be influenced by their reading of works by canonical authors.

Having selected fourteen students to contact for interviews, I then drafted an interview guide, which was designed to generate dialogue and be highly interactive while at the same time collecting information that could be analyzed and compared. The first section of the guide collected significant background information about the student, including their

age, ethnic identity/identities, educational and work histories, their parents' occupations and educational backgrounds, college writing courses completed, and the types of writing performed at work and at home.

The body of the interview began with a focus on definitions. I asked students to define, in their own words, the terms *author* and *writer*, whether they were comfortable applying these terms to themselves, the reasons why these terms may or may not be appropriate designations, and finally to compare and contrast the meanings of these terms in general, as well as when applied to themselves. From a focus on definitions, I then posed more open-ended questions, asking students to reflect on their specific experiences with academic writing at CWE, and the ways in which reading literary texts may have influenced their writing processes, or the ways in which they conceived of themselves during their writing processes. The third section of the interview guide asked students to consider issues of audience awareness in academic and non-academic writing contexts; the fourth, and final, section posed a series of questions related to how having work published might alter a student's definitions or conceptions of him or herself during the writing process. Questions related to the last issue included whether a student had had a piece of writing published in the past and, if so, whether this had changed his/her relationship to writing and if not, whether he/she would like to have a piece of writing published and how he/she might foresee this changing his or her conception of him or herself during various writing processes. This section also asked students to reflect on which piece of writing they might consider publishing and what their specific relationship to this piece of writing was.

I was able to complete ten interviews: eight in person and two by telephone. The in-person interviews were recorded by audio cassette. The fact of students at CWE having to balance multiple demands, including school, work, and family, was a factor in scheduling

and completing interviews. Nevertheless, the interview sample was representative of the demographics of the overall CWE student body. The interviews took approximately one-hour to complete and participants received a twenty-dollar honorarium. Six students interviewed had been enrolled in the fall, 2003 section of the Humanities 101 course; four students interviewed had been enrolled in the spring, 2004 section of the course. The same syllabus, texts, and assignments were used in both sections of the course.

The eight in-person interviews were conducted at CWE: five of the interviews took place in the third floor conference room; three were conducted in the sixth floor instructors' lounge. All eight interviews were audio-taped, and, during the course of these interviews, I also took some notes on the interview guide itself. Because of scheduling issues, two interviews were conducted via telephone and these were not audio-taped. However, I transcribed the conversation as the interview was being conducted.

The interview guide went through one revision after I had conducted three interviews. The revisions were based on insights from the first three interviews conducted, and the changes made were not substantive, since I wanted to maintain continuity over the course of all ten interviews. The revisions were three-fold: first, I added a question related to a student's early literacy experiences; second, I revised a question to ask in more explicit terms how a student's relationship to writing might change if his or her work were to be published; and third, I re-ordered the sequence of questions in the first section of the interview guide in order to better facilitate the flow of the interview. All of the issues included in the revisions had been discussed in the three interviews already conducted, but had not been posed as questions in quite the same form in the earlier version of the interview guide.

After I completed all ten interviews, I transcribed the contents of the audio-taped interviews and the hand-written transcripts of the telephone interviews. I then began the process of analyzing the data collected. The first step in this process was to give each student a pseudonym, which I found somewhat invasive to the analysis and presentation of the interview results. Although necessary for the purpose of presenting my findings, the use of pseudonyms added a level of abstraction to the process of interpretation, since I could no longer read a student's comments and say to myself, yes, "this student said this." Instead, I had to engage in an act of translation, moving from comment to pseudonym to actual name. I also found myself to be somewhat self-conscious in the act of re-naming these students, and I had to ask myself whether these pseudonyms adequately characterizes the students without seeming stereotypical. My reactions to the re-naming process may appear overly self-reflexive and something only an academic would find time for. Nevertheless, I felt it was important to note this, and to at least pose the question of why it is that we, as researchers, use student's "real words," while not using their real names in our analyses of interview data.

Data Analysis

As much as the theoretical positions that I have mentioned earlier in this methodological review were informing my thinking at the time I set out to perform the interviews, and as much as I was able to follow a set plan for conducting the interviews, once they were completed—even the first interview—and the process of thinking about the data collected began, to describe the methodology of the data analysis portion of the project

as structured in any linear manner, would simply be untrue. Instead, the process I engaged in was recursive, full of attempts to form the data into one interpretation only to find that this interpretation did not adequately represent the complexity, specificity, and subtlety of the information collected.

In preparing to analyze the data, my first step was to transcribe the interviews from the audio tapes and written notes into Microsoft Word. I then collated responses to each interview question, using tables in Microsoft Word to collect and organize the responses. Though I relied primarily on the transcripts of the interviews and the information collected in the cumulative data file to analyze the interviews, there were times when I also referred to the following materials: audio tapes of the interviews, the course syllabus, in-class writing samples, and essays written by the students interviewed. All of these materials then offered even greater perspective on the students who had participated in the study.

Having compiled the data from the interviews, I then began the process of trying to, as Geertz suggests, create a reading of what were essentially fragments. That I was creating a reading from verbal comments made in response to questions that asked a student to reflect on his or her experiences with writing, as opposed to notes that I had made on student behavior in the act of writing, may appear to have made my work as a cultural anthropologist somewhat easier. I am not certain that it did or did not. However, I do feel certain that the interpretive frame one uses to approach first-person comments made by subjects interviewed is as influential in a researcher's understanding of these comments as it would be in the researcher's understanding of a given set of actions or behaviors. For example, just as the actions of Geertz's winking boys can be interpreted in various ways, the comments made by students can be placed in a certain context in order to "mean" whatever the researcher hopes to prove. Furthermore, I found that the comments themselves expressed, or took on,

different meanings depending on the interpretive frame through which I read them, a fact that may make working with transcribed words even more complex than recorded behaviors.

Over a period of several months, I read and re-read the interviews, viewed and re-viewed the interview data, and sorted and re-sorted interview results. The process took much longer than I thought it might, and I had virtually memorized the interviews and internalized their results before I was able to begin structuring my findings into a narrative about the different ways in which students define themselves during the writing process and how these definitions matter both experientially, as well as in terms of the rhetorical and technical characteristics of their writing.

I began my analysis of the data collected by looking at student definitions of the terms *writer* and *author* and by comparing definitions offered by those students who were comfortable applying the terms writer or author to themselves and those who were not comfortable consistently applying one or both of these terms to themselves. And, even at this point, I ran into difficulty applying my original hypothesis to the data. For, the data did not adhere to the narrative I had hoped to find, namely that certain students were comfortable referring to themselves as *authors* and certain students were not. Instead, I found that there was a clear division between students who were comfortable consistently referring to themselves as *writers* and those who were not.

In my analysis of what differentiated those students who were comfortable referring to themselves as *writers* from those who were not, I tried to discern patterns, or similarities, in these students' relationship to different variables, including:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Term Enrolled in Humanities 101

- Student's publishing history
- A student's description of their relationship to audience during the writing process
- Experiences with writing outside an academic writing context
- Early literacy experiences at home
- Early literacy experiences at school
- Reception of writing in academic contexts, i.e., having received encouragement to write or positive feedback on writing assignments
- Reception of writing in non-academic contexts, i.e., having received encouragement to write or positive feedback on writing assignments
- Parents' socio-economic and educational backgrounds
- In-class writing sample
- Formal essays
- Marginal comments made on drafts of formal essays

Although I am satisfied with the interpretation that I propose for these interviews, I am very aware that there are other interpretations, and that this particular one is inflected not only by my theoretical, pedagogical, educational, and cultural background, but also by my own experiences with writing. Describing the complications involved in data analysis in the field of composition and rhetoric, Ann Berthoff writes:

If meaning is set aside in the search for "data," the findings will not then be applicable to the making of meaning. But composition specialists who follow psycholinguistic principles of analysis want to have it both ways: their empirical research requires that meaning be left out of account, but they also want to claim that their findings are relevant to pedagogy. What writers do is thus confused with what psycholinguists want to study. This methodological pitfall is impossible to avoid when the investigator is guided by a conception of language as a code. (Berthoff, 310)

As much as I planned this project to be focused on meaning, rather than data, my ability to continue that course once I got to the stage of analyzing the data was challenged more than I ever could have imagined. For, as much as this dissertation is about the narrativity that is

embedded in the concept of authorship and in every authoritative fact, I still often felt the need to say something authoritative about the data that I had collected.

Though I had revised the goals of my study to avoid what Berthoff refers to as “psycholinguistic principles” and “language as code,” in the analysis phase of the project, I once again had to resist the urge to revert back to these principles and this approach to language (310). This urge resulted, I believe, from my inability to fully jettison all traces of my original hypothesis from the project. This original hypothesis was based on the possibility of modeling the actions and thoughts of a subject during the writing process that could then be applied to virtually any individual in any rhetorical situation. Though I had revised the project to focus on an *exploration* of the ways in which the terms *writer* and *author* are used and defined by students during various writing processes, as I began the data analysis portion of the project, I found myself once again hoping to *prove* something about these terms and the ways in which they function. Fortunately, the information I collected was resistant to my attempts to read and present it as data: Although there was some correlation between self-definition, audience awareness, and writing ability, this was only one narrative, among many, that resulted. And, more importantly, this was not the most compelling narrative, nor the most cohesive narrative that I could construct. Instead, the narrative that, from my perspective, not only made the most sense, but best reflected the full meaning of the information collected indicated a result that I was not prepared to find: Being a writer is a role one plays, not an identity that one possesses, and is *dependent on*, rather than *independent of*, a particular discourse community.

Chapter 3: Autoethnography of Researcher

There is a story that I tell over and over again—to my students, to myself, and to anyone else who might be interested in hearing it—about how I learned to write. And, like every story, particularly, I find, those apocryphal ones that have to do with how we conceive of ourselves or *who we are*, it changes each time, both in the telling and in the way I interpret it. Though I will begin with the “facts,” like every story, it is not so much the facts, but how the facts are related that matters most. The story, at this moment in time, goes like this.

Having grown up in Ann Arbor, Michigan, a town whose major industry was the University of Michigan, living in a neighborhood that was populated primarily by academics, and raised by two women, who, while not academics, had been to graduate school, I learned very early that learning and knowledge were important and life-long commitments. My biological mother had a Ph.D. in Psychology and worked as a clinical psychologist in private practice; my nonbiological mother had an M.A. in Social Work and ran a local nonprofit organization. The majority of my friends’ parents actually taught at the university and those who didn’t were mostly doctors or dentists or engineers. One friend’s father worked in the insurance business and this seemed to me to be pretty unusual and strange. Not only did he not teach at the university, but he worked in Detroit! Their house was the only one I remember not being full of old books. It had, instead, several shelves lined with brand new hardcover books, because this particular father read at least one bestseller each weekend. The world I grew up in was, however well-educated and worldly, a very small one.

I always did very well in school. In other words, I was a good student, meaning I did what was expected of me and was seriously engaged with whatever material we were studying. Whether it was math, which I had to work very hard at, or English and writing, which I worked less hard at, school work and school were very much at the center of my life.

In fact, I remember distinctly at around the age of eight deciding that being successful meant doing well at school and attending the “right” college. I had no idea where this might lead in terms of a specific career, I just knew it led somewhere. The names, locations, and rankings of different colleges were often discussed by people I came in contact with in Ann Arbor, which was a place where people talked quite a bit about their educational histories, teaching assignments, and research, and, very rarely about money or class or race.

In grade school, I was placed in advanced reading and math and in middle school, I got all A’s, except one B in trigonometry in the 9th grade. In high school, I was placed in AP classes and got good grades. I know I wrote papers in these classes, though I don’t remember the writing of any of them, but one with much clarity. This was a long research paper—fifteen to twenty pages if I am recalling things correctly-- assigned for my junior AP American History class. Regarding this paper, I remember having absolutely no sense of what I was doing in the process of writing it, as well as an eleventh-hour trip to a friend’s divorced father’s house in Toledo to use the only word processor we had access to at the time. The next year, my nonbiological mother would, as part of a lottery at a local computer store, win an Apple IIe computer and afterwards I remember spending many hours sitting in the basement typing into it. I have no recollection of what or how I wrote. I just remember sitting there for long stretches of time finding whatever it was I was doing quite difficult.

Whether or not I had been taught to write a structured essay I cannot recall. I tend to think that had I been, the writing of the American History paper may not have been such a trial. Throughout my schooling, I remember doing a great deal of research and producing many pages to create reports; I just cannot remember being told “this is how you write an essay,” or receiving any step-by-step guidance in drafting a paper. My memory of writing that one American History paper is as a battle, long and involved, with, eventually, the paper

winning. I don't remember what I received for a grade, though I do remember being very nervous about the grade and about the possibility that I may have failed.

I always kept a journal and I did well on written tests and on verbal assessment tests, but I do not recall ever being told that I was a good writer. (As I am writing, I remember that I was actually published in a student magazine in middle school and that being asked to participate in this project was a compliment to my work as a student and as a writer, and yet I still did not derive any sense of confidence as a writer from the experience). One of my most vivid memories of writing is of sitting in the basement of the house where I grew up all alone, writing my college admission essays and having not the slightest idea what I was doing, or how I was going to write them. I was too proud to ask for help, and too afraid to show them to anyone, because I knew they were no good at all. It was only through some stroke of genius that they might be acceptable; writing, I thought at that time, was not a practice, it was magic, and it never occurred to me that these essays might have a set form.

How is it that a girl who grew up in an academically privileged home and school system and who loved school could emerge from secondary school terrified of writing? I know that the messages about writing that I received at home, all of which revolved around writing being made by inspired and talented geniuses contributed to this, as well as the fact that, at least as far as I remember, even in school there was a lack of information about writing that was either positive or productive, or that addressed the issue at all in practical terms. I know that writing has come out into the open much more since the 1970s and 1980s, when I was in school, and I think my story emphasizes the importance of this change.

I did not get into my first choice colleges; however, I was accepted to my second choice schools, all elite private universities, just not the ones I most wanted to attend. I decided to go to Stanford University primarily because I was offered a very comprehensive

aid package, but also because my mother discouraged me from attending Columbia since she was not familiar with New York City and was concerned that it was not a safe place. I was relieved to have gotten in anywhere—my greatest fear being that I would be rejected by every school and have to stay in Ann Arbor and attend the University there, which was hardly the worst scenario possible, unless you grew up in Ann Arbor and were, as I was at the time, a bit of an academic snob.

In college, I again threw myself (the phrase strikes me as oddly literal) into my studies. I had arrived with a passel of AP credit and therefore tested out of any required composition course. A first year Introduction to humanities course was required and included a writing seminar component though, again, as far as I can remember there was little practical introduction to writing. In the humanities course, and in other classes, I found myself writing lots of papers, but I remember receiving no writing instruction and certainly did not engage in conversations about writing as a process with anyone. I struggled to write these papers. Nevertheless, I completed them and, though I still had no real sense of what I was doing, received good marks and positive comments. I assumed that writing was hard for everyone and that was just the way it was. I ended up taking more advanced classes and all the while still had not mastered the academic essay form. Perhaps I knew what I was doing having read so many essays, knew that there was an introduction and conclusion, but I am absolutely certain that I did not know what a topic sentence was, and I'm not even certain that all of my papers had thesis statements in them. They certainly had arguments and ideas, but very little structure. I had lots of opinions and was quite verbal, so even without knowing how to write essays, I wrote something.

This kind of unstructured but deeply passionate academic essay writing continued all the way through my four years of college, and is evident even in papers I produced as a

student in the doctoral program in Comparative Literature at Yale University. I spent one year at Yale and then decided to take a break from graduate school. The reasons for taking a leave of absence were complicated and involved many factors, including a sense that I wanted to be a writer, not an academic.

Fresh out of Yale, I returned home to Ann Arbor, Michigan and began looking for a job. While not particularly cocky, I was aware that my educational pedigree had a certain value. (I would learn over time that this value was based more on social rather than intellectual currency, but I was not fully aware of this then). I applied for a writing and editing job at a reference publishing house in Detroit and, after being granted an interview, was asked to take a writing and editing test.

I ended up getting the job, but I was also told that on the basis of the writing test, I almost didn't. Needless to say, I was fairly shocked. I had always been rewarded and praised for my writing (which, interestingly, never made me feel like a good writer), and I also had a long history of doing very well on essay tests. Nevertheless, I took the criticism that my writing was "quite academic but unreadable" as I took most criticism, which was to heart. I didn't question the judgment, or the motives behind it, I just decided that there was, as I had long suspected, something wrong with my writing. Through high school, four years of college, one year of graduate school, legions of essay achievement tests, final exams, and term papers, the feeling that I had no idea how to write persevered. My experience of writing essays was like driving blind, though, miraculously, I seemed always to arrive in the right place: "A" grades, a good college, testing out of "basic" writing classes. And, in many ways, the experience of finally being caught was a relief.

It is interesting for me to reflect on this story now that I am both a writer and a teacher of writing. The part of me that is a writing teacher feels very angry at this story. I

can hear myself saying to one of my students: “Someone told you that you couldn’t write! What nonsense, how wrong!” But the part of me that is a writer has always been grateful for the diagnosis and intervention that happened at this reference publishing house in Detroit, Michigan. (The class/cultural conflict between Ann Arbor and Detroit is another subtext to this story). I know now that I was not writing as the publishing house needed me to be writing, but part of that related to the fact that I had never actually been taught to write essays with any clarity or structure. I simply wrote what I thought and prayed that it came out in a comprehensible way, never questioning the notion that interesting thinking produced good writing; this was, I thought, simply a given.

I’m certain that I am better equipped to relate to and teach my students as a result of this experience, both because I understand how writing can be structured in a repeatable way and because I had to go through the process of being told (and, perhaps even more importantly, living with the feeling) that I was not a good writer. For, what I learned from the man who trained me in the publishing house-style of writing was that writing had a structure and a method. I find it very easy to refer to this man as the one who taught me how to write, even if that is only a partial truth. What is true is that he taught me a certain kind of writing that I had never known about before. I would learn later that he did this for legions of other bookish, twenty-two year olds who worked at the same publishing house.

What follows is the first of two interpretations of my experience of “learning how to write” at the publishing house. Sitting in a windowless room on the eleventh floor of an office building in Detroit, I was told for the first time in explicit terms that every piece of writing has a structure and form, that “This is how you write a sentence,” “This is how you write a paragraph.” “It is simple, you just have to follow the rules.” Did I feel that my ideas were stifled because I had to follow a structure? No. Did I feel that my writing voice was

silenced? No. It was altered slightly and I think the more I write in highly structured, at times, almost formulaic, forms, it becomes less individualistic. But my writing voice is still there, even when I think it is a bit stifled.

A second, and possibly more complicated, interpretation of this story involves the fact of being told that I could not write properly according to a set of very strict guidelines and that I had an amazing teacher whom I was (of course) slightly in love with. My tutor/trainer was a published novelist and was very passionate about writing and literature. He was a working writer (working full-time as an editor at the publishing house, writing fiction four to six hours a night, and sleeping whenever he could, including sometimes during the day at the office) and he also came from a much more working class background than my own. And, because of both factors, he had a very workmanlike attitude toward writing. “Anyone can do this. It isn’t rocket science,” he often said, a message that I had never heard or entertained before because, in the world that I grew up in, writing was all about ideas, and if the ideas were good enough, so was the writing. One was a brilliant scientist or mathematician or labor theorist, never a brilliant writer, except for poets, and they were just touched or crazy or super brilliant, which I would never be.

So, at twenty-two, I took my first composition class, something I had always been told I didn’t need to bother with. The experience has made me believe heartily in composition classes for everyone since it allowed me to confront my fears about writing and move beyond them, to a place where I can write confidently.

I recently decided to look over some of the papers I wrote before I “learned how to write.” And in reading them over, I was struck by how much excitement there is in them, how much jargon there is in them, and how much they are all about trying to use this clever writing voice to—most often—avoid making a clear point. I notice a veneer of

sophisticated rhetoric to cover over pretty straight-forward arguments. The shorter papers are better, though even these show signs of having no proper structure. For instance, in one, the introductory paragraph runs a page and a half, there are no topic sentences, and there is no clear progression in argument. Nevertheless, they are full of energy and rhetorical flourishes and in their own unstructured way are clearly engaged with and passionate about their subjects.

After I “learned how to write” in a structured manner and in a house style, my writing changed. My later academic essays make sense in a way the earlier ones do not, and it is sense, more than passion, that these essays radiate. It is only now, thirteen years after I was for the first time taught to write an essay that I have even entertained the idea that this was not a purely positive experience. For, when I was finally taught how to write in a structured, repeatable manner, I had the experience of having writing demystified. I didn’t have to be afraid of it. It was a known quantity that could be controlled and managed. And yet, now, looking over the papers I wrote in college and in my first year in graduate school, I’m not sure that I would have—or could have—written them had I been schooled in proper academic essay writing. So this is the second turn in the story, how important it is to know how to write in a structured manner, and how challenging it is to prevent structure from dominating one’s approach to writing and thinking.

Although I liked my job at the publishing house in Detroit a great deal, I did not stay there very long. After seven months of living in Michigan, my boyfriend and I had saved up enough money to move to San Francisco, where I once again found myself panickedly looking for jobs. I tried very hard to find a publishing job and couldn’t and, as a result, ended up working as a research analyst with a management consulting firm and, in my little free time, dreaming of writing creatively and generally being miserable. I attended only one

creative writing workshop during the year and a half I lived in San Francisco and, although it was not a highly positive experience (I seem to remember the female facilitator not being surprised when, during the writing exercise, I wrote a short piece dominated by description rather than invention), it was also some kind of turning point. It was a big step for me to even admit that I wanted to write creatively and that I might be able to learn to write creatively. For, in my highly academic world, I fundamentally believed that writers were born, not made.

At the end of 1993, having saved up enough money to travel for a few months, I set off for Mali, West Africa, where a friend from school was living and working. I do not know if I ever said to myself that I hoped to use the time away to write; I know I certainly thought of writing as something I would like to do while I was not working full-time. However, I still did not have the confidence or audacity to call myself “a writer.” I kept lengthy journals throughout my travels and produced some sketches and watercolor drawings, and concluded my travels with a two month stay in Southwestern England, where I structured my time around writing creatively everyday. Having only ever worked as an editor on literary magazines and having never published a short story (though I had written a handful), I felt like a fraud spending my time in such a way, but I did it nonetheless. During my three month stay in England, I wrote two or three short stories and a short essay about Mali. I was writing; I just didn’t take any of it all that seriously.

On the advice of a close friend, I decided to move to New York City after I left England, instead of remaining in Britain or returning to California. I arrived in New York in 1995 without a job or a place to live (though I had friends to stay with), and quickly found an apartment in Park Slope, Brooklyn. I chose to live in Brooklyn because, at that time, it was relatively inexpensive and, because I hoped to work with a nonprofit or arts

organization or work part-time and write, none of which, I knew, would include a high salary. On what I can only recall as a whim, I decided to put in an application to the City College M.A. program in Creative Writing in August, 1995 for the Fall, 1995 term. Much to my surprise, I was accepted. It was the only writing program I applied to.

Although, even at that time, I continued to feel that “real writers” did not have M.F.A. degrees and did not need to go to school to learn how to write, I decided to enroll at City College. I ended up working with Mark Jay Mirsky and meeting some incredibly talented and interesting people and, despite all of my reservations, learning a great deal about writing. Most importantly, I was having to write creatively in order to fulfill the requirements of my various creative writing seminars.

Between September, 1995 and September, 2005, I have devoted a great deal of time to writing and been very involved in the literary community in New York City and now look back at my first tentative steps towards that involvement with a sense of disbelief that I had so little confidence that I would ever be a writer. I know that somewhere, very deep down, I had always wanted to be a writer; I am just surprised that I am now comfortable (most of the time) calling myself that. In the years between starting at City College and now, I have not only written a memoir and a novel, I have also published a number of short stories and non-fiction articles, some of which I've actually been paid for. I have also, during that time, become a teacher of writing. Nevertheless, I don't think I felt fully comfortable referring to myself as a writer until sometime around 2002 or 2003. I know there was a specific moment in time when I began for the first time feeling comfortable calling myself a writer. I wish I could pinpoint the date exactly, though I suspect it was something that took place over the course of several years rather than on a specific day. I cannot remember exactly what changed, but I can remember a feeling of all of the writing that I had ever done gelling

together to establish a kind of foundation on which I then felt comfortable calling myself a writer. And, when I did feel comfortable calling myself by this name, it was in a very specific way. It was in terms of knowing a trade. It was in terms, quite literally, of knowing that I could write a sentence. And, if asked to write a sentence—for a non-fiction article, or for a short story, or for a business report—I could. Writing, while not always as easy as speaking, was, I began to see, an ongoing conversation in which I was a participant.

Part of the reason that I may have been hesitant to call myself a writer had to do with the fact of not being able to get my first novel published. For a long time, I had dreamed not only of having this novel published, but of what that fact would mean about how I thought about myself and my writing. I had had other work published, including a piece on the *NYTimes.com* Web site, as well as numerous business and technology articles in glossy magazines, and a couple of short stories. And, though I had been lucky enough to find a literary agent, and began to believe that the prospects of selling the book to a mainstream publisher were good, the book simply did not sell. And, I had decided that until I had sold a book to a publisher, I would not feel comfortable referring to myself as a writer. My novel remains unpublished and this fact continues to contribute some anxiety whenever I refer to myself as a writer, particularly since the first question that people generally ask after one introduces herself as a writer is: “Oh, have you published a book?” My first book, a collection of stories and essays, will be published in January, 2007 and its publication will, I hope, help dispel some of the anxiety I feel when referring to myself as a writer.

My interest in teaching writing has grown out of my experiences in the writing classroom as well as of economic necessity. Having survived pretty well as a freelance writer in the 1990s, I found myself in the early part of the new century spending a lot more time looking for work, as opposed to working. I also decided then that if I wanted to continue

teaching, I wanted to do so not as an adjunct instructor, but as a professor. Returning to graduate school in the Fall, 2002 semester, I have learned a great deal about the study and teaching of writing. I have also struggled to retain the sense of myself as a writer while I pursue my studies and career as an academic. It is a struggle that I continue to have. The requirements and demands of traditional academic writing are quite distinct from those of creative writing or journalism. And, although it has always been my goal to find a balance between my creative work and my academic work, it seems, most often, that I am either doing one or the other, not both at the same time. I feel fortunate to be in the field of Composition and Rhetoric, which, perhaps more than some disciplines, has made more room for some experimentation in approaches to academic writing. Nevertheless, in my time in the Ph.D. program, there have been times when I had to seriously question whether I considered myself a writer. I still do because I continue to write creatively and publish.

In terms of my work as a teacher of writing, when I began teaching writing at CWE in 1998, I was completely self-taught and I wanted, like many novice teachers, to share the light with my students. I wanted them to feel that they too could *master* writing. Everyone could do this, I believed, they just needed to know the rules. Even though I taught writing as a process, and even though my classes were full of free writing and low-stakes writing and were not structured around a composition text-book, I adopted a very structural approach to teaching writing, which was, I believed, the way in which I had been taught how to write.

I had not been trained as a teacher of writing, and certainly should have been before I entered the classroom. Nevertheless, my early teaching experiences were very positive: my students lapped up my energy and optimism, as well as my apparent belief that I had something to *tell* them, i.e., that once they learned the conventions of academic writing their lives would be much easier.

As I learned more about rhetoric and composition as a discipline and gained more experience as a teacher of writing, I began approaching the question of teaching writing much more holistically. Teaching writing, I have begun to understand, is culturally situated and culturally informed and is a very complex proposition. The more I learn about the teaching of writing, the more I am fascinated by the process and, at the same time, amazed by the number of factors--psychological, linguistic, sociological, cultural, educational, institutional, political, technical—involved. It is my sense that when I first embarked on my investigation of authorship and student writing, no matter how much I resisted the idea of writing as a skill, I was still to some extent approaching it as just that, a technical act. It was only by embarking on this research study that I have begun to grasp how limited my understanding of what the terms *writing* and *writer* might encompass.

The extent to which this research project is related to issues in my own literacy narrative is, I believe, quite apparent. My struggle to negotiate a relationship with the term *writer* is the most obvious aspect. I initiated this research project believing that it had to do with teaching writing rather than with my own work as a writer and I must admit to being somewhat surprised that it relates equally to both. Nevertheless, as much as I recognize how much my autobiography informs the concepts behind, and the analysis of my study, I also believe that I could not have gotten past the strictures of the definitions of my own literacy narrative that informed the study without the collaboration of the students involved. It is in that respect that the study is dialogic and, in being so, has introduced something new to the ongoing discussion of and description of writing and the teaching of this act.

Chapter 4: Student Profiles

From its inception, this project has been concerned with ways of seeing: how students see themselves in the writing process and how they see their writing. This metaphor of seeing, or perception, also relates to the ways in which I analyzed the findings from this study. For, if I wanted to understand how student writers perceive themselves, how could I represent the students interviewed in the most multi-faceted manner? And, how could I find a way that allowed students' self-definitions to be seen?

Because a dissertation is written, I had to think about the ways in which it is possible for individuals to be seen in writing, which is primarily through voice and characterization. I therefore begin the analysis of the interviews by presenting profiles of each student.

One of the primary questions that I have had to pose to myself in preparing to discuss the interview findings has been how to find a place for both the specific and the general. This issue strikes me as one that teachers are consistently faced with: how to attend to the needs of individual learners in large class settings. In order to address both the specific and the general, I have divided my discussion of the student interviews into two sections. The first section (Chapter 4), offers profiles of each student interviewed, highlighting a certain facet of the interview that I found particularly noteworthy. The second section (Chapter 5) offers one reading of the interview data and identifies certain trends that emerge from that reading.

I had thought this project was going to be about how student writers see their writing. It has ended up being much more about how students' experiences inside and outside the classroom contribute to their relationships to writing, how students see themselves in relation to various scenes of writing, and how they describe the moments

when, and the reasons why, they are not simply “doing” school or having school “done” to them, but seeing places for themselves.

Christine

“I write but I am not a writer.”

Born in Guyana to Chinese parents, Christine grew up speaking English as her home language and, at age 11, she and her family moved to New York City. Her mother worked as a seamstress in Guyana and her father as a superintendent of a bus company. After immigrating to the U.S., her mother began caring for the sick and elderly and her father was employed as a factory foreman. One of seven children, Christine explained that neither of her parents attended high school; however, her mother did successfully complete her GED through a course of self-study, after moving to the U.S.

Prior to enrolling at CWE in the spring, 2003 semester, Christine finished her Associates Degree at a CUNY Community College. She has been working for the NYC transportation authority for 22 years and is currently a data processing supervisor. Although she is only 44 years of age, she will be eligible for retirement in three years, and sees completing her B.A. as a way to explore options for a second career once she retires.

In response to a structured free-writing assignment that took place as part of our humanities course, not during the interview, and which asked students to write either about their relationship to writing, or about their decision to return to college despite the fact that they were working adults and may not realize any financial gain from their degree, Christine wrote the following:

Writing and Me

I am a much better factual writer than a creative writer. I can tell you about the policy of a disciplinary rule or a safety procedure. But, it is very difficult for me to express myself fictionally. I cannot paint a picture and walk you through a story in detail. Facts are so much easier.

While I'm at work, employees sometimes fail to follow rules. When those rules are broken disciplinary action is necessary to re-direct employees actions the way the Company expects them to behave. If an attendance rule is broken discipline starts with a warning then a reprimand, suspension time until dismissal is ultimately reached.

Safety should be everyone's concern. When lifting an item, we should bend at the knees. Do not use your back. Using your back causes strain and pain.

Writing creatively is difficult. I am stuck, it's very difficult for me to finish this paragraph. In my early school years I found that I was the first pupil to complete their written assignments. I did not elaborate, I wrote the necessities and the conclusions. Half an hour later other students were still writing.

I feel

Conclusion goes here

During our interview, when asked what words come to mind when she thinks of the term *author*, Christine replied, "A writer of books," and then immediately added, "I don't come to mind." And in response to the question "Do you consider yourself an author?", she answered, emphatically, "No!" Asked why, she replied that she had a very definite idea of what authors do: they write creatively. As for herself, Christine did not "feel that [she] was capable of producing something so wonderful and imaginative." She went on to explain that "When I read other peoples' writing you can picture the events when you read it. [In *Their Eyes Were Watching God*] death is sitting in the middle of the room. You can picture the whole room first and visualize the whole atmosphere and no I can't do that. I'm a factual writer."

Christine defined the term *writer* in terms similar to that of author, as "having something published," however, she mentioned that she thought of the term writer in a more "professional sense, the newspaper writers, anyone who writes something

professionally.” In response to the question of whether she considered herself a writer, she answered, “I write, but I am not a writer.” Her judgment of her abilities as a writer appeared to relate to early experiences at school, where, she said, “[although] English is the only language I speak I was never really good at it. I stunk at grammar.” She was also critical of herself for being a “factual writer,” which she somehow associated with being somewhat “cold.”

Although Christine said that she had received little encouragement to write when she was in school, she did express an interest in writing a book about her mother’s experiences emigrating to Guyana, which she described as “her inspiration.” Regarding that project, she commented, “I started writing it and after three pages it just fizzled out. I tried to set the stage so you can visualize the whole picture.”

Despite her self-criticism with respect to her writing, Christine also mentioned that she is sometimes asked by her co-workers to help with writing projects because her English and writing skills are more advanced than theirs. However, in terms of the possible relationship between writing at work and academic writing, Christine felt “maybe it is a handicap because I’m not creative at work. It’s not really writing writing. It’s not writing like a story. It’s not writing in sentences. We leave off prepositions.”

In our discussion of audience and writing, Christine made clear distinctions between her writing at work and her writing at school. At work, she said, when she is writing policy statements that are read not only by employees, but by her supervisors and members of the transportation union, she does consider her audience. In fact, she went on to say, that with this type of writing she maintains “two views,” and she is very conscious of her style and word choice: “At work...I try to be objective. I do read what I’ve written as though I’m out there in the field, as if I’m the recipient of the writing. I have to have two-views: the

employee view and the policy view.... I imagine transit workers reading this. I stay away from large words. I try to be as clear as possible. I have to write step procedures: really explain.”

When asked whether she imagined an audience for her academic papers or considered herself part of an audience for that work, she laughed. “We all write for the teacher,” she said, “but at the same time it still has to make sense to me.” Christine then contrasted her sense of audience when writing academic papers with her sense of audience in her speech class: “In my speech class, when I prepare my speech, I put myself in the audience, but not with my writing.” Asked why she was unable to construct an audience for her academic essays, she explained that “I don’t feel that I’m qualified to be in the professor’s position.”

Although Christine defined the term writer primarily as “having something published,” she did not feel that after having her work published, she would consider herself a writer. In fact, she made it clear that “she would be an author of that piece, but would not consider [her]self a writer or an author.” Nevertheless, having a piece of writing published would, Christine believed, “make her very proud.” And, she would be interested in publishing part of an essay she wrote for a history class on 19th c. Guyana, not because she found the writing different from her other essays, but because she found the topic interesting and because “[the paper] was a bit personal. There was a ten page requirement for the paper and I wrote sixteen pages and I still thought I was missing information.”

Lisa

“[But] with [that one] paragraph, I wrote [that] with me in it and I felt that no matter what I got for that paragraph it didn’t matter....The teacher said to move it to the beginning and I needed it at the end. I love this paragraph. I was a rebel at that moment. I’m not usually a rebel.”

Lisa, a 45 year old, who has been working as a teacher’s aid for 7 years, graduated from Catholic high school in New York City, attended college classes for six months and then dropped out. It is, as she described it, “after a 25 year absence from school” that she returned to college at CWE in the fall 2003 semester in order to complete her B.A. and become a certified public school teacher.

Lisa’s father worked in manufacturing and her mother worked as a homemaker and seamstress. Both of her parents were born in Puerto Rico, where they attended grade school; her father completed elementary school before he began working, while her mother attended school only through grade 4.

Divorced several years ago, Lisa is raising her two children on her own. She has a son, who is attending Lehman College, a four-year CUNY college located in the Bronx, and a daughter who is 11. Although Lisa does not remember her parents reading to her as a child, based on her own work in the classroom as a teacher’s assistant, she has been very active in developing her children’s reading and writing skills. She is proud of her children’s academic successes, and hopes that her son is getting everything he can from his college experience.

In response to a structured free-writing assignment that took place as part of our humanities course, not during the interview, and which asked students to write either about their relationship to writing, or about their decision to return to college despite the fact that

they were working adults and may not realize any financial gain from their degree, Lisa wrote the following:

Writing Is the Way

Writing has been a very important skill, needed in my everyday life. We may not realize how much we use this tool until it is really needed. It is very crucial for a person to tune up and sharpen the instruments with plenty of practice, both in grammar, mechanics and sentence structure.

I am a paraprofessional for a regular setting classroom in the sixth grade. I edit students work daily in the area of Journal Writing. It is very [] to be able to grade the students in being able to edit their own work I also recommend for the students to edit each others work.

In Core Humanities I, I was able to execute and bring out these skills. I always find myself using the thesaurus to make it sound better. [My instructor for that course], on the other hand, would tell me to write what I meant. I learned to be more at ease with my writing. My biggest issue is the mechanical part in writing and sentence structure. As you may very well see.

My daughter is in the 4th grade. She is getting ready to take the Reading City-wide test. One of her daily homework assignments is to write essays. They use a rubric of 1-4 in her score. I work with her on her essays and her paragraph form.

I am looking forward to learning so much more in this class. I hope that you will have the patience with me. If you are available to see me before classes, I would be willing and available. I am not afraid of any critiquing. I need a strong foundation so I can accomplish major heights in my other classes. I am intimidated by all the skills you need. I am looking forward to a productive semester.

During our interview, Lisa defined an author “as someone who writes a book and puts his ideas on paper.” She based this definition on her experience as a teacher’s assistant, working with kids on reading and math. “Before we enter different genres we talk about authors and illustrators of certain books,” she explained.

In terms of whether she considered herself an author, she replied “not really.” “I’m thinking about the selling part.... I don’t consider that anything I write would have any buyers.” Although, growing up, no one ever encouraged Lisa to become an author, she has been told “that with my divorce, I have a story, something to say. There is a moment in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* when Janie sees that image and she knows what she has to do

and that was similar to my experiences. People say you ought to write a book or teach a class.”

Lisa’s definition of a writer was similar to her definition of an author, though she also included several technical elements in her definition of the former term: “A writer is someone who has really good ideas. Thesis kicks in, he knows the main ideas, paragraphs, putting everything in its proper place.” Feeling that she is sometimes but not always a writer, Lisa explained that “My own writing is OK but my own writing versus college writing I don’t live up to that standard. The standard is to write a paper, you know, it is like the end of the rainbow, I’m dreaming of it, I can see what the goal is, but even with the third draft, I was still edited and that third draft is what I would have liked to have written on the first draft.” Based on her experiences at CWE, which, she described as being very positive because they enabled her to feel “for the first time [that she] loved books and literature,” and “that [she] can do anything,” she defined herself as “not being a great writer [in terms of] putting thoughts together, grammar.”

After talking about her writing in school, and her paper on Zora Neale Hurston, Lisa actually defined an author in a distinctly different manner from her first definition. Responding to the question “what are the differences/similarities between an author and writer?” she replied, “That’s an interesting question. To me, I’m thinking they are the same thing because you need one for the other. To be an author you don’t have to sell it. You wrote those words, you wrote those ideas. I would connect them.” I am not entirely certain why she revised her definition and whether this resulted from the discussion we were having before the question was introduced, or because the question was phrased in such a way that did not ask Lisa to define herself but the terms *author* and *writer* in general.

When asked if she imagined herself as part of the audience for her writing, Lisa answered “no, just the teachers.” She went on to say, “I wrote these papers for my professors. This is something I wrote for you to get a grade. If you are my audience, and one person can be an audience, then I guess you were that. These [papers] were put together to perform for you.” Lisa described the teacher as audience making her think more about thesis statements and structure. Although she felt her professors at CWE were encouraging of her work in general, she was discouraged by the fact that after each draft there would be more comments and suggestions for revision: “When I see the final draft with lots of editing [marks]....and I know it is my best and it is still not up to par I get a little upset but I know this is my best.”

Lisa’s reactions to the possibility of having her writing published were mixed. The idea of having work published was very appealing to her and, she said, would make her “think ‘wow, this is good....if it were to happen I would have more confidence.” Furthermore, if she had something published, she felt “she would not have to write a book.” However, regarding the reality of her writing to date, she insisted that it “was not good enough” to publish. And, even if a professor were to say the writing was good enough, and asked her permission to publish one of her essays, she would only “maybe consider it” if it were for a limited audience.

In discussing her essay on *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Lisa commented several times on how, when writing the essay and then reading over the essay, “it felt different” from other experiences with writing. Asked why this was the case, she explained, “because I was in it. Even if it was one paragraph, I put myself in there. I really felt her [Janie]. Reading that paper is different. I liked that the paper was personal but I also liked that I had to think through things.” Lisa emphasized that it was both the personal connection to the

novel, as well as the fact that she was asked to comment on a scholarly article related to the novel that made her experience of writing that paper unique.

Patricia

“I kind of think that I write better when I get to choose something that’s interesting to me rather than ‘Here, write this.’”

Having dropped out of high school after the 10th grade, Patricia, who is now 26, completed her GED in 1996 through an early childhood development program at CUNY’s Bronx Community College, and has been working as an assistant teacher at private daycare sites ever since. She enrolled at CWE in 2003 in order to complete her B.A. and become a teacher.

Patricia’s mother, who was born in Belize, has a B.S. in nursing from a Belizean university; however, she currently works as a house cleaner in New York City. Her father was born in the U.S. and at one point served in the military, but Patricia has had little or no contact with him since she was a young child, and had no information about his educational background.

In response to a structured free-writing assignment that took place as part of our humanities course, not during the interview, and which asked students to write either about their relationship to writing, or about their decision to return to college despite the fact that they were working adults and may not realize any financial gain from their degree, Patricia wrote the following:

Writing in my younger years as a child was fun for me. I wrote about Fairy Tales and other stories that was either read to me or told to me. Today

most of my writing is either related to my job or school and do not get a chance to enjoy it for myself.

Working in a pre-K classroom does not involve a lot of adult writing, most of the time it is writing down what the children have expressed about their work or things that they have learned in class. During nap time the lights are turned off and there is not much to see. Thereby I do not attempt to write because it will only hurt my eyes. The only other writing that is done is for school.

I major in Early Childhood Education and with the major comes a lot writing classes; Humanities Core II is only my third class. In my previous classes I've wrote essays about short stories, poems and even essay about myself. Sometimes I did not want to do the work because of being tired and forced to do it instead of [three words indecipherable]. And the one time writing was fun for me was when I wrote songs or poems because it is the best way I now how to express myself when I am writing.

Discussing the terms author and writer, Patricia defined them in similar terms. An author, she said, is “a creative person” and added, “this is what authors do, they have ideas constantly and they go to writing all of the time.” She defined a writer as “someone who’s able to put their thoughts down on paper.” In the course of our interview, however, she would make a distinction between an author and a writer, commenting that whereas for authors “writing is something they love to do,” for writers, “that’s their job, they have to write letters, they have to do e-mails, they’re not looking at it as enjoyment.” In response to the question of whether she considered herself an author, Patricia answered “no,” and explained, “I was thinking about that [issue] because when I saw [the film version of] *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, since I wrote my essay, I’ve been wanting to go back to it [the book] and try to analyze it more and then try to get it [the essay] into some kind of scholarship type thing but I haven’t done that. I don’t think I work as hard as authors do. I kind of do my writing, read it over and hand it in. I don’t look back to it.” In this response, Patricia linked the term author not only with the desire to write without instigation, as she did in her earlier response, but with preparing a piece of writing for publication.

To the question of whether Patricia considered herself a writer, she responded, “sometimes.” She then went on to add, “it’s funny when you say who’s a writer because I feel like everybody’s a writer; everybody writes.” And yet, despite this very open definition of the term, she did not *always* consider herself a writer. Instead, she only considered herself a *writer* when she was acting as she defined authors acting, i.e., without instigation or, as she put it, when she was “in the mood to just write without someone giving me an assignment.”

Patricia believed that all of her writing—at work, at home, at school—was highly influenced by the audience she was writing to. “When I write e-mails, I can picture the person’s face. Also, when I’m at my job and I know I have to write a parent a note and I think about what their reaction is going to be when I write ‘because [your child] didn’t nap they’re in a cranky mood,’ I ask myself ‘will they be upset, will they be OK?’” Although Patricia described the two roles that she was able to take on when composing notes for her job—that of the teacher and that of the parent—she did not have the same ability to bifurcate her perspective in writing and reading her academic papers.

One of the things that I noticed when Patricia described her experiences with writing at work was how much of a definite purpose and audience she had each time she wrote, and how much the writing in that context was about communication rather than performing. Although she described herself as being very aware of grammar when writing to parents and commented that the voice she uses in those notes is different from one she adopts with her friends, she is still able to place herself in the position of the parent and revise her writing as though she were engaged in a dialogue with them. When asked if she ever experienced this kind of relationship to audience with her academic writing, she replied, “I don’t know. I have a strange way I do things. I remember you talking about audience but I just kind of do

what I do. I think if you think too much about audience it kind of takes you away from you.”

Patricia’s most positive experiences with academic writing were those in which she was able to “be [her] own writer” rather than writing to what she referred to as a “standard of excellence.” Describing the differences between these two approaches, she explained that in some classes “they [professors] were really expecting excellence in writing, like a certain type of way of writing. I believe [some professors] have a certain type of way of writing that [they] like to read and what should be in it and I am just not that type of writer. Of course other students [in that class] were that type of writer and I’m sure they got A+’s.” For instance, Patricia mentioned the essay that she had written about Zora Neale Hurston’s novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. The essay was unique, she said, because it was not in a traditional expository form. Instead, she was writing from the perspective of different characters and exploring what they were feeling at particular moments to then support her interpretation of the novel. Her paper was about the three relationships that Janie was involved in and how each represented a different stage in her development. She commented:

It was actually fun writing the paper. I got to express how I felt about Janie’s whole sexual experiences and how with each relationship it built up to her becoming this woman and finding the love she’s been looking for forever. [In describing Janie’s reactions in three different love scenes] I thought, how am I going to express how [Janie] is feeling during this time and then I had to imagine, ‘OK, if I say it was like this, how was that going to sound?’

Patricia emphasized that she enjoyed writing the paper on *Their Eyes Were Watching God* not only because of the freedom she had in choosing what she wanted to write about and how to write about it, but also as a result of her ability to engage with the language of the novel. When I asked her if her interest in the novel and its language had to do with the

fact of it being written by an African-American woman, she explained that while she had read many books by African-American women, what appealed to her most in this one was the language of the novel and what she described as the “quality” of the writing:

I think it was the writing [in that novel that made it stand out for me]. It was something different...like, when I read Maya Angelou it was so different from any books I'd read before her. The language was different. [Hurston's] language was more sophisticated [than that in some other books]. I read *Waiting to Exhale* and the story was great but her [Terry McMillan's] sentences just kind of ran on and on and on and on and it was very simple, simple wording, very easy to understand.

Despite the fact that Patricia was enthusiastic about having a piece of her writing published, she was not sure that this would change her relationship to writing. She thought it would give her more confidence and possibly help develop her understanding of the essay form, but her response, she said, would “depend on what my reaction would be.” If, after having the essay published, she had more of a drive to write, then she felt this experience would change her relationship to writing.

Celia

“Now, I'm staring at a blank piece of paper. I've been intimidated to the point where I cannot write.”

Born in England to Jamaican parents, Celia has been living in New York City for almost twenty years. She originally came to the U.S. to work as a nanny and the family employing her encouraged her to complete her Associates Degree, which she did, graduating in 1997 from CUNY's New York City Technical College. Although she does not need any additional academic credentials to proceed in her career path as an accounting controller with a major fashion brand, Celia decided to complete her B.A. “to feel that I had accomplished something; it is for me.”

In response to a structured free-writing assignment that took place as part of our humanities course, not during the interview, and which asked students to write either about their relationship to writing, or about their decision to return to college despite the fact that they were working adults and may not realize any financial gain from their degree, Celia wrote the following:

What is My Relationship to Writing
By _____

Writing to me is a form of expression. As someone who has traveled and lived in different countries, it enables me to put into words thoughts and feelings and observations.

It is my intention to share some of these experiences I have had through the use of writing.

I spent the first nine years of my life in England. My parents originally from Jamaica decided to return, taking their children. Jamaica was a culture shock for me as I had never seen so many people of color.

I entered high school at a very young age and was at a disadvantage because the other students were two years ahead academically than I was. In my frustration, I began to keep a diary. Here I would express the pain and loneliness I felt as the odd one out. My imagination began to soar and I discovered I had a knack for inventing stories. I wrote these down and consequently became quite popular at school because the other students enjoyed my elaborate tales.

Reading also fueled my imagination and upon leaving high school and returning to the UK I continued to make up stories and write them down.

To this day I still do this, however, time and responsibilities leave little time for my hobby, so the stories remain in my head. The invention of the PC has been of great help but alas time is not my friend.

I have traveled to several places and I find beauty in most things however I find it easier to take a photograph than to write down what I see. I do less writing for fun as I used to do, now the only real writing I do is either for work or college.

I have made a promise to myself that once I finish my BA degree I am going to sit down and write about the experience of going back to school at 40.

