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THE POSTDISCIPLINARITY OF LORE: PROFESSIONAL AND PEDAGOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN A GRADUATE STUDENT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

by

JULIETTE C. KITCHENS

Under the Direction of Mary Hocks

ABSTRACT

Recuperating Composition's lore in postdisciplinarity in order to illustrate the polyvalent, multidirectional positionality of our practices, this study argues that Composition's lore, as it functions in a community of practice, helps locate and address various challenges with the cultural displacement that burgeoning scholars experience as they critically negotiate their practices within the expectations of the academy. Bridging the communities of writing teachers in classrooms and writing centers in a demonstration of institutional polyvalence, this ethnographic study's participants suggest the reflexive influence of postdisciplinary lore in the cultivation of authority and practitioner identity. As one point of access to this cultural negotiation, the transmission and application of myth contextualizes lore as cultural phenomena affecting both professional and pedagogical development in graduate student teachers and tutors. This study con-

cludes that the reflexivity offered in postdisciplinary sites of cultural engagement encourages a negotiated, recursive power relation between the institution and the practitioner, thus creating multiple, malleable sites of authority and agency within disciplinary culture.

INDEX WORDS: Graduate student development, Lore, Myth, Postdisciplinarity, Community of practice, Reflection, Authority, Pedagogy, Teaching practices, Teacher education, Reflexivity, Professionalization, Professional development, Cultural Studies, Writing Center, Writing Program Administration, Disciplinarity

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by

JULIETTE C. KITCHENS

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2012

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Juliette C. Kitchens
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THE POSTDISCIPLINARITY OF LORE: PROFESSIONAL AND PEDAGOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN A GRADUATE STUDENT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

by

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August 2012

DEDICATION

To my community of practice, with gratitude and appreciation.

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This project would not have been possible without the generosity of my community of practice and the love and support of my family and friends.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to my mentors, committee members, and friends Dr. Mary Hocks, Dr. Beth Burmester, and Dr. Marti Singer, without whom I would still be sitting in front of a blank screen. Thank you for your unparalleled patience and guidance at every stage in my graduate career. I would like to thank Dr. Burmester, specifically, for encouraging me to brave the realm of graduate student administration and providing IRB sponsorship for this project. Dr. Singer, thank you for the opportunities you created for the English Department's graduate students and for always meeting my drafts with a smile. I would also like to thank Dr. Hocks for reminding me that writing is hard, but not impossible; for reading with compassion and curiosity; and, for critically and enthusiastically engaging the many incarnations this project took as it evolved.

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CHAPTER ONE

SITUATING SHARED MISSIONS: AN INTRODUCTION TO LORE'S INFLUENCE IN A COMMUNITY OF DEVELOPING PRACTITIONERS

The following dissertation illustrates the sociocultural influence that developing practitioners negotiate through and with Composition's lore. More specifically, in locating sites of postdisciplinary practices and tension, I believe, as administrators and fellow practitioners, we can more readily assist burgeoning practitioners endeavoring to make sense of the conflicting cultural influences they must negotiate as they craft their practices and identities. Using a postdisciplinary lens, this project seeks to recuperate Composition's lore, or the experientially bound and pragmatically grounded knowledge of our practices as they shape writing and how or why we teach it. I situate Composition's lore as a framework through which to examine ways graduate students develop a social and cultural connection to teaching and professional practices within their community. Positioning lore as postdisciplinary addresses a twenty-five year debate within Rhetoric and Composition, producing new space in which to tinker with lore by acknowledging that our narratives sustain and challenge disciplinary culture. Additionally, postdisciplinary lore reflects the multiple locations in which developing practitioners access and negotiate power and authority. Applying postdisciplinary lore to graduate student development, then, illustrates the connections and the gaps existing between traditional (disciplinary) locations of learning, such as classrooms and writing centers, and the revolutionary space created by a community of engaged learners.

A fundamental goal of this project is to highlight the possibilities that arise when we look to our similarities—our shared space—for guidance when facilitating graduate practitioner learn-

ing opportunities. Because both writing centers and graduate teaching programs can promote postdisciplinary practices, or practices developed through critical, multidirectional reception of practitioner culture, I address these sites of professional development as cooperative space to reinforce the need to step away from the "turf wars" that are too often the result of polarizing and politicizing various locations within the field of Rhetoric and Composition. Moreover, using blended research methods (discussed more thoroughly in Chapter Two) and drawing from scholarship throughout the disciplines, this study reflects the blended community created by graduate students who are teaching and tutoring. Additionally, to suggest the synergic nature of writing program and writing center practices and to reify the viable, generative knowledge-building experienced through Composition's lore, the participant narratives in the following chapters are parallel to the scholarly contributions in value and representation.

In the transitional space graduate students embody—that of moving from student to colleague and the many roles negotiated within that evolution—the narratives constructed and shared within a community affect how the burgeoning professional situates their practices within the classroom, profession, and academy. Applying an ethnographic approach to this study's design afforded me access to the narratives constructed within this community, as well as the influence these narratives have on the professional and pedagogical development of community members. Discussed in Chapter Two, participant selection required representatives with diverse degrees of teaching and tutoring experience to reflect the dynamic disciplinary aims of an English department offering degrees in Rhetoric and Composition, Creative Writing, and Literary Studies and supporting a writing center staffed by graduate students. Of note, some participants came to the study having first tutored, while others began tutoring after they entered the classroom as teachers. This simple, yet influential, shift in experience indicates a fundamental differ-

ence in graduate student expectations regarding cultural pedagogical practices. The diversity of participant experience and locations of practice simulates within my data the rich complexities offered by the community and witnessed within a community's narrative. Chapter Two explains this study as an effort to offer a better understanding of not only how participants articulated their teaching practices and professional development, but also how participants situated their community and the cultures of writing and the academy, as they pursued program completion and, ultimately, "professional" status.

Writing centers as sites for teacher education is a strongly politicized issue within the field of Rhetoric and Composition. Scholarship addressing graduate students in writing centers commonly points toward graduate students as writers (tutees) or as future administrators, rather than directly addressing the concerns facing centers staffed partially or fully by graduate students who also serve as teaching assistants (Conroy and Lerner; Jackson, Leverenz, and Law; Jukuri; Leverenz; Mick; Pemberton). While writing center scholarship has increasingly focused on writing centers as sites for graduate student professionalization, the scarcity of the research plausibly indicates the underlying fear that our centers and practices will be seen as "training ground," positioning writing center practitioners and administrators to continue addressing the cultural marginalization we faced throughout the 1980s and 1990s. However, acknowledging that writing centers and tutor practices provide graduate students with professional and pedagogical learning experiences and opportunities that encourage developing practices through social engagement and reflection opens new avenues of inquiry and renews the value of our sites in relation to our institutions, the profession of teaching, and to the act of learning. Muriel Harris, Irene Clark, Nancy Welch, and Neal Lerner are among the few to address the valuable development opportunities writing centers offer developing Composition teachers, yet their work is rarely found in the

monographs and collections dedicated to graduate student professionalization and pedagogical maturation.

Although not the primary function of writing centers, writing center communities often afford a uniquely structured learning environment for graduate student teachers developing both professional and pedagogical practices. Focusing on teacher education is not meant to diminish or compete with other learning communities present in our centers. That it is first an environment for developing writers rests at the heart of our collective mission—but this isn't *all* that we are. Writing centers present opportunities for developing student and professional writers, pedagogues, theorists, administrators, activists, digital content designers, etc. This study centers the peripheral community shaped by graduate student tutors and teachers because if we are to understand the institutional vitality of writing centers, we must look outward, seeking connections demonstrating the versatility and opportunity writing center experience offers. I explore this community, as it is shaped in an English Department, inferring that the polyvalence of Writing Centers and Writing Program Administration, specifically our shared mission of graduate professionalization and pedagogical development, potentially creates community ties that impact both teaching and tutoring practices as well as individual practitioner identity.

Aligning with Philip Gardner and William Ramsey, this research assumes the polyvalence of writing centers with the recognition that writing center work "is not an anti-curriculum but is the *same* work of the disciplines and *an extension of them*," creating and sustaining our cultural knowledge and practices of writing as well as of the academic professional (33). This stance implicitly suggests writing centers are postdisciplinary sites—locations offering both critical inquiry and affirmation of disciplinary culture and practices. Rather than dichotomize or alienate tutoring from teaching, forcing community members to artificially categorize practices

and learning processes, a goal of this dissertation is to illustrate ways in which communities of developing teachers and tutors share purpose, meaning, strategies, and practices. To this end, the following study focuses on the postdisciplinarity of lore in a graduate student community of practice located in a research university's English department, which actively integrates writing centers and classrooms as sites of teacher education and professional development.

Contending that writing center work "should be framed in terms of shared mission with mainstream education, rather than as a subversion of it," Gardner and Ramsey theorize writing centers as sites that are at once acculturating and liberating (27). That is, writing centers engender an ecology of practice[1] representative of multiple disciplines and, as such, experience moments of marginality as well as centrality within the constellation of disciplinary communities functioning throughout the institution. For writing program and writing center administrators who are developing curricula and practices within these communities, this study offers insight to the sociocultural tension experienced by graduate students as they culturally locate their practices within the profession. Using a postdisciplinary lens, I address lore's integration with community formation and its facilitation of members' cultural awareness of both pedagogical and professional practices.

Fundamentally, Composition's lore is our experiential knowledge about how and why we teach writing. Lore is our narrative body of knowledge directly connected to our experiences as we participate in our field, the institution, and university life. It communicates not only our successes, but also our struggles and conflicts—the tension we face as we attempt to reconcile our

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[1] James Zebroski situates ecology of practice as the relations between any number of practices and the theories informing them. To illustrate, he states, "Theorizing practices, then, are related to writing practice, teaching practices, curricular practices, disciplinary practices and professional practices" ("Toward a Theory of Theory for Composition Studies" 39). For a detailed discussion of this relational schema, also see Zebroski's *Thinking Through Theory* (1994).

theory with the material reality of our practice. Because this tension exists similarly in various practitioner locations, we often incorporate lore as an active educational tool in the development of our professional and writing practices. We draw from and share our varied institutional experiences as markers of writing culture and professional life. Moreover, as we build and share lore we develop and sustain our disciplinary expectations, traditions, politics, and histories.

