

THE RHETORIC OF POWER: JOHN DEWEY, DEMOCRACY, AND RHETORICAL
CITIZENSHIP

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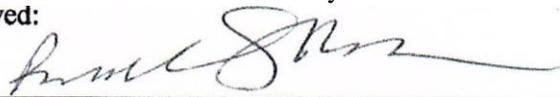
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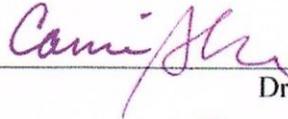
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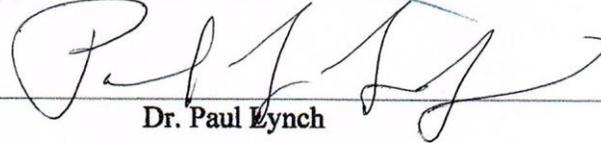
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DEDICATION

My father was a mechanic at the City of Fort Worth. He worked 27 years as a truck-2 mechanic in the equipment services division. When I was a kid, my father strongly encouraged me to get an education, and often told me, “I worked hard all his life with the hope that my kids wouldn’t have to.” This dissertation is dedicated to all the working class parents like my father, T.S. Peterman, and my mother, Emma Lee Peterman, who worked hard all their lives in the hope that their kids would have a better life. This dissertation would not be possible without all the years of hard work and the years of support from my parents.

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Introduction: John Dewey and the Democratization of Knowledge through Rhetorical Citizenship, Conceptual Structures, and Communicative Agency

Background:

In his 2015 book, *Political Literacy in Composition and Rhetoric: Defending Academic Discourse against Postmodern Pluralism*, Donald Lazere observes, “The past few years have seen an outpouring of books and reports deploring Americans’ civic ignorance, with titles like *Just How Stupid Are We?*, *The Dumbest Generation*, *The Age of American Unreason*, and *Tuned Out: Why Americans Under 40 Don’t Follow the News*. This [Americans’ civic ignorance] is a problem that everyone seems to complain about but no one tries to solve through any coordinated, nationwide effort” (287). Lazere outlines the struggle that the American education system, as a whole, has had over the last 25 years to educate students to become active, informed participants in the political sphere. Lazere, and other scholars, have struggled with the simple question of “How do we produce good citizens through pedagogy?” Lazere outlines his own struggles teaching civic literacy in his career as a teacher and scholar in Rhetoric and Composition and his struggle to find the best pedagogical approach to teaching rhetoric and writing to develop a more critically conscious and engaged citizenry. Civic Literacy can be defined as “the knowledge of how to actively participate and initiate change in your community and the greater society. It is the foundation by which a democratic society functions: Citizen Power as a check and as a means to create avenues for peaceful change” (Urban Agenda/Civic Literacy Project at Wayne State University). He calls this struggle to educate students to become active, informed participants in the political sphere a long running, quixotic project with its stated goal being the, “broadening college humanistic study, with Rhetoric and Composition at the center, to foster

critical thinking about politics and mass media” (4). Ira Shor, in a review essay, describes Lazere’s central quest in his book as a means to “explore how Rhet/comp took leave of its most important civic goals and how the field can recover its political edge” (154). Shor goes on to argue, “Lazere’s big vision, first-year writing should develop rhetorical awareness and critical analysis of partisan politics, propaganda appeals, and policy issues. Students should move from such an introductory writing class to deeper rhetorical studies of language use in society” (Shor 155). Lazere refers to Rhetoric and Composition as “the master discipline for application to every other academic field with the potential to foster civic literacy” (288) and details the growing problems in civic literacy facing higher education.

In an effort to combat this growing crisis in civic literacy, the *American Political Science Association* (APSA) formed a taskforce in 1995 to address the growing problem of the lack of civic education in American secondary and higher education. The Introduction to the ASPA’s 1998 policy statement released as part of the first civic renewal initiative cited above sums up the need to spur civic renewal and increase the civic literacy of students. In this statement, Margaret Stimmann Branson argues,

Civic education, therefore, is—or should be—a prime concern. There is no more important task than the development of an informed, effective, and responsible citizenry. Democracies are sustained by citizens who have the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Absent a reasoned commitment on the part of its citizens to the fundamental values and principles of democracy, a free and open society cannot succeed. It is imperative, therefore, that educators, policymakers, and members of civil society make the case and ask for the support of civic education from all segments of society and from the widest range of institutions and governments. (The

Role of Civic Education: An Education Policy Task Force Position Paper with Policy Recommendations).

Stimmann Branson goes on to state that this civic education is essential to sustaining democracy and the free exchange of ideas, and the cornerstone of academic freedom in higher education. She issues a call for scholars, teachers, and administrators to take up the challenge of preparing students for their role in democracy.

To combat the perceived crisis in civic literacy and to take up the challenge of preparing students for their role in democracy, the *American Association of Colleges and Universities* developed the *National Taskforce on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement*. This taskforce consisted of 12 prominent administrators and scholars from around the nation with the stated goal “to assess the state of civic learning and democratic engagement among two and four-year colleges and universities. The project was charged with producing a national report and action plan with ambitious recommendations for strengthening these commitments” (The Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Project). This project also led to the landmark report entitled “A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy's Future: A Call to Action and Report from The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement” which “documents the nation’s anemic civic health and includes recommendations for action that address campus culture, general education, and civic inquiry as part of major and career fields as well as hands-on civic problem solving across differences” (A Crucible Moment). The large scale initiatives illustrate the growing concern at the national level with the state of civic literacy in higher education. As part of this push several two and four-year institutions have added civic literacy components to their general education core curriculum. However, it is not just a

national movement related to higher education policy. The field of Rhetoric and Composition has picked up this call in the last ten years, as well. Our field has seen a surge of scholarship related to rhetoric, democracy, and citizenship. A cursory search in the TCU library frog scholar database will reveal that there have been over 300 journal articles, 54 books, and more than 500 dissertation topics in the last five years related to democracy, rhetoric, and civic literacy. Several other authors in Rhetoric and Composition such as Amy Wan in her 2014 book, *Producing Good Citizens: Literacy Training in Anxious Times*, Anne Colby, et al., in *Educating for Democracy*, Patricia Roberts-Miller's book, *Deliberate Conflict: Argument, Political Theory, and Composition Classes* and Barbara Jacoby's collection entitled, *Civic Engagement in Higher Education* argue there is a brewing civic literacy crisis in America that has placed democracy under serious threat due to an uninformed and biased citizenry. An uninformed and biased citizenry are those who lack the informational literacy to parse through sources of information to determine the credibility of sources or to determine the facts. A biased citizenry, in this case, would be those citizens who make political decisions on the basis of social identities and partisan loyalties, and not an honest examination of reality.

Amy Wan provides a cautionary tale in her narrative on citizenship warning that the term "citizenship" is a super-term or god term that, "travels and shifts to add weight and approval to literacy programs claiming civic outcomes form their processes" (17). She goes on to argue, "the capacious nature of the term "citizenship" contributes to a lack of attention to concrete civic goals and allows the term's too-finite flexibility, allowing the public good of citizenship to stand in for any number of values that are more economically than critically motivated" (19). Wan makes an argument based on the concept of cultural citizenship that

cautions that citizenship can often be used to reinforce dominant power structures and uses several examples from the early 20th century to explore how the concept of citizenship has negatively affected immigrants in the transition to America. She argues, that often, civic literacy became an uncritical moniker used to prevent immigrant participation in American politics. Wan's book explores citizenship around the time that Dewey was developing his theories of education for democracy and provides some valuable insights on the concepts of democracy, citizenship and literacy were theorized in the early twentieth century. Wan argues that the early twentieth century saw a "profound economic change in the uses of education through literacy as a mass strategy to shape citizenship" (3). Her book is a beautiful illustration in the negative ways that citizenship has been used in the past to reinforce oppressive structures of power and provides a cautionary tale for civic education so that we ensure that any initiative related to rhetorical citizenship is dedicated to social justice which undermines these oppressive structures.

Instruction in civic education such as Wan describes is often listed as an institutional vision or at many colleges and universities. These vision statements often communicate an institutional commitment to teaching the rhetorical skills that students will need to practice rhetorical citizenship such as information literacy, combating implicit bias, and communicative agency. However, despite a stated dedication in mission or vision statements these colleges and universities rarely have a clearly defined process for achieving these visions. In the co-authored book, *Educating for Democracy*, Anne Colby, Thomas Ehrlich, Elizabeth Beaumont, Jason Stephens, and Lee S. Shulman, argue, "undergraduate moral and civic education is not an institutional priority on most campuses. This is hardly surprising, given the dominant patterns of U.S. higher education. Few colleges and universities are

building moral and civic education into the heart of their undergraduates' learning" (49). Colby, et al., provide a case study of 12 campuses in America who are developing new curriculums meant to teach students a way to move beyond the classroom and into civic action in their communities. The authors demonstrate through these case studies that there is a complex crisis in America where students are learning to think critically about ideological formations of identity and negotiating difference but students are argue that students are not being taught how to use this knowledge in public setting as a way to learn to do citizenship. Colby, et al. claim most colleges and universities, "understand the importance of students' grappling with complex and messy real-life contexts and recognize that the skills of persuasion, negotiation, compromise, and interpersonal and cultural sensitivity are of the utmost importance" (50). However, they argue that these concepts require experiential learning outside the classroom such as service learning. Colby, et al., add, "The institutions see that this work (civic literacy and community engagement), if well designed, can heighten students' sense of efficacy and lead them to redefine their personal identity, making a sense of themselves as citizens and ethically responsible individuals central to that identity" (51).

Barbara Jacoby, in the Introduction to her collection of essays *Civic Engagement in Higher Education*, supplements this need to teach students to move beyond the classroom to learn to "do citizenship" and argues that that a renewed commitment to teaching students to "do citizenship" can lead to what she terms "civic renewal." She defines civic renewal as, "the wholesale revitalization of our democracy through the reanimation of our citizenry to participate with increased vigor in our democratic systems" (3). Jacoby goes on to argue that civic renewal arises out of the need to teach students to address problems that arise in society collectively through formation of small social movements on the local scale through service

learning (4). Through service learning, students with a shared set of beliefs can band together to form blocks of solidarity needed to form small social movements and small networks of informal participatory action (4). Much like Dewey, Jacoby sees that students need to be taught to face the challenges that arise in their communities and develop the necessary skills and methods to face these challenges through inquiry, collaboration, and participation. Patricia Robert-Miller, in her book cited above, *Deliberate Conflict*, narrows the focus of solving political arguments to the composition classroom because she feels that “composition studies could be enriched by paying closer attention to differences among models of the public sphere” (5). Roberts-Miller goes on to argue, “Teachers often opt for writing assignments and pedagogical approaches that put a premium on collaboration, cooperation, and individual expression. In consequence of this resistance, composition courses spend too little time helping students learn how to argue about public issues” (121). This text posits a question that is very similar to the one posed by Lazere, “In what kind of public discourse do we want our students to engage?” Roberts-Miller provides very few concrete answers to this question, but her text is important because it posits two strong claims. First, there is a civic crisis in America that requires specialized knowledge in argument and deliberation to resolve this crisis. Second, scholars in Rhetoric and Composition need to take up charge to teach the skills to address this crisis, and she posits some theories about the various ways in which teachers in composition can theorize this in their classrooms and the public sphere.

This is but a small sample of the growing call within higher education and the field of Rhetoric and Composition, in particular, for the need to teach students to develop skills in civic literacy, rhetorical citizenship, and political deliberation. Each of the authors cited

make cogent arguments that there is a growing crisis in civic literacy and that our field should theorize ways to teach students to develop skills necessary for citizenship in a social democracy. It is within this call that I will situate this project as a possible solution to this growing civic literacy crisis in America. In short, the problem posed in this dissertation is that democracy requires specialized knowledge in rhetorical methods developed to teach students how to “do rhetorical citizenship” given the complexity of modern democracy. This dissertation will seek to answer the call to teach students the skills necessary to practice a form of civic literacy I and other scholar’s term rhetorical citizenship. Christian Kock and Lisa S. Villadsen define rhetorical citizenship as, “a discursive phenomenon in the sense that important civic functions take place in deliberation among citizens, and that discourse is not prefatory to real action but is in many ways constitutive of civic engagement” (7). There is an intellectual tradition that examines the role of education in society that claims that there is a direct correlation between the function of the state and the quality of its education. This tradition specifically argues that knowledge is a capacity for action in democracy. Rhetorical training in methods of inquiry and argumentation have long been the center of this discussion of the role of education in society. More specifically, rhetoric has been the center of education in democracy for the better part of 2500 years dating back to our forefathers in Ancient Greece.

Statement of the Problem

John Dewey is not the first scholar to examine the role of rhetorical education in society, although he is likely the most well-known proponent, of rhetorical education of the 20th century. In fact, this debate can be traced back to Athens in ancient Greece. Philosophers such as Isocrates and Plato debated the role of rhetorical education in classical Greek society as early as 380 B.C. Isocrates, in his philosophical tract, *Antidosis*, explores the role of educational culture in developing the capacity for citizens to participate in Athenian democracy. As Kathryn Morgan argues in, “The Education of Athens: Politics and Rhetoric in Isocrates and Plato,” “Isocrates’ civic/political education is a rhetorical education. Isocrates constructs his model by identifying political and rhetorical excellence. He wants to elevate his Athenian audience to the level of *philosophers* [her emphasis] by making them apply, in particular, a principle of intellectual consistency to their lives” (126). Isocrates argues that with focus, participation, and consistency anyone can be trained in the rhetorical methods necessary to become an apt citizen in democracy. Morgan goes on to add, “Thus in the *Antidosis*, he [Isocrates] remarks that as a result of its *paideia* in wisdom and speech, Athens has become the leader (hegemon) of Greece” (128). *Paideia* in this context means education and upbringing or a combination of symposium (school learning or training) and sumposium (home learning or family training) both of which will affect the development of the student’s character and aptitude for participation in society. Another early Greek philosopher, Protagoras, supports this contention in the platonic dialogue that bears his name when he states that a citizen is trained by his parents, his teachers, and the state through its laws (324d-326e). Josiah Ober, in *Democracy and Knowledge: Innovation and Learning in Classical Athens*, goes on to argue that education for Athenians was not, “limited to literary

culture and its popular byproducts. A major part of a citizen's education came through the performance of his political role" (Ober 226). Each of these lines of argument argues that there is some sort of educational training needed to be able to fully and adequately participate in politics as a citizen.

J. Peter Euben, however, argues that democracy must rely on "professional expertise rather than a direct democracy of amateurs" (19). In his essay entitled, "Democracy Ancient and Modern," Euben argues, "the massive transformation of economy and society during the last 350 years means that democracy must be representative democracy, which relies on professional expertise" (19). Euben argues that while we can all agree that we do not want an oligarchy of the kind Plato preferred he does caution that calls for a more direct democracy where the common or average citizen would have a larger and more consequential role in the governing of the nation is not necessarily the neutral good it is often uncritically portrayed as. Euben makes the argument that political rule requires a high level of professional, specialized knowledge in argument, bargaining, and deliberation that many citizens simply do not have within them. Euben argues, "The vision of a participatory democracy that mesmerizes contemporary democrats is more political projection than historical fact. It is natural that the majority of citizens choose more efficient ways of gratifying desire and achieving their goals than altruistic political activity" (478). This echoes Socrates' argument in book six of *The Republic* where Socrates argues that men will say what the crowd wants to hear and the approval of the crowd will overwhelm any education or training the citizen might hold (492a-492b). While Euben's argument is, often times, a veiled argument for cultural elitism (as is Plato's argument) he does raise some strong concerns with some current conceptions of democracy. And though his essay was written 25 years

before the 2016 presidential election, his argument carries much weight in the current political climate that has arisen since the election of President Donald Trump. For example, we have seen the call for a popular vote in place of the Electoral College where large urban centers who seemingly contain more progressive voices could have a greater influence in popular elections. However, this sort of direct democracy based on popular vote creates a greater likelihood of tyranny because you can let large population centers in three large cities in America control the outcomes for the rest of the American electorate.

Euben goes on to explain that democracy in the 21st century is complex, and is much more complex in scope and imagination than the democracy than the one *The Republic* was written in many all those thousands of years ago. American Democracy has mass media, the internet, social media, and various other technological advancements that make governing extremely difficult because of the saturation of information provided to citizens at every moment of every day. Added to this is the simple scale and scope governing 250 million people. You have local, state, and federal governments to navigate. This complexity sets up a conflict in the philosophy of education that seeks to determine whether political knowledge is best served in the hands of the few, or the hands of the many. In the platonic conception, J. Peter Euben argues that “democracy is largely a matter of choosing among elites in periodic elections rather than what it literally meant: the *kratia* (power, rule mastery) by the *demos* (people or the mob)” (478). The goal in Euben’s article is that we should be skeptical of mass, grass roots political efforts where large masses of the public are actually participating in democracy. Often, he argues, this leads to fascism or tyranny and not social justice or the undoing of oppression. Euben cites several examples of this in the 20th century with the Nazi

movement in Germany and the Fascist movement Italy as representative examples of the dangers of populist movements led by polarizing ideological figures.

Euben believes that a representative democracy with checks and balances built in to place limits on power, and where the polis looks for the best and most ethical representation of Plato's philosopher king every few years has ensured years of peace and prosperity. Euben's basic argument is that democracy is not really broken and that what we have is working for the majority of the populace so we should be wary of breaking the system because that could place the freedom citizens enjoy in danger. Euben's argument begs the questions, "should knowledge be concentrated in a powerful elite who rely on professional expertise to make decisions for the whole or dispersed throughout the entire social and political sphere where everyone is entitled to participate in democracy as a citizen?" It is a difficult question and one that he makes an informed and rational argument for despite its likely unpopularity.

Euben's argument is rooted in Plato's metaphor of the ship's captain in book six of *The Republic*. Plato wrote around the same time as Isocrates, who we discussed previously. They were on opposite sides of the argument about democracy. Isocrates argued that through education the people could be counted on to be careful and cautious stewards of democracy and power because as Kathryn Morgan argues, "a state committed to rational discussion should welcome the contribution of those who have made a special study of argument" (128). Plato, on the other hand, is famous for his argument that philosophic knowledge should be a requirement for leadership in his analogy of the philosopher king, but that most citizens do not have the ability, desire, or training to acquire this knowledge. To Plato, the majority of people are ruled by base desires that subvert their ability to see truth and develop virtue. Due

to this, they cannot be trusted to govern. Dewey, who we will discuss in more detail later in this Chapter, outright rejected any form of oligarchic rule. His whole democratic project was committed to providing average, everyday citizen with the education and training necessary to participate in democracy. We will return to this later when discussing the significance of this project to the field of Rhetoric and Composition.

Plato's ship captain metaphor in Book Six of *The Republic* is probably one of his most famous dialogues—perhaps infamous might be a more apt description depending on your ideological disposition. Plato argues that ruling requires specialized knowledge in philosophy and absolute power. Knowledge and power should be placed in the hands of an educated elite who are then entrusted to captain the ship of state. In this dialectic exchange in book six, Socrates questions Glaucon as to what are the essential characteristics of those desired to be the governors of a state. Socrates asks Glaucon, “Since those who are able to apprehend the eternal and immutable are philosophers, while those who are incapable of this and who wander in the region of change and multiformity are not philosophers, which of the two, tell me, ought to be governors of a state?”(484a-d). Glaucon obviously answers “philosophers” because this is Plato and Plato loves philosophers. Socrates then asks, “Can there be any question as to whether a blind man or one with quick sight is the right person to guard anything?” (484a-d). Socrates then goes on to argue that the blind person in this metaphor is comparable to those who are destitute of knowledge and have not distinct exemplary characteristics in their soul and, as such, are incapable of discerning perfect truth (484a-d).

After a brief dialogue about philosophers in Athens either being useless or wicked, Socrates then opens into an argument from illustration using the ship as a metaphor for

ruling. This illustration is meant as a metaphor for mob rule. Socrates asks the group to imagine a ship at sea where the captain is strong and tall but somewhat physically disabled and not very much of a seaman. The sailors quarrel about the captain's piloting of the ship. Each thinks he has the right to steer the ship and can do it better than the captain even though they have not studied art or learned to discern truth, or even been taught how to pilot a ship (487d-488c). Many on the ship even refuse to believe that pilotage can even be taught and begin to kill those who assert that it can. They begin to crowd the captain and kill their rivals preparing for the moment they can bind the captain and seize control (488c-489b). After this, they begin feasting and celebrating with each complimenting the other and their skills as a pilot, and reward each with titles related to their craftsmanship. They also condemn anyone who might have real skill as a navigator and be fit to command the ship (488c-489D). Socrates then asks Adeimantus if he thinks that the sailor with real craftsmanship and navigation skills will be called useless by the crew of the ship in this scenario. Of course, Adeimantus agrees that he would. Socrates then responds that this is the true picture of cities in Greece because they have been trained in the disposition of the mind to mistrust philosophy and thus cannot see the truth of ruling.

Plato, through Socrates, uses this metaphor to bemoan that private education is destroying Athens because the private teachers who corrupt Athens by indoctrinating the youth into sycophantic behavior. Plato's real argument about education here is that the people (the *demos*) have been educated into ignorance and prejudice against the *real sophists*—Socrates and Plato—who can teach them the truth of ruling. Plato's response to this is that the philosopher must withdraw entirely from politics because it is impossible to educate the mob into philosophy, and therefore, they cannot be trusted with democracy or

rule (489c-490d). Plato is correct that bad education is in many ways much more terrible than no education and that the wrong types of education can masquerade as good education and reinforce oppression and pander to the basest desires in humans. These are wholeheartedly a bad thing. However, what we really see emerge in the comparison between Isocrates and Plato are two conceptions of educational philosophy. Isocrates' version of education is a philosophy of hope that places faith in our ability to teach citizens the ethics of virtue, knowledge, and rhetorical skills necessary to build a social democracy that could realistically accomplish the goals of social justice. Plato's version is a cynical version predicated on cultural elitism and a cynical view that people cannot be trusted to rule their own lives. Plato's basic argument is that only a few really smart people are capable of rule but the average citizen is too unintelligent to know that they should allow them to rule. In Plato's version, intellectual and spiritual corruption are the natural telos (end or outcome) of democracy.

Plato's metaphor, though effective in its time, is out of date. For democracy to flourish we need to end a conception of democracy ruled by oligarchs or a powerful elite that concentrates power and knowledge in the hands of a small few wealthy Americans. In Plato's day, wealth had corrupted the ideal of the philosopher king. Americans have held a conception of democracy predicated on life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness where each citizen is imbued with the opportunity to pursue their own destiny free from tyranny. John Dewey argued for a conception of democracy as the best means for people to avoid being dominated. To Dewey, democracy provides a system through which citizens could experience the full flowering of their capacities and abilities. Dewey thought that how we

actually become distinctly ourselves depends on our interactions with communities to which we belong, because they provide the resources we rely on to become who we are.

I wholeheartedly believe we can teach citizens the skills to take control of the American political system to make it more equitable and just if students are given the capacity for participation through civic training. If we teach students a form of rhetorical citizenship then we can create a more equitable form of participatory democracy.

Participatory democracy is a deliberative dialog and decision making process which hears all voices and diverse perspectives to enact meaningful change. Ideally, it would be an equitable process embarked upon by a group empowered with decision-making authority, surfacing a deeper understanding of issues, consolidated around a common purpose to forge a collective decision out of individual interests. To accomplish this, we need to develop a commitment to civic renewal and civic literacy. Much like Donald Lazere argues, the best place to accomplish this goal is within Rhetoric and Composition. This dissertation will argue that we need a democratization of knowledge that encourages a form of participatory democracy based on rhetorical citizenship and holds the Isocratean view that with focus, participation, and consistency anyone can be trained in the rhetorical methods necessary to become an apt citizen in democracy. When citizens are trained to participate in democracy and forgo the cynicism that crony capitalism has brought forth in America we can make realistic changes for the betterment of Americans.

This dissertation project will take up Sheldon Wolin's argument that "democracy is a project concerned with the political potentialities of ordinary citizens, that is, with their possibilities for becoming political beings through the self-discovery of common concerns and of modes of action for realizing them" (34). Wolin echoes the earlier charge that there is

a crisis in civic literacy. He argues, “one measure of the success of the project of depoliticization is that political scientists now study a citizenry distinguished by passivity, alienation, resentment, and above all, a growing despair about the efficacy of our political system” (476). He goes on to argue, “This comes at a time when, by most accounts, class divisions are widening and disparities in life chances and in access to basic needs such as breathable air, drinkable water, and pacific schools, are becoming sharper” (476).

In many ways, I feel the anti-democratic rhetoric of Plato, and to an extent, J. Peter Euben, are an attack meant to minimize or destroy the vitality and energy displayed by a *demos* which believed that with political action and participation, citizens can truly change the world, and limit the impact of crony capitalism and plutocracy. In my opinion, this attack is meant to maintain power the hands of a powerful few. One major problem we face is that our education system is influenced by the cynical version of democracy proffered by Euben and we need to change this to a system predicated upon hope as described by Isocrates. This project will argue that democracy is essentially about participation and training students in the capacity to “do citizenship.” John Dewey argues in *Democracy and Education* that “the price that democracies must pay for their continuing health is the elimination of an oligarchy—the most exclusive and dangerous of all—that attempts to monopolize the benefits of intelligence and its best methods for the profit of a few privileged ones, while practical labor, requiring less spiritual effort and less initiative remains the lot of the great majority” (341). It seems more apparent than ever that we can see plutocracy and oligarchy creeping into control of American democracy but Dewey’s work on democracy and education is relevant now and can be used to stop the march of oligarchy in America. To combat this rise in fascism we need to teach student strong rhetorical skills in inquiry,

research, argumentation, and communication so that they can become savvy consumers and makers of arguments. Civic literacy can ameliorate the rise in fascism because it is a form of experiential learning that helps form an active critical consciousness in students. Critical consciousness is crucial in developing a form of historical and social responsibility to offset a willful ignorance that reinforces anti-democratic rhetoric, because it links thinking and judging political actions in a real world setting outside the classroom.

Significance of the Study:

I believe that this dissertation makes three important and original contributions to the field of Rhetoric and Composition. First, this dissertation adapts the concept of institutional rhetorics from the field of organizational communication to examine how institutional knowledge is developed and transmitted via rhetorical documents such as the WPA OS. Second, this dissertation examines how these institutional rhetorics can be used to manage knowledge-intensity to control the development of knowledge and stabilize (or destabilize) accepted forms of knowledge. Lastly, this dissertation proposes a large scale theoretical shift in the teaching of FYC to incorporate methods of civic literacy predicated on rhetorical citizenship, and proposes sample outcomes that would radically realign the focus of FYC from teaching methods of composition toward a focus on teaching students to use the skills learned from these methods of composition toward the betterment of democracy in America. I believe the study of how knowledge-intensive organizations manage knowledge intensity in institutional rhetorics provides a new and important lens for examining the ways that knowledge is managed and transmitted in our professional organizations. More importantly, the study of institutional rhetorics provide another way to evaluate the knowledge and

practices we value, and those we do not because they are excluded from our institutional rhetorics for rhetorical reasons.

This dissertation, entitled, “The Rhetoric of Power: John Dewey, Democracy, and Rhetorical Citizenship,” explores the role of rhetorical education in the three main lines of argument for rhetoric and democracy in John Dewey's political philosophy as outlined in *The Public and Its Problems*: democracy as the protection of popular interests, democracy as social inquiry, and democracy as the expression of individuality. These three philosophical purposes of democracy are as important today as they were in Dewey’s time, and they also form the basis of a theory of democracy predicated on public deliberation where governing is seen as a long and careful discussion about how best to protect the interests of the public. Furthermore, democracy as public deliberation is the best way of confronting the struggle of interests in a society. Dewey argues, “The method of democracy – insofar as it is that of organized intelligence – is to bring these conflicts out into the open where their special claims can be discussed and judged in the light of more inclusive interests than are represented by either of them [conflicts and special claims] separately’ (*Liberalism and Social Action* 56). Development of a conception of rhetorical citizenship and communicative agency can change the scope of American democracy so that students have the power and confidence to eliminate cynicism that currently has America in its grip.

John Dewey believed that inquiry formed the core of citizenship in America, and conceptualized a specific form of rhetorical citizenship predicated on inquiry needed to make his vision of social democracy work in an industrial society of the future. Dewey conceived of rhetoric as the use of symbolic action by human beings to share ideas, enabling them to work together to make decisions about matters of common concern, and to construct social

reality. Rhetoric is the means by which people make meaning of and affect the world in which they live. At their very core, human beings are social animals who use symbolic language to solve problems in their lives as citizens. Dewey conceptualized a specific type of rhetorical citizenship predicated on inquiry, participation, and communicative agency. As Robert Danisch argues in *Building a Social Democracy: The Promise of Rhetorical Pragmatism*, “The idea of a ‘rhetorical citizen’ is meant to highlight the ways in which communicative practices matter for life in a democracy and what kinds of communication practices are necessary for the processes of coordination, collaboration, and cooperation” (222). Karolyn Kohrs Campbell supplements this idea of the rhetorical citizen in her conception of rhetorical agency. She argues, “Whatever else it may be, rhetorical agency refers to the capacity to act, to have the competence to speak or write in a way that will be recognized or heeded in one’s community. Such competency permits entry into an ongoing cultural conversations and is the *sine qua non* [her emphasis] of public participation, much less resistance as a counter-public” (3). Danisch goes on to argue that Dewey believes citizenship is not someone in possession of a legal status within a state but, “a person engaged in rhetorical practices that help shape the process of decision making, the outcomes of public deliberation, and the constitution of social relations within communities” (222). In this conception, citizenship is earned through participation and action not given due to birth status. What could be more democratic than that?

Any democratic project predicated on the work of John Dewey will require that citizens be dedicated to habits of inquiry needed to develop an organized intelligence and learn the habits necessary to critically evaluate text, media, and imagery. Organized intelligence, in this sense, is a sort of collective thought, thought form, or a manifestation of

the consciousness of a public that emerges from the collaboration, collective efforts, and competition of many individuals and appears in consensus decision making. To Dewey, it is literally the organization of individual intelligences into a complex system of solidarity where the many begin to think as one, and common desires for egalitarian aims begin to materialize in the public sphere as a manifestation of public will and intelligence. In many ways, Dewey's theory of organized intelligence is the process of having a large number of seemingly independent agents spontaneously organize themselves into a coherent system of political action. In organized intelligence, individual agents organize themselves into a public via communicative agency predicated on well-reasoned, and persuasive arguments. Rhetoric, then, is essential to the formation of an organized intelligence, and students will need to be taught how to improve their capacity for communicative agency.

Citizens will also need the capacity to make persuasive arguments about the best course of action in response to conflicts in the public sphere, and to rhetorically create and analyze the special claims that arise from these conflicts. This project will argue that we need to conceptualize a form of social democracy that is predicated on democratizing knowledge that will rekindle the role of ordinary people in the performance of government. Social democracy is predicated on a belief that, "to turn to rhetoric is to believe in the potential of people to exercise practical judgment and engage in public deliberation" (Danisch 230). Deliberation in the pragmatic sense that Dewey intended means to arrive at a practical judgment expected to solve a special problem that arises in the public sphere and which defies the normal methods of resolution. Deliberation is predicated on inquiry that requires that citizens continually reflect on their beliefs in light of new arguments, evidence or reasoning. Deliberation of this sort, however, requires specialized rhetorical training to form

the habits necessary to practice or perform communicative acts of agency in the public sphere. Specialized training is necessary to form a social democracy capable of ensuring Dewey's conception of democracy as protection of popular interests, democracy as social inquiry, and democracy as the expression of individuality.

Dewey also draws attention for the need for artistry and eloquence in the rhetoric used in social democracy. Dewey argues in *The Public and Its Problems*, "The highest and most difficult kind of inquiry and a subtle, vivid, and responsive of communication must take possession of the physical machinery of transmission and circulation and breathe life into it" (184). This is Dewey's attempt to combine *epistêmê* (knowledge) and *technê* (craft or skill) into a grounded theory for living in a social democracy where the citizen uses artistry and eloquence developed through experience in inquiry and communication to develop sophisticated forms of rhetorical citizenship. The more rousing the characterization of one's problem in response to a subtle understanding of its applicable structures, the more imaginative and practical are proposed solutions, the more comprehensive and accurate the estimate of the consequences of implementing them, and the more responsive is the choice to its expected consequences. As the individual acquires more practice in intelligent conduct, the dispositions that make it up become habits (*How We Think* 196).

This is also an attempt to unite wisdom and eloquence into a civic rhetoric as argued by Isocrates, cited earlier, and later Cicero, in *De Inventione* and elsewhere. Dewey's attempt to combine artistry and experience echo's Cicero's argument in *De Inventione* that, "wisdom without eloquence produces very little that is beneficial to states, where as eloquence without wisdom is usually extremely disadvantageous to states and is never beneficial" (qtd. in Kneupper and Anderson 313). Charles W. Kneupper and Floyd D.

Anderson, in their essay, “Uniting Wisdom and Eloquence: The Need for Rhetorical Invention,” go on to emphasize this point when they argue, “an art of knowing, doing and making in the realm of civic affairs ... taught rhetoric with the aim of preparing their students for “excellence” in civic life” (313). This excellence entailed, “the making of speeches and laws, in rendering judgments, in engaging in inward as well as outward deliberation, and in the determination of those qualities which best promote the happiness and welfare of humanity” (313). Here Kneupper and Anderson underscore Dewey’s need to create a practical wisdom that combines knowledge, artistry, and experience into a sort of social intelligence in citizenship. This is what Kneupper and Anderson attribute to an Isocratean conception of general education as, “aimed at producing “cultured” citizens who possessed, in Kennedy’s words, a wisdom in practical affairs resulting in high moral consciousness and equated with a mastery of rhetorical technique” (317)

The key here is that experience and practice help the citizen develop the skills necessary to eloquently participate in the public sphere, and that knowledge is developed through craft and practice into art. As any athlete will readily admit, practice is what forms the basis of habits of excellence. How we practice defines our performance and forms the basis of our habits. Learning to practice well helps develop the craft and artistry required to participate in rhetorical citizenship described by Dewey. This leads to a serious question facing the premise of social democracy described by Dewey. How do citizens in social democracy learn to do rhetorical citizenship? Where can they begin to practice the expertise required to participate in the rhetorical life of democracy? To conceptualize a new form of democracy, we will be required to develop new methods for teaching rhetorical citizenship, and we will need to propose new forms of communicative agency necessary to allow citizens

to participate and disrupt the current state of democracy to form a new social democracy. I argue the best place to develop the specialized knowledge necessary to develop the training necessary to perform rhetorical citizenship is in the First-Year Composition (FYC) sequence. Hopefully, this would lead to practice in rhetorical citizenship that would be carried out through a student's college education, but we have to begin somewhere, and as Donald Lazere argues, FYC is uniquely situated to take on this challenge.

This work will explore the techniques the field of Rhetoric and Composition can utilize in the work of John Dewey to teach inquiry, problem solving, and practical judgement in the era of “fake news” so students are enabled to become perceptive evaluators of felt or emotional rhetoric through the practice of social inquiry—or the theory of applying scientific methods to solve social problems. It is my argument that social inquiry can provide students with the skills needed to perform rhetorical citizenship in a way that can pierce the veil of certainty in thought so that students are able to consider possibility dispassionately and to seek out differing views that challenge the fixed certainty of modern political belief. Cass Sunstein argues in *Why Societies Need Dissent*, “proper inquiry places upon believers something like an epistemic obligation to expose oneself to dissenting and unfamiliar views, yet we tend to polarize ourselves and only associate with like-minded members of our group” (13). A cursory glance at any online debate, comment section, or social media site quickly demonstrates the need to teach a rhetorical mindset predicated on true listening that teaches citizens the willingness to entertain differing views and consider possibility. It is also necessary to teach students to investigate their own fixed beliefs because certainty is the enemy of democracy and the root of authoritarianism and tyranny.

Reorienting First-Year Composition to instill students with more rigorous forms of social inquiry required for rhetorical citizenship will allow educators of rhetoric to instill students the habits of thought and action necessary to develop a democratic disposition. This democratic position will teach them to think critically about the problems that will face them in their lives as citizens, work collaboratively to solve these problems, and communicate these solutions with artistry and purpose. Social inquiry developed through a grounded theory that combines experience and knowledge into eloquence and artistry in rhetoric will help students in their lives as citizens. This will allow us to rethink the outcomes we have traditionally held for First-Year Composition so that they can integrate democratic methods that will prepare students for the types of inquiry required to be engaged, rhetorical citizens in a social democracy as theorized by John Dewey. This project will also explore the role of education in democracy, but more specifically the kinds of rhetorical training necessary for democracy to function in the way Dewey conceptualized democracy as the protection of popular interests, democracy as social inquiry, and democracy as the expression of individuality. The ultimate goal of this dissertation is to theorize how to teach students the habit of mind necessary to do what Cornel West argues in *Democracy Matters: Winning the Fight against Imperialism*. West argues, “We hope they [students] pursue the examined life with gusto, develop relentless critical facility, retain intellectual integrity, commit to the never ending pursuit of genuine democracy, and speak forthrightly when they know it is time to do so” (213).

Training in Dewey’s theory of social science can provide a solution to the lack of specialized knowledge necessary to participate in twenty-first century democracy. Dewey’s theory of social science taught in First-Year Composition can democratize knowledge, and

provide students the inquiry skills necessary to make and disseminate knowledge in the 21st century. The study I am conducting will explore the ways that John Dewey's theories of social inquiry, conceptual structures, and special problems can help us develop a distinctive understanding of how rhetorical publics can solve problems in a participatory American democracy. This dissertation will argue that our field needs to extend our work beyond the classroom into the public sphere to teach students to solve problems in the real world. Training will provide the specialized knowledge necessary for students to participate in democracy. This leaves us with a final question, "What does Dewey's Social Science look like?"

Conceptual Framework:

Dewey's theory of social science will be the foundation of this study. The goal in this study is to explore how we can integrate Dewey's theory of social science into our First-Year Composition outcomes to develop a theory of rhetorical citizenship, and to develop a way to apply this theory in the composition classroom. Dewey's theory of social inquiry (often labeled "Dewey's social science" in scholarship) and its individual parts will form the conceptual framework of this dissertation. In much of the scholarship surrounding John Dewey or Democracy or Rhetorical Citizenship or Civic Literacy, there are a multitude of calls to use the composition classroom as a laboratory for democracy. However, these calls often lack specifics of what this lab would look like, and a conceptual framework of what using Dewey would look like in reality. Dewey's social science is his theoretical attempt to apply a quasi-scientific method to problems facing democracy. The goal of this dissertation will be to answer these calls with some concrete ideas about how to train students to be rhetorical citizens using Dewey's Theory of Social Science. This theory contains three parts

and each of the three parts can be adopted and taught in First-Year Composition to emphasize inquiry, collaboration, research, and problem solving. This dissertation will develop a conceptual framework for teaching John Dewey's theory of social science in the classroom. This dissertation will summarize the conceptualization briefly here but they will be outlined in much more depth in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Special Problems – Special problems are threshold concepts of knowledge or difficult concepts. Erik Meyer and Ray Land conceptualize threshold concepts as problems that cannot be solved without new schemas or methods. In current educational theory, a threshold concept can be thought of as a sort of doorway in thinking that is difficult to open because the thinker does not have the knowledge or skills to solve the problem at their current level of knowing. This doorway is seen as opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something. It represents a transformed way of understanding, or interpreting, or viewing something without which the learner cannot progress. Dewey's special problems, to me, clearly seem to be threshold concepts in democracy. These are problems that cannot be resolved with old methods and citizens cannot progress past them without developing new knowledge and skills. Special problems also function akin to Lloyd Bitzer's conception of the rhetorical situation. Out of this troublesome and problematic threshold, a *kairos* emerges in much the way that Lloyd Bitzer describes in "The Rhetorical Situation." In this article, Bitzer argues that rhetorical discourse emerges as a response to a situation much the same way that answers come into being in response to a question or a problem. Bitzer goes on to add that not all questions have answers and that certain rhetorical situations defy language or the ability to develop discourse to meet the needs of the situation. When a special problem arises a student (or citizen) will need to

conduct research to find the requisite knowledge needed to progress through the threshold, and use this knowledge to develop rhetorical skills necessary to respond to the rhetorical situation.

In the composition classroom, this is akin to what Linda Flower and John R. Hayes termed problem solving rhetoric. Flower and Hayes argue, “Problem solving explores the wide array of mental procedures people use to process information in order to achieve their goals” (450). Simply put, people solve problems using strategies derived from cognitive abilities, “from inventing a mouse trap to designing a course syllabus or writing a sonnet. Articulating our own ideas and intentions to someone else—getting the right words on paper—draws on a staggering array of mental gymnastics, from simply generating language to highly sophisticated concept formation (Flower and Hayes 450). Dewey’s form of special problems would be an effective way to combine Bitzer, Flower and Hayes, and Dewey’s theories of problem solving into a synthesis of the three that students could use to solve problems facing them in democracy. I will develop this in much more detail in Chapter 3.

Inquiry – Inquiry is research done into the nature and history of the problem. Dewey argues that inquiry must be social in nature so that citizens collaborate to determine a solution and dedicated to finding a solution that will benefit the largest portion of the group affected by the problem. Dewey’s conception of inquiry is also quasi-empirical as it is an attempt to apply the scientific method to social situations. This sort of inquiry is often termed Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) because it asks students to “conduct research, integrate theory and practice, and apply knowledge and skills to develop a viable solution to a problem” (Walker, et al. 5). This is also sometimes called problem based learning (PBL) in educational research but PBL is generally considered is an older and out of date version of

Inquiry-Based Learning. Inquiry-Based Learning is “an approach to enhance and transform the quality and effectiveness of the learning experience by adopting a learner centered, learner-directed, and inquiry-oriented approach to learning that puts more control for learning with the learner” (Blessinger and Carfora 16). Inquiry-Based Learning came to prominence as a re-conception of PBL meant to narrow and structuralize the research students used to find solutions to a problem so that students have more concrete steps to problem solving.

Inquiry-Based Learning is an attempt to return student centered inquiry to its roots in John Dewey’s work, and to add a social aspect to prior conceptions of problem based learning. Dewey argues, "In social inquiry, genuine problems are set only by actual situations which are themselves conflicting and confused. Social conflicts and confusions exist in fact before problems for inquiry exist. The latter are intellectualizations in inquiry of these "practical" troubles and difficulties" (*Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* 498-499). In addition, Robert Westbrook argues that Dewey’s social inquiry requires, “a belief that democracy as an ethical idea calls upon men and women to build communities in which the necessary opportunities and resources are available to realize fully his or her particular capacities and powers through participation in political, social, and cultural life” (14). The goal of inquiry in this conception is to theorize a way to teach students to position themselves in relation to the problem and the rhetorical public faced with the problem and to learn to view inquiry and research as goal directed, rhetorically situated, cooperative human interactions meant to solve the problem facing the rhetorical public they are situated within. With Inquiry-Based Learning, students are taught to pursue their own ideas and assumptions, test their ideas and hypotheses, and interrogate questions to arrive at more fully formed Conclusions.