In our interview, Celia defined the term author as “someone who is able to put their thoughts onto paper [and] that can relate to others.” In the course of defining both the terms *author* and *writer*, she took the opportunity to make critical comments about herself,

adding, with self-conscious humor, that she wished that she, like authors, could relate to others and that although writing may be “natural” for writers, for herself, “it is a struggle.” When asked if she was an author, Celia said “no, because a lot of the thoughts I have I do not put to paper. They sound good in my head, but they just stay in my head and I don’t write anything down.” Though she offered a slight differentiation between the two terms *writer* and *author* based on the fact that she associated the term *writer*, she mainly emphasized the similarity between the two terms, with both connoting an ease and effortlessness with the act of writing. Asked to define a writer, Celia replied, “I generalize a writer as something that is a natural thing.” In terms of whether she considered herself a writer, she replied, “No, because I’m crap.” She laughed after she said this, and then admitted, when I asked whether this self-assessment applied when she was struggling to begin to write, or once she was actually in the process of writing, that “getting started is hard, but then afterwards the ideas do pretty much flow.”

Celia did not recall receiving any encouragement to write at school, primarily, she believed, because she was a bad speller and, in the Jamaican school system, excellent spelling was considered a very important part of good writing. Nevertheless, she has been encouraged to write by her sister and by her professors at CWE. However, in the spring, 2005 semester, she was finding that she was very blocked with her writing because her professor has been, according to her, very critical:

To take criticism is very hard, particularly if you feel that you’ve done a lot of work. With my thesis statement, one professor started by saying: “Well, I don’t know how much time you spent on this” which to me was a negative right away. And I shut down immediately when he said that. I thought: “This man does not like me” and I didn’t even hear what he was saying after he said that because I know that I had spent a great deal of time on it and showed it to a couple of people and they had said “it’s OK, it’s interesting.” But the bottom line was that he said it was too broad and I felt that he could have said that in a nicer way.

Because the professor dominates Celia's sense of audience when she is writing academic papers, the dialogue she engages in with the professor as she writes is influential not only in terms of *what* she writes but *how* she writes and, furthermore, how she conceives of herself during the writing process. The imagined dialogue that takes place between herself and the professor is, she explained, sometimes inhibiting, and sometimes encouraging, and is based not only on the actual verbal and social interaction between herself and her professor, but written comments, as well as Celia's own imagined projection of the professor when she is writing: "I visualize what the professor would say about certain things [and this can be inhibiting] only if I am stuck for an idea.... But if it was flowing then I don't care. I like it." It was, in fact, only when her image of the professor was conceived as highly critical that she felt most inhibited in her writing and felt "intimidated to the point where [she] could not write." Though her writing process appeared to be greatly facilitated by an open dialogue with a professor, Celia nevertheless admitted that even when writing papers for professors with whom she is comfortable communicating, she will sometimes alter what she has written because she feels the professor may not agree with her point.

In the late 1980s, Celia wrote a letter that to *Billboard*, a national music magazine, that was eventually published in the magazine's letters section. She said the experience "made [her] happy and gleeful" even though "when [she] wrote it it was not with the intent for them to publish it." Celia did not believe that having the letter published changed any part of her writing process or her relationship to writing. It also did not change her understanding of audience because, she explained, "at the time I didn't have any understanding of audience; I wrote the letter to one person." The experience did, however, inspire her "to write more letters of complaint," which was the rhetorical mode of that letter.

Celia was very receptive to the idea of having one of her essays published, and while she did not feel this experience would make her an author, she did feel it would further establish her ability to conceive of herself as a writer. In discussing the papers she would feel comfortable publishing as part of a class book, she compared them to the letter she had written to *Billboard* and mentioned the way in which there is some part of her own ego that is invested in her imagined relationship with the professor when she is writing academic papers:

A great deal of thought went into both of them. A great deal of thought had gone in to what I had wanted to come from the nominations [letter] and for the papers I wrote in your class. I spent a lot of time on them. And I did them because I wanted to be pleased and I wanted to please you. I don't want to let you down, which is a reflection of myself. It is my own ego.

She went on to comment on the way in which her audience, which is some combination of the professor and herself, is directly tied to her confidence as a writer. Because, she explained, “she does not take criticism well,” whatever critique occurs needs to take place as an open dialogue between her and her professor and be accompanied by some encouragement at the same time. Celia pointed to the ability to establish a dialogue of humorous complaint with the professor as being very important to her overall relationship with academic writing.

James

“I got angry there in that paper. And it helped me.”

Raised in Harlem, where he still resides, and educated in New York City public schools, James, who is 46 years old, works as a site supervisor with a nonprofit dedicated to

alternative sentencing programs for prisoners. James' mother left school after the 8th grade, his father after the 7th grade. Both parents were raised in the South, but met in New York City. When I asked James how he defined his ethnicity, he replied, "I'm black." I then went on to ask if he considered himself an African American, to which he commented, "sometimes, it depends on the mood I'm in if I consider myself as an American. I mean I love this country and stuff but it depends...I guess I'd say I'm African." James completed 69 credits at community colleges prior to enrolling at CWE. When he completes his B.A., he will be the first of his five siblings to graduate with a college degree.

Despite the fact that James is now a very committed and hard working student, he described himself as someone who, at times, had behavioral problems at school, and, in high school, simply was not interested in attending classes. James explained his lack of interest in school as dating from his early grade school years, when he was diagnosed with a speech impediment in grade school and, as a result, was sent to special education classes and subsequently teased by other students. He was also held back in the 4th grade. However, when he repeated the grade, he ended up having a teacher who would greatly influence him. This teacher "whipped us and washed out mouths out with soap," James explained, if a lesson was not completed. "Anything she had given you you had to learn," James commented, and, for him this was a very positive experience. He recounted this specific teacher as his "most favorite teacher today because she showed me at the time that I could learn."

In response to a structured free-writing assignment that took place as part of our humanities course, not during the interview, and which asked students to write either about their relationship to writing, or about their decision to return to college despite the fact that

they were working adults and may not realize any financial gain from their degree, James wrote the following:

Writing a class essay

Why is it important for a individual to go to college.

Going to college give you a chance to grow and prevent you from falling behind in knowledge. Growing in wisdom help you to deal with life issue from the best possible prospect. Though a college education may not provide you with the money for suivable, it will give you more opportunities.

As time change, so do information about that job or environment. As a person continue there education through college or training program, he or she is adding value to their lives. Education help you to feel good about yourself and encourage you to face new challenges. With understand you can communicate and help others within your family and community. Without new information and the ability to improve in life, you are bound to retreat to old habits in thinking and behavior.

Money can't buy you peace in the world or within you family, but education teach you how to deal with conflict and crisis, and give you a better opportunity at achieving your goal.

In closing, without a higher standard of education, where would we be at today? The growth opportunity is unlimited with a good education. However, making more money doesn't mean a more comfortable life for you, or anyone else. I would chose wisdom knowledge and understanding over money on any given day. What good is having a lot of money and don't know how to use its?

During our interview, James defined an author "as a person formulating the book or the story behind it. Someone who's intelligent, someone who has an idea who wants to bring it into reality, bring it to life, whether its realistic or a dream, something they want to share with others." And, he felt strongly that "we all are authors. It is just a matter of time of putting thoughts and feelings on paper." In contrast, his definition of the term writer was much more focused on the act of writing itself and its technical attributes rather than creative aspects. For James, being a writer is communicating to another individual, not "just writing my thoughts" or being creative. Writing is, he went on to explain, an act somewhat like translation:

When I write to myself, sometimes I keep journals, anything that's going on in my mind, I don't have to be detailed as an author because it is there only for me. But if I wanted to translate the information to leave it for my children, then I'd need to be a writer. They'd need to know exactly what I was thinking and why I came to that conclusion. They need to know. If I'm writing a professor a letter as a friend, I can write my thoughts and maybe there's some bad grammar. If I'm writing a professor as my instructor, then my grammar and everything else has to be correct and that's when I'm a writer.

Though his definition of writer was democratic and inclusive, he also mentioned, in comparing the term *author* to the term *writer*, that he was “always an author but sometimes a writer.”

Although James answered “no” to the question of whether he imagined an audience for his writing, he then went on to explain that in the case of his family history, which he has been encouraged to write about by friends, he would imagine his children and grandchildren as an audience. And, for academic work, he “thinks about the professor,” and asks himself consistently as he writes, “am I being clear?” He also related in detail the way in which dialects change in response to one's audience:

When I write to my friends I'm not as concerned with my grammar structure but to get my point across. Now that I'm taking grammar now, I find myself wanting to write better even to my friends. I ask several friends to correct me on the phone when I speak with them. They work in an office downtown but when they come back in the hood they can go backwards and forwards. Sometimes when I caught them on the job and they'll be “oh, I can't talk to you right now but you can call me back later or I'll talk to you at home,” and I think, “oh you're going white on me now.”

The issue of dialect came up again when we were discussing the books that we had read in our Humanities class. Describing the experience of reading Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, James commented:

[For the first time] I read a piece of material that was written in a language that I was familiar with, or I had heard in my house growing up with and that was very encouraging. And that also gave me [a sense of] this is where this saying comes from, because this is from the South and my family is from the South. I had someone who was writing and speaking and was published who I could relate to, which was really, really mind-blowing. It was the first time I read something that was close to the way I speak.... People are saying I'm speaking a dialect that's not acceptable and half the time I didn't know where my slang was coming from. It was from the South there. There was a place for me and I was so interested that there was a place for me.

The sense of authority James derived from reading Hurston's novel was then two-fold. First, he was able to establish a primary sense of authority through his familiarity with the dialect in the novel, which then gave him a greater sense of authority in relation to his own dialect and in his ability to comment on the language and characters in the novel. Secondly, James derived an associative sense of authority from the fact that the author, writing in a dialect he himself used, "was published."

In relation to other critics writing about the novel, James felt that because of his family history, personal experience, and familiarity with a specific Southern American dialect, that he spoke from a position of authority that even certain published critics, who were not black and who had not grown up in the same socio-cultural context that he had, could not access:

Critics had written books themselves but they had not gone through what Zora Neale Hurston had gone through. They attacked the story. What other identity can they relate to other than what they've seen?... And whereas [certain] critics [were] saying Teacake is representing the typical African American guy, to me Teacake was a fool. I wanted to make a comparison with Teacake and the guy hanging out on the corner of the block, or those kids doing drugs, having a good time, as opposed to the guy who put in 12 hours at his job. The critic was saying Joe Starks was part of imperialism. [But I disagreed. I felt] he saw opportunity and he had a vision.

James believed that his Hurston paper “was the best writing [he] did in the class” and, in discussing the paper in our interview, commented, “I got angry in that there paper and it helped me.”

In my comments about an early draft of James’ Hurston essay, I asked him to do more research, since I felt that some of the critical articles he was using needed to be put into a historical context, and that a review of more recent criticism might lead him to further complicate his interpretation of Teacake and Joe Starks. I remember our exchanges about this paper at the time of our class very vividly, and when our conversation turned to this topic in our interview I revisited the exchange with new perspective. I recalled that when first discussing the paper with James, I felt it was extremely important to help him find an interpretative stance towards the novel that was not based on dualities, i.e., the characteristics of Starks versus the characteristics of Tea Cake, but complicated by other issues being considered in the novel, i.e., gender, economics, race, and culture. I would later recall that when we were engaged in discussing my comments about his paper, James did not immediately concede to my authority, but stood his ground, and, rather than treating me as someone with something to teach him, approached me as someone who could learn from him. During the course of my interview with James, I began to be much more aware of the positive implications of his disagreeing with me, particularly in the larger context of James’ educational experiences, which he consistently described as being about achieving certain standards of correctness. For, in that context, the moment stood out as one in which the power dynamics between James and an instructor were very differently situated.

To the question of whether James would like to have an essay published in a class book, his response was one of guarded and conditional interest. He was very concerned about having “all of his grammar mistakes” published, even though he also thought that

giving other students the ability to see his struggles with standard written English may be instructive and helpful to them. When I explained to him that we would edit and copy edit the book as a class, he replied, “but then that’s not really publishing.” When I replied that “this was how publishing worked,” he expressed greater interest in publishing “the original copy” as well as, at some point in the future, producing and publishing a copy edited version that adhered to the conventions of standard written English.

In terms of what James would be most interested in publishing if he decided to participate in the project, he mentioned the Zora Neale Hurston essay because it was his “best essay” from our class, and because he was “emotionally involved in that.” This essay, he believed, had a strong and clear argument that differed from certain critical perspectives on the novel. Throughout our discussion of publishing the paper, regardless of whether James was resistant or receptive to the idea, he did not feel that having the essay published would change his relationship to writing.

Susan

“There are times [with writing essays] when it is a question of being comfortable with my voice and with being heard. That is what I have more of a problem with. I don’t want to be restricted either way, either that I have to sound like bell hooks or the most traditional critic. It would help me figure out me. I would be more comfortable in certain spheres.”

Susan, who is 27, enrolled at CWE to complete her B.A. after dropping out of a private liberal arts college that she had attended for two years on a full scholarship. She currently works as a program officer for a Haitian-American nonprofit. Born in New York City to Haitian parents, Susan attended public grade school and middle school in Brooklyn, and a private, college-preparatory high school in New Jersey. Both of her parents graduated

from college and her father, an engineer and businessman who had been trained as a lawyer in Haiti, completed an M.A. in the United States.

In response to a structured free-writing assignment that took place as part of our humanities course, not during the interview, and which asked students to write either about their relationship to writing, or about their decision to return to college despite the fact that they were working adults and may not realize any financial gain from their degree, Susan wrote the following:

Topic: Myself and my relationship to writing

When I think of myself as a writer I experience intense feelings of uncertainty. I usually do not choose writing as a medium of communication because I come from a cultural background that communicates strictly through oral tradition.

I am Haitian and my first words were in Haitian Creole. Haitian Creole is a melange of different languages from various ethnic groups and cultural traditions. It has only recently been developed into a written language. As a result mostly every experience from news to history is told through stories or songs. This is an oral tradition very similar to Homer's bard tradition.

As a child I was bombarded by stories and songs but was surprisingly free of the cumbersome pages of books. My life was just as vivid and colorful as my contemporaries but remained in my head and in my words. It was not until I was in school that I experienced the joy of books and writing. But writing still remains the work of my outside world and hardly feels like my home. I think it is time I marry the two.

In our interview, Susan was comfortable consistently referring to herself as a writer, but not as an author. She differentiated the two terms based primarily on the reach and scope of one's work. "An author is someone who is willing to share their ideas," she commented, "they put themselves out there." Authors also, she said, "see [writing] beyond a hobby, it is who they are, it is a career." A writer, on the other hand, applies to a larger number of people, and is "just an expression of ideas and thoughts." Susan was, however,

not ready to apply the term *writer* to everyone since, she commented, “not everyone has the ability to write.”

In our discussion of audience, Susan admitted that in her writing at school, in her earlier college courses, and in her work at CWE, the majority of the time she is “not writing for [herself]” but writing for a teacher. She described the writing that she does for herself as “such a different language; I tend to be very poetic and immigrant like.” Susan was a very active and vocal member of our Humanities class and wrote highly competent essays for the course. I was therefore somewhat surprised to find out that she was only minimally engaged by the reading, much of which she was familiar with from high school and her earlier college courses, or by the essay assignments. This lack of engagement was evident in her essays, which, despite containing many interesting insights, appeared not to have been revised. In our interview, Susan confirmed that she had written only one draft of the essays for our course.

Writing academic papers on auto-pilot, or without much personal engagement, was something, Susan commented, she had been doing for years. Having done a great deal of writing in high school and in her college classes at the private college she attended before enrolling at CWE, Susan had figured out a method for completing the work and “giving the teacher what they wanted” by writing in a formulaic manner. In discussing why she adopted this approach to writing academic papers, she explained that at times she used such a method simply because it was familiar and easy, while, at other times, it was necessary in order to complete the volume of work she was faced with.

Susan explained that the feeling of dissociation that she felt with respect to academic writing dated from her experiences in high school and related to her overall relationship to higher education. As one of a handful of minority students at the private high school she

attended, and one of the only scholarship students, she began at that time to completely separate her home and school lives:

In high school I was never myself. I was just a player on the stage. And that's how I always felt, lines being given to me, I'm being fed lines and I'm just playing a role. I never had friends in high school. I dissociated myself. I never saw anyone as truly a friend because I was never myself...there were only five black children at the school and they were from a very different background [from mine]. I was the Susan I felt I was expected [to be]. I never brought my home life to the table and how I expressed myself at home was never how I expressed myself at school. I never had a moment when I didn't do that.

At her prep school, Susan was given the opportunity to take a Toni Morrison poetry seminar at Princeton University, and it was through this experience that Susan became most acutely aware of the various voices that she adopted in different writing situations. Morrison was impressed with some of the poetry that Susan had written, but noted the difference between her creative writing voice and the voice she used in her critical paper:

I handed in one paper and [Morrison] wrote back, "you don't sound anything like your poetry." And it was so true because I had just learned to mimic everybody else. It hurt but I knew it to be true. In the process of writing I was so outside my head, it's not even me talking it was another person or something I'd read sounds like. And it never disturbed me at all, it was my process.

I asked Susan if, since high school, she had been able to find some balance between her various writing voices, and she explained that she had not:

I've read things by other people that have done this, like James Baldwin, Cornell West, and they tend to use their voice in the writing, so does Martin Luther King. And I think, if they can do it, then [I can]. [But it is hard being] comfortable with your voice at all times, particularly for a bicultural person, which I am, because I go between different groups.

Nevertheless, Susan explained that at work, where she writes proposals and grant applications, she feels she can express herself more freely than in her academic essays. In our discussion of why this was the case, she said that the fact that she perceived a clear purpose and a defined audience for her writing at work were both important differences from her academic writing, which she often perceived to be “writing for writing’s sake.” Her practical engagement in the topics and her sense that there is a real-world purpose both give her a different relationship to her writing at work. The one exception to this was a sociology paper she wrote for a CWE class on the orthography of Haitian Creole. In this paper, because she was very interested in the topic, she was able to adopt a writing voice similar to one she often utilizes at work, that of an “advocate for social issues.” She also felt that in that specific paper “there was a little piece of me in it.”

Having written for the student newspaper in high school and in college, Susan has had many pieces of writing published. However, she did not, at first, mention these when I asked if she had had any writing published. She instead described the experience of having a small book of poems published in high school:

I was very proud of myself. It was very unexpected and I took this seminar and the [positive feedback and encouragement] were unexpected and were just incredible. It was the first time that I could actually say that I was hungry, and feeling that I was comfortable and that this was something that was natural. Now, I look at it and I say, “Wow I did that.” I still like it. It still surprises me. It feels so ever present. You think, I was 17 or 18 and you think, “what did I know?”, but it still speaks of who I am. It is like going back in your journals but it is different when it is published because I worked a lot harder on those things; I did a lot of editing. It is more of me because it is not off the top of my head, I wrote it, I thought about it and this was exactly how I wanted it to be.

Susan did not, however, believe that this experience of having her creative work published changed her relationship to writing in general, and particularly not her relationship to

academic writing. Instead, she described the experience as being a “peak experience,” and one that was not likely to occur again. Susan was receptive to having her paper on the orthography of Haitian Creole published as part of a class book and felt that the idea of having academic essays published and read by other students may help her resist the urge to write in a prescribed and mechanical voice and form. She also emphasized that having an interest in the curriculum helped her resist a formulaic approach to writing academic essays.

Susan spoke very eloquently about the issues facing students who have both a bi-cultural and bi-dialectical relationship to the college courses:

If you look at African American students, at minority students not including Asians, what I found was that...for minority students it is for advancement not to be enriched. [White students] felt part of a larger [academic] community, and [possibly more] connected to [a standard written English (SWE)] voice. When you're “the other,” you're not an active part of that discourse, or you feel that you are not or you are told that you are not. If you are white, [SWE] may not be your voice, and I understand that to be true, but you feel more comfortable adopting it because it is something that when you go back to your private life, most people you know have adopted that voice and [so, for white students of a certain class background, going back and forth between home and school] is not a true bi-cultural experience. [Whereas] the minority student has to make a choice, either to disappear and this is who [they] become or to go back and [I don't feel] that there is any in-between.

Eliza

“[By publishing an essay, I'd feel] that the words that I put on paper were being read not just by a teacher or a boss or myself or my friend at the other end of the e-mail, but by someone who was interested in reading these essays. I think that would be great.”

Raised in Yonkers, New York, Eliza, who is now 50, went to work right after high school because of her family's financial situation. “It is one of the biggest regrets of my life not going to school,” she explained, and part of the reason why she has returned to

complete her B.A. Prior to enrolling at CWE, Eliza took several adult education classes at colleges in New Jersey and New York City and, at age 40, graduated from secretarial school. Eliza's father, who worked as a "tool and die man," attended college for three years and then dropped out after marrying; her mother completed secretarial school.

Eliza works as an administrative assistant in a New York City law firm. Her duties include taking dictation, and typing briefs and letters. She is responsible for editing and proofreading her work; however, she does not describe these tasks as writing, but as transcribing. She has kept diaries for a long time and writes long e-mails to friends. She has also kept "a suitcase of personal artifacts [including] from first grade these little one page writings [she] did."

Although Eliza cannot recall anyone encouraging her to become a writer or publish a book, she commented that "I've said this to myself because I've got some interesting stories to tell." She also believed that she "has had an interesting life history involving "lots of tales," and "has a flair for words." Nevertheless, when asked if she considered herself a writer, she replied, "not yet, not really, but I mean I can write a good essay."

In response to a structured free-writing assignment that took place as part of our humanities course, not during the interview, and which asked students to write about their relationship to writing, or their decision to return to college despite the fact that they were working adults and may not realize any financial gain from their degree, Eliza wrote the following:

In my estimation, the old adage "knowledge is power" is quite true. The more you know, the easier it is for you to navigate your way through life.

For me, one of my biggest regrets is not to have gone to college directly out of high school. At the time it seemed to me to be more efficient to go right to work and earn a living. As time went on, however, it became more apparent that a higher education should be sought after. At times it wreaked havoc with my self-esteem—I felt inferior to those who had pursued their education.

Going to college opens doors. It also opens your mind to new ideas and better ways of thinking about things. People with a good education speak better, write better, and relate better to the world around them. They have a better perspective to events and people. College-educated people have a broader sense of what's happening and can see things on a larger scale. What I mean is they outgrow their small town narrow views.

I may be glamorizing what a college education can do, but it has become very important to me to complete my education. I have taken classes here and there throughout my adult life, but this time I mean to take it through to the end and acquire that Bachelor's degree. Hopefully maybe I'll even go beyond it, but let me not get ahead of myself. Sometimes I feel overwhelmed with my job and going to school, but my better self says don't quit. It will all be worth it in the end. Even I will be able to preface sentences with, "When I was in college..."

So you see that even if you don't make more money for having gone to college, you make more of yourself for having had the experience.

During our interview, Eliza defined the term author as "someone who is able to write and convey a message or a story," and a writer as "someone who is sensitive to their surroundings and feels the need to express themselves in the written word." She then distinguished the two terms based primarily on audience: "You can be a writer and just write for your own personal pleasure, but when you're an author you're writing knowing that others are going to be reading your works." Eliza also distinguished the different types of writing she did—at school, at home, at work—based on audience, which influences her style for each type of writing. She explained that "when [she's] doing something for work, [she] knows that the format has to be right and the spelling has to be right and I should have gotten it right from the get-go. It has to make sense; the sentence has to make sense. With academic work, [she] looks at grammar and clarity with an eye on getting a good grade."

Eliza was very enthusiastic about the prospect of having her writing published, and she felt that it would change her relationship to writing because she would have a new sense that "people were interested in my story, in my writing, in the way I wrote." She also felt that having her writing published would strongly reinforce her identity as a writer and, unlike

most students, felt that “if her name was on [the publication]” she would then consider herself an author. Having her writing published, she explained, would “validate the fact that you can write, that your words make sense and that someone else might be interested in reading [them].”

Jennifer

“[A]uthority has a lot to do with this grading system. We’re always aware that [the professor] has the final say.... As students, we never perceive it as egalitarian. The room is not egalitarian although here at CWE we try to do the lecture [as a seminar] and [sit in] a circle. And that’s alright, but subconsciously you know it’s still not [egalitarian].”

Born in the Dominican Republic and raised in New York City, where she attended public schools, Jennifer graduated from high school and completed an Associates Degree in Child Development at a CUNY Community College before enrolling at CWE. Having worked as a trainer with autistic pre-schoolers, Jennifer, who is now 35, is completing her B.A. in order to become a certified teacher. After graduating, she may enroll in the City College M.A. program in Language and Literacy in order to focus on teaching ESL. Neither of Jennifer’s parents completed high school and her mother, who was widowed when Jennifer was two, worked full-time in a factory until she eventually remarried, when Jennifer was in grade school. Jennifer grew up speaking both Spanish and English and, during our conversation about her educational background, she consistently remarked on how influential her own struggles with English were in the development of her approach to writing.

In response to a structured free-writing assignment that took place as part of our humanities course, not during the interview, and which asked students to write either about their relationship to writing, or about their decision to return to college despite the fact that

they were working adults and may not realize any financial gain from their degree, Jennifer wrote the following:

Attending college has always been important to me. I was the first member of my maternal family to graduate from high school and step foot in college. I began but didn't finish, this due to financial stress and other personal matters. I continued to make attempts, but always failed. I decided to try again and I feel confident that this time I'll be triumphant. After all the time that has elapsed I was not the first to graduate from college, other cousins have beaten me to it.

As an immigrant woman I have always felt the need to present myself in the highest form possible. Although, I didn't finish college I always knew that it was immensely important. It was always one of my deepest desires. I appeared to be content with where I was in life but inside I felt as if my life accomplishments were stagnant. My past attempts in college were always in which as a person I performed the best. My self esteem and demeanor would be booming.

College isn't a matter of how much I would or could make in a given job, for me its more than that. It's a sense of accomplishing something without monetary value. It's so valuable that it would never be able to be stripped away by anyone. At 33 years of age I am happy to be back. Its still a financial struggle and it's painfully achieved, but I know its well worth it.

In our interview, Jennifer's definitions of the terms author and writer were somewhat fluid and based primarily on the genres of writing she associated with each. She defined an author as "a writer, or as someone who puts a story together and makes sense out of it." A writer, she explained, "was a writer of novels." She believed that the term author had "more prestige attached to it," and she commented that "when I think of an author I'm thinking about more formal work." In contrast, "a writer is someone who can write almost anything, more like a poet, it doesn't have to be said in a restrictive manner." Although Jennifer did "not yet" consider herself a writer because she felt she first needed to become "more comfortable" with writing, "not procrastinate," and have a better sense of mastery with regard to technical aspects of writing, she also commented that there was a great deal that she would like to write about.

When asked if anyone had ever encouraged her to write, Jennifer mentioned a middle school English teacher who, in response to one essay commented that she “liked the way I wrote because she could hear my voice; that she could hear that the way I wrote was very similar to the way I spoke.” In high school, finding herself in much larger classes, Jennifer did not receive the same kind of individualized attention, and found herself less attentive to, and less interested in, her schoolwork.

Although Jennifer does very little writing outside her coursework at CWE, she explained that she has a lot of stories that she would like to relate and, in fact, has an idea for a novel. Asked why she has not written any of this down, she replied that “there is so much emotion and fear involved with it that I’m afraid of all the stuff that may come out.”

In terms of her academic writing, Jennifer explained that, although she has certain standards for correctness and clarity in her writing, she is always writing for the professor and, at times, this influences not only the style, but also the content of her essays:

In order for a paper to be acceptable I feel like I need to know some of how this person [thinks] who wants to listen to and read my paper, I have to make it acceptable to him or her. They [the professors] are all different, they all want something different in their papers. And when I don’t sound or express what they want the grade is lower. Definitely. For example, today we have this class, and it is the first class, and if the professor wants a paper next week, that’s problematic because I haven’t seen that much of him or her yet. I haven’t felt him out.

Jennifer did, however, point to one paper, an opinion essay on the atomic bomb, in which her viewpoint “that dropping the atomic bomb was a callous act on behalf of the U.S.” was challenged by the professor, and yet she did not “change [her opinion] just to comply with what [she] thought the professor wanted her to say.”

In terms of why she felt she had to tailor her writing so specifically to the professor, Jennifer explained that this had to do with the grading system, which made it impossible for

the classroom to be truly egalitarian and that students are always aware that “the professor has the final say.” Jennifer did, however, mention one course in which contract grading was used as a time when she “felt somewhat in control of what the outcome would be” with respect to grades.

Jennifer was enthusiastic about the prospect of having her writing published. However, she felt that having her academic work published would not have the same effect as having her personal writing published. Publishing an academic essay would, she believed, strengthen her identity as a writer, but it would only be by publishing her personal writing that she might overcome certain fears she has with regard to expressing herself, and find the ability to write about certain stories that she has not yet been able to relate.

John

“[When I’m] writing a paper, I imagine the professor but I also imagine that I’m working at *Time* magazine or something like that. That it is high quality and can be conveyed to anybody. I try to put myself at a high level and get myself to a point where I can write the paper.”

Born and raised in the Bronx, John, who is 27, attended New York City public schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Having graduated from high school one year late, he explained that “everything has momentum, even laziness has its momentum,” which is also, he commented, one reason why he did not go to college immediately after high school. Having worked as a security officer with a financial services corporation for the last five years, John is now a highly motivated student. He attributes his interest in intellectual issues and books primarily to his parents. Although his father did not attend college until late in his career, he worked as a researcher with a nonprofit organization even before finishing his degree, and, at age 50, graduated with a B.A. from CWE. John’s mother,

who completed her degree at a CUNY community college, works as a nurse. At work, John not only writes incident reports and memos on a daily basis, but is also asked by colleagues and friends to help them with writing letters and reports because they perceive him as someone who is a skilled writer.

In response to a structured free-writing assignment that took place as part of our humanities course, not during the interview, and which asked students to write either about their relationship to writing, or about their decision to return to college despite the fact that they were working adults and may not realize any financial gain from their degree, John wrote the following:

Core Humanities

A good writing process is key to starting, sustaining and completing any academic writing endeavor. I will discuss some of the techniques I use for my own writing process.

My first year in college I learned about a technique called clustering. This technique involved writing topics you would like to address in your paper and connecting them to related topics. With this technique you can view all your topics together and then decide what you would like to discuss in what order.

So now you are at a point where all your ideas and related ideas are on paper. The next thing you must do is prioritize them. You must decide which things you would like to address first. The more you write in order the more your writing will follow some sort of structure. You can look over it and see if it has the feel you would like it to have.

Once you have completed your first draft you can read it a few days later to see if it has the same effect on you. This can also be done by having it read by someone else and listening to their opinion of it. If you feel it is necessary you may write a 2nd, 3rd and 4th draft. Each time you should improve and polish over it. Any grammatical or spelling mistakes should be corrected each time. Eventually you should have a balanced, clear, concise essay or writing.

This essay outlines in a capsule my writing process. This process from clustering to final drafts can be used for academic as well as personal writing. I feel it can provide any writer with a good approach toward any writing project, as it has proven valuable for me time and time again.

In our interview, John defined an author as “a storyteller, a refined storyteller,” who shapes stories “into something that is cohesive and has a format.” He also clearly distinguished an author from a writer based on whether or not one’s work has been published:

Anybody can write down a story. When I think author I think of someone who’s published. Because we don’t make ourselves authors. If I write a paper, it doesn’t make me an author. If it says Harper Collins on it then obviously somebody else thought it was good enough to publish.

John conceived of writers in more general terms: “A writer is a communicator who can convey information,” he explained. However, he also added that he considered only writers of literature were authors. In contrast, he did not consider writers of nonfiction books authors, even if they had published widely. He commented, “for some reason, I don’t consider Noam Chomsky an author; I consider him a writer. He is a communicator.”

While John did not consider himself an author, he did believe that once he became more adept at certain writing techniques, and was able “to develop the skills where they become second nature, to become more of a proofreader of my own work,” he may then be comfortable referring to himself as an author. And, when asked whether he considered himself a writer, he answered first, “I could be a writer, I’ll say yes just based on the communication part, [but] based on someone who’s been published in the *New Yorker*, then I’d be in trouble.”

In terms of audience, John is highly attentive to the stylistic, tonal, and rhetorical differences when writing in different genres and to different individuals:

The audience at work is usually my supervisors, my managers, co-workers. It depends who it is. With certain co-workers I’ll be funny in an e-mail. I’d never do that with one of my superiors.... [In my work writing] I pay more attention to spelling and format. You don’t want to send an e-mail to a supervisor in which you misspelled something. It’s an issue of you looking

bad. Sometimes, I'll cut and paste what is in the e-mail to Microsoft Word because e-mail doesn't pick every [spelling and grammar issue] up. I go over it and over it and over it. I don't go over my academic essays in the same way because, for some reason, I don't see the situation being as dire. If there's something wrong with the paper, the professor will let me know.

And, although with his academic writing, John considers the professor an important part of the audience for the academic papers, he also conceives of the audience for these essays in much wider terms:

Before [college] I had no concept of audience, I basically said I'm doing this for the teacher. In college, I realized that beyond the professor—what's that book, *City at the Center*—I realized that there were other people who will read your work and if your name is attached to this it is an artistic representation of yourself.

John also considers himself part of the audience when reading and editing his work, and will often imagine a very wide audience for his paper as he is involved in writing it: “[When I'm] writing a paper, I imagine the professor but I also imagine that I'm working at *Time* magazine or something like that. That it is high quality and can be conveyed to anybody. I try to put myself at a high level and get myself to a point where I can write the paper.”

John “absolutely” believed that having an essay published would change his relationship to writing. Explaining why, he commented:

It makes it more serious, it's not casual anymore. There's something about being published. If I go to a copy shop and run off 100 copies of something, that's not published. Published, there's something about it that's official. I know a lot of underground zine publishers and even there it is different from publishing yourself.

Although he felt that publishing an essay as part of a class book would reinforce his identity as a writer, he also felt that it was only when “Simon and Schuster come knocking at the door” that he would consider himself an author. In terms of which essay he would

contribute to the CWE project, he mentioned a personal essay that he had written on the events of September 11, 2001 that was written not as an assignment for our Humanities class, but as an independent project. When asked why he did not submit this essay, or others, to *City at the Center*, he said it was a lack of time that prevented him from doing so.

Daniel

“Generally I do a lot of thinking before I put anything on the page.... I have a lot of internal dialogue between myself and myself, or between myself and someone who is questioning my point of view.”

Daniel, who is 42, was raised on Long Island and attended public schools for his primary and secondary education. Having left high school before graduating, he would later complete the GED exam and attend SUNY, Purchase for one semester before deciding to leave college. He has been working as a security guard in New York City for 23 years and in Spring, 2003, decided to enroll at CWE and complete his B.A. Daniel’s parents both graduated from college; his father worked as a journalist for a trade magazine and his mother, who completed an M.A. at Hofstra, was employed as a rehabilitation counselor for blind and handicapped children.

In response to a structured free-writing assignment that took place as part of our humanities course, not during the interview, and which asked students to write either about their relationship to writing, or about their decision to return to college despite the fact that they were working adults and may not realize any financial gain from their degree, Daniel wrote the following:

My Writing Process

Writing about one's own writing process is a bit like a snake swallowing itself. Or maybe not, but it sounds so good for a moment there. There might be a point there and that point might be, actually, it definitely is that this, what I am doing right now sitting here writing an essay, pen to paper, in a defined location and in a defined amount of time is completely antithetical to my usual writing process, which is more like an iceberg (I'm a good one for metaphors) it mostly takes place under the surface

My writing practice, when given a writing assignment, is to let it roll around in my head for a while when my mind is not otherwise occupied or impaired. Generally I might have a few good ideas right off the bat but frequently I'll consider several approaches a lot of which I will discard (like that whole snake business). I never hand write, not even notes but wait until I'm at the computer. This sometimes results in my forgetting some elegant phrases that I might think of while on line at McDonald's but so be it.

When I get in front of the computer, I'll write in sections not at all sequentially. Sometimes I'll rethink what I have written and rewrite at that point I'll hard return the original down to the bottom of the document in case I still want it. Once I have enough sections I'll put them together. And then I play around with the words, read, [] and organize. Spell check is a god-send but grammar check is a pain in the ass.

Having put all the pieces together I'm pretty much done. I might give it to my wife to read but I will be very resistant to change anything except the commas; I'm not very good with commas.

So there you have it, [Daniel's] unique writing process. The flexibility of Microsoft Word plays a big role in it, but the most important element is time and by that I mean time spent not writing. So my writing process involves mostly not writing. It is very much like the atom which is mostly empty space. I need some time to think that over.

The End

Defining the term writer quite broadly, "as somebody who writes anything, a self-definition," Daniel mentioned in the course of our interview that he was comfortable applying the term to himself since he was engaged with a great deal of writing for school. However, when he was not actively and frequently writing, he did not consider himself a writer. He then explained that part of his reason for defining the term writer in such a way resulted from the fact that when he was younger, he wrote a lot, and then later wrote very little, until he began writing again when he enrolled at CWE in 2003. In terms of his

definition of the term author, Daniel commented that he “generally associates authors with somebody who has a published work, but not always; I associate authors with larger work.” If he were to complete a book, Daniel would consider himself an author.

Having received a great deal of encouragement to write from his family and from other people who “said I should write a book,” Daniel also recalled his very early experiences with writing in school:

When I was in kindergarten or nursery school, we would fold up construction paper and make books and I was a little more gifted at forming words and I would make little books with pictures and stories. When I was in grade school I started writing stories. At camp we had a newspaper and I wrote for the newspaper. It was a camp called Abelard.

After leaving high school, Daniel joined the military, a choice, he described as “unusual” considering his class and educational background, and began writing about these experiences to a friend who was an editor at the *Albany Student Press*. Daniel’s friend encouraged him to compile the letters into an article for the student newspaper, but Daniel did not end up completing the piece. The experience of not having his work published may have, he believed, “discouraged [him].” However, as to whether the experience influenced his decision not to pursue writing as a career, he commented, “I imagined myself being a writer in a way that I imagined myself playing short stop for the Mets. There came a point where I didn’t really think it was feasible.”

At CWE, Daniel conceives of the professor as the audience for his academic papers but, he commented, “in terms of the overall piece I have to satisfy myself.” He mentioned that he was aware of the number of essays that professors have to read, and tries to make his “stand out a bit.” He is also aware of audience considerations at work, where he writes

incident reports and memos. And, because of his skills as a writer, his boss and co-workers often ask him to take over certain writing duties.

Daniel felt that having a piece of his academic writing published would change his relationship to writing. He did not, however, feel he would then consider himself an author. That, he said, “would depend on the length of the publication, or the seriousness of the publication, or the length of the work or the scope of the work.” Daniel has written some short fiction that he might consider publishing as part of the CWE class book; he also mentioned his essay on *Macbeth* as one that he enjoyed writing and might like to share with a wider audience.

Chapter 5: Interview Data Analysis

What does it mean for students to see places for themselves in an academic discourse community? In my interviews with students, I gained significant insight into how this process of locating, or re-locating, oneself occurs, and whether the names that are used to refer to oneself in the act of writing, i.e., *author*, *writer*, facilitate one's ability to establish such a place in a specific discourse community.

What follows is one of many possible readings of the data collected from my interviews. However, this reading will, I believe, offer some clarification of not only how students define the terms *writer* and *author*, but how these terms function in a writing classroom, why it is crucial for the field of rhetoric and composition to clarify the ways in which these terms are used, and the implications of such a clarification for ongoing theoretical work and pedagogical practices in the discipline.

Interview Sample

Background information about the students, including their age, educational history, occupation, parents occupations, and parents' educational histories was collected in the first section of the interview. The average age of the participants was 38.4 years, and the mean age 42, as compared with a CWE average student age of 40. Seven of the ten participants were female, whereas 80 percent of the total CWE student body is female. All except two of the interviewees had graduated from high school; the two who did not have a high school diploma had completed the GED. Eight of the ten students had completed some college course work prior to enrolling at CWE: Four students completed Associates Degrees; three had completed course work at four-year colleges and then dropped out; and one had taken

several continuing education courses. Students worked in education as Assistant Teachers, and in various support roles in the public, private and non-profit sectors.

Student Age, Educational Background, and Occupation

Student	Age	Highest degree earned + college coursework prior to CWE	Occupation	Sector
Christine	44	Associates	Data processing supervisor	Public
Lisa	45	HS + 6 mo. at private college	Asst. Teacher	Public
Patricia	26	GED	Asst. Teacher	Private
Celia	42	Associates	Payroll manager	Private
James	46	Associates	Supervisor	Nonprofit
Susan	27	HS + 2 yrs. at private college	Program officer	Nonprofit
Eliza	50	HS + adult ed. courses	Administrative assistant	Private
Jennifer	35	Associates	Asst. Teacher	Public
John	27	HS	Security officer	Private
Daniel	42	GED + 1 semester at SUNY college	Security guard	Private

Interviewees had diverse ethnicities, and three were born outside the U.S. Though the majority of interviewees reported that English was their home language, three spoke English and another language at home:

Table 1: Student Birthplace, Home Language(s), and Ethnicity

Student	Birthplace	Parents' Birthplace	Home languages	Ethnicity*
Christine	Guyana	Guyana	English	Chinese
Lisa	USA	Puerto Rico	English/Spanish	PuertoRican-American
Patricia	USA	USA	English	African-American
Celia	Jamaica	Jamaica	English	Jamaican
James	USA	USA	English	African-American **
Susan	USA	Haiti	English/Creole	Haitian-American
Eliza	USA	USA	English	Caucasian
Jennifer	Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico	English/Spanish	PuertoRican-American
John	USA	USA	English	Latino
Daniel	USA	USA	English	Caucasian

*Students were asked how “they defined their ethnicity.”

**James defined himself ethnically first as “black,” rather than as African American because, he commented “I do not always feel like an American even though I was born here.”

The three interviewees who grew up in bilingual households all attended grade school in New York City, and thus began speaking English at an early age. All of the interview participants attended public middle schools, and all but one public high schools. All began attending CWE in the spring or fall semester of 2003. Six were enrolled in Humanities 101 in the fall, 2003, and four in the spring, 2004 semester:

Table 2: Student Primary and Secondary Education by Location and Type of School and Dates Enrolled at CWE and in Humanities 101

Student	Grade School	Middle School	High School	Enrolled CWE	CWE 101
Christine	PS/Guyana	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	Fall, 2003	Spring, 2004
Patricia	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	Spring, 2003	Spring, 2004
Celia	PS/Jamaica	PS/Jamaica	PS/Jamaica	Fall, 2003	Spring, 2004
Susan	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	Private /NJ	Spring, 2003	Spring, 2004
Lisa	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	Spring, 2003	Fall, 2003
James	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	Fall, 2003	Fall, 2003
Eliza	PS/NYState	PS/NYState	PS/NYState	Spring, 2003	Fall, 2003
Jennifer	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	Fall, 2003	Fall, 2003
John	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	PS/NYC	Fall, 2003	Fall, 2003
Daniel	PS/NYState	PS/NYState	PS/NYState	Spring, 2003	Fall, 2003

Author/Writer: Definitions and Self-Definitions

The influence of Romantic conceptions of authorship was clearly evident in student definitions of the term *author*. Students emphasized that authors possessed inspiration and originality and that it was these very attributes that the vast majority of students felt made it impossible to apply the term to themselves. Students emphasized that *author* was a term that referred to those who wrote without outside instigation and who possessed a “gift” for writing. *Authors*, students insisted, had a particular relationship to writing that was somehow different from that of writers and this difference—however conceived--was an essential part of student definitions of the term *author*.

The interviews appear to confirm that an Author/student binary exists, with nine out of ten students answering resolutely “no” to the question, “Do you consider yourself an author?”³⁸

Table 3: Student Responses to Question 4, “Do you consider yourself an author?”

<u>Consider Self an Author</u>	<u># Students</u>
Yes	1
No	9

James, the one student who did identify himself as an author did so because he defined the term author as “someone who has ideas” and because he believed that “we are all authors.”

With the exception of James, students consistently described their writing, or their writing processes, as deficient compared with those of authors. Such an assessment was based primarily on students’ experiences with writing, e.g., “I’ve only written shorter pieces; basically everything I’ve written has been assigned” (Daniel), and the reception of their writing, e.g., “I don’t consider that anything I write would have any buyers” (Lisa), as opposed to their experiences of reading authorized texts, which students described being more inspired than intimidated by. While student images and definitions of authors were informed by their readings of authorized texts and the ways in which those texts were presented by instructors, the distance they felt between themselves and the role of author depended entirely on their perception of the quality, and often the quantity, of their own work, as well as with the fact of not being published or not writing in certain genres.

Though the words students associated with the term *author* varied widely, and four mentioned the words *writer* or *writing* in their descriptions, student definitions of the term

³⁸ See Greene, Horner, Lunsford, Stygall, Halasek.

author consistently underscored the difference between the terms *author* and *writer*. For most, the term author was “something different” from a writer and something “larger than” a writer.³⁹ Students expressed the uniqueness and specificity of the term *author* in several different ways.

Table 4: Student Definitions of the Term Author

<u>Student</u>	<u>Definition of <i>Author</i></u>
Susan	An author is someone who sees [writing] beyond a hobby, it is who they are, it is a career.
Eliza	When you’re an author you’re writing knowing that others are going to be reading your works.
Jennifer	Author has more prestige attached to it [compared to writer]. When I think of an author I’m thinking about more formal work. I guess more complex.
Patricia	[For] authors [writing] is something they love to do.
John	I define the term author as just a storyteller, but a refined storyteller, they whittle it down into something that is cohesive and has a format. Anybody can write down a story. When I think author I think of someone who’s published. Because we don’t make ourselves authors. If I write a paper, it doesn’t make me an author. If it says Harper Collins on it then obviously somebody else thought it was good enough to publish.
Daniel	I generally associate authors with somebody who has a published work but not always. I associate authors with larger works.

The nine students who were not comfortable referring to themselves as *authors* reported that if they wrote more, wrote with ease and without prompting, or if their writing was of a higher quality, they might then consider themselves *authors*. In their discussion of why they did not consider themselves *authors*, three students, Eliza, Lisa, and John, directly linked authorship with publishing, while seven explained that what differentiated them from authors was a lack of inspiration, motivation, or ability.

³⁹ Student responses to Q1, “What words do you associate with the term *author*? What comes to mind when you think of this term?” included: Book (4 students); Writer/Writing (4 students); Creative (3 students); Storyteller (3 students); Ideas (2 students); Putting Thoughts on Paper (2 students); Relate/Share with Others (2 students); Published (2 students).

Table 5: Attributes Required for Student to Conceive of Him- or Herself as Author

<u>Student</u>	<u>Attributes Required for Student to Conceive of Self as Author</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Christine	Inspiration/Vision	Because I don't feel that I'm capable of producing something so wonderful and imaginative. When I read other peoples' writing you can picture the events when you read it. They can picture the whole room first and visualize the whole atmosphere and no I can't do that. I'm a factual writer.
Jennifer	Inspiration/Vision	It makes me nervous because I think I want to write someday but I don't know if I will be able to. There is so much that I would like to write about. It is really big, like wow, an author.
Patricia	Inspiration/Motivation	I don't think I work as hard as authors do. I kind of do my writing, read it over and hand it in. I don't look back to it.
Celia	Inspiration/Motivation	Because a lot of the thoughts I have I do not put to paper. They sound good in my head. But they just stay in my head and I don't write anything down.
Susan	Inspiration/Motivation	I've never written anything outside the purview of class or work, which has just been for me to share myself.
Daniel	Inspiration/Motivation	I've only written shorter pieces. Basically everything I've written has been assigned except for when I was young. When I was younger I did write [without it being assigned].
Eliza	Audience/Publishing	My name is not on a publication.
Lisa	Audience/Publishing	Not really. I'm thinking about the selling part. I don't consider that anything I write would have any buyers.
John	Audience/Publishing	When I think author I think of someone who's published. Because we don't make ourselves authors. If I write a paper, it doesn't make me an author. If it says Harper Collins on it then obviously somebody else thought it was good enough to publish.

Though students cited a range of reasons why they were not comfortable referring to themselves as authors, the one constant that all share is the fact that they are lacking access to something—a certain kind of purpose or audience--that would allow them to position themselves as authors. In other words, the rhetorical context that students associate with authors is unique and exclusive.

Regarding student definitions of the term *writer*, seven students defined the term in terms similar to the ones used to define an *author*, i.e., as the possession of certain characteristics or attributes, whereas three students defined the term as designating the ability to engage in an act of communication. The three students who defined the term *writer* as an engagement in *any* act of written communication were comfortable consistently applying the term to themselves, whereas the seven students who defined the term as the possession of certain characteristics were either not comfortable applying the term *writer* to themselves or not comfortable applying the term to themselves consistently:

Table 6: Student Responses to Question 6, “Do you consider yourself a writer?”

<u>Consider Self a Writer</u>	<u># Students</u>
Yes	3
Sometimes	3
Not Yet	2
No	2

There was a clear correlation between how students defined the term *writer* and whether students were comfortable consistently applying the term *writer* to themselves. The three students who were comfortable consistently applying the term to themselves defined the term in a very democratic manner, emphasizing writing as a communicative act.

Table 7: Student Definitions of the Term *Writer* (Students Who Consistently Conceive of Themselves as Writers)

Student	Consider Self Writer	Definition of <i>Writer</i>
Susan	Yes	I think anyone could be a writer, it's just an expression of ideas and thoughts. I don't think everyone is a writer; not everyone writes, not everyone has the ability to write.
John	Yes	Someone who's able to communicate and convey.
Daniel	Yes	[I define writer] much more broadly [than author], somebody who writes anything. It is a self-definition.

The students who considered themselves writers mentioned that “everybody writes” and “everybody is a writer” or “everybody could be a writer.” They considered being a writer a role that anyone could play, as opposed to an identity. There is not only a noticeable absence of any characteristics of the Romantic author included in the definitions by this group of students, but these definitions, when compared to those offered for the term *author*, are clearly distinct.

In contrast, students who were not comfortable consistently applying to the term *writer* to themselves defined *a writer* as a subject position that they might attain based on some type of change or the acquisition of certain attributes.