Stephen North's *Making of Knowledge in Composition*, published in 1987, asked us to not only participate in the practice of lore, but also turn our critical attention to it. I address the historical position and reception of lore while pointing toward a postdisciplinary conceptualization of lore's function within practitioner communities. Our earliest scholarship on lore centered our attention on its methodological function, attempting to dichotomize theory and practice as we questioned how lore informs our theory and theory-building. Exploring these ideas more comprehensively in the review of lore scholarship offered in Chapter Three, "Lore as Cultural Narrative: The Postdisciplinarity of Our Stories," I point to Elizabeth Rankin and John Schilb as influential contributors signaling key turning points in our early critical inquiry of lore. Schilb suggests we expand our understanding of "practice," casting it as a sustaining, developing act, while Rankin speaks to how lore enhances practice-as-inquiry. Rankin states, "if we listen more closely to practitioner narratives, and listen to ourselves listening in, we can begin to interpret [the] codes of authority and understand what we mean when we recognize as knowledge a particular practitioner's claim" (265). This study's findings illustrate Rankin's notion of meta-listening in that I position the narratives of graduate student teaching and tutoring practitioners as artifacts indicating socially and culturally informed community participants.

As the field continues to determine lore's praxis, we have expanded our discussion of lore to include identity politics, pedagogy, methods, as well as program development, and disci-

plinarity. These "new" directions often have been framed as points of practice-as-inquiry, particularly as critical context for writing program administration and writing center studies. Because this dissertation broadly speaks to how developing practitioners engage lore, I suggest that lore's role in practice-as-inquiry is at once individually, communally, and socioculturally constructed.

While the field of Rhetoric and Composition acknowledges that lore is a communal source of knowledge that individually influences practitioners, Joseph Harris, in "The Idea of Community in the Study of Writing," urges us to "talk about certain forces as social rather than communal, as involving power but not always consent. Such talk could give us a fuller picture of the lived experience of teaching, learning, and writing in a university today" (21). Amending this statement, Harris has more recently argued that "our interest in the *social* needs to be deepened by a concern for the *material*" (*A Teaching Subject* 156). Therefore, I position lore as communal *and* social phenomena affecting the practitioner's material reality by signaling trends or moments in practice that influence the shape and development of both our field and its practitioners. Moreover, we may or may not be able to control the effect lore has on us as we develop; seemingly, it may reinforce or remove a practitioner's agency within their practices and within their community. Chapter Four, "Practitioner Community, Community of Practice: Development and Narratives of Experience," proposes and illustrates a social framework that includes discursive as well as active practices (specifically, community of practice), situating lore with a more complete recognition of its dynamic and organic construction and transmission.

We commonly think of our communities in reference to discourse, placing high value on the dialogic exchanges within and among our social spheres. However, considering works such as *Writing/Disciplinarity, Writing Center Research,* and *The Everyday Writing Center*, as well as

the number of monographs and collections addressing how our stories shape us, the question arises whether our critical attention to discourse community as the sole social structure framing lore limits our understanding of lore's function. If we fail to acknowledge the significance of our practices, both shared and individual, and how these practices develop, it stands to reason that we fail to provide lore its full scope of activity.

While most of this study's participants readily use the language of "discourse community," their descriptions and narratives point to a community of practice, indicating that within graduate student communities, the practitioner role is at once individually and socially centered. This is not to say that teaching is the *only* role that is centered; on the contrary, graduate students fluctuate among a variety of practitioner roles as they develop professionally. As Paul Prior notes, "to study the sociogenesis of disciplinarity, that is to understand both its mature practices and how those practices are developed, graduate education is a strategic site" (xiii). Graduate students are continually learning to negotiate the expectations and standards of the various practitioner roles embedded in our field and therefore offer a unique perspective to how our practices are shaped. Looking specifically at lore's role within this development speaks to aspects of professionalization directly tied to community interaction and negotiation. These include mentoring, observation, focused discussion, local and global networking—acts fostered by our best practices in both program- and center-specific locations.

The practitioner community that graduate students who are engaged in diverse pedagogical acts create is vital to legitimately situating lore as a functioning element affecting the learning and development processes graduate students experience. Revaluing the practitioner-centered model can assist in estimating or understanding the value of our lore in relation to communicating and informing the disciplinary standards and expectations shaped by

our field's communities. That is, lore aids in identifying community and cultural expectations, as well as communicating standards of practice and participation. More specifically, shared narratives not only affect how developing practitioners function within the classroom as teachers, but also how they respond to professional activities and responsibilities within the community. Practitioner narratives, particularly those developed and shared within a graduate student community, impact practices such as assessment, course organization or structure, dissemination of material, approaches to conferencing. These narratives also inform a community member's decision to participate in professional development opportunities. The following chapters illustrate that graduate students who are afforded the opportunity to experience and integrate diverse pedagogies from multiple sites of practice apply knowledge that is potentially considered location-specific, or that which is developed through a singular type or site of practice, to alternate locations and experiences. Expressly, lore is vital to the shaping of the practitioner's cultural pedagogical understanding.

Additionally, this dissertation positions graduate student development as a type of legitimate peripheral participation within a community of practice. For example, Chapter Four examines a few of the ways in which this study's participant community acts as a community of practice, using Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger's ground breaking work in social learning theory. Lave and Wenger's *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (1991) was the first text to suggest communities of practice as a potential social framework grounded in the discovery of how practice and learning interconnect, or, situated learning. In his forward to their text, William F. Hanks, a professor of Sociocultural Anthropology at University of California, Berkley, speaks to the importance of Lave and Wenger's work, stating, "it implies a highly interactive and productive role for the skills that are acquired through the learning process. The indi-

vidual learner is not gaining a discrete body of abstract knowledge in which (s)he will then transport and reapply in later contexts. Instead, (s)he acquires the skill to perform by actually engaging in the process, under the attenuated conditions of *legitimate peripheral participation*" (14). Lave and Wenger turn to legitimate peripheral participation in their approach "to draw attention to the point that learners inevitably participate in communities of practitioners and that the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community" (Lave and Wenger 29). Specifically, legitimate peripheral participation is tied to membership in a community of practice, which is "a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice" that positions individual learning processes and acts in direct correlation with social actions and relations (Lave and Wenger 98). Situating learning in direct relation to participation speaks to the foundations of Composition's social construction theory as well as the processes graduate students encounter as they learn to be professional teachers and scholars.

In *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*, Wenger discusses participation-based learning as "a process of social reconfiguration" through members' negotiation of existing practices and standards and their responsibility "for the meanings of what they do" (219, 220). My data indicates that participants express accountability to their community and the cultivation of its practice, which points to each tenet within a community of practice: mutual practice, accountability to enterprise, and repertoire. As the graduate student participants discussed elements in their own practice—through telling stories of their experiences, as well as departmental and institutional histories—their reflections indicated that as the community members acquired

teaching and tutoring experience, they began negotiating both practice and the meaning of it as a way to reconcile practical knowledge and experience with cultural mores.

Participant narratives indicate that lore influences how graduate students culturally identify within the profession as well as how they grow to understand the disciplinary cultures of the academy and of writing because lore fluctuates between centered and marginalized locations to best enable access to power and authority. Expressly, lore serves a social or cultural agenda rather than that of the theorized "institution." Lore reaches beyond and moves among the boundaries of the classroom, writing center, or campus, accessing and negotiating (if not also reconciling) the cultural information and knowledge held by various types of stakeholders with diverse levels of interest, including those "outside" of the institution. Because of this ability, lore helps identify or locate points of tension experienced by new and developing practitioners.

Each of us comes to this profession with a set of assumptions and expectations. We recognize that these are, at some point, readily informed by non-participating culture and, particularly as graduate students, peripheral participation as students. Newcomers' expectations as they enter the community are negotiated by and through the community's shared repertoire as a direct response to membership's accountability to the enterprise. The conflicts arising from this negotiation then informs the community member's practice through a recursive, reflexive revision. Chapter Five, "Shaping Cultural Knowledge: Myth in Graduate Student Development," addresses one location in which practitioners mediate the cultural tension professional development provokes. Using participants' narratives of their pedagogical experiences, this chapter seeks to illustrate the recursive impact tutoring and teaching have on each other as graduate students work toward understanding their pedagogical choices and professional identity. The fluidity of knowledge construction, revision, and implementation between these sites of practice reflects the cul-

ture that lore promotes, as well as lore's postdisciplinarity. Specifically, the ways in which community members receive, use, and produce lore suggest that graduate students critically integrate diverse practices in an effort to both adhere to and question existing, mature community practices.

The idiosyncratic nature of this knowledge construction also makes it difficult for administrators and practitioners to isolate what educational activities and experiences have the greatest impact on burgeoning professionals. Participants in this study indicated that generationally shared knowledge is a key contributor to their understanding of standards and expectations, as well as the negotiation of cultural assumptions. This affirms that some aspects of professional development are, in fact, organically constructed. That is, we cannot replicate lore effectively and therefore can't really test it. Lore is ever-changing and frequently individualized within and among specific communities, remaining consistent but malleable. The organic or nebulous nature of lore, and its effects within community and individual development, brings to surface a long-standing debate surrounding the validity of lore and how we effectively situate and use it within Rhetoric and Composition. Since the publication of *The Making of Knowledge in Composition*, we have struggled with the legitimacy of lore's function and its efficacy in reflecting the state and nature of our work. The accumulated narrative body of knowledge lore presents is often empirically at odds with disciplinarity's structure and expectations.

