

PREFACE

This book chases after writing processes—what they look like, where they live, how they elude us, what we assume about them. We're accustomed to thinking of them as a writer's own. But whose are they, really? The infinite processes and scenes and moments that coalesce in and around this book are not really mine alone. I know that for sure. It was never just me, but rather the many *wheres*, with *whats*, and with and for *whoms* that I've worked and studied and taught over the years that find their ways in to these pages.



Figure 1. Me, first thinking about situating writing processes, May 22, 2011. Photo credit: Laura Micciche.

This project began in earnest in 2011. It began with a presentation in which I believe I asked some grad school friends to photograph their writing spaces and talk with me about them. Before that, I was inspired by Joe Harris, who while giving a talk at the University of Cincinnati on his great book, *Rewriting: How to do Things with Texts*, shared an image of his office. If my memory is right, he talked how that space—though it looked lonely, isolated, or disembodied—was actually teeming with *others*, populated by the partners

that appear and do work with him in the form of sources. It started me thinking about the scale of process—about the local material environments in which processes unfold and also about those more amorphous process participants (sources, genres, rhetorical constraints, readers, discourse conventions, and so on) which both infiltrate and leap beyond the walls of any given writing room.

Before that, I credit my fascination with processes, especially as an avenue to composition histories, to Russel Durst, who helped me write about Janet Emig and wonder about postprocess. I thank Joyce Malek for all that she taught me about teaching and about honoring student writing. I am grateful to Julia Carlson, who worked with me to imagine my interests in Romanticism from a writing studies angle. I thank Jim Ridolfo for his tremendous knowledge of the field and invaluable and ongoing advice in navigating it. And to my dissertation director and friend, Laura Micciche, I extend infinite and ongoing gratitude for showing me how to teach, mentor, research, write, ask questions, and lead a balanced and rich academic life. Like many who know her, I want to be just like Laura when I grow up. She, and the rest of my doctoral committee—Russel, Jim, and Julia—ineluctably reflect in the writing, research, style, and aims of these pages. I was lucky to have had such stellar support in my graduate training, including from the Charles Phelps Taft Research Center, which supported my research with an enrichment grant and a 2012–2013 Dissertation Fellowship, and from the University of Cincinnati English department for the 2011 Pat Belanoff Summer Research Fellowship. I also thank the graduate student writers who participated in the multimodal case studies that formed the core of my dissertation. The details of that study may only pepper the periphery of this book, but what I took from peering into those writers' rooms and processes is very much at its core.

I wish also to warmly acknowledge my other teachers in the field, those who know me less or not really at all but nevertheless have gifted me their time, interest, and engagement that in different ways have helped shape this project: Andrea Lunsford, Nancy Sommers, Scott DeWitt, Kevin Roozen, Jody Shipka, Steve Parks, Jonathan Alexander, Amy Vidali, and many other anonymous reviewers. These connections, these interlocutors, have supported and challenged my thinking. I also want to thank my supportive department at the University of South Carolina, especially my chair, Nina Levine, for keeping me focused on the development of this project and my rhet/comp colleagues, Kevin Brock, Christy Friend, Chris Holcomb, Byron Hawk, and John Muckelbauer for their support, interest, and feedback. I also want to acknowledge the teachers and professors I've had through the years who ignited my interest in reading, words, writing processes, and working in academia: my third-grade teacher, Mrs. Waggoner, and her writer's workshop; Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Dunn, Mrs. Klein, Mrs. Dever; Bill Alberti, Allan Emery, Erin Labbie, and Steve Arch.

My thanks also go to Susan McLeod and Rich Rice, editors of the *Perspectives on Writing* Series, as well as my insightful reviewers. Their guidance has been invaluable in reshaping these pages into the form they are. Thanks too to Mike Palmquist of The WAC Clearinghouse and the editorial team there for their guidance in all production matters.

I want to also recognize the spaces through which this book, in its many versions, was forged—a graduate student computer lab, my dining table, a coffee shop that turned into a Starbucks, empty cubicles at the Langsford Center, Langsam Library, Thomas Cooper Library, Indah Coffee, Paneras, my orange arm chair, my first faculty office (one with my name on it), my current campus office, which I sometimes make into my writing “jail,” and the constant accompaniment of background TV, especially those shows (cooking, remodeling, baking) where people successfully compose things in 60 minutes or less.