Table 8: Student Definitions of the Term *Writer* (Students Who *Do Not* Consistently Conceive of Themselves as Writers)

Student	Consider Self Writer	Definition of Writer
Christine	No	I write, but I am not a writer.... When I say writer or when you say writer I think of something published. Anyone who writes something professionally. (Publishing)
Celia	No	I generalize a writer as something that is a natural thing and for me it is a struggle. (Inspiration)
Eliza	Not yet	If you got paid for it, [if] you could earn a living [then you are a writer]. Most people have to make a living and if you're serious about writing it takes a lot of your time and time is your most precious commodity. (Publishing)
Jennifer	Not yet	Someone who doesn't procrastinate, who knows what they are doing and just does it. (Inspiration)
Lisa	Sometimes	[I'm] not always [a writer]. My own writing is OK but my own writing versus college writing I don't live up to that standard. The standard is to write a paper, you know, it is like the end of the rainbow, I'm dreaming of it, I can see what the goal is, but even with the third draft, I was still edited and that third draft is what I would have liked to have written on the first draft.
James	Sometimes	If I'm writing to a professor, then my grammar and everything has to be correct and that's when I'm a writer. (self/text)
Patricia	Sometimes	I'm a writer when I'm in that mood. (inspiration)

Two students who considered themselves writers “sometimes,” defined writer as one who writes correctly: one explained that he considered himself a writer only when he was “writing correctly,” and the second only when she had “attained a certain academic standard.” The four students who answered “no” or “not yet” all defined *writer* as a state they would attain if something changed. For instance, if they were published or paid for their writing, or if they did not procrastinate.

Students who are not comfortable consistently applying the term writer to themselves apply attributes of the Romantic model of authorship to the term *writer*. These students *do* differentiate between authors and writers; however, the boundary between the two is porous and they apply attributes of the Romantic model of the author to both terms.

Table 9: Comparison of Definitions of and Attributes Associated with Terms Writer and Author (Students Who Do Not Consistently Conceive of Themselves as Writers)

<u>Student</u>	<u>What Attributes are Lacking to Conceive of Self as Writer/Author</u>	<u>Definition of Writer/Definition of Author</u>
Christine	Audience/Publishing	I write, but I am not a writer.... When I say writer or when you say writer I think of something published. Anyone who writes something professionally.
	Purpose/Vision	Because I don't feel that I'm capable of producing something so wonderful and imaginative. When I read other peoples' writing you can picture the events when you read it. They can picture the whole room first and visualize the whole atmosphere and no I can't do that. I'm a factual writer.
Celia	Purpose/Inspiration	I generalize a writer as something that is a natural thing and for me it is a struggle.
	Purpose/Motivation	Because a lot of the thoughts I have I do not put to paper. They sound good in my head. But they just stay in my head and I don't write anything down.
Eliza	Audience/Publishing	If you got paid for it, [if] you could earn a living [then you are a writer]. Most people have to make a living and if you're serious about writing it takes a lot of your time and time is your most precious commodity.
	Audience/Publishing	My name is not on a publication.
Jennifer	Purpose/Motivation	Someone who doesn't procrastinate, who knows what they are doing and just does it.
	Purpose/inspiration	It makes me nervous because I think I want to write someday but I don't know if I will be able to. There is so much that I would like to write about. It is really big, like wow, an author.
Lisa	Language	[I'm] not always [a writer]. My own writing is OK but my own writing versus college writing I don't live up to that standard.... even with the third draft, I was still edited and that third draft is what I would have liked to have written on the first draft.
	Audience/Publishing	Not really. I'm thinking about the selling part. I don't consider that anything I write would have any buyers.
James	Language	If I'm writing to a professor, then my grammar and everything has to be correct and that's when I'm a writer.
	n/a	We are all authors.
Patricia	Purpose/inspiration	I'm a writer when I'm in that mood.
	Purpose/motivation	I don't think I work as hard as authors do. I kind of do my writing, read it over and hand it in. I don't look back to it.

What is clear from these definitions is that although students who are not comfortable consistently referring to themselves as writers clearly distinguish between the terms *author* and *writer*, they attribute Romantic characteristics to both authors and writers and perceive whatever rhetorical context they associate with each term as not being available to them unless something—their language, purpose, or audience—were to change. These students are alienated by the audience, purpose, and language they assign to the rhetorical contexts of *both* writers *and* authors, and therefore cannot *imagine* consistently finding places for themselves in either.⁴⁰

There was little correlation between technical proficiency at writing and whether a student considered him or herself a writer:

Table 10: Student Technical Writing Proficiency

Student	Consider self writer	# words above or below average		# errors	
		total essay	/per sentence	grammatical	spelling
Susan	Yes	(85.7)	(3.5)	-	1
John	Yes	+24.3	+2.5	-	-
Daniel	Yes	+109.3	+5.5	-	2
Christine	No	(74.7)	(5.5)	-	-
Celia	No	+53.3	(4.0)	-	1
Eliza	Not yet	+39.3	+0.5	-	-
Jennifer	Not yet	(22.7)	+0.5	2	2
Lisa	Sometimes	+28.3	(1.5)	-	-
James	Sometimes	(26.7)	+1.5	9	3
Patricia	Sometimes	(44.7)	+3.5	5	1

Note: Highlighted area indicates students who were comfortable consistently referring to themselves as writers. **Bold** indicates students whose technical writing ability may counterindicate their ability to identify or not identify themselves as writers. The average diagnostic essay length was 267.7 words and the mean was 268.5 words; the average sentence length was 17.5 words and the mean was 18 words. A dash (-) in the grammatical or spelling error column indicates no errors.

⁴⁰ Students whose definition of the term *writer* are influenced by Romantic characteristics commodify the written text, seeing it as a product and mirror of themselves, rather than as a process and “merely” an act of communication between self and other. While a full discussion of what exactly the rhetorical context associated with the Romantic author may look like is well beyond the scope of this project, I believe that one crucial aspect of that rhetorical context is that it collapses the three terms of the rhetorical triangle into one, namely the author. Thus purpose and audience is conceived of being the domain of the individual, rather than external entities. See particularly Wordsworth’s 1815 Preface for his discussion of audience and purpose in writing.

Based on the average words per essay or per sentence, or in terms of the overall number of errors, there is no clear correlation between a student's technical writing and his or her ability to consistently apply the term writer to him or herself. For instance, on the basis of average words per essay, Celia, Eliza, and Lisa are all about average and Susan is below average. In terms of overall number of errors, Christine, Eliza, and Lisa had none and Daniel had two.

Though all of the students who were comfortable applying the term writer to themselves had received encouragement to write, several students who were not comfortable applying the term to themselves had also received this type of encouragement:

Table 11: Student Conception of Him- or Herself as Writer and Receiving Encouragement to Write (Prior to Enrollment at CWE)

Student	Consider Self a Writer	Received Encouragement to Write In School or as a Child	Comments
Susan	Yes	Yes	No one encouraged me to write in terms of 'be a writer or an author.' Maybe they encouraged me to write for school and to be able to express myself well and be articulate but nothing in terms of writing a book.
John	Yes	Yes	Teachers in HS. I had an English teacher in HS. We were studying <i>Oedipus</i> and she liked [what I wrote] and said I was a good writer and encouraged me to write.
Daniel	Yes	Yes	Yes. My parents, teachers. Friends.
Celia	No	No	When I was younger, no one encouraged me to write.
Christine	No	No	English is the only language I speak but I was never really good at it. I stunk at grammar.
Jennifer	Not yet	Yes	In junior high school, my English teacher. I wrote something for her, maybe a response to <i>Animal Farm</i> and she said she liked the way I wrote because she could hear my voice. She said she could hear that the way I wrote was very similar to the way I spoke.
Eliza	Not yet	No	No, I've said it myself but nobody else has said it to me. Cause I think I've got some interesting stories to tell. I've had an interesting life history. A lot of tales. I have flair for words.
Patricia	Sometimes	Yes	Teacher. A 3 rd grade teacher.
Lisa	Sometimes	No	I went to Catholic school and there was lots of writing, but I wasn't such a great student.
James	Sometimes	No	I was not a very good student when I was younger.

And, *all* of the students interviewed reported that they had received encouragement to write at CWE:

Table 12: Student Conception Self as Writer and Receiving Encouragement to Write (Post-Enrollment at CWE)

Student	Consider Self a Writer	Received Encouragement to Write at CWE
Susan	Yes	Yes
John	Yes	Yes
Daniel	Yes	Yes
Celia	No	Yes
Christine	No	Yes
Jennifer	Not yet	Yes
Eliza	Not yet	Yes
Patricia	Sometimes	Yes
Lisa	Sometimes	Yes
James	Sometimes	Yes

Furthermore, the majority of students believed that their relationship to writing had changed as a result of their experiences at CWE:

Table 13: Change in Student Relationships to Writing as a Result of Experiences at CWE

<u>Student</u>	<u>Has Relationship to Writing Changed As a Result of Experiences at CWE</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Susan	Yes	Yes I think at CWE [my relationship to writing has changed,] not at [the former private college I attended]. Because the professors are a little more understanding [at cwe] but also very encouraging and they're not patronizing and they don't have preset notions of what students' abilities are.
John	Yes	Absolutely. I see that there's a format to it that needs to be respected and it's not a format in the sense that it's trying to stifle you, you know, you're trying to put shackles on me.
Daniel	Yes	Since I've been in college I complete works and have much more confidence in my abilities. I've gotten a lot of good feedback on it as well.
Celia	Yes	[My work at CWE has] contributed to my sense that writing was not very hard, but hard, and that if I applied myself I could do it.
Christine	Yes	I feel better about it. At cwe, the required writing forced me to write more.
Jennifer	Yes	At CWE definitely because there is such a big emphasis on writing in every class. Being able to choose the classes was very helpful. I'm a bit more comfortable [with writing].
Eliza	No	I don't think it has changed, but I'm learning as I go to write better.
Patricia	Yes	I've definitely received encouragement to write at CWE. Less mistakes on grammar and quotations and what do you call that again...citations..... I've also realized what type of writing I like.
Lisa	Yes	I've had professors at CWE who made me feel I could do anything. [Not only my relationship to writing but] my relationship to reading has changed too. [My professors] really challenged me with the books.
James	Yes	As an author it [my experience at CWE has been] good. I learned quite a bit. I also realized that I could formulate thoughts. As a writer, it frightened me, because I realized that I had a long way to go.

Encouragement is not, apparently, as powerful as a student's definition of the term writer in determining whether a student is comfortable applying the term to him or herself.

There did, however, appear to be some correlation between early literacy experiences and a student's ability to conceive of him or herself as a writer:

Table 14: Relationship Between Student Conception of Him- or Herself as Writer and Early Literacy Experiences

Student	Consider Self a Writer	Comments About Early Literacy Experiences
Susan	Yes	My mother read to me all of the time. I started to read very young. I was the first child and I started reading at two and a half or three.
John	Yes	My mother read to me and there were books in the house. I remember one thing that was considered impressive was I began writing my name at 4.
Daniel	Yes	Both my parents read to me; my mother taught me how to read. When I was in kindergarten or nursery school, we would fold up construction paper and make books and I was a little more gifted at forming words and I would make little books with stories and words.
Christine	No	My parents were both working all of the time. There was no time for reading.
Celia	No	My earliest memory involving writing is from high school. I don't remember anyone reading to me when I was young.
Eliza	Not yet	Both my parents read to me. I don't really remember writing when I was young, but I have a suitcase of my own personal artifacts and from first grade I have these little one page writings I did.
Jennifer	Not yet	Absolutely not, ever [did anyone read to me when I was young].
Patricia	Sometimes	I don't remember anyone reading to me.
Lisa	Sometimes	My mother didn't know much English and she didn't have time [to read to me or help with my homework]. All the reading and writing that I've been most involved with is from the last ten years.
James	Sometimes	I don't remember anyone reading to us when we were young. My mother ordered books for us in the mail. Dr. Seuss, different kinds of little small books that used to come in the mail. My mother read to herself quite a bit, especially her bible and the newspaper.

There was also a strong correlation between a student's ability to conceive of him or herself as a *writer* and his or her parents' educational backgrounds. The three students who

answered “yes, they considered themselves writers,” had parents who had both graduated from college, and two had one parent who had completed an M.A. All four students whose parents did not attend high school did not answer “yes” to the question, nor did the one student whose father had attended college, though not completed a degree, nor the two students whose mothers had attended nursing school.

Table 15: Student Conception of Self as Writer and Parents’ Educational Backgrounds

Student	Consider Self Writer	Parents Educational Background
Susan	Yes	Both parents college graduates/father completed M.A.
John	Yes	Both parents college graduates
Daniel	Yes	Both parents college graduates/mother completed M.A.
Christine	No	No HS
Celia	No	Mother attended nursing school in U.K., both parents HS graduates
Eliza	Not yet	Father completed some college work, both parents HS graduates
Jennifer	Not yet	No HS
Patricia	Sometimes	Mother attended nursing school in Belize
Lisa	Sometimes	No HS
James	Sometimes	No HS

Though only one of the three students who were able to consistently apply the term writer to themselves currently worked in a white collar occupation, all three were raised in households that were identified professionally as white collar and middle-class. In contrast, all seven students who were not comfortable consistently applying the term *writer* to themselves had been raised in households that were identified professionally as blue-collar, or working class.

Table 16: Student Conception of Him- or Herself as Writer, Parents' Occupations and Student's Current Occupation

Student	Consider self writer	Parents' Occupations		Student's Occupation
Susan	Yes	F: engineer/lawyer	M: nurse	S: program officer
John	Yes	F: sociologist	M: nurse	S: security guard
Daniel	Yes	F: journalist	M: homemaker	S: security guard
Christine	No	F: factory foreman	M: seamstress/ home healthcare aide	S: data technician
Celia	No	F: military officer	M: nurse	S: bookkeeper
Eliza	Not yet	F: tool-and-die man	M: secretary	S: administrative asst.
Jennifer	Not yet	F: *	M: factory worker	S: asst. teacher
Patricia	Sometimes	F: *	M: house cleaner	S: asst. teacher
Lisa	Sometimes	F: factory worker	M: seamstress/ homemaker	S: asst. teacher
James	Sometimes	F: *	M: homemaker	S: site supervisor

* indicates that father's occupation is unknown; father was not part of the household

Audience

In response to the question of whether a student imagined an audience for his/her writing, nine of the ten students initially answered “no.” However, after reflecting on the question, and considering whether “audience” was the same thing as “a reader,” all ten students responded that they thought about readers when they were writing. When asked about specific writing situations, for instance, writing letters or e-mail, writing essays, and writing at work, students concurred that there was a specific reader for each writing context or situation. The majority of students described the process of visualizing their readers in detail as they were writing, and all emphasized that the audience for academic essays was the professor, who, for certain students, dictated not only the style of the writing, but the ideas presented. Only three of the ten students felt they were writing for the professor *and* others, either some imaginary audience or another individual, when writing academic essays. These

three students clearly mentioned, each in their own way, that they wrote these papers not only for the teacher but for other imagined audience members and, what was most noteworthy, *for themselves*.

**Table 17: Student Comments on Audience
(Students Who Consistently Conceive of Themselves as Writers)**

Student	Comments on Audience in an Academic Writing Context
Susan	[With academic writing] the audience is the professor but I know what is expected of me.
John	[At school] the audience is the professor. But it is also for my friends and family. They read my papers. I wrote a paper in 2003 and it was an “A” paper and I gave it to friends and family because I thought it was good work.... Writing the paper I imagine the professor but I also imagine that I’m working at <i>Time</i> magazine or something like that. That it is high quality and it can be conveyed to anybody. I try to put myself at a high level and get myself to a point where I can write the paper. [q: and do you imagine yourself as part of the audience when you’re writing essays?] Yeah.
Daniel	The professor is the audience for an academic essay and I try to anticipate what is expected of me and the points that are expected and stylistically as well. But in terms of the overall piece I have to satisfy myself and the professor. I also shouldn’t forget my wife; she is also part of the audience.

From these comments, it becomes apparent that students who are comfortable referring to themselves consistently as writers place themselves at a level of parity with their external audience, including the professor, and at times are able to *identify* with their audience in an academic context, meaning they have established a certain authority in relation to that audience.⁴¹

⁴¹ Although these three students were able to position themselves with a sense of authority in relation to audience in an academic writing context, Susan was also quick to point out moments when she was writing in her own voice versus mimicking the stylistic conventions of academic writing. She was aware of her ability to “sound like someone else” when writing academic essays, and was actively trying to find a way to make her own voice heard in her academic writing. She did not experience the same kind of struggle between her own voice and stylistic conventions in her writing at work, where, she commented “her voice as a natural advocate” was strengthened by a concrete purpose and audience. Susan also explained in her interview that “one of my main things at CWE is trying to change my relationship to academic writing,” in other words to find a way to express her own voice in her academic writing.

In contrast, the seven students who were not comfortable consistently describing themselves as writers explained that their academic essays were written exclusively for the professor:

Table 18: Student Comments on Audience (Students Who Do Not Consistently Conceive of Themselves as Writers)

Student	Comments on Audience in an Academic Writing Context
Christine	I'm writing to make sure that I'm supporting my position. I make sure it is grammatically correct. We all write for the teacher. At school, I can't say that I do put myself in the professor's position.
Lisa	I wrote these papers for my professors. This is something I wrote to get a grade. If a professor is my audience, and one person can be an audience, then I guess the professor was that. These [papers] were put together to perform for the professor.
Patricia	My audience for my academic essays is the professor.
Celia	Audience is the professor. I wasn't thinking about anyone reading [my essays] except the professor. I sometimes visualize what [a professor will] say about certain things, and I think "oh no, she's not going to like that so delete."
James	With [academic essays], it is always "is it enough" is it the right grammar, is it the right paragraph structure. I don't want to graduate unless my professors know that I have achieved good academic writing skills.
Eliza	I pay attention to my academic work and look at grammar and clarity with an eye on getting a good grade. [Q: do you visualize the professor as your audience when you are writing academic essays?] Yes.
Jennifer	[The professors] are all different, they all want something different in their papers. And when I don't sound or express what they want the grade is lower.

These comments indicate a sense that students are performing, rather than identifying with their audience in an academic writing context. There is also a focus on the diagnosis of deficiencies, whether real or anticipated, as well as, for most, on the *written product* rather than the writing process.

The different relationship to audience possessed by the three students who identified themselves consistently as writers versus those students who did not is evident not only in their comments about audience, but in their writing samples and in marginal comments they made on drafts of their essays. For instance, on a draft of a paper, Susan writes in the margin, “need better example here,” whereas Lisa, recounting her own experience of revising a paper, remembers asking herself, “is this enough?” The kinds of questions Lisa asks herself during the writing and revision process were echoed by all of the students who did not consistently conceive of themselves as writers.

The choice of, and approach to, the topic of the students’ diagnostic essays also reveals an interesting difference between students who consistently conceived of themselves as writers and those who did not. Susan, John, and Daniel all chose to write on the subject of one’s relationship to writing, as opposed to the alternate topic, the decision to return to college. And, both Susan and Daniel focus their discussions in the informal writing assignment around a paradox: Daniel writes that his writing process is actually for the most part NOT about the act of writing, but of reflecting on and thinking about writing; Susan discusses the distance she feels towards writing as a form of expression based on her early experiences with Haitian Creole, a language that has only recently been developed into a written language. In a very structured essay, John relates the details of one stage of his writing process—brainstorming—and the ways in which this can be used effectively by students in general. All three students share a similar focus in their essay—themselves—and how their relationship to writing is both instructive, exemplary, and informative to a wider audience.

Of the seven students who did not consistently identify themselves as writers, four—Lisa, Patricia, Celia, and Christine—chose to write about their relationship to writing and

three—James, Jennifer, Eliza—chose to write about their decisions to return to college. Although all four students who write about their relationship to writing have their own way of approaching the topic, there are thematic similarities between these essays: all comment in some way on the deficiency of the writer and all four do not attempt to analyze or make a larger point from the anecdotal information presented. Both Jennifer and Eliza, in their essays reflecting on the decision to return to college both point to a lack that each believes will be remedied by completing a college degree. And James, though he does not write about himself, but about the importance of education in general, makes it clear that education presents the opportunity to acquire new information and ways of thinking. All three students emphasize the ways in which education can change an individual and invest a person with greater authority and understanding.

Of the seven students who were not comfortable consistently referring to themselves as writers all focused solely on the professor as the audience for academic essays. However, three of these students described an experience of writing with a sense of authority in relation to their audience when they were particularly engaged in a topic:

With My *Their Eyes Were Watching God* paper, I wrote that last paragraph with me in it, and I felt that no matter what I got for that paragraph it didn't matter.... The teacher said to move it to the beginning [to use it as a thesis statement] and I needed it at the end. I love this paragraph and I didn't know where else to put it. I couldn't find a place for it and I left it there and it was important to me. I was a rebel at that moment. I'm not usually a rebel. I usually try to do my best. It felt different. I was in it. Even if it was one paragraph I put myself in there. (Lisa)

Lisa's comment speaks volumes and is one that has been crucial to my understanding of the data I collected and this project in general. I therefore hesitate to offer a slight comment on it, but of course, I must. For, although Lisa commented that "she put [her]self in [that last paragraph]," I believe that what Lisa did was put a *version* of herself into that last paragraph,

a version that was willing not to let the teacher be the authority, but to stand up to the teacher. And, it was at that point when she had found a place for herself as a participant in the rhetorical context of academic writing. What is difficult at first to interpret in this comment is that when Lisa writes that “I wrote [that paragraph] with me in it,” she is referring both to the content of what she wrote, as well as to the *way* in which she wrote it. For, at that moment Lisa had internalized the audience and purpose of this specific act of writing, as she indicates by her comment that she had been able to make the purpose of the essay her own, i.e., “no matter what I got for that paragraph it didn’t matter,” and to envision herself as the controlling audience for the essay, i.e., “the teacher said to move it to the beginning and I needed it at the end.” Lisa, in fact, acknowledges that something has changed for her in the writing of this particular essay when she comments, “I was a rebel at that moment.” And, indeed, she was. She was rebelling against the authority of a prescribed purpose and external audience, choosing instead to inscribe her own purpose and audience for this act of writing. As a result, Lisa is able to *act as* a writer.⁴²

James also described a difference in his relationship to purpose, audience, and language when he was writing about a topic that he felt he not only could relate to, but one to which he brought a sense of authority:

The writing [in the *Their Eyes Were Watching God* essay] was the best writing I did in your class. You said I could have done more research. I got angry there in that paper. And it helped me. To me, it was alright me being angry. These people [i.e., critics] had written books themselves but they had not gone through what she had gone through. They attacked the story. What other identity can they relate to other than what they’ve seen. They were

⁴² A comparison of the writing that Lisa did as part of our structured informal free-writing exercise and in her Zora Neale Hurston essay reveals a shift in the style in which she is writing, as well as in the type of rhetorical strategies she employs. However, because the two pieces were written at very different points in the semester, i.e., the beginning and the end, it is difficult to isolate and determine which factors, i.e., her experiences in the classroom and other writing assignments, or her relationship to this particular writing assignment, contributed most to the change in the style of and rhetorical approach to her writing.

saying Teacake was the average black person at that time. At the end of the story she went back to Mr. Starks. She went back to the town, she went back to her porch there with her friend, at the end of the book she goes back to his house. One person is leaving behind something, whereas this critic is saying Teacake is representing the typical African American guy. To me Teacake is a fool.

The internalization of authority that James describes is profound and surprisingly similar to that described by Lisa. In both instances, Lisa and James mention first standing up to the authority of the instructor, choosing to continue with their projects on their terms, and then finding a new kind of authority in relationship to the wider academic discourse community.

Jennifer described a change in her relationship to audience in her experience of writing of an opinion essay on the topic of the atomic bomb.

[After] writing an opinion paper on the atomic bomb, [which] I thought was a callous act on behalf of the U.S., the professor challenged my opinion and asked me things like “well, what if your son was there, and hindsight is always 20/20” and I said, “well, my son wasn’t there and maybe I don’t have 20/20 hindsight, but this is my opinion and this is what I think.” I guess I was like, this is my opinion and this is what it is. I felt like I’m not going to change it just to comply with what I think you want me to say.

Jennifer’s ability to challenge the authority of the instructor appears to translate into a different relationship to the academic writing context.

A similar sense of authority was achieved in relationship to audience for Christine and Patricia when they described their experiences of writing at work, where they appear to be more confident putting themselves in the position of the reader:

At work, yes [there is an audience.] I try to be objective. I do read what I’ve written as though I’m out there in the field as if I’m the recipient of the writing. I have to have two-views: the employee view and the policy view since the union will read this and will make an appeal if there is anything wrong with what is being written. I imagine transit workers reading this. I

stay away from large words. I try to be as clear as possible. I have to write step procedures, really explain things. (Christine)

When I'm at my job and I know I have to write a parent a note and I think about what their reaction is going to be when I write "because [your child] didn't nap they're in a cranky mood. and maybe what their reactions will be. Will they be OK, will they be upset?" (Patricia)

When asked why they were unable to achieve the same relationship to audience when writing in an academic context, Christine and Patricia remarked that they were not able to put themselves, or not comfortable putting themselves, in the professor's position.

Celia explicitly linked her ability to establish a sense of authority in relation to her writing to her ability to establish an open dialogue with an instructor:

To take criticism is very hard, particularly if you feel that you've done a lot of work. With my thesis statement [in a recent class], the professor started by saying: "Well, I don't know how much time you spent on this" which to me was a negative right away. And I shut down immediately when he said that. I thought: "this man does not like me" and I didn't even hear what he was saying after he said that because I know that I had spent a great deal of time on it and showed it to a couple of people and they had said "it's ok, it's interesting." but the bottom line was that he said it was too broad and I felt that he could have said that in a nicer way and he had written notes and it was this whole thing just to tell me it was too broad. Now I'm staring at a blank piece of paper. I've been intimidated to the point where I cannot write.

When, however, Celia has established an open dialogue with an instructor she commented that she derived a sense of authority from this conversation and it actually *enabled* her to write.

Publishing

Only two students, Celia and Susan, had had writing published and, for both, even though the work had been published some time ago, they described the experience as being both important and unique:

I had a letter published. I wrote a letter to *Billboard* magazine in the late 80s about the nominations for the American Music awards. And they published that letter. It made me happy and gleeful. When I wrote it it was not with the intent for them to publish it. (Celia)

I had some poetry published in high school. I was very proud of myself. It was very unexpected and I took this seminar and the [positive feedback and encouragement] were unexpected and were just incredible... Now, I look at [the booklet of poems] and I say, “wow I did that.” ... I still like it. It still surprises me. It feels so ever present. You think, I was 17 or 18 and you think “what did I know?” but it still speaks of who I am. It is like going back in your journals but it is different when it is published because I worked a lot harder on those things; I did a lot of editing. It is more of me because it is not off the top of my head, I wrote it, I thought about it and this was exactly how I wanted it to be. (Susan)

Eight of ten students in the survey responded very enthusiastically to the possibility of having their academic work published if we, as a class, were to assemble a book of essays written for the Humanities II course. And nine students, including the two students who had writing published, believed that having a piece of academic work published would change their relationship to writing in some way, making it “more serious,” or giving them the sense “that other people were interested,” or giving them “confidence” in their writing. Students mentioned several different ways in which having an academic paper published might change their relationship to writing:

**Table 19: Comments on Having Writing Published
(Students Who Do Not Consistently Conceive of Themselves as Writers)**

Student	Comments on Having Writing Published in a Class Book
Eliza	[I would feel] that other people were interested in my story, in my writing, in the way I wrote. That my stuff was out there, words that I put on paper were being read not just by a teacher or a boss or myself or my friend at the other end of the e-mail but by someone who was interested in reading these essays. Yeah, I think that would be great. It just kind of validates the fact that you can...that your words make sense and that someone else might be interested in reading it.
Christine	It would make me very proud.
Jennifer	Oh yes, I would love to. I think it is a fear I would overcome of those things I want to say.

These comments are particularly noteworthy in light of earlier comments made by these three students about their own writing and their conceptions of themselves when they write. Eliza consistently mentioned in her discussion of the definition of the terms *writer* and *author* that a key characteristic of each was the fact that they had writing published. Christine, who related feelings of inadequacy with regard to her own writing, believed she would achieve a feeling of pride if her work were published. And, Jennifer, who commented that she would consider herself a writer once she was “more comfortable. Not to procrastinate. Just get it done because I would know what I was doing,” suggested that having work published would allow her to “overcome [a fear] of those things I want to say.”

Those students who were comfortable applying the term to themselves were also enthusiastic about having work published:

**Table 20: Comments on Having Writing Published:
(Students Who Consistently Conceive of Themselves as Writers)**

Student	Comments on Having Writing Published in a Class Book
Susan	It would be like, “oh my writing is out for everyone to see.”
John	It makes it more serious, it’s not casual anymore. There’s something about being published. If I go to a copy shop and run off 100 copies of something, that’s not published. Published, there’s something about it that’s official. I know a lot of underground zine publishers and even there it is different from publishing yourself.
Daniel	That would be great [to publish a class book]. I thought there were some very good writers in that class.

In terms of which essays Susan, John, and Daniel considered publishing, Susan discussed a paper she had written for a sociology class on the orthography of Haitian Creole. She would select that paper, she said, because “that’s the only paper I can say that I have a little piece of me in,” in other words she felt a connection to the language and purpose of the paper in a way she did not with many academic essays. John was interested in publishing an essay that he had written outside of class on September, 11, 2001, and Daniel planned on contributing the paper he had written on Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* as part of the Humanities 101.

Although the vast majority of students responded very positively to the idea of having their work published, only one student, Eliza, believed that, afterwards, she would then consider herself an author and be able to establish herself in the specific rhetorical context she associates with authors.

Table 21: Impact of Publishing on Student Conception of Him- or Herelf as Author

Consider Self an Author	# Students	
	Overall (Q:3)	If Essay Published (Q:33)
Yes	1	2
No	9	8

The reasons students gave for not considering themselves authors even after having work published had to do with the fact that authors, according to students, had either multiple works published or a commercial publisher:

Table 22: Student Comments on Relationship Between Publishing and Self-Conception as Author

Student	Comment
Daniel	[In terms of being an author] it would depend on what it was. If I had a piece published in a journal or something like that, maybe not. It would depend on the length of the publication or the seriousness of the publication or the length of the work or the scope of the work.
John	No, [I wouldn't consider myself an author]. Not yet. Not until Simon and Schuster came knocking at the door.
Jennifer	I'd be a writer but not an author. Going back to what I said before, a writer is, I don't know how to explain it, an author is more formal, more about a big novel or a <i>New York Times</i> bestseller.

However, of the six students who did not consistently consider themselves writers at the beginning of the interview, three answered “yes” to the question when asked if they would consider themselves writers *after* having a piece of work published.

Table 23: Impact of Publishing on Student Conception of Self as Writer

Consider Self a Writer	# Students	
	Overall (Q: 6)	If Essay Published (Q: 33)
Yes	3	7
Sometimes	3	2
Not Yet	2	0
No	2	1

The three students who, even after having work published, expected there to be no change in their relationship to the term writer had very definite ideas about what correct writing was and a feeling that they had a long way to go to achieve this “standard.”

Table 24: Student Comments on Impact of Publishing on Conception of Self as Writer

<u>Student</u>	<u>Consider Self Writer in general/if work published</u>	<u>Comment on Having Work Published</u>
Lisa	Sometimes/Sometimes	I wouldn't want to because it is not good enough. Not nearly good enough.
James	Sometimes/Sometimes	I don't think I'm too comfortable. The good part is that a student who is struggling can say, I'm not alone. But all of my grammar mistakes!
Christine	No/No	It would be nice but I don't see myself as being that good to have it published.

Lisa and James were the only students who expressed some reluctance about having work published because they were concerned about the quality of their writing and the scope of distribution. Given a limited scope of distribution and the ability to revise their essays, even these students were willing to consider the possibility of publishing their papers. Lisa said having the essay published would ultimately “give her confidence,” and James commented that although he had reservations about having his work published, it might help other students see they are not alone in their struggles with writing:

Maybe I would consider it. I would do it for my kids, my students, my professors, not beyond. It would give me confidence. If it were published, I would think “wow, this is good.” I would keep writing. If that were to happen I would have more confidence. I wouldn't have to write a book.
(Lisa)

I don't think I would feel comfortable with that there. When you speak about publishing, are you talking about James' work all across the country? I don't think I'm too comfortable [with that]. The good part is that a student who is struggling can say, I'm not alone. (James)

Although the majority of students reacted very positively to the possibility of having their academic work published, a number of different issues have to be considered. First, Celia had a letter published in a national magazine, and that experience did not change her

conception of herself as a writer. Yet, she believed that having an academic essay published would change her conception of herself as a writer. Second, I invited all of the students in these two Humanities courses to submit essays to the annual CWE undergraduate publication *City at the Center*, and none of the students did so. This leads me to speculate that it is not publishing student work that is somehow an “answer” to helping students form a different conception of themselves during the writing process. Rather, for some students, having work published may actually lead to a change in how they conceive of and relate to their audience in an academic context.

There are therefore two key findings from my discussions with students about the possibility of publishing their work. First, that for students to be involved in the creation of a journal or class book may further their understanding of writing as a process, and help them understand to what extent publishing and writing are collaborative and iterative processes. And, secondly, that having an essay published may help a student expand his or her conception of audience, which, when conceived of as including his or her peers and his or her professor may allow students to begin to perceive themselves as members of that audience, as well as active members of the academic discourse community.

Chapter 6: Preliminary Findings and Discussion of Interview Results

Findings

The interviews suggest that a student's ability to refer to him or herself as a *writer* or *author* is a socially situated act *dependent on*, rather than *independent of* a specific discourse community. In each writing context, or discourse community, an individual must construct him or herself as a writer or author not as a monologue, i.e., "I am a writer," but as a dialogue, i.e., "because of my understanding of the specific purpose, audience, and language of the context in which I am writing, I am able to consider myself a writer." Students based their definitions of the terms *writer* and *author* on their understanding of the rhetorical context, i.e., purpose, audience, language, associated with each term. And, these definitions in turn were the key variable determining whether or not a student was able to situate him- or herself, or envision a place for him- or herself, in the rhetorical context of a specific discourse community.

Ninety percent of the students interviewed were not comfortable applying the term *author* to themselves. Students were generally unable to comfortably situate themselves in the rhetorical context they associated with the term *author*, and described this context as one that they would probably *never* participate in. Students consistently cited their lack of inspiration and originality, as well as the absence of a large and receptive readership, as reasons why they would not be comfortable applying the term to themselves. Discussing the audience students associated with the term *author*, students described this as large and highly critical, and an author's *purpose*, or reason for writing, as inspiration and originality, which were characteristics students did not associate with themselves.

While some students were comfortable consistently applying the term *writer* to themselves, seventy percent of students interviewed were not. A comparison of the two groups, those who were comfortable consistently applying the term *writer* to themselves and those who were not, revealed important, if somewhat surprising, results. In terms of technical writing proficiency and having received encouragement to write at the college level, similarities far outweighed differences between the two groups. *All* students reported receiving encouragement to write at the college level. And, like encouragement to write, current occupation, overall technical proficiency with writing, and the performance of writing tasks at work, were not significant in determining a student's ability to consistently apply the term *writer* to him or herself in an academic writing context.

The profiles and educational experiences of students who were comfortable consistently applying the term *writer* to themselves in an academic context varied significantly in terms of their education (public/private schooling), race, ethnicity, work experience, and age. However, in terms of their backgrounds, the one common element all shared was having been raised in households in which both parents were college-educated and that were identified socially and professionally, if not economically, as middle-class.

In terms of their definitions of the terms *writer* and *author*, those students who were comfortable consistently applying the term *writer* to themselves clearly separated the terms and the rhetorical contexts associated with each. In contrast, students who did not consider themselves as writers defined the terms *writer* and *author* in very similar terms. Though they insisted there were differences between *writers* and *authors*, they associated originality and inspiration, in other words, traits of the Romantic author with both.

Students who were comfortable consistently conceiving of themselves as writers defined "being a writer" as having the ability to engage in an act of communication. Those

students who were not comfortable consistently conceiving of themselves as writers defined “being a writer” as the possession of certain attributes. In other words, students in the latter group defined *writer* as a state of being rather than a way of acting, and perceived “being a writer” as a dominant and stable identity, rather than as one of many possible roles or identities that an individual takes on or inhabits. Students who are able to cast themselves in the role of writer in an academic discourse community appeared to understand what the role entailed, and were comfortable casting themselves in such a role. Those students who were not able to cast themselves, or not able to cast themselves consistently, in the role of writer in the academic discourse community, appeared unable to separate actor from role. In other words, they did not see that the actor was adopting a persona. Instead they believed they must become the actor himself.

Students who were able to consistently conceive of themselves as writers described their relationship to the audience and purpose of an academic writing context in ways that were distinct from those students who were not comfortable consistently applying the term *writer* to themselves. The first group described their relationship to audience as dialogic, meaning they were able to project themselves not only as writers but also as imagined *readers* of their own work. In both their interviews and in their writing samples, students who were comfortable consistently applying the term *writer* to themselves approached the writing of academic discourse from a place of knowing how to position themselves as interlocutors with their audience/reader and with the purpose and language of academic writing. These students described themselves “talking with” an audience and purpose, which they had in some manner internalized. In contrast, those students who were not comfortable consistently identifying themselves as writers defined audience as a controlling authority that they were either unable or rarely able to establish communication with in an academic

writing context, and their experience of writing academic discourse as being primarily monologic, or an act of “reciting for” an audience.

Nevertheless, students who were not comfortable consistently describing themselves as writers in an academic context did cite particular moments—either in relationship to academic writing or other types of writing--when they were able to establish a dialogic relationship to the audience, purpose, and language of a particular discourse community. These moments occurred when students were writing about material that they had a strong personal connection to, or some authority over, in a language they felt comfortable expressing themselves in, or to a reader they felt comfortable expressing themselves to.

Regarding the impact of publishing in changing a student’s relationship to the terms *writer* and *author*, it appears that students’ identifications of themselves in relation to the term *writer* may be effected by the publication of their work; however, student relationships to the term *author* would remain unchanged by such an event.

Summary of Interview Findings

- The term *author* is one that students are not comfortable consistently applying to themselves in an academic writing context.
- The term *writer* is one that some, but by no means all, students are comfortable consistently applying to themselves in an academic writing context.
- The ability to apply the term *writer* to oneself relates not so much to a student’s technical ability to write, or to having received encouragement to write, as to a student’s ability to establish a consistent position of authority for him or herself in relation to the specific rhetorical context of academic writing.
- Those students who are able to consistently identify themselves as writers shared similar socio-cultural backgrounds and clearly differentiated the terms *writer* and *author*, defining the first as a way of acting, i.e., engaging in an act of communication, and the latter as a state of being, i.e., the possession of certain attributes or characteristics.

- Those students who were unable to consistently identify themselves as writers defined both the term *writer* and the term *author* as states of being, i.e., the possession of certain attributes or characteristics.⁴³
- Although the majority of the students interviewed did not consistently conceive of themselves as writers, there were moments when these students were able to establish a position of authority in relation to, or enter into a dialogue with, the audience, language, or purpose of the academic discourse community, thereby, behaving in the same manner as those students who did identify themselves as writers.

Discussion

The findings from the interviews appear to instantiate theoretical perspectives that emphasize the socially and rhetorically situated nature of student relationships to academic writing. In “Inventing the University,” Bartholomae explains:

It is difficult to imagine...how writers can have a purpose before they are located in a discourse, since it is the discourse with its projects and agendas that determines what writers can and will do. The writer who can successfully manipulate an audience (or, to use less pointed language, the writer who can accommodate her motives to her reader’s expectations) is a writer who can both imagine and write from a position of privilege. She must, that is, see herself within a privileged discourse, one that already includes and excludes groups of readers. She must be either equal to or more powerful than those she would address. (594)

Confirming Bartholomae’s observation, the interviews suggest that students who do not readily identify themselves as writers in an academic writing context may be able to play the role of writer in an academic context not merely by being encouraged to consider themselves writers, but by being shown how to establish a dialogic relationship with a reader, language, and purpose. The interviews also confirm that before students can establish an internalized inner dialogue with an audience, language, and purpose (the I/I relationship, i.e., “I” as writer AND reader) that is a characteristic of students who are comfortable referring to

⁴³ In future research, I hope study the question of whether, for those students who do not consistently identify themselves as writers, *writer* is the most appropriate term for describing these students’ fully realized textual-selves.

themselves as writers, they first have to establish a successful dialogue with a real external audience, purpose, and language (an I/Thou relationship, i.e., "I" as writer and thou (teacher, peers, et al., as readers)).

In terms of why a student's ability to consistently conceive of him or herself as a writer in an academic context may be, to some degree, dependent on a student's socio-cultural background might be explained by bringing these findings together with work in social psychology and anthropology by Dorothy Holland and William Lachiotte. In the introduction to a collection of essays on the social construction of identity, Holland and Lachiotte write:

Identity is a concept that figuratively combines the intimate or personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social relations. We are interested in identities, the imaginings of self in worlds of action, as social products; indeed, we begin with the premise that identities are lived in and through activity and so must be conceptualized as they develop in social practice. (5 *Identity and Agency in Cultural Practice*)

In more recent work on the sociogenetic formation of identity, Dorothy Holland and William Lachiotte explain how “people form senses of themselves—identities—in relation to ways of inhabiting roles, positions and cultural imaginaries that matter to them, e.g., as a skater, a punk, a radical environmentalist, a theoretically sophisticated anthropologist, a stylish dresser, a good father, a third wave feminist, a moderate Republican” (2-3 “Vygotsky, Mead, and the New Sociocultural Studies of Identity”).

Why students were uniformly unable to apply the term *author* to themselves can be explained, I believe, by the fact of the dominance of the Romantic model in student definitions of the term. In this model, the rhetorical situation is dependent on only a single variable, the writer, who has internalized both the audience and purpose of any writing situation.

In considering what the findings from the interviews mean in terms of the issue of authorship in rhetoric and composition theory and pedagogy, I believe they emphasize the importance of clearly distinguishing the terms *writer* and *author* in the composition classroom by defining the first as a subject position available to students and one that connotes an authoritative relationship to the rhetorical situation of a specific discourse community, and the latter as a term that is reserved for either those individuals (if one adheres to a Romantic model of the author) or cultural functions (if one adheres to a poststructural conception of the author) that are *outside* the writing classroom. The findings also suggest the importance of cultivating an authoritative and dialogic relationship to the specific rhetorical context of academic writing. Though publishing student work may enable some students to achieve a more authoritative relationship to the audience, purpose, and language of academic writing, this is, however, just one of several things that must take place. To further cultivate a student's authority in relation to the specific rhetorical situation of academic writing and his or her ability to consistently cast him/herself in the role of *writer* in an academic context, instructors need to foster a student's dialogic relationship to audience, purpose and language by 1) establishing a dialogue with the instructor, 2) presenting students with the opportunity to write about content that they have some stake or authority in; 3) allowing students to write in languages/voices that they feel they have authority over; 4) drawing parallels between academic writing and other types of writing, for instance, writing at work or personal writing.

Into the Classroom: Exploring New Terminologies and Teaching Practices

In the fall, 2006 semester, I found myself teaching freshman composition at an institution where I had no prior teaching experience, leaving me somewhat constrained by what I considered to be the academic expectations of the institution and somewhat wary of experimenting too widely with my syllabus. However, having developed what I considered to be a pretty standard freshman composition syllabus and first essay assignment, namely a review essay of the nonfiction book we were using as the core text in the course, I was quite literally *forced* to integrate some of the findings from this dissertation into my teaching practice. For, even after reading several book reviews in class, having multiple discussions about the essay assignment, and completing several informal writing assignments related to the assigned essay, I found that many students were still struggling to understand how to write it. I realized that what I had left out of the assignment was for whom and for what purpose students would be writing. Though I may have thought that by assigning a review essay, the purpose would be fairly clear, I had failed to explicitly mention or to even explain the audience for the assignment. This failure on my part is, for me, glaring evidence of my own immersion in an academic discourse community. For, though as a class we had discussed the concept of audience in general and in academic writing, I never considered—either in the assignment or in our discussions of it-- the question of for whom this specific essay was being written. It would just be, I presumed, written for the same audience that every academic essay is written, i.e., some unnamed, entirely unspecified, invented, and nonexistent group of academics and scholars.

After returning home from a day of discussing the assigned essay, I recall having felt very uneasy about the answers I had given my students as to “how” to write the essay, as well as a with the apparent dissonance between my own theoretical work in this dissertation and my

teaching practices. Though I had been writing and writing and writing about the importance of allowing students some say in the purpose, language, or audience for an essay, I had nevertheless developed an essay assignment that excluded student participation in all three areas. Since the subject matter and approach to the essay could not be changed, I tried to figure out some way to allow students some say in *how* they wrote the essay. I therefore asked each one to decide on a publication for which they would be writing their review. Somewhat to my surprise, this addition to the assignment succeeded in not only clarifying all of the questions that had arisen about it, but in giving students a new found sense of engagement with the assignment. From the earliest brainstorming exercises and through every draft, I asked students to name the publication they would be writing for. Some of my engineering students took the opportunity to write for specialized engineering journals that they either invented or were familiar with; another student wrote his review for *GQ*; yet another wrote for a popular music Web zine. The vast majority of students chose to write their reviews for the college newspaper, a kind of de facto choice, which nevertheless gave students a concrete and real sense of their audience, namely other college students, and how they might adapt their language, argument, and style to these specific readers.

In terms of how a pedagogy might evolve to address and reflect a more self-conscious and clearly defined use of the terms *writer* and *author*, I can, at this stage, only point to the bare outlines of such an approach in the writing classroom. As someone who has spent many years believing that what students want to hear is that they are all, in fact, writers, a pedagogy that abandons that notion feels perilous. However, given the fact that the majority of students interviewed as part of my qualitative study do not, in fact, define themselves consistently as writers, what we, as writing teachers, may be sacrificing by no longer exhorting our students to consider themselves writers may not be as great as we feared.

Instead, it opens up the possibility that students can begin *defining* rather than *being defined* by the term *writer* and the way this term/role/subject position functions in an academic writing context. It is an idealistic stance; however, it is one that very well may inject vitality into a type of writing, i.e., academic writing, that is often in need of such resuscitation.

In this imagined pedagogy, *being a writer* is not an identity, but a role that one inhabits when involved in the act of writing. This then shifts the emphasis of writing pedagogy away from one based on exhortation, which is meant to aid students in the revelation of an identity that is presumed to be already latent, to one based on conversation, which asks students to consider how subject positions that they currently use to define themselves might be expressed through the act of writing. This second proposition opens up a number of extremely complex issues about language, representation, and genre. Nevertheless, I believe that facing such questions will lead to a range of important and valuable inquiries for the field of rhetoric and composition.

Such an imagined pedagogy is simultaneously informed by social constructivist and expressionist theories, particularly through its focus on voice, which is conceived not as a quest for one essential voice, but as multivocality. Thus, voice, which is so central to expressionist conceptions of the writer is actually recuperated in a postmodern conception of the writing subject. However, it is voice framed not as a possession, but voicing as an act dependent on context. Students have different voices in their register and the writing classroom can become a place to explore these voices and the ways in which they relate to different styles and genres of writing and thinking. Students must ask themselves how they relate to audience in a specific writing context, and how they may bring voices from other rhetorical contexts to bear on the academic writing context while, at the same time, becoming comfortable and familiar with the very conventions of academic writing. Moving

away from a reified notion of *writer as identity* in rhetoric and composition theory and pedagogy empowers students to conceive of themselves during the academic writing process in terms that engage their multiple subject positions and their experiences with writing outside an academic writing context, while at the same time allowing them to understand that a successful academic writer is not *who one is*, but *a role that one becomes comfortable playing*.

Appendix A

CWE 101
Core Humanities-Literature
Spring, 2004

Instructor: Johannah Rodgers
Thursdays: 6pm-9:20pm

Course Description

This course is designed to continue the introduction to literature, literary studies, and academic writing that was initiated in CWE 100. Focusing on longer works from a variety of genres and historical periods, the course will allow students to further refine methods of critical writing and reading. There will be a strong emphasis on writing, close textual analysis, understanding the historical and cultural context in which literary works were written, and research methods. Students are expected to complete reading and writing assignments on time and to come to class on time and prepared. In order to actively participate in class discussions and small group work, it is crucial that students have read and thought about the assigned texts.

Required Texts

- 1) Homer's *The Odyssey*, translated by Robert Fagles, Penguin edition, 1996
- 2) William Shakespeare's *Othello*, Signet Classic edition
- 3) Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- 4) Diana Hacker's *A Pocket Style Manual*, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000
- 5) English Dictionary (Webster's, Oxford, or American Heritage)

Books will be on sale at the Center during the first two weeks of the term. Please purchase all of them at that time.

Supplies

One spiral notebook for in-class exercises and class notes.

Assignments and Grading

Three critical essays will be required. Students are also expected to complete weekly journal assignments. Essays will represent 50% of the final grade, class participation 25% and journals 25%. More than one unexcused absence will result in a FULL LETTER GRADE penalty. This means that with two unexcused absences, a student cannot expect to receive a grade higher than a B, with three, a grade no higher than a C, with four, a grade no higher than a D. Three latenesses are the equivalent of one absence.

(See attached “Assignments and Grading” section for a more in-depth discussion of specific assignments and grading rubrics and policies).

Attendance and Lateness Policy

Each of our classes is the equivalent of FOUR fifty-minute classes. Therefore, it is extremely important that you keep absences to an absolute minimum. Out of respect for the class please be punctual. Grades will be impacted by absences and lateness (see Assignments and Grading below). If you leave a class before its completion, this will be counted as an absence. If situations arise that are beyond your control, talk to me after class.