To address the issue of disciplinary validity, I posit that our continued placement of lore as disciplinary practice restricts it, diminishing its cultural impact and location. I point to scholars, such as Susan Brown Carlton and Patricia Harkin, who speak to the postdisciplinary possibility of lore. Harkin is arguably the first to theorize lore as postdisciplinary at The Conference on College Composition and Communication in 1990, and later in her article, "The Postdiscipli-

nary Politics of Lore."[2] Susan Brown Carlton builds on Harkin's work, addressing lore in an effort to clarify Rhetoric and Composition's conceptualization of postdisciplinarity. Taken together, these scholars argue that lore both reflects and sustains disciplinary practices, expectations, and standards, but also critically questions those constructs. My findings suggest that the conflicts and tension represented in and through our lore help developing, or acculturating, practitioners (here, graduate students) find their footing within the profession, the classroom, and the writing center. These narratives promote a space in which the developing practitioners openly question, critique, accept, and deny institutional practices, assumptions, expectations, and standards as they work to reconcile conflicting cultural knowledge and practice in the process of earning membership in the professional community.

Although lore manifests in a variety of ways postdisciplinarily, within this study I focus on the use and cultivation of myths as an integral postdisciplinary element of social narrative and acculturation for the developing practitioner. Throughout the disciplines, our understanding of *myth* varies wildly; therefore, I connect multiple fields of study, rather than focus on a single area, to develop a framework for lore's *myth*. In Chapter Five, I situate myth using symbolic anthropology and the work of Clifford Geertz to establish that no culture is without its myths and that myths are vital to understanding a social system's evolution. In reference to culture, Geertz offers that myth "denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which [people] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (89). Later, he points specifically to myths as phenomena serving to synthesize a people's ethos and world-

[2] Harkin presented "Metacommentary on the Postdisciplinary Politics of Lore," in Chicago (March 1990); this was presumably a version of her article "The Postdisciplinary Politics of Lore," which appeared in *Contending with Words* in 1991.

view. To help extract lore's myth from our notions of sacred myth, I turn toward political myth and mythohistory as foundational analogies for lore's myth to reify lore's ideological purpose, as well as its historical and sociological applications. I look to the work of Christopher Flood, Emeritus Professor at University of Surrey known for his research in cultural politics, in locating ideological purpose and authority within a body of myth (such as lore's) that is produced, sustained, and ultimately revised until its dismissal by the community or its integration with historical accounts. Chapter Five specifically points to myth as a postdisciplinary site in which developing professionals (graduate students) negotiate the authority inherent to acculturating disciplinarily.

To help situate ways we might locate lore's myth and the impression it leaves on our practices, I include participant narratives of their initial practices and expectations as they entered the classroom and how these developed over the course of their graduate teaching experience. These narrative accounts indicate that myth remains an active part in the practitioner's reflective process, serving as either an unrealistic but encouraging positive representation or as a warning of what to avoid. Further, illustrating the generational propagation and revision these myths necessitate in order to remain vibrant cultural threads within our communities, participant narratives indicate tension among the myths guiding graduate student teachers' initial practices, their approaches to identity and authority, and their understanding of institutional culture. Focusing on this tension acknowledges the roles of writing center practice and community in reconciling the conflicts created as developing practitioners attempt to negotiate mythic perceptions with actual lived experience. As this study shows, once the graduate student practitioner identifies the myth, they begin revising their understanding of individual, communal, and cultural standards to

craft practices that correlate to the socially and culturally constructed notions of tutoring and/or teaching both within and outside of the academy.

Finally, Chapter Six offers potential pedagogical applications of this research, as well as avenues through which future research may expand this study's findings. Focusing on how administrators and program developers can facilitate the implementation of postdisciplinary reflective practices, this study concludes that developing practitioners engage myths as negotiable representations of academic culture and the culture of writing. The reflexivity of developing practitioners' reflection in relation to myth and practice suggests that fostering the cooperative goals, or shared mission, of various pedagogical and professional sites simultaneously promotes both individual and social experiential learning within a graduate student community of practice, providing opportunity for newcomers to critically acculturate.

CHAPTER TWO

DESIGNING A STUDY OF COMMUNITY: CONSIDERATIONS OF METHOD AND PURPOSE

Originally, this study broadly sought to address the reflective practices of developing graduate student tutors and teachers as they interacted with and learned from their community. The data collected suggests that Composition's lore is a vital component in the developing reflective practices of graduate students acculturating to the profession. As participants constructed their "stories" in interviews, the supporting data (surveys and portfolio artifacts) they provided helped construct a global context in which those narratives function. Moreover, because the analysis of data pointed more directly to the cultivation of community and the individual community members' negotiation of practices within the social construct, the intended use of the data also necessitated revision.

Although the study's original design more directly reflected the properties of case study with its limited participant body and period of data collection, the social turn suggested in the data brought its ethnographic foundation to the forefront of this study's structure. Shirley Brice Heath and Brian Street define ethnography as "a theory-building enterprise constructed through detailed systematic observing, recording, and analyzing of human behavior in specifiable spaces and interactions" (29). Conversely, Thomas Newkirk contends "the case-study writer draws on a core of mythic narratives—deeply rooted story patterns that clearly signal to the reader the types of judgments to be made" (135). The following chapters present both of these patterns, somewhat equally valued. This study seeks to build theoretical knowledge about the body of mythic narratives informing graduate student practices, both pedagogical and professional.

Bruce Berg notes that ethnography is a preferred "umbrella" for research practices because it "ensures the inclusion of a wide combination of elements, such as direct observation, various types of interviewing (informal, formal, semiformal), listening, document analysis (e.g. letters or newspaper clippings), and ethnomethodological experimentation," or, more generally, composing the "ethnographic record" (8). While collecting the data, my position as a graduate student teacher, tutor, and administrator within the community of study afforded opportunities to informally talk with participants, observe classroom and tutoring practices, and engage in shared or social professional development opportunities. The ethnographic umbrella under which this study resides acknowledges the inherent access to community and practitioner context provided through my shared community membership and peer status. In addition, an ethnographic research design foregrounds the theory-building accomplished in the following chapters. That is, to some degree, my "insider" community knowledge is inextricable from my researcher knowledge, which is facilitated by the data, informing this study's theory of professional and pedagogical development in a graduate student community of practice.

Further, with ethnography, researchers can only trust that the data will unfold in such a way as to point us in the direction of the participants' experiences. That is, while we can hypothesize an argument and focus generative material, such as interview and survey questions, to correlate with our concerns and interests, we cannot know what will prove to be the most significant points of inquiry until we begin to comb through the data. In *Seeing Yourself as a Teacher*, Elizabeth Rankin uses confessional reflexivity within her research, noting that meanings emerge from ethnographic data "only because [the researcher] wrestled them forth, constructing and reconstructing them continually" through sustained engagement with the texts constructed (125). She alludes to the disheveled appearance ethnographic research adopts in her description of the

texts influential to her research. As Rankin admits to the immeasurable influence of texts by scholars such as Donald Schön, Wendy Bishop, and Peter Elbow, and notes the chaotic method in which she kept researcher notes, she reminds us that "we must find ways to read our own teaching, our relationships with students and peers, as carefully and as subtly as we read the other texts we are used to studying" (126). To this end, organizing and coding interview data shaped itself as *annotations* readily associated with readings of our "usual" texts (articles, monographs, etc.). Admittedly, these annotations initially were chaotic to organize, as discussed later in this chapter, due to the recursive nature of ethnographic data analysis. Further, the immediacy of my involvement in the community as a peer occasionally complicated my ability to act as "outsider" during this process.

Historically, ethnographic research, particularly in the social sciences and in education, has relied on Herbert Blumer's theory of symbolic interaction, which explains that meaning is accounted for in two ways: people intrinsically tie meaning to things, events, actions, etc., *or* meaning is gradually accumulated and imposed onto things, events, actions, etc. While undertones of symbolic interaction are afoot in the data, this is not a predominant paradigm placed onto the participants and the data collected. Rather, Blumer's symbolic interaction, particularly in relation to community interaction and discourse, poses too great a set of complications for the researcher to overcome. In response, Manford Kuhn's alternative model of symbolic interactionism "argues for a deterministic model of social organization. From this perspective, social institutions are viewed as representing relatively stable networks of social positions accompanied by associated norms and expectations" (qtd. in Berg 13). Kuhn's schema allows for social interaction's alterations not only to the state of the subject's experience, but also to the state of the structure itself, aligning with the definition of postdisciplinarity established in this dissertation.

Also, symbolic interactionism more appropriately applies to the underlying structure discovered in the community on which this study focuses, particularly given that Kuhn's understanding of the community-subject interaction is dependent on the self investment of community members in the networked and social structures residing within the community and its environment. Kuhn's understanding of symbolic interactionism connects directly to Wenger's description of communities of practice as well as Lave and Wenger's research on and theory of situated learning, or legitimate peripheral participation, within academic communities of practice.

Complicating the use of Kuhn's approach for this study is Stephen North's claim that our field values the scholar over the researcher. North points to Robert Connors' article, "Composition Studies and Science," noting that Composition's reluctance to fully commit to empirical research, and our reliance on paradigms such as those constructed by Blumer and Kuhn, creates a "hodgepodge" of methodological creations, rather than a consistent paradigm under which Composition's research can function cohesively. Connors, however, claims the empirical research model that Kuhn works within does not align with the work of Composition researchers because "it has always been the task of rhetoricians to try to solve problems and not puzzles" (qtd. in North 360). While I concur with North that there must remain viable opportunity for empirically situated research to inform our body of knowledge, I more readily support Connors' assertion that "Empirical research has much to teach us, but it cannot teach us who or what we are" (qtd. in North 360). While this study began as both a quantitative and qualitative endeavor, it became increasingly clear through data analysis that the focus of this work required a more humanistic approach in order to reflect the dialectic between participant data and the findings presented in the following chapters.

A noteworthy complication within the method of this study results from the continued paring of participants included in the dissertation. Although this study collected and analyzed data from twenty participants' experiences as graduate student teachers, tutors, burgeoning professionals, and community members, I include seven participants' narratives as representative of the findings generated by the larger group. This creates a data representation that appears more closely related to case study than ethnography. The nature of the theory generated specifically from the participant narratives altered the purpose of the discussion of findings, or the report, so that selected participants are situated throughout this dissertation as illustrations of lore's disciplinary and postdisciplinary purposes in practice. Further reinforcing a case study structure, in Rhetoric and Composition, studies engaging the use, function, or development of lore tend toward this form, using potential quantitative data as foundational context and focusing the analytical report on narrative construction. In essence, we report on lore just as we transmit it—narratively.

