Deep Reading

Teaching Reading in the Writing Classroom

Edited by
Patrick Sullivan
Howard Tinberg
Sheridan Blau

Figures 13.1–13.6 reprinted by permission of Michelle Chiles and Emily Brown.

Staff Editor: Bonny Graham
Interior Design: Jenny Jensen Greenleaf
Cover Design: Pat Mayer
Cover Art: *Jubilee*, 2017, ink on paper, Bonnie Rose Sullivan

NCTE Stock Number: 10638; eStock Number: 10645
ISBN 978-0-8141-1063-8; eISBN 978-0-8141-1064-5

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Sullivan, Patrick, 1956– editor. | Tinberg, Howard B., 1953– editor. | Blau, Sheridan D., editor. | National Council of Teachers of English, publisher sponsor.
Title: Deep reading : teaching reading in the writing classroom / edited by : Patrick Sullivan and Howard Tinberg and Sheridan Blau.
Description: Urbana, Illinois : National Council of Teachers of English, [2017] | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2016055603 (print) | LCCN 2017016252 (ebook) | ISBN 9780814110645 ( ) | ISBN 9780814110638
Subjects: LCSH: Reading (Higher education) | English language—Rhetoric—Study and teaching (Higher) | Academic writing—Study and teaching (Higher) | Reading comprehension—Study and teaching (Higher) | College reading improvement programs.
Classification: LCC PE1404 (ebook) | LCC PE1404.D3875 2017 (print) | DDC 428.4071/1—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2016055603

Contents

Introduction

Patrick Sullivan
Manchester Community College

Howard Tinberg
Bristol Community College

Sheridan Blau
Teachers College, Columbia University

We began this project with great enthusiasm—and with perhaps an even greater sense of urgency. We have grown concerned with the lack of attention given to reading in our disciplinary conversation about the teaching of writing, and we are alarmed by the impoverished and reductive understanding of reading that has worked its way into curriculum and state standards by way of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the widespread use of standardized tests to measure proficiency in English. The theory of reading enacted in these state standards and in most standardized testing positions readers as passive recipients of information and defines reading primarily as a kind of text-focused close reading (Dole, Duffy, Roehler, and Pearson). Unfortunately, as Ellen C. Carillo has noted, "a foundational element that has infused literary study since at least the 1970s, but one that the Common Core largely ignores, is that the reader plays a role in the construction of meaning" ("Reimagining" 31). While text-centered close reading must certainly be an important component of any individual's repertoire of literacy skills, this approach to reading draws on a traditional, outmoded, and simplified understanding of the reading process and the nature of reading itself. It is also difficult to find ways to link this type of reading activity to meaning-making and authentic intellectual

work because the reader is left almost entirely out of this process. This approach to reading thus serves to disconnect reading from the important academic and human activities of exploring problems (Wardle), thinking critically and creatively (Facione; Sullivan, "UnEssay"), and producing knowledge.

This theory of reading also ignores decades of reading scholarship that positions readers in more complex relationships with the texts they read. Louise Rosenblatt's important transactional theory of reading, for example, first formulated in 1938, positions individuals in a dynamic, reciprocal relationship not only with texts but also with "the natural and social environment" (Rosenblatt, *Reader* xiv). Rosenblatt theorizes reading, famously, as "an event in the life of a reader, as a doing, a making, a combustion fed by the coming together of a particular personality and a particular text at a particular time" (*Literature* xvi). Transactional theories of reading provide abundant opportunities for students to engage in authentic intellectual work, and they connect reading to writing, critical and creative thinking, and the production of knowledge in deep and powerful ways. This theory of reading also enacts the production of knowledge in personal, academic, and vocational contexts, in which the value of an act of reading is intimately connected to the character traits, habits of mind, and ethical commitments of the persons who read (Blau). Key habits of mind, like those articulated in the "Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing," that we seek to privilege in our classrooms can also be actively nurtured. These habits of mind include curiosity, openness, engagement, creativity, persistence, responsibility, flexibility, and metacognition (Council of Writing Program Administrators; Costa and Kallick).

Marcel Proust may have provided the most eloquent formulation of this theory of reading in his essay "On Reading," first published in 1905. Proust positions the reader as central to the meaning-making process and formulates a complex transactional understanding of how readers produce meaning:

> Indeed, this is one of the great and wondrous characteristics of beautiful books (and one which will enable us to understand the simultaneously essential and limited role that reading can play in our spiritual life): that for the author they may

> be called Conclusions, but for the reader, Provocations. We can feel that our wisdom begins where the author's ends, and we want him to give us answers when all he can do is give us desires. He awakens these desires in us only when he gets us to contemplate the supreme beauty which he cannot reach except through the utmost efforts of his art. But by a strange and, it must be said, providential law of spiritual optics (a law which signifies, perhaps, that we cannot receive the truth from anyone else, that we must create it ourselves), the end of the book's wisdom appears to us as merely the start of our own, so that at the moment when the book has told us everything it can, it gives rise to the feeling that it has told us nothing. (23)

The key moment for us—and a formulation of vital importance for our discipline as we seek to theorize a deeper, more integrated understanding of the reading–writing relationship—is this phrase: "our wisdom begins where the author's ends."

Nationally, the widespread acceptance among school policymakers and politicians of a traditional and radically simplified theoretical understanding of reading appears to have produced an epidemic of what Kelly Gallagher has called "readicide"—"the systematic killing of the love of reading, often exacerbated by the inane, mind-numbing practices found in schools" (2). Gallagher suggests that readicide is caused by educational practices that value the development of test takers over the development of lifelong readers (5). This understanding of "valuing reading" (7) may help to explain the disturbing results reported on the Nation's Report Card, a congressionally mandated project administrated by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) through the National Center for Education Statistics. As Patrick notes in his essay in this volume, in 2015 only 37 percent of twelfth-grade students performed at or above the Proficient achievement level in reading (Nation's Report Card). The remainder of students in this testing cohort tested below Proficient, with what NAEP identifies as either Basic or Below Basic reading skills. NAEP found comparable levels of low achievement in math, science, and writing. A simplified approach to reading may well help to explain poor student performance in these subject areas as well. Two reports about reading from the National Endowment for the Arts—*Reading at Risk* and *To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence*—document the scope of this

problem. Dana Gioia acknowledges in his preface for *To Read or Not to Read* that "the story the data tell [about reading] is simple, consistent, and alarming" (5). Reading comprehension skills are eroding, and these declines have "serious civic, social, cultural, and economic implications" (7).

Building on the work of Elizabeth Wardle, we must theorize the approach we take to reading in the writing classroom as a high-stakes enterprise. Wardle theorizes two very different kinds of learning dispositions that we can privilege in the classroom: "problem-exploring dispositions" and "answer-getting dispositions." A problem-exploring disposition inclines students "toward curiosity, reflection, consideration of multiple possibilities, a willingness to engage in a recursive process of trial and error, and toward a recognition that more than one solution can 'work'" (n.p.). An answer-getting disposition, in contrast, inclines students toward seeking "right answers quickly" and actively encourages students to be "averse to open consideration of multiple possibilities." Wardle warns that

> the steady movement toward standardized testing and tight control of educational activities by legislators is producing and reproducing answer-getting dispositions in educational systems and individuals and . . . this movement is more than a dislike for the messiness of deep learning; rather, it can be understood as an attempt to limit the kind of thinking that students and citizens have the tools to do.

As Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron have demonstrated, language skills reside at the very core of thinking, learning, and cognition itself: "Language is not simply an instrument of communication: it also provides, together with a richer or poorer vocabulary, a more or less complex system of categories, so that the capacity to decipher and manipulate complex structures, whether logical or aesthetic," depends significantly on the complexity of a student's language (73). The unsettling findings of the National Commission on Writing, therefore, may have as much to tell us about *reading* as they do about writing. The commission found, unfortunately, that twelfth-grade students currently produce writing that is "relatively immature and unsophisticated" (17).

Like Gallagher, a number of reading scholars and expert classroom practitioners have been actively at work seeking to offset this movement toward a simplistic and mechanical understanding of reading, but their work has been slow to be embraced by compositionists (Atwell; Miller; Newkirk; Smith and Wilhelm; Wolf). Much of this work is written by and for secondary school teachers, and this has helped perpetuate the idea in our discipline that reading instruction is the concern of K–12 educators only and does not require the attention of college instructors. This has also contributed to isolating college compositionists from reading theory and instructional strategies, even though college writing teachers routinely acknowledge the need to improve the reading skills of students in their writing classes. As David A. Jolliffe has noted, "At every college and university where I have taught in the past twenty-five years—and this list includes four state universities, a private liberal arts college, and a large Catholic university—the talk about student reading is like the weather: Everybody complains about it, but nobody does anything about it" (470).

We suspect that one reason for the neglect of reading within composition and rhetoric is the well-documented tension within English departments between those whose expertise is literary (including critical theory, historical criticism, gender studies, and other areas of specialization focusing on the reading of canonical, literary texts) and those whose professional expertise is with composition and rhetoric. As Sheridan notes in his essay in this volume, the parting of the ways between teachers of literature and teachers of composition is rooted in a tradition within literary studies of privileging authoritative readings produced by literary specialists and devoting only limited attention to the experience of actual student readers as they engage with texts. In this instructional model, readings communicated by literature teachers to their students become the primary focus and product of instruction. Student writing about literature in this model is often evaluated largely on the basis of its "correctness" in reproducing someone else's knowledge, thereby ignoring what Proust calls in his essay "On Reading" a "providential law of spiritual optics," a "law which signifies, perhaps, that we cannot receive the truth from anyone else, that we must create it ourselves" (23).

As composition began to consolidate into a discrete discipline, however, it shifted from a focus on the product (text) to the process of composing and an understanding of the writer as a maker of meaning. Tensions between literature specialists and composition specialists in English departments thus grew from the fundamental differences in their assumptions about how a text and meanings are produced, taught, and evaluated. The famed Lindemann–Tate debates of the 1990s, which both Sheridan and Howard reference in their essays in this collection, exemplify the intensity of this theoretical difference and its practical focus on the question of whether—or to what extent—the study of literature could continue to command any curricular space in a modern and professionally well-informed first-year composition class. The increasing disciplinary respectability of composition as a field with its own research traditions, theoretical frames, and pedagogical principles eventuated the wholesale removal of literary study from first-year writing classes nationally.

Without literature and the range of interpretive possibilities generated by literary texts and genres, many first-year writing classes and programs have focused instead on teaching students to read rhetorically (Bean) and to employ rhetorical analysis when reading nonfiction texts, particularly in relation to argumentative writing, which in secondary schools and many first-year composition programs has became the dominant genre of writing (Sullivan, *New* 11–118). The popularity of rhetorical reading may help to explain why it occupies such a prominent place in the description of reading skills and competencies emphasized in CCSS documents, where the analysis of texts tends to be reduced to an examination of a text's formal properties and leaving largely unengaged a confrontation with a text's meaning, the problems a text invites readers to consider, and the wisdom it might offer.

For writing specialists, like most academic professionals, keeping up with scholarship outside of their area of specialization is often challenging, and within the field of English, reading specialists and writing specialists often inhabit very different professional and educational spaces, teach different kinds of courses, and perhaps naturally converse primarily with members of their own professional discourse communities. One of our goals with this book is to help address this disciplinary segregation and to

help restart our disciplinary conversation about reading and writing that was begun in the 1980s and flourished for about fifteen years before declining precipitously. This conversation was led by scholars such as Patricia Donahue, Mariolina Rizzi Salvatori, David Bartholomae, and Anthony Petrosky. Alice Horning, along with Donahue and Salvatori, have done the important work of keeping this conversation alive since the blossoming of interest in reading in the 1980s. Unfortunately, however, the assessment of our discipline voiced by Marguerite Helmers in 2003 still holds: "the act of reading is not part of the common professional discourse in composition studies" (4; Salvatori and Donahue, "Guest"; Horning and Kraemer; Horning and Gollnitz). Although there has been a recent resurgence of interest in reading by scholars including Ellen C. Carillo (*Securing*), Daniel Keller, Michael Bunn, and Patrick (*New*), there is still much to say about this subject as we develop a theory of writing that is informed by the central role that reading plays in the production of knowledge and meaning (Salvatori and Donahue, "What"; Smith; Jolliffe and Harl). This book seeks to contribute to this reawakening of our professional interest in reading and to help advance our theoretical and practical understandings of the essential connection between reading and writing.

In many important ways, this volume is a continuation of our series of books focused on college-level writing: *What Is "College-Level" Writing?* (Sullivan and Tinberg) and *What Is "College-Level" Writing? Volume 2: Assignments, Readings, and Student Writing Samples* (Sullivan, Tinberg, and Blau). We would like to suggest—after many years of reflection and research on the complex question that frames these two books—that reading must be theorized as foundationally linked to any understanding of college-level writing. As Maryanne Wolf notes in her book on reading and the science of the brain, the invention of writing and reading some 10,000 years ago required us to restructure the physical properties of our brains, creating new neural pathways and the development of important new cognitive functions. This process "rearranged the very organization of our brain, which in turn expanded the ways we were able to think, which altered the intellectual evolution of our species" (3; Kandel, Schwartz, Jessell, Siegelbaum, and Hudspeth). A great deal is at stake, therefore, as

we seek to deepen our understanding of the vital role that reading plays in teaching and learning in the writing classroom.

We also seek in this book to affirm the value of reading for pleasure and the importance of developing pedagogies and classroom practices that communicate to students the many aesthetic and affective joys to be found in reading. This is an approach to reading perhaps best captured by the title of one of Louise Rosenblatt's most widely known essays: "What Facts Does This Poem Teach You?" We also believe there is great value in Marcel Proust's understanding of reading as a "pure form of friendship" (34) and, to borrow Maryanne Wolf's memorable phrase about Proust's understanding of reading, as a kind of "intellectual 'sanctuary,' where human beings have access to thousands of different realities they might never encounter or understand otherwise" (6). Wolf has suggested that this "expanding sense of 'other' changes who we are" and "what we imagine we can be" (8). Following Proust, we believe that "it is through the contact with other minds which constitutes reading that our minds are 'fashioned'" (36–37). We also embrace one of Nancie Atwell's key formulations:

> For students of every ability and background, it's the simple, miraculous act of reading a good book that turns them into readers, because even for the least experienced, most reluctant reader, it's the one good book that changes everything. The job of adults who care about reading is to move heaven and earth to put that book into a child's [or high school student's or college student's] hands. (27–28)

Overall, our primary goal with this book, following Atwell, is ambitious: to help nurture skilled, passionate, habitual, critical, joyful, lifelong readers across all grade levels and especially across institutional boundaries in US high schools and colleges.