Conceptual Structures – A conceptual structure is a rhetorically situated, historical understanding of the problem or an intellectual history of the issue that examines how the concept has developed over time and asks the student to examine the historical consequences of these structures. In the Introduction to *Framing Public Memory*, Kendall Phillips argues, “the important sense here is that some entity that can be labeled a public exists, and, further, that these entities have memories” (4). Memories, in this sense, mean a sort of shared social history or the shared pool of knowledge and information in the history of a social group that is shaped and developed by participation in a rhetorical public. Public memories are akin to the concept of public knowledge as outlined by Lloyd F. Bitzer in his essay, “Rhetoric and Public Knowledge.” Bitzer defines public knowledge as, “a kind of knowledge needful to public life and actually present somewhat to all who dwell within community...It may be regarded as a fund of truths, principles, and values which could only characterize a public” (68). However, it could be argued that public memory is the way a rhetorical public uses alternative conceptions of history to argue against or subvert these “funds of truth.” This rhetorical tool could be used to illustrate that these funds of truths are not necessarily true for all members of a community which causes a rise in a rhetorical public. Bitzer does, however, attempt to address the issue of power when he states, “they [publics] are carved out less by exigencies in local, geographical contexts and more by communications which shape consciousness and call attention to massive problems which cross traditional political boundaries and are essentially universal” (71). Here Bitzer, I think, attempts to find a way to allow rhetorical publics the means necessary to address change and dissent. Critical race theory would forgo essentialisms such as the idea of a “universal public” in favor of theories of intersectionality where “theorists and critics move beyond a single-axis understanding of

oppression, and attend to the struggles of those who exist within multiple oppressed identity categories. This framework was first applied (or, more accurately, given name) by Kimberlé Crenshaw in her 1989 article “De-marginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics” (“Intersectionality” *FemTechNet Critical Race and Ethnic Studies Pedagogy Workbook*). However, I do think in this essay that Bitzer is attempting to provide rhetorical publics the mutability to change and alter as the problem or rhetorical situation facing the public changes.

A rhetorical public, in this sense, is a group within the larger public sphere that has aligning goals, a common discourse, and similar ideologies that seeks to combine these voices in solidarity to gain access to the larger public sphere. Bitzer defines a public as, “a community of persons who share conceptions, principles, interests, and values, and who are significantly interdependent” (68). Some common examples of well-known rhetorical publics are the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community (LGBTQ), or minority groups such as the LatinX community. These rhetorical publics are groups who share a common history that is often times at odds with dominant forms of power in the public sphere, and they use public memory work to subvert the common historical conceptions of problems facing these communities.

For example, the noted cultural rhetoric scholar, James Chase Sanchez, is a member of the LatinX public and uses public memory historical methods to examine how minority groups often differ in their memory of racist monuments in America. In his public memory article co-authored with Kristen Moore, entitled, “Re-appropriating Public Memory: Racism, Resistance and Erasure of the Confederate Defenders of Charleston Monument,” he and

Moore argue that memory can be thought of as a communicative process that involves selection and interpretation with worldly consequences in the kinds of historical understanding generated by these selections. Their analysis examined the ways that racialized material objects are constantly being rewritten and revalued by different audiences who visit the sites of confederate monuments. While public memory work typically focuses on the architecture of physical structures, I would like to adapt it as a method to critically examine the ways that solutions to problems have been developed to exclude marginalized groups from public discourse, and to consider how memory is curated in online ecologies. I will also like to examine how rhetorical citizenship with an emphasis on history can utilize public memory to resist marginalization.

Recent work on historical methods argue that we need to teach students to challenge dominate conceptions of history that marginalize or omit groups or narratives from history. The new historical method I would like to develop from Dewey's theory of conceptual structures will need to incorporate the work of public memory into the composition classroom to teach students to approach history from a variety of perspectives and to adapt a social form of inquiry that seeks to examine the consequences of their rhetorical choices. The work of public memory refers to the ongoing choices made when a group of people (typically, a nation or a state) "remembers a particular part of its history, highlights that part of history within a container available for everyone to experience, and locates that container within a social, cultural, and political context" (Casey 17). James Chase Sanchez and Kristen Moore argue that memory can be thought of as a communicative process that involves selection and interpretation with real world consequences in the kinds of historical understanding generated by these selections.

In the age of the internet, it is important to teach students that everything they say online in twitter tweets, Facebook status updates, snaps (snaps are from the social media platform snap chat—they are pictures with captions that are supposed to dissolve after a predetermined length of time but are often saved and circulated online in groups so that they never disappear as planned) forms a public memory of the object, and that these memories are forever because everything lives online far beyond intended timelines. Also, each of these social media entries form a living representation of them as a historical being. We live in a time where every human being can document their lived history on a daily basis, and this documentation will live on well beyond our lives. It will be crucial to teach students the methods of reflection necessary to manage this so that they can use these digital mediums in the public sphere rhetorically to advance the goals of their rhetorical publics. How we use social media entries are akin to creating an online scrapbook of a rhetorical public that you share through a social media platform. Teaching students to select and interpret facts and resources are essential skills for 21st postmodern democracy due to proliferation of resources.

However, to take this conversation back to Dewey, conceptual structures also ask participants to utilize research and the gathering of historical data related to a problem to help determine a better understanding of the concept, its historical development, and its relevance to the current problem. I want to augment Dewey's theory so that students examine conceptual structures from the position of a rhetorical public and to interpret and analyze how their membership in this rhetorical public shapes their understanding of these selections, and to reflect on the possible consequences of what they have chosen. Dewey's theory of conceptual structures is akin to the historiography of ideas or concepts, and his basic argument for this is that if we had a better understanding and definition of the concepts at

hand in any given problem we could better employ solutions to meet the unique needs of the problem at hand, and I believe that if students are more reflective about rhetorical choices they make they are much more likely to create a better public memory of the artifacts of their lives, and their publics. They will also think more consequentially on the public structures they participate in as citizens, and be conscious of the types of monuments they allow to be built in their communities. This requires that we teach students that all arguments begin with research from reliable sources and are predicated on facts but to consider these facts from a perspective situated among many social networks that we inhabit. As Dewey argues, “As we identify concepts more precisely in the social science, and, as we learn more and more about those concepts, our ability to predict consequences in social affairs, in turn, will continue to be more and more accurate” (*Logic* 487). If we teach students that selection and interpretation are important aspects of inquiry we can teach them to see “the public as a realm of action; an arena in which humans achieve immortality by inscribing themselves into public memory via their actions before others” (Phillips 4).

Purpose of the Study:

To this end, this project will examine these central questions:

- What role has democracy played in the formation of our field as demonstrated in the scholarship in *College Composition and Communication*?
- What outcomes has the field of Rhetoric and Composition traditionally valued in First-Year Composition? What role does democracy play in the outcomes in First-Year writing programs? How do these outcomes provide the capacity to participate in democracy? (If they do)

- How can John Dewey’s work on democracy and education allow us to integrate democratic methods into the outcomes of First-Year Composition?
- What does “teaching democracy,” mean for the field of Rhetoric and Composition? How will this change the scope and shape of the field?
- How can we use John Dewey’s theories to teach rhetorical citizenship and communicative agency to spur participation in Democracy?

Organization of the Dissertation Chapters

Chapter 2 – A Taxonomy of Democratic Methods in Rhetoric and Composition

Chapter 2, Taxonomy of Types or Eras of Democratic Education in Composition Studies beginning with its founding in 1946, reviews the work published in the journal *College Composition and Communication* (CCC) from 1946 in order to see what terms, values, or types of democratic education emerge. This study will examine both the historical and current knowledge of rhetoric and democracy including substantive findings, as well as theoretical and methodological contributions of democracy, on the development of the field of Rhetoric and Composition. CCC will serve as a representative sample of the theory and work done in Rhetoric and Composition, and will allow for a close examination of the characteristics of the field as a whole. In other words, I will argue that CCC is the flagship journal in our field, and as such represents the most informed approaches rooted in scholarship. CCC publishes work on a wide range of topics in our field and is the theoretical driver of the scholarship in our field. The articles published in CCC are usually representative microcosms of larger trends, and as such, will provide a good synopsis of the larger trends and changes since its inception.

The goal of this Chapter is to summarize and synthesize how democratic methods such as service learning, critical literacy, community engagement, or “the social turn” in Rhetoric and Composition, and how they are conceptualized in this journal. In this Chapter, I reviewed and analyzed five decades of scholarship on Rhetoric and Composition published in *College Composition and Communication*. My original intent was to tell the story of the journal and its role in the formation of composition to examine how democratic methods have emerged out of the *kairos* of this journal. However, trying to synthesize roughly 1200 journal articles with numerous different trends and categories was impossible. I narrowed my focus to the major trends that related to democratic methods, and then explore the various forms of composition that arise out of these broad categories. From this journal, I selected 95 journal articles that comprised work I thought most clearly related to democratic methods in the field of Rhetoric and Composition. To limit the scope of the literature review, I reviewed key search terms on any article connected to democracy. From these key terms, many similar search terms began to emerge. I referred to these as “categories of research” and began to look for large categorical topics that repeated in the works I had chosen. Fourteen broad categories continually emerged in the key search terms in the library databases and they are listed below.

Categories of Research	
Argument	Civic Rhetoric
Community Engagement/Service Learning	Cognitive Rhetoric
Communication (Broadly Defined)	Democracy
Discourse	Education
Language	Literacy
Identity/Ideology/Social Justice	New Media
Pedagogy	Personal Voice
Political/Public Rhetoric	Agency
Social Action/Social Change	Writing (Broadly defined with a bent toward the political)

The categories emerged from this review were grouped into categories above and then synthesized using rhetorical citizenship theory as the organizing principle for the draft. To do this I used Brian Jackson and Gregory Clark's thesis on democracy as outlined in their book, *John Dewey and the Rhetoric of Democratic Culture*. To Jackson and Clark, democracy is not a thing as a capacity for participation in democratic life. They go on to argue, "democracy describes a kind of human interaction that must follow when individuals or groups choose to, or discover that they must, treat each other as equals" (2). I used this idea to look for the various theories that Rhetoric and Composition has used over the years such as civic rhetoric, critical literacy, or community engagement, for examples, as capacities for democracy and organized the Chapter around this principle. The principle argument is that democracy is not merely a category of institutions and practices, but a learned style of action, or a "manner of being" in everyday life. These capacities help students find rhetorical strategies to orient themselves to other groups and individuals. Each category then contains a democratic capacity to participate in the everyday life of democracy. They are trained capacities taught in the field of Rhetoric and Composition. I then looked at the historical development of these issues and organized the capacities into a narrative.

Chapter 3 – The WPA Outcomes Statement as Institutional Rhetoric for Knowledge-Intensive Organizations

Writing assessment, or how to evaluate individual student texts, has always been a core component of Rhetoric and Composition. In the mid-1980s, there began to be a growing call to develop programmatic level assessment to determine the quality and rigor of First-Year writing programs. Part of this call was increasing pressure from colleges,

universities, and accrediting bodies that asked the field to prove that we were doing what we said we were doing at the programmatic level through a standardized, rigorous form of programmatic assessment. This Chapter will seek to analyze the WPA Outcomes Statement (WPA OS) to determine how these outcomes prepare students to participate in democracy as citizens once they complete their education. This Chapter will critically examine what the WPA outcomes reveal about values the field of Rhetoric and Composition hold based on what the WPA outcomes list as the essential knowledge and skills that a student should have after completing First-Year Composition. As Susanmarie Harrington argues in the front matter to *The Outcomes Book: Debate and Consensus after the WPA Outcomes Statement*, “the WPA Outcomes Statement represents a working consensus among composition scholars about what college students should learn and do in a composition program. But as a single-page document, the statement cannot convey the kind of reflective process that a writing program must undertake to address the learning outcomes described” (front matter).

The goal of this analysis will be two fold. First, I would like to see what skills we currently value in Rhetoric and Composition as a field, and discuss what these values reveal about the field as it currently stands. What methods do we use that could be said to support a democratic culture where students are trained in rhetoric toward the goal of developing social power? The goal of this analysis will be to assess what skills students are taught that would help them develop communicative agency where they can achieve the possibility of “gaining access to and influencing civic life through symbolic action...and how people may be involved with, and evaluate, public rhetoric—as both participants and recipients” (Kock and Villadsen 10). Second, I would like to use this evaluation as a starting point to theorize how these outcomes will need to change to better prepare students for rhetorical citizenship after

they complete college. Brian Jackson and Gregory Clark argue, “Deliberative discourse requires mass rhetorical literacy for an open society” (11). The WPA OS is good place to begin a discussion about what rhetorical literacy is currently being taught in our field, and to examine how we might change these outcomes to better prepare students for rhetorical citizenship.

Chapter 4 – Civic Literacy, Rhetorical Citizenship and Conceptual Reframing

Chapter 4 of this dissertation will examine the Writing Program Outcomes Statement (WPA OS) as a form of institutional rhetoric—sometimes also called organizational rhetoric—and used this framework to examine how the WPA OS functions to transmit the knowledge and values our field agrees should function as learning outcomes in FYC. Chapter 4 examines the essential competencies students should learn on some level before exiting First-Year Composition regardless of axiology or philosophy. The goal of this Chapter is to survey what is included in the WPA OS as essential skills, but more importantly, what is excluded and why. A second goal is to examine the WPA OS as an institutional rhetoric to theorize how the field uses its numerous policy statements, position statements, and declarations on student rights to transmit knowledge to its public. Ultimately, this Chapter will argue that forms of institutional rhetoric, such as policy or position statements for example, allows an organization with competing voices and ideologies to speak with a single voice to communicate disciplinary knowledge, manage knowledge-intensity, and set boundaries as to what counts as knowledge in our field. As learning outcomes are indicators of success of an academic course or program, it is essential that our field provide a clear idea of what can be achieved by adding a civic literacy component to the WPA OS. Learning

outcomes give a clear idea to our stakeholders of what they are going to learn or achieve at the end of the first year writing sequence or course.

Chapter 4 will also analyze John Dewey's theory of democracy as laid out in his seminal texts, *Democracy and Education* and *The Public and Its Problems*. This Chapter will focus on developing a clear definition of democracy and education as outlined by Dewey and will trace the history and development of John Dewey's theories of democracy and education and its effects on modern education and the field of Rhetoric and Composition. This Chapter will discuss the ways that rhetoric and public discourse are used to persuade and influence others in Dewey's conception of democracy through the use of what Dewey called "scientific thinking" and the development of his "social science" as outlined early in this Chapter. Furthermore, this Chapter will develop a theory and practice of Deweyian inspired civic involvement and citizenship, particularly for those in positions of structured inequality. The practice of rhetorical citizenship with a commitment to communicative agency would allow the field to theorize new ways to teach students to utilize rhetoric in their personal, private, and public lives so that they can do what Jeffrey Grabill terms "speak, write, or otherwise perform in the face of significant complexity and the presence of recognized expertise" (120). This theory of civic rhetoric will require that we teach students in First-Year Composition the tenets of good citizenship through collaboration with others to effect social or community change through Dewey's theory of social science.

As Robert Westbrook argues, Dewey's belief in teaching students a rigorous form of reflection he labeled scientific thinking "entailed not only the use of a particular method [conceptual structures, for example] but participation in a community possessed of specific cognitive virtues and Dewey believed these virtues—free inquiry, tolerance of diverse

opinion, and free communication—were necessary attributes of a democratic society and polity” (170). Dewey’s famous theory of classrooms as “laboratories of knowledge making” developed out of this idea that students “should be engaged in ongoing experimentation, communication, and self-criticism, constituting themselves as a youthful commonwealth of cooperative inquiry” (170). To accomplish these goals, Dewey developed his theories of education over time to include an emphasis on history, special problems (topoi), social inquiry, and conceptual structures discussed earlier. These theories and how they can be used in the First-Year Composition classroom will be further developed in this Chapter.

Second, this Chapter will also examine how Dewey’s theory of conceptual structures can be updated and utilized in modern First-Year writing programs. As part of this process, this Chapter will seek to investigate how to translate a theory of Dewey’s conceptual structures and the importance of history and historiography into writing instruction to confront issues facing citizens in a 21st century democracy. John Dewey believed history to be “the most effective conscious tool” for teaching a student the basics of moral philosophy because it will “enable the child to appreciate the values of social life, to see in imagination the forces which favor men’s effective cooperation with one another, to understand the sorts of character that help and that hold back” (*Democracy and Education* 216). As Thomas D. Fallace argues in, “John Dewey on History Education and the Historical Method,” that “For Dewey, to understand any piece of knowledge and its relationship to an individual or society, one had to understand its history. Like many of his contemporaries, Dewey agreed that a theory of historical change was the key to understanding the present” (21). Dewey believed that teaching a cooperative version of history that went beyond a mere telling of facts and

that took into account a multiplicity of interpretations which was essential to building the democratic character.

Dewey thought history so important that he made it a core piece of his theory of conceptual structures which underpin his philosophy of problem solving in democratic societies. In Dewey's 1938 book, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, Dewey devoted an entire Chapter, titled "Judgment as Spatial-Temporal Distinction: Narration Description," to the historical method. He believed to truly understand the special problems that arise in democracy you must first understand not only the historical generation of the problem but the shared history of democracy that spurred people to work together out of a sense of shared ownership in America. History, as theorized in conceptual structures, requires students develop a rigorous dedication to research and inquiry into how problems develop and are solved within specific communities of practice, and as I mentioned earlier, we need to augment this by teaching students to also situate themselves within a rhetorical community. It resists the notion that a problem can be defined outside of lived experience, and this historical component of conceptual structures is inclined instead to favor ideas as historically conditioned features of the world which are best understood within some larger context. In rhetorical terms, it means that each special problem has a unique *kairos* that has brought it into being but this *kairos* is never without a proper exigence, and Dewey's social science requires that one develop an understanding of how this problem developed and what contexts and experiences brought it into being. Thomas D. Fallace argues that Dewey referred to his method as shaping "form and content" of the special problem where in

Dewey insisted that teachers should not approach the content of history as static, predetermined facts, but rather as a set of simplified, unraveling processes involving

concrete problems and tools corresponding with the development of the [human] race, which aligned with the developmental stages of the child. Thus, the history of the race dictated the selection of “content,” and the developmental level of the child dictated the appropriate “form” the content took, as the latter recapitulated the former. (Fallace 22).

However, Dewey’s conception of form and content are rudimentary and outdated so this Chapter will modernize his methods through a theoretical examination of these terms in modern rhetorical practices.

Lastly, this Chapter will examine the role of inquiry in First-Year Composition and theorize how John Dewey’s theory of social inquiry might benefit the teaching of First-Year Composition. I have laid out a conception of Dewey’s theory of social inquiry earlier in this Chapter so I will not go into more detail about it here, but this Chapter will establish a brief history of inquiry in Rhetoric and Composition and examine how Dewey’s theory of Social Inquiry can be updated to add to the theory of inquiry informing research in Rhetoric and Composition as outlined in the first part of this Introduction.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion: Democracy as Essentially Rhetorical; Rhetoric as Life Blood of Democracy

Chapter five of this dissertation will serve as the conclusion to the work. It will provide a summary of the main points of research, a general overview of the important contributions of this work to the field of Rhetoric and Composition, and recommendation for future research. The conclusion will argue that this dissertation makes three important and original contributions to the field of rhetoric and composition. First, this dissertation adapts the concept of institutional rhetorics from the field of organizational communication to

examine how institutional knowledge is developed and transmitted via rhetorical documents such as the WPA OS. Second, this dissertation examines how these institutional rhetorics can be used to manage knowledge-intensity to control the development of knowledge and stabilize (or destabilize) accepted forms of knowledge. Lastly, this dissertation proposes a large scale theoretical shift in the teaching of FYC to incorporate methods of civic literacy predicated on rhetorical citizenship, and proposes sample outcomes that would radically realign the focus of FYC from teaching methods of composition toward a focus on teaching students to use the skills learned from these methods of composition toward the betterment of democracy in America. I will then examine theoretical implications of these contributions, and examine the recommendations for future research into these contributions.

Chapter 2: A Taxonomy of Democratic Methods in Rhetoric and Composition

Since its publication in 1916, John Dewey's *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* has spurred debate about the role that education should play in democracy and what role democracy should play in education. Dewey argued that democracy should play a pivotal role in American life. Democracy, as conceptualized by Dewey, is about intelligent and civic minded participation, understanding the wants and needs of others in relation to one's own, and it is about cooperation, collaboration, and compromise. To Dewey, "life covers customs, institutions, beliefs, victories and defeats, recreations, and occupations" (*On Democracy* 8) and education was the central nexus that tied all this together and trained students to participate in Dewey's conception of American life. He believed that civilization continued through the transmission of cultural, social, and historical ideology and that an individual's life within a civilization is best constituted through participatory democracy. It was Dewey's belief that,

Democracy, as an ethical ideal, calls upon men and women to build communities in which the necessary opportunities and resources are available for every individual to realize fully his or her particular capacities and powers through participation in political, social, and cultural life. This ideal rested in the capacity of human beings for intelligent judgment if proper conditions are furnished. (Westbrook XV).

Dewey's belief that participatory democracy should shape American life has been widely influential in the development of higher education. For example, he was at the forefront of the movements in student centered education and experiential learning. His belief in experiential learning was directly tied his belief in democracy. Dewey believed citizens need to be well educated to solve the moral and social problems facing America. Moral and social

problems, for Dewey, are concerned with the guidance of human action to the achievement of socially defined ends that are productive of a satisfying life for individuals within the social sphere such as equity, social justice, and economic advancement. In my estimation, to bring Dewey's concept of participatory democracy into the 21st century to achieve this "satisfying life," students would need to be taught the methods of social inquiry necessary to solve problems facing the communities, social networks, and rhetorical publics that they inhabit. However, as Brian Jackson and Gregory Clark argue in their essay, "John Dewey and the Rhetoric of Democratic Culture," "This [Dewey's conception of Democracy] is not...about political theory, nor even about democracy. Rather, it is about the essentially rhetorical way of life—one we are calling here *Democratic Culture*—that we believe Dewey imagined for his work" (2). Developing the means to teach the democratic culture and civic literacy necessary to prepare students to animate this rhetorical way of living meant to teach civic literacy is a core components of this project.

In the Introduction to this project, I discussed Donald Lazere's claim that America currently has a crisis in civic literacy. Lazere, in his 2015 book, *Political Literacy in Composition and Rhetoric: Defending Academic Discourse against Postmodern Pluralism*, outlines the struggle that the American education system as a whole has had over the 25 years to educate students to become active, informed participants in the political sphere. Lazere, and other scholars, have struggled with the simple question of "How do we produce good citizens through rhetorical pedagogy?" Lazere outlines his own struggles teaching civic literacy in his career as a teacher and scholar in Rhetoric and Composition. Lazere claims his struggle to teach critical thinking and civic literacy stem from students' lack of training in both at the high school or college level. Lazere argues,

My agenda would give priority to the factual knowledge and analytic skills that students need to make reasoned judgments about the partisan screaming matches and special-interest propaganda that permeate political disputes. One source for such knowledge and skills can be the disciplines of critical thinking and argumentative rhetoric. Unfortunately, few high schools or colleges require courses with that focus” (288).

Lazere argues that our field—Rhetoric and Composition—is perfectly situated to teach the rhetorical skills necessary to participate in a democracy because First-Year Composition is centered around argumentative rhetoric that is predicated on critical thinking, writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating. In order to “do citizenship” citizens will need to know a variety of rhetorical skills and we can teach these skills in FYC. After reading Lazere’s text, I thought through his claims about our field being perfectly situated to take up this charge. However, I was also struck by a strong sense that the field of Rhetoric and Composition are already teaching civic literacy as a field in a number of ways. Out of this thinking arose a simple question, “What role have democratic methods—or civic literacy to use Lazere’s term—played in the formation of our field as demonstrated in the scholarship in *College Composition and Communication*?”

When we think on this question, historically, there are a number of ways that our field has addressed social issues and meditated on how to address them in the classroom. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, we saw the beginning of what was termed the “social turn” in Rhetoric and Composition. This arose out of opposition to the cognitive rhetoric of the 1980s which focused on the mental processes writers used during the composing processes. The cognitive rhetorics, it was said, focused on the writer in isolation from social and cultural

contexts that shaped the writer, writing, and rhetorical situation. The social turn was based on a social constructivist point of view that explored the ways that culture and society affected the rhetorical decisions a writer makes when composing, and focused on how we teach the rules and structures of discourse communities so that writers could learn the rhetorical moves necessary to participate in the communities. Kelly Kinney, Thomas Girshin, and Barrett Bowlin argue in the 2010 issue of *Composition Forum* that the social turn in Rhetoric and Composition can actually be seen as three distinct movements

The first [...] emphasizes teaching writing and learning how to write as collaborative, interactive processes. The second shift grows out of the first, but, rather than focusing primarily on instructional practice, as James Berlin writes in *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures*, it examines and critiques the signifying practices that shape subject formation—and, by extension, the discipline—“within the framework of economic, social, and political conditions” (83). While scholarship represented by the third social turn does not ignore classroom pedagogy or critical theory, it also does something quite more: *it takes as its starting point embodied activism*, [emphasis added by authors] (qtd. in Alexander and Rhodes 482).

Alexander and Rhodes go on to state, “the important point here is that the social turn serves as a powerful lens through which to see composition's ongoing grappling with socio-economic and cultural disparities” (482). It also illustrates our field's long held commitment to social justice, civil rights, and opposition to inequality in its various forms. The social turn, in my opinion, grew out of a social constructivist framework that viewed student intellectual development as socially situated and a conception of knowledge constructed through interaction with others which oriented this framework toward the sort of embodied

activism described by Alexander and Rhodes. Put simply, Rhetoric and Composition's orientation toward the social has always been with an eye toward participation in the public sphere with the stated goal of resisting unjust power dynamics in America—and to some extent, American Capitalism. Since the social turn, there have been pockets of scholars who have always geared first year composition toward teaching students to DO SOMETHING with the knowledge that is made in composing to improve the lives of people in their communities. This commitment to social justice in its various forms generates the core of my interests as a scholar, and is central to the formation of this project. One of the central reasons I chose to focus this project on civic literacy was to extend and continue the social justice work that has been started by the scholars before me over the last 50 years.

James Berlin, Peter Elbow, David Bartholomae, and Patricia Bizzell's early work on ideology, rhetoric, and discourse communities are foundational to this movement (as are a multitude of others). James A. Berlin, in his landmark essay, "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class," sought to create a transformative philosophy of composition that provided students with the knowledge and skills necessary to change the world. His conception of social epistemic rhetoric grew out of a desire to promote self-discovery and individual authenticity through processes of defamiliarization (474-476). Berlin has argued that by focusing on professional composition and communications and ignoring ideology, social-cognitive rhetoric—which maps structures of the mind on to structures of language and the interpersonal world—lends itself to use as a tool for training workers in corporate capitalism (478). Berlin was critical of social-cognitive rhetoric because it did not teach the explicit ideology of social epistemic rhetoric he thought students needed to be transformative members of society. Berlin argues that in cognitive rhetoric, "Writing becomes...just

another instance of problem-solving processes people use every day, most importantly the processes of experts, such as master chess players, inventors, successful scientists, business managers, and artists" (483). Berlin, as a Marxist, highlighted the dialectical nature of rhetoric, as it involves "engaging the material, the social, and the individual writer, with language as the agency of mediation" (478). This dialectic rhetoric endowed students with transformative knowledge required to understand how power functions, and this engagement with the social allowed students to locate themselves within history as an agent of social change.

This idea of transformative knowledge is similar to Jackson and Clark's idea of democratic culture. Democratic culture is invested in teaching students the rhetorical capacities necessary to participate in democracy—or to use their rhetorical knowledge to do something, to participate in public life, or to institute change to improve the lives of citizens in their communities. Dewey also believed citizens need to be well educated to solve the moral and social problems facing America. Moral and social problems, for Dewey, are concerned with the guidance of human action to the achievement of socially defined ends that are productive of a satisfying life for individuals within the social context. The best way to achieve these socially defined ends are through the use of rhetorical skills necessary to participate in democracy. This calls for an investigation into Lazere's claims that Rhetoric and Composition can teach the goals of civic literacy and rhetorical citizenship, and by extension, calls for an examination into what our field of Rhetoric and Composition has done historically to prepare students for their life as citizens in a democracy. Out of this conversation arises one of the central questions of this Chapter. What role have rhetorical

capacities for participation in democracy played in the formation of our field as demonstrated in the scholarship in *College Composition and Communication (CCC)*?

The purpose of this Chapter will be to establish the various methods that the field has predominantly used to teach students civic literacy or democratic methods. To this end, I looked for common themes, organizing theoretical frameworks, and schools of thought to group these under in order to provide a cohesive way to make sense of the various ways civic literacy has arisen in our field. This is not to say that this is a seamless narrative where each of these movements develop coherently over time in a straightforward fashion. As David Gold argues in his 2012 *CCC* essay, “Remapping Revisionist Historiography,” “in this newly emerging revisionist landscape, Rhetoric and Composition historiography faces two primary challenges: *integration* and *fragmentation* [emphasis his]. How do we map new scholarship on to existing scholarship, and how do we do so in a way that allows us to draw from a shared body of knowledge?” (Gold 17). To adequately respond to this integration and fragmentation, Gold argues,

Rhetoric and Composition historiography must not simply recover neglected writers, teachers, locations, and institutions, but must also demonstrate connections between these subjects and larger scholarly conversations. Further, we must better incorporate recent advances in recovery work, thus beginning with the assumption of a complex, multi-vocal past as our starting point for historical inquiry. (Gold 17)

To this end, the goal of this Chapter will be to do what Gold has laid out in his framework for historiography, which is to look for connections between individual authors and larger scholarly conversations in order to identify and examine the theoretical commonplaces that underpin many of the common features in the work of civic literacy in our field. To

accomplish this goal, I will use Richard Fulkerson's "metatheory" of analysis laid out in his essay, "Composition at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century" to interpret and critique two large ideological frameworks I see as organizing the majority of scholarship in civic literacy in CCCs. The rationale for this selection is that Fulkerson has already created an inventive and well organized theory for examining philosophies of composition in the 21st century. This metatheory, while straightforward and easily understandable, is a robust method of inquiry for composition research. It identifies a motivating concern, poses questions, allows for hypothesis related to the questions, and provides the means to justify the results. It provides a simple method for examining the features of an axiology while also providing the means to make claims and provide evidence to support the theory.

Theoretical Framework.

The field of Rhetoric and Composition has historically taken on the challenge to teach the skills necessary to "do rhetorical citizenship" through a variety of practices, theories, and methods. These various methods and movements have not been grouped together into one single movement but, instead, circulate as approaches to teaching composition. All of these individual attempts are what Jackson and Clark refer to as "rhetorical capacities to participate in democracy" (11). Jackson and Clark argue that rhetoric is the most essential practice in democracy, and necessary to establish a democratic culture predicated on "a rhetorical way of life...persuasive communication is one of the most essential practices in constituting democratic culture—one in which individuals are expected to express themselves constructively within a community and at the same time to judge rigorously the expressions of others on those same constructive criteria" (2). This conception of rhetorical capacity is akin to what Dewey imagined in his work, and is a theory of democracy that "describes the

kinds of human interaction that must follow when individuals or groups choose to, or discover that they must, treat each other as equals” (*Democracy and Education* 2). What skills in human interaction do we teach as a field and what can we learn about our field from these skills? What are the capacities we provide to participate in democracy?

Fulkerson argues that composition in the 21st century has what he terms, “axiological consensus and pedagogical diversity” (655). Axiological consensus and pedagogical diversity means that

We [the field of Rhetoric and Composition] agreed that we were to help students improve their writing and that "good writing" meant writing that was rhetorically effective for audience and situation. But we still disagreed over what sort of pedagogy would be best reach the goal-over whether to assign topics, how to assign topics, and what type of topics to assign; over the role of readings and textbooks; over peer-response groups; over how teachers should grade and/or respond to writing (655).

The use of democratic methods to teach rhetorical citizenship has demonstrated a similar sort of axiological consensus and pedagogical diversity. The field of Rhetoric and Composition agrees that preparing students for their role as citizens in a democracy is a good thing (axiological consensus), but there has been a lot of disagreement about the best ways to approach this issue (pedagogical diversity).

The axiology of a specific theory of composition underscores what it values in terms of product, process, and outcomes in relation to Rhetoric and Composition. Some examples of axiologies in Rhetoric and Composition are critical/cultural studies, procedural rhetoric, and expressivism, according to Fulkerson. Attempting to synthesize axiologies into taxonomies is a core historical practice in our field, and by extension, grouping these various

attempts to teach students to “do citizenship” into individual axiologies (or taxonomies) and examining what the underlying values of each movement is an accepted form of historical study in Rhetoric and Composition studies. For example, James Berlin and Byron Hawk have done very detailed studies of the various groupings of composition philosophy from a historical perspective. Simply stated, taxonomies of pedagogical and ideological features of philosophies of composition is a time honored tradition in our field.

To conduct this study, I will use Fulkerson’s theoretical framework of study as outlined in pages 657-658 of “Composition at the Turn of the Twenty First Century,” to guide this examination of democratic methods employed by the field. Fulkerson argued,

In order to have a philosophy of composition upon which you can explicitly erect a course, you must answer four questions:

1. The axiological question: in general, what makes writing "good"?
2. The process question: in general, how do written texts come into existence?
3. The pedagogical question: in general, how does one teach college students effectively, especially where procedural rather than propositional knowledge is the goal?
4. The epistemological question: "How do you know that?" which underlies answers to all the others. (657).

I will employ these four questions (and others) in order to examine critically the variant contemporary approaches to teaching democratic methods in our field over the last 50 years. Fulkerson concedes that these are not static, tidy categories with no overlap and that many of the philosophies will share some similarities in process, pedagogy, and epistemology. He argues, “It seems to imply that there are separate and systematic sets of characteristics for

each ‘perspective’—four perspectives, four pedagogies, four views of process, and four epistemologies. But it isn’t that simple” (657). What Fulkerson claims is that there will be scholars who may fit the categories on one or more axiology but adopt a different philosophy of process or pedagogy to achieve the goals set forth in their particular conception of composition philosophy. For example, an author may espouse a Critical Theory axiology but not adopt the process or pedagogy normally associated with this axiology such as dialectical exchange or problem based teaching. This is a caveat to acknowledge that all the essays in a study such as this may not line up perfectly with each category. These two axiological categories are just frameworks for understanding and allow for flexibility in pedagogical implementation.

The two conceptual categories which I see emerge as the principal axiologies underpinning civic approaches to the teaching of Rhetoric and Composition are Critical Theory and Community Writing. The rationale for these two emergent frameworks for democratic methods are that they take an inside out approach. Each asks the student to begin their study inside the classroom but eventually turn the focus outside the classroom in different ways. One, Critical Theory, is theoretical in nature and the other, community writing is practical in nature. Critical pedagogy is a student centered pedagogy meant to liberate the individual, and society through the raising of critical consciousness. Critical pedagogy is a teaching approach inspired by critical theory and is the practical classroom application of the theoretical concepts of critical theory. The student can learn this methodology from the classroom. As Ann George argues, “critical pedagogy engages students in analyses of unequal power relations that produce and are produced by cultural practices and institutions (including schools), and it aims to help students develop the tools

that will enable them to challenge this inequality” (McLaren 163 as qtd. in George 92). This work is largely theoretical in nature because it asks students to examine power structures in society but while the stated end goal of this philosophy is to prepare students for citizenship in democracy there is not a hard and fast requirement that students actually leave the classroom to practice these skills in the service of citizenship. It can be said that there is a stated assumption that students will learn these skills and then use them after graduation though I will concede that there are practioners who take on a more active role in extending these lessons outside the classroom.

Community writing is collaborative in nature, and is meant to raise critical consciousness through service work with other students while extending learning outside the classroom. As David Coogan argues in, “Service Learning and Social Change: The Case for Materialist Rhetoric,” community writing is predicated on “how to *discover* the arguments that already exist in the communities they wish to serve; *analyze* the effectiveness of those arguments; collaboratively *produce* viable alternatives with community partners; and *assess* the impact of their interventions” [emphasis his] (667). Community writing assumes that the students will necessarily begin their research outside the classroom in a community that they choose or is assigned by the professor. As Paul S. Collins argues, “Community” can mean a neighborhood, a school, a profession, even an entire ethnicity or religion—any group bound by a common interest or condition. No matter how small or large this community may be, your own experience of it can become the starting point of worthwhile research” (16). In many ways, communities function as the rhetorical publics that I discussed in the Introduction to this project, and community writing situates the composition classroom within a community—or public—that the student inhabits to practice the skills needed to be

active participants in this community, and to make change in the community. However, this is just a brief sketch of each philosophy of composition and I will provide a more detailed look at each below.

Critical Theory

AXIOLOGY – What makes writing good?

Critical Theory is a philosophy of composition which, according to J.L Kincheloe (2005), is concerned with

Transforming relations of power which are oppressive and which lead to the oppression of people. It tries to humanize and empower learners. It is most associated with the Brazilian educator and activist Paulo Freire using the principals of critical theory of the Frankfurt school as its main source. The prominent members of this critical theory are Adorno, Marcuse, and Habermas. Critical theory is concerned with the idea of a just society in which people have political, economic, and cultural control of their lives (as cited in Aliakbari and Faraji 77).

Critical Theory is also sometimes referred to as Critical Literacy and Critical Pedagogy (CP). A Critical Theory approach to democracy would “focus on having students read about systemic cultural injustices inflicted by dominant societal groups and dominant discourses on those with less power, and upon the empowering possibilities of rhetoric if students are educated to “read” carefully and “resist” the social texts that help keep some groups subordinated (Fulkerson 659). Andrea Greenbaum has recently argued that cultural studies approaches, critical approaches, many feminist approaches, and even postcolonial approaches can all be seen as similar “emancipatory movements in composition” (Fulkerson 659).

Ann George argues in the Chapter “Critical Pedagogy: Dreaming of Democracy” found in *A Guide to Composition Pedagogy*, that critical pedagogy in Rhetoric and Composition traces its roots back to Paulo Freire’s book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. George states, “Freire’s educational philosophy is grounded in his conviction that oppression interferes with man’s [sic] ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human—that is, to know oneself, as a subject in history capable of understanding and transforming the world” (93). George adds that Freire’s concept of education is predicated on problem posing or dialogic education in order to spur the development of a critical consciousness. George defines this critical consciousness as, “the ability to define, to analyze, to problematize the economic, political, and cultural forces that shape, but according to Freire, do not completely determine their lives” (93). Keith Gilyard, in *Composition and Cornel West: Notes Toward a Deep Democracy*, adds that this “heightened perception, or *concientizacao* [as Freire labels it], is to be used to identify the specific social, economic, and political contradictions to be transcended” (26). Gilyard goes on to add that education is only truly authentic when it aids in the formation of student critical consciousness. This problem posing philosophy aids in the formation of *concientizacao* or critical consciousness, and forms the core of this axiology. Problem posing is essential to Critical Pedagogy’s conception of good writing because it teaches students to approach the historical and cultural world as a transformable reality shaped by human ideological representations of reality. Problem posing would instill students with the self-knowledge needed to empower them to assert their role in history to combat oppressive power.

Good writing in this approach would require students to analyze rhetorical situations to examine how power would function within society to determine how to thwart or

undermine power structures in America such as patriarchy, white supremacy, capitalism, or colonialism. As Henry Giroux states, in *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*, “Literacy is best understood as a myriad of discursive forms and cultural competencies that construct and make available the various relations and experiences that exist between learners and the world” (10). Critical literacy, as practiced in a first year composition course, would provide students the agency and skills needed to critique forms of power, discrimination, and oppression. Gilyard goes on to argue that Critical Pedagogy, “enables students to consider a wide array of ideological perspectives and develop facility in interrogating those positions, the very activities that should lie at the heart of civic literacy and humanistic education” (29).

Daniel Barlow, in “Composing Post-Multiculturalism,” extends this idea that critique of race as a core component of composition. He examines the concept of rhetoric and racial diversity as the focus of composition and rhetoric courses. Barlow argues minority views can be advanced in democracy if we teach students the skills necessary to transform overarching public opinion through persuasion in the public sphere. Barlow believes through an examination of race students can achieve critical consciousness about structures and power dynamics related to race in democracy. He argues, “Racial inquiry can lead students to self-reflection, incisive cultural analysis, and a capable lexicon suited to writing projects that translate discomfort and uncertainty into personal expression and critical acumen” (414). Barlow sees race as a means to teach students the critical literacy necessary to challenge racial injustice and believes that orienting his composition course toward this will allow students to study race as a topic of inquiry. This mode of using race as a topic of inquiry, “is useful for writers because it is so difficult and sensitive a topic, and grappling with the

difficulty and sensitivity of race produces especially deliberate, critical, and conscious writing; writing that necessarily engages with the commonplaces—the “correct” answers—of multiculturalism” (415). Writing in this conception would not only engage with the commonplaces but also provide students with the agency necessary to reconstruct these commonplaces into more equitable distributions of power. A writing course of this nature would involve students “gaining knowledge about the systems and structures that create and sustain inequity (critical analysis), developing a sense of power or capability (sense of agency), and ultimately committing to take action against oppressive conditions (critical action)” (El Amin, et al. 11). Communicative agency—or the power to use rhetorical methods toward the achievement of individual goals—develops as students gain self-efficacy through recursive classroom practices. As students learn to understand how power functions within a system, and better understand their role within systems of power, they begin to develop the skills needed to become an actor within the system and this develops their sense of agency. This leads to self-actualization of the student’s critical potential.

Paul Bator supplements this idea that composition should teach skills in civic literacy to create critical consciousness by extending the examination of the subject to include and analysis of the object. In his article, “Aristotelian and Rogerian Rhetoric,” he argues that in this conception a subject is a person broadly defined who has a unique consciousness, and has a connection with other individuals that exists outside itself as objects. Objects function as the other outside the self. Bator believes that writers can better understand themselves, the rhetorical situation, and rhetorical arguments by better understanding the opposition’s stake in the problem at hand. Bator argues,

The Rogerian writer seeks to establish shared grounds of communication between

himself (or herself) and the audience by pointing out plausible circumstances under which both the writer's and reader's positions could be valid. The establishing of such possible validity allows for mutual sharing—a point at which both the reader and writer can vary their perspectives and perceive areas of truth in the other's position (430).

He argues a Rogerian perspective places emphasis on the problem or idea and encourages close, critical analysis by the reader. The deliberate analysis of the audience's point of view leads the writer to more careful, well-reasoned, and objective writing that encourages the reader to revise their image of the world and their consciousness to include—or perhaps make room for—other images and consciousnesses. This allows for a more dialogic approach to composing better situated to be inclusive and just.

