

# World Wide Words: A Rationale and Preliminary Report on a Publishing Project for an Advanced Writing Workshop

by Peter Sands

University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Publishing articles on the World Wide Web in established webzines edited for love or money by people who take their tasks seriously offers a possible remedy to the problem of inauthenticity or pseudotransactionality in student writing.<sup>1</sup> Seeking to improve student awareness of audience through authentic writing—defined loosely as writing which is inherently interesting or important to the writer, rather than writing done only for extrinsic reward—I recently used a Carnegie Foundation grant to create an experimental section of my campus's Advanced Writing Workshop in which students would study online magazines and submit their writing for publication in the venue of their choice.<sup>2</sup> Such projects in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) aim at improvement of the course through empirical observation and development of a scholarly—e.g., public and peer-reviewed—approach to teaching. As Pat Hutchings puts it, the SOTL project "begins in quite pragmatic questions," and leads to "theory-building"<sup>3</sup> intended to have long-term effects on teaching and learning in the context of the regular conversation of scholars conducted in publishing and speaking. In this article, I present a rationale for foregrounding audience and purpose by moving students toward publishing online in actual, edited, established, off-campus venues, as well as a very preliminary report on my classroom-based research project to examine effects of this publication-directed writing class on student self-perception as writers writing for audiences other than themselves or their peers. As my initial focus in this project is on student self-perception, I do not offer here significant readings of either student writing or of their revisions and other attempts to connect with an audience. Instead I conclude by discussing inherent problems in the project, such as the too-great availability of possible publication outlets; the intellectual shifts required of students, such as directing their attention to both real and imagined web audiences; and the need for continuing study of writing apprehension in online publishing, with respect to the possibilities for productive anxiety offered by publishing online.

Writing workshops offer rich possibility for such work because they do not have a necessary content analogous to many other kinds of courses; much of their content is generated on-the-fly between the first and last session of the course. There may be common readings and a set of practices the teacher conveys, but the ultimate goal is for students to bring their writing to a public space—the workshop itself. Ideally, this should be writing that they have previously generated on their own or generate on their own during the workshop, toward which they feel some personal connection and responsibility, and for which they desire improvement. In this context, students write for themselves, their peers, and the instructor, often giving primacy to teacher-as-audience in the interests of their grade. Thus, many students write on topics easily recognized as school-related: e.g., literary texts. Their writing remains in the context of a highly artificial situation, which might account in part for the poor transfer of classroom writing competencies across the curriculum or to the workplace.

Opening the closed system of the classroom by publishing student writing online is almost ridiculously simple. Even if a faculty member were unable or unwilling to do so, a student in the course or a university-sponsored student assistant is likely to be able to help. Although there are risks to the ego and the orderly structure of the workshop, publishing student writing online can encourage a greater sense of audience, bring more feedback, remove the teacher as a final authority, and increase productive anxiety. Additionally, this new fourth audience encourages active engagement with a burgeoning medium—the World Wide Web. Accordingly, some writing teachers have been publishing student writing on the World Wide Web for years now (I first published student writing on a course website around 1996), but doing so maintains a measure of artificiality dependent on a hierarchy that runs from teacher to student and maintains the centrality of the classroom in the experience.<sup>4</sup> It is conceivable that the two-way nature of online writing can help change this, as Michael Spitzer argues: "participating in networks provides students with a focus and sense of purpose that are absent in most academic writing. Instead of writing for their teachers, they write to one another."<sup>5</sup> But simply writing for each other will not necessarily alter the perception of students that they are writing for peers in a relatively closed system. As Nick Carbone puts it: "It is not just enough to publish, which is what both of these models personal or class web pages offer, but there should also be some place for students to publish that gathers pieces from others

as well, some place that will be around for a time to come, that will not go down when a student graduates or a class ends." <sup>6</sup> Carbone argues that "by providing students online journals for publishing their work, and by creating journals that require the work to be good, we offer students access to a wider audience" (249). Still, even the system imagined by Carbone would likely keep the classroom and the teacher at the center of the exchange. To truly open that system, one must move from the less-closed system of a class website—or a teacher-proffered online journal—to the open system of public competitive publishing on the Web. <sup>7</sup> As I discovered while trying to do so, that is an ideal not likely to be reached.

## Audience

A rationale for authentic writing situations is inherently connected to a rhetorical worldview that places the writer/rhetor in explicit relationship with both the text and the audience, implicit or actual. This is unobjectionable. James Porter argues, however, that audience in composition is often treated lightly, subject to template-style analyses in the composition, when it should be taught as situated in rhetorical ethics and as contextually more fluid. <sup>8</sup> According to Porter, "the practice of ignoring audiences, or of treating all audiences with generic strategies, or indeed of any approach to audience, has ethical implications" (124). He argues for a community or socially based view of audience which figures the relationship between writers and their audiences as a dialogic one in which the "audience" can have an influence on acts of composing. Thus, courses in which students write on self-selected topics for self-selected, diverse audiences in the world move toward amelioration.

The dialogic nature of Internetnetworked writing has long been acknowledged—writers gain a responsive audience via email, chat rooms, and, certainly, the provisions of most webpages for readers to provide direct feedback to the writer(s). Because of its two-way nature, writing for web publication foregrounds audience in ways that may present problems for writers, who may not fully understand the ways that they "enter into a cooperative relationship with another" (Porter 119) and how that relationship differs from the naturalized and hierarchical relationship they are accustomed to having with teacher-readers.

