



Rhetoric & Writing at BGSU

Rhetoric & Writing Notes - Fall 2003

Issue Eight : Fall 2003

Lynette Porter Honored by the Society for Technical Communication

Lynette Porter, a 1989 graduate of the Rhetoric & Writing Ph.D. Program, was named a Fellow of the Society for Technical Communication at the STC annual conference, held in Dallas last May. During the awards banquet, Lynette was recognized for her work in both industry, as a consultant and author or co-author of four professional books, and academia, as a teacher and mentor of technical communication students. This is one of the highest awards of STC International, said William Coggin, director of BGSU's MA in Technical and Scientific Communication (and a Fellow himself), who helped with research for this article. The process of becoming a fellow is described by the STC as follows: "The rank of fellow is conferred only upon associate fellows who have attained such eminence in the field of technical communication that the board, by a two-thirds vote of all members, deems them worthy of being singled out as one of the select few who have distinguished the Society and the profession. Associate fellows may not apply for the rank of fellow; they must be nominated by a committee of fellows." Currently only 129 people in an organization with more than 25,000 members hold the distinction of Fellow.

Lynette porterly@cts.db.erau.edu received her MA in Scientific and Technical Communication at Bowling Green before entering the Rhetoric & Writing Program. She is a faculty member at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

An Alumni Update from James Martin

I've had an interesting 14 years since graduating from. Right after leaving BG in August 1989, I was hired by the University of Guam, in the Western Pacific American territory of Guam, where I continued to work through the Fall 2001 semester. I taught in the English Division there, was tenured in 1995, worked as Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences for one year, and as Department chair for a number of years. I did a stint as visiting professor in China in 1992-93. I helped found a journal of Western Pacific creative writing called Storyboard, which has put out 7 or 8 issues so far.

In 2001, I decided to make a change in 2001. I resigned from the University of Guam, and moved to China, as a professor of English Language & Literature this time at Xiamen University in Xiamen, Fujian, in Southeast China. I am teaching literature, writing, and critical theory, to MA and Ph.D. candidates in English. Quite interesting. My wife, who is Singaporean, and I have traveled quite a lot throughout Asia and feel quite comfortable here. We revisited Bowling Green once, in 1998 or so. Some contact information: jamesemartin02@yahoo.com and <http://www.martin.cnidc.net>.

Thoughts on Revision and Publication: From Dissertation to College English Article by Jonathan Mauk

My 1999 dissertation defense was more deliberative than forensic. That is, my committee (Alice Calderonello, Sue Carter, Tom Klein, Dan Madigan) encouraged me to think about future possibilities from the research I had already done. So several months after, I plugged my writerly nose, returned to the text and distilled the last three chapters into a twenty-five-page essay. This (distillation?) process took a full month and involved, primarily, foregrounding (and better supporting) key claims.

I first submitted the essay to one of the major journals in the field (let's omit the title), but after nearly a year without a response (and a brief email asking for even a gesture), I decided that time had run out, and sent it along to College English. Jeanne Gunner, the editor, did indeed respond within the "sixteen weeks" noted in CE submission guidelines. She had sent the draft to three reviewers, and each responded with typed comments and a recommendation: publish, revise and re-submit, or reject. If memory serves, I got back one publish and two revise and re-submits (it wasn't a jackpot, but it wasn't bad). All three reviewers had insightful suggestions. (In fact, as I realized then and in textbook publishing since, some reviewers know a writer's intentions with such lucidity, that they border on psychic.)

The suggestions from the reviewers prompted some heavy reading, and so I found myself mired in research: building support structures beneath debatable claims—or, at least, claims that might be easily dismissed. I wrestled through the matrix of data on the National Association for Educational Statistics web site, read through recent texts on two-year colleges and demographic trends, and worked through more critical geography—the primary theoretical apparatus working in the essay.