Huge gratitude and hugs go to OWG—my dear friends, my colleagues, my “open writing group.” Allison Carr, Christina LaVecchia, Janine Morris, Katie Taylor: over the years, you’ve read many drafts, given me much feedback and support, and sat across from me for countless hours as we typed, sighed, laughed, and looked forward to knocking off our writing work and getting lunch. Though our sessions are fewer now and via video call (or in conference hotel rooms), you all are in this book. So too have other friends and now colleagues supported me in this project: Kelly Blewett, Carla Sarr (who supportively demanded that I make this work shine), Tessa Mellas, Ruth Williams.

I thank my family whose influence is here, too. My mother, Victoria, took me with her to college when I was a child, where I sat in her education classes and learned how cool a university campus was. When I was a bit older, her work as a children’s librarian meant I spent tons of time on my own roaming the stacks. Without her and these scenes, I’m not sure I would have ended up a professor. I thank my Dad, Jan, who continues to believe so steadfastly in education and in teachers, but never became one himself. I thank him too for the electronic typewriter he bought me for a birthday. I’m grateful to my siblings, Ben and Elizabeth, who were among the first supporters of my writing. When they were at school and I was the youngest at home, I remember typing nonsense on an old typewriter in the living room. I made them “read” my work when they got home, and they laughed trying to sound-out the “words” and make meaning from my gibberish. They showed me clearly and early on how writing processes are never ours alone.

Finally, no writing is possible without my home, my family, my life—my husband Chris, Sammy, and all the guys. And our pup Del, who so far has been willing to demonstrate at least some modicum of patience for me to finish this book, waiting on my feet—just as he is right now—waiting for when

I will close the laptop to take him on his walk. He's up and insisting now, pressing his head down on my keyboard. So, I better finish for now and go.

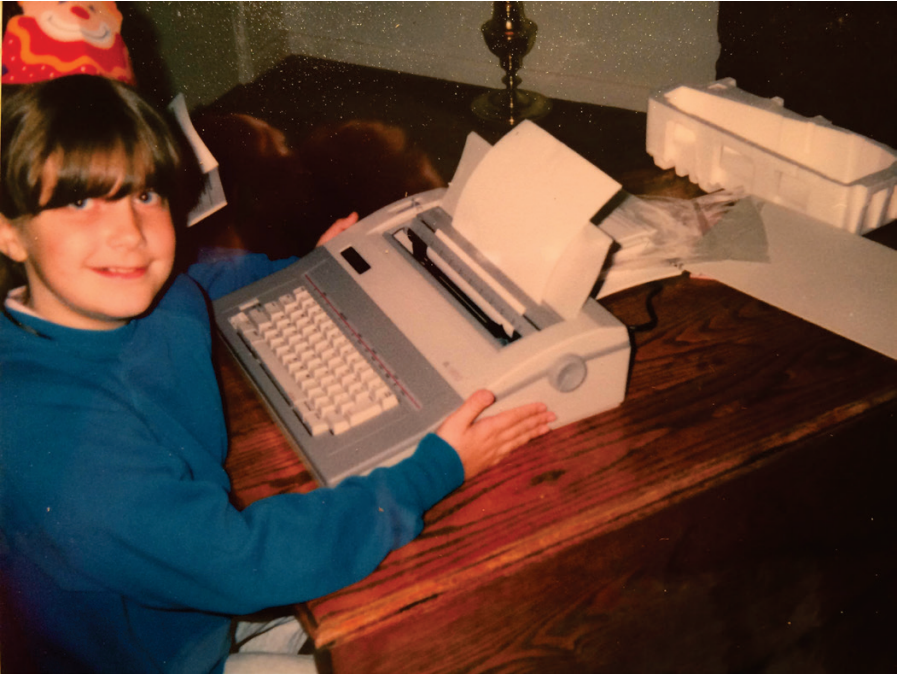


Figure 2. Me, with my electronic typewriter.