When writing remains within the bounds of the classroom community, audience issues in the advanced writing classroom, with its less defined and more broadly conceived purposes, probably require less attention through direct instruction. Roen and Willey (1988) showed that while audience appears as a central concern in many composition textbooks, deferring attention to audience concerns until revision is an effective scheme for improving student writing.<sup>9</sup> The research Roen and Willey cite is largely concerned with beginning writers at the college level; studies of experienced writers suggest that they may not perform a formal audience analysis early in the process, but they have a developed sense of when it is time to consider audience needs and when those needs must be sublimated to the work of composition. But studies of relatively artificial writing situations such as the first-year composition paper, where the audience may be imagined as broader than the teacher and peers, but likely does not exist outside the classroom, are not necessarily adequate to describe the writing processes and pedagogical necessities for teaching in an environment with a built-in audience. Additionally, while the "real" audience of a webzine may easily be slotted into the community or social view of audience Porter proffers (e.g., 117, 125), there is no guarantee that anyone will read what is posted.<sup>10</sup>

Donna Ashmus makes an observation that is fairly common when she notes that students publishing their work on the web "are writing for an audience that is drawn from around the world" and that "no longer is the audience just the teacher or even a class of thirty other students."<sup>11</sup> Catherine Smith reasons that, in distinction from traditional concerns with audience, "Web audience is a significantly different problem" because of the way we perceive the Internet and the way that information is interlinked online.<sup>12</sup> What's more, Smith finds that the "public aspect is . . . the most important reason for teaching digital composition. The Web opens the classroom by letting academic work out and the wider world in. Students writing on the Web are participating in public discourse." Smith argues that because of the distributed nature of the Web, teachers should no longer teach students to write for "specific audiences," but only for a "general audience" apparently composed of all the possible readers of a website. This is I think a misreading of the inclusivity of the Web that Smith celebrates: "anybody with access may use the Web; the technology makes no social or cultural distinction among users."<sup>13</sup> First, "access" itself is deeply connected to economic status: who could argue with a straight face that the

Web is open to everyone? Everyone who can afford at least \$1,000 for a PC and a monthly fee for a connection; everyone who can instead afford to enroll in a college or university; everyone who can get to the public library, if their town has a library, and that library is connected to the Web. Need I point out that anyone who can get to the library also has access to the print resources of the world, most of which are still not online? Accordingly, I argue that teaching students to write for an imagined "general audience," may have value, but no more value than the same instruction given in the un-connected classroom; instruction in finding and writing for an audience of the students' own choosing is likely to be both more productive and more educative.

Still, given the millions of websites in existence, and the apparent inexhaustibility of the fount of new posting, blogs, webzines, ezines, and meazines, there is a very real possibility that even a submission accepted for publication will never be seen by more than a few readers. But, even so, there is a general cultural perception that material on the web is published and public; e.g., commercial publishers can refuse to publish material that was previously posted to the web, even on an author's personal site.<sup>14</sup> What's more, the situation changes further when students operate with the apparatus of the publishing process. By this I mean that when students publish their papers online in a course webzine that has some of the apparatus of publishing in a commercial or professional magazine—online or offline—their sense of audience is likely to be heightened—either by the experience of considering and writing for an audience, or through the experience of (possibly) getting feedback from a source well outside the classroom.<sup>15</sup> Thus, when interviewed about their attitudes toward publishing their writing online, students offered positive comments, such as "I would love for others to read it writing for a class, 'cause I have published my poetry already in an online poetry magazine."<sup>16</sup> S. further elaborates on her desire for publication:

**Dr. S:** ... Then, how would you describe your attitudes toward publishing your writing?

**Student1:** I think it would be neat for somebody to actually—I want feedback. Tell me what you think, tell me if you like it. I was never the kind of person that wouldn't want feedback or think there's a critic like 'oh I don't want anybody to read my stuff'. I read it. Let me know if you think it's garbage, tell me. I'll rewrite it  
...  
...

**Dr. S:** The last question that I want to discuss is umm . . . what are some reasonable, achievable goals that we can set for the semester . . . things that, if you were to make a 'to do' list in learning to write this semester, some things we could put on that 'to do' list that we could check them off as we move through the semester.

...

**Dr. S:**..and one will be in our class webzine.

**S1:** Okay... 'cause I kinda like that idea. I'm like, 'wow, I'll get published'.

Most of the students in the first two semesters under study expressed a similar desire to be published, couching their desire in terms of "validation," and differentiating it from classroom work. One, who also expressed a simple desire to graduate and not do any more writing for school, said that she did not separate in her mind the writing she did for school versus the writing she was supposed to try to publish. At the other end of the spectrum, another expressed reluctance to publish online out of fear that she would risk negative exposure as she began her planned career as a professional writer after graduation. Virtually all identified the process of trying to publish—regardless of success or failure—as itself having had a positive effect on their metacognitive awareness of the complexities of writing outside the classroom.

