Addressing the Situation: An Analysis of the CCCC Chairs' Addresses of the Last 11 Years (1998-2008)

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ADDRESSING THE SITUATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CCCC CHAIRS’ ADDRESSES

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I dedicate this to my Florida family:
Natalie Szymanski, Lei-Burger, Zephyr Doodles, Fishette, and the late Fisherton.

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ABSTRACT

This project extends Ellen Barton’s 1997 historical study of the first twenty CCCC Chairs’ Addresses where she examines what she calls “a tradition of […] ‘evocative gestures’—the articulation of broad concerns in the field” (235). In her analysis, Barton demonstrates two themes: (1) accordant gestures about the complexity of teaching composition and the service this teaching provides to students and the community and (2) conflicting gestures about how best to represent the field through research and where the field should be housed within the academy. Since her study, there have been eleven new Addresses and thus an exigence for additional research. This project responds to that exigence by analyzing the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, starting with Cynthia Selfe’s in 1998 and concluding with Cheryl Glenn’s in 2008. The results from this research show the emergence of three new themes in gestures different from the two Barton identifies: recurring gestures about (1) literacy, (2) our stake in writing, and (3) diversity. This project makes two significant contributions to our understanding of our own history: (1) using a coherent set of texts, it maps the important topics in our field over the last eleven years, and (2) using Barton’s themes as an historical context, it illustrates how the focus in our field has changed since the inception of the CCCC Chair’s Address in 1977.
In her 1997 study “Evocative Gestures in CCCC Chairs’ Addresses,” Ellen Barton analyzes what were, at the time, the twenty CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, beginning with Richard Lloyd-Jones inaugural talk in 1977 and finishing with Nell Ann Pickett’s in 1997. These Addresses, which typically conclude the general session for the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), have all since been published in *College Composition and Communication (CCC)*, and according to Barton, these “versions […] provide a body of texts with rich historical view of two decades of composition as a professionalized field” (235). Within these Addresses, Barton identifies “a tradition of what can be called ‘evocative gestures’—the articulation of broad concerns in the field” (235). In examining the CCCC Chairs’ gestures over the past twenty years, Barton looks for ways in which these Chairs talk with and/or at one another over topics they deem pertinent to the field and its ongoing attempts at “self-representation” and “professionalism” (236). What Barton demonstrates are two interesting themes, each of which contains two separate parts: (1) consistency in gestures about (i) “teaching” and (ii) “service,” and (2) contention in gestures about (i) research paradigms and (ii) where the field should be housed within the academy (235).

Before moving forward, I feel it is important to clarify first the lexicon pertinent to this project. To begin, Barton uses the term “evocative gestures” to describe a cluster of individual gestures that speak to a recurring topic, but since she, when illustrating these “evocative gestures,” also refers to an individual Chair making a single gesture, I use the term “theme” in place of “evocative gestures.” Thus, “themes” is my term, not hers, and I use the term to refer to gestures about a particular topic that appear within at least three different CCCC Chair Addresses. In addition, Barton tends to focus on what she terms “landmark articulations”: a Chair’s (or Chairs’) gesture that seems to epitomize a particular part of a particular theme. However, she also references specific Chairs whose articulations (gestures) are not landmark articulations but nonetheless stand as significant markers in the continuation of a particular part of a particular theme. Although I note Barton’s use of the term “landmark articulation,” I avoid the term in my analysis of the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses; instead, I use the term “gesture” to denote any signifying claim with an affective component, what Barton would term
“the articulation of [a] broad [concern] in the field” (236). Furthermore, I explicitly note when a gesture is not as developed as those by other Chairs are. In Barton’s case, she does not provide much attention to what I would call smaller gestures and instead simply alludes to their existence. It is also worth noting that the scope is quite different for each of our projects, which therefore allows us to accomplish different tasks. For instance, Barton’s analysis, both thorough and informative, is nonetheless part of a book chapter, whereas my study has a larger scope. Consequently, I am able to summarize her work as well as the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses over the past eleven years; in addition, I can look to see if any of Barton’s two themes continue to manifest themselves over the last eleven Addresses, and I can report any new themes that have emerged during that time as well.

In what follows, I will briefly summarize the two themes Barton demonstrates. From here, I will outline my own project, which extends Barton’s study by examining the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses from 1998 to 2008. I will then provide a literature review and some context for this study before detailing my research methods. Lastly, I will conclude this introductory chapter by providing an overview for the remaining six chapters: what I accomplish in each chapter as well as how these chapters work together to create a robust analysis of the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses which in turn is juxtaposed with Barton’s original study. This project overall will examine the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses using multiple lenses, and as a whole, it will create a new lens from which to look at the history of the field.

**Barton’s Two Themes: A Summary**

Ellen Barton discusses the first of two themes in two corresponding parts: that Chairs make accordant gestures about (1) “teaching” and (2) “service” (235). Starting with teaching, Barton begins with Richard Lloyd-Jones’ inaugural Address in 1977, where he “makes the argument that the teaching of writing is a complex activity,” a gesture that Barton says has manifested itself, in some way, “in every Chair’s [A]ddress since” (236). Barton then references Vivian Davis, the CCCC Chair the subsequent year, who takes Lloyd-Jones’ gesture further, suggesting that writing teachers occupy the unenviable position of trying “‘essentially [to] help [students] master the writing process in a year of freshmen composition,’” a notion she calls “‘absurd’” (qtd. in Barton 236). Davis argues that we cannot teach students to become good writers in such a short span, as “‘[a]ll evidence indicates that good writing is the result of
processes that develop slowly” (qtd. in Barton 236). Barton also references Lillian Bridwell-Bowles, who in her 1994 Address states how the teaching of writing “is far more complicated than simply either-or-thinking” (qtd. in Barton 236). However, what Barton focuses most of her attention on is what she terms the three “landmark articulations”—those gestures that epitomize “this shared sense of teaching” (237): Lynn Troyka’s 1981 Address, where she underscores “the importance of teaching writing to nontraditional students” (237); Miriam Chaplin’s 1987 Address, where she carries Troyka’s gesture forward but also adds that we need to foster a pedagogy that deals more with students’ personal experience and that positions students and teachers “as learners” (237); and Jane Peterson’s 1990 Address, where she worries that our commitment to teaching is lessening due to “the traditional academic hierarchy that privileges research alone” (238). As a set, these six gestures stand for what Barton categorizes as an ongoing discussion about the complexity of teaching composition—the first of two corresponding parts to her first theme.

The second part of Barton’s first theme highlights consistency in gestures about service. Here, Barton defines service by connecting it to the commitment to teaching, where there is also a commitment on the part of composition teachers to help students become valuable “citizens […] to society at large” (238); that is, what composition instructors teach their students assists them in becoming productive members in the outside world. As such, the teaching of composition becomes a service to students and to the community at large. To illustrate this recurring gesture about service, Barton again begins with Lloyd-Jones and Davis, both of whom speak to the importance of communicating (or attempting to communicate) with “the general public” (238) about what composition studies can contribute to both the academy and to the community. Barton also again quotes Bridwell-Bowles, who argues that the teaching of composition provides a “service to society” (239) by showing students “the power of communication” (qtd. in Barton 239) and its ability to enact change for the better in the social realm. But as with the first part of this theme, Barton distinguishes a “landmark articulation”; in this case, it is Lester Faigley’s 1996 Address, where he talks about the transformative power literacy has outside the academy, “arguing that the field should rededicate itself to […] encouraging our students to use literacy to participate in democratic community life, to engage civic issues, and to promote social justice” (qtd. in Barton 239). Together, these five gestures constitute the second part of Barton’s first theme, illustrating what she claims are “similar
arguments that the teaching of writing makes a significant contribution to the development of informed citizens in a diverse but democratic society” (239). Barton’s first theme thus contains two sets of recurring gestures: those that (1) speak to the complexity and importance of teaching composition, and those that (2) speak to the service such teaching provides to both students and the community at large.

The second theme in Barton’s 1997 study also has two corresponding parts; however, these two sets of recurring gestures are different in that they show disagreement. Although Barton’s first theme shows accordant gestures about teaching and service, her second theme shows contentious gestures about what research model the field should promote, humanistic or empirical, and where the field should be housed within the academy, as its own discipline or as an intradisciplinary focus within English departments. Demonstrating the conflicting gestures about the field’s research agenda, Barton again starts with Richard Lloyd-Jones, who advocates that composition position itself in the humanities and “occupy a central position within the university by virtue of its scholarship” (242). By “align[ing] the field squarely within literature and the humanities,” Lloyd-Jones argues that such scholarship would include “studying the literary language and aesthetic texts of high culture” (242). Barton states that as a humanist Lloyd-Jones “valorized composition scholarship as resistance to empiricism,” and like many humanists, he was “ambivalent about studies of language from the sciences” (242). Highlighting his gesture against an empirical model, Barton says he doubted composition’s ability to be “‘precisely defined’” and compacted into “‘immutable categories’” (qtd. in Barton 242). Lloyd-Jones’ gesture promoting humanism is thus two-fold: on the one hand, he lauds the scholarship that stems from a humanistic approach, but on the other hand, he states that by embracing humanism, composition by extension avoids engaging in an empirical model that he believes is overly scientific and incompatible with composition.

The next year, however, Vivian Davis advocates for an empirical model, thus proposing an alternative to Lloyd-Jones’ humanistic research paradigm. As Barton notes, Davis’ reasoning for empiricism essentially comes down to verification: “‘the teaching of composition should be submitted to tests of verifiability’” (qtd. in Barton 242). Davis’ gesture is tied closely to her prior one about the complexity of teaching, stating that many outside the field are unfamiliar with the complexities and nuances of composition; in other words, those outside the field perceive composition differently than those inside do. Therefore, in “develop[ing] its own
sophisticated empirical tradition” (243), Davis argues that both those in and outside of the field will learn more about the process of writing; furthermore, this research will help to make the field less “vulnerable” (243). Other Chairs, though not to the same extent, echo Davis’ gesture. Barton notes for example that in 1979, William Irmscher discusses “cognitive research on problem-solving and intellectual development,” and in 1980, Frank D’Angelo points toward “the importance of research on symbolic action in science and on narrative in social sciences” (243). In addition, Barton quickly references Lee Odell’s 1986 Address, where he “devotes some attention to the need for integrating research from cognitive psychology [with] research from rhetoric” (243), claiming that the two will remain incomplete if separated from one another.

And these two research paradigms, Lloyd-Jones’ humanistic approach and Davis’ empirical one, seem to co-exist within the field from around 1978 until about the time of Odell’s 1986 Address, in which Barton observes “the last substantive appearance of empirical studies in CCCC Chairs’ [A]ddresses” (243), for it is at this point where “the relationship between empirical studies and composition research become one of overtly suspicious and/or empty rhetorical gestures alone” (243). Influential in this movement, Barton suggests, is Maxine Hairston’s 1985 Address, where she combats “perfunctory rhetorical gestures about empirical studies […] with] overt gestures of suspicion” (243-4). Perhaps attempting to refute claims similar to Davis’ in 1978 that the field should look to validate itself, Hairston argues that we should not deign to “‘what Lewis Thomas calls ‘physics envy’” (qtd. in Barton 244) and simply engage in empirical studies in order to authenticate the field. In 1988, Bartholomae appears to “cement” the “claim for the humanities as the reigning [research] standard for the field” (244). According to Barton, Bartholomae “situates the research project of composition firmly within the contemporary humanities” (244), aligning the field with “English studies specifically and the contemporary humanities generally” (245). For Barton, then, Bartholomae’s gesture “represents the stance that most CCCC Chairs […] assumed implicitly for the [next] 10 years” (245), but these gestures as a whole illustrate the discussion between what research paradigm the field should adopt: humanistic or empirical.

The second part of Barton’s last theme includes a debate between “disciplinarity and intradisciplinarity” (245). Here, Barton begins with Hairston’s and Bartholomae’s respective Addresses “because they reflect the tension between the field and its more local context of English studies” (245); that is, they provide an answer for the question as to what relationship the
field should have with English studies. In her Address, Hairston argues “for disciplinary autonomy” (245), and her “most convincing argument,” according to Barton, is her claim that the field’s interdisciplinary relationship with literary studies is unbalanced. Hairston claims that literary scholars do not know what compositionists do and are unfamiliar with its theory. In testing the validity of such a claim, Barton notes that she performed a quick bibliographical overview of the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses and Modern Language Association (MLA) Presidential Addresses between 1991 and 1996. What Barton discovers is that Hairston’s claim has merit: many literary authors and scholars are referenced in both sets of addresses, but in the MLA presidential addresses, “no composition scholar is referenced” (246); the only crossover figure is Paulo Freire, “whose disciplinarity identity in education cannot be claimed by either literature or composition” (246).

Bartholomae, however, “differs sharply with Hairston” (246), advocating instead that the field embrace its relationship with English: we should “‘acknowledge our roots in English, not deny them’” (qtd. in Barton 246). Barton aptly illustrates, however, that while Hairston and Bartholomae deliver opposing gestures, they “argue more or less across each other, not taking up the other’s most convincing points” (246). For instance, while Hairston pushes for autonomous disciplinarity, she does not “articulate what interdisciplinary relationship composition should then negotiate with English and its foundational theoretical and methodological frameworks” (246). And although Bartholomae wants composition to “retain its intradisciplinary focus within English studies,” he does not address how this relationship, in Barton’s terms, commonly “resembles a one-way street” in favor of literature over composition (246). Collectively, however, both of these gestures characterize Barton’s second part of her second theme and appear to substantiate her claim that “the gestures articulating the field’s representation of itself […] vary widely and seem to reflect much conflict” (235).

In sum, Barton demonstrates that the two themes “reflected in the body of CCCC Chairs’ [A]ddresses”—that is, accordant gestures about the complexity of teaching composition and the service this teaching provides to students and the community as well as conflicting gestures about how best to represent the field through research and where the field should be housed

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1 This is the only time Barton moves outside the corpus of texts that is the first twenty CCCC Chairs’ addresses when demonstrating her two themes. However, in her “Contexts of Teaching and Service” section, she quotes an article from her state newspaper that “excoriate[s] approaches to teaching based on analysis of society or self, calling for ‘real’ instruction in writing” (240), and in her “Contexts of Research” section, she begins by quoting Robert Connors, who asserts that all historical narratives are biased in some fashion (248).
within the academy—“ultimately revolve around professionalism” (249). At the same time, however, they also mark how “the field stands in contrast to traditional academic [disciplines]” (249), especially as it concerns research. In other words, although our field is similar to other disciplines in that we understand the importance of research, the research within our field does not fall under the category of “research-based careerism” (249). Rather, the work the field does “involves research, but emphatically includes teaching and service as well” (249). As Peterson’s 1991 Address suggests, we need to continue to research, and we need valuable contributions from that research, but we also must attempt to avoid a hierarchy of research over teaching and service, a point that other Chairs have stressed in their Addresses as well. In concluding, Barton forecasts that future CCCC Chairs will “continue to take up both Bartholomae’s gesture of integration as well as Peterson’s gesture of critique, reflecting [this] continuing struggle to build a field that truly integrates research, teaching, and service into its definition of professionalism” (250).

The Project: “Addressing the Situation: An Analysis of the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses of the Last 11 Years (1998-2008)”

Ellen Barton’s 1997 study provides a lens for reading across the first twenty CCCC Chairs’ Addresses in a meaningful way, illustrating two interesting themes: that (1) the gestures about “teaching” and “service” show consistency, while (2) the gestures about research paradigms and where the field should be housed within the academy show contention (235). However, over the past eleven years, the corpus of texts within Barton’s study has expanded, thus creating an exigence for further research. Working from Barton’s research, I investigate the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses of the last eleven years, starting in 1998 with Cynthia Selfe’s “Technology and Literacy: A Story about the Perils of Not Paying Attention” and ending in 2008 with Cheryl Glenn’s “Representing Ourselves.” In examining these eleven historical texts, I primarily address one important question: what themes (if any) have been sounded in the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses? Put another way, what can we learn about the field from reading across the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses? In addition, I also look to answer the following question: are the two themes Barton identifies carried on, both in part or in whole, in
subsequent Addresses? In other words, do any of the past eleven Chairs make gestures similar to one or more of the four recurring sets of gestures Barton documents?²

In analyzing each of the eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses from 1998 to 2008, I use the printed version in the CCCC. I also consult Duane Roen’s 2006 book, Views from the Center: The CCCC Chairs’ Addresses 1977-2005, which includes the CCCC’s version³ of each Address from 1977 to 2005 as well as a brief “Afterward,” where each speaker⁴ reflects upon the experience as a whole: what they worried about, what their intentions were, what their process(es) were in composing the Address, what the opportunity meant individually, what the opportunity meant to the field, etc. While brief, these “Afterwards” nonetheless provide further context and information for each Address, which is useful in crosschecking interpretations of the Address with intentions for each one. As a whole, these materials provide a robust amount of information from which to work.⁵

This study’s ensuing results can be informative in a three distinct ways: (1) they can signal the important topics in our field over the last eleven years; (2) they can help map the level of attention these topics received over the last eleven years; and (3) in comparison with the themes Barton discerns, they can illustrate whether the focus in our field has changed since the inception of the Chair’s Address in 1977 and if so, how. In addition, these results can provide additional exigencies for other scholars to carry forward; that is, other questions and areas of exploration to which I do not attend.

Literature Review and Context

² One might assume that the logical process for this type of project would be to start by examining the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses through the lens Barton provides, thus looking to see if any of her two themes (the four sets of recurring gestures) continue to be points of emphasis, and then begin to search for any new themes that may emerge. However, starting first with Barton’s lens may well preclude me from being able to analyze the last eleven Addresses with an open and objective eye; that is, it would be difficult to look for new themes when I already see the Addresses in a particular light—the way Barton does. Thus, it is prudent to explore the past eleven Addresses openly first and look at them through a specific historical lens afterward.

³ The versions of Yancey’s Address (2004) and Hesse’s Address (2005) in Roen’s book are not exact duplicates of the versions found in CCCC due to the difficulty of transferring the multimedia components from each Address into print.

⁴ Pavel Zemliansky wrote Wendy Bishop’s “Afterward,” as Bishop had passed away in 2003 due to complications with Leukemia. For Addresses prior to 1998, only William F. Imrscher (1979), Frank D’Angelo (1980), and Donald C. Stewart (1983) did not write their own “Afterward.” Amelia Herb, who “assisted in the project by researching the NCTE archives” (Roen 69), wrote Imrscher’s; D’Angelo “requested that his colleague and friend Keith Miller” write his (78); and Theresa Enos wrote Stewart’s, as he had passed away in 1992.

⁵ Because Roen’s book was published in 2005, I do not have “Afterwards” for Wooten’s, Anoyke’s, and Glenn’s respective Addresses. I will speak more to this and how I use the “Afterwards” in the “Methodology” section.
Following World War II, America’s educational landscape began to change, and one such change was an increase in attention toward the teaching of freshmen composition. The implementation of the GI Bill in 1944 contributed to an influx of new students into universities around the nation, and with this increase in the student body came an increase in both attention toward freshmen composition and graduate programs (Connors 204). The number of PhD graduates in English also increased, and “this new group of teachers made itself felt” (Connors 205).

At the 1948 NCTE Conference, a session on the value of both composition and “‘College Undergraduate Training’” (Bartholomae 39) culminated in a contentious question-and-answer exchange that was left unsettled at the end of the session’s allotted time. Consequently, a team of seven petitioned the NCTE Committee for a time to discuss such issues further. The result: a two-day meeting in Chicago on April 1 and 2 of 1949 that is marked as the official birth of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC). “[B]orn out of the need to have a certain kind of discussion that existing venues were not making possible (not NCTE, not MLA)” (Bartholomae 39), this two-day meeting was devoted toward “‘College freshmen Courses in Composition and Communication’” (40). Although the CCCC started with a small group membership of about “200 members” in 1949, its membership increased significantly, from “1,656 in 1957 to 2,888 by 1962” (Connors 205). Today, that membership is about 7,200, with annual conference attendance between 3,000 and 3,400 (Yancey).

The CCCC would quickly become a safe house of sorts for composition teachers: a place to discuss “Communications pedagogy and New Critical theory” (Connors 205); a place, as James Berlin states, that provided a “sense of professional identity” for composition teachers (106). Others have echoed Berlin’s assertion. For Susan McLeod, a renowned scholar in the field, the CCCC acts as “a disciplinary home” (525), and in his 1988 CCCC Chair Address “Freshman English, Composition, and CCCC,” David Bartholomae recalls the CCCC having an extreme influence on his professional career: “CCCC provided a sense of community that made me believe I could get started—that there was, in fact, work for me to do, that it was good work, and that I could do it in good company” (38). Thus, while some continue to dispute whether we are a discipline or a profession, the outcome is nonetheless the same: in the beginning and now, sixty years later, the CCCC has provided a safe house, a community acknowledging that teaching
freshmen composition was a significant occupation worthy of both additional attention and research.

With such attention and research, however, came the emergence of diverse yet specific foci within rhetoric and composition; in other words, since its inception, the CCCC has acted as a barometer for what is currently important in the field. For example, in his 1997 book Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theories, and Pedagogy, Robert Connors looks at how rhetoric evolved as an area of study. He notes that before 1963, the study of rhetoric largely went unnoticed in our field, and he points toward the dearth of CCCC sessions devoted toward rhetoric before 1963 as evidence (Connors 207). Here, Connors uses the CCCC to measure the importance of a particular topic within the rhetoric and composition field. Like Connors, I feel the CCCC is barometer for the field, but unlike Connors, I am more interested in a CCCC’s tradition that started in 1977: the CCCC Chair Address.

Each year, the CCCC Committee elects a new assistant Chair who, two years later, becomes the official Chair, and with that honor comes a commencing Address that includes “the articulation of broad concerns in the field” (Barton 235). In other words, the elected Chairs are provided a moment in time to talk about a topic(s) they believe have relevance to the field. The Chairs know the history of the field, their audience (many of whom are in attendance), and the time in which they are speaking. Together, these Addresses provide a rich corpus of texts that not only draw our attention toward potent exigencies and major concerns and/or movements in the field but also provide us with significant historical contexts by signaling where the field has been, where it is (or possibly is) heading, and what our role can or should be during this seemingly dynamic time. As Bartholomae explains in his own 1988 Address: CCCC Chairs’ Addresses “customarily end by taking the long view—making proposals for future action or future direction” (44).

In addition to the historical contexts inherent in individual CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, these individual Addresses can be historic in themselves, having a profound influence in how we see the field as well as how the field itself is defined. For example, in recalling Maxine Hairston’s 1985 Address (“Breaking Our Bonds”), Susan McLeod reflects on the influence it had on both her life and professional development, how Hairston’s Address was an impetus for her to leave her “dysfunctional department, joining one that was much more supportive of [her] work [in rhetoric and composition]” (526). Then there is Kathleen Blake Yancey’s 2004 Address
(“Made Not Only in Words”), which has henceforth begun affecting undergraduate education in rhetoric and composition. In her Address, Yancey puts forth “a call to action,” one that avows, “it is time for a writing major” (532). Since then, the CCCC Committee has followed Yancey’s advice, and “conversations […] about the creation of a major have already begun” (532) and a webpage detailing the recent process and providing updates is available at the CCCC website (“Committee on the Major”). And Doug Hesse’s 2005 Address, “Who Owns Writing,” has motivated an entire conference devoted toward the topic, one in which he was the keynote speaker.

