COMPUTERS & WRITING CONFERENCE 2003

Purdue University, W. Lafayette, IN

Graduate Research Network 2003

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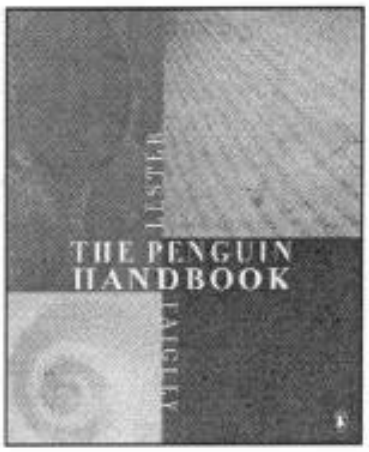
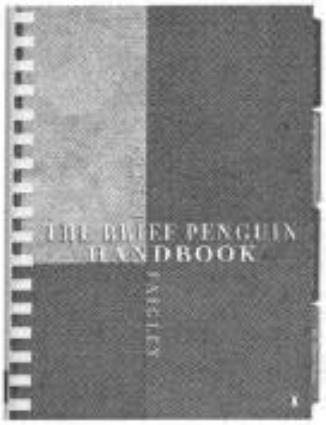


*"What is most impressive is the emphasis on **visual literacy** here. It's what makes the book distinct and cutting edge...[T]he use of icons, the color waves, and the graphics in these pages are stunning."*

- Lisa Langstraat,
University of Southern Mississippi

Lester Faigley served as the founding Director of both the Division of Rhetoric and Composition and the concentration in Technology, Literacy, and Culture at the University of Texas.



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2003 Graduate Research Network : Presenters and Abstracts

Sandy Anderson, Fayetteville Technical Community College

What You See Isn't What You Get: Getting to Know Online Students

Throughout my experience teaching in an online environment, I have uncovered a myriad of problems that both instructors and students encounter. One of the most prevalent of these problems is the issue of "getting to know each other." Questions and concerns can be immediately addressed in a face-to-face classroom, while online classrooms are typical asynchronous. This, in addition to the loss of normal everyday interaction that you can foster in a face-to-face learning environment, can cause misunderstandings and frustration from both student and faculty points of view. Using a sample class "introduction", I will present this issue to participants. My intention is to use this example to open this topic for discussion among other conference attendees.

Susan Antlitz, Illinois State University

Building Textual Spaces: MOO Writing in the First Year Composition

My current research will examine how students in an English 101 course at ISU build textual information spaces in a text-only MOO and the implications of MOO building for more traditional forms of writing and for writing pedagogy. Students were asked to use the Connections MOO as a medium for creating hypertextual information spaces about researchable topics they chose from their own interests; they also wrote reflective process writings during and after their writing in the MOO, as well as after their other course papers. Other data I will examine includes transcripts of MOO conversations and building sessions, and course papers. By looking at the places and objects student have written in the MOO, I will explore if/how writing hypertextual spaces within the MOO changes students' understandings of writing, influences thinking about the structure and navigational design of their texts, and encourages them to think differently about their research topics. In addition, I will investigate the rhetorical strategies students use when writing for the MOO. Finally, I will examine MOOs in the context of work on electronic genre and hypertext theory.

Anthony Atkins, Ball State University

Technology and Graduate Student Training in Rhetoric and Composition Programs

This project is about how graduate students in rhetoric and composition or configurations of them have been trained to use technology. While the focus of this project is on how graduate students are trained to teach writing with technology, I also hope to find out how graduate students learn to create their personal sites, build MOO rooms, use Blogs, etc. What role has their programs had in facilitating (or not) their pedagogical relationship with technology. Are graduate programs in rhetoric and composition providing this type of training, and if so is it effective? How have students responded to such training? How has the turn to technology affected graduate student recruitment? It is imperative that programs in rhetoric and composition begin to recognize the need for curriculum development concerning technology and the training of graduate students in rhetoric and composition.