The limited scope of location (or, the community on which this study is based) and its representation within this study's design arguably suggest that this research be framed as exclusively case study; however, I contend that the community-researcher relationship serves as a foundation for legitimately blending methods to incorporate elements from both ethnography and case study. Therefore, I considered this project an "ethnographic case study," similar to minieth-nography, in which varied data collection, analysis techniques, and theoretical perspectives congruent with both ethnography and case study were employed. Wendy Bishop describes minieth-nography as "something between trial runs, and pilot projects and actual microethnographies" (73). The research presented here aligns with Bishop's approximation of ethnography in that this study's theory generates potential practical application derived from microethnographic tech-

niques. However, labeling this research as a true microethnography is misleading in that, anthropologically and historically, we situate microethnography as relying on recorded spontaneous, mundane activity. While neither micro- nor mini-ethnography is entirely compliant with this study's research design and implementation, it is important to recognize the shared characteristics of each method.

The organic, conversational nature of the individual interviews and degree of eclectic reflexivity sought by the researcher further reinforce the ethnographic nature of this study's design;[3] however, the small sample of participants and the limited location and duration data collection situate this project in areas of case study and action research.[4] In response, identifying this as an ethnographic case study is most appropriate. The following chapter points to the initial research questions that helped generate the data, even if these are no longer in play, because it is vital to a comprehensive explanation of the nature of the raw material that data collection produced. The subsequent sections describing participant selection methods, data triangulation, and ethical considerations speak not only to the university's Institutional Review Board's (IRB) rigorous expectations this research, but also the diversity of representation which the findings aim to present. Finally, coding and analysis are addressed in the final section of this chapter to assist readers in identifying how the threads were "wrestled forth"—through critically reading annotations made to the "text" of the study's participants.

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[3] Heath and Street offer a succinct description of researcher reflexivity in *On Ethnography: Approaches to Language and Literacy Research* (122-125). "Eclectic" reflexivity attempts to blend aspects of confessional, theoretical, and cultural reflexivity in order to achieve transparency from a variety of angles or perspectives. Ideally, eclectic reflexivity permeates the body of the research, including the research design, each stage of data collection and analysis, the researcher, and the participants.

[4] Participants represented approximately 20% of the graduate teaching population in one Research University's Department of English. Data collection occurred over a period of approximately four months.

Research Questions

In the interest of recovering a shared mission among writing program and writing center initiatives and practices, the original research question guiding this study, in its broadest form, is "What connections exist between tutoring writing in a writing center and teaching writing in a classroom in relation to reflective practice?" To establish how twenty graduate students, with various teaching and tutoring experiences, situate and discuss their pedagogical and professional development, I approached each participant with a range of questions attending to the variety of pedagogical and professional spaces they engaged both before and during graduate school. The following served as my set of central research questions:

- How does writing center experience and background knowledge affect reflective practices in developing teachers' professionalization or teacher education?
- How does classroom teaching experience inform tutoring practices and tutor education?
- How does experience in a writing center contribute to the professional development of graduate students?
- How does tutoring and teaching simultaneously affect or alter a student's sense of peerness and authority?
- What benefits to professional development do students see in embodying both tutoring and teaching spaces?
- What connections exist in the practice of graduate students who perform both as tutor and as teacher?

Upon initial reading, these questions may appear broad and somewhat disconnected from the results presented in this dissertation; however, it is within these broadly situated questions that the practitioner culture in which graduate students within this study participated began to unfold its

narrative. The specific questions participants responded to in surveys and interviews can be found in the appendix. Of note, participant responses shifted the direction of the research so that the focus became predominantly the roles of community, lore, and reflection in developing graduate student pedagogy and professionalization. Rather than serving as the primary function of the data, the roles of tutoring and teaching became secondary, serving as elements or aspects of a greater picture. Due to the findings, the primary research question evolved into "How does lore inform the shaping of a practitioner community and its members' practices?"

Data Collection and Triangulation

After obtaining IRB approval, I collected data on graduate student tutor-teacher pedagogy, professionalization, and community membership using three types of research sources: electronic surveys, digitally recorded interviews, and artifacts from teaching portfolios. The methodological triangulation created by the use of these tools minimized researcher bias while promoting a deeper ethnographic understanding of the participants in relation to identity construction, perception of community and professional support, and pedagogical and professional development. Using various means of data collection denotes typical triangulation in a mixed methods study. In *The Research Act*, Norman Denzin discusses this a necessary but generic interpretation of the term and one from which research does not always benefit. That is, while research benefits from a variety of data types, triangulation also includes the application of multiple theories, methods, and researchers. Although I was the sole researcher in this study, I pursued Denzin's approach to triangulation. I asked participants to provide teaching portfolio documents to assist in understanding how they articulated their pedagogy and professionalization for an ad-

ministratively oriented audience.[5] Participants were instructed that these materials would not be used directly in the report of findings, but rather as preparation material for the researcher prior to the interviewing process and throughout data analysis. Moreover, the insight provided by the interview preparatory material regarding how participants professionally represented their practitioner and professional identity and development embedded a participant-generated reference to further ensure appropriate and ethical representation of each graduate student teacher. Finally, this research is informed by multiple theories addressing communities of practice, pedagogy, writing program and writing center administration, and tutoring to validate findings and analyses.

Interviews

A series of three individual interviews were conducted with each participant during a four-month period of time. Interview seed questions were provided to the participant one week prior to the scheduled interview to allow the participant time to reflect on the types of issues that might be raised in the interview and also aspects of their experience that they might want to explicitly discuss. Participants were aware that these were general questions and that the conversation might diverge from the planned inquiries, depending on their responses within the interview and to the surveys.

In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life,* Erving Goffman describes interviewing as an "encounter," in which there is a perceived social interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. Goffman's description of the research interview allows for rhetoric's notions of spectacle and delivery to take center stage; however, it over-simplifies the reflective action of the moment, specifically in relation to this study's aim. While there exists an undeniable performa-

[5] Portfolios are generated for an audience of department administrators and faculty members. Graduate students are encouraged to use this required activity as an opportunity to discover what is expected of them while on the job market and/or once they are in a position and must compose annual reports and portfolios.

tivity within each interview situation (a performativity that many of the study's participants discussed during the interviews), and the actual performance is tempered by my relationship with the individual as a fellow community member, the interviews conducted encouraged more reflexive and reflective interaction than Goffman permits. That is, potential hierarchical patterns among the participants and researcher were discouraged through a variety of means. Questions were open-ended and often led to discussions that served to construct new knowledges for both parties, if not only the researcher. Additionally, interview questions were not designed to identify inadequacies or exploit the position of the participant. Rather, questions were designed to establish a deeper understanding, often for the participant as well as the researcher, of the nature of our practice, our community, and our profession, as well as how we think and talk about these aspects of our everyday life in the academy.

The final individual interview asked the participants to reflect on their "teacher self," "tutor self," "professional self," and "scholarly self." Understanding how the participant views him- or herself in each of these furcated categories is vital to understanding the reflexive reflective processes of each participant and how each participant views the separate roles he or she negotiates as a graduate student within the Department of English. In addition, this interview included a prompt that asked participants to reflect on their involvement with this study. Selected responses are included in the text of Chapter Six, which illustrates potential practical applications of this study's method and findings.

Once the individual interviews were completed, a set of researcher-moderated group interviews were conducted over a six-week span in which five to seven participants met and held a conversation focused on the questions provided in the appendix ("Group Interview Questions"). The group interview was designed to allow observation of how participants with varying back-

grounds talked about their development and experiences, both professional and pedagogical. This final interview also provided insight to how each participant interacts with his or her community members. The conversation occurring during these interviews was helpful in understanding the context of the community of practice that graduate students create as well as how each participant interacts with this community and the reflection that comes from this setting.

Portfolio Artifacts

All graduate teaching assistants in the university's Department of English are contractually obligated to submit an annual teaching portfolio to the Director of Lower Division Studies during the spring semester. Artifacts required in the teaching portfolio at the time of data collection included: a current curriculum vitae; teaching philosophy; course reflection (one document that includes a brief reflective account for each course taught during the previous Spring, Summer, and Fall semesters); Professional Development Community (PDC) reflection;[6] student evaluations and syllabi for each course taught in the previous Spring, Summer, and Fall semesters; and, three sample student papers with instructor assessment.[7] Additionally, graduate students tutoring in the university's writing center were asked to submit an annual tutoring portfolio during the spring semester to the Director and Assistant Director(s). Tutoring portfolios included a current curriculum vita, tutoring reflection, and tutoring philosophy.

Participants volunteered various artifacts from their most recent teaching and tutoring portfolios to assist the researcher in developing a foundation of their pedagogy or pedagogies and their professional experiences. These documents were not required in order to participate in this

[6] This document is a brief reflective account of PDC meetings and events attended, community participation and/or support, and general comments or thoughts.

[7] The portfolio requires one sample each illustrating student writing evaluated at "high" (A-range), "medium" (B-range), and "low" (C-range). Attached to each sample is the department's standard grading rubric.

study, although all participants provided the requested documents. In addition to a curriculum vitae and a teaching philosophy, participants were encouraged to provide, specifically, the course and PDC reflections, and (when applicable) tutoring philosophy and reflection as these documents serve to illustrate the most immediate personal understanding and articulation of participants' individual practice and development. Again, these materials were used to gain insight into the participant's philosophy, pedagogy, and classroom experience, as well as identify when, if, and how participants were connecting tutoring and teaching experiences and practices. Understanding how a participant frames the profession, students, and the academy is crucial to developing a sense of each participant's construction and articulation of his or her teaching and professional identity within the context of community expectations and practices. Portfolio artifacts were reviewed by the researcher prior to interviewing each participant and were informally considered when analyzing data and reporting findings.