However, these Addresses, though influential to both our field and our work, also provide potential for additional work—potential Ellen Barton not only noticed but also capitalized on in her empirical research study in 1997: “Evocative Gestures in CCCC Chairs’ Addresses.” In my study, which extends Barton’s original, I examine the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses from 1998 to 2008 and work under the same assumption that Barton did: that the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses “provide a body of texts with rich historical view of […] composition as a professionalized field” (235), signaling important exigencies and areas of concern in our ongoing attempts at “self-representation” and “professionalism” (236).

**Methodology**

This study is an historical research project covering the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses from 1998 to 2008 using discourse analysis as the primary method and involving a limited set of texts: the printed versions of all eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses available in *CCC*, Duane Roen’s book *Views from the Center*, and Ellen Barton’s foundational 1997 piece “Evocative Gestures in CCCC Chairs’ Addresses.” There is obviously a certain chronology to these Addresses: some Chairs respond to, refer to, or build off previous ones, while others often acknowledge the historicity of the Addresses as a whole. Thus, it seemed only appropriate that I honored that chronology, and I read them in the order in which they were presented, starting with

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6 Yancey has also seen her efforts come to fruition in the smaller context of Florida State University, which in the fall will begin offering courses for a third track in the English department (aside from the two already in place for “Creative Writing” and “Literature”) called “Editing, Writing, and Media.” Rhetoric and composition doctoral students and professors will teach the courses.

7 The Hofstra Cultural Center (Hofstra University) presented “Who Owns Writing?” October 16-18, 2008. As per the flyer, this is titled “A conference on the future of rhetoric and composition.”
Cynthia Selfe’s Address in 1998 (“Technology and Literacy”) and ending with Cheryl Glenn’s in 2008 (“Representing Ourselves”).

In order to answer my main question, “what themes (if any) have been sounded in the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses,” I read each printed Address from the CCC, and in doing so, I took extensive and exhaustive notes, discerning the overarching intention(s) (points) of the Address as well as each Chair’s more pronounced gestures, those signifying claims with an affective component that articulate a “broad [concern] in the field” (Barton 236). I also read the available “Afterwards” in Roen’s Views from the Center. While the influence of these “Afterwards” may go unnoticed, as I did not specifically reference them in the remainder of the project, they were nonetheless helpful in that they provided additional context about the Address. In reading these “Afterwards,” I became privy to how these Chairs approached the Address as well as what they wanted to accomplish in delivering their Address.8

Then, upon initially reading and annotating these Addresses, I read them again, searching for meaningful ways to read across them as a set; that is, I looked for themes: a cluster of gestures about a particular topic that appear within at least three different CCCC Chair Addresses. However, I did not use any predefined categories in looking for a particular theme; rather, I engaged in a grounded theory approach similar to the one Joyce Neff details in “Grounded Theory: A Critical Research Methodology.” Drawing on Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss’ work in the 1960’s, Neff fleshes out a methodology of “‘grounded theory’” (125), a process she calls “both recursive and intensive” (125). As an “iterative” process, grounded theory “leads to findings that are rooted in precise analytic procedures and to theory that is fluid, open, and provisional” (125). As a whole, grounded theory “is based on ‘systematically and intensively analyzing data’ not just to order them, but to examine conceptual relationships and to generate theory” (125 original emphasis). In analyzing the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, I examined this corpus with an open and objective eye, letting any potential themes emerge and define themselves. In addition, by meticulously reading across these Addresses, I was able to produce findings that are “open” and “provisional” but also “generate a theory” for looking at the field in meaningful ways.

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8 As noted in an earlier footnote, I did not have access to “Afterwards” for Wootten’s, Anoyke’s, or Glenn’s respective Address, as Roen’s book was published after Hesse’s 2005 Address. However, in analyzing these eleven Addresses, I relied on all of the available materials, including these “Afterwards,” even though this additional context (1) was not available for the last three Addresses and (2) was not referenced specifically in my proceeding analysis.
Throughout this process, I made a concerted effort to consider the context in which each gesture and a potential theme manifests itself. For instance, in Barton’s examination, the second part of the second theme she identifies is that the gestures pertaining to where the field should be housed in the academy suggest contention. Maxine Hairston, in her 1985 Address (“Breaking our Bonds”), makes the gesture for disciplinarity and a separation from the English department, but David Bartholomae, in his 1988 Address (“Freshmen English, Composition, and CCCC”), commends composition’s allegiance to English studies, pronouncing it a relationship we should both accept and value rather than try to detach from and elide. Thus, while both of these Chairs make gestures concerning the same topic, they promote disparate approaches to dealing with the topic. Their responses and gestures about the same rhetorical situation contrast one another.

Therefore, upon identifying any such “contentious” component in a theme of recurring gestures (gestures about a topic that manifest themselves in three or more Addresses), I not only listed how a Chair made a gesture through a particular lens but also made sure to describe and demonstrate how the Chair used that lens within his/her respective Address in order to show both the way s/he broached the topic as well as the key term or terms through which s/he examined it. For example, in making a gesture about literacy, Judith Wootten commonly uses the terms “visual literacy” and “multimodal literacy,” and unlike other Chairs who also make gestures about literacy (e.g., Selfe, Gilyard, Yancey, and Lovas), Wootten broaches the topic by posturing against such literacy, believing we need to focus our collective attention elsewhere. Therefore, while Wootten’s gesture is still about literacy, it is vastly different from the other gestures about literacy in tone, intent, and terminology, all of which I illustrate in full in my proceeding analysis.

Throughout this process, I employ what Mary Sue McNealy terms “discourse analysis,” which is the study of any “oral, written, and graphic materials that have been produced in natural situations for a particular audience and purpose” (124 original emphasis). In engaging in such an analysis, one has “carefully selected representative samples” and “clearly defined procedures for collection and interpretation of data” (124). McNealy notes that “in most cases, scholars use discourse analysis to provide data for making inferences about people, events, and objects that cannot be directly observed” (124). In my project, I did the same: I carefully selected a corpus of texts and used clearly defined procedures, relying on both textual information and specific quotes in looking for meaningful ways to read across the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses.
After demonstrating any emerging themes over the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, I looked to answer my other question: “are the two themes Barton identifies carried on, both in part or in whole, in subsequent Addresses?” As noted, Barton documents two themes, both of which have two corresponding parts: that (1) the gestures about (i) pedagogy and (ii) service show consistency, and (2) the ones concerning (i) research paradigms and (ii) where the field should be housed within the academy show “conflict” (235). In looking for the presence of any of these four recurring gestures in any of the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, I attend to it in the same fashion outlined above: I described and demonstrated the gesture in full, making sure to cover the lens through which, the degree to which, and key term or terms through which the gesture is made.

Thus, my methodology was three-fold: I started by (1) reading over each CCCC Chair Address during the past eleven years, performing an individual analysis so that I could summarize each one; then I began (2) rereading the Addresses, this time employing a grounded theory approach and letting themes, clusters of gestures that address a recurring topic, emerge openly; ⁹ and I concluded by (3) rereading the Addresses as a set one last time using Barton’s lens and searching for ways in which Chairs continue to make gestures similar to one or more of the set of four recurring gestures she demonstrates. In employing different degrees of examination, looking at (1) to what degree and (2) in what light a gesture manifests itself in a particular theme, as well as analyzing these Addresses through two different lenses, using (1) Neff’s grounded theory approach and (2) Barton’s study, this project will provide multiple and illuminating ways to read across both the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses of the past eleven years as well as Barton’s work.

What is to Come

I present the remainder of this project in six chapters. In Chapter 2, I provide an overview of each CCCC Chair Address from the last eleven years. Knowing that not everyone who reads this project will be familiar with these Addresses, I felt it necessary to set a context for each Address and provide a summary. In each review, I summarize the Chair’s Address by

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⁹ As stated earlier, a theme includes gestures about a particular topic that appear within at least three different Addresses. As a quick example, four Chairs (Selfe, Gilyard, Yancey, and Wootten) make larger gestures about literacy, and as such, this comprises a theme. However, both Gilyard and Lovas make brief gestures that contain pop culture references—Gilyard by quoting James Brown and Lovas through Elvis—but since there are only two such examples, this would not be enough evidence to constitute a theme.
highlighting the overarching intention(s) within the Address as well as some of the more salient claims.

Chapter 3 marks the first of three consecutive chapters devoted to the themes I discover in the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses using Joyce Neff’s grounded theory approach. The first theme I identify in looking for meaningful ways to read across this corpus of texts is recurring gestures made about literacy. All of the gestures within this theme prove to be similar in that the respective Chairs all look outside the academy first in (1) making others aware of the role literacy plays both in and outside the classroom and/or (2) speaking to the literacy practices being implemented or that should be implemented in the composition classroom. The second theme, which I speak to in Chapter 4, shows consistency in gestures about our stake in writing, which I define as the clout (or lack thereof) writing teachers have in writerly matters at the academic and legislative levels. In this chapter, I demonstrate how Chairs make gestures about the lack of agency writing teachers have in the conceptualization and implementation of writing in the academy and how this in turn affects the conditions under which writing is taught. Furthermore, in discussing this problem further, these Chairs as a set outline a two-step method to invoke change that focuses on ownership and policy: they propose those in the field, those with expertise, should have ownership in writing (that is, own the conditions and assessment standards under which writing is taught) and have control over the larger policy decisions concerning writing. In other words, they believe writing teachers should have the main stake in writing. And in Chapter 5, I demonstrate the final theme that emerges where Chairs make recurring gestures about diversity in two corresponding ways: (1) we are not racially diverse as a field, and the diversity we do have in areas of institution, position, and sexual orientation does not mask and, in some cases, can actually exacerbate issues of equity, and (2) we need to put forth more effort in making the salient issues attached to diversity present in our pedagogies and curricula.

In Chapter 6, I return to Barton’s work, illustrating if and the degree to which any of her two themes and their corresponding parts are present in the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses. What I ultimately determine is that there is little carry over, that of the Chairs, only one, Wendy Bishop, makes a larger, more robust gesture that readdress any of the two themes Barton demonstrates. I then conclude this study in Chapter 7 by explicating the implications of this project, stating what we can learn from it, what areas and aspects of these Addresses can still
be explored in future studies, and what I foresee happening in CCCC Chairs’ Addresses as we move forward. Speaking briefly to the latter, I examine Charles Bazerman’s recent 2009 CCCC Chair Address (given in San Francisco, CA on March 12) and articulate how he follows the trend of prior Chairs in that he makes gestures about the two noted themes of literacy and our stake in writing.
CHAPTER 2: AN OVERVIEW OF THE LAST 11 CCCC CHAIRS’ ADDRESSES

In this chapter, I give an overview of the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, starting with Cynthia Selfe’s 1998 Address “Technology and Literacy: A Story about the Perils of Not Paying Attention,” and finishing with Cheryl Glenn’s 2008 Address “Representing Ourselves.” In summarizing these eleven Addresses, highlighting the overarching point of the Address as well as some of the more salient claims, I provide a context for those unfamiliar with the Addresses that will also make the proceeding three chapters, each of which outlines an emerging theme within this corpus of Addresses, easier to follow and comprehend.


In her 1998 Address, Cynthia Selfe examines a prominent and burgeoning cultural influence: technology. What is important to Selfe, however, is how new technology is affecting literacy practices within the classroom and what consequences this may have for the workplace and world at large. Throughout her Address, Selfe provides a narrative that speaks to the ways in which new technology and literacy practices “exacerbate current educational and social inequities” (414). As a concrete reference, Selfe analyzes the Clinton-Gore administration’s 1996 document Getting America’s Children Ready for the Twenty-First Century, which was a national project aimed at developing and expanding technological literacy. The promise underpinning this national project as well as other large-scale technological literacy movements is that a literacy of and through technology will provide a more robust educational experience and result in equal opportunity for post graduation success and prosperity. However, any evidence to support this promise, as Selfe continually emphasizes, “has not been borne out” (419). Worse: it may never be. Since the implementation of this project, she has not found one published word from our field on what composition’s role should be, not one word about “professional development,” allocation of money, or standards of excellence in terms of technological literacy (419). And for the time being, the problems engendered by not paying attention to technology and literacy practices are evident both in and outside the classroom.
In the remainder of her Address, Selfe underscores two important lessons. The first is that the “national project to expand technological literacy has not served to reduce illiteracy—or the persistent social problems that exacerbate illiteracy” (423 original emphasis). Instead, the project has simply changed what it means to be literate and, by extension, illiterate. This redefined idea of literacy is still predicated on access and will therefore still favor the white and the wealthy, meaning social inequities in race and class are still linked in some fashion to literacy cultivation and acquisition but remain pushed to the periphery.

Turning to the composition classroom, Selfe believes we, as a field, are complicit in perpetuating “the inequitable literacy system […] described [above]” (429) because we do not attempt to unpack the very real consequences of technological literacy in the classroom. While some teachers see technology as a way to heighten and possibly alter the ways we learn, Selfe notes that, typically, teachers often relegate technology to the background—to someone in the department willing to handle the duties or to other conferences (e.g., Computers and Writing). In other words, we want to make technology invisible, so we can instead focus on, as she says, “the theory and practice of language” (413). But what Selfe aptly explains is that those who do implement technology into the classroom rarely discuss the ramifications of technological literacy: “[c]omputer-using teachers instruct students in how to use technology—but, all too often, they neglect to teach students how to pay critical attention to the issues generated by technology use” (429 original emphasis). In this scenario, nobody is “pay[ing] attention” to “how technology is now inextricably linked to literacy and literacy education in this country” (414). Said another way: “both groups,” those who implement technology into the classroom and those who do not, “contribute to the very same end” (429). Selfe thus stresses that the potential “perils of not paying attention” to technology are important to everyone, and even those who implement technology into the classroom need to be cognizant of the ways in which technology now plays a role in the world at large, how it affects not only how we now go about making meaning but also who has access to this new way of making meaning.

The second lesson Selfe stresses is that literacy is always both “a political act as well as an educational effort” (424). Selfe claims that the national project on literacy is a product of a capitalist agenda masquerading as a means to improve literacy in America. In pursuing new avenues created via globalism, the Clinton-Gore administration planned to build America up as a technology powerhouse and offer other countries the opportunity to buy their technology. This,
in turn, would “not only re-vitalize the American economy, it would also help promote the spread of democracy and capitalism around the globe within the context of a liberalized global economic system” (425). An important corollary, however, was and still is the impact of technology in the workplace; that is, in order for America to become a technology powerhouse, both additional technology and technological expertise would need to be infused into the workplace. But as Selfe notes, this too exacerbates issues of race and class. As she states, “Black employees or Hispanic employees are much less likely than white employees to use a range of computer applications in their workplace environments” (420 original emphasis).

Furthermore, in order to gain technological expertise pertinent to the workplace, people need to become technologically literate. This, once again, brings us back to the classroom and the literacy issues of race and class discussed above. “In other words, the poorer you are and the less educated you are in this country—both of which conditions are correlated with race [and class]—the less likely you are to have access to computers and to high-paying, high-tech jobs in the American workplace” (421).

As a whole, the Clinton-Gore literacy project was designed to create “a continuing supply of educated workers who both had the skills necessary to design and manufacture increasingly sophisticated technological goods at home, and could offer sophisticated and specialized technological service in international arenas” (427). This would allow the Clinton-Gore administration to reach and thus influence a large number of people in the shortest amount of time. What this literacy project actually did, according to Selfe, is simply exacerbate old literacy problems of race and class present inside both the classroom and the workplace. Although she does not use the term, what Selfe describes here are the problems stemming from the digital divide, where technology—and more specifically in this case, computers—“continue to be distributed differentially along the related axes of race and socioeconomic status and this distribution contributes to ongoing patterns of racism and to the continuation of poverty” (420 original emphasis). What Selfe thus advocates is for us, for everyone, to begin to pay attention to the ways technology influences how we currently learn: it affects not only how we become literate but also how we determine what it means to be literate. What worries Selfe most is that, far too often, we “take technology for granted” (429); it “becomes invisible to us” (429).

Consequently, as a caveat to all, she states, “technologies may be the most profound when they disappear [when they become entrenched in our culture to the point that they are no longer
distinguishable], but—it is exactly when this happens that they also develop the most potential for being dangerous” (435 original emphasis). For Selfe, we cannot let technology and its inherent consequences go unnoticed; we cannot let the problems this new technological literacy proposes become simply the norm.


Victor Villanueva’s 1999 Address has two overarching arguments, both of which deal with race: (1) that multiculturalism is not truly alleviating issues of race, and (2) that we need to readdress race in the classroom once again in ways that (i) help us “break from colonial discourse” (656) and (ii) make room for additional voices (e.g., those from South America) alongside the European ones we frequently lionize.

Villanueva begins his Address with two historical anecdotes that illustrate the xenophobia and violence that can manifest themselves when two different cultures intersect. Although these anecdotes are dated (the first from the 15th century, the other the 16th) the message is still germane to today’s world: tension and racial prejudice amongst different cultures are ubiquitous. As a way to address these issues, schools have implemented programs and courses that laud the importance of multiculturalism. Here, students become familiar with and learn about other cultures. Villanueva says that he understands the appeal inherent in multiculturalism; that is, it appears efficient. As educators, we have numerous obligations, and rather than earnestly attend to issues of race, we resort to multiculturalism as a quick remedy. It is this “too-much-to-juggle mindset,” he suggests, “that gives rise to multiculturalism” (648). However, if we are truly committed to education, then according to Villanueva, we can no longer idly give in to the illusion that multiculturalism acts as a panacea; rather, we need to dig deeper and prod further.

For Villanueva, multiculturalism is not entirely sufficient: “[e]thnicity and the cultural plurality suggested by multiculturalism appeal to common sense in ways that can address racism—and sometimes they do, maybe often—but without tugging at its hegemony with the kind force so many of us would wish” (650). In other words, while the intention of multicultural discourse and studies is commendable, it is merely a start, one he understands is easy to both gravitate toward and become complacent with. But upon listing a litany of racist incidents, the last of which involves police officers shooting a Chinese man because they fear he will perform
martial arts against them, Villanueva claims that “[m]ulticulturalism hasn’t [actually] improved things much” (650). As further proof, he asks the audience to consider the dearth of people of color teaching in the classroom or publishing in our journals. This, he claims, only “reifies the conception that people of color don't do better because they don't try harder” (651). Thus, as an initial step in the right direction, Villanueva turns to the classroom and claims that we make racism a priority again—that we focus on the “‘absent presence’ in our discourse” (qtd. in Villanueva 648).

In an attempt to mitigate racism, Villanueva suggests that we need to engage in a two-step process. First, we must realize that racism is inextricably linked to colonialism; as he says, “we are steeped in a colonial discourse, one which continues to operate from a developmental rather than dialectical model” (658). Colonialism perpetuates the stigma of otherness, and to illustrate how countries of color are deemed the “Other” and thus inferior, he tells his audience to imagine a Mexican philosopher and a French philosopher: “Which carries the greater weight?” (658) Secondly, we need to “[b]reak precedent” (659) and detach ourselves from the colonial mindset. This new way of thinking does not entail that we marginalize the great Western and European minds we currently revere; their contributions and insights will still be valued. What this new mindset does create is a respected place where we can “learn from the thinkers from our own hemisphere” (659), to see what those frequently marginalized voices can contribute to how we see and make new knowledge.


Keith Gilyard, in his 2000 Address, implies that there is a disconnect between how we talk about language in the classroom and how we actually use language in the social realm. Speaking to this exigence, he suggests that we reconfigure our classroom literacy practices in ways that tackle the importance of language in our social lives—specifically, the way we use it to construct our identity and to navigate ourselves within various societal structures. In doing so, Gilyard begins by paying homage to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and then proceeding into a historical anecdote about Paul Laurence Dunbar and his affiliation with the Wright Brothers as well as his influence in the publishing of The Tattler. Due to the persistence of racism, Gilyard feels that those such as King and Dunbar, as well as others such as W.E.B. Du Bois, had no other choice but “to devote almost their entire talents to the progress of African Americans” (261).
And in weaving these stories together, he sees the potential for a new pedagogical “model” (262) that would engender a new type of student: “[i]f we agree to aim for a radical, transcultural democracy, as King did, then we need pedagogies to foster the development of the critical and astute citizenry that would pursue the task” (262). As an initial step toward that goal, Gilyard, working from Romy Clark and Roz Ivanic’s concept of “Critical Language Awareness” (266 original emphasis), proposes a pedagogy that would “[maximize] various epistemologies, [search for] transcultural understanding, [and create multiple] spaces for imaginative wanders [… and] scholarly recreation” (262). In other words, he wants to instill a pedagogy that explores and is receptive to new ideas, ideologies, and cultures.

At the heart of this pedagogy is a focus on the nexus between student and language; that is, a focus on the ways we use language and the ramifications of such use in the outside world. In the classroom, Gilyard foresees value in approaching writing as “a situated and constructed endeavor” (375). Here, students become familiar with the power of language. Like King, Dunbar, Du Bois, and others, they discover that language can “regulate and reproduce patterns of privilege” (266); they come to realize that “whenever we speak in the dominant discourse, no matter how liberally we may tweak it, we help to maintain it” (268). In turn, then, students can learn to resist or defy dominant discourses that impede them or lead to oppression. What Gilyard thus proposes is a nuanced pedagogical approach, one that is attuned culturally to the power of language and the way it assists us in constructing our identity and navigating societal structures.

2001: Wendy Bishop – “Against the Odds in Composition and Rhetoric”

In her 2001 Address, Wendy Bishop closely examines the current state of rhetoric and composition as a field and states that those who teach “writing and rhetoric work against personal, pedagogical, and institutional odds” (322). Despite this marginalization, she opposes the idea of the rhetoric and composition field becoming the center of English studies (and in theory, evening the odds), admitting that at first it might feel nice, but that we, as a field, might “become something completely otherwise” (323). However, rather than turn to that “otherwise,” Bishop focuses on what rhetoric and composition is as well as what it needs to become.

Bishop compares her association with the field to riding an elevator: she moves up and down “at the mechanical beast's whim” (326), sometimes arriving on familiar floors and other times at new and unique ones. This, she says, is “enough to keep [her] interested throughout a
professional lifetime” (326). In addition, she states that the members of our field gravitate toward these multiple and new opportunities to engage with a wide variety of material—the sort of agency that, as Joe Harris says, provides a “‘chance both to be among others and to choose [one’s] own way’” (qtd. in Bishop 326). This brings Bishop to what she perceives to be a defining feature of the field; we are “a dedicated minority by choice: as agents instead of as those acted upon” (325 original emphasis). And while sometimes our field’s members can teeter on “physical and emotional exhaustion” (329 original emphasis), we nonetheless persevere, “tilt[ing] the odds, incrementally, in our field's favor” (329).

Still, not all is as rosy as it may appear. In “review[ing] statistical reports and survey results with NCTE staff,” Bishop was alarmed by the relatively stagnant nature of CCCC’s membership: “[w]e're not losing membership overall but we're not growing as we should” (329). This is where Bishop sees the need for change, the need to alter the fact that not everyone finds what s/he is searching for at CCCC. The solution: appeal to our field’s interests. First, however, we need to make those interests heard; “[t]he more active our membership is in asking for what it needs, the more interested and invested it will become” (331). Then, and just as important, we need to listen to those interests. She does not want new members to feel like the sparrow in Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* that dashes through the meadhall, “into and out of promised warmth” (325). Rather, we need to accommodate one another, realize that we are a community, and talk “with, not at” (331 original emphasis), each other.