ID Cards

Please make sure that you have an official CUNY ID card and that it is updated for the semester. Cards are issued at the Center at various times during the semester. If you are unable to obtain your card at one of these times, you must visit the uptown campus and have the card issued there.

Other Issues

We will have a fifteen minute break during each class. Students are asked not to leave the classroom until this break period since it is disruptive to the class. It is my hope that this class, despite its large size, will be run using a seminar format. This means that student preparedness and discussion are very important to the success of the class. However, because of the class size, I have to ask students to raise their hands when they have a comment and not to interrupt other students when they are speaking. When students are not addressing the class as a whole or involved in small group work, they should be listening, not talking amongst themselves. Students are welcome to bring beverages to class. Please do not, however, plan to eat, or finish eating, during class. There is simply not enough room or time for this.

Tutoring Resources

Writing tutors are available from 6pm to 9pm Monday - Thursday at the Center. Appointments can be made at the Reception Desk. I encourage students to bring working or final drafts of papers to review with tutors. Also, I strongly encourage students to work with each other to review their essays.

Office Hours

I will be available after class to discuss paper topics and essays with students. If you need to contact me for any other reason, you can leave a message at 212-925-6625. I will generally check my messages once a week, however, it is possible that I may not get your message until the next class.

Assignments

Essays

Three critical essays will be required, one five-page essay, one two-to-three page essay, and one five-to-ten-page essay. Although essay topics will be assigned, it is my hope that essay topics may also emerge from journal and in-class writing and I encourage you to consider these ideas for papers. Students who choose to design their own paper topic must submit the topic to me before finalizing it. Papers are due at the **BEGINNING OF CLASS** on the date indicated. Late papers will not be accepted. All essays can be revised and the revised grade will be the grade given. Essays must be typed and double spaced on white paper. Papers should include a cover page, be stapled, and handed in **WITHOUT** a plastic cover or folder. I recommend that you save all copies of essays on a computer disc.

Journals

Journal assignments are listed on the syllabus. Each “journal” entry is expected to be at least one page in length and will be handed in to me for review. I prefer journal assignments to be typed, but I will also accept hand-written journals. Journal assignments are required and are meant to help students expand and explore their writing in a different manner from essay assignments. The topics that will be explored in the journals relate to the writing process and to reading questions.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the uncited use of material from any printed or electronic source. Any evidence of plagiarism in an essay will result in an automatic grade of F. Plagiarism is a very serious issue, is a violation of City College ethical codes and may result in a student being expelled from the college.

**Core Humanities II-Literature
Class Schedule and Assignments
Johannah Rodgers**

Week	Date	Assignment
WEEK 1	29-Jan	HOMEWORK: Reading: Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> Books 1-4; Journal: Write a letter to Homer asking him about any questions that you have about the reading. For example: Why does the poem begin with Athena speaking to Telemachus? What is the significance of this? Write a paragraph responding to one of your questions.
WEEK 2	5-Feb	DISCUSS IN CLASS: Homer HOMEWORK: Reading: Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> Books 5-12; Journal: 1) Cite an episode from the <i>Odyssey</i> and explain what it reminds you of, i.e., a specific fairy tale, a scene in a novel or film or play, a passage from the Bible or another religious text. 2) Reflect on the ways in which the characters, situations and settings of the <i>Odyssey</i> are both real and unreal at the same time? In what way are they unreal? Why is the element of unreality important?
	12-Feb	NO CLASS
WEEK 3	19-Feb	DISCUSS IN CLASS: Homer HOMEWORK: Reading: Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> Books 13-18 and Knox Introductory Essay; Journal: 1) What do you notice about the structure and organization of the Knox essay? 2) What did you find most interesting in the essay? 3) Brainstorm on paper topics
WEEK 4	26-Feb	DISCUSS IN CLASS: Homer

HOMEWORK: **Reading:** Homer's *Odyssey* Books 19-24; **Journal:** Develop Thesis Statement for Essay

WEEK 5 4-Mar DISCUSS IN CLASS: Homer

HOMEWORK: **Journal:** FIRST DRAFT OF ESSAY DUE NEXT CLASS

WEEK 6 11-Mar DISCUSS IN CLASS: Homer
HOMEWORK: FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE NEXT CLASS. Reader Response essay 5 pages in length, typed and double spaced. Papers must be revised and checked for spelling. LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. PAPERS MUST BE HANDED IN AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS. NO PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 6PM.

WEEK 7 **18-Mar** DISCUSS IN CLASS: Shakespeare

HOMEWORK: **Reading:** Othello Act I (pp. 3-28)
Journal: Three questions related to the play

WEEK 8 25-Mar DISCUSS IN CLASS: Shakespeare
HOMEWORK: **Reading:** Othello, Acts 2-5 (pp. 29-128) **Journal:** Write out one speech that contains an image that you feel is important for interpreting the play as a whole. Which character uses the image? Where? When? In response to whom? Why do you feel the image is important to understanding the play as a whole?

WEEK 9 1-Apr DISCUSS IN CLASS: Shakespeare

HOMEWORK: **Journal:** 2-3 page essay reflecting on one speech, the figurative language contained in it and the significance of both to the play as a whole

WEEK **15-Apr** DISCUSS IN CLASS: Harlem Renaissance and

10



Zora Neale Hurston

HOMEWORK: Reading: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; **Journal:** Locate one image that you find particularly difficult or interesting. Write a one paragraph interpretation of the image.

WEEK

11

22-Apr DISCUSS IN CLASS: Zora Neale Hurston

HOMEWORK: Reading: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; **Journal:**

WEEK

12

29-Apr DISCUSS IN CLASS: Zora Neale Hurston and the Harlem Renaissance

HOMEWORK: Reading: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; **Journal:** Go to library and locate a scholarly article related to a topic that you are particularly interested in from Hurston's novel. Make two photocopies of article. Prepare a five minute presentation for next class on why you selected that article and your paper topic.

WEEK

13

6-May DISCUSS IN CLASS: Zora Neale Hurston

HOMEWORK: Reading: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; **Journal:** Prepare draft of essay

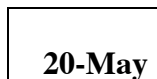
WEEK

14

13-May DISCUSS IN CLASS: Zora Neale Hurston
HOMEWORK: THIRD WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE NEXT CLASS. Essay 5-10 pages in length, typed and double spaced. Papers must be revised and checked for spelling. LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

WEEK

15



20-May FINAL PAPER DUE--LAST CLASS

NOTE: Dates of classes in **BOLD FACE** indicate that a writing assignment is due on that date

Grading

Essays will represent 50% of the final grade, class participation 25% and journals 25%. More than one unexcused absence will result in a FULL LETTER GRADE penalty. This means that with two unexcused absences, a student cannot expect to receive a grade higher than a B, with three, a grade no higher than a C, with four, a grade no higher than a D. Three latenesses are the equivalent of one absence.

Grades for the course will be based on class participation, attendance and a portfolio of the essays and assignments prepared for the course. Although you may receive a “C” on one paper, it is still possible to receive an “A” for the course if there is significant improvement in your written work throughout the semester.

We will discuss all assignments in detail, as well as each element (listed below) that essays will be graded upon.

Essays will be graded on the following:

- ❖ Quality of Argument
 - Essay is analytical and focused on text, summarizing, when used, is for purpose of argument
 - Argument is original and reflects an engagement with the language and content of the literary text
 - Thesis is "sized" correctly, i.e., not too vague or too specific to contain argument
 - Evidence cited
 - Shows understanding of literary terminology used
 - Generalities avoided

- ❖ Quality of Writing
 - Author's voice is not stilted or contrived
 - Continuity and clarity of sentences
 - Author shows understanding and command of language used

- ❖ Structure and Organization
 - Attention to paragraph structure
 - Thesis is well constructed to reflect organization and argument of paper
 - Argument is well represented and reader is able to easily follow points being made
 - Consistent tense (Please remember: essays analyzing pieces of literature are written in the present tense!)
 - Paper has a beginning, middle and end and each section reflects the goals of the essay

- ❖ Grammar and Mechanics
 - Adequately proofread, shows attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation
 - MLA format for citations and bibliographies
 - Title and title page for essay and pages numbered
 - Essay is typed, double spaced and twelve point font is used

Appendix B

The Social Construction of Authorship Johannah Rodgers Interview Guide

Interviewer:

Name:

Date:

Contact Information:

Highest Degree Earned:

Years Enrolled in College Courses:

Age:

Gender:

Student's Educational Background:

Writing/Composition Courses Taken:

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction:

Occupation:

Years at Current Job:

Types of Writing Performed at Job:

Ethnicity/Family Background:

Home Language(s):

Parents' Occupations:

Parents' Educational Background:

Literacy Narrative: History and Current Definitions

1. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

1a. How do you define the term author?

1b. What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

2. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

2a. How do you define the term writer?

2b. What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

3. Do you consider yourself an author?

4. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

5. If no, why not? What would make you an author?

6. Do you consider yourself a writer?

7. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)
8. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?
9. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities?
10. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write?
11. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author?
12. Do you remember anyone reading to you when you were very young?
13. What is your earliest memory involving writing?

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

14. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.
15. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain.

16. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

Identity, Writing, and Audience

17. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing?

18. If yes, who/what makes up this audience?

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

19. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.]

20. Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing?

21. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then?

22. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this?

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

23. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34.

24. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?

25. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain?

26. Did it change any part of your writing process?

27. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed?

28. Did it change your understanding of audience?

29. Did it change your relationship to reading?

30. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?

31. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]

32. Would you like to have a piece of writing published?

33. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing?

33a. Would it make you a writer?

33b. Would it make you an author?

34. What if I published one of your papers? Would that make you an author or a writer?

35. What if we as a class published a book ? Would that make you an author or a writer?

36. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique?

37. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain.
38. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?
39. Is the quality of the writing in this piece different from other things you have written? If yes, how?
40. Did you imagine an audience for this piece of writing?
41. Were you a part of the audience you imagined for this piece of writing?
42. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

Appendix C
Transcripts of Interviews

Celia

Highest Degree Earned: ASSOCIATES. NYCITY TECH. 1997, GRADUATED. STARTED CWE FALL, 2003. WILL GRADUATE MAY, 2006. MAJOR: LIBERAL ARTS.

Years Enrolled in College Courses:

Age: 42

Gender:

Student's Educational Background: EXCELSIOR HIGH SCHOOL, KINGSTON, JAMAICA. PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL. NO COLLEGE AFTER HS.

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: TWO MANDATORY CLASSES AT NYC TECH.

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction: CWE CORE II. FILM CLASS. RACE RELATIONS. BEAUTY/CULTURE/AESTHETICS CLASS.

Occupation: PAYROLL MANAGER.

Years at Current Job: 1.5 YEARS.

Types of Writing Performed at Job: NONE.

Ethnicity/Family Background: BLACK. PARENTS ARE JAMAICAN. BORN IN ENGLAND.

Home Language(s):

Parents' Occupations: WORKED FOR JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT.

Parents' Educational Background: MOM: NURSE, WENT TO NURSING SCHOOL. DAD HAD SOME COLLEGE. HS IN JAMAICA. COLLEGE IN ENGLAND. FATHER IN RAF AND SO MAY HAVE DONE COLLEGE IN JAMAICA. MOVED BACK TO JAMAICA AFTER KIDS WERE BORN.

Literacy Narrative: History and Current Definitions

43. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

CREATIVITY. KNOWLEDGE. GIFTED.

How do you define the term author?

SOMEONE WHO IS ABLE TO PUT THEIR THOUGHTS ONTO PAPER THAT CAN RELATE TO OTHERS. I WISH I COULD.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

44. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

EDUCATION. THAT'S ABOUT IT.

How do you define the term writer?

MAYBE BECAUSE I AM IN SCHOOL BUT I THINK OF IT IN TERMS OF HAVING TO WRITE PAPERS, EDUCATION.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

45. Do you consider yourself an author?

NO.

46. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

BECAUSE A LOT OF THE THOUGHTS I HAVE I DO NOT PUT TO PAPER. THEY SOUND GOOD IN MY HEAD. BUT THEY JUST STAY IN MY HEAD AND I DON'T WRITE ANYTHING DOWN.

Q: IF YOU DID PUT THOSE THOUGHTS DOWN, WOULD YOU BE AN AUTHOR: I SUPPOSE I WOULD BE.

47. If no, why not? What would make you an author?

IT MIGHT BE TIME. I FEEL LIKE I HAVE A LOT GOING ON. I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR MYSELF. MY FILM CLASS IS ON SATURDAY.

48. Do you consider yourself a writer?

NO. [LAUGHS] BECAUSE I'M CRAP. I GENERALIZE A WRITER AS SOMETHING THAT IS A NATURAL THING AND FOR ME IT IS A STRUGGLE.

Q: IS IT A STRUGGLE EVEN AFTER YOU GET STARTED? NO, GETTING STARTED IS HARD. BUT THEN AFTERWARDS THE IDEAS DO PRETTY MUCH FLOW.

49. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

50. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?

51. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities? SIMILARITIES WOULD BE THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS THAT ARE WRITTEN DOWN. I'M NOT EVEN THINKING OF JOURNALISTS AS WRITERS, ONLY OF SOMEONE IN SCHOOL.

52. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write?

MY SISTER. FIVE YEARS AGO, BECAUSE I WAS TELLING HER A STORY ABOUT MY CATS AND I HAD THIS WHOLE SKIT AND SHE SAID 'YOU SHOULD WRITE, YOU SHOULD WRITE THAT DOWN.'

NO ENCOURAGEMENT WHEN I WAS YOUNG.

I DIDN'T LIKE WRITING BECAUSE I WAS TERRIBLE AT SPELLING. WHEN I WAS YOUNGER SPELLING WAS A BIG DEAL. I WAS GOOD AT ENGLISH COMPOSITION AND LITERATURE BUT MY SPELLING WAS ATROCIOUS. I THINK IT WAS A MENTAL BLOCK THAT I PUT ON MYSELF.

53. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author?

MY SISTER. SHE WAS ENCOURAGING ME TO, I DON'T KNOW, TO WRITE.

54. Do you remember anyone reading to you when you were very young?

55. What is your earliest memory involving writing?

HIGH SCHOOL. ENGLISH COMPOSITION, HISTORY. ONE HISTORY EXAM WAS TO WRITE A LETTER WELCOMING SLAVES THAT WERE COMING AND I HAD THIS WHOLE LETTER ABOUT THE PLANTATION AND WHAT TO EXPECT. DON'T ROLL YOUR EYES AT ME! I SAID THEY WERE GOING TO CHANGE YOUR NAME. I GOT A B BECAUSE I COULDN'T SPELL AND SO I COULDN'T GET AN A.

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

56. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.

YES, BECAUSE NOW I LOOK AT IT AS WRITING IS HARD. NOW I LOOK AT IT AS A BUILDING BLOCK. NOT SOMETHING I DO WILLINGLY BUT THAT I HAVE TO DO.

WORKED FOR A FAMILY AND THIS FAMILY GOT ME TO TAKE A GED AND GO TO COLLEGE.

DECIDED TO FINISH THE BA TO FEEL THAT I HAD ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING. IT IS FOR ME.

I'M KICKING MYSELF FOR TAKING THIS FILM CLASS.

57. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain.

CONTRIBUTED TO MY SENSE THAT WRITING WAS NOT VERY HARD, BUT HARD, AND THAT IF I APPLIED MYSELF I COULD DO IT AND I GOT A LOT OF ENCOURAGEMENT FROM YOU THE PROFESSOR. I HAVEN'T FELT THAT I HAD THE SAME SUPPORT FROM OTHER PROFESSORS WHOM I COULDN'T COMPLAIN TO.

IT IS AN INDIVIDUAL THING. I DON'T KNOW IF THERE IS A GENERAL RULE OF THUMB THAT CAN BE APPLIED TO [HOW WRITING CAN BE LESS INTIMIDATING]

[[The teacher feels like they need to make comments and yet I think some students would like to hand in papers and have them be fine. Is there a space that can be created where you

stop criticizing. It is so much about criticizing things. The professional mentality is the more I criticize the more I'm encouraging you. In school: too much praise, students don't take you seriously; too much criticism: nothing is every good enough.]]

TO TAKE CRITICISM IS VERY HARD, PARTICULARLY IF YOU FEEL THAT YOU'VE DONE A LOT OF WORK. WITH MY THESIS STATEMENT [FOR MY FILM CLASS], THE PROFESSOR STARTED BY SAYING: "WELL, I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH TIME YOU SPENT ON THIS" WHICH TO ME WAS A NEGATIVE RIGHT AWAY. AND I SHUT DOWN IMMEDIATELY WHEN HE SAID THAT. I THOUGHT: "THIS MAN DOES NOT LIKE ME" AND I DIDN'T EVEN HEAR WHAT HE WAS SAYING AFTER HE SAID THAT BECAUSE I KNOW THAT I HAD SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME ON IT AND SHOWED IT TO A COUPLE OF PEOPLE AND THEY HAD SAID "IT'S OK, IT'S INTERESTING." BUT THE BOTTOM LINE WAS THAT HE SAID IT WAS TOO BROAD AND I FELT THAT HE COULD HAVE SAID THAT IN A NICER WAY AND HE HAD WRITTEN NOTES AND IT WAS THIS WHOLE THING JUST TO TELL ME IT WAS TOO BROAD. HE'S CRITICIZING IN A WAY THAT HE KNOWS HOW AND I THINK HE COULD HAVE SAID THAT IN THREE SENTENCES AND EVERY TIME I LOOK AT THAT I SEE IT AS A GREAT TURN OFF.

[[if we knew what we were writing for in an academic context, the criticism would be more directed or focused or useful]]

58. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

I ENJOYED READING ALL THREE OF THEM IMMENSELY.

Q: DID READING THESE MAKE YOU WANT TO WRITE, DID READING THESE MAKE YOU THINK "WOW I COULD DO THIS": NO. LAUGHS. NO. I MEAN, YOU KNOW HOW AUTHORS WHEN THEY WRITE AND THEY DESCRIBE THE SCENERY AND TREES AND THEY MAKE ALL OF THESE SIMILES OR WHATEVER I CAN'T DO ANY OF THAT CRAP. YOU KNOW. I THOUGHT TO MYSELF IF I WERE TO WRITE SOMETHING IT WOULD PROBABLY BE A PLAY OR A SCREENPLAY. SO AND SO SAID THAT AND SO AND SO SAID THAT. BUT DESCRIBING THE ROOM AND THE CHAIRS, NONE OF THAT COMES TO ME.

I REMEMBER ZNH DESCRIBING THE CHERRY BLOSSOM TREES AND THAT WAS JUST BRILLIANT. I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

JR: YOU NEVER KNOW. I BET YOU USE A LOT OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR CATS.

WELL MAYBE I'LL HAVE TO START LISTENING TO MYSELF NOW BECAUSE I COULD TALK ABOUT THEM FOR DAYS.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

59. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing? NO.

JR: What about when you are writing a letter?

WELL, YES, JUST THE PERSON I'M WRITING THE LETTER TO. I TEND TO WRITE THE SAME WAY I SPEAK. MY BOSS ACTUALLY TOLD ME THAT MY E-MAILS ARE A BIT TOO DIRECT. CAUSE THAT'S THE WAY I SPEAK. I JUST GET TO THE POINT AND SAY WHAT I HAVE TO SAY.

I DON'T WRITE LETTERS TO PEOPLE. I SEND E-MAILS TO MY FRIENDS. I JUST SAY WHAT I HAVE TO SAY I DON'T TRY TO MAKE THEM FEEL GOOD.

JR: What about school papers?

AUDIENCE IS THE PROFESSOR. I MAY HAVE SHOWED A FEW PAPERS TO CAT. I WASN'T THINKING ABOUT ANYONE READING THEM EXCEPT YOU.

JR: Did you visualize me, the professor, when you wrote the papers?

I WOULD VISUALIZE WHAT YOU WOULD SAY ABOUT CERTAIN THINGS. OH NO, SHE'S NOT GOING TO LIKE THAT SO DELETE.

JR: Was that inhibiting?

ONLY IF I WAS STUCK FOR AN IDEA. IF IT WAS COMING AND I WAS HAVING A GOOD TIME THEN NO; BUT IF I WAS STUCK THEN IT WOULD BE INHIBITING. BUT IF IT WAS FLOWING THEN I DIDN'T CARE. I LIKED IT.

JR: In the film class, do you imagine this professor?

NOW I DO. NOW I'M STARING AT A BLANK PIECE OF PAPER. I'VE BEEN INTIMIDATED TO THE POINT WHERE I CANNOT WRITE.

60. If yes, who/what makes up this audience?

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

61. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.]

62. Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing?

63. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then? NO.

[JR: But in our class you were part of the audience and you were having a conversation with yourself with these papers.

OH YEAH, I DO THAT ALL OF THE TIME. I WILL HAVE WHOLE CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHER PEOPLE IN MY HEAD]

64. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this?

YES BECAUSE YOU HAD ENCOURAGED US TO POST OUR PAPERS TO BLACKBOARD SO OTHERS COULD READ THEM AND EVEN MAKE COMMENTS. I NEVER POSTED ANY PAPERS. I WASN'T INTERESTED IN WHAT ANYONE ELSE WAS DOING. I REMEMBER YOU TELLING US THAT THE PROF. WAS NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO WAS GOING TO BE READING THESE PAPERS AND THERE WAS A GREAT UPROAR ABOUT THAT. WE WANTED TO KNOW THAT WHAT WE WERE DOING WAS CORRECT AND WE DIDN'T FEEL THAT SO AND SO COULD TELL US IF WHAT WE WERE DOING WAS CORRECT. WE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WAS RIGHT AND WHAT WAS WRONG AND YOU WERE OUR GUIDE.

JR: Does having an audience make you feel that you have something to say?

YES.

JR: And without that you wouldn't be writing this paper.

NO I WOULD NOT.

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

65. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34. YES. I HAD A LETTER PUBLISHED. I WROTE A LETTER TO BILLBOARD MAGAZINE IN THE LATE 80S ABOUT THE NOMINATIONS FOR THE AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS. AND THEY PUBLISHED THAT LETTER.

66. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?

67. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain? IT MADE ME HAPPY AND GLEEFUL. WHEN I WROTE IT IT WAS NOT WITH THE INTENT FOR THEM TO PUBLISH IT.

68. Did it change any part of your writing process? NO.

69. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed? NO.

70. Did it change your understanding of audience? I THINK AT THE TIME I DIDN'T HAVE ANY UNDERSTANDING OF AUDIENCE.

JR: then who were you writing it to?

I WROTE IT TO ONE PERSON.

JR: did it make you want to write more?

LETTERS OF COMPLAINT, YES.

JR:

71. Did it change your relationship to reading?

72. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?

NO.

73. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]

NO.

74. Would you like to have a piece of writing published?

75. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing?

Would it make you a writer?

Would it make you an author?

76. What if I published one of your papers? Would that make you an author or a writer? A WRITER, I SUPPOSE, BECAUSE IT HAS TO DO WITH SCHOOL.

77. What if we as a class published a book? Would that make you an author or a writer? I WOULD THINK OF MYSELF AS A WRITER, NOT AS AN AUTHOR.

JR: would that be interesting to you?

SURE, WHY NOT (ENTHUSIASTICALLY)

78. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique?

I LIKED THE THREE THAT I DID FOR YOUR CLASS. THE ODYSSEY AND SHAKESPEARE AND ZNH. I DID LIKE THOSE.

79. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain.

I WAS JUST HAPPY THAT I COMPLETED THEM AND THAT I GOT A POSITIVE RESPONSE. THAT WAS A BOOST TO MY EGO.

I ENJOYED THE TOPICS. I ENJOYED THE BOOKS.

80. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

A GREAT DEAL OF THOUGHT WENT INTO BOTH OF THEM. A GREAT DEAL OF THOUGHT HAD GONE IN TO WHAT I HAD WANTED TO COME FROM THE NOMINATIONS AND FOR THE PAPERS I WROTE IN YOUR CLASS I SPENT A LOT OF TIME ON THEM. AND I DID THEM BECAUSE I WANTED TO BE PLEASED AND I WANTED TO PLEASE YOU. I DON'T WANT TO LET YOU DOWN, WHICH IS A REFLECTION OF MYSELF. IT IS MY OWN EGO.

EDITING E-MAILS AND PAPERS IS A SIMILAR PROCESS. THAT DOESN'T SOUND RIGHT, WHAT'S A BETTER WAY TO SAY THAT.

81. Is the quality of the writing in this piece different from other things you have written? If yes, how?

82. Did you imagine an audience for this piece of writing?

83. Were you a part of the audience you imagined for this piece of writing? YES, I SUPPOSE I WAS. I REALLY HATE SHOWING MY PAPERS TO PEOPLE BECAUSE I DON'T TAKE CRITICISM WELL. I GUESS I HAVE TO BE MY

OWN AUDIENCE I HAVE TO BE COMFORTABLE WITH WHAT I'VE WRITTEN. I WILL NOT SHOW YOU MY PAPER. I KEEP IT VERY CLOSE TO MY CHEST. YOU KNOW HOW SOME PEOPLE WANT EVERYONE TO READ THEIR PAPERS.

84. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

THE HAND I FAN WITH. AFTER I READ THAT BOOK, I DID HAVE A WISH TO WRITE. IT WAS VIVID AND FUNNY.

I THINK BECAUSE I HAVE ALL OF THESE THINGS IN MY HEAD, I GUESS IS IF COULD GET OVER MY FEAR OF REJECTION THEN I COULD WRITE THEM DOWN.

[IS THERE ANY WAY THAT YOU CAN TELL YOURSELF A STORY ABOUT BEING A WRITER?]

NO, I GUESS I NEVER HAVE. BUT I DON'T SEE WHY I COULDN'T START. I FANTASIZE ABOUT OTHER THINGS, WHY NOT FANTASIZE ABOUT THAT!

[CLAUDIA THEN TELLS A VERY VIVID STORY ABOUT HER COUSIN WHO HAS MET BRAD PITT AT A PARTY AND HOW SHE IMAGINES HER COUSIN CALLING HER TO ASK HER TO COME TO THE PARTY TO MEET BRAD PITT. SHE THEN TELLS A VERY MEMORABLE STORY ABOUT HER COUSIN AT THE PARTY AND HOW SHE HAS HAD HER PICTURE TAKEN WITH BRAD PITT ONLY TO FIND THAT THE CAMERA WASN'T WORKING, SO THEN WAITED AN HOUR TO GO BACK AND GET UP THE NERVE TO ASK FOR ANOTHER PICTURE, WHICH PITT GRACIOUSLY AGREED TO, AND, IN FACT, INSISTED ON MAKING SURE THAT THEY FIND A CAMERA THAT WORKED!]

Daniel

Highest Degree Earned: [[how it is that one begins writing//how it is that one has something to say]] GED. WENT TO HS IN LONG ISLAND. STATE UNIVERSITY AT PURCHASE FOR ONE SEMESTER.

Years Enrolled in College Courses: SPRING, 2003 BEGAN AT CWE.

Age: 42

Gender: M

Student's Educational Background: PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: NO COMP AT PURCHASE.

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction: TOOK A COMPOSITION CLASS AT NEW SCHOOL WITH MY WIFE IN EARLY 1990s. WANTED TO STIR MY CREATIVITY. I WASN'T DOING ANYTHING FORMALLY ACADEMICALLY.

Occupation: SECURITY JOB. LINCOLN TOWERS.

Years at Current Job: 23 YEARS

Types of Writing Performed at Job: SECURITY INCIDENT REPORTS. DAILY OCCURRENCE. ALSO COPY EDIT AND ENTER REPORTS WRITTEN BY OTHER GUARDS WHO HAVE VARYING DEGREES OF LITERACY. BOSS HAS ASKED DAVID TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS. CURRENT BOSS IS NOT PARTICULARLY LITERATE AND SPEAKS LIKE SOMEONE ON A COP SHOW AND WRITES THAT WAY TOO.

Ethnicity/Family Background: BORN IN MANHATTAN. LIVED IN QUEENS TO 6TH GRADE THEN MOVED TO MERRICK, LI, UNTIL 17. WHITE/JEWISH.

Home Language(s): ENGLISH

Parents' Occupations: FATHER: JOURNALIST FOR INSURANCE PUBLICATION. MOTHER: REHABILITATION COUNSELLOR FOR BLIND AND HANDICAP.

Parents' Educational Background: BOTH PARENTS HAVE B.A.; MOTHER HAS M.A. AT HOFSTRA.; TWO SISTERS, OLDER SISTER IS A HOMEMAKER WITH THREE CHILDREN. YOUNGER SISTER HAS TWO CHILDREN AND HAS A GRADUATE DEGREE IN REHABILITATION THERAPY AND WORKS AT NYU.

Literacy Narrative: History and Current Definitions

1. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

WORDS? LITERATURE LITERATURE LITERATE. WRITER. BOOK

How do you define the term author?

SOMEBODY WHO WRITES BOOKS

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.) PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

2. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

WAITER/WAITRESS. SIMILAR WORDS TO AUTHOR.

How do you define the term writer?

MUCH MORE BROADLY, SOMEBODY WHO WRITES ANYTHING. IT IS A SELF-DEFINITION.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

3. Do you consider yourself an author?

NO.

4. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

5. If no, why not?

I'VE ONLY WRITTEN SHORTER PIECES. BASICALLY EVERYTHING I'VE WRITTEN HAS BEEN ASSIGNED EXCEPT FOR WHEN I WAS YOUNG. WHEN I WAS YOUNGER I DID WRITE.

What would make you an author?

HAVING COMPLETED A BOOK.

6. Do you consider yourself a writer?

YES. Always? Um, WHEN I WAS YOUNGER I DID, THEN THERE CAME A TIME WHEN I NO LONGER DID BECAUSE I WASN'T ABLE TO WRITE. I TRIED TO DO SO BUT... THEN WHEN I RETURNED TO SCHOOL, I DID AGAIN.

7. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

8. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?

9. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities?

I GENERALLY ASSOCIATE AUTHORS WITH SOMEBODY WHO HAS A PUBLISHED WORK BUT NOT ALWAYS. I ASSOCIATE AUTHORS WITH LARGER WORK. A WRITER IS SOMEBODY WHO WRITES FOR ANY REASON, FOR PLEASURE, POETRY, SHORT FICTION, MEMOIR, OBSERVATION.

If you write a letter are you a writer? NO

10. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write?

YES. MY PARENTS, TEACHERS. FRIENDS.

11. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author?

YES YES LOTS OF PEOPLE SAID I SHOULD WRITE A BOOK. AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL OR JUST A BOOK. NOBODY IN MY FAMILY ENCOURAGED ME TO WRITE A BOOK, THEY JUST ENCOURAGED ME TO WRITE.

12. Do you remember anyone reading to you when you were very young?

BOTH MY PARENTS READ TO ME; MY MOTHER TAUGHT ME HOW TO READ.

13. What is your earliest memory involving writing?

WHEN I WAS IN KINDERGARTEN OR NURSERY SCHOOL, WE WOULD FOLD UP CONSTRUCTION PAPER AND MAKE BOOKS AND I WAS A LITTLE MORE GIFTED AT FORMING WORDS AND I WOULD MAKE LITTLE BOOKS WITH PICTURES AND STORIES. WHEN I WAS IN GRADE SCHOOL I STARTED WRITING STORIES. AT CAMP WE HAD A NEWSPAPER AND I WROTE FOR THE NEWSPAPER. IT WAS A CAMP CALLED ABELARD. MY PARENTS WERE PROGRESSIVE.

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

14. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.

YES. I CAN DO IT. I CAN COMPLETE WORK. BEFORE I ATTENDED COLLEGE, I WOULD START STORIES, WRITE NOTES FOR STORIES AND NEVER FOLLOW THROUGH. SINCE I'VE BEEN IN COLLEGE I COMPLETE WORKS AND HAVE MUCH MORE CONFIDENCE IN MY ABILITIES. I'VE GOTTEN A LOT OF GOOD FEEDBACK ON IT AS WELL.

15. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain.

I WOULD SAY SO. I WOULD SAY SO. THE LONGER ACADEMIC PIECES EXPANDED MY ABILITIES AS AN ACADEMIC WRITER THE SHORTER PIECES I WAS ABLE TO HAVE FUN WITH. A LIGHT TONE, MAKE A POINT. I WAS OCCASIONALLY FRUSTRATED BY REVISIONS REQUESTED. I TRIED TO FOCUS ON THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE TO WRITE NOT WHAT YOU WANT BUT ON THE ASSIGNMENT.

16. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

WELL, I FOUND ZNH A LITTLE INTIMIDATING. I THOUGHT IT WAS SUCH AN AMAZING PIECE, SOMETHING THAT WOULD BE BEYOND MY CAPABILITIES IN SCOPE. BUT YEAH, DEFINITELY, THE BOOKS EXCITED ME. THEY DID NOT INTIMIDATE ME. I WAS JUST AWED BY ZNH.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

17. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing?

NOT REALLY, NO.

You're writing an e-mail: I'M MY AUDIENCE.

Academic paper: YES, I TRY TO ANTICIPATE WHAT THE PROFESSOR EXPECTS FROM THE PIECE. AND I HAVE TO SATISFY MYSELF.

Do you visualize an audience?: NO. [not for stories, not at job]

18. If yes, who/what makes up this audience?

THE PROFESSOR IS THE AUDIENCE FOR AN ACADEMIC ESSAY AND I TRY TO ANTICIPATE WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AND THE POINTS THAT ARE EXPECTED AND STYLISTICALLY AS WELL. BUT IN TERMS OF THE OVERALL PIECE I HAVE TO SATISFY MYSELF AND THE PROFESSOR.

Do you imagine a bifurcation of yourself when you are a part of this audience? NO, IT IS THE SAME PERSON.

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

THERE IS AN AUDIENCE FOR THINGS AT WORK BECAUSE THOSE COULD BE READ IN A COURT OF LAW...NO, NO, IF I INCLUDE MYSELF, EVERYTHING HAS AN AUDIENCE.

19. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.]

IT SETS A BAR THAT I HAVE TO ACHIEVE. I DON'T WANT TO HAND IN A FIRST DRAFT THAT I WOULD BE EMBARRASSED BY OR CONSIDER SUBSTANDARD OR NOT CONSIDER INTERESTING. I WANT IT TO BE INTERESTING.

Where does that criteria come from?: I TRY TO MAKE IT INTERESTING FOR THE PROFESSOR; I'M CONSCIOUS OF THE FACT THAT THEY ARE READING LOTS OF PAPERS AND I WANT TO STAND OUT A BIT.

20. Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing?

21. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then?

22. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this?

YES. BECAUSE, THE LARGER PIECES WERE MORE FOCUSED TOWARDS ACADEMIC WRITING SO I WAS GOING FOR DIFFERENT THINGS. IT WAS LESS WRITING IDEAS IN MY HEAD AND MORE ABOUT FRAMING AN ARGUMENT AND BACKING IT UP RATHER THAN JUST EXPRESSING OPINIONS. IN THE SHORTER PIECES I TRIED TO WRITE SOMETHING INTERESTING AND AMUSING. THE AUDIENCE WOULD HAVE BEEN THE PROFESSOR AND MYSELF. I WAS TRYING TO WRITE SOMETHING THAT WOULDN'T BE SENT BACK. KEEPING FOCUSED ON MY MAIN ARGUMENT. LEFT TO MYSELF I WOULD BE LEFT TO DIGRESS WITH LOTS OF PARENTHETICAL ASIDES.

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

23. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34.

NO, I CAME CLOSE. I HAD A STORY I WROTE PUBLISHED IN THE ALBANY STUDENT PRESS IN THE 1980s. I HAD BEEN CORRESPONDING WITH A FRIEND AND HE ASKED ME TO WRITE A PIECE ABOUT MY EXPERIENCES IN THE MILITARY. MY EXPERIENCES OF BASIC TRAINING. IT WASN'T VERY GOOD. I PROCRASTINATED.

HE REALLY ENJOYED THE LETTERS I WAS SENDING HIM AND HALF THE PEOPLE AT MY HIGH SCHOOL WENT TO SUNY SCHOOLS AND HE THOUGHT IT WAS INTERESTING THAT I WENT TO THE MILITARY WHICH WAS UNUSUAL FOR MY DEMOGRAPHIC. WHEN I GOT DISCHARGED HE WANTED TO PUBLISH MY LETTERS IN HIS PAPER, WHICH WAS AROUND THE TIME I WAS DISCHARGED.

24. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?

25. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain?

NO BECAUSE I DIDN'T THINK MUCH OF THE PIECE. THE FACT THAT I WASN'T ABLE TO RISE TO THE OCCASION MIGHT HAVE DISCOURAGED ME.

I IMAGINED MYSELF BEING A WRITER IN A WAY THAT I IMAGINED MYSELF PLAYING SHORT STOP FOR THE METS. THERE CAME A POINT WHERE I DIDN'T REALLY THINK IT WAS FEASIBLE.

26. Did it change any part of your writing process?

27. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed?

NO.

28. Did it change your understanding of audience?

NO. LIKE I SAID I WASN'T VERY HAPPY WITH THE PIECE. MY FRIEND WAS ALSO A LITTLE DISAPPOINTED BECAUSE I PUT IT OFF AND IT DIDN'T HAVE THE SPONTANEITY OR THE CLEVERNESS OR THE FLOW OF THE LETTERS I HAD WRITTEN. DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO ADVANCE MY OPINION OF MYSELF AS A WRITER. [[FRIEND BECAME A JOURNALIST]]

29. Did it change your relationship to reading?

30. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?

31. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]

32. Would you like to have a piece of writing published?

YES

33. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing?

YES

Would it make you a writer?

YES

Would it make you an author?

IT WOULD DEPEND ON WHAT IT WAS. IF I HAD A PIECE PUBLISHED IN A JOURNAL OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT, MAYBE NOT. IT WOULD DEPEND ON THE LENGTH OF THE PUBLICATION OR THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PUBLICATION OR THE LENGTH OF THE WORK OR THE SCOPE OF THE WORK.

Do you feel like you have something original to say?: MAYBE UNIQUE. PROBABLY NOT ORIGINAL.

34. What if I published one of your papers? Would that make you an author or a writer?

GREAT.

35. What if we as a class published a book ? Would that make you an author or a writer?

THAT WOULD BE GREAT. I THOUGHT THERE WERE SOME VERY GOOD WRITERS IN THAT CLASS. IT WOULD NOT MAKE ME AN AUTHOR. IT WOULD MAKE ME A WRITER.

36. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique?

SOME OF THE SHORT FICTION I DID. A COUPLE SHORT STORIES THAT WERE SEMI-AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL. I ENJOYED THE MACBETH PIECE FOR OUR HUMANITIES CLASS.

37. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain.

38. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

39. Is the quality of the writing in this piece different from other things you have written? If yes, how?

SATISFIED MY EXPECTATIONS MORE.

Do you look at them?: YES

40. Did you imagine an audience for this piece of writing?

THE ACADEMIC PIECES THAT I WROTE, THE PROFESSOR, AND MY WIFE, I SHOULDN'T HAVE LEFT HER OUT, SHE IS ALWAYS A MEMBER. THE FICTION PIECES GENERALLY THERE'S THE CHANCE THAT I'D HAVE TO PRESENT THEM TO THE CLASS SO THE SENSE OF AUDIENCE IS EXPANDED.

Do you think if we had read our papers aloud, would that have expanded the audience?: PROBABLY SO.

41. Were you a part of the audience you imagined for this piece of writing?

42. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

IS IT FUNNY IS IT AMUSING IS IT INTERESTING.

A LOT OF THEM HAVE BEEN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SO I WANT THE NARRATOR WHO IS LIKABLE.

I THINK IF YOU ARE GOING TO WRITE ANYTHING RELEVANT TO THE HUMAN CONDITION IT HAS TO HAVE SOME HUMOR IN IT, IT HELPS YOU ACCESS YOUR READER MORE.

What happens when you write; what makes you think you have something to say: GENERALLY I DO A LOT OF THINKING BEFORE I PUT ANYTHING ON THE PAGE; AT WORK OR ON THE SUBWAY, I'LL RUMINATE AND SOMETIMES I'LL MAKE CONNECTIONS AWAY FROM THE COMPUTER IN MY HEAD. OFTEN I FIND THOSE CONNECTIONS WHEN I'M NOT WRITING. WHEN I'M AT THE COMPUTER I'M TRYING TO FIND A WAY TO EXPRESS THINGS CLEVERLY. BUT IN TERMS OF HAVING SOMETHING TO SAY, MOST OF MY THINKING OCCURS WHEN I'M NOT AT THE COMPUTER. I'M TRYING TO STRUCTURE THE PIECE WHEN I'M AT THE COMPUTER. ONE OF THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING A SECURITY GUARD IS THAT I HAVE TIME. I EMAIL MYSELF NOTES, HALF OF WHICH I UNDERSTAND. CONNECTIONS DO OCCUR WHEN I'M AT THE COMPUTER OR WHEN I'M READING BACK WHAT I'VE WRITTEN, YOU KNOW, I'LL MAKE CONNECTIONS AND COME UP WITH IDEAS. BUT OFTEN I'VE LET THE THING STEW IN MY HEAD BEFORE I WRITE. I ALMOST THINK OF IT AS TWO DIFFERENT PROCESSES, YOU KNOW. ESPECIALLY IF IT IS AN ACADEMIC PIECE AND I'M TRYING TO EXPRESS A VIEWPOINT OR AN OPINION.

Does it come to you? I HAVE A LOT OF INTERNAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN MYSELF AND MYSELF. OR BETWEEN MYSELF AND SOMEONE WHO IS QUESTIONING MY POINT OF VIEW. BUT YEAH, A LOT OF MY IDEAS ARE; THERE ARE FLASHES OF INSIGHT AT THE COMPUTER.

Beofre you start writing, do you have to have articulated something to yourself?: NO. I HAVE THE IDEAS MARINATE IN MY HEAD AND I ARTICULATE THEM AT THE COMPUTER.

And then you expand them, you learn from our writing: YEAH. WHEN I'M TRYING TO BACK IT UP. SOMETIMES CONNECTIONS WILL OCCUR TO ME THAT HAVEN'T OCCURRED PREVIOUSLY. MY ARGUMENT IS REFINED BUT VERY RARELY CHANGED. I TRY TO COME TO IT WITH THE IDEAS FULLY FORMED AND I'LL COME TO IT WITH SENTENCES OR PHRASES THAT I'VE SENT MYSELF IN AN E-MAIL.

John

Highest Degree Earned: H.S., JFK IN BRONX, PS

Years Enrolled in College Courses: CWE=FIRST SCHOOL, FALL, 2002

Age: 27

Gender: M

Student's Educational Background: ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN BRONX; GRADUATED FROM HS ONE YEAR LATE AND EVERYTHING HAS MOMENTUM, LAZINESS HAS ITS MOMENTUM.

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: ENGLISH COMPOSITION IN FALL, 2002 (GLEASON)=GOOD PRIMER FOR WRITING. "THERE'S A LOT OF FEAR WHEN IT COMES TO WRITING AND THAT SORT OF STABILIZES YOUR FEAR. THERE'S A STRUCTURE/FORMAT AND IF YOU FOLLOW THAT YOU'LL BE FINE."

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction: FICTION WORKSHOP (SAVIO)

Occupation: SECURITY OFFICER, CITIGROUP

Years at Current Job: 5 YEARS

Types of Writing Performed at Job: YES. HAVE LOG THAT WE WRITE IN AND TYPE OUT INCIDENT REPORTS AND MEMOS, THINGS OF THAT NATURE, TECHNICAL THINGS. WRITE EVERYDAY AT WORK.

Ethnicity/Family Background: LATINO, BORN NYC; PARENTS BORN IN NYC ALSO

Home Language(s): ENGLISH

Parents' Occupations: MOTHER: NURSE; FATHER: SOCIAL RESEARCH/WORKS AT A SHELTER IN THE VILLAGE NOW AT COLUMBIA PRESBYTERIAN. WORKED FOR BORIQUA RESEARCH INSTITUTUTE. DID ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT INVOLVED STATISTICS, SOCIOLOGICAL THINGS.

Parents' Educational Background: MOTHER: TWO YEARS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE; FATHER GRADUATED FROM CWE AT AGE 50. BOTH WENT TO HS IN NYC. PRIOR TO CWE, WORKED IN NONPROFIT SECTOR AND HAD ONLY A GED BUT HE WAS SO EXPERIENCED THAT POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS WOULD TAKE HIS EXPERIENCE OVER DEGREES.

PARENTS MET IN THE BRONX IN THE MID-70s. FOUR SIBLINGS. EACH PARENT HAS KIDS WITH OTHER PEOPLE. MARIO BORN WHEN J. WAS TEN. PARENTS DIVORCED WHEN J. WAS THREE BUT DAD WAS AROUND TIL 5 OR 6. FATHER STILL IN BRONX AND STILL IN CONTACT. GREW UP WITH BROTHER AND MOTHER IN HOUSEHOLD. THINK ABOUT HOME LIFE IN TWO ERAS: BEFORE MARIO AND AFTER MARIO. WHEN J. IS VERY YOUNG, MOTHER READS TO HIM WHEN HE GOES TO BED.

Literacy Narrative: History and Current Definitions

1. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term? CREATOR.

How do you define the term author? WOW. I DEFINE THE TERM AUTHOR AS JUST A STORYTELLER, BUT A REFINED STORYTELLER, THEY WIDDLE IT DOWN FROM A [INAUD] OF STORIES INTO SOMETHING THAT IS COHESIVE AND HAS A FORMAT.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.) ANYBODY CAN WRITE DOWN A STORY. WHEN I THINK AUTHOR I THINK OF SOMEONE WHO'S PUBLISHED. BECAUSE WE DON'T MAKE OURSELVES AUTHORS. IF I WRITE A PAPER, IT DOESN'T MAKE ME AN AUTHOR. IF IT SAYS HARPER COLLINS ON IT THEN OBVIOUSLY SOMEBODY ELSE THOUGHT IT WAS GOOD ENOUGH TO PUBLISH.

2. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term? WRITER IS SOMETHING ELSE. WRITER IS A COMMUNICATOR WHO CAN CONVEY. FOR SOME REASON, I DON'T CONSIDER NOAM CHOMSKY AN AUTHOR, I CONSIDER HIM A WRITER. HE IS A COMMUNICATOR.

How do you define the term writer? SAME THING. A COMMUNICATOR. SOMEONE WHO IS ABLE TO CONVEY, TO RELATE.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

3. Do you consider yourself an author?

NO. I DON'T THINK THAT I'M THAT REFINED. THAT I'M AT THE POINT WHERE I HAVE THE FORMAT AND THE RULES DOWN ENOUGH. I WAS READING JIM'S BOOK AND THERE WERE THINGS IN THERE, TECHNIQUES HE USES IN THERE TO GET THINGS ACROSS THAT I CAN'T DO.

4. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

5. If no, why not? What would make you an author?

TO DEVELOP THE SKILLS WHERE THEY BECOME SECOND NATURE. SELF-EDITING. TO BECOME MORE OF A PROOFREADER OF MY OWN WORK. TO GET TO THE POINT WHERE I DON'T NEED A PROOFREADER FOR MY WORK. I CAN DO IT MYSELF.

NEW Q: SO WHAT YOU WROTE WAS JUST FINE, IT DIDN'T NEED ANY COMMENTARY. IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?

YEAH. WE ARE ALL GOING TO NEED COMMENTARY. JIM SHOWED ME A PAPER THAT HE SUBMITTED TO AN ANTHOLOGY AND HIS PROOFREADERS WENT ALL THROUGH IT AND KILLED IT. THE MANUSCRIPT HAD A BUNCH OF MARKS ON IT. I TELL JIM THAT I CAN'T DO THIS AND I WON'T BE ABLE TO DO IT LIKE THAT AND HE SAYS IT IS PART OF A PRACTICE, YOU DO OVER AND OVER AGAIN AND THEN YOU REALIZE, I SHOULDN'T SAY THAT, I SHOULD SAY THIS. THAT'S WHAT COMES WITH TIME.

NEW Q: SO [BECOMING AN AUTHOR] IS BECOMING YOUR OWN PROOFREADER.

RIGHT.

6. Do you consider yourself a writer?

I THINK I COULD BE A WRITER. **Are you a writer now?** I'll say yes. Just based of the communication. I'm working on an essay now, a personal essay. **Let's pretend we're at a party and I ask you if you're a writer, would you say yes?** Yeah. Based on my

definition as someone who's able to communicate and convey, in that context, yeah. Based on someone who's been published in the Nyer, then I'd be in trouble.

7. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?) SOMETIMES. I'M A WRITER WHEN THERE'S SOMETHING THAT I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT, THAT I'M ABLE TO WRITE ABOUT.

What about letters or e-mails? NO. FRIENDS OF MINE ACTUALLY COME UP TO ME AND ASK ME TO WRITE LETTERS AND E-MAILS FOR THEM, LIKE A FRIEND OF MINE HAD TO SEND A LETTER TO HIS LANDLORD AND I WROTE IT. A LOT OF TIMES, WE WANT TO SAY SOMETHING, AND HOW DO WE SAY IT, HOW DO WE SAY IT THE **RIGHT** WAY. HE HAD SOME PAPERS AND THINGS BUT I WAS LIKE WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY. SO I WROTE IT IN A LETTER FORMAT AND I REDID IT AND REVISED IT. SO I SAID, LET'S BE SIMPLE ABOUT THIS THERE WAS A LOT OF REDUNDANCY IN IT AND I SAID LET'S GET RID OF THAT. SO THINGS LIKE THAT.

HE TOLD ME WHAT HE WANTED TO SAY. HE SAID, THE PROBLEM IS SUCH AND SUCH AND THE SINK IS... AND THE RENT.... THESE ARE THE ISSUES YOU WANT TO ADDRESS AND WE WRITE IT OUT. OK, I SAID, LET'S WRITE IT OUT.

