

A PREFATORY NOTE

This issue is something of a departure from our earlier, more “concrete” issues, and some readers may be surprised at its ideological intention: To demonstrate the uses of so-called “high brow” literary criticism in the teaching of Basic Writing. Other readers may be surprised at the eclecticism of our selections: Aristotle, Marx, Norman Holland, and Walter J. Ong. Hardly a complete history, but we plead that the diversity will stimulate instructors of writing to suspend disbelief about what helps students and to look more widely for sources of aid. We hope that the deliberateness of putting theory into practice encourages instructors in the view that today’s students can benefit from literary theory in learning to write. We applaud our contributors’ imaginative uses of theory. If our readers are fired with enthusiasm for more “applications,” we could be persuaded to undertake another, later issue on the same theme.

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