Part I of this book attempts to clearly define the many challenges we have before us as we seek to integrate reading into the writing classroom and as we develop a theory of reading that honors it as a richly complex social, cognitive, and affective human activity. We begin with a chapter by David A. Jolliffe, which updates his important review essay about reading that was published in 2007 in *College Composition and Communication*. We

follow this with a chapter by Sam Morris, a former high school English teacher, who takes us into his high school classroom as he works to teach reading and writing in progressive ways while also struggling to satisfy state and local curricular requirements. Kathleen Blake Yancey, Jacob W. Craig, Matthew Davis, and Michael Spooner follow with an essay about the effects of new technology on reading and writing practices. We conclude this section with Jason Courtmanche, who is director of the Connecticut Writing Project and has been working with high school English teachers for many years. Courtmanche offers a cross-disciplinary perspective on the value of reading from his experience teaching an Honors First-Year Experience course at the University of Connecticut that enrolled primarily non-English majors.

Part II features three essays written by college students about their development as writers. As it turns out, their testimony documents the integral role that reading has played in this development. Significantly, standardized tests such as the SAT, ACT, and K–12 state-mandated proficiency tests played no role whatsoever in nurturing their interest in reading and writing. It appears that standardized tests can, perhaps, certify a certain narrow kind of reading and writing proficiency (Klausman et al.; Hillocks; Sacks), but they cannot nurture or create this kind of proficiency—or a deep love for reading and writing. Instead, our student contributors point to a whole range of experiences inside and outside of the classroom that have kindled and sustained their passion for reading and writing.

We can learn much from these experiences that can inform the activities and pedagogies we privilege in our classroom as we seek to nurture this kind of interest and passion. These activities focus on choice, freedom, autonomy, deep learning, creativity, writing across disciplines, and pedagogical strategies that introduce students to disciplinary knowledge. Overall, these student essays provide a fascinating glimpse into the teaching and learning process in action in the lives of real students. The essays also highlight the many different ways the process of literacy acquisition can unfold as students work their way to becoming strong readers, writers, and thinkers. They also help us see how pedagogical choices, theories of reading and writing, and classroom practices affect real students in real classrooms right now.

Each of our student contributors worked with a sponsor and mentor, and each mentor was given the opportunity to reflect on this collaboration in a brief commentary that follows their student's work.

Because we know that classroom English teachers grades 6–13 will be the primary agents helping students become college-ready readers and writers, Part III of our book focuses on the practical and the pragmatic. This supersized section of our book offers teachers a rich variety of pragmatic approaches to teaching deep reading in writing courses that can be put immediately to use in the classroom. These chapters deal with the widest possible variety of approaches to teaching reading in the writing classroom. We begin with Patrick's essay, which seeks to theorize an approach to teaching writing based on "deep reading"—a process of inquiry built around "challenging questions" and "troublesome knowledge" as well as caution, humility, and open-mindedness. Kelly Cecchini, a high school English teacher, then reports on an innovative collaboration between a high school English department and a local college English department. This chapter reports on precisely the kind of collaboration and bridge building across institutional boundaries that we hope to foster with this book.

We then move on to a group of chapters that explores a variety of approaches to teaching deep reading. Ellen C. Carillo discusses classroom strategies related to "mindful reading" that will help students read and write across disciplines. Katie Hern examines the important role that reading and "big ideas" must play in the basic writing classroom. Muriel Harris offers advice to writing teachers about teaching reading based on more than thirty years of experience as a writing center tutor, director, and advocate. Howard Tinberg explores the many challenges of teaching reading in a first-year composition class in a community college setting. Sheridan Blau proposes that a return to the study of literary texts in first-year writing classes can offer the richest possible opportunities for strengthening the capacity of college students to read deeply. Rebecca S. Nowacek and Heather G. James draw on the practices of expert readers in the STEM disciplines, and through this framework find that they understand student struggles in writing classes in new ways. Patricia Donahue and Mariolina Rizzi Salvatori conclude this section with a chapter that theorizes an ap-

proach to teaching reading and writing—"unruly reading"—that bypasses the restrictions of certain established reading patterns to uncover "zones of possibility, provoking, even encouraging, the element of discovery."

Part IV concludes the book with two short letters written for students, one by Patrick and the other by Alfredo Celedón Luján. It is our hope that these two letters, which seek to translate disciplinary knowledge about reading and writing for student readers, will help classroom instructors initiate productive conversations with *their* students about reading and writing.

We have had the great honor of developing this book in consultation with Alice Horning, Deborah-Lee Gollnitz, and Cynthia Haller, who are also editing a volume of scholarly essays about reading that focuses on reading across the disciplines. The title of their book is *What Is College Reading?* (ATD Books and the WAC Clearinghouse). We have developed these two books collaboratively, and we offer them to readers as companion volumes. Although we have pursued different editorial objectives, both collections arose from a similar impulse—the need to address the importance of reading in the teaching of writing. Alice has kindly provided an afterword for this collection, which includes a brief preview of *What Is College Reading?* and the book's table of contents.

We dedicate this book to Louise Rosenblatt, one of our heroes. Like Rosenblatt, we believe that a great deal is at stake when students read—for individual development and growth, for the health of our communities, and for the strength of our democracy. Like Rosenblatt, we believe that

> democracy is not simply a structure of political institutions but, as Dewey said, "a way of life." Democracy implies a society of people who, no matter how much they differ from one another, recognize their common interests, their common goals, and their dependence on mutually honored freedoms and responsibilities. For this they need the ability to imagine the human consequences of political and economic alternatives and to think rationally about emotionally charged issues. Such strengths should be fostered by all the agencies that shape the individual, but the educational system, through all its disciplines, has a crucial role. (*Literature* xv)

Rosenblatt's belief that "the teaching of literature could especially contribute to such democratic education" (*Literature* xv) was the inspiration for her landmark book on reading, *Literature as Exploration*. A similar impulse to communicate the vital importance of reading has been the source of our inspiration as well.

We warmly welcome readers to this collection and its celebration of literacy, intellectual generosity, and classrooms alive with deep reading and deep learning.

Works Cited

Atwell, Nancie. *The Reading Zone: How to Help Kids Become Skilled, Passionate, Habitual, Critical Readers*. New York: Scholastic, 2007. Print.

Bean, John C. *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*. 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011. Print.

Blau, Sheridan. "Performative Literacy: The Habits of Mind of Highly Literate Readers." *Voices from the Middle* 10.3 (2003): 18–22. Print.

Bourdieu, Pierre, and Jean-Claude Passeron. *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. 2nd ed. Trans. Richard Nice. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2000. Print.

Bunn, Michael. "Motivation and Connection: Teaching Reading (and Writing) in the Composition Classroom." *College Composition and Communication*. 64.3 (2013): 496–516. Print.

Carillo, Ellen C. "Reimagining the Role of the Reader in the Common Core State Standards." *English Journal* 105.3 (2016): 29–35. Print.

———. *Securing a Place for Reading in Composition: The Importance of Teaching for Transfer*. Logan: Utah State UP, 2015. Print.

Costa, Arthur L., and Bena Kallick, eds. *Learning and Leading with Habits of Mind*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008. Print.

Council of Writing Program Administrators, National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Writing Project. "Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing." *Council of Writing Program Administrators*. 2011. Web. 30 Dec. 2016.

Dole, Janice A., Gerald G. Duffy, Laura R. Roehler, and P. David Pearson. "Moving from the Old to the New: Research on Reading Comprehension Instruction." *Review of Educational Research* 61.2 (1991): 239–64. Print.