William Banks, Illinois State University

Reading & Writing for (Gay) Bois: A Primer

*There are any number of reasons that print media for adolescent gay males seems to be in short supply. The magazine *XY*, now in its seventh year of publication, and the new magazine *Xodus* -- both geared toward the "gay boi" -- continually report their struggles to stay afloat: gay bois still feel they cannot subscribe, especially if they're "closet," and advertisers refuse to buy space for fear that they'll be thought to "encourage" youth-sex. Other print media face the same sorts of limitations. Currently, I'm working on a paper for NCTE 2004 that looks at the sort of reading and writing that go into making the "gay boi" and my particular interest is to identify texts that are useful for high school teachers and students. More specifically, I'm looking at the sort of Internet texts that are available for the gay boi, what these texts say, and how gay bois are writing themselves (back) into the discourses that surround them. I will be interested in hearing from other participants about 1) possible avenues of exploration, 2) what online sources/texts they may have used that fit this research, and 3) what, beyond "rhetorical analysis," might be an appropriate research methodology for conducting this study.*

Lisa Cahill, Arizona State University

Tutor Training and Pedagogy Asynchronous Email Conferencing

As writing centers decide about whether to offer only static online resources, only interactive spaces, or a combination of both services, they need to articulate and evaluate their rationales for doing so, as Ahrenhoerster and Brammer (2002) advocate. Yet, at the same time, centers need to think through the potential short- and long-term implications of their decisions. This process of thinking through the implications becomes especially important for centers whose goal is to make services, typically offered in the face-to-face setting of the center, accessible to students in online venues. Thus, centers are faced with decisions about the best means of facilitating writing conferences online. If they opt for synchronous or asynchronous communication forms, they are then presented with different sets of questions, such as the following: (1) Which type of communication form works best for our goals? For our students? For our resources? For our tutors?; (2) What technologies or programs are available for us to use?; and (3) How do we prepare our tutors to work in this new conferencing space? This last question is very important because of its implications for the kinds of changes to tutor training and tutor pedagogy that may be required.

William Cole, University of Georgia

The Gromboolia Project: A MOO-based Hypertextual Literature Classroom

This project explores the potential of MOO (Multi-user domain, Object-Oriented) as a platform for creating hypertextual online learning spaces. Specifically, it involves the creation of a large suite of MOO objects for the study and teaching of the "nonsense songs" of the British Victorian poet Edward Lear followed by classroom testing of the space with students. The final result of this project will be a working MOO-based, hypertextual literature classroom, one that provides an engaging environment for learning about a particular literary topic and that provides models for the development of similar spaces for other topics. Besides the creation of the Gromboolia environment itself, I see this project as bridging the current gap between hypertext theory and computer pedagogy, potentially broadening the scope of both fields. To hypertext theory, it will bring the idea of hypertext as a shared space and of hypertext reading as a potentially social, rather than purely solitary, activity. To the discourse on online learning environments, it will provide a MOO classroom where the subject of instruction is the teaching environment, where the structure of the knowledge to be learned or the topic to be explored shapes the space of instruction itself. In so doing, I hope to begin to reveal the unrealized potential of MOO noted by Espen Aarseth when he states that they "are not the poor relatives of more artistic textual media but contain a potential for textual complexity and diversity that is far from mastered, or even conjectured, at the present time."

Diana Dominguez (GRN Online), Texas Tech University

Three Different Analytical Interpretations of Guenevere in Malory's Mort D'Arthur

Most critical views of Thomas Malory's character of Guenevere focus on her role as a "destroyer of good knights" and how she is as much (or more) to blame for the downfall of Camelot and Arthur as Lancelot -- with much patriarchal criticism centered on Arthur's comment that he regrets more having lost Lancelot than Guenevere. Feminist views of Guenevere have focused on exposing how her character is a victim of a patriarchal and misogynistic portrayal on the part of Malory and his contemporaries (and later patriarchal critics/scholars). Feminist re-visions of Guenevere cast her in the role of a priestess, goddess, or ancient powerful druidess (Celtic, etc.) who has been co-opted and subsumed into a patriarchal and Christian "new order" (i.e. Arthur as the Christian king) -- the most notable example of this is Marion Zimmer Bradley's Mists of Avalon. All these views are valid and garner much critical attention. However, there may be an alternative view, which I hope to develop in this article. It is possible to read Best Practices for Handling the Paper Load Guenevere as a woman with independent agency who adopts behavior that "seems" hysterical, irrational, deceitful, and changeable (i.e. like a "typical silly" woman) in order to purposely push Lancelot away from her in order to save Arthur, her marriage, and Camelot -- and that, in the end, she gets the upper hand when she ultimately rejects Lancelot after Arthur's death. I would like to discuss this view with other on the GRN online group to work out some details and get some feedback on this view.