## **Publishing and Writing in the "Advanced" Classroom**

This sense of the complexities of writing in the real world is a frequently stated goal of the composition curriculum, among others, particularly for classes beyond first-year writing. But so-called Advanced Writing is still a difficult thing to define.<sup>17</sup> For my purpose, the Advanced Writing Workshop at my institution is an upper-division course in expository writing, which is sometimes taken for graduate credit as well. The course is open to various forms of definition—I've often taught it with a focus on academic writing and rhetorical theory; another regular teacher often focuses more on creative nonfiction; two others are teaching it next term with a focus on revision. In general, many instructors have distinguished their advanced writing workshops from the first-year composition classroom by allowing greater leeway in student selection of topics and in allowing the writing to more closely approximate writing in the "real world." Libby Miles, for example, describes a course in which students create and manage a functioning small publications office, such as for a college or university, and in which they are introduced to both the mechanics of publishing and the different intellectual context and skills

required in "real-world" publishing situations, as opposed to the artificial writing situation of the school. <sup>18</sup> Similarly, Chris Anson describes a variety of possible ways to organize a course in editing to give students a better conception of how actual editors work, but also to give students finer control over mechanics—as an integrated component of rhetorical practice—in their own work. <sup>19</sup> Michael Carter argues that

If we limit writing instruction to the generalizable skills and relatively general writing contexts of the freshman course—or even the "harder" courses offered by some as advanced composition—then we are only partially doing our jobs as writing teachers. Our job is to lead students toward expertise in writing, a journey that freshman composition only begins. <sup>20</sup>

Carter emphasizes the role of experience in creating expertise beyond competency and proficiency; he suggests that it is possible that college students simply cannot amass the wide experience that is necessary for them to achieve expertise. Still, it is possible to surmise that with a greater engagement and higher-stake personal commitment to writing that writers will pay closer attention to both the content and the form of their writing: "documentation and bibliography ... seem more important to them when their papers seem important as well." <sup>21</sup>

One way to encourage that engagement, and an attendant awareness of the writer's relationship with an audience, is to increase the apparent connections between disciplinary study and writing. Scholarly writers, particularly on writing across the curriculum, have long held that by introducing students to particular disciplinary conventions and by taking their writing seriously within those conventions, rather than trying to make the conventions of the English department a powerful synecdoche for all disciplinary conventions, we aid students in developing voice, diction, and intellectual habits necessary for success in writing. To cite just one example, Olivia Frey and Mary Ellen Ross argue that "creating the disciplinary context will necessarily *make* better writers" because they create "high-investment writing situations" where students have "a personal interest in the writing." <sup>22</sup> Frey and Ross are following the research of Jennie Nelson and John R. Hayes, who delineated ways that courses can encourage writers to take an active interest in their writing. <sup>23</sup>

Since long before the WAC movement, however, advanced writing courses have had at least an implicit connection to publishing or public writing. Adams and Adams, for

example, report that professional training in journalistic writing was a curricular component at many colleges and universities from the middle of the nineteenth century on, owing to a public perception of need and a theoretical focus on "audience and purpose" held by many prominent scholar-teachers.<sup>24</sup> Accordingly, Isaacs and Jackson hold that

. . . as teachers of writers, albeit teachers of student-writers, it is reasonable to assume that we would seek opportunities for students to go public with at least some of their writing, just as other writers do... New trends in the field of composition and in higher education more broadly, suggest that writing teachers will feel pressure to make public writing a part of their composition curriculum and pedagogy.<sup>25</sup>

### **Eng 430: World Wide Words**

In my advanced composition course I have usually used a simulation exercise that mimics the publishing process in order to direct student attention toward a "real" audience. In this exercise, I ask students to write a query letter to the editor of an imaginary publication. This query letter functions as a proposal or prospectus, a common-enough tactic in teaching writing.<sup>26</sup> Feedback to the query letters comes from peers playing the part of the imaginary editors. Subsequent work in the class consists of writing multiple drafts of the project, with feedback from peers; each student is both playing the part of an editor and of a writer in the publication cycle. In the course, I permit students to work on papers for other classes, with the permission of the other instructor, to revise papers written in previous semesters, or to choose and research material about which they wish to write.<sup>27</sup>

Insofar as this project mimics the real world, I've been satisfied with it; students have self-reported that it raised their consciousness of the publishing process and helped them conceive of a real audience that may have specific goals and needs to be addressed. But my Web-enabled, hybrid courses were not making the most effective use of available technologies and forward-looking trends in real-world writing. In summarizing the exigency to which contemporary teachers must respond, Gunther Kress writes that "one urgent task is to try to understand what skills, aptitudes, knowledges, dispositions concerned with representation and communication young people will need in the world of the next two decades or three, in order to live productive, fulfilling lives."<sup>28</sup> The design I had been using did not seem to me to adequately challenge, or challenge as completely as

I desired, the status quo of the writing workshop.<sup>29</sup> My design looked too much like the very pseudotransactional writing I hoped to discourage. Indeed, as I began background research for the grant-supported course redesign, the literature did not seem to support the design I had been using.