Facione, Peter. "Critical Thinking: A Statement of Expert Consensus for Purposes of Educational Assessment and Instruction." *The Delphi Report Executive Summary: Research Findings and Recommendations Prepared for the Committee on Pre-College Philosophy of the American Philosophical Association.* ERIC Document Reproduction Service, No. ED315423. 1990. Print.

Gallagher, Kelly. *Readicide: How Schools Are Killing Reading and What You Can Do about It*. Portland: Stenhouse, 2009. Print.

Gioia, Dana. "Preface." *To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence*. Research Division Report 47. Washington: National Endowment for the Arts. Nov. 2007. 5–6. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

Helmers, Marguerite. *Intertexts: Reading Pedagogy in College Writing Classrooms*. New York: Routledge, 2003. Print.

Hillocks, George. *The Testing Trap: How State Writing Assessments Control Learning*. New York: Teachers College P, 2002. Print.

Horning, Alice, and Elizabeth W. Kraemer. *Reconnecting Reading and Writing*. Anderson: Parlor P, 2013. Print.

Horning, Alice, and Deborah-Lee Gollnitz. "What Is College Reading? A High School-College Dialogue." *Reader* 67 (2014): 43–72. Print.

Jolliffe, David A. "Review Essay: Learning to Read as Continuing Education." *College Composition and Communication* 58.3 (2007): 470–94. Print.

Jolliffe, David A., and Allison Harl. "Texts of Our Institutional Lives: Studying the 'Reading Transition' from High School to College: What Are Our Students Reading and Why?" *College English* 70.6 (2008): 599–607. Print.

Kandel, Eric R., James H. Schwartz, Thomas M. Jessell, Steven A. Siegelbaum, and A. J. Hudspeth. *Principles of Neural Science*. 5th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012. Print.

Keller, Daniel. *Chasing Literacy: Reading and Writing in an Age of Acceleration*. Logan: Utah State UP, 2014. Print.

Klausman, Jeffrey, Christie Toth, Wendy Swyt, Brett Griffiths, Patrick Sullivan, Anthony Warnke, Amy L. Williams, Joanne Giordano, and Leslie Roberts. "TYCA White Paper on Placement Reform." *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* 44.2 (2016): 135–57. Print.

Miller, Donalyn. *The Book Whisperer: Awakening the Inner Reader in Every Child*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009. Print.

National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges. *The Neglected "R" : The Need for a Writing Revolution*. Princeton: College Board, 2003. Web. 24 Aug. 2010.

National Endowment for the Arts. *Reading at Risk*. Research Division Report 46. Washington: National Endowment for the Arts, 2004. Print.

———. *To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence*. Research Division Report 47. Washington: National Endowment for the Arts. Nov. 2007. Print.

Nation's Report Card. "Nine Subjects. Three Grades. One Report Card." *National Assessment of Educational Progress,* 2016. Web. 2 Jan. 2017.

Newkirk, Thomas. *The Art of Slow Reading*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2012. Print.

Proust. Marcel. "On Reading." *On Reading*. Ed. and trans. Damion Searls. London: Hesperus, 2011. 3–43. Print.

Rosenblatt, Louise. *Literature as Exploration*. 5th ed. New York: MLA, 1995. Print.

———. *The Reader, the Text, and the Poem: The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1978. Print.

———. "What Facts Does This Poem Teach You?" *Language Arts* 57.4 (1980): 386–94. Print.

Sacks, Peter. *Standardized Minds: The High Price of America's Testing Culture and What We Can Do about It*. Cambridge: Perseus, 1999. Print.

Salvatori, Mariolina, and Patricia Donahue. "Guest Editors' Introduction: Guest Editing as a Form of Disciplinary Probing." *Pedagogy* 16.1 (2016): 1–8. Print.

———. "What Is College English? Stories about Reading: Appearance, Disappearance, Morphing, and Revival." *College English* 75.2 (2012): 199–217. Print.

Smith, Cheryl Hogue. "Interrogating Texts: From Deferent to Efferent and Aesthetic Reading Practices." *Journal of Basic Writing* 31.1 (2012): 59–79. Print.

Smith, Michael W., and Jeffery D. Wilhelm. *"Reading Don't Fix No Chevys": Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2002. Print.

Sullivan, Patrick. *A New Writing Classroom: Listening, Motivation, and Habits of Mind*. Logan: Utah State UP, 2014. Print.

———. "The UnEssay: Making Room for Creativity in the Composition Classroom." *College Composition and Communication* 67.1 (2015): 6–34. Print.

Sullivan, Patrick, and Howard Tinberg, eds. *What Is "College-Level" Writing?* Urbana: NCTE, 2006. Print.

Sullivan, Patrick, Howard Tinberg, and Sheridan Blau, eds. *What Is "College-Level" Writing? Volume 2: Assignments, Readings, and Student Writing Sample*s. Urbana: NCTE, 2010. Print.

Wardle, Elizabeth. "Creative Repurposing for Expansive Learning: Considering 'Problem-Exploring' and 'Answer-Getting' Dispositions in Individuals and Fields." *Composition Forum* 26 (2012). Web. 24 August 2015.

Wolf, Maryanne. *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*. New York: Harper, 2008. Print.

"Learning to Read as Continuing Education" Revisited: An Active Decade, but Much Remains to Be Done

David A. Jolliffe
University of Arkansas

A decade ago, *College Composition and Communication* published my review essay "Learning to Read as Continuing Education." Shortly after its publication, my former student and, at that time, director of composition at the University of Wyoming, Mary P. Sheridan, accused me of being a bit sneaky. She recognized my gambit right away: I wasn't merely reviewing four important books, all of which touched on issues related to the teaching of reading in high schools and colleges and to fostering a better "reading transition" from the former to the latter. Under the guise of a book review, I was assaying what I perceived to be a substantial problem in composition studies, which I now refer to simply as "the reading problem": the failure of the field in general to interrogate the roles that reading plays in high school and college writing and to recognize the paucity of theories, methods, and materials teachers have in both settings to develop more informed perspectives about themselves as teachers of reading. As I noted in the review essay, "the topic of reading lies outside the critical discourse of composition studies," so instructors do "not have access to ample resources to help them think about a model of active constructive reading in their courses or about strategies for putting that model into play" (478). Given that lacuna, I wanted in 2007 to jumpstart a conversation about reading in composition studies, to contribute to the incipient impulse at

that moment in the profession to bring reading to the fore. I'm delighted to report that Mary almost immediately understood my call for more extensive discussions of the reading problem and invited me to come to Laramie to talk about the issue with her and her colleagues.

In the ten years since the publication of "Learning to Read as Continuing Education," the conversation has become slightly more vigorous, if not necessarily more focused, and I am honored that the editors of this volume have invited me to reflect on how the terrain of the reading problem has changed in the ensuing decade. In what follows, I describe the contributions of some new participants in the discourse—important new documents and new scholarship—and I conclude by raising questions I hope the profession will continue to address in the coming years. Because, ideally, students' acquisition of college-level reading abilities exists on a continuum, I begin with the new action in the K–12 scene and then move to new developments at the postsecondary level.

The Reading Problem Confronted, K–12

There can be no doubt that, for K–12 educators, a seismic shift in the reading problem's center of gravity came about with the famous—some would say infamous—Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The standards, a joint venture of the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and Achieve, a not-for-profit education-reform organization, emerged very quickly between early 2008, when the three sponsoring organizations released a report calling for the development of a "common core of internationally benchmarked standards" (*Common Core State Standards Initiative*), and late 2009, when the first draft of the actual standards was released.