Surveys

The initial survey for this study, a demographic survey, was distributed to all graduate students in the university's English Department and served to determine participants. The demographic survey, found in the appendix, provided data regarding the student's program (M.A., M.F.A., Ph.D.; Literary Studies, Creative Writing, Rhetoric and Composition) and chronological information detailing teaching and tutoring experience.

After collecting the initial survey and selecting participants representing relatively proportional percentages of the program's disciplinary demographics, the first of three study-specific surveys was electronically distributed to each of the twenty participants one week prior to the first interview. This five-point scale survey (see Appendix; "Pedagogy Survey") is designed to provide the researcher with an understanding of how the participant structures his or

her classroom and what types of work occur in his or her classroom. This survey was completed by the participant and returned to the researcher prior to the first individual interview.

A follow-up pedagogical survey (see Appendix; "Pedagogy Survey 2") was electronically distributed to the participant immediately after the first interview was conducted. This four-point scale survey identifies three specific activities in teacher practice (assessment, conferencing, and classroom) and assists in situating how the participant perceives him- or herself when engaging various teaching situations or moments.

The third survey, focusing on professionalization (see Appendix; "Professionalization Survey"), was electronically distributed to participants one week prior to their second interview and returned to the researcher prior to the scheduled interview. This survey is designed to identify what types of professional development opportunities participants have experienced and if participants perceived a degree of faculty support regarding their professional endeavors.

The first and third surveys were reviewed prior to the first two interviews, respectively, so that participants could elaborate on their responses if necessary. Many participants supplemented their survey numerical responses with write-in material that explained nuances within their pedagogy or professional activity and development. This data informed the immediate interviews, as well as data analysis and narrative coding, but does not appear here because of its tertiary impact on the discursive findings.

Participant Selection and Description

The categories of participants include graduate students who tutored prior to teaching, graduate students who taught prior to tutoring, graduate students who began teaching and tutoring at the same time, and graduate students teaching without tutoring experience. Each category speaks to one potential experiential orientation within the larger social context of this research,

that of the effects of embodying multiple pedagogical and professional spaces in the early stages of practitioners' careers.

Twenty participants served as the initial subjects for this study. They represent approximately 20% of the graduate student teachers in the university's English department at the time of data collection. Of the participants, four were seeking degrees in Creative Writing; seven, degrees in Literature; and nine, degrees in rhetoric and composition. Each group of selected participants included both Ph.D. and M.A. or M.F.A. representation. While the participant percentage in relation to degree program does not correlate to the percentages of the department exactly, the numbers were determined with two qualifiers: 1) as this research specifically addresses issues in Composition and Rhetoric, graduate students pursuing degrees in the field composed the largest category of early selection; and 2) availability of certain categories of participants was limited in the number of volunteers. A representative number relative to the potential volunteers was determined once initial demographic surveys were returned and potential participants were identified. Additionally, this study called for participants with a variety of teaching and tutoring experiences. Seeking to explore how graduate students develop in reference to the potential impact of shared pedagogical sites and community, volunteers who were chosen offered diverse teaching experiences (such as high school teaching or teaching in alternative communities) and a range of amount of experience (some participants had just finished their first year of teaching when interviews were conducted, some had more than a decade of experience). The variety of experience yields a deeper understanding of the potential effects and variables, accounting for diverse graduate student experiences and knowledge bases, and also mimicking the rich complexities afforded in a community, which are reflected in its narrative.

For the purposes of this dissertation, seven participants were identified as representatives of the data and analytical findings. Reflecting the diversity of practice found in the larger group, six of the participants had tutoring experience; four with tutoring experience at the university's writing center, and two with previous tutoring experience at different institutions. Additionally, all participants included here were pursuing their Ph.D, with four in the field of Rhetoric and Composition, two in Creative Writing, and one in Literature Studies. The final selection process included only Ph.D. students and candidates because these participants had the reflective space needed to articulate the immediate, as well as sustained, influence or effect lore had on their practices, community, and disciplinary cultural knowledge.

Coding and Analyzing Data

Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman remind researchers that "to review a set of field notes, transcribed or synthesized, and to dissect them meaningfully, while keeping the relationship between the parts intact, is the stuff of analysis" (56). Succinctly, we cannot separate coding from analysis. Moreover, Joseph Maxwell points out that analysis simultaneously occurs throughout data collection; we cannot gather information without thinking of it in the context of our inquiry, design, hypotheses, or potential outcomes (95). Throughout the design and implementation of this project, my continued analysis generated multiple researcher "notebooks" (most kept digitally) in which I sought to make connections between the theory and scholarship as I read and re-read the practices of my community. These notes informed the types of questions I asked, the information I provided participants, and, perhaps most pertinent to this discussion, my approaches to data analysis and reporting.

As I began data collection, I correlated the incoming statistical data afforded through survey responses in an effort to understand the pedagogical and professional trends indicated by

participants. This material informed the follow-up questions presented to participants during our interviews and also helped determine the initial codes applied to interview data. While the survey material was initially intended as part of the study's report, the statistical data accumulated background information, rather than appearing statistically relevant to the study's findings, once the discursive analysis and findings began to take shape. As ethnographers often attest, not all of the results found in a single study will prove vital in the write-up; most of the data we engage remains tucked away in our notebooks and files but remains necessary in crafting our understanding of the social and cultural context of our participants. According to Harry Wolcott, "The critical task in qualitative research is not to accumulate all the data you can, but to 'can' (i.e. get rid of) most of the data you accumulate…. The trick is to discover essences and then to reveal those essences with sufficient context, yet not become mired trying to include everything that might possibly be described" (35). As the individual interviews became the primary focus of the research results, the information generated through the surveys and group interviews shifted into points of reference that ensured my ethical treatment and representation of data and participants.

Coding nearly 130 hours of interview data was aided immeasurably by the use of specific empirical research oriented software, notably, Atlas.ti. This software allowed me to interact with the video, rather than written transcripts for the first several passes through the data. Using the software's video annotation tool, each participant interview was viewed in its entirety and then reviewed and annotated with a minimum of five viewings.[8] The multiple viewings allowed me to

[8] A "viewing" constituted watching the complete body of interviews, often tagging segments within the digital form as well as annotating interview notes and participant files. As I more frequently returned to the primary participant interviews, or those used in this report, there were several partial-views that occurred as I oscillated between various findings and recursively revised the tags applied to video segments. The approximation of viewings offered in the timeline presented here represents the repetition required to foreground the prominent themes expressed within the data.

mark segments of the interviews with varied focused "readings," as well as search for trends within the footage. In coding and analyzing ethnographic research, it is important that researchers let the data guide them, rather than impose a predetermined set of expectations on it, and to approach the data in ways most amenable to the researcher's cognitive propensity of learning (i.e. numerical or linguistic approaches, metaphors or spatial analysis, etc.) (Bishop 118). As such, upon approximately the third review of interview data, I engaged the material specifically looking for indications of altered teaching and tutoring practices, explicit connections between lore and community development and between lore and individual practices, and general references to the type of community participants expressed they participated in within the department. These annotations pointed toward community of practice as an organizing social structure, as well as lore's role in participant professional and pedagogical self-orientation within their community and disciplinary culture. That is, participants explicitly pointed to the lore acts and narratives that informed how they individually viewed the academy, the profession, and the practices therein.

Annotating the visual material using key words and phrases assisted in identifying trends within participant narratives, selection of the participants included here, as well as segments within the interviews in need of transcription for final passes as the study's write-up was built. I found I could not maintain specified descriptive, interpretive, and pattern code viewings of the interviews. Rather, annotation activities oscillated among these categories organically. While it is unrealistic and unnecessary to provide a complete list of annotation terms used throughout the coding of data, a few examples pertinent to the final report include descriptive terms such as "lore building act," "lore altering/influencing classroom practice," "lore altering/influencing tutor practice," "blending practices," "community influence/pedagogy," "community influ-

ence/professional engagement," "myth/authority," and "myth/practice." These broad-stroke annotations were developed more specifically in later readings of the transcriptions and subsequent viewings of interview footage to include interpretive elements such as theoretical touchstones and references to foundation material (such as teaching portfolios and surveys). Correlations among participant data, or pattern coding, occurred more frequently toward the conclusion of data analysis, although when it truly began and ended is unclear due to the nature of ethnographic data analysis. Additionally, each set of codes required operational definitions to ensure ethical representation of participants and a cohesive, clear representation of each point of interest within the data.

Ethical Considerations

Conducting this study posed a series of ethical issues that required deliberation and clear action. As the researcher, I was positioned to gain a fairly deep understanding of twenty participants' pedagogy, professional development, experience, and political positioning within their fields of study (and within mine). Several participants had worked with me in the university writing center, in which I served in an administrative capacity. Additionally, some of the interview questions positioned participants to denote displeasures they experienced within their community and practices. To minimize the ethical discord in relation to participants, I offered them full disclosure of the use of data, the study's purpose, goals, method, and methodology, as well as access to the write-up. Further, participants were encouraged before each interview to decline answering any question that made them uncomfortable or that they simply did not wish to discuss. To help facilitate participant protection, all interviews were stored digitally, off campus, and never viewed in public locations. Moreover, access to material identifying participants was limited to the primary researcher and the faculty sponsor, both sanctioned by IRB. As a reflection of

the sustained primary ethical consideration and awareness of this study's conception and development, I ensured that participant identities were consistently protected, that they understood how their material was handled, and that they had full access to the findings at any time.

The Findings

This dissertation includes narrative excerpts from the participant interviews as illustrations of the ways members function in a community of practice and how their participation affects the sociocultural negotiation of lore and professional practices. Ethnography positions the researcher with access to a wealth of data that is not directly reported, but which nonetheless informs the researcher's conclusions. Although only seven of the research participants are referenced in the following chapters, the chorus of narratives provided by the full body of initial participants influenced and directed the study's findings as they are presented here. The following chapters focus on community of practice, myth, and lore because, within data analysis, these elements appeared to recursively and reflexively inform each other within the study's community of participants. Chapters Three and Four, respectively, illustrate lore's postdisciplinarity and the cultural negotiation developing professionals accomplish through it. Chapter Five focuses on one type of lore's postdisciplinary phenomena, myth, in order to illustrate that, regardless of location, lore positions practitioners to maintain reflective practices. The final chapter suggests a variety of methods through which administrators and researchers might engage the reflexivity of practitioner reflection in graduate student curricula and program development.