For example, Charles Hill and Lauren Resnick (1995) argue that "it may be that writing classes cannot really make a substantial difference in people's abilities to write well within their workplace contexts" and writing classes need major changes to achieve that goal.<sup>30</sup> Hill and Resnick acknowledge that many instructors use simulations of real-world writing tasks, as I have done, but they also point out that such simulations are so acontextual that they may not at all achieve the stated goals.<sup>31</sup> Hill and Resnick say they "believe that the way to improve writing instruction is to embed the instruction as much as possible into the genuine rhetorical situations in which writers find themselves—not to "create" classroom tasks that approximate such situations on a surface level."<sup>32</sup> They note that projects which either take students out into the world—such as what we now call service learning—or that follow students into the workplace after college, are exceptional and rare, a situation that should be changed: "If we really want to help people as they use writing to try to improve their lives, we need to find ways to work with people as they initiate, agonize over, and struggle to complete the kinds of writing tasks that matter to them as they are facing them."<sup>33</sup>

In the fall 2001 incarnation of my course<sup>34</sup>, students wrote three projects. One of those projects was published in the class webzine (<http://www.uwm.edu/~sands/awwzine/>) and the other two were written expressly for submission to webzines outside the class that students had identified and contacted on their own. Taking the students on the road in this manner is still fairly rare, in spite of the prevalence of the Internet in discussions about writing, teaching and learning these days.<sup>35</sup> The literature on students and publishing, even with reference to the World Wide Web, concentrates more on ways to publish student writing on the web for others to read, or to make that writing more accessible to everyone in the class.<sup>36</sup> This is a creative application of the Web, one which takes the older practice of self-publishing a batch of student essays as a class book or the practice of posting student essays on a physical bulletin board on campus, and extends it to the whole world. But it does not take a lot of thinking to conclude that the exercise maintains

the artificiality of the older models. <sup>37</sup> Even if a teacher publishes student writings on the Web and then invites response from a selected group, the exercise remains artificial, for who is going to respond? Other professionals, their students, and the like.

Alternative models, such as creating a class webzine in which students publish their work in a venue explicitly modeled after webzines, don't take the exercise much further. But they do have the added advantage of generating a more holistic approach to the problem of writing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by forcing the issue of design,<sup>38</sup> and raising awareness of audience. A potential issue with raising awareness of audience is that writers may become more apprehensive, but the data I've gathered thus far is inconclusive. <sup>39</sup>

## **Problems and Pitfalls: Toward a Conclusion**

Publishing student writing online on a course website is particularly simple with the current crop of HTML-friendly word processors and the widespread availability of good HTML editors. People in the computers and composition community have been putting student writing upweb for the better part of a decade now. But placing student writings on a course website is a potentially pseudotransactional activity in important and fairly obvious ways: there is no guarantee of response or effect. Thus it seemed to me that asking students to seek out actual publications where they might send their writing would be more effective. <sup>40</sup>

Although the research project is ongoing and student responses are both being gathered and analyzed, I have the following preliminary observations, based on interviews and questionnaires about student self-perception and awareness of audience, about problems instructors interested in "real-world" online publishing will likely encounter:

- Awareness of publishing conventions: even upper-division English and English Education majors in the class self-reported ignorance of publishing conventions.
- Reasonable expectations for time-management and querying editors. More students self-reported that they had learned to organize their time and that they needed to improve time- and project-management skills than reported an increased awareness of audience or publishing processes.
- Number of available publications: the sheer number of webzines and ezines that may or may not publish submissions is staggering. I pointed students to a list of

around twenty publishing literary-critical work,<sup>41</sup> and a number of indexed webzines,<sup>42</sup> but students reported that the number and variety of publications very nearly overwhelmed them, or that they could not find publications narrow enough to take an interest in their topics. For example, while one student wrote a personal narrative about her years as a dancer in amateur, school, and semi-professional settings, we could not find any webzines that published articles about dance. On the other hand, a student who wrote about *The Great Gatsby* and Marxism, had many possible venues but elected to publish that article in the class webzine instead.

- Paucity of quality: students interested in popular culture have plenty of outlets for reading and writing. But those interested in more niche-driven topics—e.g., professional dancing; literary criticism—had the hardest time finding publication venues. Often, they complained of the unreadability or superficiality of the sites they found. At the other end of the spectrum were sites clearly written by professionals, which students felt they were not ready to write for.
- Inappropriateness of self-selection: one student sent her paper, a summary of secondary sources on the causes of alcoholism, via email to *Newsweek*; another turned in for her first paper a personal narrative in which she claimed to have participated in an assisted suicide (which led both to her being questioned by police and having to withdraw from the class). The apparent cause of such inappropriateness seems to be simple unfamiliarity with the kind of material that actually gets published, and with the very public nature of writing online, suggesting that even these advanced humanities students are spending precious little time reading other than for courses. One student, a professional web designer, remarked his surprise that so few of his peers had read any webzines prior to the class.
- Difficulty of imagining the real audience. Several students mentioned in interviews that they had a hard time determining who the reader of an online magazine might be—especially if they had spent little time reading online magazines prior to the class. This is related to the audience problem James Porter identifies as at the core of most composition courses.<sup>43</sup> At least in perception, if the students additionally are submitting their work to a professional or amateur publication online then they can assume an actual audience to a degree far beyond

the imagined or limited audience of the writing classroom. However, most students reported in interviews that they had not had enough feedback from webzines to significantly alter their view of audience.

- Time-management: students all reported that they had difficulty managing their own deadlines. In particular, they underestimated the length of time it would take an editor to reply to their queries, as well as the length of time it would take to go through multiple drafts with both their peers and (possibly) a stranger-editor.

In allowing students complete editorial control—they chose their topics, set their own deadlines, and responded to each other within loose guidelines I set—I in some ways got more authenticity than I desired, in that my preliminary observations of the course reminded me more of the struggles I had when trying my hand at writing as a freelancer than of the struggles I had in writing workshops in my own undergraduate days.