Traci Gardner, tengrrl.com

Best Practices for Handling the Paper Load

We need to rethink and resituate the techniques we use for handling the paper load. Rather than anecdotal solutions, simple classroom recipes, and easy-to-assemble tools, we need to find ways to respond to students's work in ways that integrate with our practices in the classroom as part of a smooth and consistent pedagogy.Once a teacher places response, assessment, evaluation, and grading in the context of student-centered, process-based instruction, responding to student writing becomes the basis of every day

activities in the classroom. Extending Covino's true magic characteristics to the way that we manage the paper load generates choices for responding to student writing in ways that align with the best practices in writing instruction:

- *They are generative, not reductive, prescriptive, or corrective. They result in more critical thinking, more critical reading, and more writing.*
- *They give student writers choices rather than limiting their options.*
- *They ask students to rethink, extend, and critique their ideas, rather than providing expert techniques and solutions that result in cookie-cutter modeling (5ptheme).*
- *They are the result of interaction and dialogue between students and teachers rather than rote adherence to strict patterns.*
- *They result in integration of ideas and options rather than lockstep adaptation to fit an unchanging model.*

I am currently working on a manuscript that extends and explores these ideas, with specific attention to both print and digital "paper loads."

**URL if available: http://www.tengrrl.com/paperload/*

Jayne Higgins, Northern Illinois University

Intersections of Print and Electronic Media in the First-Year Compostion Classroom

I teach first-year composition in a fully electronic, smart classroom. I use print media, such as _The Chicago Tribune_ or _Newsweek_ magazine as the primary text. I have used this approach over the past ten years, have witnessed the advent of the Internet as a research tool, and have recently examined the differences in the classroom between print media sources and on-line sources. Since I am in a smart classroom, I have been able to fully integrate both kinds of sources in my teaching. I have found that an interesting intersection exists that can provide fruitful insights into our culture and writing our culture for our students. I believe students greatly benefit from this intersection of media. I find that by the end of each semester, my students have a solid grasp of both writing skills and writing contexts. My students pre-view issues on the websites provided by the print media sources and look at editorial choices as well as inclusion issues. The end result has been a much higher quality of researched writing and a much greater understanding of college writing as a whole. I am interested in gathering others who use non-reader approaches to composition and discussing what impact the advent of the Internet has had on those approaches.

Sylvia Jones, The Open University

Arguing On-line and Off

This paper addresses issues of academic literacy and learning using asynchronous conference technology. The paper reports on a study into the writing across two media of students taking a distance education graduate Management Diploma offered world-wide on-line. The study investigates how students from diverse backgrounds, who never meet face-to-face, construct arguments in the dialogic conference environment of on-line discussion and subsequently construct arguments in the context of individually written academic assignments. Several assumptions are examined in the study. The use of the on-line conference as a forum for discussion in distance education is ubiquitous and so are individually written term papers. In designing this model of learning, pedagogic practice has long believed that students learn if they engage in forms of argument both in their on-line discussions and in their academic writing. However,

language research is showing that many aspects of context and culture, together with the influences of the technology on communication, sculpture the interactions differently between the two modes of communication. This leads to the question of how the students draw on the intermental experience of the on-line discussion to inform the composition of argumentation in their essays. The study draws on genre, composition and systemic linguistics theory in the analysis of data from the on-line discussions and the students' subsequent individual written assignments. The data is analyzed to reveal the influences of generic and audience differences and the effects these have on the argumentation. The analysis reveals student writing practices in the two modes which enable them to make claims negotiable so that counter claims are possible and to make their propositions contingent. The analysis reveals to what extent the students are able to combine the conflicting perspectives developed by the on-line discussion. The findings reveal the difficulties of moving from the argumentation practices developed in the dialogic medium of the on-line conference to the different argumentation of the assignment writing. This raises issues of how academic literacy can be addressed in distance education.