The standards are cast as instructional guideposts for teaching English language arts and mathematics in grades kindergarten through 12, and the English standards hold the potential to significantly affect both the ways students are taught to read in elementary and high school and the reading habits, practices, and states of mind they bring to college. The jury is still out on the question of "significantly affect" for good or ill.

The English language arts standards are subdivided into categories of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language, and there are four sub-subdivisions for reading: "reading-literature," "reading-informational texts," "reading-foundational skills," and "literacy in science, social studies, and technical fields." (Some teachers initially objected to the label "informational texts," wondering whether they would be required to teach students to read, say, technical manuals.) The sub-subdivisions are then sub-sub-subdivided into grade-level bands—for reading literature and reading informational texts, for example, there are standards for each grade from kindergarten through grade 8 and then standards for grades 9–10 and 11–12. The CCSS document clarifies that the "reading-foundational skills" standards are relevant only in grades kindergarten through 5, and the literacy in the content areas standards pertain only to grades 6 through 12.

Each of the sub-sub-subdivided sets derives from the same ten "anchor standards" for reading:

- Anchor standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Anchor standard 2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- Anchor standard 3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Anchor standard 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- Anchor standard 5: Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- Anchor standard 6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

- Anchor standard 7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- Anchor standard 8: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
- Anchor standard 9: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
- Anchor standard 10: Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

At first blush, these standards might seem relatively unobjectionable. They essentially call on students to learn old-fashioned, New Critical close reading—what's the main idea of a text and how do the parts of the text work to flesh out, to instantiate, this main idea?—and a few other things: how to read "diverse media and formats" and how to make what Ellin Keene and Susan Zimmerman call "text-to-text connections" (55).

There are a couple of odd blemishes in the reading standards. The collocation of "point of view" and "purpose" in standard 6 has always struck me as odd, as an apples-and-oranges juxtaposition. And I have often wondered why standard 8, on delineating and evaluating the argument, is so far down the line since it seems so directly related to standard 2, determining the central ideas. (Plus, I find myself completely befuddled by the way anchor standard 8 appears in the standards for reading literature: "Does not apply to literature" is what it says. How, I wonder, am I going to teach act 3, scene 2, of *Julius Caesar* ["Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears . . . "] without delineating and evaluating the argument and the specific claims in the text?) Now in my forty-first year in the classroom, having taught everything from tenth grade through graduate school, on the one hand I see these standards as a potentially salutary assurance that students whose teaching has been guided by them will at least be able to encounter a text on my syllabus, take a stab at constructing a statement of what they think it means (and, yes, the opinions of sundry literary theorists be damned, I do think texts actually

mean something), and justify their interpretation by referring to specific elements of the text.

On the other hand, I share many of the qualms my colleagues have expressed about reading as outlined in the Common Core State Standards. The problems can be represented in three categories, two of which are not immediately evident in the anchor standards. First, given the inclusion of a set of standards for reading informational texts, high school English teachers have been concerned that the important primary texts of fiction, poetry, and drama they are prepared to teach—and perhaps have taught for years on end—will be elbowed out of the curriculum by nonfiction texts, especially those that might deserve the ungainly name of "informational texts." These teachers' fears have been exacerbated by the allusion in the standards document to the "distribution of literary and informational passages by grade in the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress reading framework" (*Common Core State Standards Initiative*). That framework proposed that the entire reading "menu" for fourth graders should be 50 percent literature and 50 percent informational texts; for eighth graders, 45 percent literature and 55 percent informational texts; and for twelfth graders, 30 percent literature and 70 percent informational texts. The standards document attempts to assuage these fears of the death of imaginative literature by arguing that the teaching of reading should not be the sole responsibility of English instructors and that literacy instruction should be spread across the curriculum—hence the inclusion of reading standards for literacy in science, social studies, and technical subjects. If a typical high school senior is expected to read 30 percent literary and 70 percent informational texts, so the thinking goes, the bulk of the 70 percent will be shouldered in the non-English courses. Most high school English teachers I know, however, understand the pedagogical realpolitik of their schools and concede that they are usually the only faculty members who in practice attend to the teaching of reading. If any administrator in their district believes in those NAEP percentages, these teachers surmise, they're going to be teaching lots less literature and lots more "information." Seasoned English teachers have nightmares about being required to explicate refrigerator repair manuals.

Second, teachers wonder whether the CCSS provide a de facto reading list—one, moreover, they don't like much. The hotly disputed Appendix B of the standards document offers 183 pages of lists of "exemplar texts": fiction, poetry, drama, and informational texts for English language arts in all the grade levels and for history and social studies, science, and technical subjects in grades 9 through 12. To be sure, the standards document clarifies that these are not recommended reading lists, but instead simply collections of texts that are appropriate in "complexity, quality, and range of date, authorship, and subject matter" (*Common Core State Standards Initiative*) for the grade levels. But Appendix B has agitated teachers for a handful of legitimate reasons. First, even the literary selections are often texts with which teachers are not familiar and which seem to be beyond the comprehension level of their students. Few teachers of English language arts in grades 9–10, for example, could envision themselves teaching (and their students understanding) Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* or Ionesco's *Rhinoceros*. Second, the informational texts selected for English language arts and for the other content area courses seem even odder choices than the literary texts. The informational texts for English include a number of mainstream American history and government works—for grades 9 and 10, for example, Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty or give me death" speech, Washington's Farewell Address, and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and his Second Inaugural—but also some quirky suggestions like Margaret Chase Smith's "Remarks to the Senate in Support of a Declaration of Conscience." And one has to wonder if any teacher in the content areas would actually assign some of the informational texts recommended for them: at grades 9–10, for example, Mark Kurlansky's *Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World* for history and social studies and the Environmental Protection Agency pamphlet "Recommended Levels of Insulation" for science. Third, almost predictably, some high school administrators apparently do view Appendix B as comprising recommended reading lists and actually require teachers to add selections from the appendix to their courses.

Finally, the most problematic aspect of the Common Core reading standards is adumbrated in the anchor standards, but it's made explicit in the sample "performance tasks" that accompany

the lists of exemplar texts in Appendix B. Simply put, the reading standards have heralded a solitary—some would say a manic—focus on close reading, on what the professional development mavens have come to call "text-based responses." These tasks operate on the assumption that texts have stable, determinate "meanings"; that the component parts of a text, also stable and determinate, combine to forge these meanings; and that readers' responses to the texts play no vital part in their comprehension and evaluation. Critics of this "text-based" focus call attention to the operative verbs in the reading anchor standards: *cite, determine, summarize, analyze, interpret, assess, integrate, evaluate, delineate*. Notably absent are verbs that might signal what many teachers believe to be appropriate starting points for reading comprehension: *respond, react, connect*. Personal response—and some would add personal engagement—is verboten.

Even a cursory examination of the sample performance tasks reveals the standards' "just-the-texts, ma'am" approach. Consider this task for a grade 9 or 10 English language arts course: "Students analyze how the Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa in his film *Throne of Blood* draws on and transforms Shakespeare's play *Macbeth* in order to develop a similar plot set in feudal Japan." Similarly, look at this sample task for a grade 9 or 10 science class: "Students cite specific textual evidence from Annie J. Cannon's 'Classifying the Stars' to support their analyses of the scientific importance of the discovery that light is composed of many colors. Students include in their analyses precise details from the text (such as Cannon's repeated use of the image of the rainbow) to buttress their explanation" (*Common Core State Standards Initiative*). Nowhere in the Kurosawa-*Macbeth* question are the student readers encouraged to position themselves in relation to the central themes of both the film and the play: ambition, regicide, marital relations. Nowhere in the Cannon question are the student writers invited to consider why the "repeated use of the image of the rainbow" might actually be engaging to Cannon's audience.