## **Toward a Conclusion: Next Steps**

The grant-supported, two-semester study raised issues that cannot be resolved without further research. This is true not only because of the inconclusive nature of the small sample and the classroom context, but also because there is less history and empirical data regarding writing instruction and the World Wide Web. A corollary to the interest in student writing online is a concern that teachers understand how working online might contribute to writing anxiety. While students in the study reported their interest in being published, and rarely intimated that they were uncomfortable with the notion of being read by strangers, the possibility remains that discomfort with writing may increase in relation to the expected public-ness of the end product.<sup>44</sup> It remains, however, to more fully study the possible effects of both publication and the use of computers on writing apprehension,<sup>45</sup> which is where the study is now being directed. The two courses: ENG 430 and ENG 431 will be offered again in the fall and spring semesters, with students again participating in the study.

Writing instruction bears heavy responsibilities, carrying both the weight of institutional and societal expectations, as well as the belief of many members of the discipline that, as James Berlin put it, "In the composition or communications class, the student is being indoctrinated in a basic epistemology, usually the one held by society's dominant class, the group with the most power."<sup>46</sup> It is politically necessary to impart that understanding

to students, and practically necessary to engage them through some form of authentic writing that as much as possible involves a real transaction, such as publishing, which inherently involves a change in the writer's relationship with audience.

## Acknowledgments

Research for this essay was supported the Carnegie Foundation in the form of a year-long fellowship in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the Center for Instructional and Professional Development of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I am indebted to Christine Goepfert for her research assistance, provided through UWM's Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program. Finally, I am indebted to Anthony Ciccone, Renee Meyers, Katherine Olsen, Amy Otis-Wilborn, Dean Pribbenow, Helena Pycior, for their feedback and suggestions.

## References

Adams, K. H., and John L. Adams. (1991). Advanced Composition: Where Did It Come From? Where Is It Going? In Katherine H. Adams and John L. Adams (Ed.), *Teaching Advanced Composition: How and Why* (pp. 3-15). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Adams, K. H., and John L. Adams. (1991). *Teaching advanced composition: Why and how*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Anson, C. M. (2000). Below the surface: A true-to-life course in editorial practice. In R. M. H. Linda K. Shamon, Sandra Jamieson (Ed.), *Coming of Age: The Advanced Writing Curriculum* (pp. 121 and CD-ROM). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Ashmus, D. (1999). The world wide web: Driving on the information superhighway in the classroom. In Tharon Howard and Chris Benson (Ed.), *Electronic Networks: Crossing Boundaries/Creating Communities* (pp. 51-67). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Benda, J. (2001). Field trips to public squares?: Purposes, audiences, teachers, and student-written web pages. In Emily Isaacs and Phoebe Jackson (Ed.), *Public Works* (pp. 61-68). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

- Berlin, J. (1984). *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Bishop, W. (1989). Qualitative evaluation and the conversational writing classroom. *Journal of Teaching Writing*, pp. 267-285.
- Butler, H. J. (1995, July). Where does scholarly electronic publishing get you? *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, 26(4), 234-246. *Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe*. Micromedia Limited.
- Carbone, N. (2001). Diving into the text: Reconsidering the myths of our books. In John F. Barber and Dene Grigar (Ed.), *New Worlds, New Words: Exploring Pathways for Writing About and in Electronic Environments* (pp. 233-250). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Carter, M. (1991). What is advanced about advanced composition?: A theory of expertise in writing. In Katherine H. Adams and John L. Adams (Ed.), *Teaching Advanced Composition: How and Why* (pp. 59-70). Portsmouth, NH: Boyton/Cook.
- Clinton, D. (1985). *Teaching audience classification*. Presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication. ERIC ED 260 458.
- Donovan, T. R., and Janet Carr. (1991). "Real world" research: Writing beyond the curriculum. In Katherine H. Adams and John L. Adams (Ed.), *Teaching Advanced Composition: How and Why* (pp. 211-222). Portsmouth, NH: Boyton/Cook.
- Frey, O., and Mary Ellen Ross. (1991). Advanced Composition: Where Did It Come From? Where Is It Going? In Katherine H. Adams and John L. Adams (Ed.), *Teaching Advanced Composition: How and Why* (pp. 267-282). Portsmouth, NH: Boyton/Cook.
- Gruber, S. (Ed). (2000). *Weaving a virtual web: Practical approaches to new information technologies*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Hawisher, G. E., and Cynthia L. Selfe. (2000). The rhetoric of technology and the electronic writing class. In N. M. Edward P.J. Corbett, and Gary Tate (Ed.), *The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook* (4E, pp. 129-138). NY: Oxford.

Haynes, C. (1998). Virtual Diffusion: Ethics, Techne and Feminism at the End of the Cold Millenium. In Todd Taylor and Irene Ward (Ed.), *Literacy Theory in the Age of the Internet* (pp. 336-346). NY: Columbia University Press.

Hill, C. A., and Lauren Resnick. (1995). Creating opportunities for apprenticeship in writing. In Joseph Petraglia (Ed.), *Reconceiving writing, rethinking writing instruction* (pp. 145-158). Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum.

Hutchings, P. (Ed). (2000). *Opening Lines: Approaches to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Menlo Park, CA: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Isaacs, E. J., and Phoebe Jackson. (2001). *Public works: Student writing as public text*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Kalmbach, J. (1997). *The computer and the page: Publishing, technology, and the classroom*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Kress, G. (1999). 'English' at the Crossroads: Rethinking Curricula of Communication in the Context of the Turn to the Visual. In Gail Hawisher and Cindy Selfe (Ed.), *Passions, Pedagogies, and 21st Century Technologies* (pp. 66-88). Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.