Rob Koch, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Articulating a MOO Pedagogy for Writing

This presentation is part of my dissertation, which looks specifically at how the roles of collaboration and reflection in the writing process can be enhanced to suit several writing needs through synchronous transcripts. This pedagogy suggests that a series of transcripts, produced in assignment-long writing groups and using a progression of Expressive, rhetorical, and grammatical/mechanical prompts, can be analyzed and reflected upon more deeply. This analysis and reflection makes the process s of revision clearer for students, asking them to study the decisions they and their peers did or did not make during the production of the assigned text. It thus promotes a social perspective of writing, attending to the practice of writing as a tool for not only producing text, but for thinking, while encouraging more reflective and analytical skills, as well as confidence in the writer. Ultimately, what I am looking for from the GRNF is the opportunity to show my idea, to see what obstacles and issues other teachers might find in my plan, so that I can more fully address the topic in my dissertation.

Kelly Martin (GRN Online), Collin County Community College

Hybrid Rhetoric: Translation, Computers, Rhetoric, and Visual Literacy

1) Translation as a metaphor and as a rhetorical practice to help students and scholars understand rhetoric, new media (specifically the Web), computers, and translation itself. 2) In other words, translation as a bridge; in the sense, translation as a means to inform how we conceive computers and composition. However, I do not want to trivialize the role of translation, thus classifying it as a medium or a lens to study computers and composition. 3) Instead, I want to call for new theories, pedagogies, and conceptions of language and composition that incorporate translation, rhetoric, and new media. 4) The above is my contribution and challenge to scholars. My goal, in my exam studies and dissertation, is to show how rhetoric, Web writing, and translation relate to and inform each other. 5) At this stage, I do not want to propose new theories of language (I am not Derrida) or new teaching practices. However, at the most basic level, I guess I am explaining a new theory of rhetoric and Web studies and translation studies--one of incorporation. Similarly, I am explaining a new way of teaching--teaching the three disciplines/areas as separate and as a union. However, I do not plan to specifically discuss teaching practices (assignments, how to present the merger of translation, hypertext, and rhetoric, etc.).

Eric Mason (GRN Online), University of South Florida

Training the Corporate Body: Violent Women On Screen

An increasing number of texts that consider themselves progressive have begun to represent women as having characteristics conventionally attributed to males (women are now represented as aggressive and violent, for instance). But while these texts may seem innovative due to their presentation as new media, many still reproduce gender narratives that run counter to the goals of educators. While textbooks have had a long time to gain critical distance, new media may not yet have an awareness of the techniques through which it reproduces gender ideologies. My project looks primarily at a Prentice-Hall textbook supplement that uses Quicktime video clips to construct a narrative about a newly graduated female marketing major. This CD-ROM uses narrative and cinematic techniques that signify frustration at administrative and technological difficulties as leading to a desire for physical contact.

Gloria McMillan, University of Arizona

Tip of the Iceberg? Polling Attitudes and Conditions of Adjunct Writing Faculty

I am attempting to fill the gap in research about the day-to-day quality of life in an institution for adjunct writing faculty by creating a poll of attitudes and departmental conditions. This does not address salaries and hiring/firing but those daily facets of work that make life more or less bearable. In addition, I will be giving tutorials for those new to quantitative analysis, Excel, and database querying. Finally, I will attempt to track the choices that I made in project design and the methods that I adopted for this poll and reducing its data with notes about survey theory.

Karen Medina, University of Illinois

On-line Botany Flashcards

High school science teachers take their students to the woods to learn about botany. But why should the botany lesson stop there? How are we going to teach kids the meaning of words like glabrous and lanceolate? Why would they want to learn? Because it is fun, that's why. Botanists have a lot of fun! Quizzing each other. So we are developing an on-line game of flashcards or 20 questions. Actually, we have a problem, and we are hoping the games will help solve it. We have a database written by botanists, and teenagers that want to use the database in the woods. But the two vocabularies are completely different. How do you get a botanist an d a teenager to speak the same language? You create a game.