Scholars and teachers of reading at the college level decry the mindsets, habits, and practices that students taught under the CCSS might bring to higher education. Taking a pragmatist's perspective, Hephzibah Roskelly offers this indictment:

> Reading, it's implied, consists of knowing "what a text says explicitly." Experience as a part of reading is absent in this construction of values. Absent as well is recognition of how one makes meaning from texts. If a reader reads the text *explicitly*, the assumption is, she should have no difficulty reading. What's left unsaid in this set of reading desiderata is significant for teachers. How do readers attain these skills? How do they come to interpret words and phrases? How do they recognize genres? There is no mention of the process of reading, much less the experiences readers bring with them or the role of experience in reading at all. Without that help or suggestion, many teachers are left to understand that "what they think, what they feel" doesn't matter. Or shouldn't. (123)

Sean Connors and Ryan Rish see the CCSS focus as a call to an elitism that plagued English studies for much of its history:

> [The] CCSS's myopic emphasis on close reading . . . constitutes a social justice issue in so far as this emphasis validates and sanctions certain texts, types of readers, and sets of literacy practices while marginalizing others. Through the CCSS keyhole, texts are considered for their complexity divorced from social contexts in which they were written (and are read), students are considered through a deficit lens based on the extent to which their knowledge of text conventions assists in determining the meaning of the text, and students' literacy practices are considered invalid and deficient if they do not map neatly on to school-sanctioned ways of reading and determining meaning from texts. (96)

In short, educators who worry about the completely depersonalized and decontextualized definition of reading tacitly developed in the CCSS ask the simple question, "Is this the way we want to teach reading?"

The future of the Common Core movement is uncertain. As I write, the movement is taking flak from both sides of the political spectrum: right-leaning politicos and educators influenced by them are claiming that it represents a federal government takeover and therefore an abrogation of states' right, while more progressive thinkers are calling into question the developmental appropriateness of the standards, the excessive amount of testing time they will entail, and the labyrinthine bureaucracy that surrounds the

entire process—as well as their elimination of personal, experiential response as an entrée to reading. Also as I write, several states have withdrawn their support for, and participation in, the standards movement and are in the process of rewriting their own state standards—many of which resemble the CCSS, only with the state's label on them. It will bear close watching over the next several years to see if the states generate guidelines for the teaching of reading that will result in students' coming to college prepared to engage with texts personally and intellectually and to read them closely and critically.

In Colleges and Universities: A Few, but Important, Movements

I would be hard-pressed to assert that the postsecondary concern about the reading problem has really caught fire. But even though the college-level interest in reading has not been as visible as the one prompted by the CCSS at the K–12 level, there has been a slight uptick in activity among college and university scholars and teachers in the past decade. Specifically, the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) has revised its "Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition" in a way that reflects a sharper emphasis on reading, and a small but energetic group of researchers has honed in on the problem.

I think it's no exaggeration to say that the CWPA has become an increasingly important organization—I might even hazard to call it the intellectual and professional center of gravity—in the teaching, administration, and scholarship of first-year college and university writing. While some of the early work of the CWPA—for example, the Wyoming Resolution of 1988 that advocated for better working conditions for college composition teachers and the Portland Resolution of 1992 that aimed to clarify the duties and status of directors of college composition programs—was more political than pedagogical, the salient influence of the CWPA really coalesced, I maintain, with the publication in 1999 of the original "WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition." The Outcomes Statement represented a clear opportunity for the CWPA to offer a unified vision of what college composi-

tion courses should be and do—and to recommend the roles that reading should play in them.

Reading and the reading problem barely made it on the radar screen in the 1999 document: Readers are portrayed as people with "expectations" that writers must understand and meet. Reading is something that one "uses," along with writing, "for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating." Students are expected to learn about the "interactions among critical thinking, critical reading, and writing" (61–62). One would scarcely know from this document that a great majority of the papers students write in first-year composition courses are based on the readings contained in the myriad textbooks, anthologies, and whole texts taught in these courses.

In the 2014 revised "WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (3.0)," reading rises to a somewhat more prominent role. Readers are still cast solely as people with "expectations" in their fields. (For more about that designation, see discussion below.) As part of their acquisition of "rhetorical knowledge," students should "[g]ain experience reading and composing in several genres to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes." To develop abilities with "critical thinking, reading, and composing," students should "[u]se composing and reading for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating in various rhetorical contexts." But more vitally—and this is a new emphasis in the revised statement—students should "[r]ead a diverse range of texts, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, to the interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements, and to how these features function for different audiences and situations." To foster these abilities, "faculty in all programs and departments" can help their students learn "[s]trategies for reading a range of texts in their fields." Perhaps motivated by composition studies' strong interest in genre as a rhetorical construct that shapes the discursive work of different fields (see, for example, the work of Carolyn Miller, John Swales, David Russell, Amy Devitt, and Anis Bawarshi) and possibly spurred by the slight rise in scholarship about the reading problem in college composition, the authors of the new Outcomes Statement aim not only to associate reading with

critical thinking but also to advocate for a productive version of close reading, both in composition and in courses across the curriculum. It remains to be seen whether the revised Outcomes Statement will lead to an even stronger emphasis on addressing the reading problem in first-year composition.

The aforementioned new scholarship on reading in college writing attempts to flesh out just such an emphasis, but the researchers' foci have tended more toward the applied and pedagogical than toward the conceptual and theoretical. One scholar who has taken up the challenge of definition is Alice Horning. In a range of articles, Horning has developed a theory of "expert reading" that she believes should sit at the center of postsecondary pedagogy. As she writes in a 2011 article, for example,

> Expert readers are meta-readers who have awarenesses and skills enabling them to read texts efficiently and effectively. The awarenesses of experts include meta-textual awareness of organization and structure, meta-contextual awareness of how the text fits into its discipline or area, and meta-linguistic awareness of the linguistic characteristics of the text such as specialized vocabulary. The skills of expert meta-readers include analysis of main ideas, details and other aspects of the substance of the points presented, synthesis of points in a single text or multiple texts on the same point and issue, evaluation of authority, accuracy, currency, relevance and bias, and application or creation for the readers' own purposes. ("Where to Put the Manicules" n.p.)

In a later work, Horning amplified that characterization with her definition of "*academic critical literacy*": "the psycholinguistic processes of getting meaning from and into print and/or sound, images, and movement, on a page or screen, used for the purposes of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application" (*Reading* 14). Perhaps even Horning herself would concede that college writing teachers might need help translating these definitions into curricula and pedagogical practices.