Mauriello, N., and Gian S. Pagnucci. (2001). "Can't we just Xerox this?": The ethical dilemma of writing for the world wide web. In Emily Isaacs and Phoebe Jackson (Ed.), *Public Works* (pp. 44-52). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Miles, L. (2000). Working in the publishing industries. In L. Shamon, Rebecca Moore Howard (Ed.), *Coming of Age: The Advanced Writing Curriculum* (pp. 134; complete essay on CD-ROM). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Moran, C. (2001). Public and private writing in the information age. In Emily Isaacs and Phoebe Jackson (Ed.), *Public Works* (pp. 35-43). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Nelson, J., & John R. Hayes. (1988). *How the writing context shapes college students' strategies for writing from sources* (Tech. Rep. No. 16). National Writing Project.

Petraglia, J. (1995). Spinning Like a Kite: A Closer Look at the Pseudotransactional Function of Writing. *JAC*, 15(1). Retrieved 25 November 2001, from <http://jac.gsu.edu/jac/15.1/Articles/2.htm>.

Porter, J. E. (1992). *Audience and rhetoric: An archaeological composition of the discourse community*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Rabkin, E. S., and Macklin Smith. (1990). *Teaching writing that works: A group approach to practical English*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

Roen, D. H., and R. J. Willey. (1988, February). The effects of audience awareness on drafting and revising. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 22(1), 75-88.

Scholes, R., & Carl H. Klaus. (1972). *Elements of writing*. NY: Oxford.

Shamoon, L., Rebecca Moore Howard. (2000). *Coming of age: The advanced writing curriculum*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Shaver, J. P. (1990, July). Reliability and validity of measures of attitudes toward writing and toward writing with a computer. *Written Communication*, 7(3), 375-392.

Smith, C. F. (2000). Nobody, which means anybody: Audience on the world wide web. In Sibylle Gruber (Ed.), *Weaving a Virtual Web: Practical Approaches to New Information Technologies* (pp. 239-250). Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Spitzer, M. (1990). Local and global networking: Implications for the future. In Deborah H. Holdstein and Cynthia L. Selfe (Ed.), *Computers and Writing: Theory, Research, Practice* (pp. 58-70). NY: MLA.

Stix, G. (1994, December). The speed of write. *Scientific American*, 271, 106-111.

## Notes

[1] An exhaustive list of references to authentic and inauthentic writing situations, or even to the common terms transactional and pseudotransactional, would be unwieldy at best. It is a traditional problem in writing instruction, addressed, for example by Robert Scholes and Carl H. Klaus in their *Elements of Writing* (NY: Oxford, 1972). Scholes and Klaus say "it is important to

establish an actual audience for the writer to contemplate" (94). For a quick reference to issues of transfer see Charles A. Hill, and Lauren Resnick, "Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeship in Writing," *Reconceiving Writing, Rethinking Writing Instruction*, ed. Joseph Petraglia (Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum, 1995) 145-58. For a summary of transactionality and pseudotransactionality, see Joseph Petraglia, "Spinning Like a Kite: A Closer Look at the Pseudotransactional Function of Writing," *JAC* 15.1 (1995), <http://jac.gsu.edu/jac/15.1/Articles/2.htm> (25 November 2001).

[2] The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning grant was itself supported by a smaller, local grant in UW-Milwaukee's Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program, which pairs undergraduate students with researchers to both introduce the students to the often-mysterious work their professors do, and to provide a setting in which undergraduates participate in actual research projects.

[3] Pat Hutchings, "Introduction." In, *Opening Lines: Approaches to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, Pat Hutchings, ed. (Menlo Park, CA: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2000). 2, 5.

[4] This is in keeping with the ways that technology does not always liberate classroom interchanges. Hawisher and Selfe, for example, write of:

Another kind of computer-supported class we observed reflected traditional practices of writing instruction in American classrooms... In each instance, classmates seemed to be searching for answers to the instructor's preset questions. And only three or four students were participating in these rather contrived discussions... The use of technology in these classes, far from creating a new forum for learning, simply magnified the power differential between students and the instructor. Ostensibly computers were being used to "share" writing, but the effect of such sharing was to make the class more teacher-centered and teacher-controlled. (134-5)

See Gail E. Hawisher, and Cynthia L. Selfe, "The Rhetoric of Technology and the Electronic Writing Class," *The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook*, ed. Nancy Myers Edward P.J. Corbett, and Gary Tate, 4E (NY: Oxford, 2000) 129-38.

[5] Michael Spitzer, "Local and Global Networking: Implications for the Future," *Computers and Writing: Theory, Research, Practice*, ed. Deborah H. Holdstein and Cynthia L. Selfe (NY: MLA, 1990) 58-70. 65. Spitzer, of course, is referring to an effect he perceives in local-area networks, rather than the wider space of the World Wide Web, but his point holds.

[6] Nick Carbone, "Diving Into the Text: Reconsidering the Myths of Our Books," *New Worlds, New Words: Exploring Pathways for Writing About and in Electronic Environments*, ed. John F. Barber and Dene Grigar (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2001) 233-50. 240.

[7] This is the direction Jonathan Benda points toward in arguing for the need to move beyond in-class assignments and web publication to a pedagogy which emphasizes student writing as having a life beyond, and especially after, the confines and time of a class; argues that student writing should be held to similar standards for editorial professionalism as other content on the Web, and that teachers should take care not to identify or appropriate student writing as part of their class. See Jonathan Benda, "Field Trips to Public Squares?: Purposes, Audiences, Teachers, and Student-Written Web Pages," *Public Works*, ed. Emily Isaacs and Phoebe Jackson (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 2001) 61-68.