Merys Mehaffey, Saint Louis University

Perpetuating the Problems We Strive to Solve: The Challenges of Computers and Basic Writing

The project that I am just beginning, and thus have not fully researched, is based on the observation that although for the past several years scholars have been writing about the use of computers in so-called "basic writing" courses, few, however, have addressed the more difficult aspects of instructing students in computer usage as well as in writing skills. The make-up of many basic writing courses is often comprised of students from low socio-economic backgrounds, which may have prevented them from the opportunities of having much, if any, access to computer technology. How do we bring in new technologies into the writing classroom in ways that not only assist students with the composing process, but also enrich the students' experiences with writing while taking into account the challenges of non-exposure to the technology, departmental content requirements, and the whole host of individual issues that every student naturally brings into the classroom? What concerns me the most about all of these challenges within the basic writing course is that while we are hypothesizing about solutions, students' educations are suffering; the same "class" of students are neglected and ill supported that have always been so.

Kathy Northcut, Texas Tech University

Illustrations in Science

Theories of how scientific illustrations function can be placed on a spectrum with poles such as "visuals as decorative" and "visuals as epistemological." Though the context in which the visual is viewed certainly determines, at least in part, the meaning that will be wrought from it, there must be characteristics of visuals which by themselves are constitutive of meaning. Advocates of visuals as communicative include art theorists and design theorists including Tufte. However, many of these theorists stop short of examining

specific ways in which visuals might perform rhetorical functions. Noted rhetoricians, including Blair and Fleming, claim that visuals cannot be argumentative. From the graduate research network discussion, I would like to gain a sense of the participants' positions on the role of visuals to better guide the way I research science illustrations and, eventually, frame my arguments to the technical communication field.

Michael Pennell, Purdue University

Literate Citizenship and the Information Technology Revolution

The goal of this project is to examine the shifting understandings of literacy and literate citizenship based on America's shift from industrial capitalism (material labor) to post-industrialism (immaterial labor). The project centers around a comparison of two counties in Indiana--one representative of industrial capitalism, and the second industrial revolution in America, and the other representative of post-industrialism, with a focus on the local university. While terming the university a "knowledge factory" is popular, this project aims to interrogate that claim more literally in light of higher education's growing profitability as an industry and as "the" employment center for many communities. This shift to immaterial labor, represented in many ways by the university, results in a shift of literacy, leading to a possible disparity between the literate citizenship of counties depending on their connection to this new economy.

Eliot Rendleman, Georgia State University

Possibilities for "Refashioning" Aristotle's and Toulmin's Models for Hypertext Argumentation

Although we possess an abundance of excellent research that has enabled us to arrive at a shared understanding of the nature of hypertext, the traditional linear models of argumentation, which are based on and shaped by the print medium, are becoming incompatible, if not obsolete, for the multi-linear nature of the new medium of hypertext. Beyond the philosophical discussions on the nature of hypertext, we also have many excellent books based on experience and human-computer interaction studies that give practical, how-to advice on writing and designing hypertext documents. Unfortunately, these "nuts-and-bolts" books normally focus on writing and designing for consumer audiences, leaving a void in writing advice or instruction that addresses the methods for constructing hypertext arguments in the academic setting. In my study I argue that some of Aristotle's paradigms of discovering and constructing arguments and Toulmin's model for analyzing arguments should be coupled with current hypertext theory to develop instructive texts and guidelines for creating hypertext argumentation in the academy. I believe that such a study and goal of creating such instructive, practical guides and texts explaining concretely and practically what one should and should not do when making an argument using hypertext at the university would benefit undergraduate and graduate writing students and teachers interested in effective online argumentation.