Keith Gilyard, in “Literacy, Identity, and Imagination, Flight,” examines, “issues of literacy and identity relative to the development of a critical pedagogy and a critical democracy” (260). Gilyard takes up Bator's challenge to find ways to help writers find shared grounds for communication. Gilyard refers to this shared ground as “cross cultural conversations” and argues that if we are to truly “aim for a radical, transcultural democracy, as King did, then we need pedagogies to foster the development of the critical and astute citizenry that would pursue the task” (262). Gilyard argues it is important that students understand how dominant discourse influences, regulates, and reinforces privilege, and that if rising democracy depends on people understanding and resisting discourse that hampers democracy's opportunity, then it is important that students study how discourse works. Students need to engage in discussions of hegemony, ideology, and cultural differences which are supported by an imbalance of power and practice rhetorical skills of critique to tip

the balance of power back toward equity. Gilyard calls for a pedagogy that develops students capable of pursuing a transcultural, multi-voiced democracy. As Gilyard states, “students need to comprehend as completely as possible how discourse operates, which means understanding how the dominant or most powerful discourse serves to regulate and reproduce patterns of privilege” (266).

The common themes in “good writing” for practitioners of critical theory is a focus on how discourse is used to create—and change—systems of power with a stated goal of asking students to rigorously interrogate the subjectivity underlying socially constructed modes of thinking in both their own and dominant discourses. There is a notion embedded in this pedagogy that, “the ruling class hides behind language in the sense that their viewpoints become normalized and passed on as self-evident or natural” (Lakoff 53-54) and the goal of the writing instruction would be to teach students how to use rhetorical skills to expose and alter dominant or oppressive forms of discourse. This is akin to Dewey’s theory of social intelligence as outlined in *Logic: A Theory of Inquiry*, where Dewey defines social intelligence as the employment of a “scientific attitude” in problematic situations. The “scientific attitude” (a capacity to enjoy the doubtful) is not the same thing as the scientific method (a technique for making productive use of doubt by converting it into an operation of definite inquiry) but provides students the skills necessary to critically examine the world, expose injustice, and provides students with the power to combat this injustice (*Logic: A Theory of Inquiry* 58). Much like critical consciousness espoused by critical theory, Dewey believed that the scientific attitude is available to everyone. Dewey, like Friere, believed that citizens had to work for freedom by identifying the causes of oppression, and working with others to situate themselves to free themselves from this oppression, or investigate the ways

in which their privilege and power has been used to oppress others. Good writing, in this conception, would teach students the skills necessary to participate in the public sphere as citizens on their own terms.

PROCESS – How do texts come into existence?

The production of texts in this axiology would be “predicated on a rhetorical analysis of a public, document, website, or cultural artifact to determine how ideology circulates within this rhetorical situation and will often include an analysis of the writer/producer/creator of the content, its intended audience, and the rhetorical aims and outcomes of the document” (Fulkerson 667). This type of writing will often ask the writer of the rhetorical analysis to reflect on their role in this production and dissemination of the subject of the rhetorical analysis or the system that created the artifact. For example, this type of writing might ask a male student to reflect on their role in the production of patriarchy via a digital text such as a meme. Most writing assignments in this philosophy of composition would ask the students to invent the topic of inquiry based on their own knowledge, experience, and level of expertise, and would ask each student to develop their own theory of culture and to explore why is it important to a larger understanding of culture. Students would likely look for symbolic objects such as memes that represent an underlying concept or meaning and explore in their own words, a unique understanding of cultural signs using their own examples or evidence to explain how a cultural sign can have both implicit (unintended) and explicit (intended) meanings. A Critical Theory assignment will likely ask students to explore the mutable nature of power and oppression from a historical perspective that interrogates how this power or oppression within a culture has developed over time and to explore the consequences of this cultural development.

Nancy Welch's essay, "Living Room: Teaching Public Writing in a Post-Publicity Era" chronicles several examples of student writing projects taken from a Women's Studies course she taught in 2003 that explored how power was deployed in digital texts to disseminate ideology and expand structures of power. For example, one student undertook a project that examined the sexist nature of posters utilized in the school library to examine the sexual politics and stereotypes circulating on campus. Another student produced, "a comic book for teen AIDS/HIV activists, which wrestled with how to represent the "face" of AIDS without racial, sexual, and class stereotyping" (471). Welch describes her pedagogical experiences teaching students how to use rhetorical methods to push back against dominant or oppressive power they encounter on campus and in their lives. Welch's pedagogical goal is to, "add to the growing body of work that has the potential to reorient us from regarding rhetoric as a specialized *technê*—the property of a small economic and political elite—to understanding and teaching rhetoric as a mass, popular art—the practice of ordinary people who make up our country's multiethnic, working-class majority, in their press for relief, reform, and radical change" (474).

To Welch, these moments from that semester reveal that "rhetorical space—that is, public space with the potential to operate as a persuasive public sphere—is created not through well-intentioned civic planning or through the application of a few sound and reasonable rhetorical rules of conduct. Ordinary people make rhetorical space through concerted, often protracted struggle for visibility, voice, and impact against powerful interests that seek to deny visibility, voice, and impact" (477). The goal of this course was to teach students "to reflect on ingrained lessons about who is and isn't authorized to speak on a topic... [and] to focus—as my women's studies seminar often failed to do—on the policed

boundary between permitted and prohibited” or who has the right to speak in given spaces based on culture and context” (477). Welch’s essay illustrates how teachers who utilize critical pedagogy can use rhetoric to “take and make space in acts that are simultaneously verbal and physical” (477). Students learning to reclaim spaces that have been dominated or oppressed is a key component of democratic learning because it allows students to practice using rhetorical methods in the service of social justice and through practice that builds the self-efficacy needed to practice the skills in the service of democracy to make a more just and inclusive society. Welch’s argument to “take” public spaces back for the working class underscores an element of confrontation in the rhetorical practices of critical pedagogy. Welch and others want students to incorporate elements of radical dissent and righteous anger into their writing to confront social inequality. Many scholars discuss how to teach students the art of rhetorical confrontation used to combat oppression, and develop the skills of radical dissent.

Carl Herndl and Danny Bauer, in “Speaking Matters: Liberation Theology, Rhetorical Performance, and Social Action” argue that “confrontational rhetoric can be an agent of social change. It attempts to establish social change through the power of an extreme discursive style. Confrontational rhetoric takes advantage of a social crisis; however, it is best described as an attempt to expose real or perceived hegemony through disruption, and assertion of, strong alternatives to the dominant social structure and discourse” (566). This pedagogy allows students to destabilize the cultures of silence, or the alienation muffling authentic voices rendering dialogue impossible, which grow around hegemonic discourses. Herndl and Bauer state that history is told from the point of view of the dominant culture and students need to be taught the rhetorical skills necessary to challenge and destabilize these

dominant narratives. Herndl and Bauer state the goal of their pedagogy is to teach students to, “create a social space and achieve rhetorical agency in the face of severe silence and oppression” (560).

To teach students to produce these sort of texts, the authors incorporate aspects of liberation theology into critical pedagogy because, “Liberation theology integrates political revolution, religious practice, and community life into a broad cultural formation that varies from country to country and from community to community, always emerging from specific local conditions” (564). Herndl and Bauer would use liberation theology as a means of cultural and social inquiry to train students to resist domination through composing. Critical pedagogy argues that history becomes a tool of the dominant culture through texts, language, and institutions that work to maintain power and privilege as well as the social constructs needed to support their hegemonic ideology. Critical pedagogy refuses to accept the domination of the oppressed and seeks to teach students the skill required to resist this domination. Herndl and Bauer argue that liberation theology as taught in their classroom can teach students the rhetorical skills to develop critical consciousness needed to resist domination, as well, because “Liberation theology's emphasis upon literacy resists a "culture of silence" (566) and places, “emphasis upon literacy that produces a foundation for the marginalized to have a history of their own, rather than to be controlled by the dominant discourse” (567). Composition in this conception would again underscore the development of critical consciousness needed to help student recognize their role in history, and to be an active participant in social change. In order to fully take part in critical consciousness, students need to have their fixed ideology challenged—sometimes via confrontational teaching meant to push students far outside their comfort zone to defamiliarize dominant

narratives.

Dennis A. Lynch, Diana George and Marilyn M. Cooper, in “Moments of Argument: Agonistic Inquiry and Confrontational Cooperation,” argue for pedagogy that reconceives argument as inquiry which is both a cooperative and confrontational perspective. They call for argument as a dialogic process where people struggle together to interpret and deliberate on issues. This process allows individuals to articulate their positions, and evaluate and change those positions. The authors argue that before students can engage in this type of argumentation, they must understand the history behind issues as well as the very real effects of decisions made on the issues. They also argue this type of curriculum can only be successful if teachers acknowledge the discomfort some students may experience in giving up traditional ways of knowing or learning. Lynch, Copper and George state that pushing students to critically consider opinions other than their own, helps them to understand the complexities of real world issues.

Writing assignments in the course Lynch, et al., propose would be “focused on the issue of using Indian mascot names and logos for sports teams” (70). Students study the Native American icons used in sports to analyze the underlying social and cultural significance of Native American representations in American culture. Lynch, Cooper and George, argue, “The presumed goal is to critically examine not just one's beliefs but the decisions that are being made in our communities. The more those decisions touch students' loyalties, though, the more likely students are to retrench, not listen to others, resort to quips, and as a result lose sight of the complexity of the issue under consideration” (71) so an implicit assumption in this writing assignment would be to teach critical reflection necessary to see how stereotypes function in society.

The common thread amongst the production of texts in the critical theory classroom is a focus on rhetorically examining the cultural, ideological, and historical narratives communicated and circulated in texts. Students are taught to be critical evaluators of a variety of texts in a variety of modes to discern the oppressive and hegemonic ideology contained in each and to locate themselves within the dominant narratives contained within these texts via reflection and analysis. As Welch argues once students identify and locate themselves within dominant narratives they analyze how these narratives function to silence counter-narratives of minority groups marginalized by power structures. Lynch and George supplement this by asking students to review each rhetorical situation from a dialectic approach that considers both sides of an issue when evaluating artifacts. Students then take a deep dive into evaluating a chosen artifact—a meme, a movie poster, an essay—to analyze how key symbols such as words and images are designed, organized, and arranged to speak to an ideology or communicate a message. As Herndl and Bauer argue the key to this sort of social inquiry is to teach students to understand and resist dominant narratives. This teaching sometimes requires a confrontational stance on the part of the teacher as Lynch, et al., argue is required to challenge students' fixed beliefs.

PEDAGOGY - How does one teach college students effectively in this axiology?

Critical theory pedagogy trains students to

Transform oppressed people and to save them from being objects of education to subjects of their own autonomy and emancipation. In this view, students should act in a way that enables them to transform their societies which is best achieved through emancipatory education. Through problem posing education and questioning the problematic issues in learners' lives, students learn to think critically and develop a

critical consciousness which help them to improve their life conditions and to take necessary actions to build a more just and equitable society (Aliakbari and Faraji 77).

This pedagogical method usually entails decentering the classroom and draws a distinction, “between banking education and problem posing education. In the traditional view of education, teachers are pillars of knowledge; they know everything and students know nothing. Teachers deposit knowledge in students and never ask them to question that knowledge” (Aliakbari and Faraji 78). Critical theory teaches students to take control of their own learning. In this conception, students will often negotiate assignments, due dates, grading contracts, and course content and work in groups to produce collaborative assignments, provide feedback, and establish their authority as producers and evaluators of texts within this context. Aliakbari and Faraji go on to argue, “Problem posing pedagogy leads to the development of knowledge by the students themselves. Freire suggested that through a problem posing process literacy becomes immediately relevant and engaging by focusing on problematic issues in learners’ lives” (80). Problem posing education, “involves uncovering of reality, striving for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality. This consciousness allows students to take the necessary actions to improve their life conditions” (80).

Jonathan Alexander and Jaqueline Rhodes, in “Flattening Effects: Composition’s Multicultural Imperative and the Problem of Narrative Coherence” discuss the limitations of the critical pedagogy because they argue it requires a language change. A language change in this sense means teaching students to develop a language, “that allows for competing solidarities and political vocabularies [and] an ongoing engagement with a variety of narratives and traditions that can be re-read and re-formulated in politically different terms”

(Giroux 691). In order to do so, “critical multicultural pedagogy must proceed with both a recognition of our common humanity and a strong critical sense of our radical alterity, of the critical differences that exist among different people’s and different groups’ experiences of the world” (Alexander and Rhodes 431). They advocate for a form of critical pedagogy predicated on more authentic forms of understanding difference they term a “pedagogy of the unknowable” (445). In many ways, Alexander and Rhodes argument reflects the criticism that critical pedagogy often receives because it is seen as being overly concerned with developing a language of critique. Critical pedagogy is rooted in the critique of education, but this critique is often theoretical in nature. Critical Pedagogy is concerned with how students can be taught to critique education, and culture without really providing an avenue for application. The most relevant criticism to this study would be that critical pedagogy talks an awful lot about what is wrong with language practices at the theoretical level without developing a solid pedagogical framework devoted to teaching students how to actually develop an alternate, more inclusive language of critique. I believe that Alexander and Rhodes situate themselves within this conversation to attempt to parse out how we might put the theoretical nature of the language of critique into actual practice.

Alexander and Rhodes ask how we teach in the gray areas between the polarization and the understanding of difference. One way is to prompt students “*not* [to] write about what they believe they ‘know’ about one another, but what they suspect they *do not know*” (445). The exploration of such radical alterity—or radical otherness meant to challenge or oppose the heterogeneity of culture—of these critical differences can heighten a classroom’s necessary awareness of the diversity in subject matter and illustrate those,

Diverse subject positions people inhabit as a way of cultivating tolerance for the many varieties of experience that people have in our world. The inculcation or development of such tolerance [*sic*] often linked to efforts to connect prejudices based on differences to larger social structures or systems that position groups against one another, such as with institutional racism or the connections between homophobia and sexism (Alexander and Rhodes 434).

Alexander and Rhodes worry that multiculturalism's attempt to examine difference has made confronting ideology difficult because the writing that emerges from such a perspective is often materialized in inclusion narratives which discursively "reduces and flattens difference into easy, normative legibility" (438). This is what they call the flattening effect, where identities of difference are reduced in the process of seeing identities of difference as "*identical to (or identifiable with) your own*" (438). Alexander and Rhodes argue that the flattening effect minimizes or negates the radical alterity that allows students to create a unique identity in opposition to dominant narratives which results in minority identities being erased by "an overriding narrative of shared humanity" (438). The flattening effect "flattens" minorities through emotional blunting where minorities are trained to reduce emotional response in reaction to dominant narratives. This flattening effect often results in a culture of silence amongst minorities in response to white cultural narratives. This results in the destruction of alterity or otherness that minority students draw power from in their lives. Teaching students to confront these differences on a deeper level that recognizes the true importance of difference is essential to critical teaching.

Building on the idea that teaching students to confront differences on a deeper level, Virginia Anderson seeks to connect the confrontational aims of critical pedagogy to

rhetorical methods used in the composition classroom. Anderson argues, in “Confrontational Teaching and Rhetorical Practice,” that she begins her class “by claiming that we share with students a nominal belief in concepts like freedom, equality, opportunity, community, responsibility, and, indeed, individual empowerment. I endorse the critical project of helping students investigate the ways that their culture prevents these ideals from being realized” (209). Anderson holds that teachers should use rhetorical theory to create and support a strong conjectural argument that can serve as a shared starting place of our concepts of freedom, liberty, equality, opportunity, and community. Teachers, according to Anderson, often feel compelled to respond to the current political climate with its hate-filled, violence promoting, and discriminating rhetoric (197). However, such teachers must choose between taking a confrontational position that may pit them against their students or ignores their own beliefs in an effort to encourage students to participate in classroom discussions. Anderson goes to state that there is inherent danger in this sort of radical teaching because classrooms can become politics of personality where “politics become personalized, rhetorical and emotional energy shifts away from concern with intergroup social and political relations to a focus on political positions as badges of personal worth” (220). We can see that this often also reflects what happens in political debate in the public sphere, as well.

Anderson argues that many teachers fear that their opinions on politics may inadvertently indoctrinate their students or cause students to feel they have to parrot the teacher’s opinion in order to get a good grade. Others contend that teachers have an ethical and moral obligation to challenge undesirable values and that by remaining silent out of fear of stifling openness, students will think that all views have equal value. Furthermore, the effort to limit disagreement can prevent students from learning necessary skills to handle

workplace conflict—in addition to conflicts in the community. Anderson maintains that in order to foster an atmosphere of open discussion, teachers must become more aware of their tendency to use persuasive rhetoric while at the same time, arguing against others who do the same. They should be alert and receptive to cultural and emotional factors which influence the rhetorical argument. Anderson’s pedagogy reflects a commitment to teaching students to critically reflect on fixed beliefs to examine the consequences of these beliefs. This is done through a form of social inquiry meant to raise critical consciousness through rigorous investigation.

While some writing teachers focus on confrontation as a means of raising critical consciousness others have turned to collaborative learning strategies to help students to gain a more nuanced and complex understanding of the root causes of inequality and oppression. Stephen M. Fishman and Lucille Parkinson McCarthy, in “Teaching for Student Change: A Deweyian Alternative to Radical Pedagogy,” argue that a cooperative classroom approach is capable of generating critique and change in students, and discuss the process a student would use to develop writing in this conception. They argue, “In the classroom, students should be allowed to experience perplexity which results in experimentation, questioning, and openness. Second, as natural learning is a risky and social activity, school learning should focus on understanding and developing the virtue of cooperative inquiry” (315). Fishman and McCarthy take up Dewey’s contention that education is primarily social in nature and that successful “composition courses help students want to do more writing. And to encourage students to want to do more writing, successful composition teachers help students gain power to establish and contribute to writing groups” ((317). Cooperative inquiry in composition classes such as this stress that all participants are actively involved in

research decisions as co-researchers, and as such, have an equal stake in the research and discovery of knowledge. Their argument supports Dewey's approach that accepts dissonance will occur in the classroom.

However, this approach stresses conflict should always occur within the context of understanding the value of cooperation. In this frame, students are taught to work together to solve problems collaboratively as a group, so that they learn that through conflict, problems are identified, and solutions created and accepted, and a sense of justice and fairness established. Dewey believed that conflict leads to a better understanding because it brings problems into the open and makes them available for discussion, and through collaboration solutions are identified with each stakeholder having a role in the development of solutions. This increases understanding and engagement because cooperation in resolving conflict makes everyone accountable for the outcome. Fishman and McCarthy base their argument on two of Dewey's principles: first, school learning should parallel natural learning which is developed as individuals encounter and learn from problems and difficulties that require reflection and readjustment. In the classroom, students should be allowed to experience complexity which results in experimentation, questioning, and openness. Second, as natural learning is a risky and social activity, school learning should focus on understanding and developing the virtue of cooperative inquiry.

Such methodology respects the abilities of others and recognizes that every voice provides a valuable contribution to an activity. Fishman and McCarthy state the implications of Dewey's approach are that lecture is replaced by student activity; teachers shape the classroom environment to create situations where students examine dilemmas that are emotionally engaging. In this environment, teachers and students occupy alternate roles as

educators. Students and teachers work together to construct meaning through a dialogic classroom interaction. Through evaluation of Fishman's use of Dewey's pedagogy in the classroom, Fishman and McCarthy's research found that politeness, respect, cooperation, and careful conflict resulted in positive improved rhetorical exchanges in the classroom.

Each of these authors examines critical pedagogy to advocate for or critique the methods used to raise critical consciousness in students. Each theorizes pedagogical methods to teach students better ways to question authority to take control of their own learning, and critically evaluate their fixed beliefs through confrontational methods. Alexander and Rhodes argue that we should demonstrate care for minority students when teaching critical consciousness because selections from dominant narratives can cause a flattening effect on minorities. Anderson argues critical pedagogy sometimes takes a conflict perspective to critically examine power structures as a source of conflict within society. Fishman and McCarthy argue that teaching students to wrestle with complexity can raise critical consciousness. Each of these strategies adopts a radical stance to help students reach critical consciousness. Radical in this instance means a teacher who advocates for political or social reform. Teaching from this radical perspective, instructors can encourage their students to think critically about the way things are and who benefits from oppression, and in doing so, prevent history from repeating itself.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS – How does one make knowledge in this axiology?

In Critical Theory, knowledge is made through dialectic exchanges between teacher and student, between student and student, and between student and history as the student begins to examine their place in history and develop the agency necessary to become a

participant in history. As the student actualizes their consciousness they begin to use knowledge to act upon history as opposed to passively letting history act upon them. In a dialectic exchange, students and teacher begin with a problem and examine both sides of the problem (this is sometimes termed thesis and antithesis or—somewhat pejoratively—binary thinking). In Critical Theory, truth claims are “based on an epistemology that sees truth as arising out of the interaction of the elements of the rhetorical situation: an interaction of subject and object or of subject and audience or even of all elements--subject, object, audience, and language--operating simultaneously” (Berlin 486). Critical teaching challenges students to analyze how power functions in a specific rhetorical situation, but also to think through how conflicting ideas must be resolved or reconciled. Often times, there are rules to knowledge making in this situation defined by community standards that confine, limit, or omit certain types of writing. Critical teaching asks students to critically examine how the rules of discourse community can function to empower certain groups while silencing others.

How discourse functions to empower or oppress groups has come under study in Rhetoric and Composition over the last 25 years. Scholars have become increasingly interested in how academic discourse can be exclusionary to marginalized or oppressed groups. A discourse community is a textual system with stated and unstated conventions with conventions being the implicit or explicit rules governing the textual system. Geoffrey Chase, “Accommodation, Resistance, and the Politics of Student Writing,” argues, “discourse communities are organized around the production and legitimation of particular forms of knowledge and social practices at the expense of others, and they are not ideologically innocent...Conventions are not static and fixed, and because they are constructed as a result

of human interactions, we need to raise questions about the ways in which students learn, or fail to learn, the conventions of a discourse community and, in short, to turn our attention to matters of pedagogy” (13-14). Chase thinks of writing as a social activity that is linked to the process of self and social empowerment. However, he claims there are two main issues that require further consideration and research (Chase 15). First, knowledge and social practice is produced and legitimized by one dominant discourse community at the expense of others. We need to understand how the discourse conventions used in the classroom operate on a larger theoretical level, to privilege one discourse over another. Second, conventions are constructed as a result of human interaction and are fluid, so we must consider the way a student does or does not learn the conventions of a discourse community.

Chase utilizes Henry Giroux’s categories of accommodation, opposition, and resistance to describe the ways student learning responds to the dominant culture (Chase 21). Chase uses these definitions to examine three students’ work he followed over two classes in over a period of two years. Each of the three students approached the issue of discourse conventions in different ways. In this study, Bill accommodated discourse conventions above quality analysis, Kris opposed the scientific discourse convention constraints forced on her by indulging in creative writing, and Karen resisted formal discourse conventions by refusing to remain at arm’s length from her subject. The result of Chase’s study suggests we should pedagogically consider the consequences or challenges of teaching a particular discourse convention. Students learning to understand how discourse conventions are often defined by the systems of power students inhabit is essential to critical consciousness. Self-actualization happens through critical study and allows students the opportunity to realize their full potential as thinkers and learners. When teaching discourse community conventions,

instructors need to do so in such a way that allows students to see their own place in a social and historical context and encourage them to analyze their own experiences and differences as starting points in connecting to the wider world. Each individual comes to the course with their own narratives, and uses these as a starting point to enter and learn the rules of a new discourse community. The individual experiences each student brings to the composition classroom shape their understanding, ability to learn, and defines their use of rhetorical skills to enter that discourse community.

On a larger scale, how literacy functions culturally is similar to how it functions in a composition course. Citizens, like students, are shaped by their experiences with reading and writing. These experiences shape their understanding of democratic processes such as voting, participation in democracy, and defines their use of rhetorical skills in the service of political goals. In many ways, what it means to be literate—the ability to develop communicative agency or to use reading and writing in the service of political aims—defines a citizen's role in democracy. Those who cannot learn to master the conventions of political discourse communities are marginalized or sidelined. Beth Daniell, in "Narratives of Literacy: Connecting Composition to Culture" argues narratives of literacy—or how knowledge and learning are shaped by experiences with writing—can influence, respond to, reflect, and shape our conception of writing, and defines how writing is taught and learned in a composition classroom. She scaffolds her argument on Jean-François Lyotard's theory of grand and little narratives. She argues that grand narratives of literacy are conservative in nature and tend to view literacy as a means of access to the discourse conventions of the ruling class. Little narratives connect language to culture to destabilize the discourse conventions that dominate lives. Daniell argues the results of her study on literacy reveal

that we have competing narratives of literacy and underscores Gold's argument that the larger narratives that have historically tied theories of composition together are fragmenting into smaller, more niche laden theories of composition. This fragmentation has made it harder to find unifying narratives of coherence among the scholarship in Rhetoric and Composition. Instead of having one dominant conception of what it means to be literate we are seeing the rise of little literacies that define literacy as contextual and contingent. These little narratives are predicated on the language of critique that asks students to consider their role in a larger cultural context, and to identify and challenge those discourse conventions that oppress, marginalize or exclude.

Allowing students to locate themselves within the narrative about literacy reflects critical pedagogy's commitment to students learning to locate themselves as agents of change in historical narratives that guide their lives. Anne E. Green, in "Difficult Stories: Service-Learning, Race, Class, and Whiteness," also sees value in the personal narrative and argues that telling service learning stories about race and class can open the door to deeper understanding of the difference between those who serve and those who are served. Green also makes connections to Lyotard's use of grand and little narratives as a means of teaching students to situate themselves amongst master narratives to destabilize them. Lyotard argues that grand narratives function to form an inner connection between events related to one another so that they form a linear, coherent narrative which seems to develop naturally. Grand narratives portray history as a succession of social systems, and as the gradual development of social conditions. Narrative knowledge making makes of this sort can be seen as dangerous because they make things appear as they should be. In contrast, little narratives—or *petits récits*—are restricted narratives, which can destabilize the grand

narrative by bringing into focus a singular event or experience. Personal narratives in writing can function as little narratives that students can use in opposition to oppressive narratives circulating in society. Green suggests that teachers encourage students to write about difficult stories. This may involve acknowledging white privilege and dismantling the racism often attached to it. Green suggests that teachers encourage students to write about difficult stories. This may involve acknowledging white privilege and dismantling the racism often attached to it. This includes acknowledging the differences in class and culture, and not assuming everyone aspires to the same ideals of middle-class success and materialism.

One component important to student experience of service learning is position. Students from different ethnic groups, backgrounds, and experiences will view service learning from diverse perspectives and world views. For students from an under-privileged background or minority ethnic group, service learning may hold different significance. Green's research shows that white students are often unable to discuss issues of race even when their service learning projects takes them into minority communities. Through their descriptions of these communities or their experiences with members from the community, they will not address race or the ways in which racism impacts individuals in that community. Green argues that silence or withdrawal from the discussion are two of the strategies white people use to avoid discussing racism. Green points out that the goal for service learning writing should not only be to *help* the service learning site, but also, and perhaps more importantly, create solidarity *with* the site. Teaching students to confront race can be an important rhetorical skill to combat racism and white privilege.

Knowledge making in critical theory is predicated on producing critical citizens who are reflective about rhetoric and writing, and can understand how they are used in

participatory democracy. Critical teaching seeks to produce citizens who can resist accepting cultural narratives in conditioned passivity. As Chase argues, writing is a social activity that is linked to the process of self and social empowerment through self-knowledge. Green supplements this by arguing that writing can open the door to a deeper understanding of the difference between those who serve and those who are served to illustrate the role that students play in grand narratives. Daniel extends that by arguing that understanding how narratives circulate in culture can teach students to produce counter narratives to destabilize the grand narratives that oppress and silence marginalized groups in America. These authors attempt to reconfigure the way we perceive knowledge making. Writing in this conception refigures knowledge from units of discrete information—a banking concept of education—to knowledge as a socially constructed linguistic product—critical consciousness. Writing becomes a product rooted in linguistic practices predicated on skills in active listening and communicative agency that asks citizens to take a dialectic approach to Rhetoric and Composition. A dialectal approach to Rhetoric and Composition would destabilize a traditional classroom model that Giroux argues “serves to function as modes of social, political and cultural reproduction by utilizing banking methods, rote and transmission teaching, instilling a culture of conformity, and the passive absorption of knowledge” (5). The banking concept of education relies on passive, uncritical pedagogies to construct a docile, unresisting student. One, who in turn, will become a citizen in the same submissive mold. This citizen would be the very epitome of people in Plato’s allegory of the cave: chained to the wall watching shadows on the wall not realizing that they are imprisoned and hidden from the world of knowledge.

Community Writing

AXIOLOGY – What makes writing good?

Community writing is a broad term which encompasses service-learning, public writing, community-based research, community literacy, ethnography, community publishing, and advocacy and activist writing under a single heading. Community writing has established its own conference that addresses a variety of issues facing citizens in a democracy from a multiplicity of views. Writing is important because it plays a central role in how communities conceptualize themselves, and is a tool used to open dialogue across difference so that difference can be addressed in a positive and productive manner. The underpinning philosophy of community writing is to teach students skills very similar to that of Dewey's conception of problem solving. It teaches students how to deal with conflicts generated within one's daily life, develop provisional philosophies to address these conflicts, and empower them to act with purpose to address these conflicts. Berlin argues in "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class," "the subject is itself a social construct that emerges through the linguistically-circumscribed interaction of the individual, the community, and the material world" (489). So, according to Berlin, students can never really know themselves or arrive at critical consciousness if they are not engaged with a community, the real world, and themselves. Advocates of service-learning argue that a wide range of personal and communal benefits arise when students engage in meaningful community service activities that are integrally related to rigorous academic work. When engaged in the material conditions of existence in the real world, as Berlin theorizes, students have the chance to see an authentic-self emerge with the communicative agency necessary to change the world and become active participants in shaping the community. John Dewey viewed community as an

essential component of his educational philosophy because education was essential to the revitalization of the local through skills in inquiry, problem solving, and communication. Alan Waterman, in his seminal text *Service-Learning: Applications from the Research*, states, “John [Dewey] viewed community as an integral part of educational experiences, because what is learned in school must be taken and utilized beyond its bounds, both for the advancement of the student and the betterment of future societies” (2). Dewey understood that to really educate citizens who embody the agency to generate true social change that knowledge had to be at least partially ontological and experiential. Dewey’s social ontology offers us an account of intentionality, social statuses, institutions and norms, or an understanding of being in the world. Community writing is dedicated to experiential learning because predicated on ‘writing through doing’ or ‘writing as predicated on social action.’

Ellen Cushman, in “The Rhetorician as an Agent of Social Change,” argues, “the primary answer to social change is not creating liberatory pedagogy, rather it is to encourage civic participation” (51). She claims that modern scholars can be agents of social change outside of the classroom. Political activism in the classroom is not enough, scholars need to build bridges between the university and the community by actively participating in their neighborhoods (56). Cushman contends that universities are often socially, if not physically, isolated from the communities in which they are located. She points out that activism begins when the sociological barriers between the university and community are brought down. Cushman reasons we need to account for the many ways that people use language and literacy to navigate, challenge, and change the daily circumstances of their lives. Interaction with the community reminds students and scholars of the necessary material conditions required of reading and writing. As students participate in real world conditions that require

social action they develop confidence, and in doing so begin to form their own individual sense of agency.

However, Cushman acknowledges the challenges that a student faces with undertaking political activism and community engagement work. Unlike scholars with access to resources and computers to facilitate writing, students and community activists need the conditions for personal development through reading and writing to be more amenable to their social life in a democracy. Many of the women in Cushman's article work long hours to support their families, and after work and household duties, there is very little time left over for personal improvement. Their domestic priorities must be in place before they can turn their attention to self-improvement. Cushman argues one way to empower people to reach their goals is by providing those resources (56). Students need resources and education in using these resources to participate in democracy. Scheduling meetings after hours and in libraries, offices, and bookstores, providing access to computers and printers, as well as the time spent on developing job applications, creating resumes and letters, can provide them with the access they need to improve literacy. Cushman contends that while the gift of empowerment may seem one-sided, the community can empower the scholar as well through reciprocity (61). The people of the community give back in many ways by bringing the scholar into their lives. They provide a different perspective of the community as they tell stories, read letters, discuss issues, and challenge the scholar's assumptions and theories. This type of give-and-take allows each to identify points of solidarity and commonality. These points of solidarity become important aspects of service learning and community writing.

Advocates of service-learning argue that a wide range of personal and communal benefits arise when students engage in meaningful community service activities that are

integrally related to rigorous academic work. David Coogan, “Service Learning and Social Change: The Case for Materialist Rhetoric,” argues, “a focus on the effects of service learning to ensure that its method and goals are developed with input from the needs, and its primary functions to promote the civic goals of its participants” (361). Coogan argues that for service learning to be ethical it has to consider the needs of the primary service holders in the learning—students. Coogan goes on to add he believes that a course has to contain the type of writing that, “challenges students, teachers, and community partners to write for social change *and* define *change* concretely, in terms of institutional practices or policies that they wish to influence” (667). This idea that student writing needs to consider the institutional practices is a fixture of critical pedagogy because it asks students to consider how institutional practices in the academy can be oppressive or discriminatory, and asks students to examine how they might enact social change to combat these practices.

This examination of how institutional practices can be used to teach student methods of critical reflection is echoed in J. Blake Scott essay, “Civic Engagement as Risk Management and Public Relations: What the Pharmaceutical Industry Can Teach us about Service-Learning.” In this essay, Scott argues that “based on the analysis of the student service learning project, universities could encourage civic organizations to implement the ‘practices, policies, and rhetorical changes’ suggested by the analysis (361). David Coogan and J. Blake Scott argue service learning explores the connection between service learning, critical pedagogy, and academic work. Service Learning and Critical pedagogy are connected through service-learning’s potential to increase community awareness of students and their growth as citizens. Through this community awareness students better understand their roles and responsibility as active citizens. As part of this service learning, Scott advises that

rhetoricians in the field keep in mind several questions: What needs do service learning prioritize? Whose priorities are we linking and what is lost or gained with this linkage? Coogan argues writing predicated on material conditions will encourage a focus on the effects of service learning to ensure that its method and goals are developed with input from the community, that it responds to the specific dynamics of the community's needs, and it functions to promote the civic goals of its participants. Scott extends this argument by adding that based on the analysis of the student service learning project, universities could encourage civic organizations to implement the "practices, policies, and rhetorical changes" suggested by the analysis (361). Scott cautions against the trend of corporatizing service learning where liberal values of citizen community involvement are redirected to the market driven values of efficiency, customer service, and risk-management. Each author is making an argument about the balance between community needs and the goals of a first year writing course. Scot is arguing against civic engagement learning being institutionalized into a glorified internship. Coogan underscores this by arguing that instructors and administrators need to make sure to maintain the rigor of service learning courses but also to remember the vision and goal of service learning is "not just to make good citizens but to enable student-citizens to write for social change" (667). The goal of both authors is to protect civic literacy projects from being bled of their transformative aspects.

In *Writing Partnerships: Service-Learning in Composition*, Thomas Deans suggests that community writing is predicated on the belief that "students should learn to write themselves into the world through producing rhetorical documents that intervene materially in contexts beyond the academy" (8). The goal of community writing is to "encourage versatile and reflective writers who not only learn strategies for negotiating the writing

challenges of college but also venture beyond the classroom (and beyond academic discourse) to serve their communities by applying their still-emerging literacy skills to pressing social problems” (52). For Deans, community writing is a strategy meant to encourage the development of capable and socially engaged writers who demonstrate the ability to wrestle with social problems to improve society. Cushman reminds us that we need to make sure that students have the resources and support needed to participate in civic engagement and community writing. Scott adds that we ask students to engage community organizations who can provide support to communities so that the material conditions necessary for participation are met. Coogan argues that community writing should be communally responsive so that it promotes the civic goals of all citizens in a community. Good writing in this conception would demonstrate students have learned to be versatile, reflective writers capable of producing texts in response to problems that arise within the community.

PROCESS – How do texts come into existence?

One form of writing asks students to begin by identifying a community that they belong to, and focusing upon a problem within this community. After observing the problem, students are taught to clearly analyze possible solutions, construct arguments for them, decide which are likely to succeed, and consider how to initiate action. The process of community writing is rooted in field methods that ask students to utilize field notes, interviews, and data collection to produce written texts that attempt to solve a problem, and propose a solution. C. David Lisman, in *Toward a Civil Society: Civic Literacy and Service Learning*, argues “a focus on investigating and creating commitments to community seems, to those concerned with moral and civic literacy, the most appropriate grounding for

experiential writing” (22). To complete this sort of experiential writing, students would choose a problem, visit a location and complete several types of field research such as field notes, interviews, observations, and reflections to develop a sense of the type of language or literate practices used in this space to better understand what type of rhetorical approaches would be most persuasive to this group or audience. In community writing, writing is a way to organize and understand the events that affect a community—or rhetorical public—and asks the writer to reflect on the situation to develop a response to improve the lives of citizens affected in this community. Often, this type of reflection requires students to develop personal narratives that articulate their experiences inhabiting these communities. The personal narratives serve to locate the writer within the community as a participant in the problems facing the community. Community writing asks student to incorporate the personal in their writing as a personal narrative.

The use of the personal in writing is based on the writer’s own observation, experience, or opinion. Community writing assignments sometimes ask that students develop an informed opinion about an issue, then to conduct field work to document what the writer observed, to relate a subject to the writer’s life. Personal writing of this sort often can switch between modes of writing such narrative, description, and analysis. Personal opinion and narrative essays fall into this category, as do some reflective papers. Often, the use of the personal in writing is to develop critical thinking skills about observations or experience. In, “Personal Experience Narrative and Public Debate: Writing the Wrongs of Welfare,” Lorraine Higgins and Lisa Brush conducted a study at Carnegie Mellon University’s Community Literacy Center (CMULC). Higgins and Brush are researchers—not teachers—who led a group of students in a service learning project with community members. In this

essay, Higgins and Brush provide a researcher's reflection on the stories of community members. This study focused on 8 women to provide, "a venue for former and current welfare recipients to document and disseminate their stories in and beyond their communities" (702). Higgins and Brush claim this project gave them the opportunity "to observe and describe these writers' mediated performances to see whether and how they might construct *ethos* and attempt to connect with potentially skeptical readers" (702). Higgins and Brush also wanted to learn more about the roadblocks that underserved groups might face in using narratives in public deliberation, so they could see what tools might be developed to support them student's in telling stories. Personal narratives tell the story of the self. Higgins and Brush develop a form of auto-ethnography they term public narratives. These public narratives tell the story of the personal in the context of the social, or look at how the self is seen to function as a microcosm of a larger culture or socio-political sphere.

Higgins and Brush argue, that through the process of public narratives community members can be taught to,

Express identity, solidarity, and leadership skills. From this position, members can engage others as relevant interlocutors. Subordinate writers need to connect with the dominant rhetoric, yet, rebut it. They should avoid narratives that cast members as heroes or victims while demonstrating agency and countering any assumptions the dominant discourse supports. The goal of public narratives should be to get the intended audience to understand the logic and moral purpose that drives the subordinate groups' response to conflict (721).

The term "subordinated people" is used to describe poor people—usually poor people of color—who come from the bottom rung of the socio-economic ladder and social hierarches

of race, gender, etc. Students who participate in academic opportunities such as this develop a stronger sense of community awareness through their work with community members. In addition, they can see the obstacles that citizens face in their everyday lives and help find solutions to problems facing a community. This experiential learning will allow students to use analytic skills to conceptualize and better understand the problem, and develop the skills necessary use their experience as a catalyst to test new solutions.

Lorraine Higgins and Lisa Brush argue there are two primary reasons that thwart public deliberation and hamper subordinate groups from persuasively arguing on important issues they face (701). The first is the extensive expert discourse that systematizes political debates into disjointed hierarchal publics. The second is that subordinate groups are not just excluded from public debate, the dominant discourse already assumes stakeholder's subordination. Experts speak to other experts and see subordinates as the problem. They do not view them as capable of offering viable solutions to complex issues so their arguments can be easily discarded. Higgins and Brush argue the solution is for subordinates to create a counterhegemonic public (721). A counterhegemonic public provides a space from which members can express identity, solidarity, and leadership skills. From this position, members can engage others as relevant interlocutors. Subordinate writers need to connect with the dominant rhetoric, but also reshape it with counter narratives. Counter narratives are messages that offer a position that counteracts dominant narratives and alternately aim to deconstruct or delegitimize these dominant narratives. These counter narratives often entail the use of personal narratives to locate the subordinate group within the problem as a member of the community, but also to give the author a sense of voice and communicative agency.

Personal narratives can be used to teach students how to develop their sense of communicative agency by making their own identity the source of study, or situate their knowledge within the knowledge of a community. In community writing, a central focus of the writing is to understand a community's problems, culture, discourse and ideology, but also to learn to use rhetoric and writing in the service of this community. Community writing offers students a unique opportunity to learn skills and strategies for real research, investigating social justice issues, performing community service, and using rhetoric in the service of the community. However, self-reflection is an important aspect of community engagement and community writing because through writing students can potentially understand themselves and the members of the community more fully. Personal narratives serve to help the writer adapt their experiences to the service of the community, and to make knowledge through narrative story telling. In this way, personal narratives can be a key component in knowledge making because students learn to narrate experience, and to use this experience in the service of a community. Learning to make knowledge and use that knowledge in the service of citizenship is a key component of rhetorical citizenship.

Jane Danielewicz, in "Personal Genres, Public Voices," claims that encouraging students to write personal narratives helps them to develop a public voice (437). Pedagogically, personal narratives teach students that they should have a personal stake in whatever type of rhetorical writing they create, and helps them connect the personal with the public. Danielewicz states that a public voice develops out of the writer's engagement with public discourse because students learn to situate themselves within a community. It enters the ongoing conversation to influence, amend, extend, disrupt, or change it. The power for this authority comes from shared individual experiences and from the relationship between

individuals as well as individuals and institutions. The result of personal narratives reveal the complex differences in between individuals because of education, upbringing, and beliefs and helps to counteract the homogenizing effects of a global society. Students are taught to avoid narratives that cast themselves as heroes or victims, but instead, create counter narratives that disrupt dominant narratives that marginalize or oppress, or lead to a better awareness of implicit bias, and ideological positions for those who are members of the dominant group. The goal of personal narrative is to humanize the problem so that the audience understands the logic and moral purpose that drives a counter public's response to a problem. This connection between the personal and public allows a sense of individual agency to emerge through composing.