2002: **John Lovas – “All Good Writing Develops at the Edge of Risk”**

The theme of community permeates John Lovas’ 2002 Address. He begins by stating that we already have strong ties to community with the CCCC itself. However, he states that within the CCCC, we also seem to fragment ourselves; we “formulate little ‘togethers’: committees, special interest groups, caucuses. The university folk seek their own; the community college people gather separately; the small liberal arts colleges ask for their own space” (265). In other words, we create communities within communities. What Lovas hones in on specifically, however, are two distinct issues of professional equity that he believes go unnoticed within our community: (1) the dearth of appreciation of and scholarly attention toward two-year colleges, and (2) the exploitation of composition teachers at two-year colleges and of adjuncts and teaching assistants (TAs) at larger universities.
Before he touches on the significance of these “inequities,” Lovas narrates two personal trips: one to the Civil Rights Museum in Memphis and another to the King Center in Atlanta, both sites documenting historical attempts to gain equity. Lovas then transitions to our field’s attempts at gaining equity. He applauds recent efforts to address professional equity, such as Scholars for the Dream and CCC articles by Bill Cook and Victor Villanueva, but he wants to draw our attention to the inequity between two-year colleges and larger universities. Lovas opines that far too often we blindly concede that elite universities “‘select the best and forget the rest’” (274). His personal experience working at two-year colleges, however, suggests otherwise. Moreover, although he admits there are “no data” to support it, he claims that “most basic writing students and basic writing courses are found in two-year colleges” (275), yet no CCC articles devoted to basic writers mention two-year colleges. The lack of information about and study of two-year colleges, he asserts, is damaging to the field: “you cannot represent a field if you ignore half of it” (276). Looking for a reason why the two-year college is marginalized, Lovas turns to the nature of the field: “junior professors in universities need publications and citations to gain tenure and community college professors do not” (276). Thus, there is less of an impetus to cover the work in two-year colleges: “university researchers rarely study [these] programs and [their] students, and […] two-year college departments rarely publish program and institutional-based studies of [their] programs and [their] students” (276).

The second issue in inequity, the exploitation of composition teachers at two-year colleges and adjuncts and teaching assistants at larger universities, mostly comes down to monetary differences. He says, “[w]e do important work and that makes us each an important member of this society and our communities. Yet the importance of our work is not validated by the most common American standard of worth—pay” (277). Worse: “[w]e have made little headway in public awareness and political effectiveness in addressing the overuse and misuse of part-time, adjunct faculty” (278). Thus, as a solution, Lovas proposes a “‘write to work’” principle “that recognizes how critical writing is in the workplace, how essential adult literacy is to our cultural, economic, and political life” (280). In addition, this principle would provide equity in infusing writing into the curriculum and in providing complete financial coverage for those who teach writing. What Lovas asks as a whole is that we do not forget our collective worth as a community. Although we come to the CCCC for various reasons—many of which
might be personal—we should not close ourselves off to the important work and contributions of those around us.


Shirley Wilson Logan begins her 2003 Address by acknowledging the importance of “the texts of black women” (331). These texts are what “[she] know[s] best” (331), but more importantly, the authors of these texts are prime examples of people who have had important ideas to share—“good reasons to speak” (331)—but have not always had the privilege to do so. In her Address, Logan intertwines various quotes from these texts with the tacit assumption that those at CCCC should make a concerted effort to have their voices heard. Despite “our relative insignificance as a conference […] we can still make a difference” (331), for we too are people with salient questions, concerns, and ideas who do not always have the opportunity to share them in venues that matter most.

From here, Logan proposes three major courses of action: (1) readdress the less than pragmatic objectives outlined in the CCCC mission statement, (2) make composition teachers the ones in charge of policy decisions pertinent to the field, and (3) have composition teachers rededicate themselves to teaching in a manner that still respects students’ right to their home and/or own language.

Her impetus for readdressing the CCCC mission statement stems from the Executive Committee’s recently approved revision, which is broken into four primary objectives. Although Logan believes the first two, (1) “sponsor[ing] meetings” and (2) “support[ing] and publish[ing] the results of a wide range of research in rhetoric and composition” (332), have merit, she is concerned with the latter two: (3) “working to enhance conditions for learning and teaching college composition and to promote professional development” and (4) “acting as an advocate for langue and literacy education nationally and internationally” (qtd. in Logan 332). These objectives, she suggests, are difficult not only to achieve but also to maintain, as many of the environments in which we teach college composition are less than desirable. The main problem emanates from a disconnect between what composition teachers would like to accomplish versus what they feasibly can accomplish.
Next, Logan shifts her attention to the CCCC position statements. For the sake of time and space, she does not assess all eleven statements, but she asserts that they are “rewarding to read,” and more importantly, many are “[salient] to this moment in history” (333), specifically the one that speaks to “Students’ Right to Their Own Language” (334). Consequently, she is perturbed by the Executive Committee’s “preliminary reviews of these statements [which] recommend that many be either updated, re-contextualized, or simply reaffirmed” (333). Instead, she proposes, “what we need is not so much a revising as a rereading of the statements we have already made” (333), for they are still both apropos and inspiring. Furthermore, these position statements, she claims, are germane to those outside the field. At a time when those outside the field are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of effective communication and the use of language, we need to assert our presence. According to Logan, we can no longer idly watch others make decisions about composition and communication that we are more equipped to make: composition teachers need to be “at the center of all policy decisions that affect the teaching and learning of communication skills” (335). We need to highlight “the extent to which composition matters” (335-6); we need to take control of the ways in which composition and communication are conceptualized and subsequently implemented into educational as well as social settings. This, in turn, can alleviate some of the problems associated with the conditions under which we are asked to teach.

Lastly, Logan speaks about what she unfortunately feels is left unspoken: “the fact that most writing courses are taught by part-time and adjunct faculty and graduate students, most of whom are not even here at our conference” (338). We frequently presume that teachers are the problem; that is, if we replace the adjuncts and TAs with tenured professors, then the quality of education would increase. “But in most cases, the problem is the range of environments in which we are asked to teach writing” (338). Perhaps more disconcerting, she suggests, is not only the decline in CCCC membership but also the small portion of those members who are people of color. In closing, she proclaims that our field’s primary “goal should still be to teach effective writing and communication well” (339). In addition, we must do so in a way that shows deference toward “linguistic differences and teach[es] our students various dialect options, particularly the options of edited American English (EAE)” (340).

2004: Kathleen Blake Yancey – “Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key”
“Sometimes, you know, you have a moment” (297). And according to Kathleen Blake Yancey in her 2004 Address, at this moment, “[n]ever before has the proliferation of writings outside the academy so counterpointed the compositions inside” (298). The reason for the disconnect: the current technology shift and subsequent emergence of a new writing public. Given the advent of new and exciting avenues for writing, she asserts, “literacy today is in the midst of a tectonic change” (298). And with such change comes a slew of questions: now, how do we define writing, what do new definitions of writing mean as it concerns delivery, and, perhaps most important, how does all of this affect (inevitably) our field—the ways in which we make and disseminate meaning? (298-9)

The influx of new technology coupled with the emergence of a new writing public sounds what Yancey coins “a moment for composition in a new key” (299). In an attempt to avoid becoming “anachronistic” (301)—or perhaps more anachronistic than we already are—Yancey enumerates three important foci heading forward: “[d]evelop a new curriculum; revisit and revise our writing-across-the-curriculum efforts; and develop a major in composition and rhetoric” (308). Due to limitations in time and space, however, Yancey decides to focus her attention toward the first: “developing a new curriculum for the 21st century” (308), a curriculum couched in “a new vocabulary, a new set of practices, and a new set of outcomes” (308) that in turn encompass the writing composed inside as well as outside of school.

Yancey claims that “it is past time that we fill the glaringly empty spot between first-year composition and graduate education with a composition major” (308), and in the remainder of her Address, she outlines briefly the three key features in this new curriculum: (1) “circulation of composition” (312): how composing in different media, the remediation of different compositions, and the overall circulation of those compositions alter what composing is and how we compose; (2) “canons of rhetoric” (311): how the canons interact (for example, how new modes of delivery affect the relationship between invention and arrangement) to create new exigencies; and (3) “deicity of technology” (311): how the ability to use technology in purposeful ways may be at odds with its intended purpose (e.g., using a word processor to write an email) is now an important part of composing. In essence, this new curriculum is a remediation of the old, building off print literacy and working toward including new literacy practices examined through a rhetorical lens. This new curriculum also needs to remain malleable, willing to adapt to the emergence of future literacy practices. As a final caveat,
Yancey suggests that curriculum might not be the only facet of composition studies that will experience change; a new (or perhaps remediated) site, a location of learning, may be on the horizon as well.

**2005: Doug Hesse – “Who Owns Writing?”**

In his 2005 Address, Doug Hesse asks what may appear to be a simplistic (or perhaps rhetorical) question: “Who owns writing? (337)” However, Hesse is actually illuminating the current (and for him, unfortunate) state of writing in a way that attempts to galvanize and motivate fellow writing teachers. In other words, Hesse does not believe we own writing, and in his Address, he outlines why we need to make a more concerted effort to do so. In general, he believes we are a society pushed toward ownership, yet what we own is quite regulated; thus, in asking “Who owns writing?” he is specifically asking, “who owns the conditions under which writing is taught? Who owns the content and pedagogy of composition?” (337) Currently, he believes the answers to be “everyone, no one, someone, and ‘it depends’” (338), and as we move forward as a field, he hopes to change that. What he insists, therefore, is “that those who teach writing must affirm that we, in fact, own it” (338 original emphasis). Said another way, Hesse is concerned about outsiders’ perception of both writing and the teaching of writing, and worse, their perceptions often elide the valuable research and contributions from CCCC and its members. Thus, he suggests that we as writing (and composition) teachers need to take back writing, for those who own it control it both in terms of how it is implemented and taught.

And once we own writing, Hesse feels we need to address the types of writing suitable for the classroom. He states that typically composition has “concerned itself with five spheres” (349), but in looking at these five, he sees the emergence of two categories. Thus, he creates a binary (and in doing so, acknowledges the possible reductiveness in resorting to a dichotomous viewpoint; however, he does so in this instance in order to create a “heuristic” (350)) of obliged (required) discourse, which includes vocational and academic writing, and self-sponsored discourse, which includes personal, belletristic, and, civic writing. Hesse feels that we need to “own up to the demands of obliged writing on our students” (350); however, we also need to make room for the self-sponsored. And of particular interest to Hesse is the potential intrinsic in the realm of the civic.
According to our anthologies, first-year writers are not “general readers”; those would be the ones reading Harper’s or The American Scholar. Thus, it is impractical to think students can produce texts comparable to “paid professionals” (350). However, we still need them to “write about the civic sphere, not in it” (350 original emphasis). With the advent of new technologies (blogs, wikis, music, multimedia, etc.), writing in the civic sphere has expanded and encompasses more than it has in the past, yet “most of us, and that includes [Hesse], teach as if the civic sphere were still institutionally sponsored, as if there were extractable principles, guidelines, and rules” (353). This traditional line of thinking is changing, and in returning to his original question of “Who owns writing?” we can see what is at stake: the very foundation of composition within the academy. “[T]he nature of an activity” he notes, “changes according to who organizes it and for what ends” (354), and this is germane to writing. Thus, according to Hesse, in analyzing writing at its current stage and projecting its future trajectory, we need to make sure we have a say. We need to make sure that we “own writing.”

2006: Judith Wootten – “Riding a One-Eyed Horse: Reining In and Fencing Out”

Judith Wootten opens her Address by echoing a perpetual struggle in the field: the task of “defining and redefining” (236) what, exactly, we are and do. According to her, our recent defining and redefining has centered on visual and multimodal literacies. Consequently, Wootten sets forth three arguments: (1) that the visual and multimodal literacies we consider new are actually old, (2) that we may not be able to teach these literacies effectively, and (3) that if we continue to teach such literacies we need to provide proper training to all teachers.

According to Wootten, in implementing visual literacy into the classroom, we have attempted to define the term “‘visual literacy’” (239)—attempted in the sense that we still have trouble establishing a concrete definition. Nonetheless, she asserts we cling to this term, labeling it as something “new” (239) even though it has been around for a long time, just under the guise of a different name. Still, we find ourselves reiterating that our students are “visually literate (and technologically advanced), [and as a result,] we need to somehow tap into their tacit knowledge so they can hang new ideas on old pegs” (239). Subsequently turning toward multimodal literacy, Wootten says this too “is another fairly new refocusing, renaming” (241). As with visual literacy, Wootten wonders, “[w]hat about literacy hasn’t been multimodal? Like forever?” (241) Once again, she acknowledges the reasons for including such literacies in the
classroom. For example, since “students are technologically experienced, it is important that we use and develop that experience” (242). Or: “we must prepare students for the work place, where multimedia will soon be required” (242). However, the problem for Wootten in both cases, in arguments for implementing visual and multimodal literacies in the classroom, is that she is “not certain these assumptions are true” (242); that is, she wonders if our current focus on visual and multimodal literacies is really the appropriate approach heading forward.

To flesh out the consequences of a visual and multimodal literacy-oriented focus, Wootten recites a poem by Henry Taylor titled “Riding a One-Eyed Horse.” In it, the horse has a blind spot, so the rider must position the horse to see a certain view; however, positioning the horse to see in one direction blinds it from seeing another. The meaning behind the metaphor: “[w]hen we select, focus our attention, turn the seeing side of our profession toward some aspect of the universe of discourse, we must perforce blind ourselves to other aspects” (238-9). Right now, according to Wootten, the field’s current vision seems to be focused on visual and multimodal literacies, but in her experience, students often do not have their one-eyed horse turned in the same direction as their teacher: “[s]tudents like [hers], who haven’t learned the college game yet, bring oppositional discourse to every attempt to examine the rhetoric of any given discourse” (241). This leads Wootten to an important rhetorical question that problematizes and challenges the shift to a visual and multimodal vision: if we focus too sternly on these literacies and implement them for the sake of implementing them, then what are we teaching? Put another way: “[i]s the multimodality in our classrooms there to do a job for some audience,” or is technology “used because it is there and because we can use it?” (242)

For Wootten, “renaming, refocusing, using new terms for old ideas are our attempts to be inclusionary, to authorize the study of new technologies as they affect communication” (242); however, “renaming doesn’t mean we can teach it or teach it well” (243). The objective behind focusing on visual literacy or including technologies into the classroom should be “to create empowered users” (243); implementing multimodal projects just because they are chic will not create such empowered users, and according to her, teachers who are not technologically adroit are not suited to empower such students. By focusing our attention on the development of visual and multimodal literacies, by positioning our one-eyed horse in this direction, we are surely “leav[ing something] out” (237), and Wootten is concerned that what we turn away from might be what we should be teaching in the first place.
Nonetheless, Wootten admits that our field appears resolute in including visual and multimodal literacies in our pedagogies; therefore, she claims the next step is to ensure that “professional development is available to all who teach” (244 added emphasis). She knows that a majority of teaching assistants receive such training and that “writing program administrators work hard to provide such training” (244). But “what about the other half of the institutions teaching freshmen and sophomores?” (244) And although she does not “worry too much about the Luddites in the profession […] as] they won’t be around forever, […] she does] worry about the students they are teaching” (244). Thus, if we are to carry forward with these literacies and continue to make them an integral aspect of our pedagogical practices, then all teachers need the proper training. All teachers need to be able to help create “empowered users” (243).

2007: Akua Duku Anokye – “Chair’s Address: Voices of the Company We Keep”

Akua Duku Anoyke’s title for her 2007 Address, “Voices of the Company We Keep,” is appropriate because those are the people she weaves into her Address: various voices of CCCC members. Faced with the realization that she would soon give an Address to the members of CCCC, Anokye became “worried” (266). What did she have to offer? she wondered. And it was here when she turned to the CCCC membership for guidance and conducted oral interviews a year prior to her Address. In these interviews, she asked four distinct questions: (1) “When was your first CCCC Conference?” “What do you remember about it?” (2) “What kept you coming back?” (3) “What would you like to see CCCC do in the future?” And (4) “What do you say or would you say to encourage others to become members?” (267) After sifting through her responses and then providing some of her findings in her Address, Anoyke makes two corresponding arguments: that we need to (1) value all the “voices of the company we keep,” for in doing so, we can (2) better identify and understand the salient problems within CCCC, which will therefore allow us to attend to these exigencies in appropriate ways.

Anoyke begins her Address by engaging her audience in a poll, one that illustrates the variety and diversity in membership at CCCC’s. She likens this to a proverb she held dearly growing up, “‘[w]e are known by the company we keep’” (263). The caveat, of course, is that the quality of that company and the context in which it is kept affect how, exactly, “we are known.” In other words, in looking at the diversity amongst CCCC membership and in assessing “the company we keep,” Anokye says we must first and foremost “learn to work together, [for] if
[we] don’t learn to honor many voices, if [we] don’t learn to get beyond discrimination, mistrust, dishonor, [we] can’t manage […] an institution, a place, a unit that will implement collective goals” (265). In looking at our “company” further, Anokye broaches a key question for how we see ourselves: “[w]ho are the important folks in CCCC?” (266) Her answer: the members—the graduate students, tenure-track and tenured faculty, mentors, newcomers.

In other words, everyone.

And in turning toward this “everyone” and in asking them the four distinct questions outlined above, she discovered not only how the CCCC members viewed the company they kept but also how we could work together to improve said company. In her interview responses, Anokye found that although many members feel that CCCC still acts as a disciplinary home, “a place to develop long-lasting relationships” (268), there are still those who feel we are not as active as a community as we should be, that we might acknowledge problems but not take the proper initiative in attempting to rectify those problems. For example, some felt there was a distinct “lack of activism and awareness” (270), while others desired the organization to have a bigger voice in the public; that is, they wanted writing experts to engage in dialogue with those in Congress who make legislation regarding writing in order “to keep company with other constituencies across regions and disciplines, which together will give us a powerful voice” (271). Thus, while Anokye admits she may raise more questions than she actually answers, she nonetheless urges us to “confront racism, confront complacency, confront ignorance, speak our minds, demand our voices be heard” (274)—both within our community and in society. We need to both listen to and be proud of the company we keep if we ever intend to make progress as a field and as a community.

2008: Cheryl Glenn – “Representing Ourselves”

In her 2008 Address, Cheryl Glenn—like many Chairs before her, such as Bishop, Logan, and Anoyke—notes the diversity within the CCCC, believing that we can use it to our advantage. She advocates that we create a “coalition” (422), that we unite but not in ways that would suppress other voices or create some sort of hegemony (in any sense of the word). In other words, she is “not arguing for consensus, not for post-identity politics, not for the suppression of critical and dissenting voices, and not for a homogenizing professional narrative of harmonious pluralism” (422 original emphasis). Rather, she asks us to unite for “strategic
representation” (422) and create a coalition of hope. However, before outlining just how we could go about establishing this strategic representation, Glenn speaks further on the dynamic and sometimes contentious nature of our diversity as an organization and field, for if we are unable to understand our collective worth and work to settle our internal conflicts, our efforts at progress will continue to be stymied.

Glenn starts, then, by listing some of our more common differences such as where we teach and what our status is within the academy, suggesting that they make for a dynamic organization and present a “rich intellectual opportunity” (423). She also acknowledges the numerous systems within CCCC aimed at “nourishing and diversifying our organization even further […] and] not only in terms of age, institution, and experience” (423). However, our diversity at times also unfortunately begets divisiveness. We think in terms of “rhetoric and competition” (rather than rhetoric and composition) and “publish and punish” (rather than publish or perish) (423). In addition, our own discipline is divided by tenured (or tenure-track) and non-tenured faculty.

Glenn subsequently turns her attention toward outside factors that frequently inhibit coalitions of hope. For example, whenever we do unite in favor of a shared goal, legislation often “modifies” or “dismantles” those goals altogether. She points toward No Child Left Behind (NCLB) as one such salient yet counterproductive and evasive legislative policy. Another impediment is violence, and although she admits it may not be applicable in our case, it is nonetheless the number one inhibitor of coalitions of hope, manifesting itself at an alarming rate, especially in the U.S.

Thus, in returning to her advocacy for “strategic representation,” Glenn follows up on Anoyke’s advice “to develop our voice and represent ourselves” (427). However, Glenn goes further, urging that “we also need to consider what we would use that voice for. We must define our common desires, identify the specific forces that frustrate those desires, and work together to envision what is humanly possible” (427). And as she reiterates throughout the Address, “[she doesn’t] think [she’s] asking too much” (432); that is, what she outlines is a plausible goal. For, if “we can move into a CCCC culture of strategic representation, a coalition of acknowledged differences in pursuit of transformation” (432), we can enact change for the better. We can become agents of change.
Now that I have provided a summary for each of the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, I will turn my attention to detailing the themes that emerged when I re-read these Addresses as a set using Joyce Neff’s grounded theory approach. This “iterative” process “is based on ‘systematically and intensively analyzing data’” and letting any potential themes emerge and define themselves (125). In employing such an approach, I was able to identify three themes different from the two themes (and four sets of recurring gestures) Ellen Barton demonstrates. The first of those themes is gestures made about literacy, which I will illustrate in the subsequent chapter.
CHAPTER 3: LITERACY

The first of the three themes that emerged in re-reading the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses as a set is recurring gestures made about literacy. The importance of and focus on literacy has not always permeated the rhetoric and composition field, but during the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, there has been an increase in attention not only toward literacy but also, and perhaps more importantly, toward the type(s) of literacy that should be fostered in the composition classroom. This emerging trend, one not present in Ellen Barton’s 1997 study of the first twenty CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, marks what I believe to be a shift in the rhetoric and composition field. In fact, one might argue that our emphasis now seems to be three- rather than twofold: that of rhetoric, composition, and literacy. Although the literacy each of these Chairs speaks to varies somewhat per Address, literacy, at least at this moment, seems to act as an umbrella term for having a particular knowledge set and being at least adequate at a set of practices considered important to participating in a specific yet dynamic rhetorical situation. Just as important is that literacy is currently being shaped (or at least influenced) by the outside world. In other words, in the past, literacy seemed to be more of a universal concept: people predominantly thought of literacy in terms of reading and writing, and those labeled “illiterate” were usually ones who could neither read nor write. And while literacy still may conjure up similar definitions for many, literacy has nonetheless shifted: while it is contingent per rhetorical situation, many (if not most) of these rhetorical situations are present outside the classroom. Put another way, although we may be honing such literacies within the classroom, we are in turn relying on and utilizing them during our interactions within the social realm. The importance of literacy, therefore, is measured in accordance to its applicability to the outside world.

Within the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, four Chairs make robust gestures about literacy, but each one does so through a different lens. Cynthia Selfe calls our attention toward technological literacy in 1998, while two years later, Keith Gilyard proposes that we make room for a more inclusive and cultural-oriented pedagogy that fosters a literacy where language is imperative to the construction of identity in society. Both Selfe and Gilyard, however, draw attention toward how literacy can play a part in class, racial, and/or gendered inequities. In 2004, Kathleen Blake Yancey observes the emergence of a new writing public that in turn is changing
literacy practices outside the classroom and should, she argues, change how we conceive of literacy inside the classroom. And in 2006, Judith Wootten asks that we position the “eye” of our field away from a visual- and multimodal-oriented literacy and back toward one where we have a common understanding and shared expertise. While all of these Chairs take disparate approaches to discussing literacy, all of them, at least in some fashion, key on how literacy is linked to the outside world. All of them look toward the events and social milieu outside the classroom first in order to illustrate how the literacy we foster inside the classroom is evolving (or should evolve).10

In her 1998 Address, “Technology and Literacy: A Story about the Perils of Not Paying Attention,” Selfe critically examines the Clinton-Gore administration’s 1996 document Getting America’s Children Ready for the Twenty-First Century, a national project that aspired to develop and then expand technological literacy in the United States. At face value, this literacy project appears both laudable and advantageous: with the influx of new technology, it seems only natural that America would want its youth to stay informed and technologically competent. However, Selfe is not so much concerned with the goals of the project as much as she is the means to those goals, which are significant both in and outside of the classroom.