So there are people in the world who consider you to be a gifted at communicating?

YEAH, AT WORK I DO IT, I HELP FRIENDS WITH E-MAILS. BUT THAT'S ALSO TECHNICAL, TOO, THEY DON'T KNOW HOW TO USE MS WORD AND THEY KNOW I'M IN SCHOOL AND I CAN HELP THEM WITH THAT.

And do you write letters and e-mails to friends?

I WRITE E-MAILS TO FRIENDS. LETTERS NO, NOT SO MUCH ANYMORE. I CAN WRITE LETTERS. THEY ARE USUALLY TO MYSELF. LIKE IN JOURNAL FORM. BUT THEY TAKE PLACE AS LETTERS. THEY ALMOST FEEL LIKE LETTERS BECAUSE IT IS LIKE "TO ME." I DON'T PUT "TO ME," BUT....

8. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?

9. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities?

FOR SOME REASON, I ASSOCIATE AUTHOR WITH FICTION, SOMEBODY WHO'S CREATING SOMETHING WHERE I SEE A WRITER AS SOMEBODY WHO'S INTERPRETING SOMETHING. YOU KNOW, IF YOU CAN WRITE ABOUT FOREIGN POLICY OR ANYTHING. STEPHEN KING I THINK

AUTHOR. WHEN I THINK WRITER I THINK DAVID HALBERSTAM, SEYMOUR HERSCH, NOAM CHOMSKY, HOWARD ZINN.

Do you think of authors as fiction writers because that is something you'd like to do? You'd like to publish a book of fiction? YEAH, SURE, SURE. BUT I JUST SEE THEM AS CREATORS OF SOMETHING THAT'S NOT REAL.

What if they're writing autobiography? THEN THAT'S DIFFERENT, THEN THEY ARE WRITERS. ANYTHING NON FICTION.

10. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write? YES. TEACHERS IN HS. I HAD AN ENGLISH TEACHER IN HS. WE WERE STUDYING OEDIPUS AND SHE LIKED IT AND SAID I WAS A GOOD WRITER AND ENCOURAGED ME TO WRITE.

NOT IN GRADE SCHOOL.

I WOULD SAY THE NORMAL PARENT ENCOURAGEMENT. NOTHING LIKE YOU SHOULD MAKE A CAREER OUT OF THIS.

YES, THERE WERE MANY BOOKS IN THE HOUSE. MY MOTHER'S BOOKS WERE THESE BIG NURSING BOOKS. ENCYCLOPEDIAS. OF COURSE, DR. SEUSS.

11. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author? NO. WHAT I HEAR MORE THAN ANYTHING IS PEOPLE ENCOURAGING ME TO BE A STANDUP COMEDIAN.

12. Do you remember anyone reading to you when you were very young? YES. MY MOTHER READ TO ME. **DO YOU REMEMBER WHO TAUGHT YOU HOW TO READ?** COMBINATION OF MY MOTHER AND MY KINDERGARTEN TEACHER. I REMEMBER ONE THING THAT WAS CONSIDERED IMPRESSIVE WAS I BEGAN WRITING MY NAME AT 4 CAUSE IT WAS DIFFICULT, THE J AND THE A. I WENT TO KIND. CLASS AND THE TEACHER WAS MAKING NAMETAGS FOR US AND SHE OFFERED TO WRITE IT AND I SAID "NO, NO, I'LL DO IT." I REMEMBER SEEING MY OLDER BROTHER READING, LOOKING AT THE BOOK AND IT WAS GIBBERISH.

FAVORITE BOOK: THERE ARE ROCKS IN MY SOCKS SAID THE OX TO THE FOX, GREEN EGGS AND HAM

13. What is your earliest memory involving writing?

WRITING MY NAME AT 4 YEARS OLD, 1982.

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

14. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.

ABSOLUTELY. I SEE THAT THERE'S A FORMAT TO IT THAT NEEDS TO BE RESPECTED AND IT'S NOT A FORMAT IN THE SENSE THAT IT'S TRYING TO STIFLE YOU, YOU KNOW, YOU'RE TRYING TO PUT SHAKLES ON ME. BUT IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING THAT'S RAW AND PUT IT THROUGH A FORMAT I THINK THAT YOUR MESSAGE GETS ACROSS A LOT BETTER. THAT'S WHY WE HAVE FORMATS AND WHY WE TALK ABOUT THIS IN THIS PARAGRAPH AND NOT IN THIS PARAGRAPH .

I DID NOT KNOW THIS IN HS IN THE WAY I HAVE LEARNED IT HERE. IN HS YOU LEARN INTRO, BODY, CONCLUSION. WE WEREN'T TAUGHT TECHNICAL THINGS LIKE QUOTING SOURCES. HERE, WE GO THROUGH THE THEME OF YOUR PAPER AND GETTING IT ACROSS. THERE IT WAS VERY FORMULAIC. I MEAN IT IS FORMULAIC, BUT IT WAS DRILLED INTO US, INTRO, BODY, CONCLUSION, INTRO, BODY, CONCLUSION. YOU KNOW, IT DIDN'T HAVE ANY LIFE. WE FOLLOWED THE FORMAT BUT...

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ANYONE HAS SAID TO YOU ABOUT WRITING?

GLEASON SAID COMING INTO CLASS WITHOUT YOUR PAPER LOOKED OVER AND REVISED IS LIKE COMING INTO CLASS DIRTY, WITH YOUR CLOTHES DISHELVELED. THERE ARE TIMES THAT I'VE PRINTED PAPERS AT HOME AND READ THEM ON THE TRAIN AND FOUND MISTAKES. STUFF LIKE THAT. I FEEL BAD ABOUT THAT. I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO REVISE YOUR WORK. BUT WE DON'T HAVE TIME. THAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS.

15. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain.

YES, CONTRIBUTED TO IDENTITY AS A WRITER. FIRST OF ALL, WITH THE SHAKESPEARE AND USING SHAKESPEAREAN QUOTES. THAT WAS INTERESTING. WHEN WE QUOTE S. WE HAD TO QUOTE THE LINES AS THEY WERE IN THE PLAY. IT WAS SOMETHING NEW. I FOUND IT DIFFICULT. WRITING ABOUT S. AND THE ODYSSEY, ANY LITERARY THING, YOU HAVE TO GET INTO THE HEADS OF THE CHARACTERS. SOMETIMES I PRAY FOR SOMETHING TECHNICAL. BUT YOU ASK ME TO WRITE A PAPER

ABOUT WHAT MACBETH WAS THINKING AND YOU REALLY HAVE TO GET INTO THEIR HEAD.

WHAT IS YOUR WRITING PROCESS LIKE? I DID THIS TECHNIQUE CALLED CLUSTERING. I WRITE MACBETH IN THE MIDDLE AND WRITE A CIRCLE AROUND IT. AMBITION. LADY MACBETH. EVERYTHING I WANT TO SAY IN THE PAPER I PUT ON THAT SHEET. THEN ON ANOTHER SHEET OF PAPER I MAKE AN OUTLINE. THESIS IS COMPOSED IN MY HEAD. IMMEDIATELY WHEN THE ASSIGNMENT IS GIVEN TO ME I START THINKING ABOUT IT. THESIS STATEMENTS CAN BE CONFINING AT TIMES. SOME PEOPLE SAY YOU SHOULD WRITE YOUR THESIS STATEMENT LAST. I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT. INITIALLY, IT SHOULD BE VERY LOOSE, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO RIGID ABOUT IT. IT IS A GUIDELINE, WHERE ARE YOU GOING WITH THIS. IF YOU SAID, HOW DOES MACBETH RESPOND TO X OR Y, IT GIVES YOU A SENSE OF WHAT YOU'RE WRITING ABOUT.

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT SHAKESPEARE? S. IS TIMELESS. WE CAN ALL RELATE TO IT. SOME SAY S.'S PLAYS WERE LIKE THE FIRST SOAP OPERAS.

DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE SOMETHING ORIGINAL TO SAY ABOUT IT? DO YOU KNOW WHAT MAKES IT ORIGINAL, IT IS MY INTERPRETATION OF IT.
THE FACT THAT I'M INTERPRETING IT, THAT MAKES IT ORIGINAL.

THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING TO SAY. THINK ABOUT IT. WHEN STUDENTS CLAMOUR DOWN AND GET SCARED ABOUT WHERE AM I GOING TO FIND MATERIAL, THERE'S ALWAYS MATERIAL. IF I SAT HERE BY MYSELF I'D COME UP WITH SOMETHING. MY DAD, MY MOM, TEACHERS. THERE'S ALWAYS POSSIBILITIES. THERE'S ALWAYS OPTIONS.

16. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

THEY INSPIRED ME TO WRITE. MACBETH. NOT WRITE A PLAY, IT GOT MY JUICES FLOWING AS FAR AS THE PERIOD, THE CHARACTER. I WANTED TO ACT AFTER THAT. I WANTED TO SEE THE ORSON WELLES VERSION OF THE PLAY. ALL THE BOOKS WERE GOOD. ODYSSEY I REALLY LIKED. I FELT IT WAS THE PRECURSER TO RELIGION AS FAR AS THE MYTHS ARE CONCERNED. THE WHOLE IDEA OF SOMEONE COMING BACK HOME. I SAW TROY, I DIDN'T LIKE IT, BUT I COULD IDENTIFY THE CHARACTERS AND KNOW WHAT THE BATTLE WAS ABOUT.

DID IT MAKE YOU WANT TO WRITE A STORY ABOUT RETURNING HOME?

YES, IN A MODERN VERSION. I DIDN'T WRITE ONE, BUT IT MADE ME WANT TO. ONE IDEA I HAD WAS ABOUT THE DIASPORA OF PEOPLE, OF

CARRIBBEAN PEOPLE, I WANT TO WRITE ABOUT A GUY FROM P.R. IN THE 40S AND HE TRIES TO DO BETTER BUT HE GETS CAUGHT UP IN DRUGS AND STUFF. YOU GET CAUGHT UP IN THE PERVERTED SIDE OF THE AMERICAN DREAM. AND WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THIS CHARACTER GOES HOME. LIKE ODYSSEUS GOES HOME.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

17. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing?

YES I DO.

18. If yes, who/what makes up this audience?

IT IS PEOPLE MY AGE. IF IT IS NONFICTION WRITING, IT IS TO ANYBODY. IF IT IS FICTION, IT IS PEOPLE I GREW UP WITH, PEOPLE IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD, CLASSMATES.

DO YOU VISUALIZE THEM?

YES, I DO. I WAS TELLING JIM THAT SOMETHING I DO IS SAYING WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE PEOPLE FEEL THIS [FROM MY WRITER]. MAYBE THAT'S NOT GOOD. MAYBE THAT'S MECHANICAL. JIM WAS SAYING THAT...CAUSE, YOU CAN'T SAY, I WANT TO BE POWERFUL HERE, THAT DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT TO ME, YOU JUST DO IT NATURALLY. SOMETIMES I'M READING A BOOK, LIKE T.M. AND IT JUST TOUCHES ME AND I DON'T THINK SHE TRIED HARD TO GET OUT, I THINK SHE JUST DID IT, LIKE IT'S NATURAL. I DON'T WANT IT TO BE LIKE, NOW, I'LL MAKE THE MOTHER DIE HERE, I'LL DO A SO THEY'LL FEEL B.

AND AT WORK?

THE AUDIENCE FOR IS USUALLY MY SUPERVISORS, MY MANAGERS, CO-WORKERS. IT DEPENDS WHO IT IS. WITH CERTAIN CO-WORKERS I'LL BE FUNNY IN AN E-MAIL. I'D NEVER DO THAT WITH ONE OF MY SUPERIORS.

AND AT SCHOOL?

THE AUDIENCE IS THE PROFESSOR. BUT IT IS ALSO FOR MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY. THEY READ MY PAPERS. IF IT IS AN A PAPER. I WROTE A PAPER IN 2003 FOR PROF. FELDSTEIN AND IT WAS AN A PAPER AND I GAVE IT TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS GOOD WORK.

WRITING THE PAPER I IMAGINE THE PROFESSOR BUT I ALSO IMAGINE THAT I'M WORKING AT TIME MAGAZINE OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. THAT IT IS HIGH QUALITY AND IT CAN BE CONVEYED TO ANYBODY. I TRY TO PUT MYSELF AT A HIGH LEVEL AND GET MYSELF TO A POINT WHERE I CAN WRITE THE PAPER.

AND DO YOU IMAGINE YOURSELF AS PART OF THE AUDIENCE?

YEAH. WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT SOME OF THE GREAT ESSAYS THAT WE READ, AND I LEAN OF COURSE TOWARDS THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL, LIKE DO YOU EVER READ SOMETHING AND SAY, "WOW." I WROTE A PAPER ON 9/11 AND IT'S LIKE I'M WRITING THAT AND I WANT—I MEAN WE HAVE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THIS, WE'VE HAD SOME GREAT CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THIS BUT HOW DO I PUT THEM ON PAPER? I TRY BUT SOMETIMES I CAN'T GET IT THE WAY I DID BECAUSE I CAN'T GET THE STRUCTURE. WHEN YOU HAVE CONVERSATIONS, THEY'RE ALL OVER THE PLACE. BUT YOU CAN'T DO THAT IN WRITING. HOW DO YOU ENCAPSULATE SOMETHING SO RAW?

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

19. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.]

AT WORK: IT CHANGES IT IN ONE WAY, I PAY MORE ATTENTION TO SPELLING AND FORMAT. YOU DON'T WANT TO SEND AN E-MAIL TO A SUPERVISOR IN WHICH YOU MISPELLED SOMETHING. IT'S AN ISSUE OF YOU LOOKING BAD. SOMETIMES, I'LL CUT AND PASTE WHAT IS IN THE E-MAIL TO MS WORD BECAUSE E-MAIL DOESN'T PICK EVERYTHING UP. I GO OVER IT AND OVER IT AN OVER IT. I DON'T GO OVER MY ACADEMIC ESSAYS IN THE SAME WAY BECAUSE FOR SOME REASON, I DON'T SEE THE SITUATION BEING AS DIRE FOR SOME REASON. IF THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE PAPER, THE PROFESSOR WILL LET ME KNOW; IF IT'S FOR MY SUPERVISOR IT SEEMS WORSE TO ME.

WHAT ABOUT HUMOR/TONE?: I SENT AN E-MAIL TO SOME CO-WORKERS LAST NIGHT AND I WOULD NEVER DO THAT WITH A SUPERVISOR.

WHAT ABOUT RHETORICAL STRATEGIES?: YES, I AM. IF YOU'RE WRITING A PAPER ABOUT ANYTHING POLITICAL OR SOCIAL, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE PEOPLE WHO DISAGREE WITH YOU AND YOU WANT TO ADDRESS SOME OF THE ISSUES RAISED BY THOSE WHO MIGHT DISAGREE WITH YOU.

DID YOU WANT TO BE A WRITER? NO. WHEN I WAS GROWING UP I WANTED TO BE A BASEBALL PLAYER. THEN A FIREMAN. I HAD TALENT AT BASEBALL, BUT IT WASN'T DEVELOPED. I'M HAPPY NOW BECAUSE I'VE BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP MY INTELLECT.

20. Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing?

BECAME AN ISSUE IN COLLEGE. BEFORE THAT I HAD NO CONCEPT OF AUDIENCE, I BASICALLY SAID I'M DOING THIS FOR THE TEACHER. IN COLLEGE, I REALIZED THAT BEYOND THE PROFESSOR—WHAT'S THAT BOOK, CITY AT THE CENTER—I REALIZED THAT THERE WERE OTHER PEOPLE WHO WILL READ YOUR WORK AND IF YOUR NAME IS ATTACHED TO THIS IT IS AN ARTISTIC REPRESENTATION OF YOURSELF.

DO YOU FEEL THERE IS SOME PURPOSE IN WRITING ACADEMIC PAPERS? YOU MEAN OUTSIDE OF PASSING THE CLASS? YES, I DO. YOU CAN SHARPEN UP COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND ARGUMENT SKILLS, LOGIC, THOUGHT PROCESSES, AS WELL AS HELPING YOU WRITE.

21. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then? YES.

THE INTERESTING THING IS THAT THERE IS LESS PASSION INVOLVED CAUSE I DON'T CARE ABOUT SENDING AN E-MAIL TO MY BOSS. BUT IN TERMS OF HOW IT IS GOING TO LOOK ON ME, YOU KNOW IF I MISSPELL SOMETHING OR GET THE FORMAT WRONG OR USE A COLON WRONG, IT'S SCARY.

22. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this? YEAH, IT STARTED BEFORE THAT BUT IT WAS REINFORCED. I WOULD TALK TO PEOPLE IN THE CLASS AND I WANTED MY PAPER TO BE GOOD TOO AND I WOULD THINK WHAT IF THEY WERE READING IT, "WHAT IF DAVID WERE READING IT?" AISHA, LORI, WHOEVER? IT IS NOT TO BE COMPETITIVE, IT IS JUST THAT WHAT IF THE REST OF THE CLASS IS AT A CERTAIN LEVEL AND YOU'RE NOT. THERE'S A LOT OF MECHANICS IN COLLEGE. THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE IN SCHOOL WHO ARE HERE BECAUSE THEY WANT A PROMOTION. I HAVE A PASSION FOR EDUCATION.

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

23. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34.

NO. UNFORTUATELY NOT. I'M GOING TO WORK ON THAT THOUGH.

24. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?

25. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain?

26. Did it change any part of your writing process?

27. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed?

28. Did it change your understanding of audience?

29. Did it change your relationship to reading?

30. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?

31. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]

32. Would you like to have a piece of writing published? ABSOLUTELY, IF IT WAS GOOD ENOUGH.

33. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing? ABSOLUTELY.

Would it make you a writer? YES.

Would it make you an author? YES. UMM. NO, NOT YET. NOT UNTIL SIMON AND SCHUSTER COME KNOCKING AT THE DOOR.

34. What if I published one of your papers? Would that make you an author or a writer? THAT WOULD BE GREAT. BUT NONE OF THEM WERE PUBLISHABLE.

WHAT IF I SAID THEY WERE?

I'D HAVE TO DO SOME REVISION.

35. What if we as a class published a book ? Would that make you an author or a writer?

FANTASTIC. YEAH, IT WOULD, IT MAKES IT MORE SERIOUS, IT'S NOT CASUAL ANYMORE. THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT BEING PUBLISHED. IF I GO TO A COPY SHOP AND RUN OFF 100 COPIES OF SOMETHING, THAT'S NOT PUBLISHED. PUBLISHED, THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT IT THAT'S OFFICIAL. I KNOW A LOT OF UNDERGROUND ZINE PUBLISHERS AND EVEN THERE IT IS DIFFERENT FROM PUBLISHING YOURSELF.

I'D GIVE YOU THE 9/11 ARTICLE TO PUBLISH.

[JR HAD ASKED JE TO GIVE HER A SHORT PIECE HE WROTE IN CLASS TO PUBLISH IN THE BROOKLYN RAIL. WHEN ASKED HOW HE FELT ABOUT THAT, JE SAID "I FELT GOOD." I WAS GOING TO THROW IT AWAY BECAUSE I HAD IT IN SCRAPPY NOTEBOOKS. THAT WAS COOL THAT WE DID THE FREEWRITING.

36. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique?

9/11 PAPER. NOT WRITTEN FOR ANY CLASS. PERSONAL ESSAY. I TRY TO PLAY BOTH SIDES OF THE FENCE. I HAVE A FEW FRIENDS WHO ARE LAWYERS AND THEY SAY YOU HAVE TO ARGUE FROM BOTH SIDES. IT STRENGTHENS YOUR ARGUMENT.

37. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain.

38. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

39. Is the quality of the writing in this piece different from other things you have written? If yes, how?

40. Did you imagine an audience for this piece of writing? YES. EVERYBODY.

41. Were you a part of the audience you imagined for this piece of writing?

42. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

JR RAISES QUESTION OF ENCOURAGEMENT VERSUS CRITICISM IN TEACHER COMMENTS:

John: I WAS IN A CLASS, INTRODUCTION TO MEDIA STUDIES AND WE WROTE A PAPER A WEEK. IT WAS AN A- PAPER AND THERE WAS CRITICISM BUT HE WROTE A COMMENT NEXT TO MY INTRODUCTION SAYING IT WAS

ONE OF THE BEST INTROS HE'D EVER READ. HIGHLIGHT THE GOOD THINGS. IT'S UNFAIR TO THE STUDENT NOT TO CRITICIZE THEIR WORK.

JR: ACADEMIC LOVE IS "I LOVE YOU BY CRITICIZING YOU."

John: MAYBE THERE COULD BE SOME DISCUSSION OF THESE THINGS. A LITTLE FOOTNOTE, WHEN IT COMES TO GRADING PAPER, IT IS NOTHING PERSONAL, IT IS YOUR JOB. SOME PEOPLE TAKE IT IN THE SAME WAY THAT YOU MIGHT CRITICIZE THEIR HAIR.

JR: WHY DIDN'T YOU SUBMIT YOUR 9/11 ESSAY TO CITY AT THE CENTER?

John: I DON'T HAVE TIME.

Eliza

Highest Degree Earned: H.S., ADULT EDUCATION COURSES HERE AND THERE. FARLEIGH DICKINSON, BROOKDALE CC, OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE, PACE

Years Enrolled in College Courses:

Age: 50

Gender: F

Student's Educational Background: PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL IN YONKERS. DIDN'T GO TO COLLEGE, WENT RIGHT TO WORK, WE NEEDED THE MONEY. IT IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST REGRETS OF MY LIFE NOT GOING TO SCHOOL. I HAD A GREAT HS EDUCATION. DID VERY WELL IN SCHOOL EDUCATION WAS NOT IMPORTANT TO PARENTS. PARENTS SEPARATED AND MONEY WAS AN ISSUE AND I WAS WORKING THROUGHOUT HS AND AFTER SCHOOL I WENT RIGHT TO WORK.

BEFORE LAW FIRM, WORKED IN FOOD PROCESSING AND THE FIRM WENT OUT OF BUSINESS AND WAS ELIGIBLE FOR JOB TRAINING AND I WAS GIVEN A TEST AND MY FORTE WAS ADMINISTRATION AND THEY PAID FOR SECRETARIAL SCHOOL FOR A YEAR. I GOT TRAINED IN COMPUTERS AND SHORTHAND AND ALL THIS STUFF. WE HAD ENGLISH, BUT IT WAS MOSTLY GRAMMAR AND A LITTLE BIT OF MATH. IT WAS GREAT. IT WAS 8-1 SEPT. TO JUNE AND I ENDED UP BEING THE MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED! I WAS THE STEWART GIRL. 40 WHEN SHE WENT BACK TO SCHOOL.

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: MOST WRITING COURSES HAVE BEEN AT CWE.

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction:

Occupation: ADMINISTRATIVE ASST., LAW FIRM

Years at Current Job: 8 YEARS

Types of Writing Performed at Job: TAKE DICTATION AND DO A LOT OF TRANSCRIBING. LETTERS. DO MULTIPLE DRAFTS WITH ATTORNEYS AND PROOFS STUFF HERSELF.

Ethnicity/Family Background: CAUCASIAN. BOTH PARENTS BORN IN US. YOUNGER BROTHER WHO WORKS IN WAREHOUSING.

Home Language(s): ENGLISH

Parents' Occupations: MOTHER: SECRETARY/ FATHER: TOOL AND DIE MAN

Parents' Educational Background: FATHER: WENT TO DICKINSON COLLEGE FOR 3 YEARS AND WAS PRE-MED AND THEN HE MARRIED MY MOTHER AND DIDN'T GO TO HIS 4TH YEAR.

MOTHER: WENT TO BUSINESS/SECRETARIAL SCHOOL

Literacy Narrative: History and Current Definitions

1. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

STORYTELLER, NOVELIST, ENTERTAINER.

How do you define the term author?

SOMEONE WHO IS ABLE TO WRITE AND CONVEY A MESSAGE OR A STORY.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

2. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

SOMEONE WHO IS SENSITIVE TO THEIR SURROUNDINGS AND FEELS THE NEED TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES IN THE WRITTEN WORD.

How do you define the term writer?

SAME AS ABOVE.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

3. Do you consider yourself an author?

I WOULD, I ASPIRE TO WRITE. I LOVE TO READ AND I LIKE TO WRITE. I KEEP DIARIES. SO I WRITE ABOUT MY OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

4. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

5. If no, why not? What would make you an author?

TO SEE YOUR NAME ON A PUBLICATION.

6. Do you consider yourself a writer?

NOT YET, NOT REALLY. BUT I MEAN I CAN WRITE A GOOD ESSAY.

7. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

8. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?

IF YOU GOT PAID FOR IT. YOU COULD EARN A LIVING. MOST PEOPLE HAVE TO MAKE A LIVING AND IF YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT WRITING IT TAKES A LOT OF YOUR TIME AND TIME IS YOUR MOST PRECIOUS COMMODITY.

9. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities?

YOU CAN BE A WRITER AND JUST WRITE FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL PLEASURE. BUT WHEN YOU'RE AN AUTHOR YOU'RE WRITING KNOWING THAT OTHERS ARE GOING TO BE READING YOUR WORKS.

THERE ARE POOR WRITERS, POOR ARTISTS.

ARE THERE CERTAIN PEOPLE WHO ARE WRITERS AND OTHERS WHO ARE NOT?

YES, I BELIVE THAT. THERE ARE CERTAIN PEOPLE WHO ARE PRONE TO EXPRESSING THEMSELVES IN WORDS AND OTHERS WHO ARE NOT INTERESTED.

[IT IS POSSIBLE TO BE A WRITER AND NOT AN AUTHOR]

10. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write?

NOT PARTICULARLY.

11. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author?

NO, I'VE SAID IT MYSELF BUT NOBODY ELSE HAS SAID IT TO ME. CAUSE I THINK I'VE GOT SOME INTERESTING STORIES TO TELL. I'VE HAD AN INTERESTING LIFE HISTORY. A LOT OF TALES. I HAVE A FLAIR FOR WORDS.

12. Do you remember anyone reading to you when you were very young?
YES, I THINK BOTH MY PARENTS READ TO ME.

13. What is your earliest memory involving writing?

WELL, YOU KNOW, I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER, BUT I HAVE A SUITCASE OF MY OWN PERSONAL ARTIFACTS AT HOME AND FROM FIRST GRADE I HAVE THESE LITTLE ONE PAGE WRITINGS I DID. YOU KNOW HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION AND I HAVE THIS ONE WITH PICTURES AND EVERYTHING AND IT IS THE STORY OF "THE HAPPY COUPLE." IT'S HYSTERICAL.

I REMEMBER BEING TAUGHT HOW TO MAKE LETTERS. FIRST OR SECOND GRADE, ABOUT 7. STARTED READING BETTER IN THE 3RD GRADE BECAUSE WE HAD ADVANCED READING GROUPS AND I WAS TAKEN FROM THE MEDIUM TO THE ADVANCED IN THE THIRD GRADE.

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

14. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes?
Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.

NO, BUT I'M LEARNING AS I GO TO WRITE BETTER.

15. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain.

I THOUGHT THAT WAS A REALLY GOOD CLASS. I ENJOYED GETTING THE COMMENTS. YOU MADE COMMENTS ABOUT MY TENSES AND I'M MORE AWARE OF DOING THAT IN MY WRITING NOW.

16. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

THE ZNH. THAT WAS MY FAVORITE ONE. I DIDN'T GET THAT MUCH OUT OF THE ODYSSEY OR MACBETH BUT THIS SEMESTER I REREAD THE ODYSSEY FOR ANOTHER CLASS. AND NOW I HAVE ULYSSES AT HOME AND NOW I WANT TO READ THAT. AND WE ALSO DID PART OF KATZANZAKIS' ODYSSEY. AND I WANT TO READ THAT. I GOT MORE OUT OF READING [HOMER] THIS TIME BECAUSE WE DID THE WHOLE HISTORY OF THE GODS AND WE HAD MUCH MORE BACKGROUND.

THE HURSTON MADE ME FEEL LIKE THAT WAS A REALLY GOOD STORY BY A REALLY GOOD STORYTELLER. I MEAN YOU GOT TO FEEL HOW SHE FELT AND THE THINGS SHE WENT THROUGH. I WOULD LIKE TO WRITE LIKE THAT.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

17. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing?

NOT OFTEN.

LET'S TALK ABOUT THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF WRITING, LETTERS, WORK, SCHOOL:

E-MAIL: I KEEP IN TOUCH WITH FRIENDS AND I'VE BEEN REUNITED WITH OLD FRIENDS. WE DO CATCH UP WITH SOME PEOPLE I HAVEN'T TALKED TO IN 30 YEARS. MY JOURNAL WRITING IS JUST FOR ME AND WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH ME AND WHAT'S HAPPENING. AT SCHOOL, I TRY TO IMPROVE ON THE WAY I WRITE, REALLY HONING A SKILL I THINK.

[WRITES DIFFERENTLY IN E-MAIL]: USUALLY IT IS VERY LIGHT-HEARTED AND FUNNY

[ACADEMIC PAPERS]: DIFFERENT FROM E-MAIL BECAUSE WITH E-MAIL I'M NOT GETTING GRADED!

DO YOU VISUALIZE THE PROFESSOR?

YES.

DO YOU HAVE YOUR OWN STYLE IN ACADEMIC WRITING? I HAVE MY OWN STYLE. I'M KIND OF SHORT AND SWEET AND TO THE POINT.

MENTIONS A MAGAZINE CALLED "THE SUN" WHICH IS A MAGAZINE OF SHORT STORIES AND SHE RE-SUBSCRIBED WITH THE INTENTION OF SENDING THEM SOME MATERIAL. WOULD SEND THEM SOMETHING ON THE TOPIC THEY SET.

TOPICS INCLUDE: "THE FIRST TIME," "THE DAY MY LIFE CHANGED," "DEATH IN MY FAMILY"

18. If yes, who/what makes up this audience?

[DEPENDS ON WHAT SHE IS WRITING.]

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

19. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.]

WHEN I'M DOING SOMETHING FOR WORK, I KNOW THAT THE FORMAT HAS TO BE RIGHT AND THE SPELLING HAS TO BE RIGHT AND I SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN IT RIGHT FROM THE GET-GO. IT HAS TO MAKE SENSE, THE SENTENCE HAS TO MAKE SENSE.

I PAY ATTENTION TO MY ACADEMIC WORK AND LOOK AT GRAMMAR AND CLARITY WITH AN EYE ON GETTING A GOOD GRADE.

20. Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing?

21. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then?
22. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this?

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

23. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34.
NO

24. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?

25. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain?

26. Did it change any part of your writing process?

27. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed?

28. Did it change your understanding of audience?

29. Did it change your relationship to reading?

30. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?

31. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]

32. Would you like to have a piece of writing published?

SURE!

33. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing?

YEAH! THAT OTHER PEOPLE WERE INTERESTED IN MY STORY, IN MY WRITING, IN THE WAY I WROTE.

Would it make you a writer? YES!

Would it make you an author? YES! IF MY NAME WAS ON IT. [EVEN IF SHE WASN'T PAID FOR IT]

34. What if I published one of your papers? Would that make you an author or a writer?

35. What if we as a class published a book ? Would that make you an author or a writer?

SURE. I DON'T REMEMBER THE ESSAYS FROM OUR CLASS. THE ZNH WAS MY BEST ONE.

[EVEN IF PUBLISHED BY CWE IS IT A REAL PUBLICATION?]: YEAH! IF PEOPLE

WOULD IT MAKE YOU FEEL THAT YOUR IDEAS WERE INTERESTING TO A WIDER GROUP OF PEOPLE? YEAH!

WHY?

THAT MY STUFF WAS OUT THERE, WORDS THAT I PUT ON PAPER WERE BEING READ NOT JUST BY A TEACHER OR A BOSS OR MYSELF OR MY FRIEND AT THE OTHER END OF THE E-MAIL BUT BY SOMEONE WHO WAS INTERESTED IN READING THESE ESSAYS. YEAH, I THINK THAT WOULD BE GREAT.

WHAT CHANGES WHEN SOMEONE ELSE SAYS I WANT TO PUBLISH YOU, WHAT DOES IT DO TO YOU AS A WRITER?

IT JUST KIND OF VALIDATES THE FACT THAT YOU CAN...THAT YOUR WORDS MAKE SENSE AND THAT SOMEONE ELSE MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN READING IT.

AND DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE ORIGINAL IDEAS? MAYBE, KINDA, SORTA, I DON'T KNOW.

DO YOU HAVE TO HAVE ORIGINAL IDEAS TO BE AN AUTHOR? NOT PARTICULARLY, BUT YOU HAVE TO HAVE AN ORIGINAL TAKE ON AN IDEA. THAT'S WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT THE ODYSSEY; THERE WAS THE ODYSSEY AND THEN ULYSSES AND THEN "OH, BROTHER WHERE ART THOU?" THEY ARE ALL DIFFERENT TAKES ON THE SAME IDEA.

SO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR OPINION MATTERS?

PD LIKE TO, YEAH.

YOU'D BE COMFORTABLE PUBLISHING?

YES, ABSOLUTELY.

36. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique?

WELL, I'VE WRITTEN SOME GOOD E-MAILS. BUT OTHER THAN THE CORE HUMANITIES CLASSES, I MEAN THEY WERE REALLY A LOT OF WRITING. I DON'T THINK THE OTHER ONES HAVE BEEN THAT WRITING INTENSIVE. CLASSICAL GREEK MYTHOLOGY WAS FASCINATING. AT THE BEGINNING WE WOULD WRITE JUST FOR HIM TO SEE WHAT OUR STYLE WAS, THEN WE HAD A MIDTERM, THEN WE HAD A FINAL ESSAY. THEY WERE PRETTY GOOD. I WAS PRETTY PLEASED WITH MY FINAL ESSAY.

I TOOK THE “PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION” AND THAT WAS FASCINATING. BUT IN TERMS OF SPECIFIC ESSAYS, I JUST CAN’T REMEMBER.

37. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain.

38. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

39. Is the quality of the writing in this piece different from other things you have written? If yes, how?

40. Did you imagine an audience for this piece of writing?

41. Were you a part of the audience you imagined for this piece of writing?

42. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

COMP AND LIT TOGETHER? I THINK IT IS GOOD TO HAVE THEM TOGETHER TO BREAK IT UP A LITTLE AND GET SOME GOOD WRITING TOGETHER.

Christine

Highest Degree Earned: ASSOCIATES DEGREE

Years Enrolled in College Courses: 6-7 YEARS TOTAL/ 1.5 YEARS AT CWE

Age: 44

Gender: F

Occupation: SUPERVISOR, DATA PROCESSING, MTA. 22 YEARS IN POSITION.

Ethnicity: CHINESE. BORN: GUYANA. MOVED TO US AT 11 YEARS OF AGE. NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKER. FAMILY IMMIGRATED TO GUAYANA FROM CHINA IN 1860S. SISTER AND HER HUSBAND CAME TO NYC, THEN SPONSORED THEIR PARENTS AND SIBLINGS.

Student's Educational Background: DID ASSOCIATES DEGREE AT _____ AFTER HIGH SCHOOL. RETURNED TO CWE AT AGE 42 TO COMPLETE BA.

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: CORE HUMANINTIES 1 AND 2

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction:

Parents' Occupations: Mother: A) SEAMSTRESS IN GUYANA, B) CARETAKER OF ELDERLY AND SICK IN US

Father: A) SUPERINTENDENT BUS COMPANY IN GUAYAN, B) FACTORY FOREMAN, VILLEROY AND BOSCH IN NJ

Parents' Educational Background: NEITHER PARENT WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL. HAD 7 CHILDREN IN GUYANA AND NO TIME TO STUDY. MOTHER TOOK SEAMSTRESS CLASSES IN SURINAM AND PASSED HER GED WHEN SHE CAME TO THE US. UNCLEAR AS TO WHEN PARENTS STOPPED ATTENDING SCHOOL, BUT IT WAS EARLY, PROBABLY SOMETIME AFTER PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Background

1. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

A WRITER OF BOOKS.
"I DON'T COME TO MIND"

2. How do you define the term author?

A WRITER OF BOOKS.

A WRITER.

3. What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

DICTIONARY DEFINITION. SCHOOL, MEDIA.

4. Do you consider yourself an author? NO! [EMPHATIC NO]

5. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

6. If no, why not? What would make you an author?

BECAUSE I DON'T FEEL THAT I'M CAPABLE OF PRODUCING SOMETHING SO WONDERFUL AND IMAGINATIVE. WHEN I READ OTHER PEOPLES' WRITING YOU CAN PICTURE THE EVENTS WHEN YOU READ IT. DEATH IS SITTING IN THE MIDDLE FO THE ROOM. [STUDENT IS REFERRING TO A PASSAGE FROM ZORA NEALE HURSTON'S *THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD*, WHICH WE READ IN CWE CORE HUMANITIES 2 IN SPRING, 2004 SEMESTER]. THEY CAN PICTURE THE WHOLE ROOM FIRST AND VISUALIZE THE WHOLE ATMOSPHERE AND NO I CAN'T DO THAT. I'M A FACTUAL WRITER.

7. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

OTHER THAN AUTHOR? [LAUGHS] A WRITER. MORE OF A PROFESSIONAL SENSE, THE NEWSPAPER WRITERS. ANYONE WHO WRITES SOMETHING PROFESSIONALLY. BOOKS.

8. How do you define the term writer?

WHEN I SAY WRITER OR WHEN YOU SAY WRITER I THINK OF SOMETHING PUBLISHED.

9. What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

DICTIONARY, MEDIA, TEACHERS.

10. Do you consider yourself a writer?

NO.

11. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

12. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?

I WRITE BUT I AM NOT A WRITER.

13. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities?

I DON'T FEEL THERE ARE ANY. NO. THERE ISN'T ANY DIFFERENCE.

14. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write?

NO. [Not even in college?] NO. ENGLISH IS THE ONLY LANGUAGE I SPEAK BUT I WAS NEVER REALLY GOOD AT IT. I STUNK AT GRAMMAR.

15. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author?

NO. BUT I DID THINK ABOUT IT FOR A WHILE BECAUSE MY MOTHER'S HISTORY IS MY INSPIRATION. BUT I STARTED IT AND AFTER THREE PAGES IT JUST FIZZLED OUT. I TRIED TO SET THE STAGE SO YOU CAN VISUALIZE THE WHOLE PICTURE [OF THE IMMIGRATION, COMING OVER ON THE BOAT, ETC., THOUGH IT IS THE GREAT GRANDMOTHER? WHO ACTUALLY IMMIGRATES FROM CHINA TO GUYANA].

16. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.

I FEEL BETTER ABOUT IT. AT CWE, THE REQUIRED WRITING FORCED ME TO WRITE MORE.

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

17. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain.

ABSOLUTELY. YOUR CLASS WAS MY FIRST SEMESTER [MY FIRST CLASS RETURNING TO COLLEGE AFTER TWENTY YEARS]. [THE WRITING WE DID IN YOUR CLASS] WAS THE FIRST WRITING I'D DONE IN ABOUT 12 YEARS. HAVING TO WRITE AND SUPPORT THE FACTS AND MY POSITION [WHEN WE WERE WRITING ANALYTICAL PAPERS ABOUT LITERARY TEXTS]: I HAD TO SIT AND THINK. I'M A FACTUAL WRITER AND I WRITE THE FACTS THAT OCCURRED. I'VE BEEN CALLED COLD BEFORE [BY AN EX-BOYFRIEND]: I'M A VERY FACTUAL WRITER. I WRITE THE FACTS.

18. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

I NEVER THOUGHT OF IT IN THOSE TERMS. I DID ENJOY HOMER. I ENJOYED ALL OF THE BOOKS. NO, IT DID NOT INSPIRE ME TO BECOME A WRITER. BUT IT DID PICQUE MY INTEREST.

[Q: Were the books intimidating to you?]: YES, AT FIRST BUT THEN IT WAS ALRIGHT. I JUST REREAD THEM AGAIN.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

19. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing?

NO. I'M WRITING TO MAKE SURE THAT I'M SUPPORTING MY POSITION. I MAKE SURE IT IS GRAMMATICALLY CORRECT. [Q: YOU DON'T CONSIDER YOURSELF PART OF THE AUDIENCE? WHAT ABOUT THE TEACHER?]: I GUESS YOU COULD SAY I WRITE TO MYSELF. LAUGHS. WE ALL WRITE FOR THE TEACHER. BUT AT THE SAME TIME IT STILL HAS TO MAKE SENSE TO ME. AT LEAST IT SOUNDS SOUND AND I MAKE ALL OF THESE POSITIONS CLEAR. I LIKE TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYTHING IS CLEAR AND SUPPORTED. WHILE GOING TO SCHOOL EARLIER, I DIDN'T REALLY ELABORATE, I MOSTLY FOCUSED ON THE SUBJECT ITSELF. AT CWE I'VE LEARNED TO ELABORATE AND EXPLAIN.

20. If yes, who/what makes up this audience?

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

21. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.]
22. Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing?
23. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then?

AT WORK, YES. I TRY TO BE OBJECTIVE. I DO READ WHAT I'VE WRITTEN AS THOUGH I'M OUT THERE IN THE FIELD AS IF I'M THE RECIPIENT OF THE WRITING. I HAVE TO HAVE TWO-VIEWS: THE EMPLOYEE VIEW AND THE POLICY VIEW (THE UNION WILL READ THIS AND WILL MAKE AN APPEAL IF THERE IS ANYTHING WRONG WITH WHAT IS BEING WRITTEN). [NOTE: SHE WRITES MTA POLICY STATEMENTS THAT ARE CHECKED BY HER SUPERVISORS AND BY THE UNION.] WRITES MEMOS AND WORK AND WROTE PROCEDURES FOR ANOTHER COWORKER WHOSE ENGLISH/WRITING WAS NOT AS GOOD. THE PROCEDURES WERE SINGED OFF BY THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT AND IMPLEMENTED AS POLICY FOR TRANSIT WORKERS. YES, I IMAGINE TRANSIT WORKERS READING THIS. I STAY AWAY FROM LARGE WORDS. I TRY TO BE AS CLEAR AS POSSIBLE. I HAVE TO WRITE STEP PROCEDURES: REALLY EXPLAIN.

AT SCHOOL, I CAN'T SAY THAT I DO PUT MYSELF IN THE PROFESSOR'S POSITION.

[Q: Has this type of writing helped you with your academic writing?]: I THINK MAYBE IT IS A HANDICAP ALSO BECAUSE I'M NOT CREATIVE AT WORK. IT'S NOT REALLY WRITING WRITING. ITS NOT WRITING LIKE A STORY. ITS NOT WRITING IN SENTENCES. WE LEAVE OFF PREPOSITIONS.

24. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this?

I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT THAT [WHY I DON'T PUT MYSELF IN THE PROFESSOR'S POSITION]. IN MY SPEECH CLASS, WHEN I PREPARE MY SPEECH, I PUT MYSELF IN THE AUDIENCE BUT NOT WITH MY WRITING.

[Q: Do you think it is because the professor is in a position of power?]: MAYBE. I DON'T FEEL THAT I'M QUALIFIED TO BE IN THE PROFESSOR'S POSITION.

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

25. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34.

NO.

26. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?

27. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain?

28. Did it change any part of your writing process?

29. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed?

30. Did it change your understanding of audience?

31. Did it change your relationship to reading?

32. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?

33. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]

34. Would you like to have a piece of writing published?

IT WOULD BE NICE BUT I DON'T SEE MYSELF AS BEING THAT GOOD TO HAVE IT PUBLISHED.

35. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing?

I WOULD THINK SO. IT WOULD MAKE ME VERY PROUD.

Would it make you a writer?

I DON'T KNOW IF I WOULD GO THAT FAR. NO. I STILL WOULD NOT CONSIDER MYSELF A WRITER.

Would it make you an author?

YES. I WOULD BE AN AUTHOR OF THAT PIECE.

36. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique?

A PAPER I WROTE ON CHINESE IMMIGRATION TO GUYANA. EVEN THOUGH IT IS NOT COMPLETE. THERE WAS A TEN PAGE REQUIREMENT FOR THE PAPER AND I WROTE SIXTEEN PAGES AND I STILL THOUGHT I WAS MISSING INFORMATION. I'D LIKE TO BE MORE IN-DEPTH WITH THAT. OF COURSE, I SAY THAT, BUT WILL I REALLY DO IT?

37. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain.

I LIKED WRITING IT BECAUSE IT WAS A BIT PERSONAL. I'M INTERESTED IN MY ANCESTORS AND IT GAVE ME INSIGHT INTO THEIR HISTORY AND THE PROBLEMS THEY WENT THROUGH: THE CONDITIONS ON THE BOAT [GOING FROM CHINA TO GUYANA], CONDITIONS IN 19TH C. GUYANA.

38. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

I FEEL THAT I LEFT OUT QUITE A LOT OF INFORMATION.

[Q: Did you imagine an audience for this piece of writing?]: NO. I TRIED TO GET MY SON TO READ IT.

[Q: Is the quality of the writing in this piece different from other things you have written? If yes, how?]: NO.

39. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

Jennifer

Highest Degree Earned: B.A. IN LIBERAL ARTS—JUST COMPLETED AT CWE;
ASSOCIATES FROM LAGUARDIA IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT; HS DIPLOMA
Years Enrolled in College Courses:

Age: 35

Gender:

Student's Educational Background: (IT WAS PAINFUL BECAUSE I HAD TO GO TO NIGHT AND DAY SCHOOL TO MEET UP TO ALL OF THE REQUIREMENTS— THAT LAST YEAR THEY TELL YOU THIS IS ALL YOU'RE MISSING. BECAUSE OF THE LANGUAGE BARRIER WITH MY MOM SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT NEEDED TO BE DONE.) 2 YEARS AT LAGUARDIA; 2 YEARS AT CWE. PUBLIC SCHOOLS BEFORE THAT.

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, I REMEMBER MY ENGLISH TEACHER, WE READ, "ANIMAL FARM," AND I BECAME INTERESTED THEN IN [LITERATURE AND WRITING]

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction:

Occupation: BEHAVIOR/TRAINER, PRE-SCHOOLERS UNDER THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

Years at Current Job: 10

Types of Writing Performed at Job: NO

Ethnicity/Family Background: FATHER PASSED AWAY WHEN KARLA WAS ONE. BORN IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, 1969, FATHER KILLED IN CAR ACCIDENT IN U.S. CAME WITH UNCLE TO MAKE MONEY AND SUPPORT HIS FAMILY.

2 SIBLINGS, KARLA ELDEST

RAISED BY GRANDPARENTS TIL AGE OF 8 IN D.R.

Home Language(s): SPANISH

Parents' Occupations: MOTHER: WORKED IN FACTORY AND RE-MARRIED

Parents' Educational Background: FATHER: NO HS
MOTHER: NO HS
GRANDPARENTS: BOTH ILLITERATE

Literacy Narrative: History and Current Definitions

1. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term? WRITER. WRITER. JUST WRITER.

How do you define the term author? SOMEONE WHO PUTS A STORY TOGETHER AND MAKES SENSE OUT OF IT.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.) I DON'T KNOW. FROM A LONG TIME AGO.

2. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term? NOVELS.

How do you define the term writer?

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

3. Do you consider yourself an author?
IT MAKES ME NERVOUS BECAUSE I THINK I WANT TO WRITE SOMEDAY BUT I DON'T KNOW IF I WILL BE ABLE TO. THERE IS SO MUCH THAT I WOULD LIKE TO WRITE ABOUT.

WHAT MAKES YOU NERVOUS?

CALLING MYSELF THAT. IT IS REALLY BIG, LIKE WOW, AN AUTHOR.

4. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

5. If no, why not? What would make you an author?

6. Do you consider yourself a writer?

NOT YET.

7. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

8. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?

ONCE I AM MORE COMFORTABLE. NOT TO PROCRASTINATE. JUST GET IT DONE BECAUSE I WOULD KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING.

9. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities?

AUTHOR HAS MORE PRESTIGE ATTACHED TO IT. WHEN I THINK OF AN AUTHOR I'M THINKING ABOUT MORE FORMAL WORK. I GUESS MORE COMPLEX. A WRITER, I GUESS, WHEN I THINK OF A WRITER, SOMEONE WHO CAN WRITE ALMOST ANYTHING, MORE LIKE A POET, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE SAID IN A RESTRICTIVE MANNER.

10. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write? IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, MY ENGLISH TEACHER. I WROTE SOMETHING FOR HER, MAYBE A RESPONSE TO "ANIMAL FARM," AND SHE SAID SHE LIKED THE WAY I WROTE BECAUSE SHE COULD HEAR MY VOICE. SHE SAID SHE COULD HEAR THAT THE WAY I WROTE WAS VERY SIMILAR TO THE WAY I SPOKE.

AFTER THAT, NOTHING IMPRESSIVE.

I WAS MORE COMFORTABLE IN THE SMALLER SETTING OF MIDDLE SCHOOL

11. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author? NO

12. Do you remember anyone reading to you when you were very young? ABSOLUTELY NOT, EVER.
13. What is your earliest memory involving writing? I REMEMBER LEARNING HOW TO WRITE IN SPANISH AND TEACHING MYSELF THAT. I WAS 12. I DON'T REMEMBER HOW I LEARNED TO WRITE IN ENGLISH.

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

14. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.

AT CWE DEFINITELY BECAUSE THERE IS SUCH A BIG EMPHASIS ON WRITING IN EVERY CLASS. BEING ABLE TO CHOOSE THE CLASSES WAS VERY HELPFUL.

DO YOU FEEL MORE LIKE A WRITER NOW?