The enactive approach—or the cognition that arises through a dynamic interaction between a writer the community—locates agency as the process through which a living being creates meaning through experiences in the world and changing its actions based on the consequences of those experiences. Marilyn M. Cooper, in "Rhetorical Agency as Emergent and Enacted," maintains that individual agency is necessary for deliberative rhetoric (439). Cooper argues that while change is the result of individual action, the agent does not act with conscious intent or free will because the cognition that occurs between the writer and community controls the communication that emerges. Instead agency is based in the individual's experience and understanding of their own actions and enables them to participate within the community they are engaged in. A robust theory of agency is required to support rhetoric's efficacy and requires recognition of students as productive agents. Such a theory must remove the subject/object where the subject is always defined by its relation to the object/other. This theory of agency cannot account for any action that is influenced by or

resistant to the social, political, or semiotic others. Unlike subjects, agents are not defined by determination, fragmentation, or mastery. Instead, they are unique, embodied, autonomous individuals that are self-organizing and constantly changing as they interact with the changes they create in their surroundings. To support her argument, Cooper examines Barack Obama's ability to accurately and empathetically imagine what the possibilities of taking various actions would be like. Such skills are enacted unconsciously, but, can be cultivated and brought to consciousness. Cooper's study states students are already productive agents, but what students need is a pedagogy that shows them that speaking and writing are always powerful actions. They are what they write and what they speak. This self-knowledge defines their ability to contribute to the common good, and is contingent upon an understanding that recognizes their audience as individuals whose meaning is created by their own interaction with their surroundings.

Thomas Deans outlines three paradigms for community writing: writing *for* the community, writing *about* the community, and writing *with* the community. Writing for the community is geared toward the development of workplace literacies. It is meant to teach students the discourse community standards related to their career. In writing-about-the-community courses, "students engage in traditional community service (often tutoring youth or working at a homeless shelter) and then draw on that lived experience in their writing of essays" (18). In writing-with-the-community, "university faculty and students collaborate directly with community members (rather than through established nonprofit or governmental agencies) to research and address pressing local problems" (19). Each of these essays demonstrates components of the writing *with* the community approach. Higgins and Brush ask students to learn how to situate themselves within a community and use personal

narratives to produce counter-narratives that combat the oppressive cultural practices that affect the community with which they are engaged. Danielewicz supplements this through an argument that personal narratives teach students that they should have a personal stake in whatever type of rhetorical writing they create, and helps them connect the personal with the public. Cooper adds that as productive agents, students can be taught to understand the seriousness of their decision to write with a community. Through writing with the community, students can potentially understand themselves and other citizens more fully so that they can create a sense of identification with other citizens. The act of composing within a community asks students to constantly reflect and assign meaning to experience through the act of putting experiences into words—whether through personal narrative, counter-narratives or other forms of meaning making.

PEDAGOGY - How does one teach college students effectively in this axiology?

A community writing course would teach students a form of experiential and reflective education located in the field through traditional service learning methods such as ethnography, interviews, data collection, surveys, and academic writing. Assignments would guide students to research and write about issues confronting their individual communities. Students would begin by identifying a community to which they belong and focusing on problems in it, and then analyze possible solutions, construct arguments for them, decide which are likely to succeed, and consider how to initiate action. This teaching would intentionally integrate academic learning—or traditional forms of classroom based education—and relevant community service with collaborative writing where students would often complete service, conduct field research, and create texts and materials as a group. The purpose of this pedagogy is to move writing out of the classroom and into the real world to

teach students how to “do citizenship” in a real world context. Paul S. Collins argues, “Because language is used by individuals to satisfy social needs, a [community writing] pedagogy should find those needs that compel a writer to communicate with others. The social construction of knowledge requires that writers be aware of numerous competing perspectives on the issues they are researching” (4). Finding those needs that require rhetorical skills allows students to practice the principles of community writing and community based research—collaboration, democratization of knowledge, reciprocity, negotiation and compromise, and open communication. This will help prepare them for their roles in public and private life, and as citizens in a democracy.

Chase Bollig, in “Is College Worth It?” takes on this question of social need in community writing. In Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, social needs refer to the need to have relationships with others once the physiological and safety needs have been fulfilled. These needs are the emotional needs that must be filled after the basic physiological needs such as food, water, and shelter as well as safety and shelter. Bollig’s basic argument is that higher-ed often ignores the basic needs of students in favor of esoteric academic goals that students often do not understand. Bollig asks that, “compositionists refuse the compartmentalization of cultural, civic, and economic functions of higher education and consider the merits of understanding the subject of composition in terms of the citizen-worker” (151). He argues that economic considerations of students post-graduation are influencing student decisions to attend college, and argues that we should prepare students for their post-graduation roles as workers and citizens via first year composition based in community writing. Bollig argues composition should add a career outlook to our civic literacy work, or combine a writing to work perspective into community writing goals to create a citizen-worker. This philosophy

“recognizes the cultural and civic functions of composition but also understands that ‘the good man speaking well’ is looking for a job after graduation” (151). He goes on to add, “Framing our claims in terms of the citizen-worker allows us to speak to economic anxieties without reverting to domesticating vocationalism or literacy myth constructions of higher education” (151). In this conception of community writing, good teaching for the citizen-worker would ask students to analyze their positionality as workers and consumers within the system of global capitalism while they are working with community groups, which includes interrogating the privileges conferred to their political and economic status in that system. Teaching students to foster a citizen-worker ethos would provide them with a form of rhetorical citizenship necessary to participate in democracy via a well-developed sense of communicative agency.

Michelle W. Simmons and Jeffrey T. Grabill, in “Toward a Civic Rhetoric for Technologically and Scientifically Complex Places: Invention, Performance, and Participation” extend Bolig’s metaphor of composition creating valuable knowledge. They also expand the idea of the community into the digital realm. Digital communities are “spaces in which public deliberation most often take place and are institutionally, technologically, and scientifically complex” (419). Simmons and Grabill argue, “that in order to participate [in civic forums], citizens must be able to invent valued knowledge. This invention requires using complex information technologies to access, assemble, and analyze information in order to produce the professional and technical performances expected in contemporary civic forums” (419). This requires that students have space within the classroom to practice the rhetorical skills needed to develop a strong sense of communicative agency. According to Simmons and Grabill we should teach students a form of participatory,

rhetorical citizenship that would allow them to immediately participate on the local level in democracy in a variety of modalities via their own communicative agency. As Simmons and Grabill argue, “Participation requires that citizens also have an understanding of complex issues in order to articulate their experiences and participate in public conversation and offer valuable contributions to any decision (420). Knowledge is valuable in this conception of writing because students need to be able to locate themselves within a community and demonstrate the technological proficiency necessary to participate with rhetorical savvy.

Jeff Smith, in “Against ‘Illegaracy’: Toward a New Pedagogy of Civic Understanding,” argues for the necessity of valuable knowledge that instructs students to understand larger historical questions in current terms. To do this, Smith coins the term, “Illegaracy” to describe a student or citizen unable to understand their cultural situation, to see that they have choices which can change their conditions, and abdicating their political power to influence the direction of society. Smith claims that composition teachers are in the perfect position to reconnect the public agenda with a traditional liberal education (207). He states that a curriculum that has students focus on the larger, philosophical questions concerning ethics, government, or history, or topical matters such as voting rights, abortion, and standardized testing, ignores the important middle ground in between the public and the political. Smith argues students (and citizens) need to understand what joins these two areas together. He proposes a pedagogy that synthesizes the two areas—the public and the political. For example, in studying the 1992 Los Angeles riots, a teacher could offer questions that include: what is a community? When are people responsible for their own actions? Who owes what? Should rural areas be taxed to help urban areas? Who should pay for social programs? What does justice mean? The goal of legaracy is to suggest the different

issues for discussion besides the big or small ones (Smith 209). The result is that students explore the context surrounding many important issues and understand how that context both influences and is influenced by these factors that affect the material conditions of a community. Smith states that while legaracy should start in the composition classroom, ultimately, it needs to originate from the larger system of knowledge and decision making such as colleges, universities, mass media, political parties, and governments.

What we see emerge in community writing pedagogy is an attempt to break down the perceived and actual barriers between the academic and the public, or the classroom and the community. Taking a community writing approach to composition pedagogy means facilitating students' understanding of the significance of learning that happens in public spaces located outside the community. Community writing—like critical pedagogy—results in a radical decentering of the classroom meant to authorize students to take control of their learning and direct this learning toward the community. Bollig argues that in this conception of community writing, good teaching for the citizen-worker would ask students to analyze their positionality as workers and consumers within the system of global capitalism. Simmons and Grabill reconceive digital space as located within a community and argues that students require space within the classroom to practice the rhetorical skills necessary to develop a strong sense of communicative agency within these digital environments. Smith argues that composition teachers must teach students the larger, philosophical questions concerning ethics, government, or history, or topical matters such as voting rights, abortion, and standardized testing as problems facing the communities they inhabit so that they understand the public and the political are one in the same, and as citizens they have a responsibility to engage with the problems related to these issues. Community writing

functions by assigning students to study and/or serve their communities and to learn from the diverse publics around them, despite the risks that these experiences may involve because in order to change the world you have to make a conscious decision to engage with it.

Participation is the key to community writing.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS – How does one make knowledge in this axiology?

Students in community writing make knowledge by solving problems through field work or service. In community writing, language is used by individuals to satisfy social needs of a community. Any community writing pedagogy should encourage students to find those needs that compel a writer to communicate with others, and to make experiential knowledge. The social construction of knowledge requires that writers be aware of numerous competing perspectives on the issues they are researching. As Paul S. Collins argues,

Knowledge is a construct identifying conflicts we have provisionally deemed as solved. Given the conflicting arrays of knowledge generated by investigations, education should guide students into methodologies of logic, rather than toward established “facts.” Educators should strive toward a “continuity of experience,” or investigations that build upon the student’s previous inquiries (4).

Writing serves as a valuable means of developing students’ critical thinking and reflection about their experiences. These critical thinking skills help students develop knowledge through experiential learning. Students develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences outside a traditional academic setting. Collins argues, “The social construction of knowledge requires that writers be aware of numerous competing perspectives on the issues they are researching. If knowledge is dialogic, then an experiential pedagogy employing peer

response is essential to a writer's development" (5). Knowledge emerges from experiences gained working with members of a community with different experience, knowledge, and skills

Community writing can also be said to trace the formation of its community based learning back to the early days of service learning, collaborative writing, and civic engagement. Due to this, community writing traces its conception of knowledge back to pragmatist philosophers such as John Dewey or Richard Rorty. Rebecca Moore Howard argues, "Knowledge, for Rorty and his followers, is not something 'out there' that can be discovered by the persistent, gifted learner; rather it is socially justified belief, constructed in the community and acquired in interaction with that community" (57). Andrea Lunsford believes this is a shift from the conception of knowledge as individually knowable to one as socially situated and community bound (4). Lunsford argues that knowledge and reality "are mediated by or constructed through language in social use, as socially constructed, contextualized, as, in short, the product of collaboration" (4). Knowledge emerges as students develop expertise composing the various textual documents needed to communicate the purpose of their goals, and solve the problems facing their community. As students are immersed in the culture of the community, they begin to learn the rules and standards of that community which will allow them to better produce textual documents that will be persuasive to that community. This expertise is situated knowledge developed through composing.

Michael Carter, in "The Idea of Expertise: An Exploration of Cognitive and Social Dimensions of Writing" extends this theory of the social construction of knowledge, and argues expertise is only that which has previously embraced the local and the general. His

argument that, “knowledge is constituted by a community and that writing is a function of a discourse community” (267) reflects Dewey’s commitment to the social aspect of rhetoric which argues that citizens draw on existing conditions, established knowledge, social customs, and individual preferences to develop the tools necessary to solve problems facing the public. The pluralistic approach to teaching writing offered by Carter, “points toward a common ground between cognitive and social theories of composition because it shows how writing embraces both local and general knowledge” (279). Pluralism here means a system where two or more groups or individuals learn to coexist, understand one another, or make knowledge through dialogic exchanges. This approach will help students develop the social intelligence necessary to assimilate both local and general knowledge into social inquiry based writing. This reflects Dewey’s commitment to the social aspect of writing required to develop social intelligence necessary for citizenship in a democratic culture. Students must be taught not only the general knowledge about writing needed to develop expertise in writing but also the local requirements necessary to participate in discourse communities. For example, this would require students to understand how a rhetorical concept—such as a meme or an essay—functions within a given community. This micro/macro approach to teaching writing is reflected in Dewey’s theory of social inquiry required to solve problems facing students and citizens in their local community.

Bruce Herzberg, in “Community Service and Critical Teaching,” argues that this sort of community based writing predicated on service not only creates knowledge but can also generate a social conscience that helps students develop a better understanding of how power can function in ways they were not aware of, but also to develop the ability to participate in alleviating the problems facing communities they participate within. Herzberg states,

There is a good deal of evidence from our program that service learning generates a social conscience, if by that we understand a sense of the reality and immediacy of the problems of the poor and homeless along with a belief that people in a position to help out should do so. Students report that their fears and prejudices diminish or disappear, that they are moved by the experience of helping others, and that they feel a commitment to help more (308).

The goal in Herzberg's composition course as outlined in this article is to teach students, "a sense of life as a communal project, an understanding of the way that social institutions affect our lives, and a sense that our responsibility for social justice includes but also carries beyond the personal" (317). Herzberg, however, believes that service learning cannot create knowledge through service alone. Service has to be supplemented with critical pedagogy in the classroom that will teach students to critically examine the structures, "that produce and sustain poverty, illiteracy, discrimination, and injustice. There is little evidence that students spontaneously gain critical self-consciousness—an awareness of the ways that their own lives have been shaped by the very same forces, that what they regard as 'choices' are less than matters of individual will" (309). Students also have to be engaged with multiple voices within a group that challenges assumptions and asks them to learn to reconcile beliefs to make knowledge. This idea of multiple voices in the construction of knowledge is a core component of community writing.

Nathanial Rivers and Ryan P. Weber, in "Ecological, Pedagogical, Public Rhetoric" maintain that an ecological approach sees change as advanced not through a single document but through multiple mundane and monumental texts. This approach to public discourse pedagogy demonstrates to students that public change is the result of more than one voice

writing about a single topic to a single audience. Knowledge is generated through multiple voices writing about multiple issues and collaborating to identify workable solutions to major societal concerns (Rivers and Weber 201). According to Rivers and Weber, as well as other researchers, writers do not write in isolation, they are part of a larger world of inter-related, socially constructed systems that are in constant flux (211). Rivers and Weber's goal is to prepare students for the challenge of creating institutional change. Rhetorically ecological curriculum might ask students to create multiple texts for a variety of audiences or a group of students collaborating on documents arguing for change. Then through social media and letters to potential allies, students create publics around their topics to increase the success of their argument. As a result, students learn to negotiate and navigate cultural and worldly complications and conventions.

Knowledge making in community writing happens as students grapple with a problem facing the community they are situated within. The learning process begins with an initial understanding of the problem and builds additional knowledge through composing solutions to the problems. Practicing with the conventions of a discourse community builds new understandings of problems and solutions as students build experiences and make knowledge within a discourse community. As Carter argues this learning approach will help students develop the social intelligence necessary to assimilate both local and general knowledge into social inquiry to solve problems and produce texts. Herzberg adds to Carter's argument by adding that community based writing is predicated on service which not only creates knowledge but can also generate a social conscience that helps students develop a better understanding of how power functions in ways they were not aware. Rivers and Weber extend this further by arguing that most writing is communal in nature because writers

do not write in isolation, because they are part of a larger world of inter-related, socially constructed systems that are in constant flux. Knowledge is made through the creation of texts—and experience—needed to interact with these socially constructed systems.

Conclusion

In the opening to this Chapter, I examined how Donald Lazere, and other scholars, have struggled with the simple question of “How do we produce good citizens through rhetorical pedagogy?” In that examination of Lazere, I narrated his struggles teaching civic literacy in his career, and his argument that our field is situated to take on the responsibility to teach rhetorical skills required for citizenship in an egalitarian democracy. After reading Lazere’s text, I thought through his claims about our field being perfectly situated to take up this charge, however, I was also struck by a strong sense that we already taught civic literacy, as a field, in a number of ways. As I believe I have demonstrated, our field has undertaken the task of teaching democratic methods and civic literacy in First-Year Composition though it likely feels that we have not always done a good job of this due to the fragmentation and lack of cohesiveness in the teaching of civic literacy. This civic teaching has traditionally been assumed by two schools of thought—critical theory and community writing—that seek to teach students some of the skills in rhetorical citizenship necessary for life in a democracy.

While critical pedagogy and community writing share some similar goals to prepare students for participating in a democracy they also demonstrate Fulkerson’s ideas of axiological consensus and pedagogical diversity in many ways. Each pedagogical approach envisions a society devoted of social justice and freedom. An approach where citizens can use linguistic practices to break down oppressive structures like patriarchy, white supremacy, and material privilege. Education—specifically rhetorical education—is the nexus of power

that we draw from to teach students the skills necessary to allow citizens to destabilize the narratives that oppress and dominate American lives. Democracy needs education, and more than that as Henry Giroux argues, democratic societies benefit from “citizens who are critical, self-reflective, knowledgeable, and willing to make moral judgements and act in a socially responsible way” (3). If traditional education is about raising the individual to improve society, then critical pedagogy and community writing recognize the need to improve society in order to raise the individual. It inverts the normal concept of education to focus on liberating the individual from the various institutions of cultural domination, and seeks to start students immediately on the practice of improving the lives of citizens in a democracy.

To this end, these two theories share the axiological goals of raising student critical consciousness, and while they may agree on the goals they disagree on how to get there. Critical pedagogies look to engage students in analyses of how cultural practices and institutions (including schools) replicate certain power dynamics and social hierarchies. Critical theory “entails judgements about what knowledge counts, legitimates specific social relations, defines agency in particular ways, and always presupposes a particular notion of the future” (Giroux 6). Critical theory argues the only way to ensure students and teachers become critical agents is if they begin to interrogate commonsense assumptions about the nature of legitimate knowledge, social relations, and ideologies (Giroux 6). Critical pedagogy encourages students to use their counter-narratives to “critique the world in which they live and, when necessary, to intervene in socially responsible ways in order to change it” (Giroux 14). In critical theory, language presents a huge double bind—it both dominates us and frees us from domination. Language is a mechanism of both domination and possible

resistance. Teaching reflective communicative practices and rhetorical skills that undercut oppressive schemes is essential to the practice of freedom in a democracy. Learning, in critical pedagogy, is mastering the skills of critique to defamiliarize familiar forms of thought, culture, and ideology.

Community writing, on the other hand, views the use of language as a way to organize and understand the events of our lives through experiential learning and communal knowledge making. Community writing asks students to develop skills of reflection so that they can become increasingly conscious of the meanings we have assigned to our experience. The self-knowledge that emerges in community writing requires writers to consider the discourse conventions of the audience and to think more critically about what they want to say and how they are articulating it. This pedagogy asks students to situate themselves within the polis and develop the rhetorical skills and communicative agency necessary to solve problems in the political arena. Community writing pedagogy understands that democracy needs education, and more importantly, “democratic societies benefit from citizens who are critical, self-reflective, knowledgeable, and willing to make moral judgements and act in a socially responsible way” (Giroux 3). This pedagogy asks that students venture into the world to solve real problems facing real communities. Students make knowledge about themselves, the world, and composing through engagement with the problems and struggles in the real world. Unlike critical theory approaches, community writing asks students to venture out beyond the classroom and into the “real world.”

In many ways, both of these philosophies can be seen as emerging from the pragmatic philosophy of John Dewey, or as off-shoots of his thinking. Robert Westbrook argues that Dewey’s social inquiry requires “a belief that democracy as an ethical idea calls upon men

and women to build communities in which the necessary opportunities and resources are available to realize fully his or her particular capacities and powers through participation in political, social, and cultural life” (14). Dewey’s “social science” is also inherently problem based. Each participant within a public is required to work together to also make rhetoric inherently solution based, and is required to develop a solution to the problem and discuss, debate, and rationalize each solution as a community. Dewey’s conception of democracy shares many common concepts which can be seen in each of the philosophies—especially community writing. As Dewey argues, “the strongest point to be made in behalf of even such rudimentary political forms as democracy has attained, popular voting, majority rule and so on, is that to some extent they involve a consultation and discussion which concerns social needs and troubles” (*The Public and Its Problems* 364). Dewey stresses the importance of discussion, consultation, persuasion and debate in democratic decision-making. To participate in democratic life Dewey argues that one has to develop social intelligence. These processes extend and deepen the public awareness of the problems under discussion and create a *kairos* or rhetorical situation which will allow the exploration of the problem and arguments to emerge to address this problem.

As Robert Westbrook argues, Dewey’s belief in teaching students a rigorous form of reflection he labeled scientific thinking “entailed not only the use of a particular method [conceptual structures, for example] but participation in a community possessed of specific cognitive virtues and Dewey believed these virtues—free inquiry, tolerance of diverse opinion, and free communication—were necessary attributes of a democratic society and polity” (170). This, to me, seems to be akin to critical consciousness if not the very notion of the concept. Dewey’s famous theory of classrooms as “laboratories of knowledge making”

developed out of this idea that students “should be engaged in ongoing experimentation, communication, and self-criticism, constituting themselves as a youthful commonwealth of cooperative inquiry” (Westbrook 170). To accomplish these goals, Dewey developed his theories of education over time to include an emphasis on history, special problems, social inquiry, and conceptual structures.

I believe this analysis of scholarship in the field of Rhetoric and Composition demonstrates that our field’s dedication to democratic culture has historically manifested in the field of Rhetoric and Composition through two dominant schools of thought. It also demonstrates that the work in critical pedagogy and community writing can be seen as extending the work of John Dewey. My primary purpose in this Chapter was to examine historically the level at which we theorize, research, and teach the rhetorical agencies by which citizens can make democracy happen. We already study democracy extensively through the lens of community writing and critical pedagogy; my purpose is to illustrate why and how we should also bring under our disciplinary tent a deeper understanding of the contributions of John Dewey to rhetoric and democratic culture and conceptualize how we can better understand the influence of his ideas on our field historically. I think John Dewey’s work can teach us how to combine the goals of critical theory and community writing to better provide students with the capacities to participate in democracy.

In Chapter 3, I will analyze the WPA Outcomes Statement (WPA OS) to determine how these outcomes prepare students to participate in democracy as citizens once they complete their education. The WPA OS is an ideological document that outlines the core competencies the field believes that each student should have after completing first year composition. It has been altered and revised over the years to reflect best practices in the

teaching of FYC. The upcoming Chapter will critically examine what the WPA outcomes reveal about the values of our field based on what the WPA outcomes list as the essential knowledge and skills that a student should demonstrate at some level after completing First-Year Composition. As Susanmarie Harrington argues in the front matter to *The Outcomes Book: Debate and Consensus after the WPA Outcomes Statement*, “the WPA Outcomes Statement represents a working consensus among composition scholars about what college students should learn and do in a composition program. But as a single-page document, the statement cannot convey the kind of reflective process that a writing program must undertake to address the learning outcomes described” (front matter). The next Chapter will examine what could be added to the WPA Outcomes Statement to make it more suited to the goals of Civic Literacy and Rhetorical Citizenship, and discuss the benefits and consequences of adding such a plank to this document.

Chapter 3: The WPA Outcomes Statement as Institutional Rhetoric for Knowledge-Intensive Organizations

Background:

In Chapter 1 of this dissertation, I laid out a claim that America is facing a growing crisis in civic literacy due to the lack of commitment to civic engagement training in most institutions of higher education. As Henry Milner, in *Civic Literacy: How Informed Citizens Make Democracy Work*, argues, “Civic literacy encompasses not only political knowledge, but also a willingness to apply that knowledge through political participation” (2). Ann Colby, et al. claim most colleges and universities realize there is a need for civic literacy education because they “understand the importance of students’ grappling with complex and messy real-life contexts and recognize that the skills of persuasion, negotiation, compromise, and interpersonal and cultural sensitivity are of the upmost importance” (50). Authors such as Donald Lazere, Barbara Jacoby, and others have argued that the concepts of civic literacy are not often adequately taught with cohesive strategies meant to move learning to public settings in the community so students learn to solve problems in the real world. The goal of the civic literacy movement is to teach students the skills necessary to be productive citizens in a democracy. However, while many critics agree that teaching the concepts and methods of civic literacy is of need, very few can agree as to how to teach these concepts, or where to place them within the general education curriculum to benefit students most. Donald Lazere, in *Political Literacy in Composition and Rhetoric: Defending Academic Discourse against Postmodern Pluralism*, argues that first year composition’s commitment to social justice, community engagement/service learning, methods of argument and persuasion, and critical thinking make it well situated to take up the call to teach civic literacy to our students.

Donald Lazere argues that the first year writing sequence has the potential to reach the largest number of students and thus could have the widest and most far reaching impact. In Chapter 1, I posed the question, “what commitment has the field of Rhetoric and Composition historically demonstrated to civic literacy and democratic methods?”

In Chapter 2 of this dissertation, I answered this question. I examined the historical commitment of our field to the goals of civic literacy, and how we have historically sought to teach concepts of civic literacy in first year composition (FYC). Using Richard Fulkerson’s metatheory of axiological analysis, I laid out a claim that supports Lazere’s contention that the field of Rhetoric and Composition has historically demonstrated a claim to teaching students skills in civic literacy through the two philosophies of critical theory and community writing. While critical pedagogy—a subset of critical theory—and community writing share some similar goals to prepare students for participating in a democracy, they also demonstrate Fulkerson’s ideas of axiological consensus and pedagogical diversity in many ways. Each pedagogical approach envisions a society devoted to issues of social justice and freedom where citizens can use linguistic practices to break down oppressive structures like patriarchy, white supremacy, and material privilege. Education—specifically rhetorical education—is the nexus of power that we draw from to teach the skills necessary to destabilize the narratives that oppress and dominate American lives. Democracy needs education, and more than that, as Henry Giroux argues, democratic societies benefit from “citizens who are critical, self-reflective, knowledgeable, and willing to make moral judgements and act in a socially responsible way” (3).

In response to this call for more attention to civic literacy in first year composition, the central problem posed in this dissertation is that the field of Rhetoric and Composition

needs to develop a more clear and cohesive focus on teaching skills in civic literacy and rhetorical citizenship. In addition, I argue that John Dewey's theory of social science can be adapted as a method of rhetorical citizenship that can be taught in first year composition. In Chapters 1 and 2, I laid the groundwork for the argument that democracy requires specialized knowledge in rhetorical methods developed to teach students how to think critically to solve problems given the complexity of modern democracy. Further, this dissertation will seek to answer the call to teach students the skills necessary to practice a form of civic literacy that I, and other scholars, term rhetorical citizenship. Rhetorical citizenship proffers an understanding of citizenship as a discursive phenomenon, arguing that discourse is not prefatory to real action but in many ways constitutive of civic engagement. Rhetorical citizenship grows out of an intellectual tradition in America which claims that there is a direct correlation between the quality of its education and the function of the state. To this end, I also established that participation in real world scenarios which move education beyond the classroom is an essential component of teaching rhetorical citizenship. Students will need specialized skills in rhetorical citizenship to be productive citizens in a democracy. This tradition specifically argues that specialized knowledge in rhetorical methods yields a capacity for action in democracy because citizens are required to think critically and compose responsive arguments using a variety of media and mediums to function as citizens. Rhetorical training in methods of inquiry and argumentation have long been the center of education in society dating back to ancient Greece—as I demonstrated in Chapter 1. Rhetorical education is also, however, a core component of American education since the late nineteenth century when intellectuals such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Charles Pierce,

William James and John Dewey began to theorize the educational practices needed to support a growing technological democracy.

In Chapter 3, I want to dig deeper into this idea of specialized knowledge. Each axiology of composition has its own set of rhetorical conventions that it emphasizes or prizes above others. For example, in Chapter 2, I discussed the importance of critique as a rhetorical strategy when discussing critical theory as a method for teaching democratic methods. In addition, I examined the significance of community engagement and collaborative learning to the theory of community writing. Each pedagogy values some rhetorical skills more than others. I found this pedagogical diversity often makes it difficult to determine what the field of Rhetoric and Composition values as a whole. I think this is a forest/tree situation. When we begin to look at the trees—or the individual aspects of pedagogical approaches to teaching First-Year Composition—we begin to lose sight of the forest or the larger body of knowledge that binds individual forms of knowledge about rhetoric into a field or discipline. While there are individual concepts or conventions that varying philosophies of composition cannot agree on; there are also concepts that everyone can agree to at least tacitly. These areas that a majority of the field can agree on are the shared knowledge conventions that make up a discipline. Chapter 2 of this work surveyed the trees; Chapter 3 will examine the forest. The purpose of Chapter 3 will be an examination of the essential skills and practices the field finds necessary in First-Year Composition regardless of axiology or philosophy. I want to examine what is included, but more importantly, what is not included and why. The field of Rhetoric and Composition has created numerous policy statements, position statements, and declarations on student rights. However, we have only once produced a statement that clearly defines what outcomes a

student should demonstrate some level of proficiency in when completing the first-year writing sequence: The Writing Program Administrator's Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (WPA OS).

The goal of this analysis is to examine the WPA OS as a form of institutional rhetoric—sometimes also called organizational rhetoric. Institutional rhetoric, such as policy or position statements for example, allow an organization with competing voices and ideologies to speak with a single voice to communicate disciplinary knowledge. Mats Alvesson, in “Organizations as Rhetoric: Knowledge-Intensive Firms and the Struggle with Ambiguity,” argues “knowledge-intensive organizations engage actively in rhetoric as a way of providing convincing accounts, regulating impressions and images related to organizational knowledge” (1007). Institutional rhetorics are often personifications of visions, values, or support to an institution's publics. These sort of rhetorics are often used to add the ethos and expertise of collectivity or solidarity to a rhetorical proclamation. For Alvesson, organizations are “systems of persuasion where organizational actors are agents or rhetors who deploy language strategically” (Alvesson 1011). This solidarity adds weight to the document through an argument of strength in numbers, so to speak. A rhetor—such as a university, a professional organization, or a corporation—can speak as an individual, but carry the cache of an entire organization. George Cheney, in *Rhetoric in an Organizational Society: Managing Multiple Identities*, argues that institutional rhetorics allow an organization to manage multiple identities, and coalesce multiple voices into one single narrative (24). Josh Boyd and Damion Waymer, in “Organizational Rhetoric: A Subject of Interest(s),” define institutional rhetoric as the “management of multiple identities framed as

the management of multiple interests” (475). This means an organization with multiple members can act as an individual to create and disseminate knowledge.

In a certain sense, institutional rhetoric is a more complicated version of the royal “we” in that it operates like an individual rhetor but delivers a single voice with the strength provided a collective united in solidarity. In terms of the WPA OS, the power of the statement as an institutional rhetoric allowed the group to combine the various competing voices, philosophies, and ideologies surrounding First-Year Composition into one single, cohesive voice announcing a proclamation on the required knowledge each student should ascertain—at some level of skill—before completing the first-year writing sequence. For example, simply naming the document, The WPA Outcomes Statement is a rhetorical attempt to add the prestige and authority of the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) to the document as an act of persuasion toward its adoption. This implies that the combined knowledge and expertise of the CWPA went into the development of the statement to add force and vigor to the ethos of the document. Institutional rhetorics construct perceptions of reputation, prestige, and expertise within a field to construct and share institutionalized myths within and across organizational boundaries (Alvesson 1004). Myths, in this sense, should be envisioned as assumed knowledge or institutional lore. Myth in this sense is a body knowledge on a subject held by a particular group, field, or discipline which is transmitted from person to person through rhetorical dissemination of knowledge—policy statements, research, etc. The WPA OS, in my opinion, is Rhetoric and Composition’s first widespread attempt at institutional rhetoric that seeks to define clear outcomes for First-Year Composition (FYC), and as such, must be analyzed for consequences, restraints, and benefits because no rhetorical act is ideologically neutral. As James Berlin states, “a rhetoric cannot

escape the ideological question, and to ignore this is to fail our responsibilities as teachers and citizens” (682).

Institutional rhetoric is always ideological; it necessarily affirms some ideals while silencing others. Sandy Edward Green, Jr and Yuan Li in, “Rhetorical Institutionalism: Language, Agency, and Structure in Institutional Theory since Alvesson,” argue that institutional rhetoric requires, “the deployment of linguistic approaches in general and rhetorical insights in particular to explain how institutions both constrain and enable agency” (1662). Alvesson goes on to argue that professionals’ statements such as the WPA OS, “can be understood strategies for achieving and maintaining the status of a profession. In line with modern sociology of professions, it claims having these particular traits motivate a specific social position and certain privileges” (999). This way, we can see the WPA OS as an early attempt to develop a common body of knowledge agreed upon by experts in the field, and then to communicate this to the field as a unified voice of authority. As Kathleen Blake Yancey states in the Conclusion to the first version of the WPA OS in 2001,

The outcomes statement is a curricular document that speaks to the common expectations, for students, of First-Year Composition programs in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century. Central to the document is the belief that in articulating those expectations and locating them more generally, we can help students meet them, and we help assure that the conditions required for meeting them are realized (323).

The WPA OS articulates expectations for student success in First-Year Composition and functions to help meet these requirements, so I would like to analyze what the document says about the knowledge and ideology the field holds as a whole. The purpose of this Chapter is

to explore the values—or institutional myths as conceived of by Alvesson—constructed in the three versions of the WPA Outcomes Statements (WPA OS) as evidenced in writing outcomes. I would like to use this analysis to foreground a discussion in Chapter 4 about why a commitment to more radical goals like civic literacy and a commitment to social justice have been historically omitted from the WPS OS. Chapter 4 will argue that radical teaching and social justice work should feature more prominently in the WPA OS through the inclusion of a plank devoted to citizenship or civic engagement. I will then argue that a conception of rhetorical citizenship based on Dewey’s theory of social science and rhetorical citizenship can be used to meet these outcomes on the local level.

To achieve this goal, I will organize this Chapter in four parts. First, I will examine the historical development of the WPA OS as a piece of institutional rhetoric. I will examine each of the three versions of the outcomes statement to discuss what is privileged in the document, how it is rhetorically constructed, and what are the benefits and consequences of each version. Second, I will analyze the implications of the shift from writing to composing and the impact this has had, and will have, on our field. Third, I will examine how knowledge is transmitted rhetorically in knowledge-intensive organizations like the CWPA to manage knowledge intensity. Lastly, I will briefly address the omission of civic literacy and more radical forms of composition from the document as scaffold to the discussion of adding a civic literacy plank to the WPS OS in Chapter 4. Chapter 4 will include an argument for including a civic literacy plank into the WPA OS so that students can learn methods necessary to be citizens in a democratic culture. The WPA OS argues that a stated goal is to prepare students for writing in the 21st century, and an essential part of writing or composing should be geared toward the types or forms of rhetoric students will need as

citizens in a democracy. Democracy in the twenty first century is infinitely more complex than democracy was at the beginning of the twentieth century—just as democracy in the twentieth century was more complex than the century before it. I will argue that rhetorical citizenship is essential to Dewey’s belief that participatory democracy should shape American life.

History of the WPA Outcomes Statement (WPA OS)

Institutional rhetorics, like all rhetorics, have a specific *kairos* or rhetorical situation that spawns them into being. The WPA OS grew out of a complicated network of rhetorical situations that began roughly 25 years before it was conceived. In the early 1980s, institutions of higher education began to receive external pressure from accrediting bodies and the federal government to provide a more rigorous method of proving that students learn what we claimed they were learning in our general education courses. As part of this new pressure to assess and evaluate learning, colleges and universities began to develop visions and missions to guide their institution toward the goals they value and set forth. As part of defining a mission, vision, or set of core values each college develops a strategic plan to achieve institutional goals, and a method of assessment to ensure that the college or university is meeting these outcomes.

This process of institutional assessment is often referred to as institutional effectiveness. Institutional effectiveness (IE) is best described as James O. Nichols outlines in his book, *A Practitioner's Handbook For Institutional Effectiveness And Student Outcomes Assessment Implementation*, as “an on-going, college-wide process of planning and outcomes assessment, documenting the college is achieving its mission and goals and assisting in the continuous improvement of its programs and services” (6). Nichols’ model of institutional

effectiveness and student outcomes assessment cycles are the most commonly used forms of institutional assessment utilized by community colleges and universities. It is the recommended model chosen by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) for IE and demonstrates the generic components of a college's planning and assessment process. As part of the institutional effectiveness plan each division or department within the institution will develop student learning outcomes for each course that will tie into larger program learning outcomes which in turn tie into the larger core mission and strategic plan of the university. Each university will develop methods of assessment to ensure that these goals are rigorous, student centered, and clearly tied to the mission of the college or university.

According to scholar Ronald Head, the process of institutional effectiveness in American colleges and universities took root in 1984 when SACSCOC “adopted it [institutional effectiveness] in its revision of institutional accreditation requirements. The executive director of the commission at that time, James Rogers, recalled that institutional effectiveness was chosen because assessment was too contentious a term” (5). This call for accountability was undoubtedly a response to Ronald Reagan's *National Commission on Excellence in Education* report, “A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform,” which asserted that American schools were failing at both the k-12 and college and university level due to declines in student performance over the previous twenty-five years prior to the publication of the report in 1983.

The report listed fifteen findings that were cause for concern according to the primary author, Peter Denning. Among the most concerning factors in the report were

- The College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT) demonstrate a virtually unbroken decline from 1963 to 1980. Average verbal scores fell over 50 points and average mathematics scores dropped nearly 40 points.
- College Board achievement tests also reveal consistent declines in recent years in such subjects as Physics and English.
- Both the number and proportion of students demonstrating superior achievement on the SAT (i.e., those with scores of 650 or higher) have also dramatically declined.
- Many 17-year-olds do not possess the "higher order" intellectual skills we should expect of them. Nearly 40 percent cannot draw inferences from written material; only one-fifth can write a persuasive essay; and only one-third can solve a mathematics problem requiring several steps. (Nation at Risk Report)

The “Nation at Risk Report” created the perception that there was an educational crisis in America—whether or not this crisis was real is debatable. According to the commission, “the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur—others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments” (Nation at Risk Report). Denning and the authors of this report also claimed that our lack of educational achievement was compromising our ability to compete with other industrial nations, and worse, America had not only fallen behind in education—it was dead

last amongst industrialized nations in many educational indicators. As a result of this report, there was an outcry for educational improvement, across all levels of education.

In response to this report, the Department of Education created new guidelines requiring institutions of higher education to adopt standards of achievement that were measurable so that these improvements could be correlated, disseminated, and reported. The department of education, as part of its move to more rigorous accountability for student completion and success, began to tie larger parts of federal funding to student success and strategic planning especially related to federally grant-funded financial aid. It was around this same time that calls for programmatic assessments and institutional effectiveness from an organized standpoint began to work its way into the university, and more specifically, the field of Rhetoric and Composition. Institutional accreditation runs on a ten-year cycle with a five-year interim report in between each ten-year accreditation. The fifth-year interim report analyzes the success of the institution in meeting goals set forth in their ten-year accreditation reports such as the quality enhancement plan, etc. When an accrediting body such as SACSCOC makes a substantial change to accrediting measures it is estimated that it takes ten to fifteen years for this change to filter down to the individual colleges, and individual college departments. If this change in accreditation standards took place in 1984, it makes sense that the rise in programmatic assessment in higher education began to take hold in the mid-90s. Assessment, while always a part of an institution's growth and improvement, took on a much more significant meaning in the late 1980s and early 1990s as institutions shifted from access (making sure students had equitable access to higher education) to success (making sure institutions were held accountable for students completing coursework and degrees).

Writing assessment, or how to evaluate student texts, has always been a core component of Rhetoric and Composition, but the production of scholarship began to proliferate exponentially in the 1980s. The Library of Congress database lists that over 6,000 books were written on writing assessment in higher education in the 1980s alone. This proliferation continued well into the 1990s as scholars such as Richard Straub, Peter Elbow, Edward White, and Brian Huot among others were at the forefront of developing constructive responses for responding to student writing and encouraging revision. However, as writing programs began to take on disciplinary status in the 1990s more pressure grew to establish standards or outcomes to measure the achievement of student writers, and to make these measures of achievement available to the public. As colleges poured funds into first-year writing programs they wanted to see evidence that this money was well spent, and geared toward student achievement. As Kathleen Blake Yancey argues in, “Standards, Outcomes, and All That Jazz,” “The original impulse for outcomes came from a need to understand and enhance programs: it was an assessment impulse, true enough. And accrediting agencies, interested as they are in motivating enhancement, encouraged outcomes assessment” (23).

Out of this work on institutional effectiveness at the national level grew Edward White’s call in 1996 for our field to come to some sort of consensus on outcomes for First-Year Composition. As Nicholas Behm describes in the Introduction to the collection of essays on the WPA OS, *WPA Outcomes Statement—A Decade Later*, “White’s original query to the WPA listserv seemed innocuous enough, and reflected what many in the profession had often wondered” (IX). White asked,

Is it an impossible dream to imagine this group coming out with at least a draft set of objectives that might really work and be usable, for instance, distinguishing comp 1

from comp 2 or from advanced comp? We may not have professional consensus on this, though, or even consensus that we *should* have consensus. How would we go about trying?” (As cited in Behm IX).

Out of this simple query, a group of faculty considered the possibility as to whether such a task was possible or even desirable in 1997. In response, Susan Harrington claims a few participants immediately shared local documents describing courses or programs. Some other participants had begun a conversation as to whether the discussion of outcomes was better suited to the local level amongst individual faculty within a program. Others, though, wanted to consider the larger theoretical possibility of an outcomes statement that could be used in different settings to guide theory, practice, and research (Harrington xv). As Keith Rhodes, et al., adds, “The project began in frustration over the apparent inability to share or even specify widely what goes on in First-Year Composition” (8). However, the flurry of response made it clear that Edward White’s query has struck upon a kairotic moment in our field. This was the beginning of a group that has been referred to as “The Outcomes Collective.”

While unaffiliated with any professional organization at the time, the Outcomes Collective sought to, “craft a statement about what first-year students should both know and do: what we called an Outcomes Statement” (WPA OS 1.0 322). Dylan B. Dryer, speaking on behalf of the WPA Outcomes Statement Revision Taskforce in 2014, adds “Those involved in the original Outcomes Statement assumed they were creating a living document, one that in the present could and should be adapted to local needs and one that in the future should be revised and revisited” (Dryer, et al. 130). This “collaborative authoring of a common set of outcomes drew on theory as well as practice, on a keen sense of language as

well as an appreciation for difference, on a willingness to foreground possibility and to take risk” (WPA OS 1.0 322). Behm goes on to point out that, “the WPA OS ultimately did center on “objectives” or outcomes, for the Outcomes Collective worked diligently to not suggest standards, but rather outcomes” (ix). The Outcomes Collective’s decision to focus on outcomes over standards is an important one. As Kathleen Blake Yancey argues, “outcomes act as curricular framework: this is important because it means that an institution could have more than one framework operating at once. . . more generally, then, we might say that outcomes provide a kind of curricular stability without being very invasive—which in part explains their appeal (22). Learning outcomes are specific, measurable statements that define the expected skills or knowledge that students will achieve at the end of the first year writing course. Standards are definitions of what a student is to be taught over the course of a sequence of writing courses. Outcomes are thought of as a framework or suggestion, but standards are thought of as an obligation or requirement. To this end, the language of the Statement is intentionally ambiguous to encourage, “local adaptability in order to combine guidance and freedom while also striving to be applicable to the widest possible range of post-secondary institutions” (Dryer, et al. 130).