Selfe argues that the overarching impetus behind the Clinton-Gore literacy project was capital gain via globalism. By “expanding America’s technology efforts” (336), the Clinton-Gore administration could not only spread democracy and the fruits of capitalism but also combat the emergence of growing markets among the developing countries of East Asia and Latin America that threatened to capture an increasingly large percentage of the world’s consumers [as well as] the threatening increase in competition due to the global scope of the international economy. (336)

10 Lovas, in his 2002 Address “All Good Writing Develops at the Edge of Risk,” espouses a somewhat similar view in that he believes we develop literacies (plural) both in and outside of the classroom. Furthermore, he feels that literacy practices are not necessarily confined to the classroom. However, his definition of literacy is understood more clearly as a collection of accrued knowledge, and unlike the other four Chairs, Lovas does not speak extensively to the role of the classroom in honing (or even discussing) such literacies; rather, he seems to suggest that literacy development is an amalgam of collective knowledge and experiences that happens both in and outside of the classroom. Lastly, his gesture is a subsidiary one (not nearly as developed as the four other Chairs’ gestures are), sandwiched between two conference narratives and his larger gesture about professional equity within our field.
This, in turn, affected the education system, where there emerged a new goal to make every child technologically literate. In theory, this would provide every child the same opportunities for financial success and stability. The problem, however, is that not every child has access to the same opportunities in order to develop and hone this literacy.

Selfe refers to the works of Brian Street, Harvey Graff, and James Paul Gee, who assert that the promise of “personal success [and] economic prosperity” that is often associated with literacy is actually a “‘myth’” (420); when it comes to financial and economic stability, literacy “‘is less important than issues of class, gender, and ethnicity’” (qtd. in Selfe 420). Which, as I state in Chapter 2, brings Selfe to the crux of the literacy project: “in the culture that this system reflects, computers continue to be distributed differentially along the related axes of race and socioeconomic status and this distribution contributes to ongoing patterns of racism and to the continuation of poverty” (420 original emphasis). Rather than actually attempt to address the problems stemming from literacy acquisition, the Clinton-Gore literacy project merely redefines what it means to be literate and in the process continues to perpetuate inequities in class and race. Only affluent and some middle-class schools have the available resources to obtain and then include emerging technology into their curriculum. Poverty-stricken schools, on the other hand, those who mostly house poor students and students of color, scramble to teach with the meager resources they have. The financially stable schools prepare the nations’ “best and brightest” this now highly valued technological literacy, while poorer schools remain stagnant, watching others gain access to a growing and valuable commodity.

“This international effort to expand technology” had an important aftershock “in the domestic arena” (338) as well: those who become technologically savvy also demand such technologies as they grow older. They, in turn, consume and thus continually contribute their own money to the project. This project thus becomes “self-fueling” (338) and cyclical, and unfortunately, that results in the project’s pernicious ramifications being pushed toward the margins. Those who do not become technologically literate in school therefore usually occupy jobs void of technology. As Selfe says, we can see a racial divide manifesting itself in the workforce in terms of technological literacy: for example, as I note in Chapter 2, African American and Hispanic workers are much less likely than their white counterparts to have access to or even use technology in the workplace. Here, the divide between those with the most money
(those who are already privileged and have access) and those living in less fortunate circumstances (usually poor people and people of color) is simply widened with age.

Rather than attend to the very real problems associated with literacy acquisition by supporting those schools and work environments desperate for technology and additional training, only those with the proper finances are able to gain access to this technological literacy. As such, literacy is not attended to but rather replicated; that is, this new definition of literacy still carries with it the same literacy problems of class, race, money, and access. So with a problem this large, the obvious subsequent question becomes, What next? Knowing the problem is integral to solving it, but as members of the rhetoric and composition field, how are we able to tackle this rather large task? Selfe’s answer: pay attention to the potential perils she outlines concerning technology within the various sites we occupy.

And here, everyone needs to be responsible. According to Selfe, in the composition world, we conveniently split ourselves into two camps: those who use technology and those who do not. But even here, “[c]omputer-using teachers instruct students in how to use technology—but, all too often, they neglect to teach students how to pay critical attention to the issues generated by technology use” (340 original emphasis). Just as troubling is that those who do not use computers feel they are exonerated by those who do. Thus, both camps are complicit in perpetuating ignorance toward the problems surrounding technological literacy.

According to Selfe, this trend should not continue.

In order to address these issues as a field, Selfe suggests that we utilize a “situated knowledge approach,” which “can serve as a collective effort to construct a ‘larger vision’ of our responsibilities as a profession, one that depends on a strong sense of many somewheres (e.g., schools, classrooms, districts, communities) ‘in particular’” (341 original emphasis). In other words, we are diverse community, and individually, we occupy many locations, many “somewheres.” Within these “somewheres,” we need to exert our influence and collective expertise; we need to instill a critical approach to dealing with technological literacy. For Selfe, the literacy we need to foster in the classroom is one of social cognizance. We need to teach students to be aware of the consequences of being technologically literate.

Two years later, in his 2000 Address “Literacy, Identity, Imagination, Flight,” Gilyard also speaks to the importance of literacy, and like Selfe, he is concerned with how literacy affects our ability to negotiate the academic, economic, and social realms. However, Selfe focuses
primarily on technological literacy, while Gilyard focuses on a literacy that is predicated on language use. Nonetheless, Gilyard also illustrates how literacy can perpetuate pernicious hierarchies in class, race, and/or gender, and he too looks toward the outside world first as a means to reconceptualize the literacy we should foster within the classroom.

Gilyard uses James Brown’s lyrics about dancing—“‘There was a dance, hah / There was a time, hah / when I used to dance, hah’” (qtd. in Gilyard 265)—to illustrate that he, like Barthes and Derrida, knew how “meaning can be shifting [and] unstable, [even] inside a given dance” (266). This, in turn, acts as a segue for Gilyard to talk about writing as a “situated and constructed endeavor” (265); that is to say, our language is dynamic and its meaning alters per social situation. He references Romy Clark and Roz Ivanic as well as Linda Brodkey and Patricia Bizzell for their work on writing as a social practice; however, Gilyard focuses on Clark and Ivanic specifically for their work on what they call Critical Language Awareness (266 original emphasis), a concept that resonates heavily with Gilyard and his current classroom agenda. And it is through this lens that Gilyard begins to outline his new pedagogy and the literacy it both values and fosters.

In developing this new pedagogy, Gilyard includes an intense, critical focus on language use and the power it wields in our social interactions and standings. As he says:

If the ascension toward a more perfect democracy depends upon citizens being able to interrogate and resist discourses that impede such instantiation, as I suggest is the case, then students need to comprehend as completely as possible how discourse operates, which means understanding how the dominant or most powerful discourse serves to regulate and reproduce patterns of privilege. (266)

In addition to this, Gilyard lists some common uses of language that continue to reinforce inequitable racial and gendered hierarchies; for example, the negative connotations commonly attached to the word “black” or the frequency with which “he” will stand in for non-gender specific pronouns. His point: “you see how we can perpetuate ideas without even realizing it” (267). Further compounding the matter is the very nature of a standard (or standardized) discourse; its very existence creates a hierarchy in class as well as in race and gender.

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11 Although I will not flesh out this argument in this text, there surely is an argument to be made about language being a technology. And if we understand language and how we use it to be a technology, then the ramifications of language use as a literacy practice would align with Selfe’s focus on technological literacy and the potential perils of not paying attention as well as on the way technological literacy can exacerbate inequitable hierarchies.
Furthermore, “whenever we participate in the dominant discourse, no matter how liberally we may tweak it, we help to maintain it” (268).

The power of language is immense and ubiquitous. And as Gilyard suggests, this can become a problem as we attempt to configure our place within the social realm. Like Selfe, then, Gilyard is advocating for critical awareness. However, rather than focus on the detriment of being critically unaware of technology and its usage, Gilyard is concerned with the very way in which we use language. Still, in both cases, that of technology and that of language, not developing a critical eye to how both are used can reify class, racial, and gender inequities. Gilyard, however, believes that by fostering a critical language awareness pedagogy, we can make our students (more) cognizant of the way in which language affects how they construct meaning and partake in society. He proposes that we inculcate within our students the importance of being “critically careful,” that it “does make a difference” (268). For if we fail to help our students gain a critical understanding and awareness of language, fail to have them see the way literacy shapes our society and the way we act within it, they will continue to be complicit in the perpetuation of social inequity.

However, in attempting to break down and alter current hierarchies founded in prejudice, Gilyard is not simply advocating another version of the postmodern classroom. He understands and sees merit in the theory undergirding such classrooms, but all too often, especially in the rhetoric and composition classroom, he feels postmodernism “gets stuck in passive relativism, just a classroom full of perceived instability” (270). He finds it “useful at times to complicate notions of identity, but primary identities operate powerfully in the world and have to be productively engaged” (270). Thus, Gilyard believes we need to reevaluate the identity politics we push in the classroom and make sure they align with pragmatic, social interactions. In other words, in underscoring the power of language in terms of how we conceive of one another and position ourselves within the social realm, we need to ensure that we truly understand how language operates and how we can use it to achieve realistic goals.

Gilyard’s gesture thus calls for a new pedagogical model that focuses primarily on the power of language in society and its relation to identity construction. Although he only uses the term “literacy” twice, literacy is in nonetheless present in his title, “Literacy, Identity, Imagination, Flight” (added emphasis), and it is the linchpin for his entire Address: he speaks
directly to the value of writing and using language effectively, especially in the social world to subvert class, racial, and gender inequities.

Within the 2004 Address “Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key,” literacy once again surfaces as a prominent talking point with Yancey’s bold assertion that “literacy today is in the midst of a tectonic change” (298). Like Selfe, Yancey points to the emergence of new technology and the consequences this has for literacy. Although Yancey initially speaks of literacy in more traditional terms, that of writing (and composing), she quickly shifts toward how technology is altering this conventional notion of literacy. Unlike Selfe and Gilyard, however, she does not illustrate how this literacy perpetuates social, economic, and academic hierarchies. At the center of her Address, thus, is the following question: what does new technology mean for the state of writing and how does this in turn affect conventional literacy practices?

Yancey says that students do write words on paper, but they also compose words on paper: they “compose words and images and create audio files on Web logs (blogs), in word processors, with video editors and Web editors and in e-mail and on presentation software and in instant messaging and on listservs and on bulletin boards” (298). In other words, our students are writing and composing at least in some way. And frequently.

But the writing and composing these students engage in daily does not typically align with the writing and composing asked of them in the classroom. As she states, “[n]ever before has the proliferation of writings outside the academy so counterpointed the compositions inside. […] How is it that what we teach and what we test can be so different from what our students know as writing?” (298) Her answer: we are witnessing the emergence “of a writing public that, in development and in linkage to technology, parallels the development of a reading public in the 19th century” (298). What is important to note, then, is that this new writing public made “plural” (300) is manifesting itself outside the classroom walls; furthermore, people are writing of their own volition: “no one is forcing this public to write” (300 original emphasis).

Therefore, in asking what “our references to writing mean” (298), Yancey is essentially wondering how new avenues for writing, those engendered by emerging technology, complicate our traditional notion of writing and literacy. As she states, “[n]ever before have the technologies of writing contributed so quickly to the creation of new genres” (298). But what do
these new genres mean for writing and composing within academia? How are we, as rhetoric and composition teachers, supposed to react to this new writing public?

Yancey feels these new types of literacy practices call into question, or at least suggest a reevaluation of, the literacy and pedagogical practices we both implement and hold dear. In other words, “[w]hat is writing, really?” (298) Has it changed? And if so, what do those changes entail? Her short answer is that writing and composing is capacious and dynamic, but just as important, she wonders if our hesitation to include such writing and new genres—in essence, new literacy practices—has made us “anachronistic” (302). Put another way, Yancey does not feel that our current pedagogies reflect the capacious and dynamic nature of writing and composing, which in turn suggests that our pedagogies do not promote the new and robust literacy valued in the everyday world.

As a potential solution to this dilemma, Yancey begins to outline a new curriculum: “a […] curriculum for the 21st century” (308 original emphasis). In such a curriculum, we can “prepare students to become members of the writing public and to negotiate life” (306). While she admits that many teachers still grasp on to a literacy conceptualized solely in terms of print, she aptly notes that our current interactions within the field imply that a move to a more inclusive and nuanced literacy is already afoot:

it becomes pretty clear that we already inhabit a model of communication practices incorporating multiple genres related to each other, those multiple genres remediated across contexts of time and space, linked one to the next, circulating across and around rhetorical situations both inside and outside school. (308)

Fleshing out further what such a new curriculum could eventually look like, Yancey proposes a remediation. Said differently, the new curriculum will include those aspects most important and fruitful in the old curriculum, but at the same time, it will continue to build off those aspects and branch out to include new ones. This curriculum will provide a place to grapple with the writing and composing found inside as well as outside the academy; it will also contain “a new vocabulary, a new set of practices, and a new set of outcomes” (308).

As I demonstrate in Chapter 2, Yancey suggests this new curriculum would have three key elements, all of which influence the literacy practices in which we would engage. The first element, “circulation of composition” (312), examines how composing in different media, the
remediation of different compositions, and the overall circulation of those compositions alter what composing is and how we compose. Here, we can see literacy in a more comprehensive light. Rather than think of literacy in terms of print, here literacy alters per rhetorical situation: our means of writing and composing vary and our ability to do so effectively requires being literate within a diverse number of genres.

The “canons of rhetoric” (311), the second element, entails a critical understanding of how the canons interact (for example, how new modes of delivery affect the relationship between invention and arrangement) to create new exigencies. Once again, we can see how literacy in this sense begins to evolve and expand. Emerging technology is creating new and viable media within which we can write and compose. And since the media within which we write and compose influence the way in which we are able to use the five rhetorical canons, we can also begin to notice a change in our literacy practices. Put another way, our traditional literacy practices need to be reexamined, for we are no longer writing and composing within traditional media. Being able to communicate effectively both in terms of creating knowledge and understanding it is still at the root of such literacy practices; however, the exact means to which we do both alter per genre and per rhetorical situation. Lastly, the third element, “deicity of technology” (311), illustrates how the ability to use technology in purposeful ways may be at odds with its intended purpose (e.g., using a word processor to write an email). It also speaks to how our contexts determine our ability to access technology, which in turn affects our acquisition and/or development of literacy. In other words, we are only able to hone this new literacy insofar as we have access to its practices.

Like Selfe, then, Yancey does draw attention to the importance of new technology and access to such technology as it concerns literacy. However, Selfe speaks to the worldly consequences of not paying attention to technological literacy, while Yancey speaks more toward how our field and its literacy practices can adapt to the new demands of the social world. Put another way, Selfe’s literacy is conceptualized more in terms of technological adroitness, whereas Yancey’s view of literacy focuses on how writing and composing practices evolve and expand due to emerging technology. However, as is the trend when discussing literacy practices and their relevance, Yancey, like both Selfe and Gilyard, looks outside the academy and to worldly activities first in making the gesture about how literacy should be conceived inside the academy—in specific, the rhetoric and composition classroom.
Wootten also looks outward first when she discusses literacy in her 2006 Address “Riding a One-Eyed Horse: Reining In and Fencing Out.” However, unlike the other gestures made about literacy, Wootten’s gesture suggests that we try to curtail our propensity for looking to the outside world, that it is causing us to focus on and include content in our classrooms which we are not equipped to teach. This gesture, it appears, contrasts Yancey’s, and together, they seem to be in dialogue with one another. Both note how technology and a growing interest in visual and multimodal texts are increasingly manifesting themselves within our classrooms and thus impacting our literacy practices. However, Yancey embraces this change, and rather than merely make room to include these emerging technologies and genres within our old curriculum and literacy practices, she argues that we should remediate our curriculum and literacy practices to adapt to such technologies. Wootten, on the other hand, claims that the type of literacy we should attempt to hone in the composition classroom should not be a visual- or multimodal-oriented one; however, if we do decide to continue down this path, Wootten asserts that there is much work to be done.

In beginning her talk, Wootten admits that “[d]efining and redefining our discipline is not simple” (236), mostly due to the nature of our field: we display a strong penchant to include within our work anything that falls under the umbrella term “‘text’” (236). According to Wootten, thus, we place ourselves in a relation with the outside world; it, in essence, becomes the source for our work. But in positioning ourselves at “the center of the universe [… and] claim[ing] it as a matter of study” (237) as a field, Wootten states that we often run into snags and potential roadblocks. For instance, “we are as likely to disagree as to discover common ground” (236); furthermore, “how do we manage [… and] focus” (237) ourselves as field? Perhaps more important: how and what “do we teach?” (237) And with that, what do we exclude?

What Wootten is attempting to convey is the potential danger in having so many, and often times broad, foci. To illustrate this point further, she relies on Henry Taylor’s poem “Riding a One-Eyed Horse.” In it, the horse has a blind spot, so in turn, the rider must position the horse to see a certain view; however, positioning the horse to see in one direction blinds it from seeing another. As noted in Chapter 2, the point is that “[w]hen we select, focus our attention, turn the seeing side of our profession toward some aspect of the universe of discourse, we must perforce blind ourselves to other aspects” (238-9). She also goes on to say that we as a
field are attracted toward and enamored with “‘the new’” (239); however, what we need to realize is that what we conceive of as new is really not. We are simply “renaming” and “refocusing” (239). And this brings her to visual literacy and our current affinity with it.

According to Wootten, visual literacy has been around for a while: it has been present in “the study and teaching of professional or technical writing, where the design of the message is part of the content” as well as “[t]he study of film, [where] the discussion [is centered on] how and what the images on the screen convey” (239). In other words, incorporating visual literacy into the classroom is anything but new; we are simply renaming what has been done in the past. The more important question, at least for Wootten, is whether we should continue to exert our effort in redefining what we see as visual literacy and refocusing it within our composition classrooms.

For Wootten, that answer is no. She understands the theory behind such redefining and refocusing: “[w]e argue that our students are visually literate (and technologically advanced), so we need to somehow tap into their tacit knowledge so they can hang new ideas on old pegs” (239). She is just unsure how valid an argument it is, however. She claims that the “people who study ‘visual literacy’ cannot agree about a definition of what it is they study and that there’s no coherent theory” (239). Just as important, she feels that our students do not see the value in visual literacy that we apparently do despite our best efforts. Drawing on personal experience, Wootten states that “[s]tudents like mine, who haven’t learned the college game yet, bring oppositional discourse to every attempt to examine the rhetoric of any given discourse” (241).

The same problems hold true for multimodal literacy, another example, according to Wootten, of redefining and refocusing in our field. The reasons for the inclusion of a multimodal literacy are plentiful:

- Often, it seems, technology is used because it is there and because we can use it.
- Some argue that because students are technologically experienced, it is important that we use and develop that experience. Others say that we must prepare students for the work place, where multimedia will soon be required. (242).

The problem here, however, as is true of a visual-oriented literacy, is that Wootten is just “[un]certain these assumptions are true” (242). She willingly concedes that all of this renaming and refocusing does expand what we are able to study, but again, by focusing our horse in this direction, what are we leaving out?
In closing, then, Wootten states that she is uncertain whether we can teach this visual and multimodal literacy—and “teach it well” (243). As educators, our goal should be to “create empowered users” (243), and Wootten is skeptical as to whether these visual- and multimodal-oriented projects can do that: “[a]dding multimodal projects and the like to traditional classes will not create empowered users. Having students use computers as typewriters will not create empowered users. Multimedia projects for their own sakes also won’t create empowered users” (243). In addition, she suggests that teachers who are not technologically adroit are not suited to teach to these literacies, though she admits she has no evidence to corroborate this other than her own experience. Thus, if we continue to focus on these visual and multimodal literacies in the classroom, Wootten believes we need qualified teachers. With that comes further training—and not just for those entering the field. Also, we need to be cognizant of what it is we may marginalize. What are we sacrificing if we continue to position visual and multimodal literacy at the heart of our pedagogies?

Wootten’s gesture about literacy is thus two-fold and Janus-like, asking us to look backward as we press forward: (1) if we continue to rename and redefine, and in turn expand what we consider text and what it is we as a field do, then we might run the risk of turning our attention away from the literacy practice we know best: writing; and (2) if we continue to foster visual and multimodal literacies within the classroom, then we must ensure that we are able to teach these literacies well and that we create empowered users.

In reading across these four CCCC Chairs’ Addresses—those from Selfe, Gilyard, Yancey, and Wootten—we can see distinct gestures about the importance of literacy, all of which suggest that the outside world is influencing the type of literacy we are, or should be, fostering in the writing and composition classroom. Selfe is worried about the social, economic, and academic detriment technological literacy can create, especially if we do not pay attention to such literacy. We cannot let technology and the issues attached go unnoticed, she says; we cannot let the problems they propose (both in and outside the classroom) become simply the norm. Gilyard also examines the social inequities associated with literacy acquisition, but he focuses on literacy in terms of language use rather than the use of technology. Here, Gilyard believes that how we teach language use in the classroom must align pragmatically to the real ways in which we use language outside the classroom, particularly as it pertains to identity construction. Yancey illustrates how new arenas for writing and composing created by emerging
technologies can and should alter the literacy practices of the composition classroom and what we can do to avoid becoming “anachronistic” as a field (302). Wootten frets over whether our propensity to redefine and refocus ourselves as a field to include different literacies is minimizing the attention we focus and energy we exert on the literacy practices we know best: that of writing and composing. Furthermore, she doubts whether we are actually capable of teaching these visual- and multimodal-oriented literacies well. As a set, these four CCCC Chairs’ Addresses underscore the multiple ways in which literacy plays a prominent role in the rhetoric and composition field. Just as noticeable, these gestures illustrate the complicated and intricate act of not only defining literacy but also articulating the best methods for implementing it in the classroom.

I suspect that questions such as what literacy is as well as what the best practices for developing it are will remain pressing topics that will continue to receive attention as we progress as a field. In other words, I predict this first theme of recurring gestures about literacy will have traction in future CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, and I speak more to this matter in Chapter 7. In the following chapter, however, I will demonstrate the second theme that emerged in re-reading the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses as a set using Joyce Neff’s grounded theory approach: our stake in writing.
CHAPTER 4: OUR STAKE IN WRITING

Our stake in writing, the degree to which writing teachers own writing and have agency in writerly matters at both the academic and legislative levels, is a second theme that emerges in reading across the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses in a meaningful way. Many CCCC Chairs toward the latter half of the last eleven years examine the current state of writing, and with that comes claims as to who has and who should have a stake in how writing is conceived and implemented in the academy as well as how this pertains to the world at large. Therefore, as with the theme of recurring gestures about literacy demonstrated in Chapter 3, this theme too seems inextricably linked to the outside world. In the previous chapter, I illustrate how recent Chairs emphasize (or in Judith Wootten’s case, acknowledge that others inside the field are emphasizing) how literacy is germane to our social interactions and how we should therefore alter the literacy practices we foster in the classroom so that they align with the literacy practices valuable to our students outside the classroom. In this chapter, I demonstrate how those outside the classroom, those in the outside world, have a large stake in how writing is conceived and implemented, and as a result, these gestures call for an increased commitment to the teaching of writing so that our stake in writing may in turn increase. Put another way, while we as writing teachers have a stake in writing, these Chairs argue that we should have the major stake, as we are the ones with expertise. In both cases, with the gestures about literacy and the gestures about our stake in writing, the events in the outside world affect our curricula—how we teach—and the ways we participate in the field as a whole.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate how the recurring gestures about our stake in writing show consistency in two corresponding ways: they (1) draw attention to the state of writing in terms of who has agency in how it is defined and taught and how this in turn affects the writing teacher in an attempt to (2) galvanize the field in ways that will enact change. These Chairs propose that those in the field, those with expertise, should have ownership in writing and have control over the larger policy decisions concerning writing; that is, they should have the prevailing stake in writing.