KIND OF. I'M A BIT MORE COMFORTABLE. I HAVE TO DO A PAPER AND I'LL PROCRASTINATE BUT I ALSO KNOW IT WILL GET DONE. I'M INTIMIDATED BUT I KNOW I WILL PUT SOMETHING TOGETHER AND I WILL PASS AND I WILL GET A GRADE.

NO E-MAIL, SOME CARDS/SHORT LETTERS/USED TO KEEP A JOURNAL

NEVER WROTE ANY STORIES—BUT IT IS ALL INSIDE AND THERE IS SO MUCH EMOTION AND FEAR INVOLVED WITH IT. I'M AFRAID OF ALL OF THE STUFF THAT MAY COME OUT. I'M NOT READY YET.

15. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain.

16. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

THE FIRST THING I TOLD MY CLASSMATES WAS IF SHE CAN MAKE ME UNDERSTAND THIS BOOK [THE ODYSSEY] AND LIKE IT THEN MY TUITION WILL HAVE BEEN WELL WORTH IT. I HAVE TO SAY THAT I WAS SO IMPRESSED WITH MYSELF AND WITH THE WAY IT WAS TAUGHT THAT AT SOME POINT PAST THE SECOND BOOK, I WAS LIKE “WOW, I LIKE THIS; I MEAN I’M ACTUALLY READING IT.” THERE ARE STUDENTS WHO MAY SKIM, BUT I WAS ACTUALLY READING IT.

WHEN YOU TOLD US TO CHOOSE A THEME, I ENJOYED THAT ALSO BECAUSE EVEN THOUGH AT FIRST I WAS LIKE, “THIS IS HARD,” IT GOT EASIER.

I ENJOYED THE HURSTON BOOK MUCH MORE THAN THE FILM. THE FILM DIDN’T DO THE BOOK JUSTICE.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

17. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing?

THE PROFESSOR AT THE TIME.

DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU’RE WRITING IT FOR YOURSELF?

NO, MAINLY BECAUSE IT IS A REQUIREMENT AND EVEN THOUGH THIS WHOLE GRADING POLICY SUCKS, IT IS PART OF SCHOOL AND THE PAPER HAS TO BE ACCEPTABLE. I HAVE TO EDIT IT AND CHANGE IT. IF I EDIT IT IT IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. I AM NEVER SATISFIED WITH IT. AT SOME POINT I JUST HAVE TO HAND IT IN.

I THINK MY [PERFECTIONISM] COMES FROM MY EXPERIENCE WITH LANGUAGE AND BEING BILINGUAL. I ALWAYS WANT TO MAKE MY LANGUAGE AND MY WRITING BETTER.

DO YOU VISUALIZE THE PROFESSOR?

YES, I DEFINITELY DO. IN ORDER TO WRITE A PAPER, I MEAN, THEY’RE ALL SO DIFFERENT. IN ORDER FOR A PAPER TO BE ACCEPTABLE I FEEL LIKE I NEED TO KNOW SOME OF HOW THIS PERSON WHO WANTS TO LISTEN TO AND READ MY PAPER, I HAVE TO MAKE IT ACCEPTABLE TO HIM OR HER. THEY ARE ALL DIFFERENT, THEY ALL WANT SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN THEIR PAPERS.

DO YOU THINK THEY ALL WANT YOU TO SOUND JUST LIKE THEM?

I THINK SO. AND WHEN I DON'T SOUND OR EXPRESS WHAT THEY WANT THE GRADE IS LOWER. DEFINITELY. YES. FOR EXAMPLE, TODAY WE HAVE THIS CLASS, AND IT IS THE FIRST CLASS, AND IF THE PROFESSOR WANTS A PAPER NEXT WEEK, THAT'S PROBLEMATIC BECAUSE I HAVEN'T SEEN THAT MUCH OF HIM OR HER YET. I HAVEN'T FELT HIM OUT.

THIS IS ALWAYS THE CASE, [EXCEPT ONCE]: WRITING AN OPINION PAPER ON THE ATOMIC BOMB. I THOUGHT IT WAS A CALLOUS ACT ON BEHALF OF THE U.S. THE PROFESSOR CHALLENGED MY OPINION AND ASKED ME THINGS LIKE "WELL, WHAT IF YOUR SON WAS THERE," AND I SAID, "WELL, MY SON WASN'T THERE AND MAYBE I HAVE 20/20 HINDSIGHT, BUT THIS IS MY OPINION AND THIS IS WHAT I THINK." I GUESS I WAS LIKE, THIS IS MY OPINION AND THIS IS WHAT IT IS. I FELT LIKE I'M NOT GOING TO CHANGE IT JUST TO COMPLY WITH WHAT I THINK YOU WANT ME TO SAY.

18. If yes, who/what makes up this audience?

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

19. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.]

CLARITY, CORRECTNESS, WRITING FOR A GRADE

20. Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing?

21. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then?

NO

22. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this?

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

23. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34.

NO

24. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?

25. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain?

26. Did it change any part of your writing process?

27. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed?

28. Did it change your understanding of audience?

29. Did it change your relationship to reading?

30. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?

31. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]

32. Would you like to have a piece of writing published?

OH YES, I WOULD LOVE TO. I THINK IT IS A FEAR I WOULD OVERCOME OF THOSE THINGS I WANT TO SAY.

33. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing?

Would it make you a writer?

Would it make you an author?

34. What if I published one of your papers? Would that make you an author or a writer?

THAT WOULD BE FINE. WOULD NOT HAVE THE SAME EFFECT AS HAVING HER PERSONAL WRITING PUBLISHED. IT WOULDN'T HAVE THE SAME EFFECT BECAUSE IT IS ACADEMIC AND NOT PART OF MY PERSONAL....

35. What if we as a class published a book ? Would that make you an author or a writer?

I'D BE A WRITER BUT NOT AN AUTHOR. GOING BACK TO WHAT I SAID BEFORE, A WRITER IS, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT, AN AUTHOR IS MORE FORMAL. MORE ABOUT A BIG NOVEL OR A NYTIMES BESTSELLER.

HOW MUCH DOES BEING AN AUTHOR HAVE TO DO WITH HAVING A FEELING OF AUTHORITY? AND, HOW DO STUDENTS BEGIN TO FEEL THEY HAVE MORE AND THE PROFESSOR LESS.

AS A STUDENT IT HAS A LOT TO DO WITH THIS GRADING SYSTEM. WE'RE ALWAYS AWARE THAT YOU HAVE THE FINAL SAY IN THIS THING THAT I NEED TO MOVE ON. AS A STUDENT, WE NEVER PERCEIVE IT AS EGALITARIAN. THE ROOM IS NOT EGALITARIAN ALTHOUGH HERE AT CWE WE TRY TO DO THE LECTURE AND MAKE IT A CIRCLE. AND THAT'S ALRIGHT BUT SUBCONSCIOUSLY YOU KNOW ITS NOT.

WHAT IF THERE ARE NO GRADES? WOULD YOU LEAVE?

I'D STAY BECAUSE I WAS INTERESTED. AT THIS STAGE I WOULD DO THE WORK. JUST BECAUSE IT IS MORE OF A PERSONAL, KNOWING I CAN DO IT AND KNOWING IT WILL GET DONE.

CONTRACT GRADING?

IT WORKED WELL FOR ME. I LOVED IT BECAUSE I FELT AT SOME POINT I WAS SOMEWHAT IN CONTROL OF WHAT THE OUTCOME WOULD BE. JUST HAVING THIS LIST OF THIS IS WHAT YOU NEED TO DO AND THIS IS THE RESULT. AND SPEAKING WITH OTHER CLASSMATES, WE FELT THAT WE HAD SOME SAY IN THE OUTCOME AS OPPOSED TO HANDING IN ALL OF THIS WORK AND YOU'RE OBLIVIOUS TO THE RESULT.

ALSO GIVEN GRADES ON EACH PAPER. THE WAY HE DID IT IS HE GRADED EVERYTHING AND THERE WAS A CLAUSE IN THE CONTRACT, IN THE TERM AT SOME POINT HE MET WITH YOU AND SAID THIS IS THE GRADE YOU HAVE SO FAR AND SO IF YOU WANT A HIGHER GRADE, THIS IS THE WORK YOU WILL HAVE TO DO. IF YOU GOT B'S IN THE PAPER IF YOU DID EXTRA WORK, YOU COULD STILL GET AN A IN THE CLASS.

NEVER SUBMITTED ANYTHING TO CITY AT THE CENTER.

36. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique?

OPINION PAPER ABOUT THE ATOMIC BOMB. IT WAS MY OPINION SO IT COULDN'T BE RIGHT OR WRONG.

I HAVE A NAME FOR A NOVEL I WANT TO WRITE, "AMOR NEGRO." IN THE D.R. THERE'S THIS NEGATIVE ASSOCIATION WITH THE HAITIANS AND IT IS SUCH A...LIVING HERE AND GOING BACK HOME (THAT IS HOME) GOING BACK AND SEEING THAT RELATIONSHIP IS SO PAINFUL. IT IS SIMILAR TO HOW WE'RE TREATED HERE. THERE ARE SO MANY SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE TWO CULTURES, WHICH IS PART OF WHAT IS SO PAINFUL TO ME. THE WHOLE POLITICAL SYSTEM IS DIFFERENT.

WHY HAS DR BEEN MORE STABLE?

WE'RE NOT THAT STABLE, IT IS STILL A VERY POOR COUNTRY, I THINK IT IS THE REALTIONSHIP THAT WE'VE HAD WITH THE US AND THE DUMMY RELATIONSHIP WE'VE HAD WITH THAT GOVERNMENT.

37. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain.

I TOLD MY SISTER THIS IDEA AND SHE'S THIS GREAT PERSON WHO THINKS I COULD DO ANYTHING AND I WAS TELLING ONE OF MY CO-WORKERS AND SHE ENCOURAGED ME TO DO IT.

AND YOU FEEL CONFIDENT THAT YOU CAN DO THIS?

IT WOULD PROBABLY BE THIS WHOLE BIG MESS! I WOULD LEAVE IT UP TO THE PUBLISHERS TO CLEAN IT UP BUT I WOULDN'T WANT TO GIVE THEM SO MUCH POWER THAT THEY CHANGE WHAT I THINK. I'M NOT CONFIDENT ABOUT WRITING THE NOVEL BUT I KNOW I HAVE THIS IDEA.

WILL YOU HAVE THE SAME KIND OF CONFIDENCE WRITING YOUR PSYCHOLOGY PAPER FOR YOUR SUMMER CLASS?

NO. I DON'T KNOW THIS PROFESSOR.

SO ACADEMIC WRITING IS WRITING FOR SOMEONE ELSE.

YES.

HOW COULD THAT CHANGE?

I DON'T KNOW. YOU'RE ALWAYS WRITING FOR THAT PERSON IN FRONT OF THE ROOM.

MY THEORY IS THAT WE HAVE A DIFFERENT KIND OF ATTENTIVENESS TO WRITING THAT WE HAVE A PERSONAL INVESTMENT IN. HOW IS IT YOU BRING THESE TWO REALMS TOGETHER? [THE PERSONAL AND THE ACADEMIC]

38. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

39. Is the quality of the writing in this piece different from other things you have written? If yes, how?

40. Did you imagine an audience for this piece of writing?

41. Were you a part of the audience you imagined for this piece of writing?

42. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

MOST HELPFUL COMMENTS GIVEN REGARDING HER WRITING?

THE MOST HELPFUL ARE WHEN I'M TOLD EXACTLY WHAT I COULD HAVE DONE BETTER AND THEN I'M GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO THAT. BUT WHEN I'M CRITIQUED WITH "OH, YOU COULD HAVE DONE THIS," AND THEN HAVING THE CHANCE TO RE-WRITE IT RESPONDING TO THOSE SUGGESTIONS.

WORST COMMENTS?

NONE. JUST GIVING ME A GRADE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I DID WRONG, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I DID WELL IN.

DO WE HAVE A DIFFERENT WAY OF SEEING OUR WRITING WHEN WE SEE IT PUBLISHED?

WHAT WAS YOUR CHILDHOOD AMBITION?

TO BE A FASHION DESIGNER. I WENT TO FIT HIGH SCHOOL FOR TWO YEARS AND THEN I HAD TO TRANSFER OUT. MY MOM COULDN'T PAY FOR ALL OF THE SUPPLIES.

IS WRITING AT ALL LIKE SEWING?

YES, I THINK SO. THE MORE YOU DO IT, THE BETTER YOU GET.

Susan

Highest Degree Earned: H.S. DIPLOMA

Years Enrolled in College Courses: TRINITY COLLEGE (2 YEARS); 1.5 YEARS AT
CWE

Age: 27

Gender:

Student's Educational Background: PS 208, BROOKLYN; IS 285, BROOKLYN; THE
LAWRENCEVILLE SCHOOL

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: TESTED OUT OF COMP CLASSES AT
TRINITY

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction: LOTS OF WRITING AT PREP
SCHOOL

Occupation: HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE/PROGRAM OFFICER

Years at Current Job: 3 YEARS

Types of Writing Performed at Job: GRANTS, E-MAILS, LETTERS; DO A LOT OF
RESEARCH AND RESEARCH SUMMARIES. THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO COME
IN WHO ARE GRADUATE STUDENTS AND KP HELPS

NCHR: NATIONAL COALITION FOR HAITIAN RIGHTS

Ethnicity/Family Background: BOTH PARENTS HAITIAN, BORN HAITI; KP BORN
US

Home Language(s): BILINGUAL (FRENCH CREOLE AND ENGLISH)

Parents' Occupations: MOTHER: NURSE; FATHER: ENGINEER/BUSINESSMAN

Parents' Educational Background: MOTHER: B.A.; FATHER: B.S./M.A. MOTHER
ALSO HAS UPPER LEVEL COURSES FOR HER JOB

CAME TO US IN EARLY 20S

Literacy Narrative: History and Current Definitions

1. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term? KNOWLEDGEABLE; CREATIVE; I DON'T KNOW, I'VE NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT QUESTION BEFORE, IT'S AN INTERESTING QUESTION

How do you define the term author? SOMEONE WHO HAS, WHO DECIDES TO, AN AUTHOR IS A PERSON WHO IS WILLING TO SHARE THEIR IDEAS. I THINK A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO DON'T SHARE THEIR IDEAS DO WRITE BUT AN AUTHOR IS SOMEONE WHO PUTS THEMSELVES OUT THERE. OR MAYBE PERHAPS THE PERSON WHO HAS MORE PRACTICE.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

2. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term? WRITER IS, I WOULD SAY, AUTHOR AND WRITER ARE BOTH, THERE ARE PUBLISHED AUTHORS AND UNPUBLISHED. CREATIVE, FREE SPIRIT. WRITER, HMMM, A PERSON WHO IS VERY OBSERVANT.

How do you define the term writer? THESE ARE SOME HARD QUESTIONS! I THINK ANYONE COULD BE A WRITER, IT'S JUST AN EXPRESSION OF IDEAS AND THOUGHTS. **IS EVERYONE A WRITER?** I DON'T THINK EVERYONE IS A WRITER; NOT EVERYONE WRITES, NO EVERYONE HAS THE ABILITY TO WRITE.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

3. Do you consider yourself an author? NO.

4. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

5. If no, why not? What would make you an author?

BECAUSE I HAVE YET TO ACKNOWLEDGE MYSELF AS AN AUTHOR. THERE ARE THINGS THAT I'VE WRITTEN THAT, BUT NO, I'VE NEVER WRITTEN ANYTHING OUTSIDE THE PURVIEW OF CLASS OR WORK, WHICH HAS JUST BEEN FOR ME TO SHARE MYSELF.

6. Do you consider yourself a writer? YES, DEFINITELY.

7. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?) I WOULD SAY IT IS MORE WORK AND SCHOOL. AT HOME, I AM MORE...BUT I THINK DUE TO TECHNOLOGY WRITING HAS CREEPED INTO MY HOME LIFE. WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I NEVER WROTE AT HOME. MY FATHER READ A LOT. MY FATHER WAS A KNOW IT ALL; HE WAS A LAWYER IN HAITI AND HE GRADUATED VERY YOUNG IN HAITI AND HE LOVED TO READ LAW REVIEWS AND JOURNALS (AMERICAN ONES).

8. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?

9. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities? AN AUTHOR IS SOMEONE WHO SEES IT BEYOND A HOBBY, IT IS WHO THEY ARE, IT IS A CAREER; A WRITER, IT IS A PASSION, IT IS OUTSIDE OF WORK.

10. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write? NO ONE ENCOURAGED ME TO WRITE IN TERMS OF "BE A WRITER" OR AN AUTHOR. MAYBE THEY ENCOURAGE ME TO WRITE FOR SCHOOL AND TO BE ABLE TO EXPRESS MYSELF WELL AND BE ARTICULATE BUT NOTHING IN TERMS OF WRITING A BOOK.

IF I WERE TO WRITE A BOOK, IT WOULD NOT BE FICTIONAL, IT WOULD BE SCHOLARLY. "YOU'LL DO SOMETHING LIKE MLK BUT NOTHING OUTSIDE THAT, NO POETRY."

11. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author?

12. Do you remember anyone reading to you when you were very young? MY MOTHER READ TO ME ALL OF THE TIME. I STARTED TO READ VERY YOUNG. I WAS THE FIRST CHILD AND I STARTED READING AT 2 1/2 OR 3 AND SHE WAS AMERICANIZED AND SHE WASN'T WORKING AT THE TIME AND WE SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME TOGETHER.

BIBLE STORIES WERE MY FAVORITE. MY MOTHER LOVED TO READ THE BIBLE TO ME. AT THREE THERE IS A VIDEO OF ME READING FROM THE BIBLE.

13. What is your earliest memory involving writing? I WENT TO SCHOOL IN HAITI FOR A YEAR WHEN I WAS 3/4 AND IN HAITI SCHOOL STARTS AT 3. KIDS ARE EXPECTED TO WEAR UNIFORMS, LEARN ALPHABET, BEHAVE. MORE TO TRAIN THE KIDS TO BEHAVE. THAT WAS MY FIRST EXPOSURE TO WRITING. ALSO, I WAS LEFT HANDED AND THEY SWITCHED ME. I AM STILL LEFT-HANDED, BUT I WRITE WITH MY RIGHT HAND. THEY MAKE YOU WRITE LITTLE THINGS LIKE WHAT IS YOUR CAT'S NAME AND I REMEMBER DOING THAT AND GETTING PERFECT HANDWRITING. I REMEMBER GOING TO KINDERGARTEN AND I WAS A VERY CREATIVE CHILD AND I WOULD RAMBLE AND IN KINDERGARTEN, I REMEMBER WRITING AND WRITING WHEREAS THE OTHER KIDS DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO HOLD A PENCIL. I ALSO HAD THE BEST HANDWRITING. NOW, I JUST SCRIBBLE. I DON'T PAY ANY ATTENTION TO HOW IT LOOKS BECAUSE IT WAS SO IMPORTANT TO ME FOR A LONG TIME THAT I HAD PERFECTLY NEAT HANDWRITING. IT WAS AROUND THE TIME THAT MY PARENTS SEPARATED THAT MY HANDWRITING BECAME MORE SLOPPY. AROUND THAT TIME, I BECAME A LESS MOTIVATED STUDENT. I GOT THE WORK IN ON TIME, BUT I JUST WASN'T INVESTED IN IT; NO ONE EXPECTED ANYTHING FROM ME I WAS THE ONE BLACK KID AT THE ALL WHITE SCHOOL. NOBODY EVER QUESTIONED MY GRADES. WRITING BECAME THAT WAY TOO. I KNEW EXACTLY WHAT THEY EXPECTED OF ME AND I NEVER WENT BEYOND THAT. THEY NEVER EXPECTED MORE THAN THAT. I FIGURED THAT OUT VERY EARLY ON.

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

14. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.

I THINK AT CWE, NOT AT TRINITY. BECAUSE THE PROFESSORS ARE A LITTLE MORE UNDERSTANDING BUT ALSO VERY ENCOURAGING AND THEY'RE NOT PATRONIZING AND THEY DON'T HAVE PRESET NOTIONS OF WHAT STUDENTS' ABILITIES ARE. IT IS ALSO THE STUDENTS HERE. THEY ARE SO HUNGRY. I USED TO TAKE A LOT OF THINGS FOR GRANTED. SCHOOL WAS EASY, I DID WELL ON THE SAT'S, I HAD A FULL SCHOLARSHIP AT A TOP LIBERAL ARTS SCHOOL, I KNEW I WOULD GET A GOOD JOB. MY FUTURE WAS NOTHING I EVER HAD TO WORRY ABOUT. I DIDN'T EVEN ENJOY THE WHOLE LEARNING PROCESS BECAUSE THE CURRICULUM ITSELF NEVER MOTIVATED ME. AT CWE THE CURRICULUM IS MORE, EVEN THOUGH I WENT TO A LIBERAL ARTS SCHOOL AND THEY CLAIMED TO BE LIBERAL, THEY WERE LIBERAL, BUT NOT PROGRESSIVE. YOU'RE TAUGHT FROM A VERY NARROW PERSPECTIVE. TRINITY IS LIKE A BOWDOIN OR HAVERFORD. 1500 STUDENTS.

I LEFT TRINITY BECAUSE MY SISTER GOT VERY ILL. THEY NEEDED STABILIZING SUPPORT AND I FELT GUILTY. LIKE I SAID, I TOOK A LOT OF THINGS FOR GRANTED. I HATED TRINITY. I'M ABLE TO GO BACK NOW BUT I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK.

15. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain.

ACADEMIC WRITING: NOW THAT I'M LESS, I APPROACH IT IN A DIFFERENT WAY. IN COLLEGE IT WAS A CHORE, THERE WAS A LOT OF PROCRASTINATION GOING ON AND LAST MINUTE STUFF. NOW, IT IS VERY MUCH WHEN I HAVE TIME TO DO IT, I USE IT AND I DON'T HAVE AS MUCH TIME. THERE'S A TEN PAGE PAPER DUE, I KNOW...AT TRINITY WE HAD MANY MANY PAPERS DUE. IF I TOOK A SOCIOLOGY COURSE I WAS EXPECTED TO WRITE 3 OR 4 PAPERS PLUS THE EXAM. IT WAS A LITANY OF WORK. DOING THAT MANY PAPERS DID NOT MAKE THE PAPERS ANY BETTER, IT JUST MADE YOU MORE PROFICIENT AT DOING THEM. I TOOK A POETRY SEMINAR AND I TOOK AN ADVANCED POETRY SEMINAR....TOOK A SEMINAR WITH TONI MORRISON IN HS. HANDED IN ONE PAPER AND SHE WROTE BACK, "YOU DON'T SOUND ANYTHING LIKE YOUR POETRY." AND IT WAS SO TRUE BECAUSE I HAD JUST LEARNED TO MIMIC EVERYBODY ELSE. IT HURT BUT I KNEW IT TO BE TRUE. IN THE PROCESS OF WRITING I WAS SO OUTSIDE MY HEAD, IT'S NOT EVEN ME TALKING IT WAS ANOTHER PERSON OR SOMETHING I'D READ SOUNDS LIKE. AND IT NEVER DISTURBED ME AT ALL, IT WAS MY PROCESS. **DID YOU THEN CHANGE?** NO. DO YOU ACTUALLY WANT TO HEAR HOW I SOUND? I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT MY OWN PERSONAL VOICE IS TOO FLAGRANT OR ARTSY. ONE OF MY MAIN THINGS AT CWE IS TRYING TO CHANGE MY RELATIONSHIP TO ACADEMIC WRITING. I FEARED I WOULDN'T BE INTERESTED IN THE COURSES IF I WERE ENROLLED AT A MORE TRADITIONAL CAMPUS, I.E., CCNY, BC. I WOULD FINISH BUT I

WOULD FINISH WITH THIS GUT WRENCHING FEELING THAT IT WAS NOT WORTH MY TIME.

WORK: NO. WELL, ACTUALLY, IT IS MORE MY OWN VOICE BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO BE AN ARDENT ADVOCATE AND MY PASSION FOR THE TOPIC COMES ACROSS. AND I HAVE NOTHING TO COMPARE IT TO; IT IS ALL ORIGINAL. **IS THERE A CLEAR AUDIENCE FOR THIS WRITING?** IT HELPS THAT I HAVE AN AUDIENCE FOR THAT WRITING. IT DOES HELP BECAUSE I KNOW EXACTLY HOW I WANT TO GET MY IDEAS ACROSS AND I'M A PRETTY MOTIVATING PERSON AND IN THAT WAY THE KIND OF PERSON I AM, A NATURAL ADVOCATE, I KNOW EXACTLY THE LANGUAGE TO USE AND IT WORKS WELL ON PAPER.

IF I WROTE FOR OTHER STUDENTS I THINK I WOULD FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE EXPLAINING IT SIMPLY AND NOT BE BOUND BY HOW IT IS SUPPOSED TO BE STRUCTURED. I KNOW LOGIC IS VERY SIMPLE AND RATIONAL BUT WHAT I FIND ABOUT ACADEMIC WRITING IS THAT IT IS NOT SIMPLISTIC, IT IS VERY VERBOSE. IT IS ABOUT HOW WITTY YOU CAN BE, OR HOW OBSCURE, THAT'S NOT IT EXACTLY, HOW UNIQUE YOUR IDEAS ARE. IT IS NEVER STRAIGHTFORWARD AND LET ME EXPLAIN IT SIMPLY. I'VE NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET A PROFESSOR WHO FELT THAT WAY. **EVEN IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES?** NO, NOT AS MUCH IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES. WRITING FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IS VERY...CUT AND DRY; THIS IS WHAT I OBSERVED, THIS IS WHY I BELIEVE THIS.

16. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

I CAN SAY THAT I'D READ ALL OF THOSE TEXTS BEFORE OUR CLASS. NO, I'D READ THE ILIAD, NOT THE ODYSSEY IN HS. SO I CAN'T SAY THAT IT WAS SO INSPIRING TO ME.

I GUESS BECAUSE I DON'T THINK MYSELF AS AN AUTHOR OR AS SOMEONE WHO WILL PUBLISH WORK I DON'T BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF ASPIRATION.

UNTIL RECENTLY, I DIDN'T HAVE MANY ASPIRATIONS AND AT THE SAME TIME MY ASPIRATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE SAME: HOW CAN I DO A JOB AND HELP OTHER PEOPLE WHILE I'M HELPING MYSELF. FOR ME, BECAUSE I ALWAYS SAW IT AS HAVING TO GO BACK HOME AND BE HOME, I DIDN'T

HAVE REAL ASPIRATIONS. IT NEVER SEEMED WORTHWHILE BECAUSE WHATEVER I WAS—A DOCTOR OR LAWYER, I WOULD STILL HAVE TO BE HOME. THIS IS NOT FUN, SO REGARDLESS OF WHAT I DO, I'M GOING TO BE STUCK HERE ANYWAY. NOW THAT I FEEL THAT I'M A LITTLE MORE EGOTISTICAL AND HAVE SOME PRIDE THAT NEVER EXISTED BEFORE, I REALIZE THAT I MAY WANT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE WANT. TRAVELING AND RICH INTELLECTUAL LIFE I KNEW I COULD NEVER HAVE BECAUSE THOSE PEOPLE WERE OUTSIDE OF THE SMALL WORLD I LIVED IN.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

17. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing?

AT WORK: YES

AT SCHOOL: NO, EXCEPT FOR TEACHER

18. If yes, who/what makes up this audience? IN HUM. 101 YOU MADE UP THE AUDIENCE. I WAS NOT WRITING FOR MYSELF, NOT AT ALL. I NEVER THINK OF WRITING FOR MYSELF IN THAT SITUATION. IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME. AND IT JUST NEVER DID BECAUSE I HAVE MY WRITING THAT I DO FOR MYSELF AND IT IS SUCH A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE. I TEND TO BE VERY POETIC AND IMMIGRANT LIKE..WE EXPRESS OURSELVES THROUGH STORIES, PARABLES, TRYING TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE BY DRAWING THEM IN, I WOULD WRITE SOMETHING MUCH MORE POETIC IF I WERE WRITING FOR MYSELF.

CAN YOU IMAGINE A WAY OF COMBINING AN ANALYTICAL PAPER AND YOUR OWN VOICE? I'VE READ THINGS BY OTHER PEOPLE THAT HAVE DONE THIS , LIKE JAMES BALDWIN, CORNELL WEST, AND THEY TEND TO USE THEIR VOICE IN THE WRITING, MLK. AND I THINK, OK KATHY, IF THEY CAN DO IT, THEN [I CAN]. IT IS A QUESTION OF BEING COMFORTABLE WITH MY VOICE AND WITH BEING HEARD. THAT IS WHAT I HAVE MORE OF A PROBLEM WITH. I DON'T WANT TO BE RESTRICTED EITHER WAY, EITHER THAT I HAVE TO SOUND LIKE BELL HOOKS OR THE MOST TRADITIONAL CRITIC. IT WOULD HELP ME FIGURE OUT ME. I WOULD BE MORE COMFORTABLE IN CERTAIN SPHERES. IF YOU'RE COMFORTABLE WITH YOUR VOICE AT ALL TIMES, PARTICULARLY FOR A BICULTURAL PERSON, WHICH I AM BECAUSE I GO BETWEEN DIFFERENT GROUPS. IN HS I WAS NEVER MYSELF. I WAS JUST A PLAYER ON THE STAGE. AND THAT'S HOW I ALWAYS FELT; LINES BEING GIVEN TO ME, I'M BEING FED LINES AND I'M JUST PLAYING A ROLE. I'VE NEVER HAD FRIENDS IN HS. I DISSOCIATED MYSELF. I NEVER SAW ANYONE AS TRULY A FRIEND BECAUSE I WAS NEVER MYSELF...THERE WERE ONLY FIVE

BLACK CHILDREN AT THE SCHOOL AND THEY WERE FROM A VERY DIFFERENT BACKGROUND. I WAS THE KATHY I FELT WAS EXPECTED. I NEVER BROUGHT MY HOME LIFE TO THE TABLE AND HOW I EXPRESSED MYSELF AT HOME WAS NEVER HOW I EXPRESSED MYSELF AT SCHOOL. I NEVER HAD A MOMENT WHEN I DIDN'T DO THAT.

HOW DID YOU NOT DISAPPEAR INTO THAT WORLD ENTIRELY? DO YOU KNOW WHAT KEPT ME FROM SUCCEEDING, BECAUSE I WAS PRETTY SUCCESSFUL IN THAT WORLD, IT WAS THAT MY HOME LIFE WAS SO CLOSE. IF WE DIDN'T HAVE AN INDEPENDENT CULTURE, I AM THE ELDEST CHILD THERE WAS A LOT EXPECTED OF ME, MY MOTHER WAS STRUGGLING, MY SIBLINGS WERE STRUGGLING AND I FELT THAT RESPONSIBILITY, I FELT THAT TUG. EDUCATION WAS NEVER EXPLAINED TO ME AS A WAY OUT BUT AS A WAY TO HELP THIS SITUATION. TO DISAPPEAR INTO THAT WORLD WAS NEVER A CHOICE. I WAS VERY MUCH AN OUTSIDER IN THE WORLD I GREW UP IN.

HOW COULD WE DO A BETTER JOB OF ENCOURAGING "AUTHENTIC EXPRESSION" IN ACADEMIC WRITING? I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO INTRODUCE THE IDEA OF EXPRESSING THEMSELVES AUTHENTICALLY AND BE CLEAR THAT YOU WANT AN AUTHENTIC EXPRESSION. I THINK A LOT OF PROFESSORS, WHEN THEY COME IN THE WRITING PART OF THE COURSE IS NOT SOMETHING THEY REALLY FOCUS ON AND THEY LEAVE IT UP TO THE STUDENTS TO DECIDE WHAT THEIR WRITING WILL LOOK LIKE AND THE STUDENTS PROCEED BASED ON WHAT THEY'VE BEEN TAUGHT BEFORE. THAT ALSO ENCOURAGES PLAGIARISM. HOW TO SUMMARIZE THEIR IDEAS WITHOUT USING THE WORDS FROM THE BOOK. THEIR VOICE GETS STYMIED BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE A VOICE. THEY ARE TRYING TO THINK ABOUT WHAT ANOTHER PERSON WOULD SAY BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE A VOICE AND THEY GET FRUSTRATED AND IT BECOMES WRITER'S BLOCK.

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

19. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.]

20. Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing?

21. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then?
22. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this?

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

23. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34.

YES. POETRY PUBLISHED IN HS. I WAS VERY PROUD OF MYSELF. IT WAS VERY UNEXPECTED AND I TOOK THIS SEMINAR AND THE [POSITIVE FEEDBACK AND ENCOURAGEMENT] WERE UNEXPECTED AND WERE JUST INCREDIBLE. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT I COULD ACTUALLY SAY THAT I WAS HUNGRY AND FEELING THAT I WAS COMFORTABLE THAT THIS WAS SOMETHING THAT WAS NATURAL. NOW, I LOOK AT IT AND I SAY, "WOW I DID THAT." IT JUST CAME FROM A PLACE....WELL IT WAS A FEW PIECES, LIKE A LITTLE BOOKLET, ABOUT TWENTY OR TWENTY-ONE PIECES, MANY PIECES OF ONE LONG POEM. I STILL LIKE IT. IT STILL SURPRISES ME. IT FEELS SO EVER PRESENT. YOU THINK, I WAS 17/18 AND YOU THINK WHAT DID I KNOW, BUT STILL SPEAKS OF WHO I AM. IT IS LIKE GOING BACK IN YOUR JOURNALS BUT IT IS DIFFERENT WHEN IT IS PUBLISHED BECAUSE I WORKED A LOT HARDER ON THOSE THINGS; I DID A LOT OF EDITING. IT IS MORE OF ME BECAUSE IT IS NOT OFF THE TOP OF MY HEAD, I WROTE IT, I THOUGHT ABOUT IT AND THIS WAS EXACTLY HOW I WANTED IT TO BE.

24. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?

25. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain?

NO. IT JUST SEEMED LIKE A ONE-TIME THING. WRITING FOR THE NEWSPAPER WAS NOT THE SAME KIND OF THING. YOU KNOW, SCHOOL NEWSPAPER STUFF, GOSSIP, WE DIDN'T DO ANY HARD-HITTING NEWS AT MY SCHOOL NEWSPAPER.

HAVING STUFF PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSPAPER DIDN'T CHANGE HOW YOU WROTE OR YOUR ATTENTION TO WRITING? IT WAS LIKE ME WHEN I GO TO THE BEACH IN HAITI OR THE CARNIVAL, I ENJOY IT AND THIS IS WHO I AM, BUT THIS IS NOT FOREVER. THE POETRY. IT WAS NOT SOMETHING I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO REVISIT. IT WAS A PEAK EXPERIENCE. IT WAS NOT SOMETHING I OWNED. I KNEW IT HAPPENED. I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO REPLICATE THAT EXPERIENCE. I TOOK THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLES FOR GRANTED; IT WAS LIKE BEING ON THE YEARBOOK COMMITTEE. I DIDN'T WRITE IN MY OWN VOICE.

26. Did it change any part of your writing process?

NO, IT WAS TOO ONE OFF

27. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed?

NO

28. Did it change your understanding of audience?

NO

29. Did it change your relationship to reading?

NO

30. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?

NO

31. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]

32. Would you like to have a piece of writing published?

33. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing?

Would it make you a writer?

Would it make you an author?

34. What if I published one of your papers? Would that make you an author or a writer?

I WROTE ONE PAPER THAT I DID LIKE. IT WAS FOR A SOCIOLOGY CLASS. CALAGIONE TAUGHT THE CLASS BY NOT TEACHING DOWN. HE DEFINITELY ENCOURAGED THE STUDENTS TO ARISE TO THE READING. THE WORK WAS CROSS-CULTURAL, WOMEN, DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS, TRANSLATIONS, MALE WRITERS, YOU HAD A BREDTH OF VOICES. COLONIALISM AND CULTURE. SOME STUDENTS WERE NOT HAPPY WITH IT BECAUSE IT WAS NOT A SIMPLE. I THOUGHT I HAD TO PUT SOME WORK IN THIS PAPER BECAUSE I SO WANTED TO IMPRESS HIM WITH WHAT I KNEW. ORTHOGRAPHY OF HAITIAN CREOLE HAS YET TO BE DECIDED AND I THINK THE PROBLEM, THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM, IN THE CARIBBEAN ITSELF, BECAUSE CHILDREN ARE NEVER TAUGHT TO WRITE RESEARCH PAPERS OR ANALYTICAL ESSAYS. BUT THEY HAVE NO IDEA OF THAT. NO SENSE OF THE IDEA BETWEEN OPINION AND FACT. THEY CAN'T DO RESEARCH; IT IS ALL OPINION. I ALSO FEEL THAT SCHOOL IS TAUGHT IN FRENCH WHEREAS 95% OF HAITIANS DO NOT SPEAK FRENCH AT HOME AND THE ONLY TIME THEY EXPERIENCE THE FRENCH IS AT SCHOOL. YOU HAVE A HARD TIME LEARNING. THEY NEVER LEARN TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES THOUGHTFULLY IN THEIR SCHOOL LANGUAGE AND THEIR HOME LANGUAGE, CREOLE, THERE WAS NEVER ANY WRITTEN LANGUAGE FOR THE LONGEST TIME. THE GOVERNMENT HAS YET TO MAKE IT AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE AND THEY DON'T HAVE A SPECIFIC WAY OF WRITING IT SO VOCABULARY CAN'T DEVELOP. THAT'S THE ONLY PAPER I CAN SAY THAT I HAVE A LITTLE PIECE OF ME IN. IT WAS SOMETHING THAT I WAS INTERESTED IN.

35. What if we as a class published a book ? Would that make you an author or a writer?

IT WOULD BE LIKE, OH MY WRITING IS OUR FOR EVERYONE TO SEE. I GUESS IT WOULD BE OK, I WOULD BE COMFORTABLE WITH THAT ONE PAPER.

36. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique? SEE ABOVE.

WAS EVERYTHING IN THE CALAGIONE PAPER BETTER? YEAH, I GUESS IN TERMS OF FORMAT, NOT IN TERMS OF GRAMMAR. MY VOICE DID COME THROUGH A LITTLE BECAUSE THE LANGUAGE WAS MORE STRAIGHTFORWARD BECAUSE I KNEW THE POINTS I WANTED TO MAKE. SO YEAH, DEFINITELY AND I HAD SO MANY POINTS AND SO MANY THOUGHTS SO I DIDN'T HAVE TO FLUB, SO I DIDN'T HAVE TO WRITE FOR WRITING'S SAKE.

37. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain.

38. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

39. Is the quality of the writing in this piece different from other things you have written? If yes, how?

YES

40. Did you imagine an audience for this piece of writing?

YES

41. Were you a part of the audience you imagined for this piece of writing?

YES

42. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

WHEN I'M READING, I READ SO MUCH THAT I'M INTERESTED BUT THERE ARE LOTS OF THINGS I WRITE THAT I'M NOT SO INTERESTED IN.

CAN WE BE INTERESTED IN THINGS OTHER THAN OURSELVES?
HOW DO WE FOSTER AN INTEREST IN THINGS OTHER THAN AUTOBIOGRAPHY?
HOW DO WE RELATE AUTOBIOGRAPHY TO ANALYTICAL THINKING?
CAN YOU LEARN ANALYTICAL THINKING FROM THINKING ABOUT OURSELVES?

IT IS A MATTER OF PEOPLE BEING MORE INTERESTED IN WHAT THEY ARE INTERESTED IN, MAYBE NOT EVEN INTERESTED, IT IS WHAT YOU ARE COMFORTABLE WITH, YOU DON'T HAVE THE CUES TO KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE TO PUT HERE AND HERE WHEREAS IT IS SOMETHING YOU RECOGNIZE ALREADY THEN YOU KNOW. IF IT IS SOMETHING THAT IT IS OUTSIDE SOMEONE YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO MAKE IT RELEVANT TO YOU. SOME PEOPLE SEE THINGS SO OUTSIDE OF THEMSELVES THAT THEY DON'T SEE ANY RELEVANCE. THAT'S WHAT I SEE ABOUT WRITERS, THEY KNOW HOW TO MAKE EVERY SINGLE THING RELATE AND HOW TO EXPRESS IT BACK. I LOVE READING JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING AND I ENJOY WHAT THE AUTHORS AND WRITERS GIVE TO ME BUT I DON'T SEE MYSELF DOING THAT. **WHY DON'T YOU FEEL PASSIONATE ENOUGH TO WRITE ABOUT IT?** EXCEPT AT WORK BECAUSE IT HAS SOME PURPOSE.

HOW COULD PURPOSE BE BETTER INSTATED IN SCHOOL WRITING? I THINK THAT PURPOSE COULD BE BETTER INSTATED IF IT WERE LIKE HOW YOU'RE DOING A DISSERTATION AND DOING RESEARCH AND BEING PART OF SOMETHING; IT ISN'T WRITING FOR WRITING'S SAKE THERE IS SOME PURPOSE TO IT. I KNOW THERE IS A HS WHERE THE WHOLE CURRICULUM IS SET UP THAT WAY, AROUND ONE PROJECT. SOMETHING LIKE AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY CLASS, BUT NOT AUTOBIOGRAPHY, THE WHOLE CLASS IS ABOUT ONE THING AND WE'RE RESEARCHING THIS.

JR NEVER QUESTIONED THAT THERE WAS A PURPOSE.

KP: FOR ME, I WAS SELF-MOTIVATING. I WAS INTERESTED IN THOSE THINGS AND I ENJOYED HAVING INTELLECTUAL DISCUSSIONS BUT OUTSIDE OF ME I WAS BEING TOLD THAT LIFE WAS ABOUT GETTING ON WITH THINGS IN THE WORLD. AS A CULTURE: IF YOU LOOK AT AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS, MINORITY STUDENTS NOT INCLUDING ASIANS, AND WHAT I FOUND WAS THAT—FOR YOU THE PURPOSE WAS TO ENRICH YOURSELF—BUT FOR MINORITY STUDENTS IT IS FOR ADVANCEMENT NOT TO BE ENRICHED. YOU ALSO FELT PART OF A LARGER COMMUNITY, YOU FELT CONNECTED TO THAT VOICE AND THAT YOU WILL FEEL A PART OF

IT. WHEN YOU'RE THE OTHER, THAT YOU'RE NOT AN ACTIVE PART OF THAT DISCOURSE, OR YOU FEEL THAT YOU ARE NOT OR YOU ARE TOLD THAT YOU ARE NOT. IT MAY NOT BE YOUR VOICE, AND I UNDERSTAND THAT TO BE TRUE, BUT YOU FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE ADOPTING IT BECAUSE IT IS SOMETHING THAT WHEN YOU GO BACK TO YOUR PRIVATE LIFE , MOST PEOPLE YOU KNOW HAVE ADOPTED THAT VOICE AND IT IS NOT A TRUE BI-CULTURAL EXPERIENCE.

JR: I DON'T THINK IT WAS BI-LINGUAL, BUT IT WAS BI-CULTURAL, MY UPBRINGING.

KP: THE STUDENT HAS TO MAKE A CHOICE, EITHER TO DISAPPEAR AND THIS IS WHO YOU BECOME OR TO GO BACK AND YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS NO IN-BETWEEN.

JR: ARGUES THAT THERE IS SPACE IN THE ACADEMY FOR IN-BETWEEN

KP: IT JUST IS NOT SOMETHING THAT MOST STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO. WHO DO YOU MODEL YOUR BEHAVIOR AFTER? THEY USUALLY GIVE ONE TYPE OF MODEL AND THERE IS MORE THAN ONE MODEL. THE KIDS HAVE THE ABILITY TO DO THE WORK, THE ISSUE IS NOT HAVING THE ABILITY TO MARRY WHO THEY ARE AND EXPRESS WHO THEY ARE WELL ENOUGH TO DO THAT AMOUNT OF WORK WITHOUT...THEY WOULD EITHER HAVE TO PLAGIARIZE OR COPY. KIDS FROM PUBLIC SCHOOLS BECAME OVERWHELMED BY THE EXPECTATIONS AND THEY WERE TRYING SO HARD TO DO WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF THEM THAT THEY HAD PROBLEMS. THEY DIDN'T COMMUNICATE WELL WITH THEIR PROFESSORS. THEY NEVER SAW THEMSELVES AS PEOPLE TO THE PROFESSORS OR THE ADMINISTRATION SO IF YOU HAVE A DISCONNECT WITH THE PROFESSORS AND WITH THE CURRICULUM IT IS SO DISSOCIATIVE. HOW DO YOU STRUCTURE THE CURRICULUM INSIDE THIS KIND OF SCHOOL. IT IS CHANGING THE CULTURE OF THE SCHOOL. IF YOU TEACH LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES THE SAME WAY YOU TEACH AMERICAN HISTORY, YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE THE SAME PROBLEMS.

I SEE MORE PURPOSE, THIS IS WHY I LIKE CWE, EVERYONE IS STRUGGLING AND IF I'M A LITTLE BIT LUCKIER THAN OTHERS I HAVE TO TAKE THAT AS A GIFT.

Patricia

Highest Degree Earned: GED, 1996

Years Enrolled in College Courses: WENT TO BRONX CC FOR TRAINING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT TRAINING THAT TOOK 6 MONTHS. STARTED THAT IN 1996. THAT'S HOW I GOT MY GED. STARTED AT CWE 2003.

Age: 26

Gender: F

Student's Educational Background: LEFT H.S. AFTER 10TH GRADE

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: TOOK SHAKESPEARE CLASS IN HS. NO COMPOSITION. CORE HUMANITIES 1 AND 2; ENGLISH COMPOSITION.

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction:

Occupation: ASST. TEACHER, DAYCARE, 15TH ST., NYC

Years at Current Job:

Types of Writing Performed at Job:

Ethnicity/Family Background: BLACK. MOTHER BORN IN BELIZE. FATHER BORN IN US.

Home Language(s):

Parents' Occupations: MOTHER: HOUSE CLEANER, SELF-EMPLOYED
FATHER: IN ARMY

Parents' Educational Background: MOTHER HAS B.S. IN NURSING FROM BELIZE
FATHER: NO INFO

Literacy Narrative: History and Current Definitions

1. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term? WRITING

How do you define the term author? A CREATIVE PERSON

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.) TEACHERS, FRIENDS WHO ARE WRITERS

2. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term?
WORDS

How do you define the term writer?

SOMEONE WHO'S ABLE TO PUT THEIR THOUGHTS DOWN ON PAPER

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.) PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

3. Do you consider yourself an author? NO, I WAS THINKING ABOUT THAT BECAUSE WHEN I SAW TEWWG, SINCE I WROTE MY ESSAY, I'VE BEEN WANTING TO GO BACK TO IT AND TRY TO ANALYZE IT MORE AND THEN TRY TO GET IT INTO SOME KIND OF SCHOLARSHIP TYPE THING BUT I HAVEN'T DONE THAT. I DON'T THINK I WORK AS HARD AS AUTHORS DO. I KIND OF DO MY WRITING, READ IT OVER AND HAND IT IN. I DON'T LOOK BACK TO IT.
4. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?) WHEN I GET IN THE MOOD TO JUST WRITE WITHOUT SOMEONE GIVING ME AN ASSIGNMENT.... A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO, I HAD A BOOK, AN EMPTY NOTEBOOK AND I DECIDED TO KEEP ONE AS A JOURNAL AND EVERYDAY TO WRITE WHATEVERS IN MY HEAD AND SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE WRITING POETRY. SO WHENEVER I GET THOSE FEELINGS, THAT'S WHEN I FEEL LIKE, SEE USUALLY, THIS IS WHAT AUTHORS DO, THEY HAVE IDEAS CONSTANTLY AND THEY GO TO WRITING ALL OF THE TIME.

I LEARNED HOW TO ANALYZE A READING FROM YOUR CLASS. I DIDN'T QUITE GET IT UNTIL YOUR CLASS.

BEFORE I USED TO WRITE THE INTRODUCTION AND THEN THE THESIS STATEMENT AND JUST KEEP GOING. [HAS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF STRUCTURE OF ESSAY AS A WHOLE, AND LEADING THE READER THROUGH THE ESSAY.]

WHAT'S THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANALYSIS AND BEING AN AUTHOR?

5. If no, why not? What would make you an author?

6. Do you consider yourself a writer?

YES, WHEN I'M IN THAT MOOD.

7. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?) FEELING A CERTAIN WAY. IT'S FUNNY WHEN YOU SAY WHO'S A WRITER BECAUSE I FEEL LIKE EVERYBODY'S A WRITER; EVERYBODY WRITES.

WHAT ABOUT AUTHORS?

YOU HAVE AUTHORS WHO, LIKE WHEN I SAY EVERYBODY WRITES, EITHER THAT'S THEIR JOB, THEY HAVE TO WRITE LETTERS, THEY HAVE TO DO E-MAILS, THEY'RE NOT LOOKING AT IT AS ENJOYMENT, BUT AUTHORS, THIS IS SOMETHING THEY LOVE TO DO, WHICH IS WHY I THINK IT IS A LITTLE DIFFERENT.

8. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?

9. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities?

THERE ARE SIMILARITIES BECAUSE AUTHORS STILL WRITE. SO THAT'S A SIMILARITY. ALSO, BOTH DEAL WITH IDEAS.

10. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write?