[8] James E. Porter, *Audience and Rhetoric: An Archaeological Composition of the Discourse Community* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992).

[9] Duane H. Roen, and R. J. Willey, "The Effects of Audience Awareness on Drafting and Revising," *Research in the Teaching of English* 22.1 (February 1988): 75-88. Roen and Willey summarize the research on audience awareness through 1988, finding that there are two camps: one which encourages attention to audience in prewriting and one which encourages attention to audience in revising. Roen and Willey's study suggests that attention to audience is best left for the revising stage.

[10] Benda, "Field Trips" 65.

[11] Donna Ashmus, "The World Wide Web: Driving on the Information Superhighway in the Classroom," *Electronic Networks: Crossing Boundaries/Creating Communities*, ed. Tharon Howard and Chris Benson (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1999) 51-67. 64.

[12] Catherine F. Smith, "Nobody, Which Means Anybody: Audience on the World Wide Web," *Weaving a Virtual Web: Practical Approaches to New Information Technologies*, ed. Sibylle Gruber (Urbana, IL: NCTE, 2000) 239-50. 240.

[13] 248.

[14] See, e.g., Catherine F. Smith, "Nobody, Which Means Anybody: Audience on the World Wide Web," *Weaving a Virtual Web: Practical Approaches to New Information Technologies*, ed. Sibylle Gruber (Urbana, IL: NCTE, 2000) 239-50: 240; Gary Stix, "The Speed of Write," *Scientific American* December 1994: 106-11; H. Julene Butler, "Where Does Scholarly Electronic Publishing Get You?" *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 26.4 (July 1995): 234-46.

[15] E., a student in ENG 430, wrote in an email that "this comes as a little bit of a surprise!" when he received a response from an Israeli film scholar regarding a submission E. had made to the scholar's webzine. E. had been considering writing—as an "experiment"—a submission to

[www.terrificchick.com](http://www.terrificchick.com), a website for pre- and pubescent girls, but his realization that a real audience existed at the other end of the screen forced him to rethink his strategy.

[16] S., a student in ENG 430, fall 2001. Student names have been changed to preserve anonymity.

[17] Two major collections concur in saying that the advanced writing course is both variously defined and in need of rigorous rethinking. See Katherine H. Adams, and John L. Adams, *Teaching Advanced Composition: Why and How* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1991), and Linda Shamon, Rebecca Moore Howard, *Coming of Age: The Advanced Writing Curriculum* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 2000). For my purposes, the advanced writing course is focused on non-fiction prose and intended for upper-division and beginning graduate students.

[18] Libby Miles, "Working in the Publishing Industries." In Linda K. Shamon, Rebecca Moore Howard, Sandra Jamieson, and Robert A. Schwegler, ed. *Coming of Age: The Advanced Writing Curriculum*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 2000. 134; complete essay published on CD-ROM.

[19] Chris M. Anson, "Below the Surface: A True-to-Life Course in Editorial Practice," in Moore, et al, 121 and CD-ROM.

[20] Michael Carter, "What is Advanced About Advanced Composition?: A Theory of Expertise in Writing," *Teaching Advanced Composition: How and Why*, ed. Katherine H. Adams and John L. Adams (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1991) 59-70. 69.

[21] Timothy R. Donovan, and Janet Carr, "'Real World' Research: Writing Beyond the Curriculum," *Teaching Advanced Composition: How and Why*, ed. Katherine H. Adams and John L. Adams (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1991) 211-22. 221.

[22] Olivia Frey, and Mary Ellen Ross, "Advanced Composition: Where Did It Come From? Where Is It Going?" *Teaching Advanced Composition: How and Why*, ed. Katherine H. Adams and John L. Adams (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1991) 267-82. 276-7.

[23] Jennie Nelson and John R. Hayes. "How the Writing Context Shapes College Students' Strategies for Writing from Sources." *Center for the Study of Writing* (National Writing Project), August 1988. Technical Report No. 16.

[24] Katherine H. Adams, and John L. Adams, "Advanced Composition: Where Did It Come From? Where Is It Going?" *Teaching Advanced Composition: How and Why*, ed. Katherine H. Adams and John L. Adams (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1991) 3-15. 9.