CHAPTER THREE

LORE AS CULTURAL NARRATIVE: THE POSTDISCIPLINARITY OF OUR STORIES

Understood as an important concept in the early development of composition theory and praxis, *lore* is our experientially bound and pragmatically grounded knowledge of what works, can work, or has worked in relation to the practices shaping both writing and how or why we teach it. Commonly associated with Stephen North's controversially foundational work, *The Making of Knowledge in Composition* (hereafter, *MKC*), lore was part of the mainstream conversation in composition studies throughout the 1990s, and remains a focus within various subspecialties as we work toward a conceptualization and application of lore's narrative structure. However, reconciling its failure to meet traditional standards and expectations is our greatest challenge in understanding lore's effective inclusion disciplinarily. Within a traditional disciplinary framework, lore's organic structure impedes systemic reproduction and also lacks objectivity and empirical rigor. Framing lore within the rigid boundaries established by disciplinary standards and expectations restricts lore's potential value because disciplinarity cannot serve an agenda other than the institution's. Through postdisciplinarity, which runs parallel and counter to disciplinarity, lore fluctuates between centered and marginalized locations, enabling practitioner access to cultural constructs such as authority, identity, ideology. Ultimately, the postdisciplinarity of lore acknowledges that experiential knowledge serves a social or cultural agenda rather than strictly that of the theorized "institution."

Historically, North presented lore as a way into revaluing the lost practitioner voice. Our scholarship soon uncovered that the ideological shifts needed for this valuation de-center institu-

tional expectations and prioritize the traditionally marginalized knowledge practitioners construct and share. Here, I point to calls to reclaim lore in order to critically examine lore as post-disciplinary knowledge-producing cultural phenomena.

Lore reflects our cultural positioning; rejecting or dismissing it only limits our access to the changes and opportunities our cultural narratives indicate. Increasingly over the past twenty-five years, we have worked to extricate its problematized foundation from its potential value in practitioner-research. Whether searching to "fix" the empirical methodological conflicts lore presents or denying its ability to adequately serve as an effective representation of practitioner culture extending beyond our local communities and locations, we attend to lore's institutional discord because of our awareness of its importance to our practices. Disclaiming the "stories" illustrating our best and worst practices, our theoretical triumphs and failures, our developing notions of what writing and the teaching of writing is or can be, minimizes the professional and cultural value we place on practice and practitioners.

In the tradition of the academy, or disciplinarity, we seek more stable incarnations of our mundane that might lead us to a fixed cultural recognition of what we do, why and how we do it, and the varying outcomes we experience in our diverse attempts to create a foundation of practical wisdom, practical knowledge. However, lore cannot be fixed or static; lore is as transient and dynamic as the practices and experiences of those who engage in sharing their stories and those who receive and build on them. In trying to structure lore disciplinarily, we ultimately desire a way to accurately historicize and reproduce or empirically sustain it. Yet, we do not need lore to precisely record every moment; we need a manageable framework within which to place lore that permits access to understanding and locating ideological shifts as they are reflected in our cultural narrative. Further, a paradigm recognizing lore narratives as cultural artifacts brings to

the surface how we individually and communally create, engage, and negotiate standards, expectations, and boundaries placed upon our field, specialties, scholarship, research, and classrooms by those both within and outside of our community and the academy.

In the early nineties, Patricia Harkin pointed to our struggle to disciplinarily frame lore, calling for a need to "develop new strategies that use the power of lore, that have a reasonable chance of earning the academy's institutionalized respect" (135). In part, we have been answering this call with attempts to articulate our understanding of lore in ways that are conscious of disciplinary expectations and the reality of practice. While a handful of scholars within our field have identified lore as postdisciplinary, we have not yet popularly accepted this positionality of our narratives. The problem with articulating lore as postdisciplinary is twofold: we have not clearly established what it means to be postdisciplinary and therefore struggle to apply it to existing constructs and practices; and, the taxonomy North laid out for us in *MKC* contradictorily structured lore so that determining its methodological function and validity has been an ongoing critical dilemma, calling into question our disciplinary viability as a field, specifically in terms of our scholarly rigor. Moreover, the kinds of changes Harkin requested, along with others more clearly identified later in this text, were philosophical and ideological; these changes required a shift in the tradition of the academy. While academic culture remains steadfast in many of its traditions, changes have begun to take hold within the field that I believe foster the recuperation of lore and ready it for new critical exploration.

Our scholarship has dismissed lore as a collection of simple stories; declared it untrue, ungrounded, unreliable, and uncritical ("neutral" is a term we tossed around more than a few times); disparaged and blamed its use for our continued struggle for disciplinary recognition. We have scattered our conversation into the corners of our publications, seemingly restricting lore's

form, application, and possibilities to that which we have already addressed and discovered. We quieted our talk and, as a result, stopped tinkering with it. Postdisciplinarity, however, presents an avenue through which to renew our desire to revise and revisit what lore is and can be, and also reconsider how it works. Here, I present a thematically organized review of our scholarly discussion of lore, beginning with a brief overview of lore as it is presented in *MKC* and the initial reviews of the text that provide the foundation for our field's two primary concerns with lore: its seeming inability to include and reconcile theory with practice; and, the lack of philosophical grounding needed to consider lore as valid methodology. Lore without theory is limited to the act of storytelling, but because we situate these "stories" as knowledge-making acts, we inherently and inextricably bind theory to the practice of lore. Lore is not only a methodology for understanding the intricacies of writing and the teaching of writing, lore is specifically a postdisciplinary methodology framing practitioner culture and writing culture, or collectively, the culture of writing.

Establishing a Definition of Lore and Our Earliest Criticism

When North issued *MKC* in 1987, he provided a well-defined, structured outline of what lore can and cannot be. According to North, lore is experientially bound and pragmatically grounded knowledge of what works, can work, or has worked in relation to the practices shaping writing, and how or why we teach it (22). With this, North positions Composition's lore as representations of our best practices, skirting the importance of the conflicts we face through experiencing our failures and also the reconciliation with these tensions that we seek as we share our experiential knowledge. Simply, North pays little attention, explicitly, to the conflicts lore creates, represents, and perpetuates, choosing instead to focus on its structure and potential for revaluing practitioners and their work. He includes three forms through which we shape lore:

talk, writing, and ritual. While each carries equal importance, North declares lore's *talk* as the "lifeblood" of our community. He states,

> …the Practitioners' community is primarily an oral culture: Practitioners talk about what they know and don't know, about what they have done, are doing, and plan to do, all the time. They talk to one another, to their students, to administrators, to Scholars and researchers, to spouses and friends, to anyone who will listen. They do so in all sorts of settings: in classrooms, of course, but also in offices, writing centers, teachers' rooms, hallways, cars, restaurants and cafeterias, conferences, restrooms, workshops. Whatever the value of ritual and writing, lore is manifested most often, and most fully, in the more ephemeral medium of the spoken word. (North 32)

For North, as for many of us in the profession, lore's talk is an unimaginably valuable tool from and by which we learn, construct practices, develop scholarship, and shape identity. However, that our talk is considered the most valued form of lore is somewhat ironic given that we are a community papered in the written word, which serves to communicate and archive not only our classroom practices and theoretical developments, but also our professional, disciplinary development.

North considers *writing* the least amenable path to recounting "valid" lore because our written forms oversimplify what is, in reality, chaotic and nonlinear. Writing is a "Practitioner's tool," offering, "under cover of pedagogical necessity, a selective, simplified, inevitably distorted version of a far more complex body of knowledge about what it is to learn or do writing"(North 30-31). For North, our grammars, readers, and textbooks—the written materials used to "propagate the 'faith' of literacy"—fail to reflect the complexities of what we do (31). Moreover,

these materials fail to encourage others to critically engage in how and why they are being taught, as well as how and why we teach it. North additionally posits that our scholarship, in great part, also serves as a component of our written lore in that we bring our research into writing classrooms, teacher education, and professional development. This expansion of written lore does not eliminate the lore's proselytistic nature; however, the juxtaposition of these types of written materials does more readily expose the ideological positionality of each type of written material.

I offer as example an expansion to both lore's writing and its talk that is predicated on the integration of current technologies in our practices. Our digital spaces alter our talk and writing in ways that help break down the barriers of text and location. Projects such as the Digital Archives of Literacy Narratives, and educative materials such as the National Writing Project and *Take 20* serve to concretely illustrate ways in which our talk and writing have progressively expanded since the publication of *MKC*. This sociocultural expansion helps realize the importance of revisiting lore and reclaiming its significance within the field. Moreover, this expansion also points to lore's adaptability and sustainability. As technologies have altered our professional practices, both in and out of the classroom, they have also transformed how we theoretically and geographically construct location. Lore is no longer bound, just as we are no longer bound, by the constraints in which North's material reality positioned our narratives. Many of the conflicts we expressed with local and global locations of lore, addressed later in this chapter, have found a degree of resolution in the alternatives that media construct.

North declares that our written lore is an extension of ritual's power. *Ritual*, standing as the third form of lore, is "those patterns of practice which acquire what amounts to a ceremonial status, and which get passed along mostly by example" (North 29). Ritual, then, serves as the

umbrella under which our actions are nurtured, even protected, and generationally transferred, regardless of their applicability. North lists three reasons for our rituals' endurance: they help construct practitioner "identity [and] are the outward signs of community membership;" for community non-members, rituals help signal "the foundation for the Practitioner's authority;" and, "rituals serve a logistical, practical function. […] Nobody could ever explain all that there is to know or do, so we simply do as those before us have done. It is the way" (30). Rituals are interpretations of membership and authority, then, not simply for those within the community, but also those on the periphery; they are manifestations through which we culturally transmit lore.