YES. TEACHER. A 3RD GRADE TEACHER. WHEN I WAS YOUNGER I HAD A REALLY HARD TIME WITH READING AND WRITING BECAUSE WE MOVED AROUND A LOT AND I KEPT CHANGING SCHOOLS AND FINALLY WE SETTLED AT ONE PLACE IN QUEENS AND WE ACTUALLY STAYED THERE FOR A WHOLE YEAR. [MOVED TO NYC FROM CHICAGO WHEN SHE WAS 6] [RELATES VERY DETAILED STORY ABOUT BEING IN ONE CLASSROOM AND TEACHER THINKING SHE HAD PROBLEMS, BEING SENT TO A PSYCHIATRIST FOR TESTING AND PSYCHIATRIST SAYING SHE IS ENTIRELY NORMAL AND PERHAPS TEACHER SHOULD COME IN. MOTHER IS SUPPORTIVE DURING THIS EXPERIENCE. MOVED TO NEW CLASS AND THIS TEACHER "IS AWESOME." SHE REALIZED THAT PAM WAS NERVOUS ABOUT JOINING A NEW CLASS, WENT OUT TO TAKE HER INTO THE CLASSROOM, INTRODUCED HER TO THE STUDENTS AND MADE HER FEEL COMFORTABLE. IN THIS CLASSROOM, THERE WAS FREE-TIME WHEN STUDENTS WERE ENCOURAGED TO TALK AND SOCIALIZE, WHICH THEN MEANT THEY DID NOT TALK DURING CLASS. TEACHER FELT THAT STUDENTS NEEDED TO TALK, JUST NOT DURING CLASS. DURING THESE FREE PERIODS, THE TEACHER WORKED WITH PAM ON READING AND WRITING AND REALLY ENCOURAGED] EACH TIME SHE WOULD SAY "THIS IS REALLY GOOD, YOU'RE REALLY CATCHING UP, YOU'RE DOING A GOOD JOB."

11. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author? YOU. WHEN YOU READ THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE ZNH PAPER, YOU SAID "YOU SHOULD REALLY CONTINUE DOING THIS!"

[NO ONE IN FAMILY EVER SAID YOU SHOULD PUBLISH A BOOK.]

12. Do you remember anyone reading to you when you were very young?

13. What is your earliest memory involving writing?

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

14. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.

LESS MISTAKES ON GRAMMAR AND QUOTATIONS AND WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT AGAIN...CITATIONS..... GLEASON HAD A LOT OF WORK IN HER CLASS ALONG WITH TEACHING GRAMMAR AND I HAVE TO TAKE THINGS STEP BY STEP.

YOUR GRAMMAR IS EXCELLENT WHEN YOU'RE SPEAKING

I THINK THAT'S FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN FOR SO LONG. PARTICULARLY ONE EXPERIENCE, I WAS WORKING AT A DAYCARE CENTER AT WTC AND IT WAS A VERY PROFESSIONAL SETTING, YOU KNOW IT WAS A CORPORATE SCHOOL AND YOU HAD TO KNOW HOW TO SPEAK TO THE PARENTS PROFESSIONALLY AND I THINK THAT JOB HELPED ME TO BECOME A BETTER SPEAKER.

NOTICE A CHANGE WITH GRAMMAR IN WRITING FROM NOTICING IT IN SPEECH?

I'M MORE AWARE OF MY GRAMMAR NOW THAT I'M IN SPEECH CLASS. WE HAD ONE ASSIGNMENT IN G'S CLASS RELATED TO DIFFERENCES SPEAKING AND WRITING. I KNOW AT MY JOB, OR IF I'M ON AN INTERVIEW, I HAVE TO SPEAK MORE PROFESSIONALLY, NOT LIKE I'M SPEAKING TO MY SISTER OR MY FRIENDS. THIS [SPEECH CLASS] IS A MORE PROFESSIONAL SETTING, I HAVE TO SPEAK PROFESSIONALLY.

WHEN I WAS AT BXCC, I STARTED READING MAYA ANGELOU AND I THOUGHT WOW, WHAT WOULD IT BE

15. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain. I ACTUALLY ENJOYED IT. YOUR CLASS WAS IN MY SECOND SEMESTER. MY FIRST SEMESTER, I WAS A LOT MORE STRESSED OUT. I WAS CONFUSED ABOUT WHAT I WAS SUPPOSED TO DO. I ACTUALLY ENJOYED YOUR CLASS MORE. AND I USED TO TELL MY CLASSMATES, "YOU KNOW, IF I TOOK HER CLASS FIRST." YOU KNOW WHAT I THINK MADE THE DIFFERENCE IN YOUR CLASS IS THAT YOU ALLOWED EVERYONE TO BE THEIR OWN WRITER AND NOT LIKE, IN OTHER CLASSES, THEY WERE REALLY EXPECTING EXCELLENCE IN WRITING, LIKE A CERTAIN TYPE OF WAY OF WRITING. I BELIEVE PROF. X HAS A CERTAIN TYPE OF WAY OF WRITING THAT SHE LIKES TO READ AND WHAT SHOULD BE IN IT AND I WAS JUST NOT THAT TYPE OF WRITER. OF COURSE THE OTHER STUDENTS WHO WERE THAT TYPE OF WRITER AND I'M SURE THEY GOT A+'S. IN YOUR CLASS YOU KIND OF ACCEPTED EVERYONE'S WRITING WHILE STILL LETTING US KNOW WHAT THE STRUCTURE WAS. EVERYONE HAD IN THEIR PAPERS THEIR OWN VOICE.

DID IT CHANGE YOUR IDENTITY AS A WRITER: YES. I REALIZED WHAT TYPE OF WRITING I LIKED. IN THE FIRST CLASS THAT WE HAD AND WE HAD TO DO FREE WRITING WITH OUR EXPERIENCE OF WRITING, I KNEW THAT ONE OF THEM WAS WRITING POETRY AND SONGS BUT I WANTED TO LOOK PAST THAT TO LOOK AT WHAT KIND OF WRITING I LIKED OTHER THAN SONGS AND POEMS TO SOMETHING A LITTLE LONGER, MORE EXTENDED. I REALIZED THAT I LIKED WRITING COMIC STUFF. I DID ONE

WRITING [FOR FREEWRITING] AND I GAVE IT TO A CLASSMATE AND SHE LAUGHED AND THE PROFESSOR LAUGHED. I ENJOYED WRITING THAT AND I ALSO ENJOYED WRITING FICTION.

16. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT I READ A BOOK THAT WAS ANCIENT GREEK. AND IT WAS SO INTERESTING. IT REALLY WAS. I REALLY ENJOYED THAT BOOK. BECAUSE I ACTUALLY LIKE TO WATCH MOVIES LIKE THAT BUT I NEVER KNEW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FILMS THAT I WATCHED. I KNEW ABOUT OTHELLO BEFORE READING THE BOOK BECAUSE I HAD SEEN THE MOVIE. BUT IF YOU'D ASKED ME WHAT WAS SHAKESPEARE'S TIME, I COULDN'T HAVE TOLD YOU.

READING ZNH [MADE HER WANT TO WRITE A BOOK]. THAT'S WHY I WANTED TO GO BACK TO MY WRITING AND SEE WHAT I COULD CHANGE, ANALYZE MORE ON IT, REALLY BREAK IT DOWN.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

17. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing?

YEAH.

18. If yes, who/what makes up this audience?

WHEN I WRITE E-MAILS I CAN PICTURE THE PERSON'S FACE. ALSO, MAYBE NOTES, WHEN I'M AT MY JOB AND I KNOW I HAVE TO WRITE A PARENT A NOTE AND I THINK ABOUT WHAT THEIR REACTION IS GOING TO BE WHEN I WRITE "BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T NAP THEY'RE IN A CRANKY MOOD." I IMAGINE MAYBE WHAT THEIR REACTIONS WILL BE. WILL THEY BE OK, WILL THEY BE UPSET?

AND ACADEMIC PAPERS?

MY AUDIENCE FOR THOSE WAS THE CHARACTERS.

WRITING PAPERS FOR THE HUMANITIES CLASS?

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

19. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.] CLARITY, RHETORICAL STRATEGIES, TONE, STYLE “HOW I WORD CERTAIN....

Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing? ESPECIALLY WHEN I'M WRITING NOTES TO PARENTS. IF YOU WRITE AN ACCIDENT REPORT, YOU HAVE TO KNOW HOW TO WRITE IT SO IT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE “OH MY GOODNESS, MY CHILD IS ABUSED!” WE HAD A YOUNG GIRL WHO FELL OFF A SLIDE AND SHE BROKE HER COLLARBONE AND THE TEACHER HAD TO WRITE AN ACCIDENT REPORT AND THE TEACHER WAS LIKE, HOW AM I GOING TO WRITE THIS, I CAN'T JUST WRITE “SHE FELL OFF THE SLIDE.” EVEN THOUGH THAT'S WHAT IT IS YOU KIND OF WANT TO PIECE IT TOGETHER, BECAUSE SHE FELL , SHE CRIED FOR A MINUTE, AND THEN SHE WAS FINE, SHE STARTED RUNNING AROUND SO WE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THAT HER COLLAR BONE WAS BROKEN. SHE JUST STARTED RUNNING AROUND AGAIN. AND THEN ITS ALWAYS THE QUESTION OF “WELL, WHERE WAS THE TEACHER,” SO YOU KIND OF HAVE TO WRITE IT IN A WAY THAT “WELL, WE WERE AROUND, BUT BECAUSE OF ALL OF THE CHILDREN, WE CANNOT WATCH ONLY ONE CHILD, WE HAVE TO SKIM THE WHOLE PARK AND KEEP SKIMMING THE WHOLE PARK. AND OF COURSE, THE TEACHER DID SEE THAT THE CHILD WAS GOING TO FALL, BUT SHE WASN'T QUICK ENOUGH IN RUNNING TO TRY TO CATCH HER AS SHE FELL.

DID YOU HELP YOUR FRIEND WRITE THIS?

I HELPED HER. WHEN THINGS LIKE THAT HAPPEN, I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE TEACHER WRITE IT.

WHEN YOU WRITE THAT NOTE, ARE YOU YOURSELF OR ARE YOU SOMEONE ELSE?

I'M SOMEONE ELSE. I'M THE TEACHER. NOT MYSELF. NO.

WHEN YOU'RE WRITING E-MAIL ARE YOU YOURSELF?

YES.

WITH ACADEMIC PAPERS?

SOMETIMES. IT ALL DEPENDS. LIKE I THINK WHEN YOU ALLOWED US TO CHOOSE WHAT WE WANTED TO WRITE WITH EACH BOOK. FOR OTHELLO WE GOT TO PICK ONE OF THE LINES. FOR HOMER WE GOT TO CHOOSE. FOR ZNH WE GOT TO CHOOSE. SO I THINK THAT WAS MORE ME BECAUSE I GOT TO REALLY SAY OK THIS IS WHAT INTERESTS ME MORE. THAT'S HOW I KIND OF THINK THAT I WRITE BETTER, WHEN I GET TO CHOOSE SOMETHING THAT'S INTERESTING TO ME RATHER THAN "HERE, WRITE THIS."

20. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then? NO

[DEPENDS WHAT KIND OF WRITING. WITH NOTES:] WHEN I'M WRITING, I'M WRITING AS A TEACHER. WHEN I'M READING IT OVER, I'M READING IT OVER AS A PARENT.

EXPERIENCE THIS WITH ANY OTHER KIND OF WRITING? NO.

21. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this?

I DON'T KNOW. I HAVE A STRANGE WAY I DO THINGS. I REMEMBER YOU TALKING ABOUT YOU TALKING ABOUT AUDIENCE BUT I JUST KIND OF DO WHAT I DO. I THINK IF YOU THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT AUDIENCE IT KIND OF TAKES YOU AWAY FROM YOU.

WHAT ABOUT FREEWRITING:

YES. THOUGHT ABOUT HOW PEOPLE WOULD RESPOND.

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

22. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34. NO

23. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?

24. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain?

25. Did it change any part of your writing process?

26. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed?

27. Did it change your understanding of audience?

28. Did it change your relationship to reading?

29. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?

30. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]

31. Would you like to have a piece of writing published?

YES.

32. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing?

MAYBE.

Would it make you a writer? I DON'T KNOW YET. BECAUSE I THINK, IT DEPENDS ON WHAT MY REACTION WOULD BE AFTER. BECAUSE SOMETIMES YOU CAN GET IT PUBLISHED AND YOU CAN SAY, YEAH, THIS IS WHAT I WANT TO DO, USE MY CREATIVE THOUGHTS, BUT AFTERWARD MAYBE NOT.

BUT YOU SAID EVERYONE IS A WRITER?

Would it make you an author? NO. WHY WOULD IT MAKE ME AN AUTHOR? I GUESS IT WOULD MAKE ME AN AUTHOR, LIKE ANYTHING THAT'S PUBLISHED, IS THAT WHAT YOU MEAN?

WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU AN AUTHOR?

BEING, I GUESS, MORE THAN LIKE ONE THING IS WRITTEN. JUST WRITTEN. BECAUSE I FEEL LIKE A PERSON CAN BE AN AUTHOR WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE PUBLISHED OR NOT.

IF YOU DID BECOME AN AUTHOR WOULD THAT CHANGE YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO WRITING?

YES, CAUSE THEN I WOULD HAVE THE DRIVE TO WANT TO CONTINUE WRITING.

33. What if I published one of your papers? Would that make you an author or a writer?

I THINK SO [THAT IT WOULD CHANGE MY REALTIONSHIP TO WRITING]. WITH GLEASON, SHE LIKED A LOT OF SIMILES AND METAPHORS AND I HAVEN'T GOTTEN TO THAT YET. I JUST CONCENTRATE ON GETTING MY THOUGHTS DOWN, BUT I'D LIKE TO GET TO THAT POINT WHERE I CAN SAY, OK THIS IS WHERE I CAN FIT IN WHERE SIMILES CAN FIT IN, WHERE METAPHORS CAN FIT IN. RIGHT NOW I'M NOT THERE YET. I'M TAKING MY TIME, MAKING SURE THAT I HAVE THESE THINGS FIRST. I FEEL LIKE I HAVE THINGS TO LEARN ABOUT THE ESSAY PERIOD. I FINALLY UNDERSTOOD WHAT THE INTRODUCTION WAS, ABOUT THE BODY, THAT EACH SENTENCE FLOWS, AND CONCLUSIONS ARE STILL HARD FOR ME.

34. What if we as a class published a book ? Would that make you an author or a writer?

35. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written

product make it unique? THERE ARE TWO. THE ESSAY ON VODOO AND ZNH. IT IS SO FUNNY, WHEN I SAW THE MOVIE, ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS YOU SEE IS SHE PICKS A RED ROSE. [HER PAPER WAS ENTITLED "A BLOSSOMING RED ROSE"]

36. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain. IT WAS ACTUALLY FUN WRITING THE PAPER. I GOT TO EXPRESS HOW I FELT ABOUT JANIE'S WHOLE SEXUAL EXPERIENCES AND HOW WITH EACH RELATIONSHIP IT BUILT UP TO HER BECOMING THIS WOMAN AND FINDING THE LOVE SHE'S BEEN LOOKING FOR FOREVER. ONCE AGAIN, I KIND OF MADE IT FUNNY. IT WAS FUNNY TO HAVE HER LOVE SCENES. THIS WAS SOMETHING I'D NEVER DONE BEFORE, TO THINK ABOUT A LOVE SCENE. WHEN I GOT TO THAT PART ABOUT, I THOUGHT HOW AM I GOING TO EXPRESS HOW SHE IS FEELING DURING THIS TIME. THEN I HAD TO IMAGINE, KIND OF, OK, IF I SAY IT WAS LIKE THIS, HOW WAS THAT GOING TO SOUND? SO I KIND OF DID THAT FOR EACH AND EVERY RELATIONSHIP. BECAUSE I FELT IT WENT FROM BAD TO A LITTLE BETTER TO GREAT.

WHY THIS BOOK? I THINK IT WAS THE WRITING. IT WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT. I CAN GET BORED REALLY QUICKLY, LIKE, WHEN I READ MAYA ANGELOU IT WAS SO DIFFERENT FROM ANY BOOKS I'D READ BEFORE HER. THE LANGUAGE WAS DIFFERENT. HER LANGUAGE WAS MORE SOPHISTICATED. I READ "WAITING TO EXHALE," AND I MEAN THE STORY WAS GREAT BUT HER SENTENCES JUST KIND OF RAN ON AND ON AND ON AND ON AND IT WAS VERY SIMPLE, SIMPLE WORDING, VERY EASY TO UNDERSTAND. AND THEN I READ MA AND IT WAS MORE SOPHISTICATED AND MORE DIFFICULT. I WAS MORE INSPIRED, I WAS LIKE "WOW, THIS IS GOOD WRITING; THIS IS HOW I WANT TO WRITE."

I READ "HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK" AND I REALLY DISLIKED THAT BOOK. I COULDN'T STAND THAT BOOK. I WAS SKIPPING PAGES...BECAUSE SHE JUST REPETAED OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN. OH, HE'S SO YOUNG, NEXT CHAPTER, OH, HE'S SO YOUNG, I WAS LIKE OK, GET OVER IT. I'M EXPECTING HE'S SO YOUNG, NEXT, AND WHEN SHE REPEATS IT IT IS EXACTLY THE HOW SHE REPEATED . IT WASN'T LIKE THE ODYSSEY, WHEN THE STORIES GET TOLD BUT THEN YOU FIND SOMETHING A LITTLE DIFFERENT IN THE PERSON WHO'S TELLING THE STORY AGAIN. IT IS JUST LIKE SHE TOLD THE SAME EXACT THING IN THE NEXT CHAPTER. AND THE WHOLE BOOK WAS LIKE THAT.

DID YOU NOTICE THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE AND HOW THEY DIFFERED IN THE TWO BOOKS? NO

WHEN YOU SIT DOWN TO WRITE, DOES IT GIVE YOU CONFIDENCE OR AUTHORITY TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY WITH THESE WRITERS? YOU KNOW I'VE NEVER ACTUALLY THOUGHT OF IT THAT WAY. USUALLY WHEN I HAVE AN ASSIGNMENT TO DO I KIND OF LOOK MORE AT THE INFORMATION AND WHAT I'M LEARNING FROM IT AND NOT FROM I'M GETTING IT FROM THIS AUTHOR. THIS IS SOMETHING I REALLY HAVE TO LEARN ABOUT BECAUSE WHEN I FIRST DID THE VOODOO PAPER I WASN'T THINKING ABOUT CITING EVERY LAST THING THAT I READ. I KNOW ABOUT PLAGIARISM, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW I HAD TO RECOGNIZE [WHY AND HOW] I GOT INFORMATION [FROM VARIOUS SOURCES]. ONE THING CAME UP, WHAT'S COMMON KNOWLEDGE. CAUSE SOME THINGS, I FELT CK WAS INFORMATION THAT WAS JUST CONSTANTLY REPEATED OVER AND OVER AND OVER AND OVER AND HAS NO ONE MAIN SOURCE, JUST SOMETHING THAT'S TALKED ABOUT. SOME OF THIS INFORMATION IS REPEATED SO MANY PLACES IT SEEMS LIKE CK. HOW VOODOO HELPED HAITIANS REVOLT AGAINST THE FRENCH SETTLERS. THE AMOUNT OF SLAVES IN THE LAND. EVERYWHERE I WENT THEY SAID THE SAME THING SO I CAN'T PUT DOWN FIVE DIFFERENT PEOPLE SAID THE SAME THING.

IS BEING AN AUTHOR HAVING AN IDEA OR PUTTING IT ON PAPER? IT IS HAVING AN IDEA.

DO YOU HAVE ORIGINAL IDEAS? YES, I JUST DON'T PUT THEM DOWN ON PAPER.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU HAD ORIGINAL IDEAS? YES

HAVE YOU EVER IMAGINED WRITING A BOOK? YES, ABOUT MY LIFE.

DID IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE THAT ZNH WAS WRITTEN BY A WOMAN? NO. BY AN AFRICAN AMERICAN? NO. MOST BOOKS I'VE READ HAVE BEEN BY AA AUTHORS. SO WHEN I READ ZNH'S BOOK, I DIDN'T THINK "WOW," BECAUSE I HAD READ OTHER AA BOOKS. BEFORE I STARTED AT CWE, I FELT I NEEDED TO READ BOOKS BY NON-AA AUTHORS BECAUSE I STARTED GETTING BORED WITH THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SOME OF THESE BOOKS. YOU KIND OF KNOW WHAT THE STORY LINE IS GOING TO BE, SO MAYBE I NEED TO READ OTHER KINDS OF BOOKS. I READ THESE BOOKS ABOUT LIFE IN THE GHETTO AND THEY REALLY PUT THE VOICE OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN IT AND THAT ANNOYED ME SO BAD WHEN I WAS READING THAT. THE SLANG! THAT WAS THE WHOLE NEW THING AND I COULDN'T READ THOSE BOOKS.

37. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

38. Is the quality of the writing in this piece different from other things you have written? If yes, how?

39. Did you imagine an audience for this piece of writing?

40. Were you a part of the audience you imagined for this piece of writing?

41. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

DO YOU HESITATE WHEN YOU SIT DOWN TO WRITE?

I TRY TO DO THE WHOLE FREE WRITING THING BECAUSE I FIND IT VERY HARD TO START WRITING MY ESSAY. I KEEP THINKING ABOUT IT AND KEEP THINKGIN ABOUT IT. AT SOME POINT I JUST HAVE TO WRITE THINGS DOWN.

WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO ACADEMIC WRITING AND STANDARD ENGLISH? WHAT IS MY RELATIONSHIP TO IT? UM, I GUESS, I FEEL LIKE I CAN DO, IT TAKES ME, I HAVE TO KEEP READING IT OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN. I'VE ALWAYS HAD A SENSE OF WHAT AN ESSAY WAS SUPPOSED TO LOOK LIKE: INTRO, BODY, CONCLUSION. IT WAS JUST UNDERSTANDING EVERYTHING ELSE THAT GOES IN THESE INTROS AND BODIES AND CONCLUSIONS, LIKE YOUR THESIS STATEMENT. AT FIRST I WOULD JUST WRITE AN INTRODUCTION WITHOUT FOCUSING ON A THESIS STATEMENT. I TOOK A WRITING CLASS BEFORE ENTERING CWE. I TOOK THAT [AT CWE] AND THAT'S WHERE I STARTED LEARNING WHY A THESIS STATEMENT WAS SO IMPORTANT. IT WASN'T UNTIL THE END OF THE CLASS, WHEN WE HAD OUR LAST ESSAY, AND SHE TOOK THE PAPERS AND SHE SAID "FINALLY," AND I SAID, "OH, I GET IT."

BACK TO PARENTS AND NOTES EXAMPLE. DO YOU HAVE THAT EXPERIENCE WHEN YOU'RE WRITING IN SCHOOL? I THINK SO, BECAUSE I FEEL IT IS MUCH HARDER FOR ME TO WRITE, LIKE IF I GET AN ASSIGNMENT AND I HAVE TO FOCUS ON THIS ONE THING AND IT IS NOT THE THING I'M INTERESTED IN, IT IS HARDER FOR ME TO WRITE ABOUT IT BECAUSE I DIDN'T CHOOSE THE THING THAT WAS MOST INTERESTING TO ME. I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT... I'M READING THIS BOOK, HOW EUROPE UNDERDEVELOPED AFRICA, SOME OF IT I FIND INTERESTING, AND SOME

DRAGS ON, AND I KNOW IF IT WERE SOMEONE ELSE, THE PROFESSOR ACTUALLY, HE PROBABLY THINKS EVERYTHING IN IT IS GREAT AND I DON'T. AND IF HE ASKED ME TO DO AN ESSAY ON A PART OF THE BOOK THAT I DIDN'T FIND INTERESTING, I'D HAVE TO PUT MYSELF IN THIS SETTING WHERE THIS IS WHAT YOU REALLY HAVE TO CONCENTRATE ON SO, LET'S SEE, WHAT CAN I DIG UP FROM THIS. I CAN DO IT BETTER WHEN IT IS THIS IS WHAT I FEEL, THIS AND THIS AND THIS.

I ASK MYSELF WHY DIDN'T I FIND IT INTERESTING.

Lisa

Highest Degree Earned: HS DIPLOMA

Years Enrolled in College Courses: ENROLLED FOR 6 MONTHS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL; 25 YEARS LATER RETURNED TO CWE AND ENROLLED FOR 1 YEAR

Age: 45

Gender: F

Occupation: PARAPROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR, K-8, NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS. 7 YRS IN CURRENT POSITION.

Ethnicity: PUERTO RICAN; ENGLISH=FIRST LANGUAGE, SPEAKS SPANISH

Student's Educational Background: Catholic Schools in New York City

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: CWE Core Humanities 1 and 2

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction:

Parents' Occupations: FATHER: MANUFACTURING WORKER; MOTHER: HOMEMAKER AND SEAMSTRESS

Parents' Educational Background: FATHER: ATTENDED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN PR; MOTHER STUDIED THROUGH 4TH GRADE IN PR

Children: SON: 19, ATTENDING LEHMAN COLLEGE, STUDYING BUSINESS AND GETTING GOOD GRADES (3.25 GPA); DAUGHTER: 11

Background

1. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

SOMEONE THAT WRITES A BOOK ABOUT FICTION/NONFICTION/IDEAS. PUTTING IDEAS ON PAPER. FAMOUS BIOGRAPHIES. AUTOBIOGRAPHIES. MEMOIRS. ZORA NEALE HURSTON.

2. How do you define the term author?

AN AUTHOR IS SOMEONE WHO WRITES A BOOK AND PUTS HIS IDEAS ON PAPER.

3. What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

BY EXPERIENCE. I WORK WITH KIDS ON READING AND MATH. BEFORE WE ENTER DIFFERENT GENRES WE TALK ABOUT AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS OF CERTAIN BOOKS.

4. Do you consider yourself an author?

NOT REALLY. I'M THINKING ABOUT THE SELLING PART. I CAN'T SEE WRITING A BOOK. AN AUTHOR SELLS BOOKS. AN AUTHOR WRITES BOOKS USUALLY. I HAVE THIS BOOK AND I WILL SAY TO SOMEONE YOU HAVE TO READ THIS BOOK. I DON'T CONSIDER THAT ANYTHING I WRITE WOULD HAVE ANY BUYERS.

5. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

6. If no, why not? What would make you an author?

WITH THE EXPERIENCES I'VE HAD OVER TWO SEMESTERS I LOOKED AT MYSELF AT NOT BEING A GREAT WRITER—PUTTING THOUGHTS TOGETHER, GRAMMAR. WHEN I WAS ASKED TO EDIT, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING. I DON'T HAVE THE CONFIDENCE. I TAUGHT MYSELF, I TAUGHT MY SON AND DAUGHTER AND THEY RUN WITH IT BUT I DON'T HAVE THE SAME EXPERIENCE.

7. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term?

SOMEONE WHO HAS REALLY GOOD IDEAS. THESIS KICKS IN, HE KNOWS THE MAIN IDEAS, PARAGRAPHS, PUTTING EVERYTHING IN ITS PROPER PLACE.

8. How do you define the term writer?

SOMEONE THAT CAN PUT THEIR THOUGHTS ON PAPER EVEN IF IT MAKES NO SENSE.

9. What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.)

EVEN A DIARY IS WRITING. EVEN A LETTER, A SORRY LETTER IS WRITING. I READ A LOT OF CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL AND THESE HAVE REAL LIFE STORIES AND LETTERS. SOME OF THEM ARE BY KIDS AND THE WRITINGS INSPIRE ME. I KNOW THEY EDIT THEM BUT I JUST LIKE THE THOUGHTS.

10. Do you consider yourself a writer?

MAYBE NOT A GOOD WRITER. BUT YES, A WRITER. THIS IS HOW I FEEL ABOUT CERTAIN THINGS.

11. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

NOT ALWAYS. MY OWN WRITING IS OK BUT MY OWN WRITING VERSUS COLLEGE WRITING I DON'T LIVE UP TO THAT STANDARD. THE STANDARD IS TO WRITE A PAPER, YOU KNOW, IT IS LIKE THE END OF THE RAINBOW, I'M DREAMING OF IT, I CAN SEE WHAT THE GOAL IS, BUT EVEN WITH THE THIRD DRAFT, I WAS STILL EDITED AND THAT THIRD DRAFT IS WHAT I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HAVE WRITTEN ON THE FIRST DRAFT. I'VE SEEN PEOPLE WRITE. I'VE SEEN THEM LITERALLY AT LUNCHTIME DO A PAPER—NO DRAFT AT ALL—WHILE I'M ON MY TENTH DRAFT, WHICH HAS BEEN EDITED FIFTY TIMES. I'VE SEEN PEOPLE SAY THEY WRITE BEST UNDER PRESSURE. THAT'S WHAT I WOULD LOVE. [I'M] NOWHERE NEAR PERFECTION.

I'VE HAD THE FINAL DRAFT WITH LOTS OF EDITING [MARKS FROM THE TEACHER] AND I KNOW THAT HIS DRAFT IS THE BEST I COULD HAVE DONE AND THERE ARE LOTS OF "REALLY GOOD/EXCELLENT/GOOD IDEA" [MARKS IN THE MARGINS].

[Q: Is it discouraging to see so many edits on a final draft?]: Yes and no. It is my best and it is still not up to par and I get a little upset but I know this is my best.

I KNOW THERE IS ROOM FOR BETTER AND I LOOK AT THE GOOD PARTS AND I KNOW THIS IS GOOD. WITH MY *THEIR EYES* PAPER, THAT LAST PARAGRAPH I WROTE WITH ME IN IT AND I FELT THAT NO MATTER WHAT I GOT FOR THAT PARAGRAPH IT DIDN'T MATTER WHAT THE TEACHER SAID. THE TEACHER SAID TO MOVE IT TO THE BEGINNING OF THE PAPER [TO USE IT AS A THESIS STATEMENT] AND I NEEDED IT AT THE END. I LOVE THIS PARAGRAPH AND I DIDN'T KNOW WHERE ELSE TO PUT IT. I COULDN'T FIND A PLACE FOR IT AND I LEFT IT THERE AND IT WAS IMPORTANT TO ME. I WAS A REBEL AT THAT MOMENT. I'M NOT USUALLY A REBEL. I USUALLY TRY TO DO MY BEST.

12. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?

13. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities?

THAT'S AN INTERESTING QUESTION. TO ME, I'M THINKING THEY ARE THE SAME THING BECAUSE YOU NEED ONE FOR THE OTHER. TO BE AN AUTHOR YOU DON'T HAVE TO SELL IT. YOU WROTE THOSE WORDS, YOU WROTE THOSE IDEAS. I WOULD CONNECT THEM.

14. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write?

NOT REALLY. I WENT TO CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND THERE WAS LOTS OF WRITING. I WASN'T SUCH A GREAT STUDENT. MY FAVORITE THING WAS SPELLING WORDS. MY MOTHER DIDN'T KNOW MUCH ENGLISH AND SHE DIDN'T HAVE TIME. WE LEARNED WITH THE TEACHERS. ALL THE WRITING AND READING IS FROM THE PAST TEN YEARS—THE BIBLE AND BOOKS ABOUT THE BIBLE AND INSPIRATION. I TAUGHT SUNDAY SCHOOL. PROFESSOR SAVIO MADE ME FEEL THAT I CAN DO ANYTHING. WHEN THEY TOLD ME TO EDIT SOMEONE ELSE'S WORK, THEN I SAID YOU HAVE TO BE KIDDING. AT THE END, I FELT LIKE WOW, I HAVE SOMETHING. I WAS ABLE TO WRITE THE BEST I COULD.

15. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author?

NO. NO. ONE THING THAT I HAVE BEEN TOLD IS THAT WITH MY DIVORCE [I HAVE A STORY, SOMETHING TO SAY]. THERE IS A MOMENT IN *THEIR EYES* AND SHE SEES THAT IMAGE [AND SHE KNOWS WHAT SHE HAS TO DO] AND THAT WAS SIMILAR TO MY EXPERIENCES. PEOPLE SAY YOU OUGHT TO WRITE A BOOK OR TEACH A CLASS.

16. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.

YES AND MY RELATIONSHIP TO READING HAS CHANGED TOO. IF YOU COULD SEND ME A LIST OF GOOD BOOKS, I WOULD REALLY APPRECIATE IT. YOU GUYS [SAVIO AND RODGERS] REALLY CHALLENGED ME WITH THE BOOKS. *THE ODYSSEY*, *FRANKENSTEIN*.

THOUGH I HAD TO READ AND REREAD IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I LOVED BOOKS. THE FIRST TIME I LOVED LITERATURE BOOKS. OTHER THAN THE BIBLE. I WAS LIKE, I HAVE TO READ THIS: *FRANKENSTEIN* BLEW ME AWAY. *ODYSSEUS* BLEW ME AWAY. *THEIR EYES*: THE STORIES, I FELT LIKE *MCGIVER*: YOU HAD US THINKING! FOR SCHOOL YOU READ A BOOK AND THEN WRITE A PAPER ABOUT IT. YOU HAVE TO GO BACK TO IT AND

INFER AND THINK ABOUT IT. YOU HAD TO THINK THROUGH IT. GOOD BOOKS TO THINK ABOUT. GOOD LITERATURE.

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

17. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain.

FREEWITING: VERY COMFORTABLE. NO WRONG AND NO RIGHT.

ESSAYS: MORE SERIOUS

18. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

YES, THOUGH I DON'T CONSIDER MYSELF A GOOD WRITER I WAS STILL PROUD OF BEING ABLE TO READ A BOOK AND THINK ABOUT IT, PARTICULARLY THE BOOK AND THE ARTICLE [REFERRING TO READING CRITICAL LITERATURE ABOUT *THEIR EYES*] BECAUSE YOU NEEDED TO DIG DEEP. I AM PROUD THAT I HAD SOMETHING IN ME TO SAY. THESE PAPERS, I WILL NEVER THROW OUT. EVEN NOW, I LOOK AT THESE PAPERS.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

19. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing?

NO. I WROTE THESE PAPERS FOR MY PROFESSORS. THIS IS SOMETHING I WROTE FOR YOU TO GET A GRADE. IF YOU ARE MY AUDIENCE, AND ONE PERSON CAN BE AN AUDIENCE, THEN I GUESS YOU WERE THAT. THESE [PAPERS] WERE PUT TOGETHER TO PERFORM FOR YOU. IN BETWEEN, I THOUGHT, "IS THIS GOING TO BE GOOD ENOUGH?" OR I WOULD THINK "THIS PARAGRAPH ISN'T PUT TOGETHER WELL ENOUGH"

20. If yes, who/what makes up this audience?

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

21. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.]

THE TEACHER MADE ME THINK ABOUT THE THESIS AND THE MAIN IDEAS. I LEARNED ABOUT THESIS STATEMENTS AND I LEARNED SOMETHING ALL OVER AGAIN. YOU CAN PUT THIS HERE, PROBING MY MIND ABOUT WHAT YOU WANTED. ENCOURAGING. I WOULD PUT MYSELF DOWN AND FORMAT, REVISION, WRITING PROCESS, OUTLINES. DRAFTING. SAVIO WAS AN EDITOR.

22. Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing?

23. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then?

NO. JUST THE TEACHERS. FOR A MINUTE WITH THE ZNH PAPER I SAID I HAVE TO PUT THIS HERE. BUT THE GIST OF IT IS TRYING TO DO MY BEST AND TRYING TO GIVE YOU AND PROFESSOR SAVIO WHAT YOU ASKED FOR. DOING WHAT I WAS ASKED AND LOOKING AT MODELS.

I QUESTION MYSELF A LOT AND I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE OR NOT.

24. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this?

NO.

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

25. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34.

NO

26. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?

27. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain?

28. Did it change any part of your writing process?

29. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed?

30. Did it change your understanding of audience?

31. Did it change your relationship to reading?

32. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?

33. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]

34. Would you like to have a piece of writing published?

NO. AND I WOULDN'T WANT TO BECAUSE IT IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH. NOT NEARLY GOOD ENOUGH.

35. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing? Would it make you a writer? Would it make you an author?

IT WOULD GIVE ME CONFIDENCE. IF IT WERE PUBLISHED, I WOULD THINK "WOW, THIS IS GOOD." I WOULD KEEP WRITING. IF THAT WERE TO HAPPEN I WOULD HAVE MORE CONFIDENCE. I WOULDN'T HAVE TO WRITE A BOOK.

[Q: What if I published one of your papers?]: I WOULD BE SURPRISED. I WOULDN'T BE AN AUTHOR.

[Q: What if we as a class published a book]: YES, IT WOULD BE A PUBLICATION. MAYBE I WOULD CONSIDER IT. I DON'T THINK IT IS THAT GOOD, THIS PAPER, TO BE PUBLISHED. I WOULD DO IT FOR MY KIDS, MY STUDENTS, MY PROFESSORS, NOT BEYOND.

36. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique?

THE ONE WITH ZORA. BECAUSE I'M IN IT. I WROTE ABOUT HER BUT I CONNECTED WITH IT. I WAS WITH HER. IT WAS MORE PERSONAL.

37. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain.

IT FELT DIFFERENT. I WAS IN IT. EVEN IF IT WAS ONE PARAGRAPH I PUT MYSELF IN THERE. I REALLY FELT HER. READING THAT PAPER IS DIFFERENT. I LIKED THAT THE PAPER WAS PERSONAL BUT I ALSO LIKED THAT I HAD TO THINK THROUGH THINGS. PLUS, THE PAPER WAS ALSO CONNECTED TO THE ARTICLE.

IT WAS A COMBINATION OF THE THREE: 1) WRITING ABOUT SOMETHING I PERSONALLY RELATED TO, 2) JANIE'S LIFE, HOW I FELT ABOUT IT, 3) CONNECTION TO THE OTHER WOMAN.

38. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

I HAD FLASHBACKS TO MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES. I WAS PROUD OF WHAT I WENT THROUGH FOR A MINUTE AND THEN I'M PROUD OF THE END RESULT. I'M PROUD. SHE [JANIE] SAID: SHE OPENED THE WINDOW AND THE SOULS TO SEE...SOMETHING LIKE THAT. I FELT I WAS DEFINITELY CONNECTED. NOT SO LONG AGO I READ THAT PARAGRAPH AND IT MADE ME REALLY PROUD IT MADE ME SAD THAT I COULDN'T GO

BACK TO COLLEGE THIS SEMESTER BECAUSE OF MY HEALTH. I THOUGHT, “WOW, I WROTE THIS; I DIDN’T SLEEP OVER THIS.”

39. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

I WANTED TO THANK YOU AND MR. SAVIO BECAUSE YOU OPENED UP AN AREA IN MY LIFE AND I WOULD NEVER HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT THESE BOOKS WITHOUT THESE CLASSES AND I WOULDN’T HAVE PUT MYSELF IN THESE PLACES AND BEEN DIGGING DEEPER. I DID COME OUT OF IT KNOWING THAT I CAN THINK. I CAN READ AND NEED TO RE-READ. I DO HAVE SOME SKILLS. WHEN YOU CALLED ME, I THOUGHT SHE MUST BE OUT OF HER MIND; SHE MUST BE OVERWORKED. MY MOTHER WAS THERE, WHEN I GOT YOUR MESSAGE AND MY MOTHER SAID, “YOU MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING RIGHT, SHE’S CALLING YOU!”

James

Highest Degree Earned: AA, MT. ALLEN COLLEGE IN PENNSYLVANIA, 1992;
CUMBERLAND COLLEGE?

Years Enrolled in College Courses: CWE, STARTED 2003. CAME WITH 69
CREDITS, MOST IN BUSINESS

Age: 46

Gender: M

Student's Educational Background: PS 180, 120TH ST. IN HARLEM; IS 88, HARLEM;
CHARLES EVAN HUGHES, 18TH ST. (NOW SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES). THE HS
WAS GOOD, IT WAS JUST THAT I DIDN'T GO. I HAD A PROBLEM WITH
SCHOOL. I WOULD GO TO SCHOOL BUT I WOULDN'T STAY ALL DAY. I WAS
ALMOST 20 WHEN I GRADUATED. I HAD A PROBLEM SPEAKING, A SPEECH
IMPEDIMENT WHEN I WAS YOUNG, WHICH CAUSED ME TO HAVE LOW
SELF-ESTEEM BECAUSE I HAD TO GO TO SPECIAL ED CLASSES. THIS WAS IN
THE 60s. WE WERE TAUGHT HOW TO PRONOUNCE WORDS. IN DOING SO, I
WOULD ALWAYS FALL BEHIND. ALSO, WE WERE CALLED NAMES BY THE
STUDENTS. I DID A LOT OF FIGHTING AND I WAS DISCIPLINED QUITE A
BIT. I WAS HELD BACK IN THE 4TH GRADE BECAUSE MY BEHAVIOR WAS SO
BAD. THEN I HAD ONE TEACHER, _____, SHE WHIPPED US AND WASHED
OUR MOUTH OUT WITH SOAP, ANYTHING SHE HAD GIVEN YOU YOU HAD
TO LEARN. YOU DIDN'T GO HOME AND TELL YOUR MOTHER BECAUSE
WHEN I TOLD MY MOTHER THAT MY TEACHER SMACKED ME AT SCHOOL, I
WOULD GET ANOTHER BEATING. IF MY TEACHER SAID I NEEDED A
BEATING, THE TEACHER WAS ALWAYS RIGHT. WE HAD TO LEARN. THERE
WERE ONLY TWO STUDENTS THAT DIDN'T GRADUATE TO 5TH GRADE. SHE
IS ONE OF MY MOST FAVORITE TEACHERS TODAY BECAUSE SHE SHOWED
ME AT THE TIME THAT I COULD LEARN.

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: : WRITING, CURRENT EVENTS; THEN
HUMANITIES II WITH JR; COMPOSITION WITH GLEASON. MOST WRITING
WAS FOR HUM AND COMPOSITION. NOW TAKING ADVANCED GRAMMAR
WITH GLEASON. I THINK IT [ADVANCED GRAMMAR] SHOULD BE A
REQUIREMENT.

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction: SOME IN OTHER CLASSES

Occupation: SITE SUPERVISOR, CASES [ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCINATION]

Years at Current Job: 5 YEARS

Types of Writing Performed at Job: HARDLY ANY WRITING. WORK DOING MANUAL LABOR WORKING WITH PRISONERS, SUPERVISING GROUP OF WORKERS, 25-30 PEOPLE.

Ethnicity/Family Background: [PAUSE] IT'S PRETTY DIFFICULT. I'M A BLACK. **AFRICAN AMERICAN**. SOMETIMES IT DEPENDS ON THE MOOD I'M IN IF I CONSIDER MYSELF AS AN AMERICAN. I MEAN I LOVE THIS COUNTRY AND STUFF BUT IT DEPENDS ON THE FRAME OF MIND I'M IN. I GUESS I'D SAY I'M AFRICAN.

Home Language(s): ENGLISH

Parents' Occupations: MOTHER: HOUSEWIFE

Parents' Educational Background: MOTHER FROM CAMDEN, NC: 8TH GRADE; FATHER: VIRGINIA, SCHOOL THROUGH 7TH GRADE. PARENTS MET IN NYC. 5 KIDS. SISTER WENT TO COLLEGE FOR ONE YEAR. GW'S SON GRADUATED, BUT WHEN GW GRADUATES HE WILL BE THE FIRST WITH A COLLEGE DEGREE. TWO BROTHERS DID NOT FINISH SCHOOL.

Literacy Narrative: History and Current Definitions

40. What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term? AS A PERSON FORMULATING THE BOOK OR THE STORY BEHIND IT. SOMEONE WHO'S INTELLIGENT, SOMEONE WHO HAS AN IDEA WHO WANTS TO BRING IT INTO REALITY, BRING IT TO LIFE, WHETHER ITS REALISTIC OR A DREAM, SOMETHING THEY WANT TO SHARE WITH OTHERS.

How do you define the term author?

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.) COMBINATION OF SCHOOL, EXPERIENCE, INDEPENDENT LEARNING. I WANT TO LEAVE SOMETHING BEHIND FOR MY CHILDREN SOMEDAY.

41. What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term? AS SOMEONE WHO'S VERY SMART. THOUGHTS ON PAPER, EXPRESS THEMSELVES, COMMUNICATE. SOMEONE SEARCHING, BECAUSE AS YOU CONTINUE TO WRITE MORE INFORMATION COMES TO YOUR MIND.

How do you define the term writer?

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.) AS I WRITE, I REALIZE THAT MY WRITING SKILLS IS NOT GREAT I MEAN I LIKE TO WRITE AND AS I WRITE INFORMATION JUST COMES UP. SOMETIMES WHEN I'M WALKING I MIGHT JUST THINK OF A PHRASE AND I JUST WISH I HAD A PIECE OF PAPER TO WRITE IT DOWN. SO WRITING IS SOMETHING I LIKE TO DO AND I ADMIRE SOMEONE WHO DOES THAT AS A PROFESSION, THE MIND IS SO BRILLIANT THAT THEY'RE ABLE TO TAKE THAT THOUGHT AND PUT IT ON PAPER.

42. Do you consider yourself an author? WE ALL ARE AUTHORS. IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME OF PUTTING THEIR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ON PAPER

43. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?)

44. If no, why not? What would make you an author?

45. Do you consider yourself a writer? ALL OF US ARE WRITERS. THERE'S A CERTAIN STANDARD PUT IN PLACE BY OUR GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE IN POWER, BUT DIALECTS....

46. If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?) I THINK MORE SO NOW THAT I HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WRITING. I THINK WRITING TAKES ON

DIFFERENT MEANINGS IF YOU KNOW HOW YOU ARE DOING IT AND WHY YOU ARE DOING IT. RIGHT NOW, I'M VERY CONSCIOUS NOW OF WRITING TO A PERSON AND DO THEY REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M WRITING WITHOUT ME BEING THERE, IF I GIVE THEM WHAT I HAVE WRITTEN. AM I CONVEYING THAT INFORMATION TO THEM CORRECTLY AND DO THEY COMPREHEND IT? WHEREAS BEFORE, I WOULD JUST WRITE MY THOUGHTS. SO SOMETIMES I'M A WRITER AND SOMETIMES I'M NOT.

47. If no, why not? What would make you a writer?

48. What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities?

WHEN I WRITE TO MYSELF, SOMETIMES I KEEP JOURNALS, ANYTHING THAT'S GOING ON IN MY MIND, I DON'T HAVE TO BE DETAILED AS AN AUTHOR BECAUSE IT IS THERE ONLY FOR ME. BUT IF I WANTED TO TRANSLATE THE INFORMATION TO LEAVE IT FOR MY CHILDREN, THEN I'D NEED TO BE A WRITER. THEY'D NEED TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I WAS THINKING AND WHY I CAME TO THAT CONCLUSION. THEY NEED TO KNOW.

I'M AN AUTHOR FOR MYSELF.

IF I'M WRITING PROFESSOR JOHANNAH A LETTER AS A FRIEND, I CAN WRITE MY THOUGHTS AND MAYBE THERE'S SOME BAD GRAMMAR. IF I'M WRITING JOHANNAH RODGERS AS MY INSTRUCTOR, THEN MY GRAMMAR AND EVERYTHING HAS TO BE CORRECT AND THAT'S WHEN I'M A WRITER.

49. Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write?

I HAVE PEOPLE ENCOURAGE ME TO WRITE MY LIFE STORY. PEOPLE IN CHURCH. WHEN I GO INTO DETAILS OF MY UPBRINGING IN HARLEM, THAT ENVIRONMENT. A LOT OF PEOPLE SAY I SHOULD HAVE BEEN A PREACHER BECAUSE I SPEAK QUITE A BIT. PEOPLE TELL ME TO WRITE, EVEN NOW.

MY DAD LEFT EARLY AND MY MOM DID THE BEST SHE COULD. I REMEMBER MY MOTHER WHEN I FINISHED HS AND I BROUGHT HER MY DIPLOMA.... I REMEMBER EARLY ON THAT MY MOTHER WAS ABLE TO HELP US WITH ENGLISH AND MATH. EVEN THOUGH SHE NEVER FINISHED SCHOOL, I GUESS BACK THEN THEY LEARNED QUITE A BIT. THE

STANDARD OF EDUCATION WAS ERODING BY THE TIME I WENT TO SCHOOL.

50. Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author? I STILL THINK THAT I AM GOING TO WRITE A BOOK. PEOPLE TELLS ME THINGS FOR DIFFERENT REASONS AND I KNOW WHY I WOULD WANT TO BE AN AUTHOR OF MY OWN BOOK; IT IS MORE FOR MY OWN FAMILY. I KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT MY FATHER'S FAMILY FROM RICHMOND, VA. THE FIRST TIME I MET MY GRANDFATHER WAS WHEN MY FATHER DIED. I HAVE A GRANDSON GERALD, WHO IS 8 YEARS OLD AND SOMEDAY HE'S GOING TO WANT TO KNOW WHO IS MY FATHER'S FATHER.

AS A KID, I ALWAYS THOUGHT WRITING WAS SOMETHING I **HAD** TO DO. IN COLLEGE THAT BEGAN TO CHANGE, AND HERE AT CWE, AND GETTING OLDER AND REALIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF WRITING.

I'M ALWAYS AN AUTHOR BUT SOMETIMES A WRITER.

51. Do you remember anyone reading to you when you were very young? NO. MY MOTHER ORDERED BOOKS FOR US IN THE MAIL. DR. SEUSS. DIFFERENT KINDS OF LITTLE SMALL BOOKS THAT USED TO COME IN THE MAIL. MY MOTHER READ TO HERSELF QUITE A BIT, ESPECIALLY HER BIBLE. WE GREW UP JUST GROWING TO CHURCH, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, AND THEN WE STOPPED AT 13. THEN I STARTED GOING BY MYSELF AT 14, I WAS ALWAYS FASCINATED BY THE WALK OF FAITH.

MY MOTHER READ THE BIBLE, THE NEWSPAPER. HER BOOKS I CAN'T RECALL, BUT I KNOW HER NEWSPAPER AND HER BIBLE SHE READ. SHE READ THE DAILY NEWS, THIS WAS REALLY BIG THEN. I REMEMBER HER SAYING "YOU ALL DON'T GIVE ME TIME TO READ MY PAPER AND HAVE MY TEA AND TOAST IN THE MORNINGS."