- [25] Emily J. Isaacs, and Phoebe Jackson, *Public Works: Student Writing as Public Text* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 2001). ix.
- [26] See, e.g., Eric S. Rabkin, and Macklin Smith, *Teaching Writing That Works: A Group Approach to Practical English* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1990), 162ff.
- [27] See, for example, <http://www.uwm.edu/~sands/write/fall> 2001 430 syllabus.doc.
- [28] Gunther Kress, "'English' at the Crossroads: Rethinking Curricula of Communication in the Context of the Turn to the Visual," *Passions, Pedagogies, and 21st Century Technologies*, ed. Gail Hawisher and Cindy Selfe (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1999) 66-88. 65.
- [29] Cynthia Haynes, "Virtual Diffusion: Ethics, Techne and Feminism at the End of the Cold Millenium," *Literacy Theory in the Age of the Internet*, ed. Todd Taylor and Irene Ward (NY: Columbia University Press, 1998) 336-46: "educational technologies that utilize Internet-based programs are disturbing the *logos* of the "academy" and sending shockwaves throughout academia. the Internet challenges institutional systems by radically changing the way we teach and argue, and with whom" (345).
- [30] Charles A. Hill, and Lauren Resnick, "Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeship in Writing," *Reconceiving Writing, Rethinking Writing Instruction*, ed. Joseph Petraglia (Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum, 1995) 1450-158.
- [31] 147.
- [32] 156.
- [33] 156.
- [34] <http://www.uwm.edu/~sands/write/430home.htm> and <http://www.uwm.edu/~sands/write/431home.htm>.
- [35] Two excellent examples that came to my attention after I'd begun working on the changes to my course are The Word Count (<http://oz.uc.edu/~alexanj/WordCountEZine.htm>), a webzine associated with the first-year writing class taught by Jonathan Alexander at University of Cincinnati, and the several courses and student webzines archived at University of Florida ([http://writing.fsu.edu/cwc/student\\_texts.htm](http://writing.fsu.edu/cwc/student_texts.htm)). Jonathan Alexander's presentation during our workshop at the 2001 CCCC in Denver convinced me to take the final step toward this course.
- [36] See, e.g., Donna Ashmus, "The World Wide Web: Driving on the Information Superhighway in the Classroom," *Electronic Networks: Crossing Boundaries/Creating Communities*, ed. Tharon

Howard and Chris Benson (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1999) 51-67, esp. 64-65; James R. Kalmbach, *The Computer and the Page: Publishing, Technology, and the Classroom* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1997); Sibylle Gruber, ed., *Weaving a Virtual Web: Practical Approaches to New Information Technologies* (Urbana, IL: NCTE, 2000). Further references are relatively simple to find; it is common in large writing programs for student writing to go upweb. One of the more interesting examples of this can be found

[37] Those older models are not always artificial. Kalmbach reports on several community-based publishing projects that only become more artificial as they grew to encompass a wider audience and became more bureaucratized and standardized. See *The Computer and the Page*, 118-122.

[38] Gunther Kress argues that design is more important than critique at the present moment, owing to the differences between the emerging genres of multimedia communication and the older genres based solely on textuality. See "'English' at the Crossroads: Rethinking Curricula of Communication in the Context of the Turn to the Visual," in Gail Hawisher and Cindy Selfe, ed., *Passions, Pedagogies, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technologies* (Logan, UT: Utah State UP, 1999).66-88; esp. 87-88.

[39] A potential issue with raising awareness of audience is that writers may become more apprehensive. To keep track of this and to enable me to respond to apprehension issues, I administered the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Survey at the beginning and end of the class, as well as conducted two interviews about student attitudes toward writing and publishing during the course of the semester. The results regarding writing apprehension are thus far inconclusive and bear further analysis. Student interviews, Daly-Miller results, and weekly anonymous questionnaires will be coded and analyzed using Atlas/ti and Diction 5.0 in summer 2002. For one approach to using the Daly-Miller, see Wendy Bishop, "Qualitative Evaluation and the Conversational Writing Classroom." *Journal of Teaching English* (1989), 274-275.

[40] DeWitt Clinton, "Teaching Audience Classification," paper presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication (ERIC ED 260 458, 1985), discusses a similar project in the days before the Web.

[41] [http://www.uwm.edu/~sands/write/literary\\_ezines.htm](http://www.uwm.edu/~sands/write/literary_ezines.htm).

[42] <http://nav.webring.yahoo.com/hub?ring=ezines&list>; <http://ezine-universe.com/>;  
<http://www.bomis.com/searchring.fcgi?request=ezines&db=bomis>;  
[http://directory.google.com/Top/Arts/Entertainment/Publications\\_and\\_Media/Magazines\\_and\\_E-zines/E-zines/](http://directory.google.com/Top/Arts/Entertainment/Publications_and_Media/Magazines_and_E-zines/E-zines/)).

[43] "Most real-reader analysis guides help writers discover what they already know about readers—and that's the problem. These heuristics rely on tapping a prior knowledge that may be

nothing more than an inaccurate or irrelevant set of qualities attributed to the reader." James E. Porter, *Audience and Rhetoric: An Archaeological Composition of the Discourse Community* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992). 10.

[44] Nicholas Mauriello, and Gian S. Pagnucci, "'Can't We Just Xerox This?': The Ethical Dilemma of Writing for the World Wide Web," *Public Works*, ed. Emily Isaacs and Phoebe Jackson (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 2001) 44-52. See esp. 47-9. An essay by Charles Moran in the same volume, "Public and Private Writing in the Information Age" (35-43), addresses some of the same issues.

[45] James P. Shaver, "Reliability and Validity of Measures of Attitudes Toward Writing and Toward Writing with a Computer," *Written Communication* 7.3 (July 1990): 375-92.

[46] James Berlin, *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984).

**Publication Information:** Sands, Peter. (2002). World wide words: A rationale and preliminary report on a publishing project for an advanced writing workshop. *Academic.Writing*. <https://doi.org/10.37514/AWR-J.2002.0.1.05>

**Publication Date:** May 7, 2002

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.37514/AWR-J.2002.0.1.05>

---

**Contact Information:**

Peter Sands' Email: [sands@uwm.edu](mailto:sands@uwm.edu)

Peter Sands' Home Page: <http://www.uwm.edu/~sands>

---

Copyright © 2002 Peter Sands. Used with Permission.

---