Susanmarie Harrington extends this appeal to generality through a description of WPA OS 1.0 as “floor, not a ceiling, for composition programs” (xvii). The outcomes illustrate, to Harrington and others, not the most a program should be doing, but the least it should be doing to demonstrate that students are meeting expectations on what students should know and understand when completing first year composition. Harrington adds, “The outcomes statement does not prescribe curriculum; rather, it encourages conversation about curriculum. It’s arguably not comprehensive: it doesn’t attend to personal writing or

nonacademic writing; it may privilege awareness of rhetoric over performance of rhetoric” (xvii). Harrington goes on to state the strength of the document is that it celebrates these conversations on curricular matters. In many ways, the three versions of the WPA OS function as three responses to three rhetorical situations. As Edward White states, in *The Outcomes Book*, “The outcomes statement that has emerged suggests some of the answers that thoughtful and reflective practioners have in turn produced” (7). However, he goes on to add that all answers produce more questions, and new interpretations. It is into this conversation I hope to enter to analyze the three versions of the WPA Outcomes statement.

Analysis of WPA OS Versioning:

The WPA OS currently has three versions which are referred to as OS 1.0 (2000), OS 2.0 (2008), and OS 3.0 (2014) in scholarship surrounding the document. This appears to be a play on software versioning which is used to differentiate between the various updates of a software system—which, for example, Apple also refers to as an OS (Operating System). Software versioning is the process of assigning either unique version names or unique version numbers to unique states of computer software. As a software program is updated or improved, it is typically given a version number in increasing quantity. This seems innocuous, but it is another subtle reminder that design thinking is taking over the field of composing, and illustrates how fully technology has been integrated into the field’s thinking. Design thinking, here, is taken to mean a process for developing a concept or idea through repeated rounds of inquiry meant to bring the concept’s intended outcomes closer to discovery with each repetition. Software versioning is a great example of this concept used in a field because it is a process of repeatedly refining or revising technology to achieve a desired result such as usability. However, if we think about versioning in more detail, we can

see that that the first number in the versioning system is for major updates, the second number is for minor updates, and each update is imbued with unique sequence-based identifiers. These sequence-based identifiers are basically new bits of code that update, revise, or substantially change the software. Each software system is a self-contained architecture that has elements that all work in relation to one another. Each piece of code is a blue print for the system laying out tasks necessary to complete the system's functions. The WPA OS, in various incarnations, functions in much the same way. Each outcome in the document functions as a piece of code designed to work in relation to create a blueprint for a writing program or a writing course.

The WPA OS, like any good open source computer software, is also flexible enough to add any new code not included in the original source code so that it may be updated by local users to fit needs. What's more, institutional rhetorics function with the same complexity as a software system and each version of the WPA OS is an institutional rhetoric designed to make arguments about certain values the field holds for First-Year Composition while remaining flexible and open enough that users can still implement it on the local level to fit local needs. So each version of the WPA OS is like a software update that revises the institutional rhetoric of suggested outcomes to fit current rhetorical situations in the real world on the local level. Each version makes certain things clear in relation to values; it also silences and conceals other things—like radical teaching or minority voices or anti-racist pedagogy, for example. Each version of an operating system makes statements about what users need and value and how they are expected to use the system, as well as ways they are not expected to use the system. Each version is a self-contained environment that has its own

rules and restrictions for how users can compose. Let us examine each version for the values and user expectations communicated through each version of this institutional rhetoric.

WPA OS 1.0

The first version of this institutional rhetoric, like a software system, is a milestone. It is an indication that the development work is complete, has all major features that product testers say the audience requires, and is considered reliable enough for general release. Also, in terms of institutional rhetoric the first version is confronted with the problem of knowledge. The first version of an institutional rhetoric must confront “the idea of knowledge-intensity in that it is very difficult to know where and when to stop including elements” (Alvesson 1000). Each institutional rhetoric has to create boundaries of knowledge or limits to what knowledge can be transmitted in a single communication. To limit the amount of knowledge transmitted in the document, the Outcomes Collective collaborated in the mode described by John Trimbur as, “engaging in a process of intellectual negotiation and collective decision making” (602). Keith Rhodes, et al., in “THE OUTCOMES PROJECT: The Insiders’ History,” argues that in the first version of the WPA OS termed OS 1.0, “we tried to embed in this document the knowledge derived from several decades of research and practice in composition, without taking sides in the arguments that separate, say, the expressivists from the social constructivists” (11). How do you include the instructional knowledge gleaned from roughly fifty years—depending on when you date the foundation of the field—of theory, practice, and research into one document?

The questions Kathleen Blake Yancey lists at the beginning of the WPA OS 1.0 are crucial because they serve to limit and refine the types of knowledge that can be discussed in this specific version of the document, while also maintaining the status of the WPA OS as

what Ellery Sills, in “Making Composing Policy Audible: A Genealogy of the WPA Outcomes Statement 3.0,” refers to as a boundary object. Boundary objects are “objects which are both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites (59). How can you create a document that can serve as a boundary or limit to what students need to know in First-Year Composition while also allowing it to remain flexible and usable? The first version of the WPA OS released in 2001 centered on a group of four central questions according to Kathleen Blake Yancey in her brief Introduction to the statement:

1. Why is it that First-Year Composition programs seem to vary so widely?
2. Is this perception accurate? Do programs in fact vary widely?
3. Seen another way, what might our programs have in common? What concepts and practices might our programs share?
4. Given sufficient commonality, would it be possible to articulate a general curriculum framework for First-Year Composition, regardless of institutional home, student demographics, and instructor characteristics? Could we do this in a way that doesn’t prescribe or infringe? (321).

The questions Yancey posed serve two purposes. First, the questions limit what can be included as knowledge in the document, and it sets clear boundaries for what can be included in the rhetoric communicated to the public this document serves. Yancey clearly limits the scope to things that the rhetorical public can agree upon. The Outcomes Collective sought shared values that are mostly settled. In Fulkerson’s terms, they sought axiological consensus in that they are looking to the goals they agree will lead to at least a tacit agreement upon what skills a student should have when exiting First-Year Composition. The

concepts they could reach axiological consensus upon are rhetorical knowledge, critical thinking, reading and writing, processes, and knowledge of conventions.

Second, the questions that Yancey frames allow the Outcomes Collective to deal with this problem of knowledge intensity in a valuable way, knowledge intensity being the amount of knowledge that can be transmitted in a document without overwhelming the audience or being perceived as a “data dump.” The problem in gauging knowledge intensity in an institutional rhetoric is finding a balance between knowledge and usability. It is finding that sweet spot where the knowledge communicated can be easily adapted and used by constituents on the local level while also including enough knowledge to create an ethos of authority so as to encourage use. Knowledge intensity requires that enough knowledge be included in the rhetoric so that it looks smart, well thought out, and insightful but while limiting knowledge enough that it is also easy to use. To accomplish this task, the rhetor has to have knowledge enough to create boundaries or limits so that constituents can make sense of, and create a framework for use with integrity. The focus on commonality that Yancey describes makes development much easier, as well, because it narrows the conversation through consensus—what we already agree upon—while still allowing for local interpretation—or space for people to add sections for what we do not agree upon as a field. If we examine the common features included in the WPA OS 1.0, it reveals quite a bit about a framework of use the Outcomes Collective may have had in mind. The authors limited the ultimate forms of knowledge in the document to the concepts they could reach axiological consensus upon, which as I mentioned are rhetorical knowledge, critical thinking, reading, and writing, process, and knowledge of conventions. However, the way these concepts are framed tell quite a bit how the knowledge included is intended to be used by the rhetorical

publics. The Outcomes Collective demonstrate that they had a very clear conception of the type of work they expected students to do based on the rhetorical construction of these outcomes are framed and delivered to the public. This document is geared toward teaching students to enter the academic discourse community and to produce academic discourse in the form of the traditional academic essay. More importantly, this version of the WPA OS is geared toward traditional forms of writing such as the academic essay.

The first version of the WPA OS is geared toward teaching students to produce academic essays which fit a conception of First-Year Composition as service to the university. Each outcome in this version is geared toward writing as a process in an academic setting. Each outcome selected is geared toward helping students develop academic essays appropriate to an academic audience in terms of purpose, style, tone, and genre. The rhetorical conventions section states by the end of First-Year Composition, students should be able to focus on purpose, respond to the needs of different audiences and rhetorical situations, and use “appropriate” format and structures that contain the proper voice, tone, and level of formality (324). In addition, the statement suggests that students should demonstrate an understanding of how genres shape reading and writing, while also demonstrating the ability to write in several genres (324). WPA OS 1.0, however, is clearly seeking to avoid designating specific levels of proficiency in each area. OS 1.0 simply asks that students demonstrate some understanding of each rhetorical convention. For example, the discussion of genre is generalized to such a degree as to leave massive amounts of interpretation as to how to achieve these outcomes. This ambiguity is intended so that each institution can adapt the outcomes to suit their local needs.

The focus on genre is important here, I think because it represents a growing understanding of how discourse communities shape knowledge and writing. The study of genre had been a growing area of scholarship since Carolyn Miller's essay, "Genre as Social Action," was published in 1984. As Anis Barwashi and Mary Jo Reiff state in *Genre: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy* published in 2010 "researchers working across a range of disciplines and contexts have revolutionized the way we think of genre, challenging the idea that genres are simple categorizations of text types and offering instead an understanding of genre that connects kinds of texts to kinds of social actions" (3). While this book was not published at the time that the first version of the WPA OS was being constructed, it does illustrate the consensus at the time that the study of genre had progressed beyond a simple categorization of modes of discourse. Genre, by the time the WPA OS 1.0 was published, was seen as what Carolyn Miller, in "Genre as Social Action," defined as, "typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations" (159). Genres, in my understanding, can be seen as a reoccurring mode of discourse that has its own specific set of discourse conventions that guide and shape the way that knowledge is formed and shaped in certain rhetorical situations. Generic activity is central to the social organization of knowledge, including arrangements of power and authority that they foster or sustain. In this frame, Genre can be seen as the types or forms of rhetorical discourse that reoccur in certain discourse communities. Teaching students to understand genre with more complexity is a stated goal of the last section of outcomes, and is geared toward teaching students to think critically about how the conventions of writing are shaped by genre expectations which requires that students think more critically about the readings chosen in the class as they are

sometimes used to raise genre awareness though some research has shown that explicit teaching of genre often does not facilitate genre awareness.

The second outcome demonstrates a clear dedication to print based text through its title of critical thinking, reading, and writing. The comma between reading and writing is also important because it designates reading and writing as separate processes in critical thinking and not as intertwined or integrated. The critical thinking section focuses on teaching students to use reading and writing to develop skills in inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating (324). One goal of critical thinking, as defined in the first version of the outcome statement, is to learn to see writing assignments as a form of process analysis where writers learn to master the steps required in a writing assignment so that they can organize their thinking clearly in an essay. It also asks that writers learn to situate themselves in the academic community by integrating their own ideas with those of others. This means learning to use sources appropriate to the genre ethically and with synthesis and analysis. An argument essay, for example, would also ask students to conduct some sort of social critique that examines the relationship between language, power, and knowledge in hopes of creating the sort of critical consciousness discussed in Chapter 2. The overarching goal of this argument assignment could be to teach students to use sources to make or refute arguments in an academic context though some instructors could certainly have students work with real world problems in a service learning, community writing/engagement setting if they chose to do so, though I do not think this is expected or encouraged based on the language in WPA OS 1.0. This does not necessarily mean that the Outcome Collective thought negatively about community writing, etc. It speaks more to the issue of knowledge intensity—only so much knowledge can be communicated via the outcomes in one document. As Keith Rhodes,

et al. argues, “flurries of disagreement were most commonly resolved by moving to a level of generalization that could accommodate multiple positions” (11). If the Outcomes Collectives reached areas of disagreement they generalized the outcome to make it less specific and more easily adaptable on the local level. This allows disagreements to be decided at the local level individually. If generality could not mitigate disagreement the Outcomes Collective eliminated the concept from the document entirely to limit knowledge intensity.

Lastly, OS 1.0 suggests students should demonstrate some proficiency in writing as a process so that they can create multiple drafts, and develop flexible strategies for the five canons of rhetoric such as invention, style, arrangement, memory, and delivery. Although, in the outcomes statement, the canons are refigured as generating (invention), revising (arrangement), editing and proofreading (style), genre (delivery)—with memory being either assimilated into genre as genre awareness, or understanding of the historical development of genre, or omitted all together. Students would also be taught to work collaboratively and with responsibility via peer review. Peer review would serve to help students develop skills in in the lower-order concerns of writing such as editing, proofreading, grammar and mechanics, but also in higher-order concerns such as genre awareness—does my paper look like other student papers and is this a good or bad thing—as well as teaching students to attend to such matters as focus, audience and purpose, organization, and development. These metacognitive skills in writing are essential to a writer’s critical awareness of the thinking and learning completed through the process of composing an essay but are also important to a student’s conception of their self as a thinker and learner. These higher-order skills teach students to think and learn but also to conceive of themselves as a thinker and learner. Self-awareness of proficiency in these skills is as important as the skills themselves because they

create the confidence needed to use the skills with expertise, voice, and ethos.

Metacognitive practices help students become aware of their strengths and weaknesses as learners and writers and is an essential part of why writing is such an essential component of a student's education.

Noticeably absent from OS 1.0 is any sort of statement on, or outcome related to, emerging technologies, composing with computers, or multi-modal composing. As Cynthia L. Selfe and Patricia Ericsson argue in, "Expanding Our Understanding of Composing Outcomes," the WPA OS, "focuses largely on traditional writing outcomes, with only the briefest nod to emerging technologies and their impact on literacies" (32). Ellery Sills extends this argument further by stating, "without any inclusion in OS 1.0, the possibility of digital and multimodal composing is made into a residual category, an "other" lacking any formal legitimacy and earning, at best, only tacit, tangential support" (63). The reasons, according to the Outcomes Collective, that technology was omitted is twofold. First, fidelity was an issue. The Outcomes Collective did not want to include any forms of technology when they may be obsolete after the publication of the document. This would immediately date the document and require immediate revision. The other reason was more complicated. The Outcomes Collective could not reach consensus on how to address technology in terms of access. As Dryer, et al., state in regards to OS 1.0 when revising the outcomes statement in 2014, "not only did the Outcomes Collective wish to avoid exacerbating digital divide issues by recommending specific technologies that might be unavailable to many writing programs, but also recognized any specific technology would soon be obsolete" (130). The wording in the WPA OS was strategically ambiguous according to Dryer et al., so that programs had flexibility to integrate technology available on the local level to meet the outcomes.

Also, missing is any component related explicitly to citizenship or critical theory beyond a vague, and generalized statement related to understanding the relationship between language, knowledge and power. As Keith Rhodes, et al., state, “we wanted readers to know that we were not radical relativists, that we *had* standards even if we were not writing them down; and yet we wanted readers to know that we have moved well beyond a simplistic interest in correctness, that we had a complicated rhetorical project in mind” (16). They go on to argue that the result is a narrowly focused document that does not lend itself well to radical teaching, citizenship, or cultural studies/critical pedagogy. Granted, an argument can be made that any of these outcomes could be used in the service of these philosophies of composition but they are clearly not supported by the verbiage in this document. As Rhodes et al., goes on to state, “its [OS 1.0] brevity and “professional” language conveniently allowed the drafters to gloss over many of these controversies” (16). Derek Soles, in a strident critique of the OS 1.0 states, “Radical teachers...will likely be offended by and scoff at the list of outcomes the committee mandates. To radical teachers, the main goal of a writing class is to foster a social conscience within students so that they will campaign for social justice within their communities” (377).

Again, I think the ambiguity of the document allows users on the local level to adapt the outcomes to meet any number of concerns regarding critical consciousness. For example, the WPA OS 1.0 contains an outcome related to teaching students to analyze the relationships among language, knowledge, and power but does not provide any details as to how to do this so that an individual or program could adopt any axiology to achieve these goals. OS 1.0 specifically avoids any certain axiology in favor of areas where there is pedagogical consensus. The items of disagreement such as ideology underpinning the

teaching of composition should be handled by local users on a programmatic level. This is both a strength and a weakness. It allows flexibility so that the document can be adapted by local users to fit need, but honestly, it also seems a bit overly cautious as if the field intentionally avoids larger social issues affecting the very students they hope to educate. I think this reflects the degree to which the OS authors had white, middle class students, and white middle class teachers in mind. This is an issue I will return to later in Chapter 4 when discussing adding a social justice plank to the WPA OS.

This conception of a writing program functions as a floor not a ceiling. It's simply a basic sketch of what a writing program might look like based on the outcomes set forth in the original outcomes statement. This is noted because, while the WPA OS 1.0 appears out of date looking back historically, this was at the time a very strong document which outlined the essential practices that made First-Year Composition the centerpiece of many general education curricula in colleges and universities nationwide. As an institutional rhetoric, the document the Outcomes Collective created communicated a complex picture of first-year writing at the turn of the twenty first century. Teresa Grettano, et al., argue in, "The Perilous Vision of the Outcomes Statement," that "learning to write *is* complex. It is shaped by the material conditions that have shaped our lives: our exposure to literacy, the landscapes of our neurologies, and the tangible emotional events of our self-exploration" (46). As a historical document this first version does an outstanding job responding to the historical moment to communicate our institutional knowledge about what is good, possible, or desirable in a First-Year Composition sequence-based on the expertise and knowledge built over years and years of practice and research. As Grettano et al., add, "[developing a unified, progressive, first-year writing program] is a complex process, both individual and social, that takes place

over time with continued practice and informed guidance” (46). The WPA OS 1.0 provide us with a blue print for creating a solid foundation for a writing program, but also, a tool for unpacking and reconstructing the values and visions of a community as communicated via a statement of institutional rhetoric. As Edward White states, “The Outcomes Statement that has emerged suggests some of the answers that thoughtful and reflective practioners have in turn produced” (7).

WPA OS 2.0

The next incarnation of the WPA OS commonly referred to as OS 2.0 began when CWPA president, Shirley Rose asked Kathleen Blake Yancey to form a task force to investigate a revision of OS 1.0. Yancey, in turn, invited Irv Peckham to co-chair this endeavor. As Dryer, et al., state, “In 2008, the statement was amended to include ‘Composing in Electronic Environments’ which was based on the ‘Technology Plank’ addendum” (130). In terms of versioning, I think it is debatable whether OS 2.0 merits a unique number marking it as a new instantiation of the WPA Outcomes Statement. In versioning philosophy, new numbers are only assigned when major, large scale changes are implemented which make the new version incompatible with older versions. Instead, this seems more like a software patch designed to update, improve, or fix the original version to make it more user friendly or improve usability. WPA 2.0 is almost exactly the same but with a different Introduction to communicate the institutional knowledge that has been updated since the last version, and to include the section entitled, “Composing in Electronic Environments.” Although this version does not establish OS 2.0 as a radically different version of the OS, it does function as a software patch to fix the omission of composing in electronic environments, and update the institutional rhetoric to reflect emerging knowledge.

I will return to the technology plank later as a transition to a discussion about the third iteration of this document.

In institutional rhetorics, new versions only arise when the knowledge contained in rhetorical forms become too outdated to coalesce the multiple identities into one voice. As Green and Li argue, “The theoretical goals of structural institutionalism are to explain institutional order, and in particular, similarity and homogeneity across organizations” (1667). In terms of the WPA OS, this means that the OS functions to communicate outcomes the field agrees upon or the axiological consensus of the field in regards to knowledge and skills in FYC, but the OS also functions to establish order through consensus on the outcomes across the multitude of institutions that adopt the WPA OS. One goal of institutional rhetoric is to maintain stability in the forms of knowledge accepted in the organization, to make sense of this knowledge, and to develop communicative practices that transmit knowledge in a way to maintain structure and stability of knowledge forms. Most importantly, the goal is to stabilize knowledge to maintain institutional order so that new forms of knowledge cannot arise to challenge the authority of the organization without planning and preparation. As Paul Meadows, in “The Rhetoric of Institutional Theory,” adds, “an institutional system represents a structuralization of functions...and each institutional system develops its own unique method of knowledge transmission” (208) to maintain order and consensus amongst its publics. One could argue that the WPA OS 2.0 is a rhetoric meant to solidify the WPA OS as a core transmission strategy of institutional authority. A resistance to changing the document implies that the document has cache and power as a policy statement and the knowledge-intensive organization such as that which undertook the revision, the CWPA, is trying to institute a patch meant to update the statement

and maintain its usability over instituting a large scale revision. Refusing to make significant updates in the face of challenge could be seen as an attempt to structuralize—or solidify the framework of the document—to standardize the genre and function of knowledge transmission and maintain the homogeneity of knowledge by the CWPA. The framers of OS 1.0 intended the knowledge in the document to remain fluid and updated in the future, but there seems to be some clear intent to maintain the form of the institutional rhetoric so that the genre remained viable. If we examine the document closely we can see this intent emerge.

OS 2.0 opens with an Introduction centered on three main points regarding the knowledge transmitted in this document. I am going to address the first and third statements together because they are conjoined in thought but separated by text, and they may support each other in ways the authors may or may not have intended. The first bolded statement argues, “This statement describes the common knowledge skills and attitudes sought by First-Year Composition programs in American postsecondary education” (WPA Outcomes Statement 2.0). The Introduction goes on to state this is an attempt to regularize—or stabilize the knowledge as transmitted via an institutional rhetoric—what can be expected to be taught in FYC, and again emphasizes that these are outcomes and not standards because standards should be set by local institutions (WPA Outcomes Statement 2.0). Again, it also reiterates that this is institutional knowledge “learned from practice, research, and theory” (WPA Outcomes Statement 2.0). The first paragraph’s use of the word regularize is interesting in this context. To regularize something means constituting a constant or definite pattern especially within the same space between individual instances (“Regularize” Merriam Webster Online). Regularize also means that something occurs in regular intervals. So the

word choice here implies that there is some desire or need to establish the WPA OS as a genre and to establish that it will be updated at regular intervals while also attempting to regularize the learning intended in FYC. Here we can see the WPA OS solidify fully into an institutional rhetoric. Green and Li argue, “A key assumption and driving mechanism underlying rhetorical explanations is that actors pursue meaning because they must optimize and manage their limited cognitive and attention resources in a problematic world” (1670). This attempt to solidify the WPA OS into a firm genre that communicates knowledge can be seen as an attempt to direct attention and thought toward these specific outcomes in composition while also solidifying these outcomes as stable forms of knowledge recognized with disciplinary authority.

The third bolded point in OS 2.0 also speaks to an issue with regularization. The third statement argues, “Each statement of outcomes for First-Year Composition is followed by suggestions for further work that builds on these outcomes” (WPA Outcomes Statement 2.0). The intention of these sections is to acknowledge that writing instruction continues beyond FYC. This call for reexamination is also important because one of the dangers of the stabilization of institutional rhetoric, like any narrative, is that it tends to transform institutional knowledge into forms that appear natural or inevitable. As Douglas Eyman argues in, *Digital Rhetoric: Theory, Method, Practice*, “Knowledge and belief are products of persuasion, which seeks to make the arguable seem natural, to turn positions into premises” (16). As rhetorics are solidified into established, recognizable forms that seem natural and unquestioned, the danger becomes that as time passes it no longer appears to pose questions or invite challenge as Edward White stated earlier in this draft. An institutional rhetoric, if not carefully examined and revised frequently, makes knowledge appear settled

and static. So, the second part of that regularization where the knowledge contained in the document will be updated at regular intervals becomes extremely important. The field needs to uphold a commitment to reviewing the knowledge in the document to prevent it from becoming lore so sacred that the document becomes too hard to challenge or revise. This need for revision underscores that writing is a complex process that requires constant review to ensure it meets the needs of students. The first and third statement in the update addresses this need.

The second main point in the Introduction is, “learning to write is a complex process, both individual and social, that takes place over time with continued practice and informed guidance” (WPA Outcomes Statement 2.0). In the paragraph that accompanies this statement, the Outcomes Collective also shifts the conception of the primary audience to exclude anyone from parts of the document that does not have specialized knowledge in Rhetoric and Composition. The WPA OS 2.0 states, “while we have also aimed at writing a document that the general public can understand, in limited cases, we have aimed first at communicating effectively with expert writing teachers and writing program administrators” (WPA Outcomes Statement 2.0). Since the institutional rhetoric has been legitimized, accepted, and professionalized as a policy statement with implementation of OS 1.0, its credibility or ethos can be linked to disciplinary authority and rationality to limit the audience to other professionals who share this specialized knowledge. This is a stark contrast to the original document where it created a perception that this document was extended to all stakeholders in the university—students, administrators, faculty, and citizens. If nothing else, it makes the statement less open and accessible. As publics are created they are necessarily inclusive and exclusive—they invite some in the audience to participate while

excluding others from participating. This is how institutional rhetorics function as boundary objects. Institutional rhetorics set limits or boundaries on who can take part in the knowledge transmission.

The second statement in OS 2.0 also denotes the emerging authority of the document as an institutional rhetoric. Limiting the audience, at least in narrow cases within the document, announces that the WPA OS has reached a level of institutional authority that it no longer requires outside acceptance or acknowledgment. Green and Li argue, “Structural institutionalists assume that in order to survive, actors and organizations pursue legitimacy because they are embedded in fields of relationships where important social and material resources are exchanged” (1667). This speaks the other goal of regularization in that this version of the document seeks to legitimize the document through regularization or standardization. Speaking to a narrowed audience of professionals with specialized knowledge adds an element of solidarity and authority because it states clearly that this knowledge stems from years of theory, practice, and research. This document can be used to argue for the validity of programs on the local level if it is seen as containing disciplinary authority. Patricia Ericsson, in her dissertation Chapter on the WPA OS adds the Outcome Statement holds a great deal of power because, “These documents communicate our disciplinary knowledge to others when they are used as the basis for discussion about developing courses, revising curriculum, training writing teachers and those who teach writing in the disciplines, and assessment” (Ericsson 17). She goes on to add, “If the development of these documents has public funding, then their status as public policy is even more crucial. Because we need to do a better job of communicating” (Ericsson 17). If one were to build a writing program on the local level and adopt the outcomes, one could then

make the argument that the program is based on best practices of a knowledge-intensive organization such as the CWPA and this immediately provides credibility to argue for resources, space, and support.

A study of the Introduction's three main bolded statements, and the verbiage supporting them, illustrates the minor philosophical changes in thinking between versions 1.0 and 2.0. If we examine the changes to the outcomes in OS 2.0, we see that the other major change to the document came from the addition of the technology plank to the stated outcomes. On the surface, this does not alter the conception of the outcomes in a dramatic way. It appears that they simply added some verbiage to appease those like Cynthia Selfe and Patricia Ericsson who had made calls to add a technological component to the WPA OS in "Expanding Our Understanding of Composing Outcomes". However, looking back historically, this was foreshadowing a dramatic shift in the conception of First-Year Composition. I think the shift from writing to composing fundamentally changes how we think about knowledge making in First-Year Composition. In the theory of institutional rhetorics laid out earlier in this Chapter, I explained that rhetorics such as policy statements are used by knowledge-intensive organizations to stabilize and communicate institutional knowledge. The goal of the institutional rhetoric is to communicate the core body of knowledge the organization can agree upon.

To accomplish this goal, I want to discuss the addition of the "Technology Plank" as a scaffold between OS 2.0 and OS 3.0 because I believe the "Technology Plank" represents the beginning of a shift in the conceptualization of First-Year Composition from writing as a process to composing as Digital Rhetoric. This is not to say the field no longer believes writing is a process. Our field has always known writing is complex and not necessarily

linear, but in an effort to make it teachable, process theory presents writing as a relatively linear and simple system. However, design thinking changes the conceptual strategy that the field uses to describe this process as composing. This conceptual shift from writing to composing and designing in the theory of composing situates the user in complex interactions that, “encourages us to reexamine our definition of writing as an activity rather than a body of knowledge, our methods of teaching as indeterminate activities rather than exercises of mastery” (Kastman Breuch 122). This form of composing shifts the emphasis from the product (the written text produced) to the user (to teach the skills and habits of mind we want composers to develop). Technology takes on a broader role in this conception of writing because the user mediates the rhetorical situation and the available means of persuasion via the modality and technology used in the composing process.

This shift developed out of scholarship on composing in electronic environments, but the study of composing in electronic environments has long been a part of our scholarship. The first issue of *Computers and Composition* was published in November of 1983 almost a full fifteen years before the WPA OS was drafted and adopted. However, while digital technology has always been the focus of study as a medium of production, it has historically taken a back seat to writing as a process in the field’s scholarship. I think, on a certain level, technology was seen as a means of production but not as a means of knowledge making by large sections of the field. Computer and composition had historically been a subset of the field not widely studied in theory, practice, or research until it began to emerge as a field of study in the early 2000s. As such, any discussion of technology, multimodal composing, or digital writing was noticeably omitted from the first draft of the WPA OS. Cynthia L. Selfe and Patricia L. Ericsson challenged the omission of technology from the statement in their

book Chapter, “Expanding Our Understanding of Composing Outcomes” included in the book, *The Outcomes Book: Debate and Consensus after the WPA Outcomes Statement*. Selfe and Ericsson claim, “In a recent conversation among colleagues about the concerns and responsibilities of WPAs, it was suggested that our professional efforts might be better spent if we focused on more traditional outcomes of writing instruction” (32). Selfe and Ericsson go on to state that OS 1.0 devoted its attention to traditional forms of writing outcomes “with only the briefest nod to emerging technologies and their impact on literacies” (32).

Earlier in this Chapter, I outlined the Outcomes Collective’s rationale for this exclusion so I will not belie the current argument by retracing the bulk of that argument. However, it is clear that the omission of digital composing needed to be corrected. As Selfe and Ericsson go on to state, “We would argue that some of our print-based expectations for writing instruction and our revered curricular practices will hold a declining relevance for many students as well as the general public” (33). Selfe and Ericsson go on to add that, “if we do not think about expanding our *writing* programs into *composition* programs—we might well see the programs experience a rapid decline of relevance to young people and to the larger public” (33). The WPA OS 2.0 attempts to address these emerging digital literacies with the addition of the Technology Plank. However, the Technology Plank in OS 2.0 does not address composing with any depth or complexity. The Technology Plank is actually entitled, “Composing in Electronic Environments,” and is the only outcome topic in OS 2.0 to receive its own Introduction.

This outcome states that, “As has become clear over the last twenty years, writing in the twenty-first century involves the use of digital technologies for several purposes from drafting to peer review to editing. Therefore, although the *kinds* of composing processes and

texts expected from students vary across programs and institutions, there are nonetheless common expectations” (WPA Outcomes Statement 2.0). The outcomes listed are as follows:

- Use electronic environments for drafting, reviewing, revising, editing, and sharing texts
- Locate, evaluate, organize, and use research material collected from electronic sources, including scholarly library databases; other official databases (e.g., federal government databases); and informal electronic networks and internet sources
- Understand and exploit the differences in the rhetorical strategies and in the affordances available for both print and electronic composing processes and texts (WPA Outcomes Statement 2.0).

The outcomes listed confine technology to the status of tool and limit its ability to provide students with the full range of rhetorical options that true digital composing provides. This does not examine the full scope of power that technology provides in the canons of style and delivery. These outcomes theorize technology as a tool to make writing as a process simpler or more effective. There is some attempt to add complexity with the third standard that asks that students learn to understand and exploit the differences in rhetorical strategies between print and electronic media but the outcome is written in such bland language that almost any attempt to have students compose digitally could meet this outcome. I am sure this was intentional so that those with limited resources could meet this outcome but the generality bleeds the outcome of its true power. Much like the outcome about language, knowledge, and power, it feels like there was a *kairos* to develop a deeper, more impactful statement that addresses the issue in a meaningful way and the Outcomes Collective missed that

opportunity. We do not see composing addressed with complexity until the release of OS 3.0 in 2014.

WPA OS 3.0

In 2011, another bid to revise the WPA OS was launched via a question on the WPA-L. Sid Dobrin posted a question that asked, “Should the WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition include some acknowledgement of the role of the visual in writing” (Leverenz 33). Carrie Leverenz, in “Redesigning Writing Outcomes,” stated, “the speed with which Dobrin’s question was taken up suggested the time was right for reconsidering what we believe students should learn in composition courses” (33). Then CWPA president, Duane Roen, charged a revision taskforce with updating the document “to revisit the Outcomes Statement and determine how it could be updated to reflect changes in the field and current practices in first-year writing” (Dryer, et al. 129). This revision was adopted by the CWPA Executive Board on July 17th, 2014 (WPA Outcomes Statement 3.0). In addition, Dylan B. Dryer, et al., serving on behalf of the Outcomes Revision Taskforce, wrote a rationale for the revision that appears in the fall edition of volume 38 of the journal, *WPA: Writing Program Administration*. In this rationale, Dryer et al., state, “motivated by the sense that the field had a broader view of composing than it did a decade ago...Duane Roen recruited ten faculty members from various institutions to form a Task Force to explore whether the statement needed a systemic overhaul” (130). As part of this effort the Revision Task Force surveyed 27 WPAs and faculty from colleges and universities around the country. Dryer et al., stated, “We heard repeatedly throughout our research, the Statement plays several important roles: it legitimizes and justifies writing pedagogies and the work of the local WPAs; it facilitates conversations about writing instruction and values; and it guides

curriculum design, teacher development, and assessment practices” (131). In addition, they also conducted workshop sessions at the 2012 CWPA conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Forty attendees at this session were asked a variety of questions engineered to solicit feedback on revision by the taskforce. Dryer, et al. noted many attendees reminded the Revision Taskforce, “students are already avid and active participants in a range of new technologies, thus pointing to a need to focus more attention on our students’ needs and knowledge” (132). Dryer, et al. goes on to argue, “participants were concerned that students were becoming consumers and producers of digital media without having much opportunity to reflect critically and capitalize on ‘affordances’ that digital media provide” (132).

Dryer, et al., also reported that several WPAs thought the Statement fine in its current iteration, but that most suggested specific revisions such as, “defining composition as a multimodal activity; expanding the document to encompass such topics such as information literacy, reading and research, and plagiarism; and explicitly connecting the document to other statements that dealt with desired outcomes of writing instruction” (131). One document cited as an example was the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* published in 2011 and written by the CWPA, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and the National Writing Project. As Dryer et al. argue, “analogous documents composed recently...suggested that academic, workplace, civic, and private constructs of writing had already been refashioned by distributed composing practices, new genres, and unprecedented access to and ability to manipulate images” (Yancey as cited in Dryer et al. 136). This led to the task force developing three key features they sought to maintain during revision.

The key features of the revised WPA OS as outlined by the Revision Task Force were defined as

1. To articulate and disseminate these beliefs [on writing outcomes], and in doing so, to affirm some practices and, by omission, to discourage others
2. To model certain ways of thinking and talking about writing and reading in the hope that those ways would eventually permeate textbook selection, curricular design, job descriptions, assessment priorities, course titles, hiring practices, faculty development, and—of course—college students’ writing abilities
3. To invoke by a kind of disciplinary speech-act the existence of writing studies and to claim its knowledge on behalf of local WPAs (WPA Outcomes Statement 3.0).

The revision of the WPA OS, according to the Revision Task Force, was less a criticism of the previous versions’ enactment of these aims and, “more an acknowledgement that, given both time and the experience of working with an outcomes statement, the field has learned more about composition, enough to warrant revisiting the construct of “writing” assumed in both the earlier statements” (136). Dryer, et al. also state that critiques of the original WPA OS began almost immediately after its original publication in 2000 and continued after its update in 2008 (136). This criticism began because the WPA OS focused largely on print based textual production outcomes. Self and Ericsson’s 2004 essay cited earlier in this Chapter is offered as an example of this criticism as is Oddo and Parmalee (2008); Walker et al. (2011); Cope et al. (2011); and Dobrin (2011). This is indicative of new knowledge about writing and composing which developed in opposition to the knowledge contained in the document, and demonstrates the way that knowledge forms in response to institutional rhetoric. I mentioned earlier that the formation of rhetorical publics naturally include some

and exclude others. We can see here how an excluded public can create pressure on an institution through research and practice, and as this public grows in knowledge and stature, the institution can no longer exclude that public from participation. The institution becomes forced to recognize the need to change the document to include knowledge that can no longer be ignored. The pressure from members in the field forced a revision of OS 2.0 so significant that it required a new version of institutional rhetoric to address this new knowledge. This new version is known as OS 3.0.

OS 3.0 maintains the structure and layout of the original document. Dryer et al. claim “the 2014 version affirms many of the foundational concepts of the original WPA OS: for example, the idea that writing has epistemic purposes beyond recording, that writing processes should be flexible, and that one of the most important goals of FYC curricula should be to develop students’ abilities to integrate their ideas with those of others” (136). The document contains four headings bulleted and bolded here to make distinguishing between the four easier on the reader:

- **Rhetorical Knowledge**
- **Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing**
- **Processes**
- **Knowledge of Conventions**

Each of the four headings are the same headings as contained within the first version of the WPA OS with the exception of the change from writing to composing. Rhetorical conventions focuses on the ability to analyze the rhetorical situation to determine how to use this knowledge in producing and understanding texts. It focuses on the student learning to gauge audience, purpose, and the rhetorical situation to create appropriate responses to the rhetorical situation in a variety of modalities. “Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing,”

is focused on the ability to work with text to create understanding. This outcome focuses on inquiry, learning and thinking, and communicating to understand how to situate themselves into academic, professional, or civic conversations. The Processes outcome reimagines the writing process from a linear progression of steps to flexible, recursive strategies that can occur at any point of the writing process. There is still a focus on drafting multiple versions of a text as writers rethink and revise throughout the writing process. Lastly, Knowledge of Conventions is related to understanding and learning to create genres in multiple modalities and developing and understanding that conventions vary by discipline and genre and are not universal. This outcome also focuses on how lower-order concerns such as proofreading, editing, and organization can be affected by the shape and scope of genres.

In WPA OS 2.0, the Technology Plank contained a brief written Introduction that illustrated its purpose and explained the reasoning for inclusion. Feedback provided to the Revision Taskforce stated that users would like to see this explanatory Introduction extended to the other headings to explain what each means in the context of First-Year Composition. This addition added an additional 25% in length to the document according to Dryer, et al. (136). Each of these headings contain major shifts from a focus on writing to a focus on composing. The Introduction to the document clearly states, “Composing refers broadly to complex writing processes that are increasingly reliant on the use of digital technology. Writers attend to elements of design, incorporating images and graphical elements into texts intended for screens as well as printed pages” (WPA Outcomes Statement 3.0). It goes on to add that the rhetorical situation and composing activities have been shaped by students’ access to technology. In a certain sense, there is a shift from “rhetoric as the available means of persuasion” to “rhetoric as available means of digital technology.” This shift in philosophy

affects the document at all levels. This move is a recognition of the expanding conceptions of writing to include digital technology where traditional writing isn't necessarily replaced but expanded.

As I mentioned earlier, the major shift in this update is the move from writing as a discrete, linear set of steps meant to craft a printed text—typically the academic essay—to composing as design thinking or Digital Rhetoric which asks students to create a much larger variety of texts in multiple modalities such as a movie, or to incorporate and integrate more imagery into visual texts, or to create hybrid texts that utilize both print text, movies, and digital imagery. I definitely think this is valid conception of the shift in thinking regarding the move from process to design. As Dryer, et al. state, “the former versions approached writing as a more stable act—even among emerging technologies—the new version embraces emerging forms of composing in a world with fluid forms of communication” (138). The philosophical shift to composing is indicative of the emergence of Digital Rhetoric as a dominant paradigm in the field of Rhetoric and Composition. As I argued earlier in this Chapter, composing with computers or multimodal composing has always been a subset of the field of Rhetoric and Composition. However, in the early part of the century, Digital Rhetoric began to take shape as a dominant paradigm in the field, and this paradigm began to challenge the institutional lore the field held about writing. The knowledge forming outside the document places pressure on the knowledge inside the document as cognitive dissonance develops between theory and practice in the real world and the theory and practice contained in the document. In a knowledge-intensive organization, this pressure destabilizes the institutional rhetoric and creates a rhetorical situation that requires a new formation of knowledge be transmitted, and a new method of transmission. A new *kairos*

develops in response to the new knowledge formation and the organization has to rewrite the rhetoric to fit the new knowledge. Selfe and Ericsson's criticisms are the first bubbles of this new knowledge formation emerging that the field would later come to term variously as Digital Rhetoric, multimodal composing, or digital humanities depending on ideology, philosophical orientation, and outlook.

However, Digital Rhetoric is the term that I prefer to use because I believe it encompasses the values and beliefs that are outlined in OS 3.0 in the most comprehensive way. Douglas Eyman argues, "Digital Rhetoric draws its theory and methods first and foremost from the tradition of rhetoric itself—and this is...both an analytic method and a heuristic for production, and, critically for our purposes, can be structured as a kind of meta-discipline" (12). Digital Rhetoric explores the ways in which digital technologies intersect with rhetoric to create new modalities of communication. In "Digital Rhetoric: Toward an Integrated Theory," James Zappen provides a brief sketch of outcomes for Digital Rhetoric. Zappen defined Digital Rhetoric as an integrated theory predicated on four major outcomes or practices:

- The use of rhetorical strategies in production and analysis of digital text
- Identifying characteristics, affordances, and constraints of New Media
- Formation of digital identities
- Potential for building social communities (319).

Douglas Eyman extends this definition of Digital Rhetoric by adding the following activities:

- Inquiry and development of rhetorics of technology
- The use of rhetorical methods for uncovering and interrogating ideologies and cultural formations in digital work
- An examination of the rhetorical functions of networks
- Theorization of agency when interlocutors are likely to be software agents (or "spines") as they are human actors (44).

Eyman adds that Digital Rhetoric will also subsume or incorporate other rhetorical methods that may be useful in a rhetorical situation or moment of inquiry (44). In this way, Digital Rhetoric is a massive conglomeration of hybridity in that it has taken aspects of its pedagogy and methods from a multitude of sources. In First-Year Composition, Digital Rhetoric is used to teach students to compose multimodal documents, but also to interrogate the ways that ideology and culture are embedded into digital practices when making texts, games, images, or movies. Cynthia Selfe and Gail Hawisher argue that rhetorics of technology explicate social practices, people, technology, values, and literate activity which are embedded in a larger cultural ecology (as cited in Eyman 47). In this way, Digital Rhetoric also subsumes aspects of critical theory in that it seeks to interrogate the ways that oppressive structures are built into technology.