Fortunately, the new scholarship that specifically considers issues of assigning and explicitly teaching reading in college composition, while slight in quantity, is rich in concept and content. Linda Adler-Kassner and Heidi Estrem, for example, investigate "how 'directions' for reading attempt to shape the

roles that students play in reading and what ideological implications accompany those attempts" (40). Adler-Kassner and Estrem identify three such roles for reading that assignments, usually tacitly, convey:

> Content-based reading . . . asks students to summarize and interpret, to consider connections between ideas, and to use reading to develop ideas. Process-based reading focuses on the work of the writer/researcher, scrutinizing the text to look at decisions made by the writer in the process of textual production as a possible model for students' own writing/research work. Structure-based reading asks students to focus on the conventions reflected in and used to shape content; the attempt is on developing genre awareness so that student writers can make conscious decisions about how to use different genres and conventions, and can make conscious choices about how, when, or whether to use them. (40–41)

Adler-Kassner and Estrem consider these purposes through the lenses of

> three conceptions of language running through 19th and 20th century linguistics outlined by William Hanks in his book, *Language and Communicative Practices*: "irreducibility," or the idea that language is a self-contained structure that "cannot be explained by appeals to nonlinguistic behavior" or "to emotion, desire, psychology, rationality, strategy, (or) social structure"; "relationality," which holds that "language and meaning are grounded in specific circumstance"; and "practice-based," which "acknowledges that language is a system that contains and generates meaning, while at the same time users employ that system based upon their understandings of the contexts where it is used." (40–42)

All three reading roles can potentially reflect each of these conceptions. Adler-Kassner and Estrem conclude: "Articulating the kinds of reading that are enacted in classrooms and the roles that readers are expected to perform within them can open important conversations that enable instructors (and/or programs) to more productively approach reading. At the most basic level, it can help instructors develop their pedagogies for reading in first-year writing" (44).

I also find great encouragement in the work of two young scholars in the field who urge their colleagues to develop more sophisticated theoretical perspectives on the teaching of reading in college courses. For his dissertation at the University of Michigan, Michael Bunn studied "the extent to which composition instructors theorize and teach reading-writing connections" (496). Bunn argues that "explicitly teaching reading-writing connections may increase student motivation to complete assigned reading" (496). He shows that instructors purport to believe that reading and writing are connected activities but that "this belief doesn't always translate into pedagogy" (502). Bunn urges developing a "pedagogical awareness" wherein students would learn to recognize reading and writing as connected activities. He urges teachers to explain specifically the scaffolding they expect students to use to connect the assigned reading to the writing assignment, and he argues that "[w]e must teach students how to read model texts in ways that will inform the eventual writing they must do," encouraging teachers as well to show students how "to read in ways that help them develop their understanding of writerly strategies and techniques" and "to help them identify genre conventions so that they are better prepared to write in those genres" (512).

Drawing on her dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh, Ellen C. Carillo develops a pedagogical strategy that she labels "mindful reading," which is

> best understood *not* as yet another way of reading, but a *framework* for teaching the range of ways of reading that are currently valued in our field so that students can create knowledge *about* reading and *about* themselves as readers, knowledge that they can bring with them into other courses. I use the term "mindful" to underscore the metacognitive basis of this frame wherein students become *knowledgeable, deliberate,* and *reflective* about *how* they read and the demands that context place on their reading. (3)

One hopes that the work started by Adler-Kassner and Estrem, Bunn, and Carillo will be extended and applied, bringing even greater salience to the reading problem among college composition scholars and teachers.

At the risk of self-promotion, I must mention a special issue of *Reader* that my colleague Christian Goering and I coedited and that came out in fall 2014. Our editors' introduction calls for a "revolution in high school to college reading instruction" similar to the "teach process, not product" paradigm shift that emerged in composition studies in the 1960s and 1970s. The issue contains articles by Alice Horning and Deborah-Lee Golnitz, aiming to define what college reading is, and by Alesha Gayle on digital reading practice as critical literary; an annotated bibliography by J. P. Watts; a review essay by Anna Soter; and the articles critical of the Common Core State Standards, cited earlier, by Hephzibah Roskelly and Sean Connors and Ryan Rish. Perhaps the quirkiest—but we hope useful nonetheless—piece in the issue is an extended "polylogue" about the teaching of reading in college that my coauthors Jennifer Mallette and Eli Goldblatt and I titled "The Longest Conversation about Reading You've Never Heard." Our goal with this article was to try, in a substantial collective, to raise and reflect on a wide range of issues—definitional, conceptual, and political—all related to the reading problem.

To produce this piece, Goldblatt, at that time director of composition at Temple University, and I convened a group of teachers and scholars, all with an informed interest in the teaching of reading at the high school and college levels: Douglas Hartman, at the time a professor of literacy instruction at the University of Connecticut; Deborah Holdstein, at the time the outgoing editor of *College Composition and Communication;* Kathleen McCormick, at the time director of first-year writing at Purchase College of the State University of New York; Hephzibah Roskelly, professor of English at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro; Jennifer Wells, at the time a teacher at Mercy High School in Burlingame, California; and Kathleen Blake Yancey, at the time incoming editor of *College Composition and Communication.* We had invited Howard Tinberg of Bristol Community College to represent the two-year college perspective, but a recent tennis injury prevented his attending the meeting.

To prepare for this confab, Goldblatt and I sent the participants a challenging reading-and-writing assignment from the Temple University first-year composition program and a set of five very open questions:

1. What are your perceptions of attitudes among college faculty about how and what college students read?
2. When you think about the conjunction of reading and writing at the college level, what theoretical work do you see as the most important and productive for thinking through the issues?
3. We've given you one example of a first-year writing assignment that involves engaged reading. If you were to give this to your students, what challenges would it present to them? Please describe how you might go about teaching reading in connection with this assignment.
4. What down-and-dirty pedagogical advice can you give college faculty—either in composition or in the disciplines—about the teaching of reading within the typically packed course syllabus?
5. What issues have we left out? If you can imagine a true confluence of reading and writing research, what would be the most pressing areas to explore? (30)

Digging into the assignment and these questions, participants talked for nearly five hours. And, as we note in the article reporting the meeting, "the discussion did not proceed with 'here's question 1, so now everyone say what he or she has so say about it and then we'll go on to question 2.' Instead, the colloquy was wonderfully associative, digressive, anecdotal" (14). It took the outstanding efforts of Sabine Schmidt and Jenn Mallette, both graduate students at the University of Arkansas at the time, to produce a 65-page, single-spaced transcript of the conversation and then to organize a great deal of the talk under fourteen propositions that the participants' contributions to the conversation fleshed out and responded to:

1. It's extremely difficult, even for scholars in composition, literature, and literacy, to define reading.
2. An array of conditions in contemporary schools and colleges contributes to a kind of "pseudo-reading."
3. Both within and beyond academia, the teaching of reading is perceived to be either elementary or remedial or both.
4. Two institutions—schooling and government—seem to have a strong, often insurmountable influence on the ways reading is

taught and studied by educators and perceived by the general public.

5. As with all academic subjects, the teaching and study of reading are affected by conditions of race, class, and ethnicity.
6. The teaching and study of reading are often impeded by the dichotomizing "silos" of education.
7. Nearly every segment of the educator population in high schools and colleges needs to be prepared to teach reading—and anecdotes and strategies of effective teaching abound.
8. Textbooks generally fail in some way when it comes to the teaching of reading.
9. Teaching reading as inquiry can be valuable but can also generate resistance from both faculty and students.
10. Compositionists at the high school and college levels ought to pursue a more unified view of reading and writing in their teaching and scholarship.
11. Standardized testing and large-scale assessments represent impediments to be overcome.
12. Technology offers a new world—perhaps a "brave new world"—for the teaching and study of reading.
13. Questions about whether, and how, students' development of reading abilities in one course, discipline, or context transfers to another need to be addressed.
14. Establishing reading as a legitimate field of research among high school and college compositionists would be a worthy goal.