Rochelle Rodrigo, Mesa Community College

Theoretical Cross-Currents: Usability Engineering, Instructional Design Technology, and Rhetoric

The fields of usability engineering and human-computer interaction have a rich and complex variety of web design, development, and evaluation methods that have not developed haphazardly. It is to the detriment of educators, in either the schools and colleges of education or any other specific discipline, to completely ignore usability engineering and human-computer interaction web design, development, and evaluation methods because of the difference in rhetorical purpose. This means that there is a complex web of relationships between technologies, methodologies, and culture that must be understood before using a

specific technology or methodology in an ethical, moral, and theoretically conscious manner. My understanding of the current issues in distance learning, Instructional Design Technology (IDT), and usability engineering imply a need for research that explores the theoretical intersections between IDT and usability engineering:

- *How do IDT design, development, and evaluation methods theoretically compare to Usability Engineering design, development, and evaluation methods?*
- *How do IDT design, development, and evaluation methods epistemologically compare to Usability Engineering design, development, and evaluation methods?*
- *How does a rhetorical understanding of IDT and Usability Engineering design, development, and evaluation methods allow for a collaborative use of the evaluation methods from these fields for the design, development, and evaluation of Distance Learning courses?*

Kathleen St. Peters, Saint Louis University

Dramatism, Computers, and the Writing Classroom

I have been examining the implications that the work of Kenneth Burke might have on theories of composition and literacy. Presently, I am interested in the ways that dramatism can impact the way we theorize computers and writing.

Deborah Scaggs, Saint Louis University

Who Is Responsible When "Johnny Can't Write"?: An Old Debate Technologized

We have all heard the groanings of tenured professors who "have to teach Freshman writing," a cause, its seems, to become "merely" a hoop through which new teachers must jump in order to get to teach the "real stuff." Most college curriculums place a great deal of pressure upon composition teachers to teach students to write well and then are quickly pointed at when "Johnny can't write." Somehow, literature and composition have become foes rather than two complementary elements. Now, it seems, there is an even greater burden and greater pressure placed upon comp teachers to teach technology in the classroom. To what extent is this responsibility reasonable? How does the composition teacher figure in the move to get students to be technologically savvy and good writers? What complications are inevitable when the pressure to be a good teacher is compounded by this issue? These are some of the questions I will explore.

Shaun Slattery, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

As It Unfolds: Studying Compound Mediation with Screen-Capture Software

Although our field acknowledges the complex role computers and the Internet play in communication, we have just begun to develop research methods that help us to "see" this role. Clay Spinuzzi (2001, 2002, 2003) has described the coordinated and often simultaneous use of multiple resources in what he calls "compound mediation." On-screen alone, this compound mediation occurs constantly as individuals and teams coordinate the use of websites, email, word processing, and other software. However, there has been little research into how people manage compound meditation. Screen-capture software, which creates a movie of on-screen activity, presents an unprecedented technique for studying the mediating role of computers. This software allows careful analysis of moment-by-moment choice-making by workers. Coupled with more traditional research methods such as work-area observation, textual analysis, and interviews, this method can provide insights into the strategic management of on and off-screen objects.

These methods can help us analyze writers' activity on-screen. I will discuss ways of analyzing screen-captured data to identify strategic choices as they unfold in an effort to characterize coordinated tool-use by individuals and groups and will have preliminary results of this technique.

Sarah Stockwell, Northern Illinois University

Teaching the Unspoken Visual Webtext: Visual Literacy in Composition

By the time students get to our Composition classes, they have been indoctrinated to the idea that academic papers are to be printed on 8 ½ x 11 inch white paper with default margins. For the student, page format has nothing to do with the content. However, as we begin to incorporate webtexts into our pedagogy, we must be aware that we are taking our students out of the "content-only" realm and into a domain where visual presentation has significant importance. When a student first starts creating web pages, they approach the web editor the same way they would a word processor – by placing the content on the blank page and clicking "Save." Backgrounds are loud and garish; images are slammed to the left or right; the text goes from screen-edge to screen-edge. With little background in visual rhetoric, their final results are amateurish and unprofessional. Thus, in order to be responsible teachers, we must not only introduce our students to the ways visual arrangement on (web) pages encourages unspoken meaning and values, but we must also encourage students to make conscious choices as to the designs of their texts. In my research, I am exploring pedagogical ways to incorporate visual rhetoric in my composition classes, as well as encouraging my students to critically analyze the visually coded texts they come in contact with.