Drawing Attention to the State of Writing and the Influence of the Writing Teacher
Writing has a storied place within the academy, and not simply in the field of rhetoric and composition. According to the Chairs whose Addresses are in this corpus, writing is a valued entity in that we all realize it is important; it possesses academic as well as social currency. Writing’s significance within the academy seems obvious: in order to justify what students know or have learned, teachers commonly have them elucidate it through writing. In addition, when teachers contribute new knowledge to the field, they commonly do so through writing. Said differently, the ability to communicate effectively acts as a barometer for individual and intellectual worth; in the academy, we traditionally gauge one another according to our ability to convey cogently what we learned and our ability to add to the ongoing discussion—to create new knowledge.

The importance of effective communication is important outside the academy as well. In her 2003 Address, Shirley Wilson Logan notes that “various current national constituencies are ‘discovering’ the importance of writing” (334), and a year after that, Kathleen Blake Yancey suggests that the importance of writing effectively has increased with the emergence of a new “writing public” (298). The following year (2005), Doug Hesse references the 2004 report Writing: A Ticket to Work … or a Ticket Out, which accentuates the importance of writing in the job market by stating that “‘individual opportunity in the United States depends critically on the ability to present one’s thoughts coherently, cogently, and persuasively on paper’” (qtd. in Hesse 343). In all three Addresses, these Chairs underscore the importance of writing outside the classroom; all three note how writing continually manifests itself within our social practices, in the workplace and in our leisurely activities.

What we see here is that the slippery and dynamic nature of writing causes it to reside in a somewhat nebulous space; its significance is not limited strictly to the field of rhetoric and composition. While writing is very important to the field of rhetoric and composition in that it is a primary area of study, writing is also important to the academy as a whole as well as to our everyday activities in the social and private realms. As a result, many people lay claim to writing and attempt to teach it and/or to own it. And when those outside the rhetoric and composition field begin to own writing and thus affect the ways we understand and use writing, those inside the field simultaneously begin to see some of their ownership slipping away. In what follows, I will show how the collective gestures in the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses from Shirley Wilson Logan, Doug Hesse, Akua Duku Anoyke, and Cheryl Glenn illustrate the stake,
or lack thereof, that those who teach writing have in its conceptualization and implementation and how this affects the conditions governing the teaching of writing. These Chairs share the same perception about our field’s absence in larger discussions about writing, but they tackle this absence in differing ways. Logan worries that those outside the field do not know what it is we as a field do, and Hesse echoes this sentiment, suggesting that our field seems to be of minimal significance to others. Meanwhile, Anoyke, Hesse, and Glenn as a set speak to writing teachers’ absence in larger policy decisions concerning the implementation and assessment of writing in the classroom, while Logan, in turn, shows how this ultimately adversely affects the conditions governing the teaching of writing.

In 2003, Logan continually asks the question “Does anybody know we’re here?” (331 original emphasis) At first, she uses this question to juxtapose the size of the CCCC to the size of New York City, the conference’s location that year. But as Logan delves further into her speech, the prospect that nobody outside our field knows we are here—assembling and meeting, talking about writing in salient and powerful ways—becomes rather daunting and painfully realistic. “What,” Logan asks, “are we doing with our rhetorical skills that makes a difference?” (337) In other words, does anyone outside our field actually know what it is we do—what we can do to help the state of writing?

Hesse seems to think no: people do not know what it is we do. Or perhaps they do, but they just do not care what it is we have to say about it. In his Address, Hesse says he is wary about a report that highlights the significance of writing, wary not only because it was published outside the field but also because it does not acknowledge the field even exists. This, he says, induces impassioned claims about territory as well as sighs that the CCCC is consequently snubbed by national press. But worst of all, Hesse emphasizes, is that had the CCCC actually published such a report first, the harsh reality is that it would have fallen on deaf ears: “who pays attention to writing teachers?” (344) The sad fact, according to Hesse, is that people rarely turn to writing teachers for advice on writing. A common perception is that writing teachers have less to say (or at least not much to say) about writing that is fruitful. And for Hesse, it is here where our agency as writing experts begins to slip; it is here where those outside the field begin to provide their input on what writing is and how it should be taught. It is here where writing teachers’ voice loses some of its volume and pitch.
Ultimately, writing teachers losing some of whatever say they had in writing has major ramifications; that is, the idea that writing teachers have nothing important to say about writing eventually results in them not having a say in writing. This is perhaps most obvious and perturbing when it comes to larger policy decisions concerning writing, ones writing teachers are forced to watch and hear about from the sidelines.

Anoyke articulates this state of affairs in her Address. Sharing her findings from interviewing different members of CCCC, she notes the many who lamented writing teachers’ lack of authority and presence in larger matters pertaining to writing. One member said, “Our expertise isn’t put to its most productive use” (270). Another “felt we are not doing enough with our public voice” (270). Yet another provided the following:

This country is not generally led by people whose research and experience make them the experts. No one would make policy about medicine and not talk with the AMA (American Medical Association), but we get all kinds of policy pronouncements about what should be happening in writing without consulting writing experts.¹² (271)

And then there are policies such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and other forms of standardized testing, ones criticized by Hesse, Anoyke, and Glenn, that exemplify the complete lack of agency writing teachers have in the development of national writing standards. With policies such as these, writing—what it is and how well students can do it—is determined by a test, not a teacher. As Hesse says and Glenn reiterates, “[t]eachers may only whisper how well their students read [ … ]; the shout is left to No Child Left Behind. Other tests tell how well their students write” (338). Here, writing teachers are mere cogs, engaging in a pedagogy and praxis that most likely contradicts their own pedagogies and has little theoretical backing.

So when writing teachers have little say in how writing is conceived and implemented in the classroom, they in turn have little say in the conditions governing the teaching of writing. Logan, in particular, speaks to the less than desirable conditions under which writing is taught. In reviewing the four recently revised CCCC mission statements, Logan cites what she perceives as a disconnect between the CCCC Executive Committees’ expectations for the field and what

¹² Although it may be debatable whether the AMA is actually contacted about policy decisions involving medicine, what is pertinent to this discussion is that those with expertise in their field should be consulted, as these decisions and policies will inevitably affect, at least in some fashion however small, the performance of those within that particular field.
the field is actually accomplishing. As noted in Chapter 2, she finds the last two statements—
“(3) working to enhance conditions for learning and teaching college composition and to
promote professional development; and (4) acting as an advocate for language and literacy
education nationally and internationally” (qtd. in Logan 331)—difficult to maintain because the
quality of teaching in most writing classrooms is inadequate. Part of the problem, she admits, is
that TAs and adjuncts shoulder much of this work, yet many of them do not pursue avenues
intended to assist in their professional development, such as CCCC. She cautions, however, that
it would be presumptuous to assume that if we merely replace the adjuncts or TAs with tenured
professors, the quality of education would increase. A more significant problem, she contends, is
“the range of environments in which we are asked to teach writing” (338). With policies such as
NCLB and those of the same ilk restricting writing teachers’ input in how writing is
implemented into the classroom, we, by extension, steadily lose control in how we teach writing.
We have to teach to certain standards; we have to foster environments that belie our pedagogical
practices and theories. According to Logan, our very surroundings, the conditions under which
we are commonly asked to teach, thus further encumber not only how we conceive of writing but
also how we are able to teach it.

While there is an argument to be made about how large of a role writing teachers actually
had in the past in terms of how writing is defined and/or taught, according to these Chairs,
writing teachers’ current stake in writing is insufficient. When it comes to making decisions or
answering questions about writing, writing teachers frequently play the role of the mannequin:
we get (or in some cases, are forced) to watch others speak for us.

In looking at the latter half of the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses of the past eleven years, we
can see a shared concern amongst Logan, Hesse, Anoyke, and Glenn for the writing teachers’
stake in how writing is implemented into the classroom and the conditions governing how
writing is taught. Their gestures, in turn, create an exigence, a call for action. Below, I will
outline how these Chairs’ attempt to tackle the question of how we as teachers of writing and as
a community at CCCC can invoke change.13

13 John Lovas also makes a gesture about our stake in writing when he proposes what he calls “a ‘write to work’ law,
[…] which] recognizes how critical writing is in the workplace, how essential adult literacy is to our cultural,
economic, and political life” (280). This law would create a specific place for writing in the curriculum and ensure
complete financial coverage for those who teach it. Although this gesture speaks more to issues of professional
inequity within our field, which I cover in detail in Chapter 5 when I demonstrate recurring gestures about diversity,
Advocating Change

After articulating the unfortunate state of the teaching of writing, and with that the dearth of agency writing teachers have in how writing is conceived and implemented in the classroom, Doug Hesse, Shirley Wilson Logan, Akua Duku Anoyke, and Cheryl Glenn begin to formulate ways to address (or begin to address) this exigence. The way they advocate change manifests itself in a two-step framework of ownership and policy. Hesse argues that the first step toward changing the state of writing and our stake in writing is to own writing. Two years prior, Logan states that in order to have a greater stake in writing, we must have a presence in matters of policy. Lastly, Anoyke and Glenn together suggest how we can make that presence possible: we come together despite our differences to create a strategic coalition with a unified voice, one so powerful that it can no longer be ignored in all matters concerning writing.

In his 2005 Address “Who Owns Writing?”, Hesse claims that an integral step toward gaining agency in writing is to take the necessary steps to “own writing” (338 original emphasis). He notes that we are a society pushed toward ownership; in addition, he suggests, “the nature of an activity changes according to who organizes it and for what ends” (354). But as stated in Chapter 2, at this moment, he says we do not own writing. In attempting to answer who does, he says there exists multiple possibilities; for example: “everyone, no one, someone, and ‘it depends’” (338). However, rather than delve into this further, he makes a poignant assertion: “those who teach writing must affirm that we, in fact, own it” (338 original emphasis). Intrinsic in owning writing is also owning “the conditions under which writing is taught” (337); it includes owning “the content and pedagogy of composition […, to] declare someone proficient or derelict […, to] assign praise or blame” (337). Still, that leaves us with an important question: how, exactly, do we own writing?

Two years earlier in her 2003 Address “Changing Missions, Shifting Positions, Breaking Silences,” Logan states that we can increase our agency in writerly matters, what for Hesse would involve beginning to own writing, by making a better commitment to the teaching of writing. For her, “our main goal should still be to teach effective writing and communication well” (339). Simply delegating such duties to adjuncts and teaching assistants gives the
impression that we are indifferent toward how writing is taught and the conditions governing the teaching of writing. By re-dedicating ourselves to teaching, Logan believes we can begin to assert more presence in the role of writing within the academy. In addition to that, Logan stresses that the next step should be to ensure that we be present in national writing decisions; that is, that the teachers of writing need to occupy positions of power with all matters concerning writing:

As language arts educators, we ought to be at the center of all policy decisions that affect the teaching and learning of communication skills. Somebody needs to ask us the next time decisions are made about how facility with language will be assessed. Somebody needs to ask us before proclaiming a national crisis in the quality of college student writing. And we need to have ready answers when they do. (334)

But the question thus begs: how do we have “ready [prepared] answers”? According to Anoyke and Glenn, we start by coming together as a field: before we can formulate answers as a field, we need to develop a voice for our field.

In her 2007 Address, Anoyke underscores the importance in valuing the “voices of the company we keep,” both to listen and to attend to the different voices and concerns within our field. She realizes that our diversity still results in many voices being unheard, and this was the impetus in her interviewing different members of CCCC and sharing what she found: to make sure we begin to see and hear “these multiple voices, these diverse interests, [for they] tell us what kind of company we have become and point a direction for us to follow” (272). Anoyke is asserting, then, that we must remain firm in our effort to listen to the many voices of whose company we keep because ultimately it will affect our ability to create a “public voice” (271).

One year later in her 2008 Address “Representing Ourselves,” Glenn presents a means to such a unified public voice, calling for what she terms a “strategic representation” (422). Like Anoyke, Glenn notes how our diversity as a field can at times result in an unstable profession. While Anoyke claims our diversity results in many voices being ignored, Glenn argues that it can lead to divisiveness: the “same diversity that offers us so much opportunity sometimes renders us divided” (423). For example and as stated in Chapter 2, we think of “‘rhetoric and competition’” rather than rhetoric and composition and “‘publish or punish’” instead of “publish or perish” (423). Thus, Glenn urges us not to squander the opportunity our diversity provides us
and come together to represent ourselves strategically—as Anoyke says, to “give us a powerful [public] voice” (271). Although Glenn admits that “[b]uilding coalitions across differences is never easy” (421), she states that we need to remain committed to the task and to come together and construct “strategic, provisional coalitions constructed across acknowledged differences of class, culture, nationality, religion, race, sexual orientation, and, of course, gender” (421). Glenn is thus making the gesture that we “coalesce[e] across differences […] in order] to mobilize an organizational identity that can be used for strategic representation” (422). And in doing so, Glenn says we need to carry forward Anoyke’s gesture to “pull together our troops, raise our voices in unison […] and] demand [that] our voices be heard” (274). Once we constitute such a voice, once we unite in strategic representation, then we, as Glenn says, can “consider what we would use that voice for. We must define our common desires, identify the specific forces that frustrate those desires, and work together to envision what is humanly possible” (427).

One such use, according to these Chairs, is to engage in dialogue with those outside our field in positions of power, and in doing so, we must make sure that our voice is not only heard but also valued. If successful, we can help solve what Anoyke identiﬁes as a main goal amongst the field: the desire for “our social and political institutions to hear the voices of literacy research and pedagogy and enlist our knowledge to create and provide meaningful educational resources” (273–4). Furthermore, if we are able to use our voice to enact change, to have a say and thus a major stake in how writing is conceived and implemented in the classroom, then we can begin to see some changes locally. Put another way, this strategically used public voice can help to address issues such as the conditions governing the teaching of writing, a problem Logan says is encumbering our ability to maintain a standard of teaching that we expect within our field. In “coalesce[ing] professionally,” Glenn suggests we can “influence the local forces who control the conditions under which writing is taught” (427). In other words, in coming together to create a unified voice for strategic representation, we can gain a major stake in writing which in turn can positively affect the local conditions governing the teaching of writing.

However, in attempting to bolster and thus maintain this public voice, this strategic representation, we should seek additional support from those outside our field and engage in dialogue with other visible and viable allies. As Anoyke notes, “respondents suggested ways that we might make our voices heard […] and none was more critical than the need to unite with
other associations, to keep company with other constituencies across regions and disciplines, which together will give us a powerful voice” (271). If we are truly dedicated to creating change, having a say in the teaching of writing and improving the conditions under which we teach writing, then our voices need to be loud and reach the ears of those in power and our knowledge and abilities must be advertised and understood by those in power.

In reading across the gestures made by Logan, Hesse, Anoyke, and Glenn, we can begin to discern the benefits in developing a public voice and uniting strategically. As Anoyke claims, we can assist in “CCCC be[coming] the place where the public turns when ‘they’ ask about writing” (271). Furthermore, creating a public voice will have a positive impact locally and “‘help us on our campuses to talk about writing [in meaningful ways]’” (271). These Chairs argue that by coming together strategically, creating a unified public voice, and forming alliances with others, we can create a potent and sustainable presence that will permit us to engage in dialogue about writing with those in power. Rather than see others leave their thumbprint on writing’s place in the classroom, we can take our newfound agency, our increased and prominent stake in writing, and help to determine what these Chairs believe could be a new state of writing.

As with the first theme of recurring gesture about literacy that emerged in reading across the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, I suspect that this theme of recurring gestures about our stake in writing will also remain a popular topic in future CCCC Chairs’ Addresses. As I note at the end of Chapter 3, I will speak to this matter further in Chapter 7. In the next chapter, however, I will illustrate how gestures about diversity in its numerous conceptions emerges as the third and final theme while re-reading the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses as a set using Joyce Neff’s grounded theory approach.
CHAPTER 5: DIVERSITY AS…

The third and final theme that emerges when we read across the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses using Joyce Neff’s grounded theory approach is recurring gestures about diversity. What, exactly, we mean by diversity, however, requires additional explanation; that is, the term diversity is slippery, and its meaning within these Addresses seems to alter depending on the context in which it is used. Over the last eleven years, Chairs have made gestures about diversity in two recurring ways. The first is that we are not racially diverse as a field, and the diversity we do have in areas of institution, position, and sexual orientation does not mask and, in some cases, can actually exacerbate issues of equity. For example, Victor Villanueva discusses the inequality in the field racially; that is, the number of white members heavily outweighs the number of members of color. For Villanueva, the field is not diverse enough; it does not have the racial equality he believes is important to a successful community. John Lovas and Akua Duku Anoyke, however, claim that the diversity the field does have results in certain places and people being treated inequitably; they claim that there is an inherit bias within the field, that there is inequity between two-year colleges and larger universities, in professional position, and in sexual orientation. In this context, diversity refers to the individual differences amongst people who comprise a community, such as those in race and sexual orientation, as well as the professional differences that comprise a field, such as those in institution and position.

The second way these Chairs make gestures about diversity is in terms of pedagogical and curricular implementation. According to these Chairs, we need to put forth more effort in making the salient issues attached to diversity present in our pedagogies and curricula. Diversity in this context refers to one of three things: (1) discussing issues such as race, gender, and class in the classroom in important ways, (2) understanding how language affects how we negotiate our personal differences in the social realm, or (3) incorporating diverse (different) ways of seeing and understanding into the classroom. In addition, many of the gestures in both of these recurring sets of gestures possess political and/or epistemological undertones; in other words, these Chairs believe diversity plays a prominent role in the way we structure the field and create and understand knowledge as a field.
**Diversity as Inequality and Inequity within the Field**

In this section, I will illustrate how Victor Villanueva makes a gesture about the racial inequality within our field as well as how John Lovas and Akua Duku Anoyke make gestures about the inequity within our field. Furthermore, in both cases, I show how each one provides individual solutions for the respective problem(s) they discuss. In each of these Addresses, therefore, the Chair examines diversity through a somewhat different lens. Villanueva underscores our lack of racial equality, thus painting diversity as a political issue for the field. Lovas highlights two forms of professional inequity within our community: (1) the lack of appreciation of and scholarly attention toward two-year colleges, and (2) the exploitation of composition teachers at two-year colleges and of adjuncts and teaching assistants (TAs) at larger universities. Lovas is thus similar to Villanueva in that he on the one hand characterizes diversity as a political issue but on the other hand also sees diversity as an epistemological issue: in marginalizing the two-year college, we paint an inaccurate image of how we make meaning as a field. Lastly, in relying on other CCCC members’ voices, Anoyke carries forward the gesture made by Lovas, but she also uses these various voices to illustrate the field’s hypocrisy in attending to this and other issues of diversity; in other words, while we say we value diversity and strive for equity, we do so speciously. As a community, we do not always value what we say we value. In reading these three gestures as a set, then, we can see the multiple ways in which diversity can beget both inequality and inequity as well as the ways such inequality and inequity complicates the field and our ability to participate within it.

In his 1999 Address, Villanueva laments the racial inequality within our field: the fact that there is a dearth of colored people teaching in the classroom and publishing in our journals only “reifies the conception that people of color don't do better because they don't try harder” (651). Villanueva then provides perhaps the most obvious evidence of our field’s racial inequality by asking us to look at the CCCC membership, which is “92% white” (651). And although he lauds both the CCCC and NCTE for “treat[ing] its members of color with respect and advanc[ing] our numbers into positions of leadership regularly” as well as the upcoming “membership campaign that should increase the pool of people of color” (652), Villanueva is still unconvinced that these efforts in and of themselves will result in a substantial and consistent increase in new members of color.
Villanueva is thus arguing for diversity through a political lens and claiming that we do not have a diverse enough membership. In other words, it is not so much that we are diverse in race and that white members are sitting atop the hierarchy; rather, we are, plain and simple, a predominantly white field. Thus, he is seeking to increase the number and power of people of color within the field. And if we are truly earnest about recruiting and expanding the number of people of color within our field, he says we need “to write about what matters to those students of color” (652). Here, rather than simply making motions that acknowledge and speak to the value of people of color within our field, we would be appealing directly to the interests of people of color. Therefore, people of color would not be just welcomed members of the community but rather ones vital to its existence.

Three years later in his 2002 Address, Lovas credits recent efforts to improve our racial equality such as Scholars for the Dream and CCC works by Bill Cook and Villanueva, but what he really wants is to draw our attention to two distinct issues of professional inequity that he believes go unnoticed. Lovas, then, is not arguing that we need to increase our field’s diversity and, in Villanueva’s case, the number of our members who are people of color; rather, Lovas is claiming that within our field’s current diverse make-up, particular places and members of our field are treated unfairly. As a quick reference, let us turn to Cheryl Glenn, who in her 2008 Address notes how our current diversity can create imbalance. She begins by stating that we can observe our diversity by looking at the CCCC:

> We are American citizens and international scholars of every race, cultural-ethnic background, sociopolitical bent, religion, institution, commitment, and combination thereof. [...] The diversity of who we are, what we think, how we act, and where we teach makes for a dynamic organization. (422-3)

However, as Glenn sadly goes on to admit, we do not always embrace or appreciate this diversity; in fact, it can often lead to divisiveness: “that same diversity that offers us so much opportunity sometimes renders us divided” (423). Thus, an important clarification seems necessary: diversity does not entail equity; in fact, it can actually contribute to inequity. In order to flesh out this idea further, let us return to Lovas and his two glaring instances of professional inequity that he articulates in his Address.

The first instance of inequity Lovas discusses is “the blind spot regarding knowledge building in and about community colleges” (273). He says our primary focus within the field is
the larger university, while the two-year college resides forlornly in its shadow. He is unsure why this is exactly, but he believes some of it may be due in part, as Jerome Karabel and Steven Zwerling explained in the 60’s and 70’s, that “the two-year college was the device of a corporate system intended to dampen the aspirations of minority and poor students” (274). And although he quickly notes that the study is outdated, he believes that many nonetheless buy into the idea that universities “‘select the best and forget the rest’” (275). However, he argues that the best students do not always go to larger universities and tells two stories, two of many, where students have gone on to have great success, success “aided, not impeded, […] by work at a two-year college” (275).

