

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In a lovely remembrance of her time at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) in the 1980s, “A Stand in Time and Place: New Hampshire and the Teaching of Writing,” Bonnie Sunstein writes, “Once in a while we get lucky—time and space and context converge to encircle a community of like-minded people to encourage, voices in counterpoint and harmony, giving birth to a rich and productive intellectual moment that helps to shape a profession” (121). I arrived at UNH in 1992, at the tail end of the period Sunstein describes in her essay, too late to be a part of it, but near enough to its conclusion to bask in its warm afterglow. As such, I would like to acknowledge the many UNHers who contributed to my growth and development as a teacher, scholar, writer and to this project.

First among these is Donald Murray, himself, who welcomed me into his home in the late summer of 1996 to discuss writing and teaching as I headed off to pursue a masters degree under Sunstein’s tutelage at the University of Iowa. Seven years later, now a student in the doctoral program in English composition at UNH, I interviewed Murray for a paper I was writing for a course on the history of the field. While I did not know him as Sunstein and other members of her generation did, Murray was generous with me and always happy to talk writing and teaching and encourage my pursuits. I have tried to imagine how he would feel, were he still alive, to know that I have gone on to write a book about him. I can only hope that he would recognize himself in it and feel that I have fairly and accurately conveyed not just an accounting of his work and accomplishments in the field, but also a sense of his large and generous spirit.

The list of additional UNHers I would like to acknowledge here is long and distinguished. Bonnie Sunstein, my first (and only) “Jewish Mother,” served as my initial tour-guide to the UNH writing/teaching community. During my time at Iowa, Bonnie was planning a commemorative session for Murray at the 1997 NCTE conference and asked if, in my capacity as her research assistant, I would transcribe a series of interviews she had conducted with Murray. Beyond reading him in Bonnie’s Approaches to Teaching Writing class that fall of 1997, listening to him and transcribing his words was my first opportunity to really get to know Murray, to learn of his personal story and of his work at UNH and in the field beyond. Many years later, while I was conducting research for this book, Bonnie generously shared documents from her personal archive with me and helped arrange interviews with former UNH faculty members and staff. Throughout my career, Bonnie has played an instrumental role in my development for which I am incredibly grateful.

Thomas Newkirk has been a significant mentor in my career and played an essential role in the writing and development of this book. Tom sat for multiple interviews, shared materials from his professional files and archive, consulted and read drafts at numerous moments in the writing and research process, and found and shared the video of Murray from the Iowa Writer's Conference that I draw on in the book's Preface. Since first working with Tom during my years as an adjunct English instructor at UNH, he has supported and encouraged me, playing the role of a generous reader and critic, colleague, and friend. This book could not have been written without his guidance, help, and support.

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