Judith Szerdahelyi, Western Kentucky University

Interests in Computers and Writing: Comparing Two Universities

Computers and the Internet have played a significant role in my writing classes since 1997. After using Norton Textra Connect, an interactive collaborative word-processing program, TopClass, a web-based writing
environment, and e-mail for class discussions, peer editing, collaborative writing projects, or group reports, I developed a personal website in 1998 so that my face-to-face courses were entirely Internet and web based. While still
a graduate student at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, I taught my students basic web-authoring skills to design and to publish a theme-based class website in addition to developing their own personal websites, part of which was evaluated as their end-of-term digital portfolio. Still at UNCG, I served as the departmental technology liaison and the Assistant Director of Composition for Computer-Assisted Instruction. I constructed the program's website, led workshops to teach TA's and faculty how to build their own websites, and facilitated departmental use of technological resources. Since I got my first "real" job at Western Kentucky University two years ago, I have been experimenting with visual rhetoric, web design, etc., mainly in my technical writing courses. Although all of my courses are currently accessible through Blackboard, only my technical writing course can be considered a distance learning course. The possibilities to use technology for instruction at WKU are considerably more limited than at UNCG. Our computer lab, for example, does not even have a printer. These circumstances force me to be creative with technology and make the most of the situation. I am in the process of switching research agendas. My future research will focus on computers and writing. I am very interested in the following general topics: the impact of writing for the web on the development of students' literacy; online collaboration; visual rhetoric; the violation of tech. comm. Principles on the web, including bad web design; culture and identity on the web; distance learning.

John Walter, Saint Louis University

Reviving Medieval Memory for the Digital Age

While there's been a renewed interest in rhetorical memory since the publication of Yates' The Art of Memory in 1966 and much work has been done on classical and medieval memoria, the work on the contemporary practice of rhetorical memory seems either disassociated from an overall theory of rhetorical memory or more speculative than practical. To sum up this situation, Winifred Horner ends her essay "Reinventing Memory and Delivery" with the statement "In the complexities of modern technology, the external memory becomes blended with invention, the exploration of a subject…. In rethinking the canons of memory and delivery, there are no answers—only questions." This project, "Reviving Medieval Memory for the Digital Age," seeks to move beyond the questions and provide suggestions, if not answers, for contemporary practice.

Katherine V. Wills, Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis (Columbus)

Writing Program Administrators in Computer-Mediated Environments

My presentations solicit advice on a research project that empirically studies computer-assisted writing administration as a site of agency for social change. The study inquires into how writing program administrators (WPAs) integrate their agency and power in their roles as writing administrators. This research seeks to fill a gap of knowledge in the field of computers and writing concerning how individual WPAs use their agency when developing and maintaining informated spaces. The study assumes that WPAs act as administrative agents. WPAs use their agency as administrative agents beyond the role of functionaries such as "boss compositionists" (Sledd in Harris, 2000) or academic bureaucrats (R. Miller, 1988). Special features of this dissertation include original primary data on WPA decision-making, education, compensation. Preliminary data show the following: WPAs guide the use of technology in writing setting standards for departments and institutions; WPAs receive mixed recognition for their intellectual contributions in tenure and promotion; WPAs receive mixed or no additional compensation for their computer job skills; search and screen committees increasing require CAI skills of WPAs and writing faculty. The implications of this research find that job skills and intellectual contributions of WPAs who work in CAI have gone unrecognized and uncompensated causing a rise in invisible labor. When CAI is expected of adjunct faculty teaching writing classes, the workload is exponentially increased relative to compensation.