The two-year college’s marginalization is more disconcerting to Lovas because he firmly believes that, as mentioned in Chapter 2, “most basic writing students and basic writing courses are found in two-year colleges” (275). Even so, the two-year college and its students remain absent not only in CCC’s articles about first year composition but also in our field’s storied history: “[w]hen Donna Burn Phillips, Ruth Greenberg, and Sharon Gibson chronicled the history of CCC from 1950-93, no mention of two-year colleges or their writing programs occurs in the article” (275-6). All of this, Lovas believes, is both insulting to those within the two-year college and damaging to the field as a whole: “you cannot represent a field if you ignore half of it” (276). Contributing to this inequity, he says, is the political nature of the field; that is, associate professors need to publish in order to receive tenure, while two-year college professors do not. Lovas, therefore, is also making an epistemological argument, as what these professors go on to publish often highlights the ways we make meaning in the field strictly through the lens of the larger universities. As he states, those professors who publish do not focus on the two-year college: “university researchers rarely study [these] programs and [their] students, and […] two-year college departments rarely publish program and institutional-based studies of [their] programs and [their] students” (276). In other words, those who make meaning by contributing to our field through published work, conferences, and the like are often apart of larger universities rather than two-year colleges, and in making meaning, these members of larger universities often ignore half the field. According to Lovas, our diversity as a field in this context creates inequity: the work within the two-year college is perceived as beneath that of larger universities, and the ways in which we make meaning only seem to stem from and pertain to larger universities.
The second form of inequity Lovas discusses is in position; in other words, the lack of effort in addressing the exploitation of composition teachers at two-year colleges and of adjuncts and teaching assistants (TAs) at larger universities. As he says, “[t]he overuse and misuse of part-time, adjunct, temporary faculty, and teaching assistants in composition programs represent a significant failure in equity” (280). One way we can observe this abuse is financially: at large universities, this includes underpaying graduate students (i.e., teaching assistants), while at two-year colleges, this includes underpaying teachers, some of whom are adjuncts. He states that the common excuse is “that we don't understand well enough the various ways in which the exploitation occurs” (276), given that the management and logistics of first year writing (and composition) programs and programs in rhetoric and composition vary per institution. Nonetheless, at both the two-year college and the larger university, “[w]e do not demand that our states and our institutions bear the true cost of instruction, even at the paltry level that full-time professionals are compensated” (278-9). Instead, it seems as though we are content with the system, with educating large masses of students—and perhaps not at a level to which we are truly capable. Worse, it seems, is that, according to Lovas, we do not have enough positions available for those teaching assistants who eventually graduate and hit the job market; rather, when these students, these teaching assistants, earn their degrees, we simply fill their position by dumping in the next batch of graduate students or adjuncts willing to teach composition for a meager paycheck or stipend. While the exploitation of non-tenure track writing instructors is not new—in fact, it has been inherent in the field for decades—Lovas is still compelled to readdress the issue because he feels we too easily accept it as commonplace: “[w]e have made little headway in public awareness and political effectiveness in addressing the overuse and misuse of part-time, adjunct faculty” (278). 14 In an effort to curtail our field’s inequity in position, Lovas proposes “a ‘write to work’ law, one that recognizes how critical writing is in the workplace, how essential adult literacy is to our cultural, economic, and political life” (280). Here, we

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14 This specific gesture seems to align in some sense with the two previously discussed themes in terms of making some larger connection to the world at large. In Chapter 3, I illustrate how Chairs make gestures about literacy that involve them looking outward (and in Selfe’s and Yancey’s case, to technology’s role in the outside world) in order to reassess and/or re-envision the literacy practices we value and implement within the classroom. In Chapter 4, I demonstrate how Chairs make gestures about our stake in writing and how larger policy decisions outside the classroom are negatively affecting the way we teach composition and/or writing within the classroom. With Lovas’ gesture, he suggests that our lack of public awareness of the exploitation of certain writing teachers may be a reason for the prolonged inequity he perceives in position.
would obtain a greater sense of equity by culling out a specific place for writing in the curriculum and ensuring complete financial coverage for those who teach it.

In her 2007 Address, Anoyke also calls attention to the financial inequity within our field, but rather than speak to it by herself, she incorporates various voices of members within the CCCC. As explained earlier in Chapter 2, in preparing for her Chair Address, Anoyke decided to become more familiar with its company (i.e., various members who constitute the CCCC) by asking them four distinct questions:

- When was your first CCCC Conference? What do you remember about it?
- What kept you coming back?
- What would you like to see CCCC do in the future?
- What do you say or would you say to encourage others to become members?

(267)

The third of these questions elicited some rather “critical and heart-felt responses” (270). Many interviewees made claims similar to Lovas’; for example, that our “response to the plight of contingent and part-time workers” has been “inadequate” (270). Or: “‘[w]e say part-time work is so hard because of their teaching five courses a term and, when it comes to supporting us or doing something, they’re not there’” (270). Even at CCCC, a place where we come together as a field and attempt to address such issues, the inequity is noticeable; as Anoyke asserts, “we hold meetings [and conferences] in posh hotels, putting ourselves in the position of catering to fulltime faculty when those who don’t have well-paying jobs are being exploited” (270). Lovas is thus not alone in his gesture; as Anoyke documents, others too believe our field is inequitable in ways that take advantage of those writing instructors not in tenure-track positions.

However, Anoyke goes on to illustrate that our field has other problems associated with diversity. As one of her interviewees vehemently states:

‘I’m tired of hearing about students’ right to their own voice or that we appreciate diversity. We talk about race, homophobia, but we don’t acknowledge our institutional racism. We don’t acknowledge the way we institutionalize homophobia within this institution. […] They don’t understand. I’m tired of this patronizing attitude, treating democracy and diversity in name only.’ (270)
Here, the criticism is that we address issues of race simply in name, such as making multiculturalism a buzzword in our field. However, this criticism goes beyond race, including complaints of institutionalized homophobia. Rather than actually attempt to solve such issues, we seem to feel that mere recognition of them is enough. For the CCCC member quoted above, this is condescending: recognizing a problem but not attending to it properly is an affront to our community and those affected by such inequity. In highlighting these members’ fervent responses, Anoyke admits that she might pose more problems than she has answers to, but her overarching piece of advice is to listen closely to the voices of the company we keep. Just as important, she contends, is valuing such voices and making a concerted effort to address the legitimate and recurring issues of inequity within the field.

In looking at these three gestures as a set, we can see that the inequality and inequity associated with our field’s diversity poses significant problems and in many ways. Villanueva examines diversity with a political slant, showing us how our field lacks racial equality; that is, we are a predominantly white field, with white members controlling the head of the classroom as well as publishing and participating in avenues most important to our sustainability and expansion. Lovas notes two issues of inequity with which he has personal experience: (1) the way in which we seem to disenfranchise two-year colleges, and (2) the exploitation of composition teachers at two-year colleges and of adjuncts and teaching assistants (TAs) at larger universities. And with the former, Lovas is making both a political and epistemological argument: political in the sense that, similar to Villanueva’s, there are problems in how the field is represented and presented, and epistemological in the sense that the tenure system is structured in a way that excludes two-year colleges from how the field makes meaning. Finally, Anoyke highlights multiple inequities associated with diversity: in incorporating other CCCC members’ voices, she underscores Lovas’ gesture about inequity in profession and highlights how homosexuals are treated unfairly in the field.

As a set, these three gestures illustrate how diversity in its different conceptions affects the field. For instance, Villanueva thinks we need more diversity racially, while Lovas and Anoyke note how our current diverse make-up can actually exacerbate inequity in institution, position, and sexual orientation. As a field, we obviously value diversity; we speak to its

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15 As noted in Chapter 2, Villanueva makes a similar gesture: he perceives multiculturalism to be merely a stopgap and not even really an effective one. As he states, “[m]ulticulturalism hasn’t improved things much, not even at the sites where students are exposed to such things” (650).
importance frequently. As Villanueva and Lovas mention, there are commendable efforts within CCCC that highlight the work of those who are often marginalized, whether it be in race, ethnicity, gender, or position. As such, the main problem seems to be the lack of effective action. In other words, these Chairs’ gestures go beyond simply acknowledging how our field lacks diversity racially or how our current diversity in institution, position, and/or sexual orientation often resides in inequity: as these Chairs note, these problems are not necessarily new; others have made similar claims. Thus, these Chairs are similar in that they each propose a call to action. In all three Addresses, these Chairs discuss diversity by highlighting a divide, one in race, institution, position, and sexual orientation. And they want to see that divide diminish. They want change.

Diversity as Pedagogical and Curricular Implementation

A second way that recurring gestures about diversity emerges as a theme is through the lens of pedagogical and curricular implementation; that is, many Chairs—through both robust, fleshed-out arguments as well as quick statements—have made gestures that call for increased attention in the classroom toward diversity and the issues associated with it. In most cases, however, each Chair approaches diversity and the corresponding issues in a different manner, though there are definite instances of overlap, especially as it concerns issues of race. Cynthia Selfe speaks to how issues of access tied to technology can exacerbate preexisting divides in race and class. For her, we need to talk about the potential perils of technology in the classroom, so students become aware of social inequities and the ways in which we may unwittingly perpetuate them. Here, diversity is important in terms of differences in race and class and what we, as educators, can do to reduce already harmful inequities. Victor Villanueva also hopes to make diversity a more prevalent topic in the classroom, but he is focusing specifically on issues of race and making it a priority in the classroom once again. Keith Gilyard’s vision of diversity is grounded in a new pedagogical model that is receptive to new cultures, epistemologies, and ways of seeing. In addition, Gilyard proposes an increase in attention toward language and the ways in which we use it to handle our individual differences in the social realm. To a lesser extent, both Shirley Wilson Logan and Judith Wootten speak about diversity in the classroom as a term we do not fully explicate; that is, we use it as a means to gloss over the true implications and
consequences of our multiple differences. Nonetheless, in each gesture, the attention toward diversity and its importance is tied directly to the classroom.

In her 1998 Address about paying attention to the perils of technology, Selfe illustrates how the Clinton-Gore administration’s 1996 document *Getting America’s Children Ready for the Twenty-First Century* purportedly attempts to solve our nation’s literacy crisis. However, as explained in Chapter 2 and 3, what this literacy project actually does, Selfe argues, is change what it means to be literate. In other words, rather than examine the problems associated with literacy acquisition and make an earnest effort to address such problems, this project merely redefines literacy. Startling to Selfe is that our field has yet to tackle how this new technological literacy affects the way we foster literacy in the classroom. Our field seems to be in a standstill, and our silence on the matter is quite indicative of that:

- not one statement about how we think such literacy monies should be spent in English composition programs;
- not one statement about what kinds of literacy and technology efforts should be funded in connection with this project or how excellence should be gauged in these efforts;
- not one statement about the serious need for professional development and support for teachers that must be addressed within the context of this particular national literacy project.

The other, less appealing option is that we too are oblivious to the ways in which implementing a new technological literacy into the classroom affect our pedagogical practices; that, or we hope our colleagues who teach with computers will address this issue. As Selfe admits, in the composition world we conveniently split ourselves into two camps: those who use technology and those who do not. “Computer-using teachers instruct students in how to use technology—but, all too often, they neglect to teach students how to pay critical attention to the issues generated by technology use” (429 original emphasis). Those who do not use computers feel they are absolved by the latter. Thus, “both groups contribute to the very same end” (429). As such, technology becomes invisible to us, and “we participate unwittingly in the inequitable literacy system” (340).

Selfe’s advice, thus, is not only for us, as teachers, to pay attention to the issues of technological literacy; rather, we need to bring these issues—specifically, the issues of class and race linked with technological literacy and access—into the classroom. When we speak about diversity, we need to grapple with salient, identifiable issues, ones that impact us both in and
outside of the classroom. For Selfe, focusing on issues of diversity such as class and race in terms of technological literacy does that. If we see diversity as a valued characteristic—whether it be in our classroom, our various communities, or our nation as a whole—then we need to be cognizant of how new technologies may affect how we understand diversity as well as problematize preexisting inequities. Selfe urges us, in our many roles and capacities as educators, to bring these issues attached to diversity and technology to the forefront, for they have political and epistemological consequences. We need to be privy to both sides of the coin, how technology enhances but also detracts from the ways we are able to interact with the world at large.

Villanueva, like Selfe, wants to focus on pertinent issues attached to diversity within the classroom. In addition, he is also concerned with issues of race. In his 1999 Address, Villanueva focuses primarily on race and the ways racism seems enrenched in our academic practices. He perceives multiculturalism to be insufficient in its current rendition, and in grappling with this issue, he says the following:

Now as I try to think of how this profession can improve on its multiculturalism, do more than assuring that people of color are represented in our materials, more than assuring that people of color are read and heard in numbers more in keeping with the emerging demographics of the nation and the world, I remain tied to the belief that we must break from the colonial discourse that binds us all. (656)

Here, Villanueva claims that our discourse and the historical voices we frequently revere are saturated in colonialism. And by continually using such discourse and discussing and reading such voices, we begin to inherit such ideas and attitudes. As he says, “[a]mong all that is worthwhile in the intellectual discourse we inherit from the colonizers of the United States, there is also a developmental and racist discourse” (656). “[W]e are steeped in racism. And we are steeped in a colonial discourse” (658), he says. Pushing forward, Villanueva looks for ways to create the necessary cracks that can lead to such a break from colonial discourse, for ways to “break precedent” (659). His idea: start in the classroom.16 For this is where many are introduced and thereafter inculcated with such discourse.

16 In comparing this gesture with the one discussed above in “Diversity as Inequality and Inequity within the Field,” we can see Villanueva start with a political argument and move toward an epistemological one: though he begins by accentuating the lack of racial diversity and, as a result, equality within the field, his overarching goal is to invoke change in the way we understand and make meaning in the classroom. He stresses that we do not always need to
The first and perhaps most attainable goal Villanueva sets is for us to expand the corpus of texts we include in the curriculum. For the most part, we have a predefined set of texts, none of which seems very diverse in nature. “We don’t look to the South. […] We tend to get our Great Thinkers from Europe, and too often only after our literary brothers and sisters, themselves too many and too often still quite literally an English colony, have discovered them” (658). Villanueva notes, however, that there is value in these texts; that is, he is not trying to disparage their merit or place in the classroom: “[w]e shouldn't ignore the concepts that come of the ex-colonies of Europe, nor should we ignore European attempts to think its ways through bigotries of all sorts, since the problems of racism and hatred are Europe's also” (659). What he is thus advocating is that we “break from the colonial mindset and learn from the thinkers from our own hemisphere as well” (659); in other words, that we include other texts, that we read from theorists and thinkers outside of the European vein. What do intellectuals from Latin America bring to the table? How do they complicate or enhance such other readings? In essence, Villanueva is asking for inclusion, for diversity. According to him, we need a place in our curriculum for different, edifying voices.

Like Selfe and Villanueva, Gilyard speaks about issues attached to diversity, but rather than hone in on specific issues, such as class and/or race, Gilyard looks at inequities in general through the lens of language. In his 2000 Address, Gilyard stresses that language is vital to not only how we navigate our way through and place within the social realm but also how others can assist and/or inhibit such navigation. In short, language is immensely powerful, but unfortunately, many of our students are unaware just how influential language is to their very position in society. As noted in Chapter 2 and 3, Gilyard proposes a new pedagogical model, one influenced heavily by Romy Clark and Roz Ivanic’s concept of Critical Language Awareness (266 original emphasis). The intent is for students to become privy to the potent nature of language, and if necessary, they can begin to resist or defy the dominant discourses that impede them or lead to oppression. As I explain in Chapter 3, Gilyard illustrates this point with two simple examples: (1) the frequency with which we use the male form for non-gendered pronouns, and (2) the negative connotations attached to the word “black.” In both cases, we can see just how easily language can perpetuate inequities in both gender and race.
In terms of diversity, Gilyard thus wants to foster a pedagogy that emphasizes the ways in which language influence how we wrestle with the many differences amongst us, differences engendered through our diversity as a society. He wants a pedagogy that demonstrates how language can oppress those who are different from the norm, whether it is in class, gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. However, Gilyard’s new pedagogical model also incorporates diversity in an epistemological sense, in terms of the way students understand and make meaning. In trying to follow the advice of Martin Luther King Jr., Gilyard argues that “we need pedagogies to foster the development of the critical and astute citizenry” (262). In attempting to reach such a goal, he suggests we look to maximize “various epistemologies,” search for “transcultural understanding,” and create multiple spaces for “imaginative wanders […] and] scholarly recreation” (262); in other words, to be receptive to new ideas, ideologies, and cultures, to create spaces for the diverse ways in which we create knowledge and make meaning. Gilyard therefore sees diversity as integral to his pedagogical model in two ways: (1) to highlight the ways in which language impacts how we handle our various differences within the social realm, and (2) to justify the need to transform the classroom into a space that encourages diverse ways in which we can both understand and make meaning.

Although not to the same degree, both Logan and Wootten also make gestures in their respective Addresses about the importance of diversity within the classroom. For them, we do not devote enough attention to all that is encompassed in the idea of diversity; that is, similar to the claim Villanueva makes in his 1999 Address, they contend that we gloss over the important consequences created through diversity and instead speak to such issues simply in name, through words and expressions such as “multiculturalism” or “color blind.” In her 2003 Address, Logan notes the slippery nature of the term diversity and the pernicious consequences this may have: “[a]ll too often when [speaking about] ‘diversity,’ we allow the lazy force of generalization to erase those differences so that all concerned are further disempowered” (334). For Logan, if we simply resort to a term that acknowledges our differences instead of actually speaking about such differences, our differences are essentially deemed invisible. They are just there. For instance, in analyzing acts such as Affirmative Action, she claims that we simply infuse some form of “diversity,” some sort of difference, within the workplace rather than actually work to correct (let alone discuss) the reasons for such an act: “past discrimination and denial of rights, particularly of African Americans” (334). More importantly, Logan wonders how we tackle diversity in the
classroom—in particular, students’ rights to their own language. How do we prepare for and cope with the diversity in languages students bring with them? And although her subsequent exploration of this question leads her into areas about policy decisions and the conditions governing the teaching of writing (both of which have been discussed in Chapter 4), this brief gesture in her Address illustrates yet another way in which diversity in terms of our personal differences affects the composition classroom.

Wootten, in her 2006 Address, speaks directly to Villanueva’s point, one he reiterated in an Address at the 2005 NCTE Convention: “we blind ourselves to racism when we bury the concept in tropes and euphemisms” (239). In other words, when we use terms like multiculturalism—and even terms like diversity—we do not really attempt to explicate what these terms entail. Instead, we simply use the terms, and in doing so, we think we solve the problems they speak to, as if the word is a panacea. As Wootten says: “when we talk about ‘cultures’ and ‘multiculturalism,’ we think racism no longer exists; and when we use language like ‘color blind,’ we are, of course, saying color matters” (239). What Wootten thus suggests is that we become aware of the baggage these terms carry. More important, perhaps, is attempting to unpack this baggage in the classroom. When we decide what it is we are teaching, what it is we include in the classroom, we need to be aware of the vocabulary we instill. What does using the term multiculturalism actually mean? Diversity? Furthermore, what about other similar terms, other “tropes and euphemisms?”

As a set, these five gestures speak to the intricate and complicated presence of diversity within the classroom. On one hand, we can make diversity part of the classroom by talking about the salient issues attached, such as class and/or race. For Selfe, this includes looking at how new technological literacy can increase the already detrimental divide in class and race; for Villanueva, this includes making racism a key talking point within the classroom and attempting to deviate from the colonial discourse that seems to resonate within many of our venerable texts. However, we can also go beyond class and/or race. For Gilyard, this includes being aware of how language affects the very way we negotiate our various differences within the social realm.

On the other hand, another way to incorporate diversity is in pedagogical methods and ways of seeing and understanding. Gilyard’s new pedagogical model, for example, is open to multiple and diverse ways of reading across and interpreting materials. He wants to cultivate different approaches to understanding various texts, and he wants to provide unique spaces for making
meaning of those texts and others. Lastly, both Logan and Wootten caution us not to implement diversity in name only; if we talk about diversity, we should do so productively and earnestly in the ways Sefle, Villanueva, and Gilyard articulate. Repeatedly using buzzwords such as multiculturalism, color blind, or diversity is unsatisfactory; if we use such terms, we need to analyze critically their various components.

Similar to the two themes of recurring gestures about literacy and our stake in writing demonstrated in Chapter 3 and 4, these gestures about diversity also involve Chairs turning to the outside world first: these Chairs look outward in order to understand how diversity and its corresponding issues influence the world at large and then appropriate this as content matter within the classroom. According to these Chairs, we need to talk about the complex, even volatile, issues inextricably linked to diversity, such as inequities in race, class, gender, ethnicity, and so on. In addition, we need to understand the extent to which literacy, discourse, and language can maintain—or worse, exacerbate—such issues and inequities both in and outside the classroom.

In reading over the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses while utilizing Joyce Neff’s grounded theory approach, we can see the emergence of three new themes: recurring gestures about (1) literacy, (2) our stake in writing, and (3) diversity. These three themes are different from the two themes Ellen Barton demonstrates in her 1997 study of the first twenty CCCC Chairs’ Addresses: (1) recurring gestures about (i) “teaching” and (ii) “service” and (2) recurring gestures about (i) what research paradigm the field should adopt and employ and (ii) where the field should be housed within the academy (235). In the next chapter, however, I will look to see if any of Barton’s two themes are carried on, both in part or in whole, in any of the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses. In other words, now that I have examined these Addresses using Joyce Neff’s grounded theory approach as lens and demonstrated the three themes that emerged, I will re-examine these Addresses once again, this time using the lens Barton provides, looking for ways in which any of the past eleven CCCC Chairs make gestures similar to one or more of the four recurring sets of gestures Barton documents.
In her 1997 study, Ellen Barton critically examines the twenty extant CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, starting with Richard Lloyd-Jones’ inaugural talk in 1977 and concluding with Nell Ann Pickett’s in 1997. My study, which extends Barton’s, has thus far identified and then demonstrated three themes different from the two Barton documents. Engaging in a critical discourse analysis and a grounded theory approach similar to the one Joyce Neff details in “Grounded Theory: A Critical Research Methodology”—which seeks to examine texts with an open, objective eye, letting categories emerge and define themselves—I have detailed within the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses recurring gestures about (1) literacy, (2) our stake in writing, and (3) diversity. However, I have yet to speak to how, if at all, any of these Addresses carry forward the two themes Barton demonstrates. Thus, in what follows, I will briefly summarize Barton’s two themes, both of which she divides into two corresponding parts: (1) consistency in gestures about (i) “teaching” and (ii) “service,” and (2) contention in gestures about (i) research paradigms and (ii) where the field should be housed within the academy (235). Then, I will also illustrate, once again through discourse analysis, if and the degree to which any of these four recurring gestures manifest themselves within any of the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses.

What I ultimately determine is that some Chairs over the past eleven years do indeed make gestures similar to the recurring four Barton identifies; however, to say that these gestures are identical or readdress the topic at hand in the same fashion would be misleading, as the contexts from which these new gestures emerge are quite different due to continual changes in technology. For instance, while the second part of Barton’s first theme, that the gestures about service are fairly consistent, appears applicable to many Addresses over the last eleven years, the current technological shift and the development of new literacy practices have influenced the way these Chairs define how best to approach and then enact such service. Furthermore, aside from Wendy Bishop’s larger gesture about where the field should be housed, none of the
gestures seems to be part of the Chair’s larger objective. Rather, they appear as subsidiary gestures and/or nested acknowledgements—building blocks to a larger gesture.  

**Barton’s First Theme: Consensus in Gestures about Teaching and Service**

In her 1997 text “Evocative Gestures in CCCC Chairs’ Address,” Ellen Barton identifies two themes within the first twenty CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, the first of which is accordant gestures about both teaching and service. As it concerns teaching, Barton states that Richard Lloyd-Jones, who gave the first Chair Address in 1977, describes the teaching of composition as an important yet intricate and complex act, a sentiment she says is echoed, in some fashion, in every Address that follows. She then turns toward three particular Addresses that act as “landmark[s]” (237) to this perspective on teaching: Lynn Troyka’s (1981), where she argues for increased awareness of and classroom accommodation/curriculum alteration for nontraditional writers and basic writers; Miriam Chaplin’s (1987), where she takes up Troyka’s position; and Jane Peterson’s (1990), where she advocates that we teach more, cautioning against the hierarchy of research over teaching (237-8).