For decades we have, as a field, scrutinized how and why we use lore. Historically, lore has been viewed as a method used anecdotally to relay the mundane, or daily events, of our practice. Lore is merely a collection of road-worn bumper stickers on the vehicle carrying us to grander destinations offered by theory, practice, and the rigors of "valid" research. Throughout the pages of our journals, monographs, and collections, we see exemplars of lore in the forms of reflective narratives, dialog samples or excerpts, hypothetical situations, classroom or tutoring accounts, etc. We offer reviews and criticisms of textbooks, readers, grammars, collections, and monographs. We discuss the valor and successes, shortcomings and failures of course designs and pedagogical approaches. All of these serve to further explicate the more important elements of the work in hand; rarely do we witness significant import placed on the lore found in Composition's body of work. Yet, as we dismiss the narratives and the editorializing as mere flourishes whetting scholarship's dry prose, we bring these anecdotes and commentaries with us as we move throughout the academy, conferences, classrooms, and writing centers.

These forms, as North presents them, appear fairly comprehensive regarding how a social

structure (i.e. a community) shapes and conveys experientially constructed knowledge. That is, a community cultivates its lore through the means by which it symbolically represents and reproduces its practices, the expectations surrounding those practices, and the information or knowledge constructed by those practices. Providing the tenets to which lore must adhere, North states, "[…] anything can become a part of lore, nothing can ever be dropped from it"—a contradiction that has continually plagued lore's criticism and rests in two competing assumptions at work in this statement (24). First, the logical deduction: if anything can become lore, its all-encompassing nature renders it uncritical (Rankin; Phelps). However, what becomes lore is unpredictable because inclusion is based on what we value. Additionally, we make an egregious error if we contend that "anything" is synonymous with "everything" in this usage. The second assumption suggests that, because nothing can ever be dropped from it, lore must function as an ongoing, unregulated historical sprawl of experience and knowledge. This fallacy neglects cultural knowledge as a construct of communities, and their individual members, as they moderate and disseminate the information. In other words, cultural knowledge builds on itself. As members create new knowledge, they reconcile or resign existing knowledge that now appears less meaningful, pertinent, or applicable to contemporary conditions. This is not to say that "old" knowledges are erased; rather, they are reinvented.

In addition to the problematic interpretation of lore as an instrument perpetuating an "anything goes" mentality, one of the myriad problems with North's structured definition and explication is that he disguises lore's malleability with his artificial and somewhat conflicting taxonomy. In his delivery, contradicting his explicit decree that "Practitioners are always tinkering with things," North delineates lore's forms through that which is contemporarily available, claiming talk, writing, and ritual as the only viable forms through which we create and receive

lore (25). These limitations fail to create room for scholars to explore alternative forms or constructions, to play with the subject matter, the ideology, and the shapes lore *might* take.

MKC has incited multiple scholarly conversations regarding lore's methodological validity, disciplinary value, and conceptual viability in practitioner research. Scholars have critically approached lore in efforts to clarify its application and legitimize it in the eyes of practitioners, researchers, theorists, and the institution.[9] Quickly following the publication of North's text, from 1988 to 1989, our earliest criticism of lore developed in the reviews of *MKC* offered in three of our field's premiere journals: *College Composition and Communication, Rhetoric Review,* and *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*. These reviews established the primary concerns with which we would continue to grapple over the next two decades. The first of these reviews, offered by David Bartholomae, points to North's "imperialist's representation of the native," citing the categorical structure of *MKC* as constraining the diversity naturally occurring within, across, and between classrooms, departments, and institutions (225). Thus, the artificiality of *MKC*'s organizational structure, because it is reflected in North's treatment of lore, became the first critical marker in the political struggle lore has continued to face. Contributing to this particular conversation, Georgiana Donavin's review, in *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, called for a section in *MKC* labeled "The Rhetoricians," stating that denying rhetoric as part of composition serves to reinforce the "fragmentation in the discipline," an issue called to light in our field in the 1980s, and one we arguably continue to face today (387). While both scholars speak specifically to the shortcomings of *MKC*, their arguments carry over into the field's positioning of lore. That is, Bartholomae and Donavin point to the homogeneity of North's views as potentially reinforcing

[9] David Bartholomae, Cindy Johanek, Sue MacNealy, Patricia Harkin, Nancy Grimm, Alice Gillam, Neal Lerner, Irene Clark, Eric Hobson, Christopher Ferry, Muriel Harris, Gary Olsen, among others, serve as critical voices within our scholarship addressing lore.

misguided ideas of how Rhetoric and Composition functions disciplinarily. This reifies limited practitioner agency, rather than empowerment, leading to situating practitioner work as "neutral, value-free, and institutionally sanctioned" (Grimm 5).

Between the publication of *Rhetoric Review* and *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, *College Composition and Communication* published reviews offered by James C. Raymond, Richard L. Larson, and Richard Lloyd-Jones, all notable scholars North incorporates into *MKC*. Raymond cites as the text's primary problem a failure to recognize leading theorists' contributions to the knowledge constructed through Composition's research and believes this inadequacy limits the field's "fullest potential" (95). Larson, while celebrating North's call to revalue Practitioners as equally important and contributing members of the field, chastises the text's inability to present non-Practitioner researchers fairly. Specifically, he points to North's language throughout sections three and four ("The Scholars" and "The Researchers," respectively), indicating that North's overt aggression and confrontational attitude ultimately contradict his primary purpose, practitioner revaluation. Finally, Lloyd-Jones' criticism connects and illustrates both Raymond's and Larson's issues: North's failure to acknowledge practitioners' "systematic methods of observation" and "dual roles as historians or critics or philosophers" engaging theory through their research (99).

While each scholar supports the incorporation and exploration of lore as a valid means through which practitioners share their experiences and expertise, these initial reviews serve as the introduction to our early concerns with lore and provide a springboard for emerging conversations on practice and theory, methodology, community membership, authority, and institutional positionality. Most importantly, North casts lore foremost as a practitioner tool, illustrating the segregation *MKC* imposed on the field as well as bifurcating theory and practice, thus limit-

ing lore's ability to integrate or interface with theory and perpetuating the momentum driving most of our issues. Specifically, our initial concerns with North's concept of Composition's lore and the text in which we find it so meticulously delineated and illustrated revolved around theory, ideology, and practice; arguably, these remain the locus of our tension with lore.

Reconciling Theory and Practice with Disciplinary Lore

Debate surrounding theory and practice became prevalent in scholarship throughout the 1990s and, while a few of the issues have been resolved, many remain prominent today, if not in our scholarship, at least in our talk. As this debate merged with our scholarly treatment of lore, we begin realizing that if lore truly neglects theory, as early reviewers suggest, then it disavows theory's impact on practice, which disavows the existence and significance of praxis. Although many scholars have approached the theory/practice dilemma, John Schilb, Elizabeth Rankin, and Louise Wetherbee Phelps point directly to lore's positionality within the struggle to reconcile and illustrate the connections between practice and theory.

Schilb, spotlighting the philosophical dilemma existing within our ambiguous terminological constructions of "theory" and "practice," claims North's conceptualization of practice "looks backward, denoting habitual acts," and reflects "coping with novel contemporary events" (94). Schilb counters North's approach to practice, offering an alternative understanding that situates practice as *potential* and asks us to consider it as "[…] trying something out with an eye toward possibly adopting it and/or getting better at it," tinkering with it along the way (94). Implicitly arguing that practice requires reflection situates it as more than simply repetition of historically successful techniques or approaches; rather, practitioners consider past accounts and figure out how to improve them while taking critically informed risks. Expanding the purpose of practice's temporality permits us to "shuttle back and forth between the immediate occasion and

larger context [to] simultaneously look at past, present, and future" (96). Schilb sees our practice, then, as a reflexive and recursive—multipuntal and organic—means through which we can frame our field's narrative and those who create it. Contextualizing this description of practice with lore, the juxtaposition of event and meaning that Schilb offers in his expanded conceptualization of practice requires theoretically informed narrative accounts—lore—to reflectively understand the temporality each situation inherently carries. When we seek to move freely without limiting ourselves to chronological or temporal structure, such as the "shuttling" Schilb suggests, practice becomes a reflective cultural marker, rather than an atheoretical static action in time.

Rankin, also concerned with the importance of acknowledging reflection's role in practice, brings into consideration the impact of our communities. Suggesting that both practice and theory are extensions and reflections of our community engagement, she urges our field to "draw stronger parallels between the ways practitioners, scholars, and researchers construct knowledge within their own communities" (261). She notes that North views practitioners as isolated from disciplinarity's scrutiny, unlike researchers and scholars, and asserts that what "works" is "dependant on the social context" (262). This makes the challenge for practitioners, then, to communicate and justify what it means to say something "works" and to delineate the contextual rhetorical markers needed for that success. This articulation occurs when we bring our classroom knowledge, our practitioner knowledge, into the realms North delegates for researchers and scholars. Bridging these communities, practice and theory reflexively work to inform each other, as well as inform practice as inquiry.

While Rankin calls for stronger connections between the actions of varying communities functioning in Composition, Phelps positions the conflict between practice and theory as a philosophical dilemma, directing "Practical Wisdom and The Geography of Knowledge in Compo-

sition," toward a more pragmatic discussion of the interrelatedness of theory and practice through lore. She illustrates the demarcation of practitioner from theorist and, arguably, reflects the growing frustration the field experiences in uncovering viable ways to revalue practice, practitioner knowledge, and lore. Additionally, Phelps asserts that theory and practice can not reach reconciliation until the discipline (as well as the academy) values practitioners as "thinkers, in a field that set out to reform teaching by grounding it in theoretical knowledge" (864). She adds, "Seen this way, the current tensions between theory and practice, and their inarticulateness to one another, are not accidental, occasional, or temporary obstacles to progress. Rather, they provide essential clues to the nature of the field" (864). Practitioner response to theory, then, is concerned secondarily with the conceptual nature of practice and theory's relatedness and primarily with the institutional or disciplinary response to the material action of each. Therefore, before achieving resolution in lore's theory-practice debate, we must find disciplinary value in practitioners and practitioner work. Much like the perceived requirements for the disciplinary legitimacy and recognition of lore, this repositioning of values requires ideological changes in the academy that necessitate time to take root, let alone tangibly manifest meaningful application.