As we concluded our polylogue, we noted that "the participants found that we have much work to do among our own colleagues and peers. As a field, composition and rhetoric must come to new terms with those researchers who have focused on reading. . . . Eight of us came together and learned a little more about each other and a lot more about the enormity of the job ahead. We hope this article provokes much further productive conversation" (29). We shall see.

On Revisiting the Reading Problem: Where Will the Next Decade Lead Us?

So what exactly is this additional work to be done? The new attention being paid to the reading problem notwithstanding, I can't help but think that the essence of the problem is still eluding us. Let me conclude by ruminating on two big questions that still fester, at least for me: What exactly are the definitions of readers and reading that our students are developing in high school and bringing to college? What should be the focus of a course (or sequence of courses) in which students in both high school and college continue to develop mastery of reading?

At both the high school and the college levels, we need to think more deeply about what we mean by readers and reading. The past decade has provided us with two potential guides for this inquiry, the Common Core State Standards and the revised CWPA Outcomes Statement, but is either fully sufficient? Clearly, if we look to the CCSS for answers, we get something like this: readers are dispassionate, objective processors of texts, and reading is a simple matter of examining the stable and constant parts of a text in order to generate a stable and constant answer about the text's main ideas and arguments. One hopes that the several efforts aimed at rewriting the CCSS so they are more palatable to critics will generate a richer view of readers, one that acknowledges that reading is a constructive activity that begins with a reader's experience and personal response to a text.

At the postsecondary level, if we take the Outcomes Statement as our guide, readers are people with "expectations." But what does that mean? Are these expectations a static, immutable list of actions a text must accomplish in order for it to be successful with readers? Can writers always know what those expectations are? How? How are these expectations triggered? Do they emerge for each new reading experience a reader has? Do they evolve over time? How are they shaped by experience, by age, by sophistication of thought, by field or discipline? And if we can think about all these things, will we get a clearer idea of what reading is—i.e., the thing that readers do? The potential promise of the Common Core State Standards (and the revised documents that might result

from the standards' demise) is that high school students might come to college with different practices, habits, and mindsets about reading than they have done for the past several decades. I think it incumbent on those of us at the postsecondary level to meet these students with a well-thought-out vision of what exactly college readers and reading are.

Second, in our efforts as composition scholars and teachers to understand the roles that reading plays in our projects and courses, must we always take up the reading problem solely in relation to writing? This is now the third piece I've written about reading in the past three years in which someone involved in the project has said, "Be sure to connect what you say about reading to writing." Why? Can't we simply be conscientiously curious about how people read, just for the sake of reading? Or are we so driven by what amounts to an institutional mandate to produce students (and citizens?) who are capable of clear expository and forceful persuasive writing that the only focus we allow ourselves to have vis-à-vis reading is one that contributes to our fulfilling that mandate? Can we study, for example, how and why folks just read—cereal boxes, novels, webpages and blogs, real honest-to-goodness essays with no thesis statements, Bibles and Bible study guides? Is it time to have a course in secondary and postsecondary settings that's just called Reading and isn't seen as remedial? What would such a course look like? What would college and university retention and success rates look like if we had a curriculum that said, essentially, "Here's a course designed to equip you to *read* in college, and then here's a course designed to equip you to *write* about what you read?"

Ideally these questions would be enough to keep the current scholars of the reading problem busy for the next decade and bring new ideas about research, curriculum, and pedagogy to the fore.

Works Cited

Adler-Kassner, Linda, and Heidi Estrem. "Reading Practices in the Writing Classroom." *WPA: Writing Program Administration* 31.1/2 (2007): 35–47. Print.

Bawarshi, Anis S. *Genre and the Invention of the Writer: Reconsidering the Place of Invention in Composition*. Logan: Utah State UP, 2003. Print.

Bunn, Michael. "Motivation and Connection: Teaching Reading (and Writing) in the Composition Classroom." *College Composition and Communication* 64.3 (2013): 496–516. Print.

Carillo, Ellen C. "Creating Mindful Readers in First-Year Composition: A Strategy to Facilitate Transfer." *Pedagogy* 16.1 (2016): 9–22. Print.

Common Core State Standards Initiative. 2015. Web. 1 September 2015.

Connors, Sean P., and Ryan A. Rish. "Problem Solving and Modding: Two Metaphors for Examining the Politics of Close Reading." *Reader* 67.1 (2014): 94–118. Print.

Devitt, Amy. *Writing Genres*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2008. Print.

Horning, Alice S. *Reading, Writing, and Digitizing: Understanding Literacy in a Digital Age*. Newcastle-Upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2012. Print.

———. "Where to Put the Manicules: A Theory of Expert Reading." *ATD: Across the Disciplines* 8.3 (2011): 1–21. Print.

Jolliffe, David A. "Learning to Read as Continuing Education." *College Composition and Communication* 58.3 (2007): 470–94. Print.

Jolliffe, David A., and Christian Z. Goering. "Guest Editors' Introduction: A Call for Revolution in High School to College Reading Instruction." *Reader* 67.1 (2014): 3–11. Print.

Keene, Ellin Oliver, and Susan Zimmerman. *Mosaic of Thought: Teaching Comprehension in a Reader's Workshop*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1997. Print.

Mallette, Jennifer, David A. Jolliffe, and Eli Goldblatt. "The Longest Conversation about Reading You've Never Heard." *Reader* 67.1 (2014): 12–36. Print.

Miller, Carolyn R. "Genre as Social Action." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70 (1984): 151–67. Print.

Roskelly, Hephzibah. "Reading Like a Pragmatist." *Reader* 67.1 (2014): 119–35. Print.

Russell, David R. "Rethinking Genre in School and Society: An Activity Theory Analysis." *Written Communication* 14 (1997): 504–54. Print.

Swales, John. *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. Print.

"WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition." *WPA: Writing Program Administration* 23.1/2 (1999): 59–70. Print.

"WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (3.0)." 17 July 2014. *Council of Writing Program Administrators*. Web. 1 September 2015.

Arguing that college-level *reading* must be theorized as foundationally linked to any understanding of college-level *writing*, editors Patrick Sullivan, Howard Tinberg, and Sheridan Blau continue the conversation begun in *What Is "College-Level" Writing?* (2006) and *What Is "College-Level" Writing? Volume 2: Assignments, Readings, and Student Writing Samples* (2010). Measurements of reading abilities show a decline nationwide among most cohorts of students, so the need for writing teachers to thoughtfully address the subject of reading, especially in grades 6–14, has become increasingly urgent. Curriculum and state standards often reflect an impoverished and reductive understanding of reading that views readers as passive recipients of information, fueling the widespread use of standardized tests to measure proficiency in English literacy, and ignoring decades of reading scholarship that positions readers in more complex relationships with the texts they read.

Contributors to this collection—high school teachers, college students who discuss the challenges they faced as readers and writers, and composition scholars—offer an antidote to this situation. These authors (1) define the challenges to integrating reading into the writing classroom, (2) develop a theory of reading as a specific type of inquiry and meaning-making activity, and (3) offer practical approaches to teaching deep reading in writing courses that can be put immediately to use in the classroom. The volume concludes with letters written directly to students about the importance of reading, not only in the classroom but also as a richly complex social, cognitive, and affective human activity.

Patrick Sullivan teaches English at Manchester Community College in Manchester, Connecticut. **Howard Tinberg** is professor of English at Bristol Community College in Massachusetts. **Sheridan Blau** is professor of practice in the teaching of English at Teachers College, Columbia University, and emeritus professor of English and education at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

NCTE National Council of Teachers of English

ISBN 978-0-8141-1063-8

90000

9 780814 110638