As we all know from graduate courses, such reading is self-perpetuating--it begets more reading. Researching one claim (or even supporting a warranting assumption) can consume a good chunk of time. And here's the thing: CE did not give a deadline for the

publication." The acceptance sent me running back to the essay to re-check for stilted prose, stumbling transitions, grammatical errors, etc. (the academic equivalent of straightening one's tie...or tucking in one's t-shirt). But I also found myself adding several concessions and qualifiers; with the collective stare of the CE readership looming on the horizon, I became increasingly conciliatory.

I still haven't read the published essay because I'd certainly cringe at passages that still need tinkering. However, I have received correspondence about the piece from scholars around the country—and have even linked arms with some folks for a CCCC presentation. I have also since acted as a reviewer for CE. As a writer and reader and teacher, I continue coming back to basic, colloquial-sounding concepts (the ones that we emphasize in composition courses): e.g. Writing isn't writing unless it's re-writing.

John Mauk jmauk@nmc.edu teaches at Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City. Note: In March 2003, College English published "Location, Location, Location: The 'Real' (E)states of Being, Writing, and Thinking in Composition." R&W Notes invited John to reflect on the process of moving from dissertation to publication. R&W Notes would like to tell other publishing stories by program graduates.

Summer Study at Oxford University for Two R&W Students by Karen Rowe

One of the best aspects of the Rhetoric and Writing program here at BGSU is the variety of opportunities that one has to fulfill the requirements of the program. A year ago, Mona Duncel and I took advantage of the summer program at Tours, France, to brush up on (in Mona's case) and start to learn (in my case) French in order to be prepared for the graduate class that fulfills the language requirement.

This past summer, we again ventured across The Pond in search of classes that would help us fulfill our cognates. This time, however, we attended a program run by the University of Oxford's Department of Continuing Education that was held at Exeter College. The exposure to the British style of education--small-group tutorials twice a week focused on the chosen class and a daily lecture on broader topics--was eye opening and enjoyable. Fortunately, the tutors in the summer did not expect the usual five-page single-spaced theme for discussion every time the group met! But the exposure to scholars prominent in their fields as well as the interaction with students from all across America and the world was an education in more than the traditional sense.

Experiencing the life of the typical Oxford student was also an eye-opener. Three meals a day (dinner on the formal side) prepared for us and a scout who cleaned our rooms every day (including making the beds) left few housekeeping obligations to get in the way of the studying we were there to do. The freedom to use the resources of the Bodleian Library (after having sworn not to bring fire into the building nor to remove books) coupled with the lack of responsibilities made the studying and reflecting that grad students long after here in the States a daily indulgence, free from guilt.

The cultural resources of Oxford are abundant: nearly daily concerts, a rich playbill of Shakespearean offerings, free museums. And the complementary day trips organized by the college and professors mean that the student enjoys a well-rounded educational experience. The stellar education offered us by the Oxford program allowed us an opportunity to see not just how the other half lives, but how the other half learns.

R&W Program Alumni Receive Promotions

Several Rhetoric & Writing Alumni sent word about recent promotions. Congratulations on these important professional milestones! R&W Notes would like to share other good news like this. If you have been tenured or promoted in the past year, please send a quick note.

Rosalee Stilwell

After five years of teaching at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, I was eligible in Fall of 2002 for tenure and promotion. At IUP, there are two separate review processes, and, while tenure is relatively easy to achieve, promotion is more difficult. It's a matter of money in the form of salary increases for the Commonwealth of PA, so the State System of Higher Education (SSHE) is reluctant, to say the least, to promote people here. Well, I'm happy to say that I was tenured and promoted, which now makes me an official Pennsylvanian, I guess. [Rosalee, I understand, was ranked first of the seventeen candidates for promotion at her university--RCG.]

My timing is off, though: As of this writing, none of us who were promoted are receiving their expected (and contractual) salary increases. Instead, our faculty union is currently deadlocked on such issues with SSHE, and we may strike--soon. If a strike occurs, it won't be over our wages, but over many other "quality of education" abuses which the students and the professorate have endured as the McDonaldization of higher education continues here. So, if we do indeed go on strike, I look forward to reporting back to this august group of fellow alumni just what "walking the line" is like. Rosalee's email address is stilwell@iup.edu.