Over the past eleven years, we can see this line of thinking permeate many of the Addresses, though not to the same degree or in the sustained ways as outlined by Barton. Many Chairs make a gesture about the importance and/or complexity of teaching composition, but they do so rather briefly and through different lenses. We see tacit gestures about the importance and complexity of teaching composition (e.g., Selfe); gestures that recognize the complexity of teaching but in ways that steer the conversation in the direction of a different, larger gesture concerning multiculturalism (e.g., Villanueva) or our stake in writing (e.g., Logan and Hesse);

17 As a reminder, “themes” is my word, not hers. Barton refers to what I call “themes” as “evocative gestures,” but since she also refers to an individual Chair making a single gesture, I use the word theme as a stand in for “evocative gestures”: a cluster of gestures that speak to a recurring topic. In addition, she tends to focus on what she terms “landmark articulations”: a Chair’s (or Chairs’) gesture that seems to epitomize a particular part of a particular theme. However, she also references specific Chairs whose articulations (gestures) are not landmark articulations but nonetheless stand as significant markers in the continuation of particular part of a particular theme. Although I note Barton’s use of the term “landmark articulation,” I avoid the term in my analysis of the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses; instead, I use the term gesture as a stand in for any signifying claim with an affective component, what Barton would term “the articulation of [a] broad [concern] in the field” (236). Furthermore, I explicitly note when a gesture is not as developed as those by other Chairs are. In Barton’s case, she does not provide much attention to what I would call smaller gestures and instead simply alludes to their existence. Lastly, it is worth noting that the scope is quite different for each of our projects, which therefore allows us to accomplish different tasks. For instance, Barton’s analysis, both thorough and informative, is nonetheless part of a book chapter, whereas my study has a larger scope.
or, in Akua Duku Anoyke’s case, a gesture that simply acknowledges that the discussion about teaching composition—in specific, whether we should put it ahead of personal research—has a storied place in our history.

Talking about the importance of technological literacy in 1998, Cynthia Selfe turns to the classroom, noting that while some of us may teach technology, we rarely discuss the consequences of using such technology. Though she does not explicitly state that teaching composition is an intricate act, she obviously believes teaching is important, and she does place a fair amount of the burden on teachers to make sure their students understand technological literacy and the consequences it has for us both in and outside of the classroom. One year later, Victor Villanueva too speaks to the complexity of teaching when detailing our dependency on terms and concepts like multiculturalism. As he says, “[a]s academics and teachers we become accustomed to juggling dozens of constraints at a time. […] And it is] something of the too-much-to-juggle mindset, I would say, that gives rise to multiculturalism” (648). Here, Villanueva seems to echo Lloyd-Jones’ claim that teaching composition is a “complex activity” (Barton 236); however, Villanueva’s main point is more about the ineffectiveness of multiculturalism than that the act of teaching composition itself coupled with the multiple obligations and duties we have makes for, at times, a difficult profession. Thus, his gesture is nested in a larger gesture about diversity, a theme I identify that appears different from the two Barton demonstrates.

In 2003, Shirley Wilson Logan not only speaks to the importance of teaching but also advocates that we rededicate ourselves to the craft in a manner that still respects students’ right to their home and/or own language. However, the more pressing concern for Logan is the environments in which we are asked to teach. In other words, simply rededicating ourselves to teaching will not solve the problem: “[t]he cause-effect relationship here is that conditions (the cause) consequently affect the quality of instruction” (338). Two years later, in 2005, Doug Hesse also speaks to the importance and complexity of teaching writing, but he does so through the lens of ownership. Like Logan, he acknowledges how our surrounding conditions greatly influence our ability to teach effectively. In asking about who owns writing, Hesse says he is also “asking who owns the conditions under which writing is taught” (337). For Hesse, this involves questions of ownership in terms of content, pedagogy, and assessment. So while both Logan and Hesse do speak about the significance of and intricacies in the teaching of composition, they do so in ways that pertain more to our overall stake in writing, the second
recurring gesture (theme) I demonstrate, rather than to the gesture about teaching per se that Barton identifies; that is, Logan’s and Hesse’s gestures are smaller components of a larger argument and gesture, one that does not seem present in Barton’s work.

And then we have Anoyke, who in her 2007 Address brings up the gesture Peterson articulates: we should place our teaching ahead of our personal research.

By the 1970s and 1980s, however, an ever-widening set of issues grew, with more professionals focusing on rhetorical theory. This new emphasis created a shift in the organization that is even today being debated. *Is it theory and research that is the driving force [in the field] rather than pedagogy and classroom practices?* (266 emphasis added)

But even here, Anoyke’s nod to Peterson’s gesture is predicated more on recounting some of the field’s important topics in the past rather than readdressing the topic herself. Anoyke states that this topic is still on the table, that it is “debated […] even today,” but she personally does not pick up the topic in her Address. She is merely acknowledging the debate and, by extension, the first theme Barton identifies: that teaching composition is a complex act.

Reading across the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses over the past eleven years, we do not see many Chairs readdress the teacherly-side of Barton’s first theme in the same way or to the same degree as the “landmark articulations” and other notable gestures from those Chairs in the first twenty years. Rather, the notion that teaching composition is a complex activity appears to be a given, an unsaid truth, for the Chairs over the last eleven years. However, in turning toward the second part of Barton’s first theme, a consensus in gestures about service, we see a sort of evolution. While the basic premise inherent in the gesture is carried forward, the way the Chairs approach it is different—different precisely because of worldly changes in technology.

Demonstrating the recurring gestures about service, Barton defines service as a “commitment to the teaching of composition [that is] vitally connected not only to students and the university, *but also to citizens and to society at large*” (238 added emphasis); that is, according to Barton, many Chairs make gestures about the importance of writing for students in terms of how they participate in the academy *as well as how they participate in the outside world*. Speaking to the latter, Barton refers to Lillian Bridwell-Bowles’ 1994 Address, where she stresses the social importance of composition to the community: we provide a “service to society” (239) by improving literacy and helping to produce more effective communicators.
However, what stands out most to Barton, “the landmark articulation of this shared sense of cultural service” (239), is Lester Faigley’s 1996 Address, where he urges the field to increase their efforts in the classroom in order to have students not only understand the inherent power in literacy but also realize the ways they can utilize said literacy to “participate in democratic community life, to engage civic issues, and to promote social justice” (qtd. in Barton 239).

But in looking for specific ways in which this gesture about service appears within CCCC Chairs’ Addresses over the last eleven years, we see a distinct change in the contexts that these gestures emerge from due to new technology. While Chairs’ idea of service remains consistent—that in teaching students rhetoric and composition and in fostering literacy within the classroom, we help students become valuable and productive members of society—the ways in which we now understand literacy and our methods of cultivating it in the classroom have altered. Traditionally, the assumption has been that we start from within and work outward: that what we do in the composition classroom prepares students to be productive members of the outside world. In other words, what students gained in the composition classroom was transferable to the world at large. And while this thinking still remains in the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses over the last eleven years, these Chairs are different in that they now make a more concerted effort to connect our classroom practices to the outside world. There is a noticeable switch in priority and point of origin: now more concerned with literacy practices, they start outside first and work deductively. Instead of trying to define what it is we as a field do from the inside, they are now occupied with how the outside world and the literacies it values affect how we teach composition. Just as important, the continuing factor in this change seems to be the emergence of new technology.

For example, in urging the field to pay attention to the perils of technology in her 1998 Address, Selfe starts outside the academy. She begins with the Clinton-Gore administration’s Getting America’s Children Ready for the Twenty-First Century document, which “announced an official national project to expand technological literacy” (416 original emphasis). As noted in Chapter 2, what Selfe subsequently underscores, however, is that this project was the result of the Clinton-Gore administration’s efforts to expand capitalism and democracy on a global scale. Important to Selfe is that the implementation of this project resulted in drastic changes to our education system. The idea was that this new technological literacy would create an even playing field and provide more opportunities for post-graduation success. However, as Selfe
says, there is no evidence to suggest that “the current project to expand technological literacy will change the patterns of literacy and illiteracy in this country” (335). As explained in Chapters 2 and 3, the Clinton-Gore literacy project simply redefines what it means to be literate; the old and already established ideas of literacy acquisition as well as the problems they create remain the same. What is important to stress here, however, is that the events outside the classroom, ones inextricably tied to technology, directly influenced how we taught composition and literacy inside the classroom.

Kathleen Blake Yancey and Judith Wootten also make gestures about how new technologies and the ways we use them in the outside world alter (or in Yancey’s case, should alter) the very ways we teach composition and literacy. For Yancey, the emergence of new technology, which in turn created a new writing public, one that parallels the reading public in the 19th century, signals a shift in composition. This new writing public, one occurring outside the academy, is composing in various ways. They are occupying different rhetorical situations, composing with different modes (often times, using multiple modes collaboratively), publishing in various media, composing for specific audiences, and honing sophisticated rhetorical strategies—often times, unwittingly. Said another way: they are engaging in literacy practices. All of this, she argues, indicates that “[l]iteracy today is in the midst of a tectonic change” (298), and by not adapting our pedagogical practices in significant ways, she wonders if we, in the short span of a decade, have become “anachronistic” (302). In failing to adjust our curricula and classroom praxis to reflect the real-life literacy practices our students engage in daily, Yancey feels we are doing a disservice to our students. The concept of transfer—though difficult, perhaps, to demonstrate quantitatively—is no longer applicable if our pedagogy is of little relevance to our students outside the academy. Yancey then, like Selfe, is making the claim that given the emergence of technology and the ways it is altering how we compose in the world at large, we need to start outward first; we need to examine the literacy practices most valuable to our students in the outside world and work to make them a staple within our curriculum and our pedagogical practices.

And although Wootten assumes a different attitude while discussing the visual- and multimodal-oriented literacies that are becoming a more common feature in many composition classrooms, she nonetheless is very aware that technology and its use in the outside world are changing our pedagogies. As noted in Chapter 2 and 3, her biggest concern, however, is our
ability to teach such literacies and teach them well. As she states, “[i]f we are to use multimodalities and multimedia, we’d better be creating empowered users” (243). For Wootten, that starts with the teacher, front and center. She worries that those teaching with and about technology do not have the necessary expertise. However, since we seem steadfast in our efforts to include visual and multimodal literacies into the classroom—since, as she says, “[w]e argue that our students are visually literate (and technologically advanced), so we need to somehow tap into their tacit knowledge so they can hang new ideas on old pegs” (239)—then she asserts that we better provide adequate teacher training. For all teachers.

I want us to see that we need to do much work within our profession to assure that professional development is available to all who teach. I know that institutions using graduate students to teach freshmen and sophomores frequently provide those students with good training through coursework in rhetoric/composition and teaching with technologies. I know that writing program administrators work hard to provide such training. But what about the other half of the institutions teaching freshmen and sophomores? And I don’t mean only two-year colleges. (244)

Unlike Selfe and Yancey, Wootten begins her Address with a different tone and claim, arguing that we should not alter our literacy practices due to surfacing technology and its use in the outside world. However, she does acknowledge that including visual and multimodal literacies in our pedagogies because “we must prepare students for the work place [and the world at large], where multimedia will soon be required” (242) is a prominent trend within our field, and she does admit that this perspective seems to be gaining popularity and pedagogical backing. Wootten just wonders if we are doing our students a disservice by focusing on visual and multimodal literacies, but since many of us firmly believe that fostering such literacies provides a service to students and the community at large, she wants to ensure that we provide the best available service by offering proper training to all teachers. Nonetheless, Wootten’s gesture aligns with Selfe’s and Yancey’s gesture that technology and the literacies deemed pertinent outside academy are becoming (or should become) focal points in our pedagogies.

As a set, these three gestures by Selfe, Yancey, and Wootten seem to align with the accordant gestures about service that Barton demonstrates. These three gestures are concerned with preparing our students to become productive members in the world at large, to teach them
the rhetorical strategies they need in order to be successful in today’s world. And technology is a huge part of today’s world. So is literacy, and not strictly in terms of old print-bound definitions of being able to read and write. Put another way, the important distinction between the gestures about service Barton’ speaks to and the ones over the last eleven years seem to be in priority, point of origin, and social and professional currency for students. The rhetorical skills valued in the social and professional realm are evolving due in large part to emerging technology. In order to avoid becoming “anachronistic” (Yancey 302), these Chairs (at least Selfe and Yancey) have taken a different approach to ensuring we maintain the service many of the early Chairs both speak to and value. That approach is to look outside first, to connect our pedagogies to the real world.18 Thus, while some of the Chairs carry forward the gesture of service in its most basic form, the ways in which they suggest we can work to maintain this service—to make sure that we do help “create empowered users” (Wootten 243), and that we do continue to encourage “students to use literacy to participate in democratic community life, to engage civic issues, and to promote social justice”’ (qtd. in Barton 239)—take a conspicuous turn toward first making others aware of the literacy practices valued outside the academy.

Barton’s Second Theme: Contention in Gestures about Research Paradigms and Where the Field should be Housed in the Academy

As with her first theme, Ellen Barton breaks her second one into two parts (in this case, conflicts): (1) empirical versus humanistic paradigms as representational of the composition field, and (2) autonomous disciplinarity versus intradisciplinarity (i.e., a focus within English departments). Speaking to the first conflict, Barton once again starts at the beginning with Richard Lloyd-Jones, who suggests that composition should “occupy a central position within the university,” as the work we do is pertinent across disciplines. Quoting Lloyd-Jones, Barton says he claims that “‘our central position in scholarship is to make a coherent whole to all this diversity’ of scholarship” (qtd. in Barton 242). He labels “this interdisciplinary sense-making the ‘intellectual responsibility’ of composition” (qtd. in Barton 242). In calling for a humanistic

18 It is worth noting that Keith Gilyard also looks outside first when discussing the type of pedagogy he wants to foster in the classroom. Gilyard notes how the power of language influences our ability to both construct an identity and participate in the social world. Consequently, he promotes a new pedagogical model founded on this very idea. Gilyard’s classroom critically dissects the ways language “reproduce[s] patterns of privilege” (266), how it can oppress, but also how it creates opportunity, how it is a powerful tool in combating oppression and creating an identity. Thus, Gilyard’s gesture seems to align with those by Selfe, Yancey, and Wootten. However, he does not focus on technology, that is, unless we want to make the argument that language is a technology.
research paradigm, Lloyd-Jones positions the field alongside literature, and in turn, he suggests the field adopt “their traditions of studying the literary language and aesthetic texts of high culture” (242). Barton claims that as a humanist Lloyd-Jones was incredulous of scientific studies of language and their seemingly “‘immutable categories’” (qtd. in Barton 242), and he “valorized composition scholarship as resistance to empiricism” (242).

Lloyd-Jones’ gesture for a humanistic approach to the field did not stand unopposed too long, however. Vivian Davis, the CCCC’s Chair the subsequent year, advocates for an empirical research paradigm. She suggests that “‘our most significant theories about the teaching of composition should be submitted to tests of verifiability,’” and she stresses the need to “‘identify analytical methods especially adaptable to our own discipline’” (qtd. in Barton 242). Davis frets “that the lack of research sophistication [could leave] the field vulnerable” (242-3). In other words, we cannot assume that those outside the field understand the intricacies of composition in the nuanced ways we do, and in order to prevent others from undertaking studies on composition and language use, we need to construct an empirical tradition appropriate to “‘the needs of the profession’” (qtd. in Barton 243). And as explained in Chapter 1, other Chairs, though not to the same degree, carry forward Davis’ gesture for an empirical model. Barton notes that in 1979, William Irmscher discusses “cognitive research on problem-solving and intellectual development,” and in 1980, Frank D’Angelo points toward “the importance of research on symbolic action in science and on narrative in social sciences” (243). In addition, she quickly references Lee Odell’s 1986 Address, where he “devotes some attention to the need for integrating research from cognitive psychology [with] research from rhetoric” (243), claiming that the two will remain incomplete if separated from one another.

For a while, these two research paradigms (empirical and humanistic) seem to co-exist; however, by the time Odell gives his 1986 Address, empiricism in the composition field is greeted with overt suspicion (243). Part of the reason, Barton suggests, is Maxine Hairston’s 1985 Address in which she cautions against what Lewis Thomas terms “‘physics envy’” (qtd. in Barton 244). In other words, she counters Davis’ gesture as well as other similar arguments, claiming that compositionists should not conduct empirical research simply to validate themselves. Barton then refers to David Bartholomae’s 1988 Address, which she calls “a contemporary humanism [approach, one that] represents the stance that most CCCC Chairs have assumed implicitly for the past 10 years” (245). In his Address, Bartholomae claims that
composition should be a type of intradisciplinary service that is closely linked to English studies and other humanitarian areas, such as “‘women’s studies, black studies, film studies, gay studies, culture study, study of working-class language and literature, and pedagogy’” (qtd. in Barton 245).

However, in looking at the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses of the last eleven years, we do not see gestures advocating for a humanistic or empirical research paradigm. In fact, we see little reference to research. Cynthia Selfe claims that we “need additional research on how various technologies influence literacy values and practices and research on how teachers might better use technologies to support a wide range of literacy goals for different populations” (431), and she later states that we need to combine these two in the classroom, that we “have to put scholarship and research to work as praxis” (432). Still, there do not seem to be gestures arguing whether we should take an empirical or humanist approach.

Judith Wootten seems to think that at times we embody Lloyd-Jones’ humanist approach when she says the following:

And when we try to define and redefine the content of our discipline—what it is we study and what we teach and to whom—we are as likely to disagree as to discover common ground. Perhaps these difficulties arise because we take as our “text” the relationship between humans and all things. Interdisciplinary? You betcha. (236)

Wootten, though, does not necessarily make a gesture in favor of a humanistic research paradigm; rather, she just admits that a humanistic approach appears present in the field. That is not to say, however, that humanism is still the favorite amongst those in the field. Rather, Chairs over the past eleven years have just not made gestures that promote one paradigm over the other.19

Turning toward the second conflict—should we, as a field, separate ourselves and become our own discipline or stay attached to English studies—Barton focuses specifically on Hairston’s and Bartholomae’s respective Addresses. On a larger level, these two Addresses 

19 The reason for this might be the emergence of a both/and mentality; in other words, perhaps now there is room for both humanistic and empirical research. On the other hand, perhaps humanism still reigns. For instance, some, such as Richard Haswell in his text “NCTE/CCCC’s Recent War on Scholarship” (2005), argue that professional organizations such as CCCC have sought over the past twenty years to exclude research that falls under the empirical model for which Davis and others advocate. In other words, perhaps Barton’s claim that Chairs implicitly assume a contemporary humanist approach to research is true for the past eleven CCCC Chairs as well.
speak to the conflict discussed above in that they both seem to favor a humanistic approach to research, but they also “reflect the tension between the field and its more local context of English Studies” (245). In her 1985 Address, Hairston advocates for disciplinarity, stating that literary theorists do not know our work. Bartholomae, on the other hand, advocates for intradisciplinarity, believing that composition should “acknowledge [its] roots in English, not deny them” (qtd. in Barton 246). Hairston and Bartholomae, though taking up different positions, “more or less argue across [one another’s …] most convincing points” (246): Hairston does not address how composition as a discipline would “negotiate […] its interdisciplinary relationship […] with English” (256), while Bartholomae does not acknowledge that the relationship with English studies usually results in “a one-way street” in favor of literature (246). As for what has actually occurred as a function of this debate: according to Barton, “[t]he field did not move from the center of the humanities, although it did move to the margins of English studies” (248).

Although there appear to be no gestures over the past eleven years toward what research paradigm the field should espouse, there are a few gestures concerning the conflict between disciplinarity and intradisciplinarity, such as those made by Kathleen Blake Yancey and Wendy Bishop. But as is the case with the first of Barton’s two themes, these gestures, aside from Bishop’s, are brief and receive little to no sustained attention. In her 2005 Address, Yancey acknowledges that many of us still have ties to English Studies: “enough of us do reside in English to understand that as English goes, so may we” (303). But the gesture stops there. There is no further elaboration, simply a brief acknowledgement.

The most pronounced gesture, it seems, is Bishop’s in 2001. She begins her Address stating that “[t]eachers of writing and rhetoric work against […] institutional odds,” and that “they have felt marginal” (322). She also notes the longevity of the debate over our field’s role within the academy: “I’ve been thinking intently about how fatiguing certain institutional arguments and battles have been, for so many, and for so long” (322). From here, she poses the question, albeit in a reflective manner, of how it would feel “if our field became dominant, the center of English studies or the valued first-year core for all fields as some of us have suggested.

20 In her Address, Yancey also argues for the creation of a rhetoric and composition undergraduate major. In doing so, however, she does not clarify where she believes this major should be housed; that is, whether the major should be a vein within English studies or a major as part of a separate discipline. Instead, she states that regardless of the field’s institutional home, we need a major in rhetoric and composition.
it should be” (322-3). Her initial response, she says, would be of joy and relief, “‘how good to have lost those pressures and to be fairly accepted and roundly acknowledged’” (323). But in thinking about it further, Bishop doubts herself; she ponders if this would truly be a “‘good’” thing, “[f]or to become the center might be to become something completely otherwise” (323). In the rest of her Address, Bishop explores what rhetoric and composition is, therefore illustrating what it might not be if the field where to make such a move to the center of English studies. And what rhetoric and composition is, according to Bishop, is “a dedicated minority by choice” (324 original emphasis), a concept she urges us not to forget.

What we thus see is little carry over. Of the two themes Barton recognizes—(1) accordant gestures about teaching and service, and (2) contentious gestures about research paradigms and where the field should be housed within the academy—neither is readdressed in sustained, robust ways over the last eleven years except for the gesture Bishop makes in 2001. And even here, Bishop moves the discussion more toward what we can do as a community and conference to improve the CCCC in ways that are inclusive and engaging to all members—in essence, providing a third option—rather than resort to the dichotomy of disciplinarity versus intradisciplinarity. That is not to say, however, that the past eleven Chairs do not echo any of the four recurring gestures Barton demonstrates; as I have illustrated above, many Chairs do in some way at least reference these once popular gestures. Anoyke acknowledges the discussion inherent in Peterson’s 1990 gesture about the complexity of teaching and not favoring research over teaching; Wootten notes the presence of the humanistic research paradigm for which Lloyd-Jones advocates; and Yancey shows Bartholomae’s gesture about intradisciplinarity still has some traction in the field, noting that many of us are still attached, in some fashion whether we like it or not, to English.

Some of the CCCC Chairs over the past eleven years who most explicitly make gestures similar to any of the four recurring gestures Barton documents seem to couch their gestures (1) within a larger gesture—for example, Logan’s and Hesse’s gestures about the complexity of teaching are part of larger gestures about our stake in writing, a new theme I identify—or (2) within a different context. The most prominent example of the latter seems to be in the gestures about service over the past eleven years. While the idea of service, that teachers aspire to help students improve their literacies so they in turn can become valuable and productive members outside the academy, is carried forward, these Chairs (specifically, Selfe and Yancey) now look
to the outside world first in determining the literacy practices we should both deem valuable and intend to implement within the composition classroom. The reasoning behind this shift is the surfacing of new technology; that is to say, the role technology now plays in our everyday lives drastically affects literacy and our everyday literacy practices, which in turn creates important consequences for the classroom, an argument Wootten also admits is resonating heavily within our field. Put another way, the gestures about service that Barton identifies have evolved over the last eleven years to the point where these Chairs’ concept of service involves teachers helping students develop a critical eye to the ways composing and the ways we understand and make meaning are germane outside the classroom.