Digital Rhetoric also utilizes multimodal methods to teach students to compose digital texts that move beyond traditional print texts. Selfe and Ericsson add that composing practices, “include a range of other behaviors: reading and composing images and animation; creating multimedia assemblages; combining visual elements, sounds, and language symbols into alternately organized and presented forms of communication on the web, in chatrooms, and over networks” (33). Anne Wysocki argues, “Multimodal composing invites us to question fixed notions of text or image as we consider not only what is expected by a particular audience in a particular context but also what they might not expect, what they might not be prepared to see” (59). Carrie Leverenz adds to this by stating, “Multimodal composing provides students with opportunities to negotiate difference as a central characteristic of language use. Opening the writing classroom to textual difference by including composing in multiple modes gives us the chance to foster openness to other

differences as well” (34). Leverenz’s idea of multimodal composing as design thinking is based on the New London Group’s theory of “Utopian Possibility.” Utopian Possibility is defined as, “productive diversity, the idea that what seems to be a problem—the multiplicity of cultures, experiences, ways of making meaning, and ways of thinking—can be harnessed as an asset” (67). Leverenz argues that this sort of “pedagogy of multiliteracies” is meant to prepare students to participate in a global culture where students will have to learn to navigate the multiplicity of cultural, linguistic, and literate practices. This is meant to highlight the Utopian Possibility of productive diversity by using “the presence and value of difference in all human expression” (38). This attention to difference is another way that Digital Rhetoric could be used to accomplish the goals of critical theory by using an analysis of technology to raise critical consciousness.

These concepts of Digital Rhetoric manifest in OS 3.0 in multiple ways. The move from writing to composing shifts the focus of the document from products to production. It radically changes the canons of style and delivery so that students must always be thinking of the best methods to deliver texts to audiences, and to critically examine how these stylistic and delivery strategies change the nature of communication. From the classical to the modern period of rhetoric, delivery was largely associated with a speech act. Orators would develop lines of argument based on the location within the city the rhetoric was to be used—arguments for the forum, the law courts, etc. After the modern era, print-based texts were the dominant medium of delivery used to transmit knowledge. So dominant in fact, that delivery as a canon was largely lost as an area of study in rhetoric because the unchallenged assumption was that the traditional essay would be molded as the method of delivery to fit the rhetorical situation.

However, James Porter argues, in “Recovering Delivery for Digital Rhetoric,” that, “technological knowledge about distribution options—i.e., how audiences are likely to access, engage, and interact with information—pertains in critical ways to rhetorical decisions about informational content, design, style, etc.” (208). He adds “technical knowledge is integral to the art of rhetoric and to the canon of rhetorical delivery in the digital age” (208). Porter argues that rhetoric in the digital age requires, “abstract knowledge (e.g. of material and form) and procedural knowledge (e.g. of application and technique). In short, it requires both theoretical understanding and practical know-how working in tandem” (208). In my opinion, this is the core element of OS 3.0—teaching students the practical knowledge necessary to create texts in a variety of modalities using a variety of technologies while also teaching students to develop the meta-cognitive skills necessary to understand why the choices are appropriate for the rhetorical situation. Any assignment developed for earlier versions of the WPA OS could largely still be utilized with the outcomes listed in OS 3.0 but the method of delivery would change dramatically and this would require new and different skills to teach these new methods of delivery. As software platforms are often difficult to learn this requires practice to develop the technical know-how that Porter describes as well as the metacognitive skills necessary to know why the chosen method of delivery is appropriate for the rhetorical situation. Composing becomes much more complex in terms of cognition and skill.

Each of the four outcomes in OS 3.0 are geared to teach the metacognitive skills necessary to deliver multimodal compositions. Rhetorical Conventions asks that students, “gain experience reading and composing in several genres to understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers’ and writers’ practices and purposes” while also

developing “facility in responding to a variety of situations and contexts calling for purposeful shifts in voice, tone, level of formality, design, medium, and/or structure” through the use of multiple technologies (WPA Outcomes Statement 3.0). Critical Thinking, Reading and Composing asks that students learn to, “read 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” while also learning to, “use strategies—such as interpretation, synthesis, response, critique, and design/redesign—to compose texts that integrate the writer’s ideas with those from appropriate sources” (WPA Outcomes Statement 3.0).

Processes ask that students’ learning, “adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities” (WPA Outcomes Statement 3.0). Finally, Knowledge of Conventions asks students to, “Learn common formats and/or design features for different kinds of texts” and to, “gain experience negotiating variations in genre conventions” (WPA Outcomes Statement 3.0). Each outcome has infinitely complex levels of metacognition that require students to move between practical knowledge—learning the technical know-how to make a movie using Apple’s Final Cut Pro software—and theoretical knowledge—why a movie made using this technology is the most appropriate way to respond to this rhetorical situation. This is not to say that previous iterations of the WPA OS did not require this sort of metacognition. This is only to say that OS 3.0 raises this metacognition to a serious level of complexity, and technology has significantly altered the cognitive practices of First-Year composition. This shift has dramatically changed First-Year Composition from “learning to write in the academy” to “learning to compose and/or design rhetorical arguments via complex technological innovation.” In the construction of OS 3.0, the Revision Taskforce

has integrated a complex level of technical knowledge layered on top an already complex level of required rhetorical knowledge.

Scholarship in the field agrees that this level of technical knowledge in multimodal composing is necessary to keep writing/composition programs vital to the university and students. Kathleen Blake Yancey, in her landmark 2004 CCCCs address states, “Never before has the proliferation of writing outside the academy so counterpointed the compositions inside” (298). In order to maintain the viability of writing programs the field will need to change the forms of writing inside the academy to meet the needs of rhetorical situations outside the academy. The types of design in composition being done outside the academy require students develop complex forms of theoretical and technical knowledge to produce these compositions and this is reflected in the third version of the WPA OS.

Conclusion

The WPA Outcomes Statement is a unique opportunity to examine the values held by the field of Rhetoric and Composition, and an opportunity to study places where the field has reached axiological consensus on the required knowledge and skills students should demonstrate upon leaving First-Year Composition. The WPA OS also raises questions as to whether the field has not reached enough axiological consensus about certain knowledge and skills such as anti-racist pedagogy, civic literacy, or material privilege as an outcome for FYC. The WPA OS functions in this context to both solve questions we face as a field and to raise questions about matters not yet settled. It is always a rhetorical situation that invites new interpretations of old knowledge, and discussions about emerging knowledge not yet established in the field. However, there is still much work to be done on the study of intra-organizational processes through which new knowledge is generated, and the social practices

within organizations used to transmit this knowledge. To this end, this Chapter examined the way that knowledge-intensive organizations such as the CWPA manage the dissemination of knowledge via institutional rhetorics such as policy statements. Knowledge creation in knowledge-intensive organizations has been a topic of great interest to scholars in other fields such as organizational theory, sociology, and communication (Carlile 2002, 2004; Hargadon and Sutton 1997; von Krogh et al. 2000; Nonaka et al. 2006; Ribeiro and Collins 2007). This dissertation adapts theories of organizational communication such as institutional rhetoric as outlined by Mats Alvesson and other scholars in rhetorical institutionalism to analyze the WPA Outcomes Statement.

The focus of knowledge creation and transmission in institutional rhetoric largely focuses on dialogic interactions within the organizations such as face to face meetings, conversations on listservs, and organizational documents such as memos, philosophy statements, and other interoffice communications such as email. Haridimos Tsoukas, in “A Dialogical Approach to the Creation of New Knowledge in Organizations” argues, “A dialogical approach [to knowledge production in knowledge-intensive organizations] seeks to theorize how face-to-face dialogues make it possible for new organizational knowledge to emerge and be communicated” (2). Tsoukas, here, is discussing how knowledge is produced in organizations via traditional forms of organizational communication such as meetings, focus groups, interviews and surveys. In Tsoukas’ theory, all of these forms of communication are seen as dialogic because each form requires the reader to engage with the various modes of communication as a dialogue between people because a reader will create a sense of the other when engaging a text as they do with a person. However, this theory does not yet have a clearly articulated concept for the way that emergent knowledge is rhetorically

communicated in a knowledge-intensive organization such as a professional organization like the CWPA or a field of study such as Rhetoric and Composition. This body of work also demonstrates a gap in the study of how knowledge needs to be communicated with disciplinary authority to a group of constituents both inside and outside the organization. I believe this dissertation can fill this gap by theorizing how knowledge can be transmitted rhetorically via an institutional rhetoric like the WPA OS. The WPA OS is also a great example of a how a policy statement can be used to manage knowledge intensity in institutional rhetoric.

In his work on organizational communication in knowledge-intensive organizations, Mats Alvesson argues that professional statements—like WPA OS—can be seen as strategies for achieving and maintaining the status of a profession through rhetorical constructions of knowledge disseminations. These rhetorical constructions serve to enhance disciplinary status through a communication of consensus via a singular institutional voice, and allows a knowledge-intensive organization to coalesce multiple competing voices into a single, coherent narrative. Alvesson argues that institutional rhetorics are, “better seen as a symbolic vehicle which supports the political interests of the profession as a set of norms that safeguard the morally superior behavior of the professionals” (999). While, I do not see the WPA OS indicating any sort of morally superior behavior, I do see it is as an attempt to communicate best practices for First-Year Composition, and as such, communicate a preferred set of behaviors as outcomes that indicate the results of theory, practice, and research over the last 25 years of our field. An institutional rhetoric such as the WPA OS also serves our political interests because it clearly defines these outcomes as the result of disciplinary research, and the knowledge of experts in the field of Rhetoric and Composition.

The WPA OS builds disciplinary status through the development and dissemination of institutional vocabularies used to communicate specialized knowledge. In, “Rhetorical Strategies of Legitimacy,” Roy Suddaby and Royston Greenwood argue that institutional vocabularies use “identifying words and referential texts to expose contradictory institutional logics embedded in historical understandings of professionalism” (36). Suddaby and Greenwood go on to argue that actors must be literate in the institutional vocabulary and language practices to propose innovation or scenarios of change when contradictory logic emerges in the organization (37). This knowledge of institutional discourse is a prerequisite to conceptual reframing of knowledge as it changes shape over time. This analysis reveals the way the vocabulary surrounding the desired outcomes in First-Year Composition have changed over the life of the document. A great example of this is the shift from the term writing to the term composing and how that has affected the conception of First-Year Composition as a whole. This shift in terminology is an example of the conceptual reframing of our core axiological beliefs about First-Year Composition.

This work also explores the importance of conceptual reframing in the work of institutional rhetoric. Conceptual reframing means, “reclassifying an object [of knowledge], or at least shifting emphasis from one class of knowledge to another, so that a new view of it emerges” (Tsoukas 7). The CWPA has devoted considerable time and energy—since first endorsing and taking responsibility for the revision of the WPA OS in 1999—in regularizing the document as a means of institutional rhetoric, and to revising and reexamining the knowledge contained within the document at regular intervals so that the document contains a synopsis of the most updated conception of best practices in the field. When we look closely at the field’s work in conceptual reframing we can see the growth and change in the

knowledge of the field over the last twenty five years. A historical look at what we value as a field can reveal those spaces where we have reached epistemic consensus, but more importantly, reveal those places where we still have much work to do. For example, this study has revealed that the field had overlooked the important role technology and digital composing had played in First-Year Composition. Through various forms of dialogic interaction we were able to address this omission in meaningful ways. In addition, a historical analysis such as this reveals the shape of the scholarly debate on the subject of the WPA OS to reveal how the various voices within our field are molded and shaped into a single document. Examining how the field put together this document, and what we ultimately found to be of value in terms of First-Year Composition outcomes reveals the knowledge forms we privilege, and those forms that have not yet reached privileged standing such as civic literacy. The work of conceptual reframing also works to help question our most commonly held beliefs and to critically examine our institutional lore so that it is destabilized and does not become fixed knowledge that withstands contest or challenge. Our field will need to maintain the WPA OS status as a boundary object that communicates knowledge in a flexible way so that it both contains enough knowledge-intensity to maintain its status as an institutional rhetoric but also retains its plasticity so that it can be adapted at the local level to fit unique institutional needs. It is this idea of conceptual reframing that will guide the next Chapter of this dissertation.

In Chapter 4 of this dissertation, I will extend this method of conceptual reframing to make an argument that the WPA OS should add a citizenship plank to the document. The goal of this Chapter will be to propose what outcomes based on rhetorical citizenship might entail, theorize a conception of rhetorical citizenship, and propose how John Dewey's theory

of social science could be the rhetorical axiology needed to meet these outcomes on the local level. Chapter 4 will take up Kock and Villadsen's proposition that citizenship be understood as rhetorical in the sense that "important civic functions take place in deliberation among citizens, and that discourse is not prefatory to real action but is in many ways constitutive of civic engagement" (30). In addition, Robert Danisch argues that rhetorical citizenship is the search for, and practice of, methods of communication capable of guiding public decision and judgement (224). For democracy to function correctly it must be predicated on problem solving, collective decisions, and action in situations that are contingent and uncertain. It requires that we act when we may not have the facts, information, or time one might like to have to make informed decisions. So by extension, for democracy to function, First-Year Composition outcomes have to progress beyond preparation for writing in the academy and a focus on the production of texts. First-Year Composition must provide practical, real world experiences so that students can sharpen these rhetorical skills before leaving the college/university. There are those in the field who will argue that we already teach students the skills necessary to participate in the political sphere. However, I will argue that tacit knowledge is not good enough, and that we should implement Dewey's arguments regarding experiential learning in the public sphere.

Chapter 4 will examine first-year writing outcomes and propose a need to incorporate a more global perspective focused on preparing students for life in a democracy, and which teaches students to be agents of social change, advocates of social justice, and savvy users of communication in public deliberation. Sample outcomes as adapted from the American Association of Colleges and Universities Civic Literacy across the Curriculum might include:

- Deepen student understanding and analysis of the social, cultural, and civic aspects of their personal and professional identities
- Deepen student understanding of the social responsibility of professionals in their field or discipline, and analyze how their professional activities and knowledge can contribute to greater long-term societal well-being
- Evaluate the actions of professionals and institutions in their field or discipline to foster both equity and inequity in communities and society
- Provide opportunities for students to engage in the community outside of the university for the purpose of practicing these skills in real world situations in experiential learning (AACU Civic Literacy across the Curriculum Statement)

As learning outcomes are indicators of success of an academic course or program, it is essential that our field provide a clear idea of what can be achieved by adding a civic literacy component to the WPA OS. Learning outcomes give a clear idea to our stakeholders of what they are going to learn or achieve at the end of the first year writing sequence or course. A brief examination of the state of democracy in America will demonstrate that democracy is under peril, and if we are serious about improving the state of democracy, there is no better way to illustrate this commitment than making it a disciplinary priority through the addition of a civic literacy plank in the WPA OS. Chapter 4 will provide a rationale for the addition of this plank and a philosophy of composition that can be used to achieve this outcome.

Chapter 4: Civic Literacy, Rhetorical Citizenship, and Conceptual Reframing

The purpose of this Chapter is to establish an argument that Rhetoric and Composition should more fully engage the civic mission of colleges and universities nationwide. The Introduction to this dissertation outlined the issue of civic literacy and the crisis surrounding American citizen's lack of preparation for life in a democracy. Several scholars, such as Donald Lazere, Anne Colby, and Barbara Jacoby have argued that Rhetoric and Composition holds a special place within the general education curriculum which situates the field well to take on the challenge of teaching civic literacy because First-Year Composition (FYC) is a required course at every major college and university, FYC has the cache of resources to support civic engagement and literacy, and FYC is normally a first year, first semester course. I think it is important that the ground work for political literacy and civic engagement is laid early in a student's academic career so that the student can learn these skills and carry them into other courses to develop and sharpen these skills throughout their academic career. In addition, I think it is important to think vertically about curriculum in that I would hope that students would begin their training in academic and civic literacy in FYC and then continue this training into upper division courses in rhetoric and writing, or at least in upper level professional writing courses required for their major.

In addition to Donald Lazere, several national organizations have sounded a call for civic literacy and have challenged colleges and universities to take up this call. The *American Association of Colleges and Universities* developed *The National Taskforce on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement* due to a need to spur civic renewal in higher education as a response to this crisis. These policy statements paint a picture of civic education on life support in America. Data from these reports demonstrate that American

civic engagement is at an all-time low. A recent study published by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Engagement (CIRCLE) showed that on less than a third (31%) of voters age 18-30 turned out to vote in the November 2018 midterm elections nationwide. (2018 Center for Information and Research on Civic Engagement Study). In addition, the 2010 report by The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, found that “opportunities to develop civic skills in higher education through community service, school government, or service clubs are available disproportionately to wealthier students (6). This report also found that only “35.8% of college students surveyed strongly agreed that faculty publicly advocate the need for students to become active and involved citizens” (41). In addition, the study demonstrated that one-third of college students surveyed strongly agreed that their college’s efforts in civic engagement strategies resulted in increased civic capacities and participation after college (41). However, this article also showed that the number of students who remain civically engaged after college—or those who participate in civic activities meant to improve their community for 3 to 5 hours a month—is still woefully low as only 14% of those 18 to 30 engaged in civic efforts to improve their community after college.

This taskforce consisted of twelve prominent administrators and scholars from around the nation with the stated goal “to assess the state of civic learning and democratic engagement among two and four-year colleges and universities. The project was charged with producing a national report and action plan with ambitious recommendations for strengthening these commitments” (The Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Project). This project also led to the landmark report entitled “A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy's Future: A Call to Action and Report” from *The National Task*

Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement which “documents the nation’s anemic civic health and includes recommendations for action that address campus culture, general education, and civic inquiry as part of major and career fields as well as hands-on civic-problem solving across differences” (*A Crucible Moment*).

These large scale initiatives illustrate the growing concern at the national level with the state of civic literacy in higher education. As part of this push, several two and four-year institutions have added civic literacy components to their general education core curriculum. Civic literacy has become a national movement related to higher education policy. As Seth Pollack argues in “Critical Civic Literacy: Knowledge at the Intersection of Career and Community,” these initiatives were created to, “rally higher education around what has been frequently overlooked: its civic mission” (223). Pollack goes on to add, that there is tension between competing goals of higher education. There is tension between, “the goals of providing students with specialized career training and assisting in their development as members of a larger society that generates inherent responsibilities for its citizens” (223). This dissertation seeks to take on this tension and situate it within the context of the field of Rhetoric and Composition. There is tension in the field as to what the focus of composition should be such as social justice work, writing to work, or service to the college/university. This dissertation seeks to take up the argument that First-Year Composition needs conceptual reframing to more fully integrate a preparation for citizenship in a democracy so that students can be prepared to create a, “socially cohesive and economically vibrant US democracy and a viable, just global community which requires informed, engaged, open-minded, and socially responsible people committed to the common good and practiced in ‘doing’ democracy” (Pollack 224). It is my argument that in order to fully meet the needs of a vibrant US

democracy that Pollack describes, students will need to be taught the skills and practices of rhetorical citizenship so they can develop strong methods of communicative agency necessary to build communities, shape public policy, and advocate for social justice.

The current goals of FYC would not have to be comprised to accomplish these goals because all of the current goals can be accomplished in conjunction with a civic literacy focus. This is not an either/or situation where the field would need to sacrifice rhetorical knowledge or critical thinking as outlined in the WPA OS. All of these goals could be accomplished in the service of civic literacy as they could with any other content focus of FYC such as negotiating difference or critical literacy. However, the major benefit in adding civic literacy to the WPA OS would be add an experiential learning component to the current outcomes. In addition, a civic literacy component could also reinvigorate the public sphere and allow students the opportunity to develop rhetorical skills, political knowledge, and civic expertise in a real world setting.

The argument this dissertation proposes is that democracy requires specialized knowledge in rhetorical methods developed to teach students how to “do rhetorical citizenship” given the complexity of modern democracy. It is within this call that I will situate this project as a possible solution to this growing civic literacy crisis in America. This Chapter proposes to accomplish two tasks to help meet the larger goal of teaching the specialized knowledge needed to be productive citizens in a democracy. First, I will argue the WPA OS needs conceptual reframing to include outcomes geared toward civic literacy and citizenship so that our field demonstrates a commitment to social justice and democracy at a time when both are under attack. This will send a message that we are committed to

democracy and destabilizing the status quo nature of the WPA OS. Second, this Chapter will lay out a theory of rhetorical citizenship to establish how civic literacy outcomes will help prepare students for life in a democracy. This Chapter will argue that democracy is essentially about participation and training students in the capacity to “do citizenship.” More importantly, it will argue that democracy is essentially rhetorical in nature because rhetoric is a form of community-building necessary to create social unity amongst citizens while also providing the communicative agency necessary to spur them to action.

In Chapter 1 of this dissertation, I laid out a claim that America is facing a growing crisis in civic literacy due to the lack of commitment to civic engagement training in most institutions of higher education. I also argued that the function and health of a democracy is uniquely tied to its educational practices while also sketching out a project that examines our historical commitment to democratic methods through an analysis of critical theory and community writing. In Chapter 2, I examined the historical commitment of our field to the goals of civic literacy, and how we have historically sought to teach concepts of civic literacy in first-year composition (FYC). I also argued our field has undertaken the task of teaching democratic methods and civic literacy in first year composition though it feels that we have not always done a good job of this due to the fragmentation and lack of cohesiveness in the teaching of civic literacy. This civic teaching has traditionally been assumed by two schools of thought—critical theory and community writing—that seek to teach students some of the skills in rhetorical citizenship necessary for life in a democracy. In order to better teach the concepts of civic literacy our field needs a more cohesive approach to teaching these concepts, and a stronger commitment to the civic literacy as outcomes for FYC. In Chapter 3, I examined the WPA OS as a form of institutional rhetoric—sometimes also called

organizational rhetoric—and used this framework to examine how the WPA OS functions to transmit the knowledge and values our field agrees should function as learning outcomes in FYC. The WPA OS, as an ideological document that outlines the core competencies the field believes that each student should have after completing first year composition, necessarily makes arguments about what the field values and what it does not value. It has been altered and revised over the years to reflect best practices and outcomes left out or marginalized by the field. As an institutional rhetoric this document necessarily communicates what we value as a field—and what we do not value—with the authority of a collective, and as such, carries great weight which requires it to be revised and reviewed often so that beliefs do not become calcified. Through continuous conceptual reframing we can revise this document to meet the needs of the rhetorical public we serve, but also of the larger public sphere.

In this Chapter, I will extend this method of conceptual reframing to make an argument that the WPA OS should add a citizenship plank to the document. The goal of this Chapter will be to propose what outcomes based on civic literacy enact a conception of rhetorical citizenship. Chapter 4 will take up Kock and Villadsen’s proposition that “citizenship be understood as rhetorical in the sense that important civic functions take place in deliberation among citizens, and that discourse is not prefatory to real action but is in many ways constitutive of civic engagement” (30). In addition, Robert Danisch argues that rhetorical citizenship is the search for, and practice of, methods of communication capable of guiding public decision and judgement (224). What’s more, rhetorical citizenship, in this sense, also provides a community building purpose essential for democracy to function. John Dewey, in his book *Democracy and Education*, argues, “Men [*sic*] live in a community by virtue of the things they have in common; and communication is the way in which they come

to possess things in common. . . communication is a process of sharing experience till it becomes common possession. It modifies the disposition of both parties that partake in it” (As cited in Danisch 203). Rhetoric, in this sense, becomes more than mere persuasion and takes on a constitutive dimension where the ways in which we “do citizenship discursively and the way we talk about society are constitutive of and influential on what civic society is and how it develops” (Kock and Villadsen 13).

Institutional Rhetorics and Conceptual Reframing

In Chapter 3 of this dissertation, I examined the Writing Program Administrator’s Outcomes Statement (WPA OS) as an institutional rhetoric. According to the Introduction to the WPA OS, “This Statement identifies outcomes for first-year composition programs in U.S. postsecondary education. It describes the writing knowledge, practices, and attitudes that undergraduate students develop in first-year composition, which at most schools is a required general education course or sequence of courses” (WPA OS 3.0). The third, and most recent, version of the WPA OS also goes on to state, “This statement therefore attempts to both represent and regularize writing programs’ priorities for first-year composition, which often take the form of one or more required general education courses” (WPA OS 3.0). This regularization is an attempt to establish the WPA OS as an institutional rhetoric meant to communicate outcomes for best practices in our field, but also to communicate what composition teachers nationally have learned from practice, research, and theory in our field. In short, it is an attempt to communicate the knowledge developed over five decades of study in relation to First-Year Composition. It is also a broad example of an institutional rhetoric

and how these rhetorics are used to shape, regularize, and communicate this core institutional knowledge.

Institutional rhetorics are used by knowledge-intensive organizations to manage the amount of knowledge included in one document, define boundaries in knowledge, and to communicate core institutional knowledge to its publics that are dispersed geographically. W. Richard Scott, in *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, Identities*, defines an institution as, “structures comprising sociocultural rules, conventions, and established practices, that exert a significant influence on individual member’s actions” (12). In this way, the CWPA can be seen as an institution that has developed rules, conventions, and established practices regarding knowledge in FYC and which uses a rhetoric such as the WPA OS to exert influence on individual member’s actions in regards to best practices in FYC. This institution seeks to use its influence to persuade its publics to adopt its outcomes, or perhaps more importantly, to accept its authority as a knowledge making institution, and to encourage standardization—not to be confused with encouraging standards or precise levels of knowledge—but standardization as the process of making something conform to uniform conceptions of knowledge to encourage homogeneity and sameness. I proffered in Chapter 3 that the Writing Program Administrators Outcomes Statement (WPA OS) was an institutional rhetoric that is used to communicate institutional knowledge about best practices in First-Year Composition (FYC) to a rhetorical public—stakeholders in a college or university such as students, instructors, professors, administrators, and citizens.

Institutional rhetorics, such as policy or position statements like the WPA OS, for example, allow an organization—such as the Council of Writing Program Administrators

(CWPA)—with competing voices and ideologies to speak with a single voice to communicate disciplinary knowledge. It allows the organization to coalesce competing conceptions of knowledge into one manageable, transmittable form of knowledge. Mats Alvesson, in “Organizations as Rhetoric: Knowledge-Intensive Firms and the Struggle with Ambiguity,” argues “knowledge-intensive organizations engage actively in rhetoric as a way of providing convincing accounts, regulating impressions and images related to organizational knowledge” (1007). Institutional rhetorics are often personifications of visions, values, or support to an institution’s publics, but rhetorics also seek to extend the power and influence of these statements to encourage adoption. These sort of rhetorics are often used to add the ethos and expertise of collectivity or solidarity to a rhetorical proclamation. This solidarity in decision making about knowledge adds weight to the document through an argument of strength in numbers, so to speak. For Alvesson, organizations are “systems of persuasion where organizational actors are agents or rhetors who deploy language strategically” (Alvesson 1011). So, institutional rhetorics are used to both make and transmit knowledge, and this process of making and disseminating information is rhetorical in that they are meant to persuade publics into accepting the authority of these rhetorics which in turn will expand the pervasiveness of the knowledge. Rhetors have to make decisions about what is included and what is excluded in an institutional rhetoric as any rhetorician would when crafting a rhetorical work, and this process necessarily silences some arguments while empowering other arguments about knowledge—and who can speak knowledge to power.

Institutional rhetorics are developed to interpret, produce, and present public and private arguments to persuade stakeholders and others to adopt, maintain, or reject practices

related to the knowledge developed in a knowledge-intensive organization such as a professional organization like the CWPA, or a modern college or university. To this point, each version of an institutional rhetoric such as the WPA OS must confront “the idea of knowledge-intensity in that it is very difficult to know where and when to stop including elements” (Alvesson 1000). Each institutional rhetoric has to create boundaries of knowledge or limits to what knowledge can be transmitted in a single communication. For example, to limit the amount of knowledge transmitted in the WPA OS, the Outcomes Collective collaborated in the mode described by John Trimbur as, “engaging in a process of intellectual negotiation and collective decision making” (602). Keith Rhodes, et al. in “THE OUTCOMES PROJECT: The Insiders’ History,” argues that in the first version of the WPA OS termed OS 1.0, “we tried to embed in this document the knowledge derived from several decades of research and practice in composition, without taking sides in the arguments that separate, say, the expressivists from the social constructivists” (11). In taking on the project of institutional rhetoric, each individual steering committee had to make rhetorical decisions related to the creation of new outcomes through dialogue and the management of conversations with stakeholders in the rhetorical public. These decisions often involved limiting or omitting certain practices, outcomes, or knowledge from the document.

Each steering committee used various methods in a dialogic approach to manage knowledge intensity. Methods of managing the knowledge intensity in this document included group presentations at our professional organizations’ conferences such as the Conference on College Composition and Communication, The CWPA conference, and the National Council of Teachers of English conference, surveys direct dialogue between members of the steering committees and stakeholders or email or phone calls. Ikujiro Nonaka

and Hirotaka Takeuchi, in *The Knowledge Creating Company*, argue that knowledge creation in institutional rhetorics “involves the creation of new concepts through dialogue and the management of conversations” (86). This dialogic interaction between the steering committees and the stakeholders allowed the committee to receive feedback used to craft and shape the knowledge contained in the document to meet public needs. This process of revisiting the document every few years to assess public reaction to the document allowed the committee to regularize the revision of the document to ensure that it meets the needs of stakeholders. Susanmarie Harrington adds, “The outcomes statement does not prescribe curriculum; rather, it encourages conversation about curriculum. It’s arguably not comprehensive: it doesn’t attend to personal writing or nonacademic writing; it may privilege awareness of rhetoric over performance of rhetoric” (xvii). Harrington goes on to state the strength of the document is that it celebrates these conversations on curricular matters. In many ways, the three versions of the WPA OS function as three rhetorical situations. As Edward White states, in *The Outcomes Book*, “The outcomes statement that has emerged suggests some of the answers that thoughtful and reflective practioners have in turn produced” (7). However, he goes on to add that all answers produce more questions, and new interpretations. This commitment to revising the document insures that the knowledge in the document does not become static or outdated. This process of revising the document when new knowledge emerges that challenges the knowledge contained within the document is defined as conceptual reframing by scholars in organizational rhetoric. This regularization in reframing also ensures standardization because conceptual reframing prevents the document from ever becoming out of date, and as such, always contains the best practices in the field so to encourage standardization through constant knowledge management.

Knowledge management in institutional rhetorics is a key concept because organizations invest resources in developing, implementing, and transmitting knowledge. Knowledge to a non-educational institution is seen as a key component of marketplace strategy and is essential to the growth and health of a company. In many ways, knowledge management and development is also essential to an educational field, professional organization, or educational institution. One could scarcely argue that the modern university is not almost wholly dedicated to knowledge creation to enhance university standing, improve institutional profiles, and increase institutional prestige. To stay relevant in an educational institution, Rhetoric and Composition has to constantly produce, revise, and reframe knowledge. Several scholars such as Obstfeld (2002) and Hakanson (2007) have argued that the “engine of knowledge creation is ‘articulation’—a continuous process of making knowledge explicit and relevant to the task at hand” (Tsoukas 1). In many ways, the development of the WPA OS is our field’s first attempt at articulating knowledge of best practices in FYC. The WPA OS is our attempt to manage knowledge intensity in FYC by limiting the scope of learning outcomes, and articulating the expertise in best practices developed through years of knowledge production related to FYC. Each individual revision of the WPA OS is an attempt at reframing knowledge to meet new contexts, problems, or emerging knowledge. This continued articulation of knowledge expands the scope and influence of the document while also improving its authority.

The WPA OS, in its current instantiation, is a conservative document meant to maintain the status quo politically and organizationally. As Jeff Rice argues in, “Conservative Writing Program Administrators (WPAs),” by conservative, “I don’t mean the values and attributes often placed upon political affiliation. Instead, I refer to the desire to

preserve and conserve very specific administrative and pedagogical stands *as is*” (2). He goes on to state that conservatism in this sense is meant to maintain a massive, orderly system that “must be continued as if it were natural or given of writing program work” (2). The consequences of this sort of conservatism are important to Rice because, “conservatism’s shutting down of new ideas are profound; they reduce writing program administration to the maintenance of stability and efficiency and minimize the teaching of rhetoric, invention, or intellectual work” (3). Jeff Rice does not examine the work of WPAs or the WPA OS from the standpoint of institutional rhetoric, but the scholarship surrounding institutional rhetoric supports his outlook. Knowledge-intensive organizations are structures of power, and as such, the institutional rhetorics they use are meant to stabilize and control knowledge production. Institutional rhetorics have a normative function that makes the knowledge contained within the document seem natural or inevitable and knowledge outside the document unnatural or problematic. These institutional rhetorics create a double bind because they articulate an epistemology as authoritative because it contains best practices developed through years of theory, practice, and research which makes it difficult for alternate forms of knowledge to gain traction because any attempt to challenge the knowledge within the field is treated as an attempt to destabilize the system, and thus, seen as wrong or misguided. This is not to say that institutional rhetorics are bad and they should not be used, but more to illustrate that there are consequences to institutional rhetorics that we need to be cognizant of so that we can maintain a sense of open mindedness that Cynthia L. Selfe and Patricia Ericsson describe so that knowledge does not become so calcified that it cannot be challenged or changed.

Conceptual reframing at regular intervals help knowledge-intensive organizations manage the articulation of new knowledge, and provide the means for these organizations to prevent conservative stances from preventing the emergence of new knowledge. Haridimos Tsoukas, in “A Dialogical Approach to the Creation of New Knowledge in Organizations,” argues “new knowledge comes about when practioners seek to turn unreflective practice into reflective one through reflexive social interaction” (2). He also goes on to argue that this process of reflexive social interaction is called conceptual reframing, which he defines as, “a way of creating new distinctions”. Reframing means reclassifying an object, or at least shifting emphasis from one class membership to another, so that a new view of it emerges” (7). Institutional rhetorics are destabilized when the knowledge contained within a rhetoric no longer functions to meet the needs of an organization, or new knowledge emerges that the rhetoric cannot account for in its current form. New knowledge emerges in response to particular problems or particular situations. When an institutional rhetoric no longer solves a problem new questions emerge about the knowledge in the document. These questions alter the shape and scope of the document and undermine its credibility. To maintain the stability and credibility the knowledge-intensive organization must reframe the knowledge to meet new challenges or face the prospect of losing power and influence. When new knowledge emerges the rhetoric must be revised to articulate a commitment to this new knowledge.

The role of technology in composition is a good example of this type of conceptual reframing. As new knowledge about how technology affects writing emerged, it forced the field to conceptually reframe what we do from writing as a process to composing through technology. Another simple example of reframing in an educational context is when disagreement arises over the definition of terms used to describe practices such as writing or

composing. In the previous Chapter, I argued that the third version of the WPA OS arose out of the way that technology significantly altered what we do in FYC so the term writing no longer fit the conception of our epistemology. As the technology moved from analog to digital practices the way we teach rhetoric had to change to meet the demands of emerging technology. In turn, these new technologies provided ways to create texts that challenged the way that our field thought about teaching writing/composing/design. This required that our field conceptually reframe our outcomes to fit this new model of composition from writing as a process to composing through design and the move from analog to digital technologies. This reframing of knowledge also required that we also reframe our rhetorics so that it can articulate this change in knowledge. More specifically, as the content changed, we had to alter the delivery, as well, to fit this new content.

Conceptual reframing is not a novel concept. We reframe terms, concepts, and pedagogies with increasing scales of efficiency. Every article, book Chapter, or monograph published in our field can be seen as an attempt to conceptually reframe the knowledge surrounding a concept, term, or pedagogy. Simply reflecting on the number of times the term “rhetoric” has been reframed over the last fifty years is enough to make one’s head spin. Our field is committed to reframing concepts and ideas on a regular basis. However, it is important to discuss conceptual reframing as it relates to institutional rhetorics because this is a novel concept to our field. As I outlined in Chapter 3, the WPA OS has undergone three rounds of conceptual reframing since its implementation in 2000. The most recent revision in 2014 stemmed from Sid Dobrin’s call for more attention to the visual aspects of rhetoric in a WPA-L query. Other authors had also made calls to revise the WPA OS to address how computers were altering composition such as Cynthia L. Selfe and Patricia Ericsson’s 2004

essay cited earlier in Chapter 3. Other authors such as Oddo and Parmalee (2008); Walker et al. (2011); Cope et al. (2011); and Dobrin (2011) had made similar calls to revise the WPA OS to address important elements not addressed in the outcomes. It is within this frame that I will make a similar call in this Chapter. It is my contention that it is time to revisit the WPA OS to address a glaring omission in the document: that of clear and defined outcomes for civic literacy, social justice, or democratic methods. It is my contention that the WPA OS is designed to be a living document where outcome revision is regularized and normalized. It has only been five years since its last significant revision, but I believe it is time to address the lack of commitment in the document to civic literacy and social justice is of a dire need. I previously cited Edward White's contention that this document is meant to both answer questions and generate questions. It is a living rhetorical situation that settles questions and creates new questions as knowledge changes and emerges in our field.

In their co-authored article, "Expanding Our Understanding of Composing Outcomes," Cynthia L. Selfe and Patricia Ericsson foreground this discussion of revising the WPA OS to include outcomes related to digital composing. An important extension of their argument to revise the WPAS OS to include an emphasis on composing in electronic environments is that those in our field need to adopt a more open frame of mind regarding outcomes due to rapid social and cultural transformations of the information age. Selfe and Ericsson argue, "WPAs . . . need to be more open in our intellectual understanding of the outcomes for composing and composition instruction, not more constrained" (32). This open mindedness is intended to foster habits of mind that embrace change and revision to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society. Selfe and Ericsson go on to argue, "We need to recognize, study, and address not simply a limited set of outcomes, but rather a full range

of them—not simply those generated within the context of currently accepted literacies, but also those generated within the context of newly emerging literacies and fading literacies” (32). To be clear, Selfe and Ericsson’s essay is related to digital literacies and geared toward reframing the WPA OS to address emerging aspects of digital rhetoric. However, their argument about maintaining a sense of open-mindedness has been studied, and their arguments about maintaining a sense of open mindedness related to FYC outcomes is valuable.

Our field needs to make sure we are always looking at the margins of the document to those places where there are gaps or critically missing areas so that an institutional rhetoric such as the WPA OS does not become so normative that it prevents change and growth. As a field, we constantly need to be reviewing the rhetorics that articulate our knowledge so that we make sure that managing knowledge intensity does not omit important or helpful outcomes for FYC. Our field needs to routinely ask, “What is missing from this document that should be included? What are the consequences of this omission?” When I ask this question I immediately answer that this document is clearly missing an outcome for teaching students to interrogate power and to examine how language functions in relation to power. This document also lacks outcomes defines some level of achievement related to students learning to use rhetoric to make social change, and how to develop rhetorical methods to resist power functions that oppress or subjugate citizens. For example, none of the three versions of the WPA outcomes statement contain a deep, or engaged reference to examining, critiquing, or challenging power structures, or an engaged or sustained commitment to teaching students the skills necessary to use rhetoric and writing in their lives as citizens to radically alter or resist these structures of power. There is simply no mention of civic

literacy or preparation for citizenship beyond a cursory outcome related to teaching students to examine the relationship between language, power, and knowledge, in the earlier versions, but even this cursory mention of the relationship between language, power, and knowledge was removed from the third version. This seems like an omission to me because of our field's long held commitment to social justice and critiques of power. I understand that this was likely omitted because of opposition from those in the field who echo Maxine Hairston's concerns about indoctrination discussed later in this chapter. However, I feel this omission is a huge problem that needs to be addressed because much educational research has suggested that critical consciousness — the ability to recognize and analyze systems of inequality and the commitment to take action against these systems — can be a gateway to academic motivation and achievement for marginalized students. It can also help non-marginalized students understand their privilege and role in the oppression of other citizens. I also feel that the rhetorical situation for the WPA OS has changed since the election of Trump and the reemergence of white supremacy. The power dynamics of ideology have shifted greatly since 2016 and due to this we need to reexamine the WPA OS to reassert our commitment to social justice, examining power relations, and developing critical consciousness.

For example, the WPA OS could benefit from specific outcomes related to experiential learning where students extend the skills learned in the FYC classroom into the public sphere through service learning. For example, the WPA OS could add an outcome that combines developing voice and agency in writing with a service learning component that allows them to practice using rhetoric in the context of civic and democratic contexts. I will discuss the outcomes I propose for the specific outcomes later in this draft, but as an example of what could be added to the WPA OS to illustrate the type of outcomes I am proposing we

could ask that students in the FYC build personal voice and agency by examining their own cultural background in the context of civic and democratic principles. If specific measurable student learning outcomes are needed to assess this we could add that students use this opportunity to examine the material conditions of the community they inhabit. I use material conditions here as in the context of historical materialism as the result of history is the result of material conditions rather than ideas, or the physical conditions in which we live and exist rather than the narratives we hold or use to justify these conditions.

For example, the previous versions of the WPA OS contained an outcomes related to teaching students to interrogate knowledge and power, and I think asking students to learn to situate themselves within a community in a historical moment and to examine their own beliefs and ideology is an extremely valuable step to teaching students to develop critical consciousness. I think the mistake we make here is to fall into the trap of thinking this means indoctrinating students into a specific ideology or mindset. A good instructor would not push any agenda but simply teach students to reflect more fully on the conditions that have led to the development of the current conditions that a community faces and to think critically about what their role is in the historical conditions they inhabit. To illustrate this we could add student learning outcomes to assess this such as:

1. Students will learn to recognize and reflect on a distinct individual attitudes and beliefs as well as their own implicit biases.
2. Students will learn to articulate one's own attitudes and beliefs in the context of a community.

3. Students will acknowledge and assess how communities interpret civic and democratic principles differently.

These outcomes could be met in a variety of ways in an FYC course via the writing assignments in the sequence. They are flexible enough that an instructor could ask students to write/design/compose a variety of assignments to meet the student learning outcomes. For example, students could a personal narrative that explicates their own political or personal ideology in relation to the ideology of the community they have selected, and explore what they learned about themselves and the community through their service. One of the most appealing aspects of service learning is that it does not attempt to merely make theoretical links to the world outside of the classroom but literally places students in contexts outside of the classroom. It challenges students to practically apply material presented in the classroom to meaningful, real-world experiences. Service learning and civic literacy work creates a space for classroom material to be challenged, questioned, complicated, and meaningfully engaged.

Service learning and civic literacy provide students with an opportunity for deep reflection which can allow students to make knowledge through telling stories about their experience. These personal narratives can teach students to interpret the ways of seeing, knowing and being that are made available to us in our culture. One of the most important aspects of the work in critical consciousness is teaching students to make the invisible visible or to develop metacognitive awareness of their beliefs, ideologies, and biases. And by extension, it is extremely important to teach students to interrogate how the discourses that develop in a community are often invisible, and function as a sort of narrative rationale that

supports or defends the material conditions of a community as inevitable or natural. Learning to examine to make visible ideology and the language practices that support material conditions is an extremely important step to raising critical thinking in students because it forces students to learn to view the self as discursively structured.

The argument that I would like to make here is that we need combine the outcomes that are already included in the WPA OS related to developing rhetorical dexterity and awareness with outcomes that allows students the opportunity to do experiential learning in a real context outside the classroom to practices these skills. This would also allow students the opportunity to examine the material conditions of the communities they inhabit, and situate themselves within a historical moment so that they can begin read the world as Friere argues is important to critical consciousness. Freire argues “reading the world” (17) means that critical consciousness emerges when learners begin questioning the nature of their historical and social situation, and we have a responsibility to provide these opportunities despite the fact they may be difficult implement.