Peter Schreffler

I am happy to pass on the news that I have recently (officially, in early May) been promoted to the rank of associate professor in the Department of English at Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida. I have been teaching at FSC since September of 1996. All the best to you Buckeyes and Bowling Greeners! My email address is pschreffler@flsouthern.edu.

meet other R&W Ph.D. graduates at the CCCC meeting in San Antonio next Spring.

Other News from Rhetoric & Writing Program Alumni

John Fallon

I just finished editing and publishing my 20th issue of the newsletter of the Ohio Association of Two-Year Colleges (OATYC). I took over as editor in 1994--after my excellent training in the R&W Program publications course, which whetted my appetite for undertaking more professional endeavors, like editing a newsletter. Of course, non-profit professional organizations such as the OATYC, are glad to have people volunteer for duties like editing a newsletter. The key word, of course, being "volunteer."

John Fallon.J@rhodesstate.edu is a professor of English at Rhodes State College (formerly Lima Technical College) in Lima, Ohio where he has, for years, been active organizing and leading faculty development workshops for public school teachers in northwest Ohio.

Xuewei Wu

After serving for some years on the English faculty at Century College in White Bear Lake, Minnesota, Xuewei Wu reports, she has become English Department Chair of Minnesota's largest community and technical college. Her email address is x.wu@century.mnscu.edu and she would like to hear from other R&W Program graduates.

Russ Sprinkle

Russ Sprinkle sprinkle@glasscity.net is now halfway finished with an MS in clinical psychology at Eastern Michigan University. He reports that while he is working toward becoming a counselor, he remains very interested in writing instruction. In fact, he recently developed an article-length version of his 2001 dissertation, *Written Commentary and Reflective Teaching: A Systematic, Theory-based Approach to Response*, and he just learned that it has been accepted by the refereed NCTE journal *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* and he just heard that it has been accepted for publication (possibly as early as this fall). Also, Russ has conceptualized a follow-up study of the reflective models discussed in his dissertation, one that would seek empirical evidence about whether teachers who receive training using his reflective models make more effective written commentary than teachers who receive traditional training in written commentary or teachers who receive no training in written commentary.

Randall McClure

Randall is a member of the English faculty of Minnesota State University, in Mankato. He serves as director of teaching assistant training and teaches courses in composition theory and computer-assisted writing. His email address is randall.mcclure@mnsu.edu.

Keith Duffy

The mad dash to tenure persists for me here at Penn State Capital College. I wanted to report on a couple recent publications: "Community, Spirituality, and the Writing Classroom" will be published in volume 9 of JAEPL, the *Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning*. This is a revised chapter from my dissertation and the second chapter I've managed publish in article form. "Digital Recording Technology in the Writing Classroom: Sampling as Citing" has been accepted by *The Writing Instructor*. This chronicles some work I've having first-year students compose original pieces of music and having them draw parallels between the creative processes of writing academic essays and recording original music. This approach started while I was at BGSU teaching in the Chapman Learning Community with Tom Klein and company.

You can contact Keith at wkduffy@yahoo.com and he reports that you can hear his first CD, *The Joy Project*, at the Tower Records website <http://www.towerrecords.com/product.asp?pfid=2326921&cc=USD>

John Mauk

This has been a good publishing year for 1999 graduate John Mauk, a faculty member at Northwestern Michigan College. In March 2003, *College English* published "Location, Location, Location: The 'Real' (E)states of Being, Writing, and Thinking in Composition." This article grew out of several chapters in John's dissertation, something he discusses elsewhere in this issue of R&W Notes.