As a whole, I have demonstrated three new themes in gestures within the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses: recurring gestures about (1) literacy, (2) our stake in writing, and (3) diversity. In addition, I have shown above that while the CCCC Chairs over the last eleven years do make some gestures similar to the four recurring sets of gestures Barton identifies, these Chairs do not make such gestures in the same robust and sustained ways as the former Chairs; instead, they couch them within a larger gesture or within a different context. In the next and final chapter, I will articulate the implications of this project, illustrating what we can learn from it, what areas and aspects of these Addresses can still be explored in future studies, and what I foresee happening in CCCC Chairs’ Addresses as we move forward.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

Thus far, I have extended Ellen Barton’s initial 1997 study, providing a discourse analysis of the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses. I have included a summary of all eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, starting with Cynthia Selfe’s 1998 Address “Technology and Literacy: A Story about the Perils of Not Paying Attention” and finishing with Cheryl Glenn’s 2008 Address “Representing Ourselves.” In addition, in re-examining the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses using Joyce Neff’s grounded theory approach, an “iterative” process “based on ‘systematically and intensively analyzing data’” and letting any potential themes emerge and define themselves (125), I have demonstrated the emergence of three new themes in gestures different from the two Barton demonstrates in her study: (1) recurring gestures that not only underscore the importance of literacy but also draw attention to how literacy practices outside the academy are affecting (or should affect) the literacy practices we include in the composition classroom; (2) corresponding gestures that speak to our stake in writing in terms of (i) the status of writing in the academy, the lack of agency writing teachers have in how writing is implemented in the academy, and the unfortunate conditions under which we are asked to teach writing in the academy in attempts to (ii) galvanize the field and develop a unified voice in order to invoke change in larger policy decisions pertaining to writing; and (3) recurring gestures that speak to diversity in two ways: (i) we are not racially diverse as a field, and the diversity we do have in areas of institution, position, and sexual orientation does not mask and, in some cases, can actually exacerbate issues of equity, and (ii) we need to make a more concerted effort to include the pertinent issues diversity engenders into our pedagogies and curriculum.

Then in Chapter 6, I use Barton’s two themes—that (1) the gestures about “teaching” and “service” show consistency, while (2) the gestures about our field’s research agenda and where the field should be housed in the academy show contention—as a lens to analyze the last eleven CCCC Chairs’ Addresses. What I determine is that Barton’s two themes do not manifest themselves to the same degree or in the same robust fashion in the last eleven Addresses as they did in the first twenty. Rather, these two themes (and four sets of recurring gestures) have little traction in the last eleven years; three new themes—recurring gestures about literacy, our stake in writing, and diversity—now appear to be the dominant talking points for recent Chairs.
In concluding this project, I now want to address three salient questions: (1) what can we learn and take away from this project, (2) what areas and aspects of these Addresses can we still explore in the future, and (3) what do I foresee happening within the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses as we move forward?

What can we learn and take away from this project?

As previously stated in Chapter 1, this project is informative in a three distinct ways: (1) it signals the important topics in our field over the last eleven years; (2) it maps the level of attention these topics received over the last eleven years; and (3) in comparison with the themes Ellen Barton identifies, it illustrates whether the focus in our field has changed since the inception of the Chair’s Address in 1977. As I demonstrate in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, the important topics for CCCC Chairs during the last three years seems to be three-fold: (1) literacy, (2) our stake in writing, and (3) diversity. Each topic, however, is multifaceted.

In gestures about literacy, we see Chairs speak to the following:

- How literacy is paramount in us being able to navigate successfully through the social, economic, and professional realms (Selfe, Gilyard)
- How literacy can reify pernicious hierarchies in race, class, and/or gender (Selfe, Gilyard)
- How new technology (and access to such technology) is altering literacy practices outside the academy (Selfe, Yancey)
- How we as composition teachers need to look outside the academy first and then adapt our pedagogical practices and curricula to align with the pragmatic use of literacy in the 21st century (Selfe, Gilyard, Yancey)
- How visual and multimodal literacies are becoming (or need to become) focal points in our pedagogies (Yancey, Wootten)

In gestures about our stake in writing, we see Chairs speak to the following:

- How the importance of writing is being stressed outside the academy (Logan, Hesse, Yancey)
- How those who teach writing have little agency in the conceptualization and implementation of writing in the academy; that is, that those who teach writing do not own writing (Logan, Hesse)
• How those who teach writing do so under undesirable conditions (Logan, Hesse, Lovas)
• How those outside the field are unfamiliar with the field and what it does (Logan, Hesse, Anoyke)
• How those who teach writing have little to no input in legislative matters concerning writing (Logan, Hesse, Anoyke, Glenn)
• How those who teach writing need to own writing (Logan, Hesse)
• How those in the field need to come together and develop a unified “public voice” that can be used for “strategic representation” (Anoyke, Glenn)

In gestures about diversity, we see Chairs speak to the following:
• How multiculturalism is ineffective and does not address diversity and racism in significant ways; our field deals with diversity and racism in name only (Villanueva, Anoyke, Logan, Wootten)
• How our field has inequity issues in that it (1) disenfranchises two-year colleges and (2) exploits composition teachers at two-year colleges and adjuncts and teaching assistants (TAs) at larger universities (Lovas, Anoyke)
• How issues of access connected to technology can exacerbate preexisting divides in race and class (Selfe)
• How diversity is both a political and an epistemological issue for the field (Villanueva, Lovas, Gilyard)
• How discussing the true implications and issues created by diversity needs to be a priority within the classroom (Villanueva, Gilyard, Logan, Wootten)

These three main talking points also seem to vary in degrees of attention; that is, all three topics—literacy, stake in writing, and diversity—do not receive the same amount of attention over the last eleven years. For instance, literacy appears to be an important topic to these Chairs from 1998 until about 2006, with Selfe, Gilyard, Yancey, and Wootten all making larger gestures about literacy; in fact, the only small gesture about literacy comes from Lovas in 2002. And even though Anoyke and Glenn, the two Chairs to follow Wootten, do not make gestures about literacy, that does not suggest that literacy will not be addressed by future Chairs. As I illustrate below, Charles Bazerman, in his 2009 Address, makes a gesture about the importance of literacy
in our everyday lives, and he stresses that the literacy we foster in the classroom should not favor reading over writing. Both, he argues, are vital to literacy acquisition.

Although Lovas makes a very brief gesture about our stake in writing when discussing the “‘write to work’” law (280), the topic does not surface as a main talking point until Logan’s 2003 Address, but it remains the most prominent talking point thereafter: our stake in writing is a main topic for Hesse, Anoyke, and Glenn (in addition, Bazerman also makes a larger gesture about our stake in writing when discussing our field’s role in literacy education). Amongst the three themes in gestures, however, diversity receives the most sustained attention from Chairs during the last eleven years. While five Chairs make gestures about literacy and five make gestures about our stake in writing, eight Chairs make gestures that in some way speak to diversity. However, of these eight, only Villanueva, Gilyard, and Lovas make diversity the overarching talking point in their respective Addresses, and in Gilyard’s case, diversity seems to receive the same amount of attention as literacy. In other words, although diversity receives the most attention throughout the last eleven years, it does not receive the same degree of attention in individual Addresses; rather, these eight Chairs make gestures about diversity but all of them aside from Villanueva and Lovas also make equal or larger gestures about either literacy or our stake in writing.

Figure 1: Literacy
In juxtaposing these three recurring gestures with the four sets (and two themes) of recurring gestures Barton demonstrates (consistency in gestures about teaching and service as
well as contention in gestures about what research paradigm the field should adopt and where the field should be housed within the academy), we can see that the significant topics in our field have changed. The importance and complexity of teaching, the first recurring gesture Barton illustrates, now appears implicit rather than explicit in CCCC Chairs’ Addresses. Amongst recent Chairs, there seems to exist a shared consensus that our field does important yet intricate work, and rather than continue to articulate this to those within the field, Chairs now claim that we should collectively shoulder the task of making those outside the field privy to the same information, that our work is important to literacy and valuable both in and outside the academy. Moreover, as I explain in Chapter 6, the issue of service has evolved with the emergence of new technology. In her study, Barton shows how numerous Chairs (e.g., Lloyd-Jones, Davis, Bridwell-Bowles, and Faigley) argue that the teaching of composition acts as a service to the community: what composition instructors teach their students is transferable outside the classroom and thus assists them in becoming productive members in the world at large. The Chairs over the last eleven years, however, now make a more concerted attempt to connect their pedagogical practices to the outside world. These recent Chairs—Selfe, Gilyard, and Yancey—look outside the academy first and discern the 21st century literacy practices valued in our social, professional, and private lives, and Selfe and Yancey in particular have noticed that our practices have altered due to technology. As a result, they argue that the literacy practices we implement in the classroom should not only make students aware of literacy and the role technology plays in literacy acquisition but also help students hone this literacy so they can transfer it to the outside world.

The other two recurring gestures Barton documents are contention over what research paradigm the field should espouse, humanistic or empirical, and where the field should be housed, as its own discipline or as an intradisciplinary focus within English studies. As my Chapter 6 findings illustrate, these two contentious topics do not receive the same attention over the last eleven years; however, in his 2009 Address, Bazerman does echo Hairston’s 1985 gesture about disciplinarity when making his own gesture about our stake in writing. It might be presumptuous to suggest that the debate over where the field should be housed will continue to receive attention heading forward, but what Bazerman’s Address does suggest is that the topic is still relevant to the field. As a whole, however, this study shows that the important topics for CCCC Chairs over the years have changed: rather than make gestures about teaching, service,
research, or an institutional home, Chairs now make gestures that focus on literacy, our stake in writing, and diversity.

**What areas and aspects of these Addresses can we still explore in the future?**

Even though this project examines the past eleven CCCC Chairs’ Address through multiple lenses, using Joyce Neff’s grounded theory approach as well as Ellen Barton’s 1997 study, we can still engage in additional work on these Addresses and what they mean to the field. Three such potential projects include (1) interviewing the past eleven CCCC Chairs in order to gain additional information on both the process of composing the Address as well as the topics these Chairs deem significant to the field; 21 (2) examining the potential differences and similarities between the different versions of the CCCC Chair Address (the original speech and the printed version in *CCC*); and (3) looking to see if the three themes I demonstrate in this study—recurring gestures about literacy, our stake in writing, and diversity—resonate within the work done in the field over the past eleven years.

In looking more to the CCCC Chairs themselves rather than their respective Addresses, we could interview these Chairs, asking them pointed questions like the following:

- How did you come up with the topic of your Address?
- What else did you consider writing about; that is, what other topics did you consider important (or still consider important) to the field?
- How much did your personal experience and/or individual work factor into the process of composing your Address?
- Do you feel Barton’s two themes (and four sets of recurring gestures) have traction and are applicable now?
- What do you perceive as important topics for the field heading forward?

These questions and additional ones would provide further insight into each Chair’s composing process, and as a whole, this information would provide yet another lens for analyzing the CCCC

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21 The major limitation in such a study would undoubtedly be access. John Lovas and Wendy Bishop are both deceased; in addition, deciding how to interview these Chairs (personally or through other means, such as conference call or email) as well as getting these Chairs to comply with such a study might create other complications. Kelli Custer at the University of Denver is finishing a similar project for her dissertation, one titled “Driven Identities: How the Personal and Professional Identities of 13 Past CCCC Chairs Relate to the Identity of the Field” (“DU Portfolio Community”).
Chairs’ Addresses, highlighting what other topics these Chairs feel are important to our field and its ongoing attempts at “self-representation” and “professionalism” (Barton 236).

We could also perform a more in-depth study of the actual Addresses. This project only examines the printed version of the CCCC Address, which is typically published in the December issue of CCC. However, the different versions of the Address, the original speech and the printed text version in CCC, provide different lenses of examination. Although they are versions of the same Address, they are nonetheless not identical, a point Yancey discusses in the sidebar of the printed version of her Address in CCC. Oral texts have different elements and induce different reactions than printed ones. Delivery (both in tone and pace), gesticulations, and crowd reaction are three such elements that are present in the original Address but not in the printed version or, to some extent, in the videotaped version. How, if at all, do these additional elements affect the original Address? We could also look to see what else (if anything) is lost or gained between this remediation. Is the printed version altered from the original? John Lovas’ 2002 Address (“All Good Writing”) provides a case in point. Lovas’ original Address incorporated a PowerPoint presentation containing both audio and visual elements. These additional elements, ones completely absent in the printed version, provide the audience member (listener) with a different experience. It seems important to be able to both discern and articulate these changes, as they could very well influence how meaning is both made and understood. In addition, such a study could analyze how genre affects the composing of an Address as well as how the concept of remediation plays out in the smaller context of CCCC Chair Addresses.

Lastly, we could look to see if the three recurring gestures about literacy, our stake in writing, and diversity reverberate within the work done in the field over the last eleven years. As Susan McLeod says, the CCCC Chair Address often acts as a “call to action” (532), an impetus for responding to a particular exigence. If the gestures within these Addresses speak to important topics within the field, as I believe they do, then it seems plausible to suggest that others are willing to do additional work or perhaps have already begun work on these or similar topics. The scope of such a study, however, could vary widely. For instance, in looking to see if these themes resonate within other work done in the field, we would have to consider the type of work we would analyze. We could look at individual publications within journals, the most obvious being CCC, but other options include Rhetoric Review, College English, and NCTE, or individual conferences, with CCCC again an obvious choice. Another way to approach such a
study would be to look at how frequently these Addresses are cited in other publications, as this would help us gauge the importance of not only the topics within these Addresses but also the Addresses themselves within the field.

As a whole, these three projects—(1) interviewing former CCCC Chairs, (2) analyzing different versions of the Addresses, and (3) looking for ways in which these three recurring gestures (and the Addresses themselves) resonate within the work done in the field—exemplify the notion that the CCCC Chairs Addresses provide a rich context for additional and important work.

What do I foresee happening within the CCCC Chairs’ Addresses as we move forward?

In concluding her 1997 analysis of the first twenty CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, Ellen Barton predicts that “CCCC Chairs will continue to take up both Bartholomae’s gesture of integration as well as Peterson’s gesture of critique, reflecting the continuing struggle to build a field that truly integrates research, teaching, and service into its definition of professionalism” (250). In Chapter 6, however, I show that Barton’s prediction, at least over the last eleven years, proves to be inaccurate; instead, Chairs have addressed other topics, such as literacy, our stake in writing, and diversity. In the following years, I suspect that Chairs will continue to make gestures in some fashion about literacy and our stake in writing, especially with the continual emergence of new technology, which in turn continues to provide new and appealing ways to both write and compose—and, by extension, engage in new literacy practices. These two topics, literacy and our stake in writing, also appear connected by the very way writing and composing is changing in the social world: now, with the advent of new technologies, writing and composing are ubiquitous; we write and compose incessantly in various media and to different audiences. Some of the time, this writing and composing are part of our professional lives; other times, they exist within the social and private realm. Regardless, the importance of writing and composing outside the academy—the role of literacy in our daily lives—is palpable.

The problem for us as a field, however, is that there appears to be a disconnect between how we perceive and understand writing and composing and how those outside the field perceive us; in other words, those outside the field usually do not know we exist, and if they do, most are unfamiliar with what we do—what our collective knowledge about writing and composing can offer to the world at large. Consequently, our agency in most writerly matters is inadequate,
even nonexistent. As Shirley Wilson Logan, Doug Hesse, Akua Duku Anoyke, and Cheryl Glenn have collectively demonstrated in their CCCC Chairs’ Addresses, not only do writing teachers not own writing in important ways—such as owning “the conditions under which writing is taught […] the content and pedagogy of composition […] , and the ability to] declare someone proficient or derelict […] and] assign praise or blame” (Hesse 337)—they are noticeably absent in larger policy decisions concerning writing as well. As teachers, we continually stress the importance of voice, but as a field, our voice rarely reaches the ears of those in power. And as technology continues to have a hand in shaping not only writing and composing but also the literacy considered valuable to succeeding in the 21st century, it seems all the more important that we adapt our pedagogical practices and come together to form a powerful, informative, and compelling voice that clearly states what we as a field can offer as we progress further in this dynamic time of change. Put another way: our stake in writing (and composing) is all the more important as literacy continues to evolve but also remain a prized possession. I predict the importance of literacy and our stake in writing will remain two key topics for our field and our continued attempts at sustaining professionalism and relevance.

And already, Charles Bazerman has responded to these linked topics. In his 2009 CCCC Chair Address titled “The Wonder of Writing,” he argues that writing is fundamental to literacy cultivation, and therefore, we need to help students become better writers early, as literacy is imperative in our ability to participate successfully in the world at large. In addition, Bazerman discusses how literacy is evolving due to emerging technology, and as writing teachers, we can bridge the gap between our students simply using these technologies and our students developing a critical eye to how such technologies are linked to literacy as well as how they can use them in ways that capitalize on their inherent power. Thus, Bazerman is making a gesture about the importance of literacy; however, he asserts that our ability to educate students in matters of writing and literacy is predicated on us having a presence in legislative matters concerning writing. Bazerman, then, is also making a gesture about our stake in writing; he is connecting it to the relationship writing has with literacy as well as the overall role literacy has in our pedagogies.

Far too often, Bazerman suggests, teachers create a precedent that favors reading over writing, therefore undermining the importance of writing as well as its ability to empower, to create knowledgeable agents, and to invoke change. As he says,
The absence of writing over the years limits the opportunities to form an articulate self knowing how to make deeper sense of information, how to compose extended thought in response to others’ extended thoughts, how to enter as participants into literate domains of society and action. (5) Bazerman worries that we are teaching an incomplete version of literacy, one where writing takes a backseat to reading, and it is here where we as a field can step in. According to Bazerman, literacy and writing are (or at least should be) the work of our field. We know writing: “while our experiences and knowledges of writing are particular, even idiosyncratic, we share a common knowledge of what it means to be a writer and the kinds of work it takes” (2). In addition, we know the power writing wields: “[a]s teachers of writing we are bearers of this transformative technology, leading current and future generations into more refined skills, deeper understanding, more complex cooperation, new adventures, greater communion” (1). And since, according to Bazerman, writing is pivotal to the acquisition and cultivation of literacy, we need to make literacy a focal point in the classroom.

However, in making literacy a priority in our pedagogies, Bazerman aptly notes how literacy has evolved first. In the past, literacy was a means of categorizing people and maintaining the social hierarchy:

The dynamics of power that literacy has been associated with historically have in fact established roles for most people that make it easiest to submit to being inscribed by others into the book of life, accepting the places assigned—with only limited options to influence that inscription. (5)

Still today, literacy plays a prominent role in our everyday lives; in fact, according to Bazerman, literacy underpins almost everything we do, from the way we see the world to our ability to participate in it: “[o]ur thinking, our social interactions, our life projects have transformed with literacy as an infrastructure of our lives” (1). However, as Bazerman says, literacy has also evolved, and is still evolving, due to advances in digital technologies, which have thus provided new “options to influence [the] inscription” that stems from literacy (5). According to Bazerman, “[t]hese technological changes have been accompanied by social innovations that have provided opportunities for people to gain literate voice, place, and significant action” (5). Still, education—the classroom—is instrumental in us being able to gain and then cultivate literacy as well as become better writers and communicators; that is, education is vital to
understanding not only how these technologies are linked to literacy but also how best to utilize both literacy and these technologies. According to Bazerman, this is where we come in as educators and teachers of writing. As he states,

the promise of interactive technologies has yet to be fully realized. […] Effective action, as always, requires deep understanding of the game, one’s opportunities and the strategic potential of one’s available moves. The pen may be mightier than the sword, but the pen too takes a deft hand won through long training. While today the material means of global communication are cheap and widely available, using the power it makes available requires skills gained through education and focused experience—and requires the courage to wield it. (5)

For Bazerman, digital technologies are changing the literacy game, but we still need to help students become literate to how literacy works; we need to educate them in how to use such technologies and to see how writing is imperative in honing literacy. By helping our students become better writers and in the process helping them become aware of literacy’s transformative role in our lives, we are assisting in the creation of a more informed, literate, and productive society:

our task as educators is to assist people learning to assert their place in this world. We are their guides, coaches, and mentors as they learn to take place, find meanings, and accomplish work of personal and communal value. Our reward is to share in their pride and strength as their writing connects them with others. (5)

Bazerman thus carries forward the theme of recurring gestures about literacy, gestures that (1) start outside the academy first, noting how emerging technologies are altering our literacy practices, and then (2) move toward how we as a field should adapt our pedagogies in order to help students become better writers and critically aware of how literacy now functions in the 21st century. In addition, Bazerman carries forward the theme of recurring gestures about our stake in writing. He states that in order to become effective educators who help students become not only better writers but also aware of literacy’s influential role in their lives, “we increasingly have to assert ourselves as a professional force in the academic and educational policy worlds” (5). And while he echoes Anoyke and Glenn’s collective call for developing a unified voice, he also echoes Maxine Hairston’s 1985 gesture that our field should break away from English and
become its own discipline; however, he believes this “break” is only possible if we “define ourselves as our own profession on our own terms” (6).

In beginning, Bazerman states that “[w]e can craft our own disciplinarity and professionalism from the many models the university houses which contain elements that are consistent with our disciplinary culture” (6). More importantly, however, Bazerman says that we need to come together as a field: “[w]e need to work together to speak with coordinated voices for the interests of writing education” (7). However, in our current state, under the guise of English departments, this seems like a difficult task: “[i]n the last century and a half when disciplines and professions have become social, academic, and economic forces we have been under the shadow of a discipline we have many ambivalences about, one that in fact refused to recognize our role in the profession for most of the previous century” (5). Here, Bazerman is suggesting that our ties to English departments are undercutting our efforts at becoming a professional force. Worse, Bazerman says, is that “[t]he depth of our professional experiences, insight and generous intentions, unfortunately convince few beyond ourselves” (7).

But according to Bazerman, we are beginning to make progress. He acknowledges that the “NCTE’s active office in Washington working with the NCTE Government Relations Committee has developed an exciting platform for this moment of transition in educational policy, closely linked to issues already emerging in Congress and the Department of Education” (8). In addition:

Our platform has already started to influence important discussions in DC. The Platform supports fresh definitions of accountability and assessment as well as research, to align these with our best professional experience and knowledge. The Platform asks for literacy learning to be supported as a lifelong process, for the special needs of English Language Learners be recognized, and for literacy education to address twenty-first century needs. (8)

Still, Bazerman claims we “have much work to do, requiring major efforts from us all” (9), for we as writing teachers are still in the midst of a tumultuous time. He says that at this current moment, he “see[s] the walls around writing starting to crumble and […] the great spirit of writing shaking its head, flexing its knees” (9). He proclaims the stake of writing is in our hands; “[h]ow fully writing is recognized and supported depends on our actions” (9).
As we head forward, I expect future CCCC Chairs to make gestures similar to the two Bazerman makes: (1) that emphasizing literacy in our classrooms, especially its relationship with writing and technology as well as its presence in our everyday lives, should be our main pedagogical priority, and (2) that in order to bolster our educational efforts in literacy, we need to professionalize and insert our voice into legislative matters concerning writing. And although Bazerman takes up Hairston’s gesture for disciplinarity, part of one of the four sets of recurring gestures Barton identifies, I do not know if other Chairs will necessarily follow in his footsteps. In other words, Logan, Hesse, Anoyke, and Glenn all make gestures similar to Bazerman’s concerning our stake in writing; however, Bazerman is the only one who suggests disciplinarity as an instrumental step. On the other hand, perhaps other Chairs will follow in Bazerman’s shoes and continue to carry up Hairston’s gesture for disciplinarity. Either way, I suspect that future CCCC Chairs will continue to make gestures about the importance of literacy and our stake in writing, both of which now appear inextricably linked to our continued steps toward creating a professional field that prepares students to become active and productive members in the 21st century.
WORKS CITED


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Rory Lee graduated from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse with a B.A. in Rhetoric and Composition and a minor in English. Recently, he earned his M.A. in Rhetoric and Composition at Florida State University, where he is currently pursuing his PhD. Influenced by the works of Cynthia Self, Gail Hawisher, Kathleen Blake Yancey, Anne Wysocki, Danielle DeVoss, Jay Bolter, David Grusin, and many others, Rory is interested in critically incorporating emerging technologies into the composition classroom and studying how technology affects both writing and literacy practices. In his free time, Rory voraciously reads anything and everything associated with the Green Bay Packers, and he is also a Harry Potter, DC Comic, and Professional Wrestling enthusiast.