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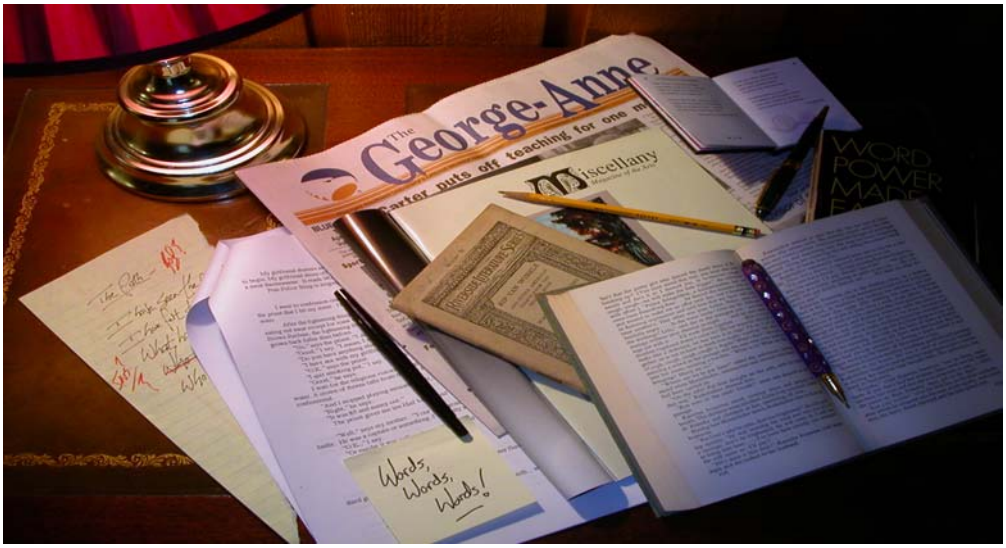
- **Department of Writing & Linguistics**, Georgia Southern University, http://www.gasou.edu/~writling/
- **Susan Lang**, Texas Tech University
- ***Computers and Composition Journal*,** http://www.bgsu.edu/cconline/
- **2003 Computers & Writing Conference** Coordinators, http://www.cw2003.org
- **LaRue Nickelson, Michael Ross Quartet,** http://www.michaelrossquartet.com
- **Tari Lin Fanderclai, the MOO Connections**, GRN Online 2003 Host. http://web.nwe.ufl.edu/~tari/connections/
- **Hampton Press**



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See the full Call for Proposals at http://www.gasou.edu/~writling/GRN/2004/

Notes

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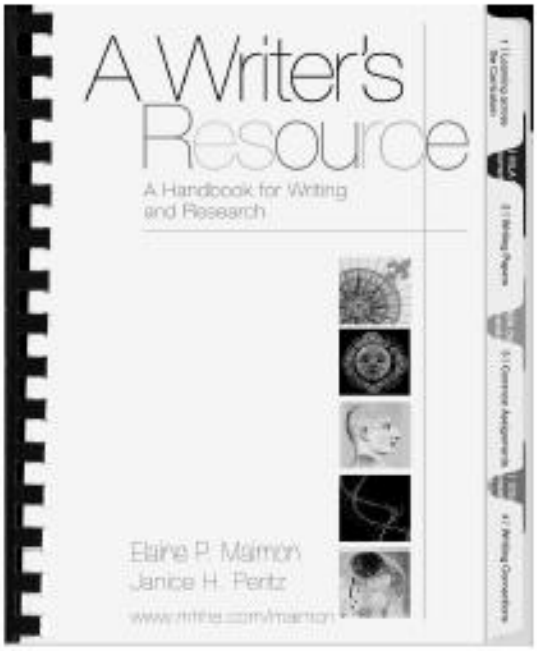

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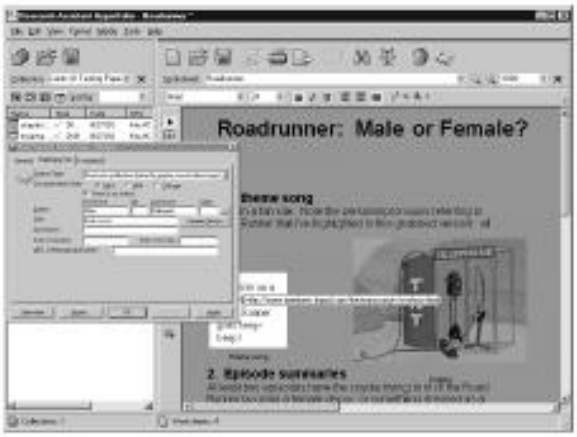

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