Recently, John jmauk@nmc.edu and his co-author (John Metz of the University of Toledo) saw their textbook *The Composition of Everyday Life: A Guide to Writing* published by Thomson/Wadsworth. The book (writes Sue Carter, a member of John's dissertation committee) draws on theoretical concepts from critical geography that John explored in his BGSU dissertation, particularly Edward Soja's concept of third space. The book includes substantial attention to visual rhetoric and communication, along with everyday rhetoric.

Lynnette Porter

In the spring I was named a Fellow of the Society for Technical Communication. And my book, *Developing an Online Educational Curriculum: Techniques and Technologies*, is being published by Idea Group Publishing this fall.

In other news

Several reviews of online education books have been published in the STC journal, *Technical Communication* (August 2003--2

at a conference in Auckland, New Zealand (with the support of a Dean's Academic Grant from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University). I gave a conference paper, "Balance of Power: The Logic/Emotion/Action Triumvirates and Leadership Styles in Star Trek and Enterprise," at the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association conference in New Orleans in April. And I presented "'Even the Smallest [Role] Can Change the Future': Galadriel, Eowyn, and Arwen as female Heroes in Tolkien's The Lord of the Ring", the Popular Culture Association of the South conference in October. Lynette porterly@cts.db.erau.edu is on the faculty of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Notes on Some First-Year R&W PhD Students

R&W Notes invited new students in the program to send short profiles of themselves for the Fall Issue. Three of the new students sent notes by "press" time (or whatever term applies to a web-based newsletter). Together, they suggest something of the diversity in interests and backgrounds that students bring to Bowling Green.

Robin Murphy

I am from Oklahoma. I received her BA in English (Literature), MEd in Teaching English, and MA in Composition and Rhetoric. My research interests revolve around pedagogy and include student-centered classrooms, online instruction, and popular culture. For my MA thesis, I discussed Buffy, The Vampire Slayer as a feminist pedagogical model in the writing classroom. I am newly married--January 2003--to husband, Kaleb, and I have two dogs, Norman and Kara.

Robin reports that her first semester in the program is going well, but that it has involved a bit of an adjustment. I've been teaching so much the past few years, and I've always put my emphasis and time on that. Now, I'm a student first. It's strange and wonderful. I'm excited about all of it.

AnDrea Cleaves

AnDrea, a BGSU Presidential Scholar, is a first year student in the Rhetoric & Writing PhD Program. She received both her BA in Communication and her MEd from the University of Toledo. She has worked in radio--hosting her own one-hour show, Toledo Concerns--and served as the Off-Campus Program Coordinator for UT. If a TV viewer is particularly perceptive, AnDrea can be seen and heard in many local commercials. Her real joy, however, has been teaching writing at Owens State Community College.

AnDrea is still in the process of distilling her interests, but her current loves are Black British Rhetoric of Victorian England, New Woman writers of the fin-de-siecle --particularly Ella Hepworth Dixon.

Eric Stallions

I am from Bowling Green, Kentucky--the other "BG." My wife, Annette, and I have a beautiful four-month-old baby daughter, Caroline. I have an MA in English with a concentration in Teaching English as a Second Language and a Bachelor's Degree in English and Allied Language Arts and Print Journalism from Western Kentucky University (WKU) in Bowling Green, Kentucky. My research interests include the teaching of writing, writing assessment, writing administration, ESL writing, second language acquisition, discourse analysis, and contrastive rhetoric.

I was a full-time instructor for the Department of English at WKU for the 2002-2003 school year. In addition, I have taught full-time at the International Language Institute at Lawrence Academy in Groton, Massachusetts; the INTERLINK Language Center at Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, Indiana; and the English Language Studies Unit at the Institute of Banking in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. As a part-time instructor, I taught refugees from Kosovo at the Western Kentucky Refugee Mutual Assistance English School, and I conducted evening survival English classes for Mexican and Bosnian immigrants for the Bowling Green-Warren County Community Education Program in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Finally, as a graduate assistant at WKU, I taught Freshman English and ESL Freshman English, and I tutored students in the Writing Center.