Without a clearly defined outcome related to civic literacy that plainly defines our commitment to teaching students the skills necessary to advocate for social justice this document appears wholly depoliticized to make it more amendable to the largest population of people in our field. For a field that has demonstrated fifty years of commitment to social justice work, such as the position statement on “Students’ Right to Their Own Language” “Statement on Anti-Racism to Support Teaching and Learning,” and the “Resolution on Social Justice in English Education,” this document appears to be painfully silent on issues of ideology, race, power, justice, and language. Derek Soles, in a 2002 editorial response to the

first WPA OS published in *College English*, argues that that radical writing teachers will likely scoff and be offended by the list of outcomes the committee mandates. Soles states, “To radical teachers, the main goal of a writing class is to foster a social conscience within students so that they will campaign for social justice within their communities” (377). He goes on to state that radical writing teachers, “equate social justice with the redistribution of social power within an inequitable class system and assign readings and topics that will help advance these goals” (377). Soles’ argument is valuable because it draws attention to the notion that there is a large portion of our field who feel that true goal of FYC transcends a service commitment to the university which asks that we teach students to write.

While this portion of the field may not be a majority or have the intellectual resources necessary to “win out” in the WPA OS a cursory look at the rise of Critical Race Theory and Cultural Rhetorics clearly indicates that there is a large portion of marginalized scholars who believe in the work of critical consciousness and social justice work. A cursory look at the most recent publications in our journals such as *Rhetoric Review*, *CCC*, or *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* as well as recent arguments on the WPA-L and TechRhet listserv will reveal that a growing number of scholars in our field are extremely dissatisfied with the status quo in our field related to social justice and would like to see a stronger commitment to radical teaching methods such as anti-racist pedagogy, de-colonialism, and critical literacy. While it may not be possible to make everyone happy with the WPA OS the addition of radical forms of outcomes could make the document more pleasing to a larger number of our constituents.

For these radical teachers, teaching students to write/compose/design is only one part of what we hope to achieve in First-Year Composition. A larger goal is to teach students to

use writing to situate themselves within the world, to understand their role as a citizen, and acquire the self-knowledge necessary to actualize their potential as change agents in a world where democracy is consistently under attack. To be clear, there is strong educational research that proves that teaching the types of critical consciousness I described in Chapter 2 has large scale benefits. Aaliyah El-Amin, et al. in “Critical Consciousness: A Key to Student Achievement,” argue that,

Research has shown that critical consciousness not only expands young people’s commitment to challenging pervasive injustice (Ginwright, 2010; Watts, Diemer, & Voight, 2011) but also increases academic achievement and engagement (Carter, 2008; O’Connor, 1997). In particular, school-based programming designed to foster critical consciousness has been shown to increase academic engagement and achievement (Cabrera et al. 2014; Cammarota, 2007) and enrollment in higher education (Rogers & Terriquez, 2013). In explaining these relationships, researchers have suggested that critical consciousness of oppressive social forces can replace feelings of isolation and self-blame for one’s challenges with a sense of engagement in a broader collective struggle for social justice (Diemer et al. 2014; Ginwright, 2010).

These studies indicate that teaching students the rhetorical skills necessary to interrogate power also has distinct connections to the development of democratic participation and agency in students. Critical consciousness is the ability to see, judge and act on issues of injustice in order to create social change, and this ability to act on injustice is a core component of civic literacy. However, despite the large scale benefits of teaching of civic

literacy and critical consciousness demonstrated the WPA OS does not make any mention of these as outcomes for first year composition.

In the Introduction to the third revision of the WPA OS Dylan Dryer, et al. clearly indicated that a stated goal of this document is to affirm certain practices and discourage others. As Dryer, et al. state, “Statement 3.0 remains the realization of a set of beliefs about what writing is and can be and how it should be and shouldn’t be taught in the first year(s) of US postsecondary education” (136). If we are to take Dryer, et al. at their word, then we have to assume that any outcome omitted from this list are omitted because they are not core components of best practices, and thus, should be handled on the local or individual level. However, the authoritative power of the WPA OS to act as a normative function of power will largely prevent this from happening because the addition of these outcomes on the local level will be seen as non-standard or as breaking with tradition and best practices. Civic literacy has been intentionally omitted because as they claim, one clear goal of the WPA OS is to, “articulate and disseminate these beliefs, and in doing so, to affirm certain practices and, by omission, to discourage others.” (129). If, as Dryer et al. claim, this document is meant to affirm certain practices, and by omission, discourage other practices, one has to believe that outcomes related to civic literacy and critical consciousness meant to prepare students to be agents of social change and advocates for social justice through rhetorical citizenship are deliberately omitted to discourage these practices. This begs the question, what does it say about our field that we do not include any mention or reference to civic literacy, critical consciousness, or more nuanced and thoughtful addressing of the relationship between power, knowledge, and language? Why have we gone silent in such a politically perilous time? I realize that things were less politically perilous when the WPA

OS was last revised in 2012-2014 but due to the rise of white supremacy and fascism in America it is necessary to addressing this gap in the WPA OS. This document appears to be strategically ambiguous regarding social justice at a time when social justice is at the forefront of the political sphere, and when forces in America seem most committed in solidarity to undermining much of the progress in social justice our field has helped advance over the last fifty years.

In short, it seems that we have gone silent on the issue of social justice just when we needed to speak up loudly in support of it. As Desmond Tutu is oft quoted as saying in *Unexpected News: Reading the Bible with Third World Eyes*, “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality” (Brown 19). If we remain silent on issues of power and do not take up the mantle of radical teaching then we are complicit in oppression. Radical teaching— often termed radical pedagogy—implies an analysis of the deeply politicized aspects of educational institutions, policies and practice so that education can be oriented towards radical social change. This is not to say that radical social change can only be achieved through left liberal politics. The goal of radical teaching is to ask students to develop a critical consciousness about their own education and learning. Teaching students to learn to read the world will help any student— regardless of political ideology—to be better citizens. Students who hold any ideological position can learn to be more empathetic, engaged citizens dedicated to social change. Students may disagree about the reasons for the material conditions of a particular community while still understanding that changes need to be made. They can also disagree about the solutions to these problems, but the goal is to get them engaged in the community

and to reflect on the problems facing these communities so that they can get involved. For example, I believe students—regardless of their ideological position or political orientation—can see the value in understanding how poverty functions, learning to situate themselves within a community to examine the real world conditions of poverty, and then developing a reflective response to what they have experienced and learned based on this service work.

We have a responsibility in such troubled times to teach students the specialized knowledge and skills required to ensure democracy survives the rise in fascism in America (and abroad) such as inquiry, information literacy, and the examining and understanding rhetorical arguments. For democracy to function correctly it must be predicated on problem solving, collective decisions, and action in situations that are contingent and uncertain. Democracy must also have a communicative dimension that allows for community building through the transmission of shared values, experiences, and knowledge developed through critical consciousness. So by extension, for democracy to function, First-Year Composition outcomes have to progress beyond preparation for writing in the academy, a focus on the production of texts, and career preparation. This not to say that the WPA OS limits programs to these goals only that they function in some capacity to support those narratives through the focus on outcomes that do not move learning beyond the classroom. First-Year Composition must provide practical, real world experiences so that students can sharpen these skills before leaving the college/university. The CWPA must revise the WPA OS to include outcomes on civic literacy to teach students to understand how language, power, and ideology function to undermine democracy and oppress citizens.

To extend Tutu's metaphor, we must teach students how to help the mouse remove the elephant standing on its tail, or teach students to help fight oppression by understanding how to use rhetoric to solve problems, build communities, and fight negative structures of power such as patriarchy and white supremacy. As Seth Pollack argues, we must integrate,

the personal with the professional, the individual with the social, and the career with the community, creating curricular space for degree programs [such as in Rhetoric and Composition] to examine issues of power, social justice, and systematic inequality that continue to threaten economic revitalization and undermine the creation of ever more inclusive, just, and cohesive democracy (226).

There are those in the field who will argue that we already teach students the skills necessary to participate in the political sphere, however, I argue that tacit and indirect knowledge is not good enough, and that we should implement Dewey's arguments regarding experiential learning in the public sphere as outlined below in the next section. I would also argue that without the support of a document such as the WPA OS the types of critical teaching necessary to spur critical consciousness and civic literacy will largely be handled on the local level by individual teachers and it will never progress beyond a pedagogical method into a social movement without support at the national level. As Tom Fox argues in, "Standards and Purity: Understanding Institutional Strategies to Insure Homogeneity," most of us, even in Rhetoric and Composition, "aren't prepared for working in bureaucracies. We chose this profession because we believe in the value of the classroom. The problem is that good teaching alone, no matter how well done, does not itself make institutions more democratic" (15). Decisions about curriculum at the local level often transcend the individual instructor

to include other stakeholders in the university such as students, administrators, and citizens in the local community. Without the support of institutions such as the CWPA providing backing and a rationale for critical teaching it is likely these methods will not take hold at the local level much less progress into a national movement. These methods require the support through institutional rhetorics such as the WPA OS to move beyond individual implementation by committed faculty into becoming a social movement to address social justice concerns in democracy.

The other issue with believing that these methods are already entrenched in our field and already being taught is the issue of pedagogification. I believe that many of the methods we use such as service learning and community engagement have undergone what Seth Pollack terms, “pedagogification” (230) where transformative teaching practices are translated into status quo pedagogical methods. Pollack argues that pedagogification is “the cultural reworking of an epistemologically transformative educational practice into a teaching method, stripping the initiative of its transformative content while emphasizing its utility as a tool for mastering the traditional knowledge base” (230). Pedagogification takes a transformative teaching practice which is meant to make knowledge disruptive and destabilizing and translates this into a passive method of knowledge consumption. In a sense, it is like taking critical teaching that Paulo Freire discusses and turning into a banking concept of education while still advocating its transformative potential. Pollack argues, for example, that service learning was originally intended to teach students to develop skills to combat poverty, but has been translated into a teaching method meant to allow students access to knowledge they will need in their careers thus reducing service learning to career training. In this way, transformative teaching practices like service learning and community

writing have been bleated of their power for social change and adapted into a method to maintain stability and standardization. Service learning has been transformed into a strategy of conservatism that Rice described earlier in this Chapter. It becomes little more than an internship, or another uncritical step in career training meant to prepare students for their roles in capitalism. Critical teaching practices such as service learning, in this way, become a normative function of power meant to prepare students for their role as workers instead of teaching students to interrogate how this career training can be antithetical to their interests as citizens in a democracy.

In order for transformative teaching practices to reach their full potential, we have to make preparing students for their role as citizens in a democracy a priority and this requires that we move civic literacy from objectives to outcomes through the implementation of a civic literacy plank predicated on rhetorical citizenship. Objectives describe what a faculty member will cover in a course and the methods they will use. They are typically handled on the local level and developed by individual programs and faculty. They tend to lack a cohesive connection to the larger curriculum and are not usually taught by other faculty. Outcomes, like those listed in the WPA OS, are typically detailed descriptions of what a student must be able to do at the conclusion of a course which are developed programmatically and assessed at the end of the course. This is the difference in a method or objective and an outcome. An outcome has cache within the institution because it is used to measure student success and is typically connected to larger state apparatuses like the Common Core, or in Texas, the Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) which requires that outcomes be taught, assessed, and reported as part of state funding. In order for civic literacy and critical teaching to be seriously taken up by faculty in Rhetoric and Composition,

we need to move these practices from methods to outcomes based on rhetorical citizenship. The best way to guarantee civic literacy and critical teaching are at the center of what we do as scholars is to develop a civic literacy plank to the WPA OS based on rhetorical citizenship. However, this begs the question, “What is rhetorical citizenship?”

Rhetorical Citizenship and the Civic Literacy Plank in the WPA OS

In the Introduction to their collection of essays entitled, *Trained Capacities: John Dewey, Rhetoric, and Democratic Practice*, Brian Jackson and Gregory Clark argue that a modern conception of democracy is not so much about political theory as generating the necessary conditions for the creation of a democratic culture. Democratic culture, “comprises the sum total of the values and attitudes as well as habits and behaviors that enable people to practice what amounts to responsible expression” (2). Jackson and Clark go on to argue, “Such a practice is inherently rhetorical, in the sense of requiring both assertion and response to be accountable to others with whom one is engaged” (2). Rhetoric forms the center of democratic culture because it provides the means to build community through the persuasive communication of values, knowledge, and beliefs, but also because it provides a method of social inquiry necessary to solve problems and deliberate on issues facing a public. Jackson and Clark state, “Persuasive communication is one of the most essential practices constituting a democratic culture—one in which individuals are expected to express themselves constructively within a community and at the same time judge rigorously the expressions of others on those same constructive criteria” (2). This sort of persuasive rhetoric of community building and deliberation is a form of communicative agency necessary for building rhetorical publics.

Communicative agency is the embodied ways of communicating as a citizen in a democracy. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, in “Agency: Promiscuous and Protean,” defines rhetorical agency as, “the capacity to act, that is, to have competence to speak or write in a way that will be recognized or heeded by others in one’s community” (3). Rhetorical competency in the communicative practices of a public is a requirement for entry in a public. When Jackson and Clark discuss capacities for participation in democracy it is this competency in rhetoric needed to develop agency that they refer to when using the term capacity. Communicative agency is a “function of individual dispositions, social contexts, and a rhetor’s ability to respond to those situations as they change over time and negotiate social standings related to gender, race, class, ethnicity, and national origin status” (Sowards 227). Raymie E. McKerrow, in “The Rhetorical Citizen: Enacting Agency,” extends this conception of rhetorical agency by arguing, “Agency, then, encompasses the complexity involved in any human interaction in which ideas are held in conflict” (240). McKerrow argues that that ability to recognize conflict and assert your take on the conflict is a sort of agency that is a prerequisite for participation in a democracy. However, all of these authors make similar points that communicative agency is predicated on the ability to use rhetorical speech acts to act in a democracy. They all agree that demonstrating rhetorical expertise is a requirement for participation in democracy and the public sphere because action is predicated on rhetorical interaction between individuals. Rhetorical expertise is a sort of specialized knowledge each human being must contain to be a citizen in a democracy in order to get things done.

John Dewey supported the importance of artful communication in his work on democracy. Dewey believed artful communication was the core component of building a

community and creating a public. As Jackson and Clark note about Dewey's work, "he imagined a culture of common values and attitudes, of shared habits and behaviors, which would enable individuals to engage constructively, together, in the rhetorical work of improving the conditions of living together—he called it the task of creative democracy" (3). John Dewey, in *Democracy and Education*, underscores the important role rhetorical communication plays in community building when he states, "Men [*sic*] live in a community in virtue of the things which they have in common; and communication is the way in which they come to possess things in common" (10). To Dewey, artful communication—or rhetoric—made coordination, collaboration, and cooperation possible.

Dewey, in *The Public and Its Problems*, defines this sort of artful communication as, "a subtle, delicate, vivid, and responsive art of communication" which must take "possession of the physical machinery of transmission and circulation, and breathe life into it" (24). When citizens are able to develop communicative agency and rhetorical skill then citizens can build communities, rhetoric becomes a dynamic, transformational power to do things in collaboration with other community members. When rhetoric becomes a *dynamis* democracy becomes a progressive means to improve citizen's lives because it becomes inherently ethical conception where citizen's practices and actions are geared toward fulfilling the lives of those in the community. Some might ask how we would we help students understand the need for social justice and to develop the work ethic necessary for social justice work?

Most students, in my experience, have been always been understanding of the need to give back or provide service to the community. Most students have experience with social justice work through their secondary schools, churches, and local nonprofits. The real

challenge is to provide them to opportunity to develop rhetorical skills in inquiry, information literacy, and argumentation in the context of a community setting. When given the opportunity to pursue social justice in a manner that fits their personal belief and self-conception as a citizen most students will display a commitment to social justice. Jackson and Clark argue that when we engage with other citizens rhetorically we learn “how to interpret, analyze, invent, and perform in dynamic social relationships that call forth ever more innovative responses to recurring situations” (7). This engagement leads us to develop what Aristotle termed, “*phronesis*” or the practical judgements that empower citizens to forecast possible consequence “based upon insight into the tendencies of actions to bring about certain results” (Johnstone 188). This aspect of *phronesis* is a sort of wisdom derived from learning and experience in practical matters. *Phronesis* leads to breakthroughs in thinking and creativity and enables the individual to discern and make good judgements about what is the right thing to do in a situation. *Phronesis* is a trained capacity in thinking and rhetoric.

Phronesis is a kind of virtue ethic that is action based and learned through experience. Students learn virtue through experiences that challenge their beliefs such as ideology, political opinions, and biases. However, *Phronesis* goes beyond understanding the determination of right and wrong, or into the ethics of blame—i.e. who caused poverty—because *Phronesis* teaches students that ethical situations are often complex and fraught with many agents and actors. Paulo Friere believed that liberation—a core component of critical consciousness—was best achieved through a transformative dialogue mixed with praxis. Praxis in this sense is reflection and action on the world in order to change it. As Ira Shor argues in *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*, “The responsibility

of the problem-posing teacher is to diversify subject matter and to use students' thought and speech as the base for developing critical understanding of personal experience, unequal conditions in society, and existing knowledge. In this democratic pedagogy, the teacher is not filling empty minds with official or unofficial knowledge but is posing knowledge in any form as a problem for mutual inquiry" (32-33). To teach a real sense of *Phronesis* one would need to develop a teaching practice based on some form of problem posing education that help students develop a strong sense of inquiry into problems and to question their relationship to the material conditions of existence. In order to truly develop *Phronesis* students would need to combine problem posing with a strong sense of praxis. This combination will allow them to determine what is socially just and apply their rhetorical skills toward these ends.

Dewey refers to this ability to perform rhetoric in social settings as trained capacities of control where citizens learn to control language to build social intelligence and social power, and then develop the means to direct this power toward the improvement of the community. John Dewey describes the power of rhetoric as the ability to, "enlarge and enlighten experience. It stimulates and enriches imagination; it creates responsibility for accuracy and vividness of statement and thought" (*Middle Works* 9). Jackson and Clark supplement this understanding of Dewey's conception of rhetoric as, "necessary for our growth as human beings, and practicing it gives us trained capacities just as much perhaps as learning it in formal schooling" (8). If we view rhetoric in this way it becomes intrinsically linked to the creation of citizenship in a democracy. If we follow this line of thinking to its logical Conclusion, rhetoric becomes inseparable from democracy and citizenship. So much so that there is a large section of scholars who refer to citizenship as the ability to use rhetoric

effectively in the service of democracy. This is conception of citizenship is referred to as rhetorical citizenship.

Robert Danisch, in his book *Building a Social Democracy: The Promise of Rhetorical Pragmatism*, defines rhetorical citizenship as, “the search for, and practice of, methods of communication capable of guiding public decision and judgment. If a democracy is to be a government of, for, and by the people, then it must allow citizens a voice in the affairs of state” (224). Danisch goes on to argue that we have a responsibility to cultivate rhetorical practices suited to our current contexts and situations. Citizens must collaborate to figure out solutions to problems facing their communities as part of their proper responsibilities as citizens. This collaboration requires communicative agency and rhetorical use of language so much that Danisch believes that rhetoric and citizenship are inherently connected, and argues

Contemporary conceptions of citizenship have been qualified in a number of different ways: social citizenship, multicultural citizenship, citizen-soldiers, or citizen-workers are just a few examples. Although these are useful elaborations of the concept of citizenship, they fail to recognize the importance of communication practices in grounding habits of citizenship. The earliest Ancient Greek model of citizen was so closely tied to speech acts that the word “rhetor” could be used as a place holder for citizen (37-38).

Christian Kock and Lisa Villadsen, in “Rhetorical Citizenship as a Conceptual Frame: What We Talk about When We Talk about Rhetorical Citizenship,” support this contention that rhetoric and citizenship are intrinsically linked. They argue that “citizenship should be

understood as rhetorical in the sense that important civic functions take place in deliberation among citizens, and that discourse is not prefatory to real action but is in many ways constitutive of civic engagement” (30). Kock and Villadsen go on to argue that the fullest, and most meaningful conception of rhetoric moves beyond a theory of mere persuasion into the social dimensions of rhetoric—rhetoric is used to build relationships, discuss problems, and propose solutions. Thomas Farrell, in “Practicing the Arts of Rhetoric: Tradition and Invention,” argues, “important civic qualities—such as civic friendship, a sense of social justice—are actively cultivated through excellence in rhetorical practices” (187). Kock and Villadsen, Farrell, and Danisch also conceive of rhetoric in similar terms to Kenneth Burke in that rhetorical persuasion cannot happen without identification. Citizens must understand the values, beliefs, and traditions of a public before they can communicate via rhetoric within that public. Rhetoric, in this conception, is a form of society building, and as such, is both constitutive and critical—it builds consensus but also functions as the method to change consensus. Rhetoric is used to make knowledge but also used as a method of conceptual reframing meant to change or alter knowledge as needed to fit new contexts.

The theory of rhetoric as means of conceptual reframing on the social level—not the idea of reframing I discussed earlier as a practice used by knowledge-intensive organizations to reframe an institutional rhetoric—develops out of the philosophy of Pragmatism and can be traced back to the work of John Dewey through the work of Cornel West. The idea of reframing developed out of John Dewey’s work *The Public and Its Problems*. Jim Webber, in his 2017 article, “Toward an Artful Critique of Reform: Responding to Standards, Assessment, and Machine Scoring,” argues that the concept of reframing stems from Dewey’s theory of meliorism. Webber defines meliorism as, “the work of improving a

situation despite limitations . . . particularly finding ways to improve the existence of those in difficult situations” (127). Webber goes on to argue that the concept of meliorism is important because it is inherently rhetorical and linguistic. Human beings are symbol using animals, as Burke argues, and as such we utilize communicative agency to solve problems and resolve conflicts arising in the public sphere. Paul Stob, in “Kenneth Burke, John Dewey, and the Pursuit of the Public,” supplements this contention by arguing, “Pragmatic criticism issues a call to alleviate the public’s problems through a reconstruction in language” (127.) Stob goes on to state that the task of the rhetorician is “crafting linguistic solutions to specific problems so that life can get better” through a reconstruction of “a specific thread in the discursive fabric that unites person to person in the public sphere” (241). Cornel West, in *The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism*, began the conversation on how conceptual reframing can be used as a rhetorical strategy for public policy debate. West argues, “Critics transform linguistic, social, cultural, and political traditions for the purpose of increasing the scope of individual development and democratic operations” (230). Cornel West, like John Dewey, believes the world can be made better through human effort, and rhetoric and communicative agency form this center of this belief.

This turn to rhetoric as the means to solve problems in a just and equitable manner emphasizes a belief in “the potential of people to exercise practical judgement and engage in public deliberation” (Danisch 230). Rhetorical citizenship, at its core, is dedicated to the ideal that citizens can develop phronesis and put this to use rhetorically in a democracy. This belief definitely carries the risk that citizens will often arrive at bad decisions, or that citizens will sometimes lack the capacity to deliberate effectively due to lack of training, intelligence, or care. The risk that rhetoric could be used negatively as propaganda is often used as an

argument to discredit rhetorical citizenship. Plato makes a similar argument via the ship's captain metaphor in *The Republic* as I outlined in the Introduction to this work. Plato argues that ruling requires specialized knowledge in philosophy and absolute power. Knowledge and power should be placed in the hands of an educated elite who are then entrusted to captain the ship of state, because the average citizen lack political expertise and practical wisdom needed to rule. However, if we are provided the opportunity to believe two things about people where one option is to believe the basest, most shallow belief that humans lack the ability to govern themselves due to a lack of intelligence and good judgement, and the other is the uplifting belief in the capacity of humans to be good shepherds who try to use reason and judge to their best of their abilities, I will always choose the latter conception because it embodies a generative belief in the human capacity for good. It is this uplifting belief in the human potential for good that drew me to John Dewey's work. I firmly believe that with proper education in rhetorical methods any citizen can become an active and engaged participant in democracy. The question becomes, "How do we provide citizens with the rhetorical training necessary to participate in democracy?"

To ensure that citizens have the rhetorical skills necessary we need to reframe First-Year Composition to include an emphasis on using rhetoric in the context of citizenship. First-Year Composition outcomes demonstrate a need to incorporate a more global perspective focused on preparing students for life in a democracy which teaches students to be agents of social change, advocates for social justice, and savvy users of rhetoric in public deliberation. The addition of the civic literacy plank to the WPA OS will provide the support and weight of an institutional rhetoric to the outcomes to ensure they are utilized by writing programs nationwide. This will also allow the field to conceptually reframe the WPA OS to

include outcomes dedicated to social justice and critical consciousness. The outcomes I propose in the civic literacy plank included in the Appendix of this Chapter are meant to be the starting point for a discussion on adding outcomes for civic literacy and critical consciousness to the WPA OS. I will discuss each outcome and explain how they could foster critical consciousness in students. In creating these outcomes, I sought to establish goals that asked students to think about their role in society from a personal, professional, and civic perspective, and to create goals that would help students learn how to situate themselves within each during first year composition.

There are two things I should mention before beginning an explication of the civic literacy plank. First, I realize that these outcomes would have to go through a rigorous process of vetting and approval like other revisions of the WPA OS. I do not assume that these would be simply inserted into the document without challenge. These outcomes are provided as a hypothetical example of civic literacy outcomes so that I can theorize what they might look like, what benefits they may hold, and to foreground a discussion of how John Dewey's work might serve as philosophy of composition geared toward meeting the outcomes of a civic literacy plank. Second, these civic literacy outcomes are not meant to be exhaustive examples of everything a student should know before entering into citizenship in a democracy. Much like the WPA OS, these outcomes also suffer from issues of knowledge intensity in that I cannot include everything I would like students to demonstrate some level of proficiency in before entering into citizenship. These outcomes were chosen because I think they represent a good starting point for discussion and emphasize skills I think important for students to practice rhetorical citizenship. It is important to remember that these outcomes are the beginning of a conversation and not the end of the conversation. I

hope these sample outcomes will spur productive discussions about how to address the needs of civic literacy in first year composition.

When developing these sample outcomes, I considered a variety of sources such as California State University-Monterey Bay's (CSUMB) "Upper Division Service Learning Outcomes," *The Association of American Colleges and Universities Guidelines for Civic Literacy*, and Quinsigamond Community College's (QCC) "Civic Literacy Learning Outcomes," to name only a few. I have cited the locations they were originally adapted from to make sure I provide credit to the original sources to avoid any questions about fair use. I have also modeled the civic literacy plank on the form and structure of the third, and most recent, version of the WPA OS which provides a heading, a rationale, four to six student outcomes, and three to four faculty expectations. However, I did not mention any specific rhetorical skills that were already mentioned in WPA OS 3.0 since I felt that would be redundant. The civic literacy plank would be geared toward providing students the opportunity to practice the rhetorical skills already contained in the document in the service of democracy outside the classroom. The most recent version of the WPA OS already has the rhetorical knowledge, critical thinking, reading, and composing, processes, and the knowledge of conventions outlined in great detail. Due to this I focused the document on issues related specifically to civic literacy and the use of rhetoric in the service of democracy. The civic literacy and critical consciousness plank can be found in the Appendix at the end of this chapter before the bibliography page.

As learning outcomes are indicators of success in an academic course or program, it is essential that our field provide a clear idea of what can be achieved by adding a civic

literacy component to the WPA OS. Learning outcomes give a clear idea to our stakeholders of what students are going to learn or achieve at the end of the first year writing sequence or course. These are not standards that provide precise measurements of achievement, but outcomes which are a generic type of result. These outcomes are meant to help students develop skills in critical literacy needed to improve the health of democracy. In his 2015 book, *Political Literacy in Composition and Rhetoric: Defending Academic Discourse against Postmodern Pluralism*, Donald Lazere argues, “The past few years have seen an outpouring of books and reports deploring Americans’ civic ignorance, with titles like *Just How Stupid Are We?*, *The Dumbest Generation*, *The Age of American Unreason*, and *Tuned Out: Why Americans Under 40 Don’t Follow the News*. This [Americans’ civic ignorance] is a problem that everyone seems to complain about but no one tries to solve through any coordinated, nationwide effort” (287). A brief examination of the state of democracy in America will demonstrate that democracy is under peril, and if we are serious about improving the state of democracy, there is no better way to illustrate this commitment than making it a disciplinary priority through the addition of a civic literacy plank in the WPA OS. The civic literacy plank seeks to affirm that rhetoric and writing have utility in democracy, and specialized training in real world contexts is required to learn to “do citizenship,” and provides the sort of coordinated effort to improve critical literacy that Lazere calls for in his book.

In the rationale to the civic literacy plank, I begin by adapting the definition of civic literacy from Thomas Ehrlich’s book sponsored by the *American Council of Education* entitled *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*. In this text, civic literacy is defined as “the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to participate in the civic life of

our communities” (VII). This definition was selected because I felt that a widely used definition that circulates with authority in civic literacy scholarship would add credibility to the document. This definition is widely accepted and used to define civic literacy in a variety of contexts. I believe this adds credibility to the rationale’s ethos due to its widespread use, but I also believe its ambiguity provides a wide amount of utility because faculty can define knowledge, motivation, skills, and values in a variety of ways. This allows for adaptability at the local level. Next, I establish the goal of the plank and its connection to First-Year Composition. I argue that students should learn to use rhetorical methods to act effectively in their roles as citizens in a democracy, and as such, students must learn not only about civic life, but how to develop rhetorical methods needed to develop solutions to problems they will face in their lives as citizens in a democracy. The goal of this is to, “focus less on what a particular utterance is like, or how effective it is, but more on how suited it is to contribute to constructive civic interaction” (Goggin 98). Jackson and Clark argue that, “Dewey wanted teachers to develop an active, pragmatic social consciousness in their students that would move them from awareness of the social situation in which they found themselves to their own self-motivated practices as agents endowed with new capacities to respond to those situations” (11). The goal of this outcome is teach students to adapt their rhetorical skills to social situations so that they can focus their newly found social powers on solving real world problems to improve the publics they are serving. This awareness of the problems facing their community will allow them to develop a strong sense of social responsibility as they learn to address these challenges.

I then argue that we have a responsibility to help students practice rhetorical knowledge and skills by “engaging with and responding to civic, social, environmental and

economic challenges at local, national and global levels” (Lumina 27). This reflects Dewey’s stance that education is not an end unto itself but the opportunity for students to develop the trained capacities necessary to become active participants in a democracy, and to help them become “contributors to the development of the larger societies to which they belong” (Jackson and Clark 12). Dewey’s stance on education is dedicated to social intelligence and power because he believed the ability to think and act were inherently communal because students learn best when engaging in dialogic acts of inquiry. As Dewey states, “schooling should prompt students to analyze situations, make assumptions, and then experiment with some kind of consequent action—such as making an argument to others” (*Middle Works* 86). This continual reconstruction of experience will allow students the practice necessary to sharpen their skills in a manner that allows real world experience in a low risk environment. This practice would eventually teach students to master “a capacity to act in cooperation with others in effective and influential ways” (*Later Works* 337). This experiential learning is the core component of civic literacy geared toward students moving education outside of the classroom.

The goal of the rationale is to offer a compelling definition of civic literacy, and then to provide a set of reasons and a logical basis for why civic literacy is important in First-Year Composition. This Introduction sets the context and exigency for the outcomes that follow. Each outcome is worded to emphasize the skills or knowledge each student should demonstrate at some level of proficiency before exiting FYC. The rationale also sets the expectation that a stated goal of civic literacy is critical consciousness—or social consciousness in Dewey’s terms—that asks students to examine issues of power, privilege, oppression, and systemic inequity as a core requirement of First-Year Composition. This

aim was argued for in the 90s but was not adopted as a universal aim at the time. For example, Maxine Hairston assailed this position in her 1992 article, “Diversity, Ideology, and Teaching Writing.” In that article she attacked ideological teaching as a new model of writing instruction that “required writing courses as vehicles for social reform rather than as student-centered workshops designed to build students' confidence and competence as writers” (180). She goes on to argue—erroneously—that this conception of writing is a vision of writing that is patronizing because it assumes that students do not have anything to say so instructors must give them something to say. Her argument not so subtly implies that the goal of this pedagogy is indoctrination into radicalism as if to say that students do not really care for social reform so writing teachers are telling them what to care about or what to write about. She goes on to assail English departments as bastions of leftism in America and cites several examples of critical pedagogy from recent publications as evidence of the growth of ideological teaching. Despite the bluster in this argument, Hairston makes a valid core point: Writing should be about Writing. The content of the course should focus on teaching students to write, and that writing is a critical step in a student’s intellectual development. I think, at the time, Hairston’s attitude was the prevalent attitude amongst the field and this idea that FYC should be geared toward a focus on student writing won out at the time.

However, I think times have changed and this is no longer the consensus of many scholars—especially younger scholars who are now entering the field. I think the rise is decolonial work that seeks overturn white supremacy, the expansion of critical race theory in our journals, and an increasing focus on other elements of radical teaching related to race, gender, and disability has increased at the Conference on College Composition and

Communication and the Rhetoric Society of America Conference. I think a few things contribute to the rise of ideological teaching in our field that makes my argument for civic literacy timely. First, I believe the expansion of de-colonial work and critical race theory predicated on raising critical consciousness is an issue of ideological dissemination. In the Introduction to this dissertation, I discussed Ronald Head's theory of dissemination where he argues that it takes ten to fifteen years to see the effects of educational philosophy changes in higher education. For example, he argued that institutional effectiveness work at the national level took fifteen years to filter down to the university level as a best practice. I think the dissemination of new knowledge works in a similar way. Our field saw critical pedagogy proposed—and shot down—in the period roughly between 1985 and 1995. This educational philosophy kept circulating in the field, and re-emerged fifteen years later conceptually re-framed in pedagogical methods such as critical race theory and cultural rhetorics. These two pedagogies are not the only pedagogies that have a foundation in critical pedagogy, but are the two most dominant pedagogies in the field at the moment.

Noah de Lissovoy argues that cultural rhetorics are a “pedagogical orientation of lovingness,” which distinguishes itself from (white) progressive “caring” by “centering an awareness of cultural difference while developing an enlarged solidarity that reaches beyond the local and the nation to participate in the construction of a global community” (288). Cultural rhetorics, like any pedagogical orientation, can be taught many ways, but this orientation requires a dedication to critical theory and the analysis of how language is used to shape the conception of difference. It also is predicated on using the skills learned in the writing classroom toward social justice goals in the real world. Cultural rhetorics also demonstrates a strong dedication to the work of decolonizing the academy and the public

sphere. Nelson Maldonado-Torres argues, “I understand Decolonial rhetoric as more than a paradigm to quash colonialism; instead, I see it as an imperative to re-accent rhetoric and open the possibilities (even if only temporary) for us to generate “a world in which many worlds can fit” (230). This idea of creating a world in which many worlds can fit reflects the ways in which Decolonial work in cultural rhetorics is predicated on using rhetoric in the real world to change language practices. Cultural rhetorics are predicated on examining real world implications of language use, and have created a *kairos* within our field that challenges us to contest oppressive and racist language practices outside the university. This paradigm has created an exigence that takes FYC beyond the theoretical into the practical, or to move the focus of study beyond the classroom.

The second reason I believe that there is an exigence for teaching democratic methods is that the political climate in American has dramatically changed over the last ten years to make the rhetorical situation more amendable to the rhetoric of civic engagement, and the work of preparing students for life in a democracy. Over the last ten years we have seen a dramatic rise in so called “alt right rhetoric” and white supremacy rhetoric. We have seen the rise of “fake news” on social media that has created a call to teach more rigorous forms of informational literacy, to teach students the skills in communication and critical thinking necessary to engage in their lives as citizens, and, frankly, a growing call to teach students the skills necessary to combat the resurgence of white supremacy in America. There is a need to teach students to situate themselves within the political debate and to take an active role in figuring out where they intersect with a lot of the major political arguments in American politics, and to do so critically so that they can be savvy evaluators of information,

and to develop the skills necessary to utilize communicative agency in the service of democracy.

The rationale for civic engagement situates students at the intersection of the identities they embody to develop social self-awareness, social responsibility, social justice, and multicultural community engagement. As Seth Pollack argues,

The deep work of civic engagement is about content and knowledge. It is about transformation of the expected knowledge, skills, and attitudes of graduates. Critical Civic Literacy recognizes that our new globalized, technologized, and highly unequal world requires community members to possess a new set of civic skills so that they are sensitive to diversity, aware of the role of power relations, and skilled at intercultural communication (232).

Students in a democracy will need to practice the rhetorical skills necessary to create and interact in a diverse public sphere, and will need to use communicative agency to create a diverse society committed to more equitable workplaces, communities and social institutions. This rationale ends by stating our responsibility to help students develop the specialized knowledge they need through experiential learning by engaging with and responding to civic, social, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and global levels.

Below, I offer five example outcomes for civic literacy in FYC. The first two outcomes are adapted from the CSUMB upper division learning outcomes developed by Seth Pollack. Dr. Seth Pollack is Professor of Service Learning, and the founding faculty director of the Service Learning Institute at California State University, Monterey Bay. As Pollack is

an authority on civic literacy, and considered one of the leading voices in civic literacy, I felt his outcomes were a good starting place to develop my own because of the credibility his contribution would provide would outweigh my own credibility. This would require some alteration to adapt these FYC because these outcomes are geared to upper division courses. They would need to be narrowed in scope and reoriented to fit the rhetorical goals of FYC. However, most students come to FYC on a career path. This may not be the path they end of up on, but they have to declare a major within the first 18 hours of credit according to federal guidelines. Most students may not have a solid understanding of their chose career field, but this civic literacy work can help students make the determination early whether their chose career field is a fit for their burgeoning sense of identity.

The first outcome argues that through civic literacy learning in FYC students should deepen an understanding and analysis of the social, cultural, and civic aspects of their personal and professional identities (CSUMB Upper Division Civic Literacy Outcomes). The second outcome asks students to participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both life enriching and beneficial to the community outside the classroom to discover how rhetoric is used to solve problems outside of the university (CSUMB Upper Division Civic Literacy Outcomes). The third outcome asks students to learn to engage in the community outside of the university for the purpose of practicing these skills in real world situations in experiential learning (Pollack Civic Literacy across the Curriculum). These three outcomes ask students to situate themselves within a rhetorical public and to discover problems facing this public. Each public will have its own conceptions of knowledge, beliefs, and values. It is important that students immerse themselves within the community to understand the public knowledge of the rhetorical public they are situated within.

The first three outcomes focus on community engagement and social consciousness. Community engagement is an essential aspect of rhetorical citizenship, and a core tenet of John Dewey's philosophy of democracy and education. The goal of these outcomes is to ensure students learn how to enter a rhetorical public, evaluate the knowledge and conventions of a public, and learn to use rhetoric to make arguments and communicate with this public. The objective is to teach students how to make and access public knowledge. Lloyd Bitzer argues public knowledge is, "a kind of knowledge needful to public life and actually present somewhat to all who dwell within a community . . . It may be regarded as a fund of truths, principles, and values which could only characterize a public" (68). Students will need to use rhetoric as a method of inquiry and communication to learn about the problems facing the community, and to learn how to access the funds of truths the community holds so they can make connections with the members of this public, because they will need to eventually use these "funds of truth" to deliberate on the issue with the members, and persuade them to courses of action that may solve the problem. David Zarefsky, in "Is Rhetorical Criticism Subversive of Democracy," argues that rhetorical citizenship requires, "participants in deliberation try out their stories on one another, exchanging them and comparing others' stories with their own" (37). This exchanging of stories allows the requisite identification necessary to engage in community building, and problem solving. Community in this is flexible. It can be the local community outside the campus where students provide service needed to help underserved population would likely be the most common kind of community. Eventually, the goal of the outcome is to help students develop mental schemas necessary to use rhetoric to build connections to a rhetorical public so they can solve problems facing the rhetorical public they choose to

engage. Flower and Hayes argue, “Problem solving explores the wide array of mental procedures people use to process information in order to achieve their goals” (450). Simply put, people solve problems using simple strategies derived from cognitive abilities, “from inventing a mouse trap to designing a course syllabus or writing a sonnet. Articulating our own ideas and intentions to someone else—getting the right words on paper—draws on a staggering array of mental gymnastics, from simply generating language to highly sophisticated concept formation (Flower and Hayes 450).

In addition, the classroom would utilize problem posing education where students learn to define, personalize, and discuss alternatives to the problem. Problem-posing investigates on deeper level any issue or problem, exploring the degree of its social and personal connections. Problem-posing “focuses on power relations in the classroom, in the institution, in the formation of standard canons of knowledge, and in society at large” (Shor 31). At its core, problem posing education challenges grand narratives and offers students the opportunity to authenticate their life experiences, cultures, and knowledge. According to Shor, “Problem-posing is dynamic, participatory, and empowering” (33). Students need to practice the “mental gymnastics” necessary to solve problems in a democracy so it is important to situate themselves within a rhetorical public so that they can begin sharpening these skills with experiential learning and concrete practice. They have to learn to rigorously interrogate all forms of accepted knowledge. The goal of the first three outcomes is to move students outside of the classroom and into the public sphere so that they can gain experiential knowledge working with groups to solve problems via a service learning assignment or sequence.

One of the reasons the first three outcomes are important is that they immediately ask the student to engage the community outside the classroom. While this may be difficult logistically, it is important that students have to have the opportunity to practice rhetorical citizenship through service learning or civic engagement in the field outside the classroom. You would manage potential faculty resistance to this initiative by creating buy-in through a collaborative approach to course design and participation. Allowing faculty and staff to have a voice in program design builds trust and a stake in ownership of the project. Allowing all faculty to have input can minimize or negate resistance. However, there will always be those faculty and staff that maintain sense of cynicism about the ability of education to be truly transformative, but in my experience, if you can get buy in from other faculty who believe in the program and the student's ability to succeed then the cynics and doubters can be managed with the energy and enthusiasm of the team. Student cynicism can often be managed with energy and enthusiasm, as well.

Peter Dahlgren, in "Online Civic Participation, Discourse Analysis and Rhetorical Citizenship," claims that civic cynicism is a huge barrier to civic engagement. He argues, "in the face of financial and social crises; many citizens feel political elites subordinate the public interest for private gain, and that governments are inefficient . . . The consequence of this discontent have led to significant declines in participation in politics on many fronts" (259). Dewey's dedication to participatory democracy grew out of a need to combat such cynicism. Dewey believed that students would develop social power through practice with experiential learning because he believed that once students had success solving problems or combating issues in the real world they would develop confidence to tackle other problems. Dewey had a deep respect for ordinary citizen's ability to use their intellectual and rhetorical

power in the service of democracy. As Harry Chatten Boyte argues in, “A Different Kind of Politics: John Dewey and the Meaning of Citizenship in the 21st Century,” Dewey “advanced conceptions of situated inquiry and the social nature of knowledge that challenges contemporary academic detachment. He held a view of knowledge production as a democratic power resource that suggested a democracy of abundance, not scarcity” (3). Students often come to college with unique experiences and requisite knowledge needed to be productive citizens in a democracy, however, they simply have not had the opportunity to develop these powers or put them to use in a civic context. These first three outcomes are meant to provide them the opportunity to practice these skills and put them to use in real world contexts.