52. What is your earliest memory involving writing?

I'VE BEEN WRITING ALL MY LIFE. WRITING HAS BEEN DIFFICULT FOR ME. I DIDN'T LIKE WRITING BUT I KNEW I HAD TO LEARN IT. NOW I LIKE TO WRITE SO IT IS MUCH DIFFERENT. I THINK WHEN IT STOPPED BEFORE FORCED UPON ME AND I JUST STARTED WRITING THINGS CHANGED. I TOOK ENGLISH 7 IN HS FOUR OR FIVE TIMES BECAUSE I COULDN'T PASS IT, FOR SEVERAL REASONS, FIRST OF ALL I WASN'T THERE ENOUGH, AND OTHER REASONS. I TOOK ENGLISH 8 AND PASSED IT WITHOUT A PROBLEM BUT I COULDN'T PASS IT ENGLISH 7. IT HAD TO DO WITH GRAMMAR AND WRITING AND I COULDN'T PASS IT.

I WAS A REBELLIOUS YOUNG MAN. I DID THINGS BECAUSE I HAD TO DO IT.

I REALIZED I HAD A WRITING PROBLEM WHEN I TOOK AN ADVERTISEMENT CLASS IN COLLEGE AND I HAD TO WRITE A PROPOSAL AND OTHER PEOPLE HAD TO READ IT OVER.

I DON'T HAVE A JOB THAT CONSISTS OF ME WRITING AND IF I HAD A JOB IN WHICH I HAD TO WRITE OFTEN I THINK I WOULD BE ABLE TO APPLY WHAT I LEARNED MORE.

WHAT'S THE MOST HELPFUL THING ANYONE'S EVER SAID TO YOU ABOUT WRITING: FREEWRITING—MENTALLY IT GETS ME PREPARED.

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

53. Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why and how it has changed or why it has not changed.

YES.

54. What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain.

AS AN AUTHOR IT WAS GOOD. I LEARNED QUITE A BIT. I ALSO REALIZED THAT I COULD FORMULATE THOUGHTS. AS A WRITER, IT FRIGHTENED ME, BECAUSE I REALIZED THAT I HAD A LONG WAY TO GO. AS YOU CAN RECALL, I WAS TAKING THE CPE EXAM AND I REMEMBER SPEAKING WITH YOU ABOUT AND SAYING I SHOULD WAIT; I TOOK THE CRITICISM GOOD AND I TOOK IT BAD, BAD BECAUSE I WASN'T READY, THE GOOD PART WAS WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO PREPARE YOURSELF TO TAKE THE EXAM. AFTER READING OVER THE PAPERS AND THE COMMENTS YOU MADE, I DECIDED THAT I NEEDED TO TAKE ANOTHER WRITING CLASS AND THAT'S WHEN I TOOK GLEASON'S CLASS.

READING THE ODYSSEY AND READING MACBETH WAS REALLY GOOD. I DIDN'T KNOW HOW BAD MY WRITING WAS UNTIL I TOOK YOUR CLASS. JERRY GAVE US ALL OF OUR PAPERS AT THE END OF THE CLASS AND I DIND'T REALLY LOOK AT THEM. BUT TAKING CORE II WAS A CHALLENGE BECAUSE II REALIZED THAT I HAD A WRITING PROBLEM. HERE, I HAD A TEACHER SAYING I WANT MY PAGES, I WANT 5 PAGES, I WANT 10 PAGES, HOW ARE YOU GOING TO GET THEM FOR ME. CORE II ASSUMED I KNEW THINGS THAT I DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW.

WHAT KINDS OF FEEDBACK HAS BEEN MOST HELPFUL? IS THE RED INK HELPFUL TO YOU? FOR ME BEING STRAIGHTFORWARD IS THE MOST

IMPORTANT THING. IF I'M HAVING A PROBLEM AND YOU JUST SAY OH YOU HAVE A FEW ERRORS BUT YOU'LL WORK IT OUT, BUT SITTING DOWN AND TAKING ME THROUGH IT, MAKING YOURSELF AVAILABLE, THAT IS MORE ENCOURAGING TO ME THAN ANYTHING ELSE. WE DON'T NEED TO BE MISLED AND YOU NEED TO DO YOUR JOB WHETHER THE STUDENTS LIKE IT OR NOT.

WHAT IS THE BALANCE BETWEEN CRITICISM AND ENCOURAGEMENT?
GLEASON IS VERY GOOD AT THIS. SHE ENCOURAGES ME BUT SHE DOESN'T PLAY. LAST SEMESTER I WAS TAKING A LABOR CLASS AND A DEMOCRACY CLASS SO I WAS WORKING BOTH JOBS AND I THOUGHT ONE OF THESE CLASSES HAD TO GO. SO EVEN THOUGH I WAS LEARNING ABOUT THE LABOR MOVEMENT, I CHOSE THE OTHER CLASS BECAUSE THE PROFESSOR WAS VERY STRICT. AND I ENDED UP WITH A B.

GRADES GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO GUAGE PROGRESS AND THAT'S SO IMPORTANT. HOW WOULD I KNOW I'M IMPROVING? HOW WOULD I KNOW WHERE I SHOULD BE AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER WITHOUT GRADING.

55. What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author?

AS AN AUTHOR, ZNH REALLY CONTRIBUTED. I READ A PIECE OF MATERIAL THAT WAS WRITTEN IN A LANGUAGE THAT I WAS FAMILIAR WITH, OR I HAD HEARD IN MY HOUSE GROWING UP WITH AND THAT WAS VERY ENCOURAGING. AND THAT ALSO GAVE ME IN SAYING OH THIS IS WHERE THIS SAYING COMES, BECAUSE THIS IS FROM THE SOUTH AND MY FAMILY IS FROM THE SOUTH. I HAD SOMEONE WHO WAS WRITING AND SPEAKING AND WAS PUBLISHED WHO I COULD RELATE TO, WHICH WAS REALLY, REALLY MIND-BLOWING. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I READ SOMETHING THAT WAS CLOSE TO THE WAY I SPEAK.

I NEVER READ NO BOOKS BY RICHARD WRIGHT. NEVER READ ANY OF JAMES BALDWIN NEITHER.

THERE WAS A PLACE FOR ME. AND I WAS SO INTERESTED THAT THERE WAS A PLACE FOR ME. ESPECIALLY THAT SHE WAS BEING A BLACK WRITER AND I'M BLACK SO WE HAD SOMETHING IN COMMON. PEOPLE ARE SAYING I'M SPEAKING A DIALECT THAT'S NOT ACCEPTABLE AND HALF THE TIME I DIND'T KNOW WHERE MY SLANG WAS COMING FROM. IT WAS FROM THE SOUTH THERE. WHAT ZNH DID WAS TAKE ME BACK TO

SLAVERY DAYS, TWO GENERATIONS AFTER SLAVERY AND HOW THEY WERE SPEAKING AND HOW THEY WERE THINKING.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

56. When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing? NO. IF I WAS TO WRITE MY OWN PERSONAL LIFE STORY THE AUDIENCE WOULD BE MY FAMILY. I DO THINK ABOUT MY PROFESSOR AND AM I BEING CLEAR. IN GLEASON'S CLASS WE HAD TO WRITE EACH STUDENT A LETTER.

57. If yes, who/what makes up this audience?

I LIKE WRITING CLASS ASSIGNMENTS BECAUSE EACH ASSIGNMENT IS DIFFERENT. TAKE FOR INSTANCE OUR CLASS, ALL THREE WRITINGS WERE DIFFERENT. IT EXPOSED ME TO NEW ISSUES. TO ATTACK THE ISSUE AND MAKE IT CLEAR WAS REALLY CHALLENGING. THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I HAVE A FRIEND, SHE IS MY BEST FRIEND, I JUST WRITE MY THOUGHTS TO HER. I JUST WRITE HER.

DO YOU IMAGINE GLEASON READING THE PAPER? WITH GLEASON, IT IS ALWAYS "IS IT ENOUGH" IS IT THE RIGHT GRAMMAR, IS IT THE RIGHT PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE. I DON'T WANT TO GRADUATE UNLESS SHE KNOWS THAT I HAVE ACHIEVED GOOD ACADEMIC WRITING SKILLS.

DO YOU BECOME A DIFFERENT PERSON WHEN YOU EDIT YOUR WRITING? NOT TOO OFTEN. I TRY NOT TO LOSE THE THOUGHT. WHEN I'M RE-READING MY PAPER ALL OVER AGAIN, I NEED TO TAKE THIS OUT. TO GET AROUND AND EXPLAIN IT I WOULD JUST CHANGE THE WHOLE PARAGRAPH BUT THAT'S NOT FAIR BECAUSE THAT THOUGHT IS IMPORTANT AND I NEED TO KEEP IT.

I DO A LOT OF BATTLING WITH MYSELF.

If no, how do you define audience, and what are your reasons for not imagining an audience for your writing? Is it because you don't feel there is one?

58. How does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.]

WHEN I WRITE TO MY FRIENDS I'M NOT AS CONCERNED WITH MY GRAMMAR STRUCTURE BUT TO GET MY POINT ACROSS. NOW THAT I'M TAKING GRAMMAR NOW, I FIND MYSELF WANTING TO WRITE BETTER

EVEN TO MY FRIENDS. I ASK SEVERAL FRIENDS TO CORRECT ME ON THE PHONE WHEN I SPEAK WITH THEM. THEY WORK IN AN OFFICE DOWNTOWN BUT WHEN THEY COME BACK IN THE HOOD THEY CAN GO BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS. SOMETIMES WHEN I CAUGHT THEM ON THE JOB AND THEY'LL BE "OH, I CAN'T TALK TO YOU RIGHT NOW BUT YOU CAN CALL ME BACK LATER OR I'LL TALK TO YOU AT HOME." AND I THINK, "OH YOU'RE GOING WHITE ON ME NOW." BUT THEY ARE ABLE TO CORRECT ME IN MY SPEAKING AND I KNOW THE BETTER MY VERBAL VOCABULARY BECOMES THE BETTER MY WRITING WILL BE.

59. Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? Or, if it is not a factor, whether you have ever been introduced to the concept of audience and writing?

60. Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. Can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Are you part of an audience then?

IF I WAS TO GIVE THIS PAPER TO SOMEONE WOULD THEY UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M SAYING; CAN MY READER UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M TRYING TO CONVEY.

WHEN DID THIS START? AT CWE.

61. Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this?

YOUR BIGGEST THING WAS MAKING THE PERSON UNDERSTAND YOUR WRITING. THE TOPIC HAD TO BE CLEAR FOR THAT PERSON TO UNDERSTAND IT. THAT'S THE THING AT CWE: DOES THE AUDIENCE UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE WRITING. THAT'S THE THEME OF THIS HERE SCHOOL.

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

62. Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q: 34. NO.

63. Where and when was your first piece of writing published?
64. Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain?
65. Did it change any part of your writing process?
66. Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed?
67. Did it change your understanding of audience?
68. Did it change your relationship to reading?
69. Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened?
70. Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36]
71. Would you like to have a piece of writing published? I DON'T KNOW AS OF YET BECAUSE I STILL TAKE MY EDUCATION PERSONAL. IT'S NOT TO BE SHARED WITH NOONE BUT MY PROFESSORS. FOR ME IT IS A PERSONAL CHALLENGE AND I'M NOT READY TO EXPOSE MYSELF TO ANYONE.

JUST A FEW WEEKS AGO, MIKE, WHO TUTORS ME TO HELP WITH PROFESSOR GLEASON, MAYBE HE'S IN THE MASTER'S PROGRAM AND PROFESSOR GLEASON HAD GIVEN HIM ONE OF MY EXAM PAPERS AND I WASN'T OPPOSED TO THAT TO HELPING SOMEONE, BUT.... I LIKE MY OWN FREEWRITINGS. READING THAT ALOUD WAS ALRIGHT, WHAT I LIKED ABOUT IT WAS THAT IT GIVES YOU A CHANCE TO UNWIND. AND IN OUR CLASS NOW WITH GLEASON, WE DO A REVIEW SOMETIMES AND THEN GO TO A QUIZ.

72. Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing? NO. BECAUSE IT IS SOMETHING THAT I WANT TO PUBLISH THAT I HAVE PEACE OF MIND WITH.

Would it make you a writer? I'VE BEEN A WRITER.

Would it make you an author? I AM AN AUTHOR. JUST LIKE MY PHILOSOPHY TEACHER TOLD ME, EVERYONE'S A PHILOSOPHER. EVERYONE'S A WRITER. THE AUTHOR'S JUST SOMEONE WHO'S PUTTING THEIR IDEAS AND SHARING IT. ZNH WAS AN AUTHOR BEFORE SHE DIED. I GUESS AS A PERSON IT DEPENDS ON HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT THEMSELVES.

[IN NOT CALLING YOURSELF AN AUTHOR] MAYBE YOU'RE TRYING TO HUMBLE YOURSELF.

73. What if I published one of your papers? Would that make you an author or a writer?

I DON'T THINK I WOULD FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH THAT THERE. I DON'T THINK IN TERMS OF.... DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED LAST YEAR, GLEASON SHARED MY ETHNOGRAPHIC BOOK WITH THE CLASS AND MY WRITING AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER AND THE END, AND A SHORT STORY THAT I WROTE. BUT WHEN YOU SPEAK ABOUT PUBLISHING, ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT GW ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY, GW.... I DON'T THINK I'M TOO COMFORTABLE. THE GOOD PART IS THAT A STUDENT WHO IS STRUGGLING CAN SAY, I'M NOT ALONE. BUT ALL OF MY GRAMMAR MISTAKES.

BUT YOU'D HAVE A COPYEDITOR.

BUT THEN THAT'S NOT REALLY PUBLISHING.

BUT THAT'S HOW IT WORKS.

YEAH BUT IT'S NOT LIKE, IF YOU TOOK THE ORIGINAL COPY AND THIS IS HOW IT WAS AND YOU WANT TO SHOW YOUR STUDENT THAT.

JR DESCRIBES PROJECT

THAT'S INTERESTING! HMMM. I GUESS WHEN YOU CROSS THAT BRIDGE. WHAT STORY WOULD YOU LIKE? I THINK MY BEST STORY WAS ZNH. I THINK I WAS EMOTIONALLY INVOLVED IN THAT. I DIDN'T LIKE WHAT THE CRITICS WERE SAYING ABOUT HER. HOW TEACAKE WAS A SUPER HERO AND I FELT THAT TEACAKE WAS AN AVERAGE GUY STANDING ON THE CORNER LOOKING FOR A HANDOUT. AND HER HUSBAND, THEY CONSIDERED HIM AN UNCLE TOM AND I THOUGHT HE WAS SOMEONE VERY POSITIVE; HE WAS NO DIFFERENT FROM ME.

74. What if we as a class published a book ? Would that make you an author or a writer?

75. What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique?

76. Describe the experience of writing this piece. Describe the experience of reading this piece of writing. Please explain.

WE HAD TO WRITE ABOUT IT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU SAID, FIND A CRITICAL ARTICLE. THESE PEOPLE HAD WRITTEN BOOKS THEMSELVES BUT THEY HAD NOT GONE THROUGH WHAT SHE HAD GONE THROUGH. THEY ATTACKED THE STORY. WHAT OTHER IDENTITY CAN THEY RELATE TO OTHER THAN WHAT THEY'VE SEEN [THE EUROPEAN IDEAL].

WHAT ABOUT THIS WRITING.

THE WRITING WAS THE BEST WRITING I DID IN YOUR CLASS. YOU SAID I COULD HAVE DONE MORE RESEARCH. I GOT ANGRY THERE IN THAT PAPER. AND IT HELPED ME. TO ME, IT WAS ALRIGHT ME BEING ANGRY. THERE WAS TALKING ABOUT THIS GUY HERE, SAY I FINISH MY DEGREE HERE AND GET MY MASTER'S DEGREE AND I'M MAKING 100/200 THOUSAND DOLLARS A YEAR AND I'M LIVING IN THIS HOUSE AND I SAY YOU HAVE TO CALL ME MR. WEST, WHEREAS THEY WERE SAYING TEACAKE WAS THE AVERAGE BLACK PERSON AT THAT TIME. AT THE END OF THE STORY SHE WENT BACK TO MR. STARKS. SHE WENT BACK TO THE TOWN, SHE WENT BACK TO HER PORCH THERE WITH HER FRIEND, AT THE END OF THE BOOK SHE GOES BACK TO HIS HOUSE. ONE PERSON IS LEAVING BEHIND SOMETHING, WHEREAS THIS CRITIC IS SAYING

TEACAKE IS REPRESENTING THE TYPICAL AFRICAN AMERICAN GUY. TO ME TEACAKE IS A FOOL. HE WAS SAYING JOE STARKS WAS PART OF IMPERIALISM. NO, HE SAW OPPORTUNITY AND HE HAD A VISION.

SO IF WE DECIDED TO PUBLISH THIS PAPER, WOULD YOU WANT TO REVISE IT? I JUST WANT TO MAKE A COMPARISON WITH TEACAKE AND THE GUY HANGING OUT ON THE CORNER OF THE BLOCK. THOSE KIDS DOING DRUGS, HAVING A GOOD TIME. AS OPPOSED TO THE GUY WHO PUT IN 12 HOURS AT HIS JOB. YOU HAVE TO HAVE A GOAL AND YOU HAVE TO WORK TOWARD IT.

DO YOU THINK THIS WAS THE CLEAREST PIECE OF WRITING YOU EVER WROTE? THAT WOULD BE FOR PROFESSOR GLEASON AND HAD TO DO WITH A DAY'S CASES AND WAS RELATED TO MY JOB. EVEN PEOPLE COMING FROM UPSTATE, GETTING UP IN THE MORNING, FEEDING HER CHILDREN AT 5 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING, TAKING THE AMTRAK, TAKING THE SUBWAY, THROWING ELBOWS, WHAT AN EXTRA SANDWICH MIGHT MEAN, WHAT AN EXTRA BREAKFAST MIGHT MEAN. IT WAS A DAY AND IT WAS A GOOD STORY AND A DESCRIPTION OF THAT PLACE AND HOW YOU GET BY.

77. What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

78. Is the quality of the writing in this piece different from other things you have written? If yes, how?

79. Did you imagine an audience for this piece of writing?

80. Were you a part of the audience you imagined for this piece of writing?

81. Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

I LOVE TO WRITE NOW. WRITING IS A CHALLENGE AND I LOOK AT MY FEMALE PROFESSORS AS BEING A MOTHER HEN. AS I CONTINUE MY EDUCATION I HOPE I RUN INTO STRICT TEACHERS AND HOW TO

FORMULATE MY THOUGHT AND GET WHAT'S INSIDE OF THEM OUT ON PAPER. TO GET THE DETAILS OUT. I FEEL IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO BE ASKED TO DO THIS INTERVIEW BECAUSE YOU COULD HAVE ASKED HUNDREDS AND HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE. SO I WAS HONORED. I'M VERY THANKFUL. EVEN AS I'M GOING ON, I'M GOING TO A DIFFERENT ERA OF MY LIFE AND EVERY ERA TAKES YOU TO A HIGHER LEVEL. I'D RATHER HAVE SOMEONE BEING REAL WITH ME INSTEAD OF BEING PHONY. THE BEST ARE THE REAL PEOPLE. IF SOMEONE GETS HURT, IT'S ALRIGHT TO GET HURT. IT'S PART OF THE EMOTIONS.

Name: JOHANNAH RODGERS

Date: December 8, 2004

Years in College: 4 years undergrad; 1 year grad Comp. Lit; 2 years MFA; Ph.D. program: 1 semester 1998, returned Fall 2002, will graduate late 2006.

Age: 36

Gender: F

Occupation: Writer and Educator

Ethnicity: White/Caucasian

Student's Educational Background: B.A., M.A., Ph.D. candidate

Writing/Composition Courses Taken: none

Other Courses Taken Involving Writing Instruction: Creative Writing seminars, literature classes

Parents' Occupations: Mother: Clinical Psychologist; Father: Unknown; Mother2: Non-profit Administrator

Parents' Educational Background: Mother: Ph.D.; Mother2: M.A.; Father: Unknown

Background

What words do you associate with the term author? What comes to mind when you think of this term? I think of someone who has published books.

How do you define the term author? An author is someone who has published a book or books or articles.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.) It is hard to reconstruct. I would have to say all of the above.

Do you consider yourself an author? No.

If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?) I have published a number of articles and stories. Because I have not published a book, I feel that I am not a "real" author. So when people ask me "Have you published?", I

generally say yes, and then add that I have published nonfiction articles and stories BUT NOT A BOOK.

If no, why not? What would make you an author? Having a book published, maybe even having more than one book published, having people read these books and talk about my style of writing and my ideas without actually knowing me personally.

What words do you associate with the term writer? What comes to mind when you think of this term? I think about the act of writing, of putting thoughts down on paper. I think everyone is a writer, whether they consider themselves one or not.

How do you define the term writer? As someone who is literate.

What are your sources for this definition? (teachers, professors, media, family, friends, etc.) Because I teach writing at the college level and study composition and rhetoric as a graduate student, I have created this definition from my studies and my own reflections on the word and on my students and society.

Do you consider yourself a writer? Yes. Not as a professional, per se, but for me the term writer is not a profession; it is an activity, and it is something that I do all of the time.

If yes, why and when (Always? Sometimes? With certain kinds of writing and not others?) Always, regardless of the kind or type of writing.

If no, why not? What would make you a writer? N/A

What are the differences between an author and a writer? Are there any similarities? There are similarities only when the two words are capitalized and thus both are professional designations. There are similarities because writing is something an Author does. I see the difference as being mainly the fact that a writer writes for his or herself and an author writes for an audience.

Did anyone ever encourage you to write? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to write? Yes. I was encouraged to write from a very young age. I was aware that there were great authors from a very young age. A story my mother told me when I was quite young (and many times again as I was growing up) was how she had looked up the astrological birth signs of all of the major poets, i.e., those that were included in her anthology of great poets (I don't even know exactly which authors were included in this survey, but I do know the cover of the book was red with black on the spine and it was hardcover; I don't remember when I became cognizant of the physical aspects of this particular book) and that there were no poets published in this book that were the same astrological sign as me. This to me meant that I would not be a poet. This meant to me that certain people were born to be poets. This meant to me that poets were born, not made. I also remember once when I broke my wrist and I had to write some essays with my left hand. I found this very frustrating and I asked my mother to help me. At some point I also remember her saying that I was not a very good writer. Although I was mostly praised for my writing, I never felt confident about writing. I found it scary and difficult until I began to write professionally.

Did anyone ever encourage you to become an author? If yes, please explain who, when and what they encouraged you to author? Yes. My family used to sit around and talk about books that we should write. This was a major pastime. I knew people growing up who had published books and "having a book" was to me an important thing. I thought that those who "had books" knew things in a different way from other people.

Has your relationship to writing changed since you began attending college classes? Please explain why or why not. I don't think my relationship to writing changed when I was in college because I never actually took a writing class, having tested out of Freshman Composition. All of the writing I did in college was about reading and interpreting literature and I was most often praised for my ability to do this. I never really thought about my writing per se, though I remember struggling to write many papers even though I would eventually get them finished. The process seemed more alchemical or magical than scientific--one wrote with inspiration, not with plans and outlines.

Identity, Writing, and Humanities 101

What was your experience of writing in Humanities 101? Did the written work--both formal and informal--contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? Please explain. N/A

What was your experience of reading the literary texts presented in Humanities 101? Did reading these texts encourage you to write or contribute to your identity or potential identity as a writer? As an author? When I read literary works in college, I was very interested in becoming like these authors and publishing equally "great" books. I believed, however, that I would not be able to, that there was something magical about these books and that the individuals who wrote them were geniuses.

Identity, Writing, and Audience

When you write, do you imagine an audience for your writing? If NO, why not? [skip to Q: 28] It depends what I am writing. If I am writing in my journal, it seems very private (though I must admit that there are moments when I wonder if anyone might ever read this journal after I die and whether they will in this journal see the formulation of ideas that are then found in my finished work). When I write articles for *Insurance and Technology*, which is a business and technology magazine, I write with a certain vocabulary and tone because I imagine that the people reading the magazine have certain expectations, have certain kinds of knowledge and vocabulary a familiarity with certain topics, and will understand and appreciate what I write. I cannot be ironic or dark in my tone when I write these articles. They are pretty straight-forward. I try to include as much information as possible, because that is what I think readers will want: information, details, insight into specific technology projects, advice. When I write articles for the Coop newsletter (weekly print run=10,000), as I do every eight weeks, I try to be more entertaining and chatty in my tone. I imagine people waiting in line and reading this publication (it is called *The Park Slope Food Coop Linewaiters Gazette*), or sitting at home and reading it. I imagine people read these articles quite quickly, and so they should be pretty light and to the point, but I also try to include information so they will think they have learned something from the article. I write on a range of topics: food and cooking, Coop policies, member behavior. I once had someone tell me they

thought something I had written in the *Gazette* was "very funny" and I was extremely happy when I heard that; it was what I wanted people to think when they were reading it. I also have a vivid and detailed image of what the readers of whatever publication I am writing for look like. For instance, with the technology magazines, I imagine a man wearing a shirt and tie and blue blazer and khaki pants reading the articles, and I think perhaps there are other men wearing business casual clothes who read these articles. For the Coop paper, I imagine a white male/female in their mid-30s/early-40s who is well educated and highly literate and politically left-wing. When I write for *The Brooklyn Rail* (monthly print run=10,000), I am a little unsure who the readers will be--I generally imagine them to be young and that they have a good sense of what is going on culturally in the city and to be left-wing politically. How I write an article for the *Rail* will also vary based on the content/subject matter of the article. For instance, if I am writing an essay about the city, I expect it should have a certain pace and include a certain vocabulary and type of perspective and pace, i.e., leisurely and reflective. When I write about politics, my tone tends to be more acrid, sometimes ironic, and the pace is snappy. When I am writing fiction I have a less defined (particularly visually) sense of audience. I think about readers more generally, i.e., when people read novels they want to be entertained. When people read novels they want to read beautiful sentences. When people read novels, they want to be involved with the characters, they want to be on the edge of their seats, they want to become aware of an image (metaphor, analogy) that they never thought of before. They want to understand something that they have never understood before, or become aware of something they have never been aware of before. Of course, these are all things that I WANT from the experience of reading novels. I cannot visualize someone sitting down and reading my novels or short stories, partially because I find the act of imagining this quite terrifying. I know how I want people to react, i.e., I want them to say: "WOW, this is amazing! What beautiful prose. The writing is so funny and insightful without being snobbish. It is original but highly readable. I want to read this book again and again and again." Increasingly, I write my stories/fiction for myself. I do not have a defined audience outside my circle of writer friends and these readers know me very well and are very patient with my work. I feel they are more interested in my work as it relates to me as a person and as a developing artist than as a writer whose work they appreciate and learn from.

If yes, who/what makes up this audience? See above. When I edit what I write professionally, I pretend to be a part of the audience I am writing for.

If yes, how does this audience impact your writing? [clarity, correctness, need for certain types of rhetorical strategies, tone, etc.] It determines the tone and syntax and vocabulary and structure.

Can you explain where or how audience became a factor in your writing? I don't think I had any sense of audience until I began working at a publishing company and was writing articles for their reference books. Prior to that, I imagined the only audience for my writing was my teacher/professor, who cared more about ideas than clarity or structure or tone. Although I loved reading and literature, I never thought about these things in terms of writing, more in terms of ideas. When I began writing professionally, the structure and tone of writing became more apparent to me--I had a better sense of what "good" and "poor" writing was. Then, writing had more to do with verbal facility, clarity, and cleverness than with ideas and thinking. I think it was then that I really understood what "style" was in writing, i.e., one's tone, one's approach to a subject. I would have a very difficult time defining style per se, but increasingly style became a layer of one's writing and if I had to define what it means for me, it is the amount of one's personality that is able to come into one's writing. And, it occurs to me now that I am talking about it that one can have different personalities when they write--different personas. Really great writers (Chekov, Proust, Musil, Gogol, Babel, Kafka, Beckett, Joyce--I'm dying because I am only naming male writers--Stein (there, phew, finally, a woman)) have a unique personality and perspective that comes through in their writing. You can hear them in their sentences--they have "something to say." And, of course, *I* think that everyone has something to say and so everyone can write. This may sound like circular thinking, but actually it isn't, it just makes me return to my definition above of what makes "really great writers" great and makes me wonder if I need to re-think that.

Do you consider yourself a part of an audience when you read your own writing? If yes, please explain. If no, can you describe the experience of reading your own writing? Yes, absolutely. Whenever I write, I am both reader and writer, particularly when I am writing nonfiction articles professionally. There may be a select number of moments when I write fiction when I don't think about audience and just write, but as soon as I start reading my fiction, I begin again to think about audience. I am also very much in dialogue with my editor who in some ways becomes a representative for the audience in general.

Did your understanding of audience change, develop, or shift based on your experience in Humanities 101? If yes, what specifically contributed to this? N/A

Identity, Writing, and Publishing

Have you ever had a piece of writing published? If yes, where? When? If NO, skip to Q:

36. Yes. 1. *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* (I contributed short biographical and critical overviews of authors--this was published in book form, and my name is in the book, but there is no by-line with the articles I wrote). 2. Letter in Stanford student newspaper (this was actually before TCLC, but I had forgotten about it. 3. *Fiction* magazine (chapter from my novel). 4. Technology magazines: *Insurance and Technology*, *Bank Systems and Technology*, *Wall Street and Technology*. 5. Ghost written material for a company's product published as an advertorial in *Business Week*. 6. *Pierogi Press* (one-page short story). 7. *Coop Gazette*. 8. *New York Times* (very short article published on the Web site). 8. *Brooklyn Rail* (several articles and one essay). 9. *Promethean*, student literary journal at CCNY (short story). 9. Sona Books Chapbook *Necessary Fictions*.

Where and when was your first piece of writing published? My first piece of writing was published in a staple-bound 8 1/2 by 11 "book" and was a collection of writings by Ann Arbor middle school 7th graders. I was very proud to have been included in this. I contributed a short essay about the Jane Austen novel *Pride and Prejudice*, and although I was very flattered to be asked to contribute, I also remember agonizing over what exactly I would contribute. It never occurred to me to contribute creative writing because I hadn't done any and never considered making some for this publication. I was never

published in high school. The odd thing about this essay was that I don't think I read the book in its entirety (I may have made this up--the idea that I did not actually read the book--but this is also a memory I have, tied up with a belief I held then and into high school and part of college that "some people just understood things" and I, in particular had some innate ability to understand texts (I think of reading Camus and Sartre in my French class and being told that I "really got it" even though I don't think I read all that closely). I recently (FINALLY) read *Pride and Prejudice* (I've read other Jane Austen novels, but never, for "some" reason, that one) and I really hated the book. I think it must be my least favorite of her novels, with *Northanger Abbey* being possibly the one I like best (in general, I much prefer George Eliot to Austen). I thought the book was terribly predictable and a little too contrite and made the women characters seem rather pathetic. Ultimately, I still prefer MY version of the novel, the one I made up in the seventh grade and that has something to do with the heroine rejecting her suitor because she is very strong-minded. I think my version (and I really have to go back and check it since I know I am misremembering) was more like Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* but with a different ending. Is this what *Pride and Prejudice* is based on? I'll have to look into that. In college, I edited a literary magazine and published one poem in that (pseudonymously, though I always thought my fellow editors must have known that I wrote it because I acted so strangely with regard to whether we should publish it or not and it was a really pretty terrible poem--and I say this not feeling that all of my writing is terrible); I also attempted to get a story published in another Stanford literary magazine, but it wasn't accepted, and I think I submitted it after college. I did more editing than writing in college. In addition to my work with *Dialtone*, the literary magazine, I also helped edit *Aurora*, which was the feminist literary magazine at Stanford and that a group of us tried to resuscitate--I can no longer remember how successful this project was. I enjoyed putting together (laying out/editing) the student literary magazine. I consider my first real publication the essays I wrote for Gale Research (the reference publishing house), though now that I say that, I'm not so sure that I really felt that I had "been published" just because these appeared in print. It makes me wonder if there is some difference between "being published" and "appearing in print" since, although I wrote these articles, they were unsigned.

Did having this piece of writing published change the way in which you thought of yourself as a writer? Please explain? I don't remember it changing the way I thought of myself as a writer because my name was not attached to the essays that I published and these books were such collaborative projects that I didn't feel that they were "my" books per se. I did think of the sections of the reference book that I edited/wrote for "mine." But I was the only person who knew that I had written these essays and selected the criticism that accompanied them. I remember really wanting to work for a magazine after working at Gale and wanting to write journalism when I went to SF but I was not successful in getting a job doing that. Having my first story published in *Promethean* did not change my relationship to writing because I didn't take the publication all that seriously. I was very excited and proud when my story came out in *Fiction* magazine, but again, it was published there because I knew someone and it was a fairly early and rough chapter from my first novel and I never felt all that comfortable having people read it. In having pieces published in magazines, I began to be able to separate myself from my writing and have the whole thing become less "personal." Of course, writing fiction is still very "personal." What I mean by less "personal" is having a thicker skin, not minding so much what someone thinks of what I have written because it is for a certain purpose. With my academic writing, I took grades very personally, so I did not have a very thick skin when it came to writing academic papers. With those, as with my fiction, I often feel very judged, probably because this writing matters to me in a way that the technology journalism (or other kinds of professional writing) doesn't.

Did it change any part of your writing process? Yes, absolutely. Instead of agonizing over something, I simply HAD to write it. I had no choice. I had a deadline and I had to put something on paper and have it make sense. When "making sense" is the first priority, I have an easier time writing. When I am making something that is meant to be admired or appreciated, i.e., some kind of aesthetic object, I have a different set of standards and quite a different writing process. I also think in some mysterious way, it allowed me to write from the voices in my head more than I ever had, or to become conscious of the fact that I was writing from voices in my head. The act of writing became more like transcription, and what I used to call "writing" then took place more in various revision stages.

Did it change your relationship to writing? What specific elements changed? Yes. It made writing a lot less scary. I became competent at writing. I didn't know if I were very good at it, but at least I knew with a great degree of certainty that I could do it and it was acceptable.

Did it change your understanding of audience? I also think in some mysterious way, it allowed me to write from the voices in my head more than I ever had, or to become conscious of the fact that I was writing from voices in my head. The act of writing became more like transcription, and what I used to call "writing" then took place more in various revision stages.

Did it change your relationship to reading? Yes. I began to pay attention to the way in which all kinds of things were written that I used to not pay attention to. For instance, I would look at the structure of newspaper articles and marketing materials. Writing became a way of communicating and there were certain ways in which one had to communicate (structure, tone, style) depending on what one was writing. I'm not describing this very well...I'm trying to think of an appropriate metaphor for this experience...it is like being an actor and you fit yourself into different roles.

Did it make you an author? If yes, please explain how and why this happened? No, not really. I think it made me a kind of self-taught journalist; to be an author, I would have an audience for my creative work.

Did it change your understanding of authorship? [Skip to Q: 36] Yes with respect to certain kinds of writing and "Somewhat" with respect to others. It definitely changed my understanding of the people who write for newspapers and magazines and banks and advertising agencies. I began to understand that these people were just that--people--they were writers, they were not gods or institutions (even though they may be representing institutions when they write). The meaning of newspaper articles and news reports and all kinds of marketing material became more pliable and slippery and subjective, as far as I was concerned. It became less objective. In the realm of fiction

and poetry, my concept of authorship also changed in that it became more "homespun." Once I began writing fiction and, more importantly, continued writing fiction, I could no longer think of Dostoyevsky or Tolstoy as these ephemeral beings gifted with genius. They, too, were writers.

Would you like to have a piece of writing published? N/A

Would having a piece of writing published change your relationship to writing? Would it make yourself a writer? Would it make you an author? I have to wonder whether my understanding of authorship will change once I have a book of creative work published. I tend to think it will, but then again, I can also imagine myself diminishing the importance of this event because it isn't a "big enough" press, or because it has taken me so long to get my first book published. I've just submitted a piece to *Chain* magazine and to *Fence* magazine, and if either of these magazines accepts my work, I believe that I will feel affirmed somehow as a creative writer. But that said, I thought that by having my work accepted by *Pierogi* I would experience a similar sense of acceptance and the fact of the matter is it didn't happen, or if it did it was quite fleeting.

What piece of writing that you have made has been most interesting to you? Please explain the context in which it was written, the title (if there is one), the subject matter, and where it was written, as well as why you were interested and satisfied with this piece of writing--what specific qualities of the experience of writing it or of the written product make it unique? I'd have to say that there are a few pieces of writing that I have been most interested in. One piece is my urban trees essay, which was published in *The Brooklyn Rail*. I'm not entirely satisfied with the writing in that piece or with the scope of the piece, but I like the tone and pace and subject matter and I enjoy thinking about things to write like that or ways to improve that piece. I like it because it has a good balance of humor/information/thinking through of socio-cultural-aesthetic phenomena. Another piece is the most recent work I've been doing--the...I don't have a name for these pieces yet, I guess I will have to come up with one (laughs)...I guess I could call them my repetition pieces though I don't think that is such a great title. I'll call them plotless associative repetitive pieces! Anyway, I like these pieces (each one I write I like

more than the last, which is probably a pretty good sign, no?) because there is a lot of energy in the writing and they are unique to me and they feel innovative, as though I have discovered a new style. When I read these pieces I think these are pretty unique and innovative (I know I said that already, but that is what I think when I look at them from an audience perspective as well as from a writer's perspective). The final piece of writing I would mention is my novel, *Driving to India*, which I began writing in 1996 as part of my work as an M.F.A. student and which I ultimately finished writing (if I have finished it), I think sometime in late 2003. There are some insights into characters that I think are quite good and it has a real structure, it has a story, and this was hard for me to do and I'm happy that I was able to create a plot. It is hard for me to think about the writing in that book and "judge" it, not, as some people think, because the subject matter is "so personal," but because I have been writing/ working on the project for so long. I like how minimal the writing is. It is not over-written, as some fiction can be.

Describe the experience of writing this piece. Please explain. (see above)

What experience do you have when you read this piece of writing?

Is there anything you would like to add or any additional thoughts that you have about authorship and writing?

Appendix D

Discussion of the Greek and Latin Etymological Roots of the Term Author

In his well-known essay “Author,” the critic Donald Pease offers the following etymological definition of the term *author*:

The word “author” derives from the medieval term *auctor*, which denoted a writer whose words commanded respect and belief. The word *auctor* derived from four etymological sources: the Latin verbs *agere*, “to act or perform”; *anico*, “to tie”; *augere*, “to grow”; and from the Greek noun *authentim*, “authority.” In the Middle Ages every discipline in the *trivium* had *auctores* (Cicero in rhetoric, Aristotle in dialectic, the ancient poets in grammar) and similarly in the *quadrivium* (Ptolemy in astronomy, Constantine in medicine, the Bible in theology, Boethius in arithmetic) (see Minnis 1984, 1-73). (Pease, 106)

Pease cites the critic A. J. Minnis as the only source for this definition, which, though not quoted from Minnis, repeats his definition almost verbatim:

In a literary context, the term *auctor* denoted someone who was at once a writer and an authority, someone not merely to be read but also to be respected and believed. According to medieval grammarians, the term derived its meaning from four main sources: *auctor* was supposed to be related to the Latin verbs *agere* “to act or perform,” *augere* “to grow” and *anico* “to tie,” and to the Greek noun *authentim* “authority.” An *auctor* “performed” the act of writing. He brought something into being, caused it to “grow.” In the more specialised sense related to *anico*, poets like Virgil and Lucan were *auctores* in that they had “tied” together their verses with feet and metres. To the ideas of achievement and growth was easily assimilated the idea of authenticity or “authoritativeness.” (Minnis, 10)

Minnis cites several different fifteenth century dictionaries as sources for his etymological definition of the term *author*. Minnis’ definition also, however, appears to be related to a source he does not cite and that predates the dictionaries he does reference and that, in all likelihood, informed the definitions contained in these dictionaries. This is Dante’s *Il Convivio* (*The Banquet*), a philosophical treatise that was written between 1304 and 1307 and published posthumously in 1490. Centered primarily around commentary on philosophy and philosophers, *Il Convivio* also contains a section dedicated to a discussion of authors and authority:

This word, namely "auctor" without the third letter *c*, has two possible sources of derivation. One is a verb that has very much fallen out of use in Latin and which signifies more or less "to tie words together," that is, "auico." Anyone who studies it carefully in its first form will observe that it displays its own meaning, for it is made up only of the ties of words, that is, of the five vowels alone, which are the soul and tie of every word, and is composed of them in a different order, so as to portray the image of a tie. For beginning with A it turns back to U, goes straight through to I and E, then turns back and comes to O, so that it truly portrays this image: A, E, I, O, U, which is the figure of a tie. Insofar as "author" is derived and comes from this verb, it is used only to refer to poets who have tied their words together with the art of poetry; but at present we are not concerned with this meaning. The other source from which "author" derives, as Uguccione attests in the beginning of his book *Derivations*, is a Greek word pronounced "autentin" which in Latin means "worthy of faith and obedience." Thus "author," in this derivation, is used for any person deserving of being believed and obeyed. From this comes the word which we are presently treating, namely "authority"; hence we can see that authority means "pronouncement worthy of faith and obedience." Consequently, when I prove that Aristotle is most worthy of faith and obedience, it will be evident that his words are the supreme and highest authority.

(Dante Alighieri, *The Convivio*, Translated by Richard Lansing
<http://dante.ilt.columbia.edu/books/convivi/convivio4.html>)

That the Dante, Minnis, and Pease definitions relate the same general information is clear. The only problem is that they all relate an etymological history for the term author that is not entirely correct. According to Richard Lansing, a Dante scholar and translator of *Il Convivio*, Dante's etymology is not only somewhat inventive, it is, in fact, wrong. In a footnote to the passage, Lansing writes, "According to Uguccione, from whom Dante takes this fanciful etymology, the Latin verb *auicio*, or *avieo*, means "to tie," as does the other form, *vieo* (from *viere*). The verbs do not in fact exist" (<http://dante.ilt.columbia.edu/books/convivi/convivio4.html#19>).

To make the story regarding the etymological roots of *auctor* even more complicated, not only does the Latin verb *auicio* referred to by Dante (and Minnis and Pease) not exist, the "Greek word pronounced 'autentin'" (written 'autentim' in Minnis and Pease) is, as Professor J.D. Noonan, a Professor of Classics at the University of Florida, explains, not a noun:

Pease provides no references for **auieo** or **autentim** (nor does he even distinguish among late-medieval and neo-Latin or among various phases of Greek). Did Pease take this on somebody else's authority? . . . Prof. Pease calls **autentim** a "noun." The ending **-im** is a Latin (not Greek) adverbial suffix, though it is a variant accusative case ending as well (cf. **statim*, *praesertim*, *confertim** and the like). Since the users of

Latin often failed to distinguish between Greek ***tau*** and ***theta*** in their speech and writing, it might be possible that ***autentim*** is a late- or medieval- or neo-Latin ADVERB, a hybrid of Greek ***authent-*** and Latin ***-im***. But that is mere speculation on my part. I never found ***autentim*** anywhere. (Noonan, February 10, 2006, e-mail written in response to a query sent by Johannah Rodgers regarding a 1999 listserv posting in reference to Pease's definition)

There are then two questions that need to be tackled with regard to Greek roots for the term *author*. First, what is “autentin” and how does this word become associated with the term *author*? Second, is there actually a Greek root for the word *auctor*?

In regard to a possible Greek root for the Latin term *auctor*, I followed up with Noonan's suggestion that the Greek *authent-* may be one. A search on the Perseus digital library's edition of Liddell and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon* revealed that there are two possible Greek roots for the Latin *auctor*: the verb *authenteo* and the noun *authentēs*. Liddell and Scott's Lexicon indicates that there are nine instances of the term *authenteo* in Greek sources⁴⁴ and offer the following definition of the term:

authenteō *to have full power over, tinos* NTest.

authent-eō ,

A. *to have full power or authority over, tinos* I Ep.Ti.2.12; *pros tina* BGU1208.37 (i B. C.): c. inf., Lyd.Mag.3.42.

2. *commit a murder, Sch.A.Eu.42.*

Regarding the secondary meaning cited, namely, “commit a murder,” this is derived from the idea of authority as connoting the sense of doing something “by one's own hand,” and can also refer to self-murder or suicide, and presumes a relationship between the verb *authenteo* and the noun *authentēs*. Liddell and Scott define *authentēs* as follows:

⁴⁴ By contrast, a search for *autentin* on the Perseus digital library returned no results and no such word is found in Liddell and Scott's dictionary. The nine instances include four in prose works (one in Herodotus, two in the speeches of Antiphon, and one in the New Testament) and five in poetic works (four in the plays of Euripides and one in a play by Aeschylus).

authent-ês, ou, **ho**, (cf. **autoentês**)

A. *murderer*, [Hdt.1.117](#), [E.Rh.873](#), [Th.3.58](#); **tinós** [E.HF1359](#), [A.R.2.754](#); *suicide*, [Antipho 3.3.4](#), D.C.37.13: more loosely, *one of a murderer's family*, [E.Andr.172](#).

2. *perpetrator, author*, [praxeôs](#) [Plb.22.14.2](#); [hierosulias](#) [D.S.16.61](#): generally, *doer*, [Alex.Rh.p.2S.](#); *master*, [dêmos authentês chthonos](#) [E.Supp.442](#); voc. [authenta hêlie](#) [PMag.Leid.W.6.46](#); condemned by [Phryn.](#)96.

3. as Adj., [homaimos](#) au<*> [phonos](#), au. phanatoi, murder *by one of the same family*, [A.Eu.212](#), [Ag.1572](#) (lyr.). (For auto-hentês, cf. sun-[entês](#), [hanuô](#); root *sen-*, *sη-*.)

There are thirty instances of the verb *authentēs* in Greek sources, eighteen in poetry and twelve in prose. One instance cited by Liddell and Scott is in the New Testament in 1 Timothy 2:12. In that text, Paul writes: “*didaskēin de gunaiki ouk epitrepō, oude authentēin andros, all' einai en hēsuchia*,” which is translated in the King James Bible as “I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp *authority* over the man, but to be in silence” (1 Timothy 2:12, my emphasis). Whether or not the New Testament is the source for Dante’s or Ugucione’s use of the word *autentin* as a noun, the fact of the word appearing in a Biblical passage that has been the subject of a great deal of commentary by religious scholars has served to both clarify and complicate a possible identification of a Greek etymological root for the term *author*.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ A summary of the arguments involved in the debate amongst religious scholars was put together in a paper by The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod in 2005: “In 1979 Catherine Kroeger, a classics student at the University of Minnesota, published an article in which she argued that *authentēō* is an erotic term best translated “to engage in fertility practices,” the implication being that in 1 Timothy 2 Paul is countering specific heretical aberrations in ancient Ephesus and hence not laying down a principle applicable for all time. Kroeger’s article prompted a series of responses that challenged the methodology and substance of her study, leading one scholar to conclude that her proposal was “more curious than substantive.” In 1992 Kroeger and her husband Richard argued for a different meaning, suggesting that Paul used *authentēō* to mean “proclaim oneself author of a man” in response to “a Gnostic notion of Eve as creator of Adam.” The appearance of a 1988 study by L. E. Wilshire based on a University of California database of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* significantly advanced the lexical study of the term *authentēō*. Wilshire examined every known occurrence of *authentēō* and its cognates (about 314 references) and concluded the following: “Sometime during the spread of koine, the word *authentēs*, went beyond the Attic meaning connecting it with murder and suicide and into the broader concept of criminal behavior. It also began to take on the additional meanings of “to exercise authority/power/rights” which became firmly established in the Greek Patristic writers to mean “exercise authority.” In a subsequent article Wilshire attempted to “clarify” his earlier work, proposing that *authentēō* probably meant “instigating violence.” However, in an extensive and scholarly study surpassing earlier studies in scope, Albert Wolters of Redeemer University College, Ontario, Canada, has shown that the work of Wilshire and some others is methodologically and lexicographically flawed. This is principally because these studies have failed to distinguish carefully not only between the verb *authentēō* and the noun *authentēs*, but more seriously between two meanings of *authentēs* having two distinct semantic

Having now become a participant in the discussion of the etymology of the term *author*, I offer a provisional update to the etymology related by Pease via Minnis regarding the Latin and Greek roots of the term *author*: According to the most recent research into the Greek and Latin roots of the term *author*, the term is derived from the Latin *actor*, meaning originator, from the Latin verbs *agere*, to increase, augment, or originate, and *augere*, to grow, the Greek verb *authenteō*, meaning to have authority over. It may also have some relationship to the Greek noun *authētēs*, meaning murderer, perpetrator.

It would be a very concise story, indeed, if it were possible to draw a line directly from either the Greek term *authentes*, or the Latin *actor* to the Romantic conception of the author as originary genius. The story is, however, much more complicated. For, as much as there may be some connection between historical and contemporary conceptions of the term *author*, the definition of the term varies depending on the social, cultural, technological, and economic structures that are in place in any given historical period. This is shown quite clearly in the transition from divine author to human author that, according to Minnis occurs sometime in the thirteenth-century, as well as with the recognition of contemporary authors alongside ancient ones, which takes place slightly later. The invention of the printing press will in turn inflect the meaning of term author, which begins to have print technology incorporated into its very definition.⁴⁶

fields, only one of which can be established to have a direct relationship to *authenteō*. (The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, "Authentein," 3-5, <http://www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=504>)

⁴⁶ Chartier writes that "In Richelet's *Dictionnaire Francais* (1680) and Furetière's *Dictionnaire universel* (1690) the term author is not applied to anyone who writes a work, only to those who have had their compositions published. Writing was not enough if one wanted to *s'eriger en auteur*; one's work also had to circulate in public by means of print" (*The Order of Books*, 41).

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