The last two outcomes ask students to deepen understanding of the social responsibility of citizens to analyze how civic activity and rhetorical citizenship can contribute to greater long-term societal well-being (QCC Civic Literacy Student Learning Outcomes), and to evaluate the actions of professionals and institutions in their field to analyze how language and power function in their profession to foster equity and inequity. Pollack argues, “The civic world becomes an important focus of study and engagement” (236) because “democratic knowledge and capabilities also are honed through hands-on, face-to-face, active engagement in the midst of differing perspectives about how to address common problems that affect the wellbeing of the nation and the world” (A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future). A core component of civic literacy is to provide students with the opportunity to learn more about social issues and their root causes which will ask them to critically reflect on their values and beliefs, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and develop a more nuanced understanding of diverse

cultures and communities. This means immersing students in what Dahlgren refers to as “civic cultures” which are akin to what Bitzer refers to as public knowledge. Civic cultures are “taken-for-granted resources that need to be available to citizens in their everyday lives; they have to do with knowledge, democratic values, social trust, communicative practices and skills, and civic identities” (262). Learning to understand civic cultures will provide students with the opportunity to see how social issues and problems have developed historically, and through this understanding of their historical development, create solutions to the problems that will fit the civic culture of a specific community. Teaching students to navigate civic cultures will require that they learn to navigate ambiguity so they learn to be open to change. The public sphere is complex, and problems will likely have more than one cause and one solution, so it is important for students to learn to wrestle with complexity and ambiguity so they learn to negotiate and work through their own confusion and frustration.

A further aim will require students to analyze the social responsibility of citizens to help them develop what Dewey termed, “social intelligence” which is defined as, “the power of observing and comprehending social situations” (*Democracy and Education* 75). The outcome related to social intelligence asks teachers to develop an active, pragmatic social consciousness in their students that will move them to a deeper understanding of how social forces come together to affect citizens. It is often said that critical consciousness in students would have them be able to demonstrate, on some level, the ability to intervene in reality in order to change it. However, this does not mean they need to be able to solve the world’s problems, but only to demonstrate some ability to offer better arguments in the face of oppression, or to better understand how structures of power function to alienate, exclude, or oppress people, and to use rhetoric to resist these power functions. This could simply mean

being able to argue more logically in message boards or social media. However, I think experiential learning outside the class will also allow students to examine how the choices that institutions in their career field make affect society and its wellbeing.

To develop social intelligence, students will examine the discourse used in their chosen field to analyze how language can create unequal distributions of power. The goal of the last two outcomes is to engage students in analyses of how cultural practices and institutions (including schools and businesses) replicate certain power dynamics and social hierarchies. Social intelligence is akin to critical consciousness in that it “entails judgements about what knowledge counts, legitimates specific social relations, defines agency in particular ways, and always presupposes a particular notion of the future” (Giroux 6). The only way to ensure students and teachers become critical agents is if they begin to interrogate commonsense assumptions about the nature of legitimate knowledge, social relations, and ideologies (Giroux 6) to interrogate assumptions about knowledge, social relations, and ideologies students need to move beyond the classroom and into the public sphere. The goal of this exercise is to allow students to apply critical thinking skills in real world situations to examine their current conditions, develop a deeper understanding about their concrete reality, and devise, implement, and evaluate solutions to problems facing their chosen community. This will allow students to develop skills in the areas of communication, collaboration, and leadership to empower them to further civic engagement. Critical thinking, or the ability to analyze one’s own thinking to improve this thinking in the face of confusion or misunderstanding, is an important aspect of helping students develop critical consciousness through civic literacy, and an important step in the developmental of social power through the trained capacities of control I discussed earlier.

The last aspect of the civic literacy plank provides some expectations of faculty in relation to these outcomes. Each of the outcomes are designed to instruct faculty on the four most important ideas related to civic literacy. First, the civic literacy plank asks faculty to create opportunities for the use of critical thinking and problem solving skills in civic opportunities outside of the classroom. John Dewey believed that good education should have both a societal purpose and purpose for the individual student. For civic literacy to function, the faculty will have to create a course that aligns a civic purpose to the goals and interests of the students. The addition of civic learning within an FYC course and with the community must not only serve the community and enhance student academic learning in the course, but also directly and intentionally prepare students for active civic participation in a diverse democratic society. Faculty are responsible for providing students with experiences that are immediately valuable and which better enable the students to contribute to society. This also aligns with the second faculty expectation to develop projects that align the goals of learning as preparation for personal, professional, and civic life outside of the college or university. Dewey believed that the public was “democratically conceived as a network of individuals living and working together with the potential for political activity as one of many cooperative social practices in which they find themselves engaged” (Jackson and Clark 11). In order for students to be capable citizens it is essential that faculty provide students opportunities to do experiential learning related to civic needs and issues.

It is important for faculty to create a course that fosters a sense of democracy as a network of individuals learning and working together to solve problems and communities. As William Keith and Robert Danisch in, “Dewey on Science, Deliberation, and the Sociology of Rhetoric,” argue, “Dewey’s philosophy of democracy was participatory through and

through. It required an involved community of inquirers capable of reflective thought regarding pressing problems and collectively aimed to improve difficult conditions” (27). Students need an opportunity to practice the tenets of rhetorical citizenship which seeks to foster robust, honest, frank, and constructive dialogue and deliberation to advance the public interest as outlined in the outcomes for civic literacy. Dewey believed in social democracy, and as such, believed that faculty should provide the opportunity for students to develop appropriate and timely communicative acts that have the potential to guide public deliberation and practical judgement. Communication, in Dewey’s sense, should also provide students opportunities to examine the ways that “social structures, institutions, and forms of individual agency are both guided and constituted by communicative practices” (Keith and Danisch 28). This conception of rhetoric requires that faculty teach students to study the role of language, power, and knowledge in the construction of oppression and privilege as the last expectation outlines.

The goal of this civic literacy plank is to bring civic literacy and critical consciousness to the forefront of composition studies. Critical literacy is important to the survival of democracy in the Twenty-First Century as right wing, anti-democratic forces seek to undermine and destabilize the institution of democracy both in America and abroad. It is my contention that adding a civic literacy plank to an institutional rhetoric such as the WPA OS will provide the necessary push to turn civic literacy into a social movement meant to reinvigorate American democracy, and provide the movement with the institutional support needed to move civic literacy and critical consciousness from methods to outcomes. This requires conceptual reframing of the WPA OS so that civic literacy is reclassified from method to outcome. For academic disciplines such as Rhetoric and Composition to remain

viable we must conceptually reframe knowledge and practices so that they are attenuated to student learning needed in the Twenty-First Century. This Chapter provides a deeper analysis of how civic literacy can be integrated into FYC, examines how the theory of organizational communication known as an institutional rhetoric can contribute to our understanding of how knowledge-intensive organizations articulate and disseminate knowledge, and provides a synopsis of what the study of institutional rhetorics can contribute to our field.

Conclusion

This Chapter had three essential tasks. First, I sought to outline the theory of conceptual reframing in institutional rhetorics. Second, I sought to establish a theory of rhetorical citizenship, and connect this work to John Dewey's conception of democracy and communication. Third, I laid out a theory for a civic literacy plank based on rhetorical citizenship and John Dewey's theory of participatory democracy. The goal of this Chapter was to theorize how we can put the concepts of civic literacy into practice in First-Year Composition to theorize how Dewey's theory of participatory democracy, and the concept of rhetorical citizenship can contribute to the field of Rhetoric and Composition.

In the first part of this Chapter, I reiterated the concept of institutional rhetorics developed in Chapter 3, and extended this conception of institutional rhetorics to include the concept of conceptual reframing. Conceptual reframing is an important contribution to the theory of rhetoric because it brings aspects of organizational rhetoric not studied widely in our field into focus to examine the contribution this subset of organizational communication might contribute to the study of rhetoric. How knowledge is articulated in our field—the

continuous process of making knowledge explicit and relevant to our stakeholders—is an important contribution to the field of Rhetoric and Composition. To be more specific, the goal of this analysis was to examine how conceptually reframing the WPA OS to include a civic literacy plank might allow the field of Rhetoric and Composition to bring civic literacy and critical consciousness into focus as a viable outcome for First-Year Composition. It is my contention that students in composition need specialized training in democratic methods to develop the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to engage in participatory democracy in the twenty-first century. The development of an informed, effective, and intelligent citizenry is vital to the long term health of democracy in America (and abroad). If citizens in America do not develop a well-reasoned and intrinsic desire to uphold the fundamental principles of civic engagement, then democracy in America cannot be sustained long term. The civic literacy plank is my attempt to make the case that First-Year Composition can and should take up the call for civic literacy and ask for the support of civic education.

The second goal of this Chapter was to outline the concept of rhetorical citizenship as the basis for a civic literacy plank in the WPA OS in support of what Jackson and Clark term, “democratic culture.” Jackson and Clark argue, “Democracy extends well beyond government systems to include the prior and fundamental work of ensuring that adults are free to chime in, to join the conversation on how they should arrange their lives together” (2). Democratic culture encapsulates all the habits, behaviors, values, and knowledge that allow people to practice participatory democracy. John Dewey held that artful and meaningful communication between citizens was the basis for democracy, and as such, rhetoric plays a formative and critical role democracy. Rhetoric is used to both create and critique

democracy. As Kock and Villadsen argue, “rhetorical citizenship as a conceptual frame emphasizes the fact that laws, rights, and material conditions are not the only constituents of citizenship; discourse broadly conceived among citizens (in other words: rhetoric in society) is arguably just as important” (13). In this conception, citizenship involves not only a citizen’s rights or privileges as granted by laws but also a citizen’s ability to use rhetoric toward the accomplishment of goals in the civic arena. In rhetorical citizenship, the “functioning of society depends not only on the justice of its institutions or constitutions, but also on the virtues, identities, and practices of its citizens, including their ability to cooperate, deliberate, and feel solidarity” (Kock and Villadsen 14) with those who belong to different groups with contrasting and divergent ideologies.

The goal of the civic literacy plank is to provide the grounds to establish rhetorical methods as an important aspect of civic literacy (and vice versa), and to make sure that students in FYC are taught the requisite skills needed to become active rhetorical citizens capable of using artful communication to build communities, relationships, and solidarity with other citizens. The civic literacy plank is also an important step toward making civic literacy and critical consciousness an essential outcome for FYC. Haridimos Tsoukas argues that institutional rhetorics’ most essential function is to articulate the knowledge made in knowledge-intensive organizations so that this knowledge can be made explicit and relevant. This articulation of knowledge through institutional rhetorics is extremely important because institutional rhetorics carry the weight of proclamations made with the authority of an institution. Adding the civic literacy plank to our core institutional rhetoric in writing program administration is no small thing. The addition of civic literacy articulates to our field that this knowledge has reached the status of priority and can no longer be ignored.

Adding it as an outcome means that each student who enters FYC would have to have some experience or training in using rhetorical methods to foster civic engagement. Since rhetorical citizenship is predicated on learning the fundamental principles of rhetoric these outcomes would need to work in conjunction with the outcomes already included in the WPA OS. Ideally, a FYC course based on civic literacy would have a commensurate amount of writing as a current FYC course that incorporates the existing outcomes, but would at the very least include a major project dedicated to field work and ethnography.

Ideally, this assignment would be geared so a student can actually practice rhetorical skills in the community. In this assignment, a student would select a problem in their community, do field research to collect information, produce materials such as pamphlets, flyers, etc. as well as more rigorous forms of writing such as an argumentative essay to meant to persuade and audience to adopt the solution they think solves a problem facing this community. Students could work in groups to approach this project, share resources, and provide support. Obviously, we would not be asking students to solve social issues like poverty, but I think students can learn to address issues of racism, poverty, or other social issues on the local level. For example, at Lone Star College all ENGL 1301 students currently do a large field project in conjunction with our center for civic engagement. We are a large urban community college with five campuses across our district that service 99,000 students a year. We are the second largest community college in America. Each campus gives a faculty member in English a two course release to facilitate the large service-learning project on each campus and direct the center for civic engagement. Faculty members typically rotate this assignment on a two-year basis though some faculty enjoy the work and tend to hold on to the role because they find working with students in the field rewarding.

In addition to the two course release each faculty member who takes on the role of directing the center for civic engagement and the service learning project receives a part time administrative assistant and two student workers per academic year. This faculty member works with local non-profit groups to facilitate our civic engagement project each student completes in ENGL 1301. In total, we are able to facilitate the large scale civic engagement project for 99,000 students for less than \$20,000 per campus. We raise most of these funds through our Lone Star College Foundation, but find it is not difficult to locate these funds through our E&G (Education and General Revenue) funds. Our administration feels that service to the community is an essential portion of the community college mission so we make it a priority and we see the rewards that this engagement brings faculty, students, and the community. For example, in this academic year our students have developed an initiative that raised \$4500 dollars for a local women's shelter through a V-Week initiative. Our students in the fall 2018 cohort planned, coordinated, and executed a month-long campaign to raise awareness for sexual violence against women in February of the following semester. This V Week initiative included a student-led production of "the Vagina Monologues" on campus, several talks by local and national experts on sexual violence, and several student led fundraising campaigns to collect donations for the local Montgomery County women's shelter. This event is the type of civic literacy project that can be truly transformative for students and faculty. As you can see, through a little planning and alignment of campus and community resources, this type of large scale project can be undertaken in a way that is affordable, logistically sound, and beneficial.

Civic literacy would no longer be an issue left to the individual instructor as a pedagogical method, but would be transformed into a true knowledge-making enterprise

where students could learn to be participants in a vibrant, exciting form of participatory democracy where they learn to develop the social intelligence and social power necessary to become influential agents of social change. Rhetoric, given this status, could once again become a *dynamis* in civic affairs and help students build a more equitable, just society predicated on social justice.

In the Conclusion of this dissertation, I will complete this work by doing two things. First, I will establish a conception of democracy as essentially rhetorical. I will develop a full examination of how rhetoric can be used to revitalize democracy through civic engagement. Second, I will examine in detail John Dewey's theory of democracy, and make an argument as to how his theory of "social science" can be used as a philosophy of composition to teach a conception of civic engagement rooted in both rhetorical citizenship and participatory democracy that when combined forms what Robert Danisch terms "social democracy." Danisch argues social democracy, "calls upon men and women to build communities in which opportunities and resources are available to every person to realize their full potential through participation in political and social life" (29). This notion of social democracy claims, "The role of communication in constructing, maintaining, and altering social organization, and functions as a way of showing how social organization conditions the possibility of human agency" (29). As I argued earlier in this Chapter, Dewey fundamentally believed that democratic participation rested on trained capacities in empathy and *phronesis* (practical judgment). This empathy and *phronesis* can be transformative if the proper conditions are furnished for citizens. Dewey's theory of social science is meant to develop a student's social intelligence and social power through rigorous application of methods of inquiry. This rigorous inquiry forms the basis of democratic culture necessary to

create a social democracy. In many ways, rhetoric and inquiry can be seen as a version of Plato's concept of the *khôra* or the space which allows forms to come into being. In Plato's conception of the *khôra*, it functions like a womb where concepts shift from idea to reality, or where the forms are geminated and shaped. In this conception, rhetoric and inquiry are used to create a democratic culture which serves as a sort of *khôra* where citizens speak social democracy into existence. In the Conclusion to this work, I will explore the ways that rhetoric and inquiry function in a democracy to form a more meaningful conception of citizenship predicated on rhetorical acts used to initiate social change.

Chapter 5: Democracy as Essentially Rhetorical; Rhetoric as Lifeblood of Democracy

Introduction to the Conclusion

In the previous Chapters of this dissertation, I built an argument that there is a civic literacy crisis in America that threatens democracy and civic life, and studied the field of Rhetoric and Composition's commitment to civic literacy, rhetorical citizenship, and democracy. In order to address this crisis, I have taken up the argument that scholars such as Donald Lazere, Barbara Jacoby and others have put forth that First-Year Composition (FYC) is uniquely situated within the academy to take on the role of teaching civic literacy to college students as a core component of the general education curriculum at institutions of higher education. This dissertation argues that civic literacy requires specialized knowledge in rhetorical methods developed to teach students how to "do rhetorical citizenship" given the complexity of modern democracy. The knowledge developed over the last fifty years in the field of Rhetoric and Composition related to the teaching of rhetoric and writing uniquely situates our field to take on the task of teaching the knowledge and skills necessary for students to participate in rhetorical citizenship.

This dissertation argues rhetorical citizenship is an underdeveloped pedagogical method needed to teach skills in civic literacy necessary to function as citizens in a democracy. This dissertation also explored what John Dewey's theory of participatory rhetoric has to offer the field of Rhetoric and Composition in terms of understanding rhetoric's role in a post-modern technological democracy, and its possible benefits to the concept of rhetorical citizenship. This work also proposed ways the field could incorporate his theory of experiential learning through civic literacy as a core component of our Writing Program Outcomes Statement (WPA OS) so to address the growing civic literacy crisis in

America. Each of the Chapters in this work has built toward a goal of examining how the field of Rhetoric and Composition conceptualize our work in the civic arena to prepare students for life in a democracy, and how John Dewey's theory of democracy can help us better understand how to use rhetoric—or artful communication meant to move citizens to action in Dewey's terms—toward the goals of building publics, and using inquiry to solve problems. This work also explored the contributions that rhetorical citizenship can make to the teaching of rhetoric in the Twenty-First Century.

Overall, I believe that this dissertation makes three important and original contributions to the field of Rhetoric and Composition. First, this dissertation adapts the concept of institutional rhetorics from the field of organizational communication to examine how institutional knowledge is developed and transmitted via rhetorical documents such as the WPA OS. Second, this dissertation examines how these institutional rhetorics can be used to manage knowledge-intensity to control the development of knowledge and stabilize (or destabilize) accepted forms of knowledge. Lastly, this dissertation proposes a large scale theoretical shift in the teaching of FYC to incorporate methods of civic literacy predicated on rhetorical citizenship, and proposes sample outcomes that would radically realign the focus of FYC from teaching methods of composition toward a focus on teaching students to use the skills learned from these methods of composition toward the betterment of democracy in America. I believe the study of how knowledge-intensive organizations manage knowledge intensity in institutional rhetorics provides a new and important lens for examining the ways that knowledge is managed and transmitted in our professional organizations. More importantly, the study of institutional rhetoric provides another way to evaluate the

knowledge and practices we value, and those we do not because they are excluded from our institutional rhetorics for rhetorical reasons.

The first important and original contribution to the field is the adaptation of institutional rhetorics to examine how knowledge is developed and transmitted in knowledge-intensive organizations such as professional organizations like the CWPA. This work proffers that knowledge-intensive organizations develop regularized and standardized genres of rhetoric to communicate knowledge, define boundaries of knowledge, and manage knowledge intensity. To construct institutional rhetorics knowledge-intensive organizations must develop intra-organizational processes to develop and shape the knowledge transmitted in institutional rhetorics. As part of this work, I narrated the historical development of the knowledge constructed in three versions of the WPA OS, and explored the ways that the knowledge contained in the WPA OS was developed, approved, and communicated. In order to be implemented the civic literacy plank would have to the same process that other revisions have went through such as stake holder meetings, roundtable discussion, feedback at CCCCs and other national conferences, etc. This work conducted a rigorous explication of the knowledge contained within one dominant form of institutional rhetoric to examine the knowledge and values contained within the document. Ultimately, I argued in Chapter 3 that our current values tend to trend toward conservative outcomes meant to maintain the status quo at the expense of more radical outcomes related to critical consciousness and social justice that might teach students the skills necessary to think critically about social action so that students can put rhetoric to work in service of social justice.

The second and original contribution related to institutional rhetorics extends the first original contribution to the field by examining how these institutional rhetorics can be used

to manage knowledge-intensity to control the development of knowledge and stabilize (or destabilize) accepted forms of knowledge. This work also explored the WPA OS to examine how managing knowledge intensity, or the amount of knowledge that can be developed and transmitted in one document, is used to manage values and ideological positions related to best practices for First-Year Composition. Chapter 3 of this dissertation explored the ways that new knowledge developed within the field, and how each version of the WPA OS was adapted to assimilate and regularize this new knowledge. This dissertation traced the history of the development of the various incarnations of the WPA OS to examine what our field has valued in the best practices and student outcomes in FYC. Ultimately, this dissertation argues institutional rhetoric, such as policy or position statements for example, allows an organization with competing voices and ideologies to speak with a single voice to communicate disciplinary knowledge, manage knowledge-intensity, and set boundaries as to what counts as knowledge in our field. This dissertation then used the theory of conceptual reframing to explore how our field could incorporate new knowledge related to civic literacy into the WPA OS to reorient FYC to better prepare students for life in a democracy. . Conceptual reframing means, “reclassifying an object [of knowledge], or at least shifting emphasis from one class of knowledge to another, so that a new view of it emerges” (Tsoukas 7). For example, if workers were to seize the means of production to implement a radical reorientation of the means and modes of production in society then they would need to conceptually reframe the institutional rhetorics that are used to communicate institutional knowledge about productive forces—or the human labor power and available knowledge given the level of technology in the means of production. This is a way that an institution could express radical positions via an institutional rhetoric.

The third original and significant contribution this dissertation proposes is a large scale theoretical shift in the teaching of FYC to incorporate methods of civic literacy predicated on rhetorical citizenship, and proposes sample outcomes that would radically realign the focus of FYC from teaching methods of composition toward a focus on teaching students to use the skills learned from these methods of composition toward the betterment of democracy in America. It is important to remember that I am not advocating that omit all the previous WPA Outcomes from the OS, but simply adding another plank that could help students put those other outcomes in the service of the community, and toward experiential learning. Conceptually reframing the WPA OS to include outcomes related to the preparation of students for life in a democracy is essential because the WPA OS carries the authority of the CWPA, and as such is influential in developing and revising the recommended outcomes for FYC in colleges and universities. As learning outcomes are indicators of success of an academic course or program, it is essential that our field provide a clear idea of what can be achieved by adding a civic literacy component to the WPA OS. Learning outcomes give a clear idea to our stakeholders of what students are going to learn or achieve at the end of the first year writing sequence or course. In addition, this dissertation argued that we need to develop civic literacy outcomes predicated on rhetorical citizenship so that students can learn the skills necessary to fight oppression, advocate for social justice, and become change agents in their local communities. Rhetorical citizenship is essential to civic literacy because it contends that rhetoric forms the center of democratic culture because it provides the means to build community through the persuasive communication of values, knowledge, and beliefs, but also because it provides a method of social inquiry necessary to solve problems and deliberate on issues facing a rhetorical public.

This study is also original and important because it examines the way an organization such as the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) can be seen as an institution that has developed rules, conventions, and established practices regarding knowledge in FYC. Organizations such as the CWPA also use documents such as the WPA OS to communicate institutional knowledge about best practices in First-Year Composition (FYC) to a rhetorical public—stakeholders in a college or university such as students, instructors, professors, administrators, and citizens. More importantly, this study reveals the ways in which this particular organization uses a rhetoric such as the WPA OS to exert influence on individual member’s actions in regard to best practices in FYC. This dissertation reveals the ways that institutions such as the CWPA use institutional rhetorics such as policy statements to persuade its publics to accept its authority as a knowledge-making institution, and to encourage standardization—not to be confused with encouraging standards or precise levels of knowledge—but standardization as the process of making something conform to uniform conceptions of knowledge to encourage homogeneity and sameness. This is not meant to be seen as an attack on the CWPA as if they are a nefarious organization with ill intent, but more a serious, critical analysis of the way that institutional rhetorics can have both positive and negative effects, and think critically through the effects of institutional rhetorics such as the WPA OS.

In addition, this study also sought to examine how we can use the institutional authority of the CWPA and an institutional rhetoric such as the WPA OS to initiate a large scale social movement meant to help prepare students for life in a democracy. This work argues that citizenship in a democracy is largely rhetorical—as opposed to more normative conceptions of citizenship predicated on rights and privileges. Since democracy is largely

predicated on citizens developing skills needed to form communicative agency to solve problems and cultivate social action, I argue that we have a responsibility to teach students how to use rhetorical skills in the public sphere to solve problems. Rhetoric, according to Dewey, is also responsible for disclosing the ideals, values, methods, and procedures of public. It is a mode of sharing ideology that goes toward community building and identification needed to find common ground. An effective rhetor should be capable of reframing an issue to break through to common ground is an essential step in building community and publics necessary to complete tasks in the public sphere. Dewey conceived of rhetoric as a bridge used to form bonds of identification that narrow the gap between two views so that opposing sides are able to find common ground necessary to solve problems. Education is responsible for teaching the public to develop artful forms of communication necessary to enable democratic debate and discussion. A central argument of this dissertation is that rhetorical pedagogy is responsible for educating future citizens with the moral and ethical virtues to fully and equally participate in democratic deliberation.

To this end, I adapted an argument from Brian Jackson and Gregory Clark that a modern conception of democracy is not so much about political theory as generating the necessary conditions for the creation of a democratic culture. Democratic culture, “comprises the sum total of the values and attitudes as well as habits and behaviors that enable people to practice what amounts to responsible expression” (2). Jackson and Clark go on to argue, “Such a practice is inherently rhetorical, in the sense of requiring both assertion and response to be accountable to others with whom one is engaged” (2). This dissertation extends the idea that rhetoric forms the center of democratic culture because it provides the means to build community through the persuasive communication of values, knowledge, and

beliefs, but also because it provides a method of social inquiry necessary to solve problems and deliberate on issues facing a public. Jackson and Clark state, “Persuasive communication is one of the most essential practices constituting a democratic culture—one in which individuals are expected to express themselves constructively within a community and at the same time judge rigorously the expressions of others on those same constructive criteria” (2). This dissertation argues that a persuasive rhetoric of community building and deliberation is a form of communicative agency necessary for building rhetorical publics. I believe that each of these three ideas are original and significant because they alter the ways in which we think about the development and transmission of knowledge in our field, the role of organizations in the development of knowledge in our field while also conceptually reframing the role of FYC in modern colleges and universities.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of this research can potentially be enormous. Implementation of the findings in this dissertation such as adding a civic literacy plank to the WPA OS would require large scale conceptual reframing of the core goals in our field. As I argued in Chapter 4, conceptual reframing at regular intervals help knowledge-intensive organizations to manage the articulation of new knowledge, and provide the means for these organizations to prevent conservative stances from thwarting the emergence of new knowledge. Haridimos Tsoukas, in “A Dialogical Approach to the Creation of New Knowledge in Organizations,” argues that “new knowledge comes about when practioners seek to turn unreflective practice into reflective one through reflexive social interaction” (2). He also goes on to argue that this process of reflexive social interaction is called conceptual reframing, and defines it as, “A way of creating new distinctions is conceptual reframing.

Reframing means reclassifying an object, or at least shifting emphasis from one class membership to another, so that a new view of it emerges” (Tsoukas 7). Conceptual reframing is a common practice used to rethink knowledge, practice, and methods used by knowledge-intensive organizations. In Chapter 4, I argued that the WPA OS requires conceptual reframing to include a civic literacy plank geared toward teaching students the skills required to participate as citizens in a democracy.

However, the implication of the findings would also require a larger conceptual reframing to reconsider the role of FYC within the institution. Currently, FYC is endowed with an institutional mandate to prepare students to write in the academy. One could also argue that FYC also has a mandate to prepare students for writing in their professions though this has largely moved to upper-level advanced composition courses as the field has expanded to include upper division courses in rhetoric and writing needed to offer degrees in our area of specialization. The theoretical implication of this research would mean we would need to dramatically reconsider the institutional mandate to prepare students for writing in the academy. I do not feel the implication means sacrificing the mandate to prepare students for writing in the college and university setting, but I do believe at the very least, we would need to re-conceptualize that mandate to include civic literacy. Conceptual reframing of this sort would require that the institutional mandate to prepare students for writing in the academy be sublimated to a larger goal of preparing students for life in democracy. My argument would be that the institutional mandate should be part of the larger goal of preparing students for life after college. While this would be a large undertaking I think the benefits I have outlined in this dissertation outweigh the costs. Our field has conceptually reframed the WPA OS three times this decade and always managed to do so in a way that

allows us to meet the current problems facing our field so that the knowledge we transmit in our institutional rhetorics is not outdated or rendered obsolete. Our field needs to make sure we are always looking at the margins of the document to those places where there are gaps or critically missing areas so that an institutional rhetoric such as the WPA OS does not become so normative that it prevents change and growth.

As a field, we need to regularly review the rhetorics that articulate our knowledge so that we make sure that managing knowledge-intensity does not omit important or helpful outcomes for FYC. Our field needs to routinely ask, “What is missing from this document that should be included? What are the consequences of this omission?” When I ask these questions I immediately answer that this document is clearly missing an outcome for teaching students to interrogate power, to examine how language functions in relation to power, and for teaching students how to use rhetoric to make social change that resists power functions that oppress or subjugate citizens. There is simply no mention of civic literacy or preparation for citizenship and this is a huge omission because our field has a long held commitment to social justice and critiques of power. While the implications of this research ask that we again conceptually reframe the WPA OS to add a civic literacy plank, I feel that the omission of civic literacy and training for citizenship is a huge problem that needs to be addressed. To be clear, I advocate for a plank over a whole scale revision because I see civic literacy as a component of FYC that works in synergy with the other established outcomes to allow students to reach a deeper understanding of those outcomes. The civic literacy plank would provide an additional component of experiential learning meant to deepen student understanding of the rhetorical knowledge in composing and design already contained in the WPA OS. As I argued in Chapter 4, a significant amount of educational research has

suggested that critical consciousness — the ability to recognize and analyze systems of inequality and the commitment to take action against these systems — can be a gateway to academic motivation and achievement for marginalized students. Undertaking another revision of the WPA OS would be a huge enterprise and require that we rethink what the most important goals are in FYC, but the benefits of teaching students the skills required to be active agents of social change outweigh the drawbacks of not reframing the WPA OS, and the role of FYC in the academy.

Recommendations for Future Research

This dissertation has been an exercise in knowledge intensity. There is much work that needs to be done to prepare for such a large scale conceptual reframing of FYC to reorient it to the goals of civic literacy. Future research will need to be conducted to explore the application of civic literacy outcomes to FYC. Research will need to be conducted to develop syllabi, assignments, and course readings related to civic literacy, critical consciousness, and civic engagement on the local level to theorize how this can work in specific institutions. Further research will also be required to theorize how we can take concepts such as service learning and community that have undergone pedagogification as I argued in Chapter 4 and reinvigorate them so that they can regain the transformative qualities that once made them groundbreaking theories of teaching and learning. This research would also need to consider how reinvigorating these pedagogies can lead to exercises that will help students understand the ideological positions and rhetorical patterns that underlie civic literacy, power relations, and the rhetorical skills necessary to solve problems in a post-modern, technological democracy. These exercises would also need to teach students to negotiate information literacy in the age of disinformation, and to navigate issues of

objectivity in news, social, and entertainment media, as well as in education itself. Future work that explores John Dewey's theory of social science contributions to Rhetoric and Composition would greatly aid in the conceptual reframing of FYC for civic literacy and rhetorical citizenship.

There is also much work left to be done to more fully evaluate John Dewey's contributions to the study of rhetoric and democracy. Unfortunately, his contributions to the goal of conceptually reframing FYC to prepare students for rhetorical citizenship were sometimes sacrificed due to issues of knowledge-intensity—or making decisions about how much knowledge can be adequately transmitted in one document such as a dissertation. There is still much work needed to conceptualize a version of John Dewey's social science to meet the needs of civic literacy. The field of Rhetoric and Composition could greatly benefit by more research as to how the four aspects of his social science—special problems, inquiry, and conceptual structures—could contribute to our understanding of civic literacy, citizenship, and democracy. Dewey's theory of social science contains three parts that are essential to teaching students how to participate in democracy on the local level.

More research is required to study special problems as threshold concepts of knowledge or difficult concepts that arise in democracy. These problems are difficult issues that cannot be solved without new schemas or methods, and can be thought of as a sort of doorway in thinking that is difficult to open because the thinker does not have the knowledge or skills to solve the problem at their current level of knowing. This doorway is seen as opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something. It represents a transformed way of understanding, or interpreting, or viewing something without which the learner cannot progress. All rhetorical situations begin with a problem facing a community or

public and a major goal of this philosophy will be identifying and recognizing problems, and working to solve these problems. Further theorizing how John Dewey's conception of special problems can help us better understand threshold concepts is needed to fully explore how citizens in a democracy can use the idea of special problems to better understand how to solve problems in a democracy.

Additional research will be needed to explore Dewey's concept of inquiry. In Dewey's conception of social science, inquiry is research done into the nature and history of the problem. Dewey argues that inquiry must be social in nature and dedicated to finding a solution that will benefit the largest portion of the group affected by the problem. Dewey's conception of inquiry is also quasi-empirical in nature as it is an attempt to apply the scientific method to social situations. This sort of inquiry is often termed Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) because it asks students to "conduct research, integrate theory and practice, and apply knowledge and skills to develop a viable solution to a problem" (Walker, et al. 5). Dewey's conception of inquiry is also predicated on information literacy. Information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information" (Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education 1). Information literacy is increasingly important in the contemporary environment of rapid technological change and proliferating information resources, because of the escalating complexity of digital environments where individuals are faced with diverse, abundant information choices—in their academic studies, in the workplace, and in their personal lives. Future research will require that students be taught a rigorous form of inquiry that will help them determine high quality information from low quality information.

Lastly, more research will be required related to Dewey's theory of conceptual structures. A conceptual structure is a rhetorically situated, historical understanding of the problem or an intellectual history of the issue that examines how the concept has developed over time and asks the student to examine the historical consequences of these structures. Conceptual structures are the intersection of memory and history, or how problems develop to both embody aspects of lived experience and historical narratives. Conceptual structures, in this sense, are a sort of shared social history or the shared pool of knowledge and information in the history of a social group that is shaped and developed by participation in a rhetorical public. Conceptual structures are also sometimes called public memories, and are akin to the concept of public knowledge as outlined by Lloyd F. Bitzer in his essay, "Rhetoric and Public Knowledge." Bitzer defines public knowledge as, "a kind of knowledge needful to public life and actually present somewhat to all who dwell within community...It may be regarded as a fund of truths, principles, and values which could only characterize a public" (68). While public memory work typically focuses on the architecture of physical structures, future research will be needed to adapt public memory work into Dewey's theory of conceptual structures so it can be taught as a method to teach history as means of critically examining the manner in which solutions to problems have been developed to exclude marginalized groups from public discourse, and to consider how memory is curated in both real world and online ecologies. This future research will also entail an examination as to how rhetorical citizenship with an emphasis on history can utilize public memory to resist marginalization.

This research on how Dewey's social science could contribute to the field of Rhetoric and Composition was originally slated to be core components of this dissertation.

Unfortunately, I sketched out a project that was much too ambitious to be adequately handled in a single dissertation, and due to this, I had to make some difficult decisions about what to exclude from this project as it developed. This work on how Dewey's theory of social science is important and I hope that someone—if not me in future research—takes up this call to think rigorously about John Dewey's work and its contribution to our field. John Dewey's thinking still has much to contribute to our understanding of rhetoric, democracy, and citizenship. We have barely scratched the surface on his work associated with pragmatism's relationship to democracy and how this work could benefit students as they prepare for life in democracy. More work in this area can be of great service to the protection and maintenance of democracy. Ultimately, John Dewey's work on the role of rhetoric—or artful communication as he terms it—in education is an important contribution to the study of rhetoric and requires that we more fully explore the ways that Dewey's work can help us better understand the role rhetorical education in the preparation of students for life in a democracy.

Conclusion to the Conclusion

This dissertation has sought to make the argument that with rhetorical training and education any citizen can learn to use rhetoric in the service of citizenship within a democracy. The core argument in this dissertation has been that participation in democracy requires specialized training in rhetorical methods. As John Dewey argues in, "Creative Democracy – The Task Before US," that "The democratic faith in human equality is belief that every human being, independent of the quantity or range of his personal endowment, has the right to equal opportunity with every other person for development of whatever gifts he has" John Dewey (*Later Works* 229). Much like Dewey, it is my underlying belief that an

educated and intelligent citizen with proper rhetorical training can work to identify problems inherent in the activity of citizenship and work diligently and deliberately toward solutions to these problems. The ability to use rhetoric effectively can be acquired informally without proper training, but these skills in democratic problem-solving can also be taught, and teaching speeds learning, and I believe we have a responsibility to teach students how to use rhetoric in the service of social justice in a democracy. My hope is that I have proven that through a conceptual reframing of FYC outcomes we can reorient FYC to teach students the skills necessary to save democracy before our third age of democracy draws to a close. With a proper reconceptualization of the WPA OS, our field can begin the process of reorienting FYC to more adequately prepare students for life in a democracy. This work has demonstrated that our field has not historically made preparation for citizenship in a democracy a core outcome of FYC, and as such, has not made an organized, committed effort as a field to orient our field toward social justice. My hope is that this dissertation has made a vibrant argument for the reasons that rhetorical citizenship and civic literacy should take on a larger role in FYC. One core goal was to argue that FYC should make a concerted effort to prepare students for citizenship, and that our field is perfectly situated to do so because democracy and citizenship are essentially rhetorical.

Democracy as essentially rhetorical means that rhetoric makes public deliberation on problems and issues possible, and facilitates the participation of all those governed by collective decisions of a democracy in the making of those decisions, leads to reasoned agreement among citizens on the merits of solutions to problems proposed in the public sphere and, therefore, recognizes that rhetoric is required as a core component of democratic legitimacy. Proper training in rhetorical methods can afford citizens the framework to

evaluate and deliberate on all views and can provide students with the power for political participation, because anyone with proper training can learn to be rhetorically savvy and to use this savvy in the service of democracy. Rhetoric is also essential to democracy because it is used to achieve agreement needed to validate political solutions on the basis of public reasoning. Rhetoric is capable of transforming both the content of citizens' character and their political conduct so they are compatible with the demands of justice. This dissertation is rooted in the Isocratean argument that with the proper training anyone can learn to become a productive citizen in a democracy, and furthermore, for democracy to flourish we need to challenge our students to use rhetoric to fight back against the current form of democracy ruled by oligarchs or a powerful elite that concentrates power and knowledge in the hands of a small few wealthy Americans at the expense of the mass of citizens in our republic. Every generation needs a new revolution and First-Year Composition is as good a place to start a cultural and political revolution as any place!

Appendix – Civic Literacy Plank

Civic Literacy and Critical Consciousness

Civic literacy is the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to participate in the civic life of our communities (Ehrlich VII). In order to develop civic literacy, learners must cultivate their own individual civic identity through the rigorous interrogation of language, power, and knowledge. Citizenship in a twenty-first century democracy will require citizens to have the rhetorical knowledge, skills, and attitudes “to work effectively in a diverse society to create more just and equitable workplaces, communities, and social institutions” (Pollack 232). In First-Year Composition, students should learn to use rhetorical methods to act effectively in their roles as citizens in a democracy, and as such, students must learn not only about civic life, but how to develop rhetorical methods needed to develop solutions to problems they will face in their lives as citizens in a democracy. With this First-Year Composition set of outcomes, we recognize our responsibilities to help students practice rhetorical knowledge and skills by “engaging with and responding to civic, social, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and global levels” (Lumina 27).

By the end of first-year composition students should:

- Deepen understanding and analysis of the social, cultural, and civic aspects of their personal and professional identities in relation to a student’s developing sense of identity and social awareness (CSUMB Upper Division Civic Literacy Outcomes)
- Participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both life enriching and beneficial to the community to discover how rhetoric is used to solve problems outside of the university (CSUMB Upper Division Civic Literacy Outcomes)
- Engage in the community outside of the university for the purpose of practicing these skills in real world situations in experiential learning (CSUMB Upper Division Civic Literacy Outcomes)
- Deepen student understanding of the social responsibility of citizens to analyze how civic activity and rhetorical citizenship can contribute to greater long-term societal well-being (QCC Civic Literacy Student Learning Outcomes)
- Evaluate the actions of professionals and institutions in their field to analyze how language and power function in their profession to foster equity and inequity

Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn

- To use critical thinking and problem solving skills in civic opportunities outside of the classroom
- To develop projects that align the goals of learning as preparation for personal, professional, and civic life outside of the college or university
- To practice the tenets of rhetorical citizenship which seeks to foster robust, honest, frank, and constructive dialogue and deliberation to advance the public interest
- To study the role of language, power, and knowledge in the construction of oppression and privilege

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Vita

Terry Shannon Peterman was born November 22, 1978 in Fort Worth, Texas. He is the son of T.S. Peterman and Emma Lee Peterman. A 1997 graduate of Kennedale High School in Kennedale, Texas, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in English from Texas A&M University-Commerce, in Commerce, Texas, in 2003.

After receiving his Master of Arts degree from Texas A&M University-Commerce, in 2006, he enrolled in graduate study at Texas Christian University. While working on his doctorate in Rhetoric and Composition, he held the Lillian Radford Fellowship in English from 2011-2012, and was the Assistant to the Radford Fellow from 2012-2013. He served as Dean of Science, Kinesiology, and Developmental Studies at Navarro College from 2013-2018. Since August 2018 he has served as Dean of Theatre, Education, Arts, and Math at the Montgomery Campus in the Lone Star College System in Houston, Texas. He is a member of the National Council of Teachers of English, the Council of Writing Program Administrators, and the Rhetoric Society of America.

He is married to the lovely Crystal Huff. They have one daughter, a miracle baby named Kathryn Emma Peterman, who is the light of their lives.

THE RHETORIC OF POWER: JOHN DEWEY, DEMOCRACY, AND RHETORICAL CITIZENSHIP

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This dissertation argues rhetorical citizenship is an underdeveloped pedagogical method needed to teach skills in civic literacy necessary to function as citizens in a democracy. Incorporating John Dewey's theory of participatory rhetoric, this work argues that Dewey has much to offer the field of Rhetoric and Composition in terms of understanding rhetoric's role in a post-modern technological democracy, and its possible benefits to the concept of rhetorical citizenship. This work also proposed ways the field could incorporate his theory of experiential learning through civic literacy as a core component of our Writing Program Outcomes Statement (WPA OS) so to address the growing civic literacy crisis in America. The concept of institutional rhetorics is derived from the field of organizational communication to examine how institutional knowledge is developed and transmitted via rhetorical documents such as the WPA OS. Institutional rhetorics can be used to manage knowledge-intensity to control the development of knowledge and stabilize (or destabilize) accepted forms of knowledge.

In addition, this dissertation proposes a large scale theoretical shift in the teaching of FYC to incorporate methods of civic literacy predicated on rhetorical citizenship, and proposes sample outcomes that would radically realign the focus of FYC from teaching methods of composition toward a focus on teaching students to use the skills learned from these methods of composition toward the betterment of democracy in America. Each of the

Chapters in this work has built toward a goal of examining how the field of Rhetoric and Composition conceptualizes our work in the civic arena to prepare students for life in a democracy. In addition, John Dewey's theory of democracy can help us better understand how to use rhetoric—or artful communication meant to move citizens to action in Dewey's terms—toward the communicative agency needed to build rhetorical publics and use inquiry to solve problems and thereby participate more fully in democracy.