Approximately ten years after Schilb, Rankin, and Phelps all position lore as theoretically grounded, Paula Gillespie addresses our persistent concerns that lore devalues or leaves no place for theory or theory-building; with this, she seeks to connect theory, practice, and lore-as-methodology. In "Beyond the House of Lore," Gillespie contends that we do have locations in which we can examine theory's role in lore. Writing centers, the work and research developed within and from these sites, offer practical space in which to explore the uses and potential of lore, explaining that often the ongoing education of writing center community members is relatively unstructured and often exists in moments of "on-the-job training" (40). The nature and

politics of writing centers invokes both the connections between communities Rankin calls for and a site in which practice is centered as a learning experience. Speaking to lore's inclusion of theory, Gillespie illustrates its recursive nature, noting that when inquiry leads from lore to theory, generates research questions, and returns again to lore, what results is a body of lore that is recursively informed by and informing theory and theory-building (41). Not only does Gillespie identify a location for lore's application, she leads us toward a paradigm that values practitioner experience. In writing center scholarship, our experiential knowledge—our lore—becomes integral to the body of knowledge creating our research, theories, and scholarship. Recognizing practitioner value through the concepts regulating disciplinary standards, holding lore to these standards, and acknowledging its generative purpose, then, touches on two primary concerns in lore's methodological debate: illustrating how lore might generate connections between practice and theory, and how we might identify and use this more robustly articulated version of practitioner experiential knowledge.

Lore's Methodological Function

Lore without the impetus of theory can achieve no greater status than simple "stories." When we position our work in contexts outside of our specific departments or field, the possibility that these stories might serve as a relevant and reliable foundation to our scholarship presents an ideological concern. Consider how our practices are translated throughout our institutions via programs such as writing across the curriculum or writing centers. Often, members within these communities tasked with negotiating and cultivating an institution's culture of writing employ incarnations of lore imbued with theoretical foundations and experiential markers to clarify expectations, techniques, and intentions serving to shape the interdisciplinary purposes and goals of writing within specific environments or rhetorical situations. Yet, scholarship and educative ma-

terial cannot stand on anecdote, alone, if we hope for institutional recognition and validation of practitioners and our practices; the story or narrative must be imbued with recognizable and relatable significance (i.e. theory) in order to transfer meaning from the isolated moment or location to a teachable history or culture. Despite our acknowledgement of the interdependence of theory and practice (praxis), our hope to critically engage lore as a valuable methodology remains severely restricted until we place legitimate, institutional value on practitioner knowledge and research. The recent push toward the "everyday" of our practice and locations as we seek new avenues in theory and research encourages us to see lore not merely as a method but as a methodological foundation on which to rest critical and valid engagement with our communities in our scholarship.

We have spent nearly twenty years debating lore's use as a grounding methodology within the field of Composition and have not yet reached resolution. The publication of North's *MKC* offered our field a definition of lore but, as scholars have gleefully pointed out, failed to articulate its place and value. For example, Sue MacNealy's *Strategies for Empirical Research in Writing* includes lore, positioning it as a tertiary, uncritical method for handing down observationally-developed knowledge that she compares to "parenting practices" (8). Discussing the problematic issue lore inherently carries—its lack of empirical data to support the generational wisdom it represents and propagates—she identifies it as a "valuable resource," particularly for new teachers, but insists that we not "valorize or denigrate" lore for the sake of our discipline's integrity. Rather, we should see it for what it is and can be, a representation of our field's oral tradition offering contribution "to the building of coherent theory in [our] discipline" (10). In other words, we can and should value lore for its contribution to our body of theory but, for our field's disciplinary security, we must caution against giving it too much recognition. Conceiva-

bly aligning with North, MacNealy's views of lore relegate practitioner knowledge to a local, generational space unfit for meaningful scholarly recognition, but not without its merits.

Additionally, Alice Gillam postulates North's role in perpetuating the struggle for lore's legitimacy, noting that he positions lore as "driven by pragmatic logic and verified by experience; on the other hand, he argues that 'writing is, by definition, the medium least amenable to representing the results of Practitioner inquiry' (52)" (xix). Gillam illustrates that North's ambiguity has brought the value of lore-as-methodology into question, as well as complicated lore's ability to garner valuable—legitimizing—space in our publications. Further complicating lore's methodological application, North states, "when Practitioners report on their inquiry in writing, they tend to misrepresent both its nature and authority, moving farther and farther from their pragmatic and experiential power base" (54). His claim that practitioners should not or cannot be trusted to act according to academic or disciplinary expectations affirms practitioner devaluation and renders the use of lore uncritical.

Standing out as an initial proponent for refiguring lore in ways that recognize its constraints while utilizing its potential, Robert Murphy posits the need to represent teacher knowledge (lore) in a manner more durable than simply unorganized, handed-down tales of moments in practice. He seeks treatment of lore that addresses its scholarly significance and also maintains the aesthetic value narrative inherently carries. He states, "Teacher knowledge is represented […] in one of its most important forms in the stories we tell ourselves and perhaps our fellow teachers and students of the moments in our teaching and learning, moments in which we were thrilled or troubled or surprised by the most complicated joy" (469). Confusing these stories with case studies or suggesting that they are somehow empirical in nature—a requirement for disciplinary methodological validation—further complicates and degrades the purpose of the nar-

ratives, according to Murphy. Arguing for the recognition that our stories must not be conflated with the type of scholarship a case study method attempts to extend, he states, "The meanings and methods of the stories we tell are unlike those of any systematic mode of inquiry [and] a renewed appreciation of them will require acceptance of their non-scientific, essentially literary character" (471). That is, disciplinary expectations must change ideologically in such a way that legitimately acknowledges "othered" ways of knowing and constructs of knowledge-making, such as practitioner knowledge and lore.

Similar to Murphy's approach, Phelps points to the reflective, aesthetic use of lore in an attempt for institutional recognition of lore's legitimacy. Noting that when, "an expertise based on experience that is understood as a complementary form of knowledge" is recognized, lore moves beyond "stories" and becomes "art" (869). The field's struggle with lore, according to both Murphy and Phelps, focuses on how to situate lore meaningfully when it is parsed to two levels of experience: one that is presentational and prescriptive[10] and one that is, apparently, metadiscursive. The former is disciplinarily situated with relative ease as it aligns with institutional expectations; the latter, however, resists standard or traditional structure and identification and thus proves more daunting to reconcile within disciplinarity. To point, as this study's participant narratives unfolded, increasingly pointing toward lore's influence, and the focus of the study shifted toward a specific form of postdisciplinary lore (i.e. myth), I found myself attending to the "art" of myth while focusing on the practical connection it holds with reflective behavior in graduate students' sociocultural negotiation. While postdisciplinarity does not seek to identify lore as "art," it does speak to moving beyond lore-as-story.

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[10] Phelps notes presentational forms as anecdote, fable, demonstration, model, and exemplar; and, prescriptive forms as maxims, proverbs, and lists of instructions (869).

Recall Patricia Harkin's claim that we must find new ways of employing lore if it is to garner institutional respect and legitimacy, previously noted in the Introduction of this study. Admitting that this will "take nothing less than getting the academy to change its understanding of knowledge production," Harkin nods to Murphy's and Phelps' earlier call for systemic acceptance of the aesthetic value that sustains lore and separates it from case study (135). Harkin and Murphy articulate one of the greatest concerns and limitations lore faces—gaining recognition as a valid way of knowledge production in a system that does not, perhaps cannot, reconcile the organic nature of the process with the rigor of scholarly expectations and standards. Although Harkin refuses to ignore some of the larger problems within North's text that scholars such as Bartholomae, Lloyd-Jones, and Raymond have given attention, her primary interest lies in uncovering ways in which we might use lore to illustrate the power of practitioner knowledge. Through this claim, Harkin shifts the responsibility from North and *MKC* and enables us to recognize our role in reducing lore to a tertiary method; in our efforts to maintain the institutional "party line," we ignored the philosophical foundation that permits lore to function as methodology. As a field, we are justifiably reticent to pose risk to our status within the academy—and attempting to critically examine and apply our experiences should not require such risks. In our effort to meaningfully situate lore as methodology, we are again faced with the realization that the change needed to validate our narratives is a systemic revision necessitating time—ideological revolution cannot happen over night.

Another important methodological complication of lore found in *MKC* is North's positioning of it as both un- or non-reflective and undisciplined or uncritical. North's suggestion that we have no codes, methods, or abilities to distinguish between practitioner knowledge and mere assertion or assumption supports his claim that all things can become lore but undermines his

primary argument to revalue practitioner knowledge. In response to this contradiction, Rankin asserts that practitioner knowledge is not unlike scholarship or research in that "practitioners share with scholars and researchers the same method of validating their claims to knowledge" (263). She adds that codes do exist and we are aware of them, even if we have not or will not articulate them to the specific degrees North attempts in *MKC.* Similarly, Phelps suggests that for the community engaged in creating and using lore, North's statement removes the authority to serve as critical consumers, if not also guardians of the rigorous ideals and ethics that the field and the academy both seek to uphold. Using Donald Schön's work on reflection, Phelps insists that our ability to individually and communally act reflectively and reflexively promotes the critical space in engaging and theorizing lore that North fails to account for or permit. In short, Rankin and Phelps individually argue that our evaluative ability with lore takes greater meaning when we acknowledge that practice is social and reflective, and therefore critical. Rankin offers that, "Good practitioners, *critical* practitioners, know that there are many ways to develop a dialectic of the mind" (267). However, many of these "ways" remain unarticulated and thus struggle for institutional legitimacy.

To encourage the systemic change needed for lore's recognition as methodology, Murphy proposes a shift in our scholarly focus of lore from its meaning and effects to its purpose. Focusing on lore's purpose suggests recognition of the disciplinary and institutional value lore holds for our history, as well as our present. That is, if we understand lore's purpose as a collection of experientially-based narratives representative of the everyday "work" of the practitioners who disseminate it, then it can also serve as a chronicle, an accumulating body of snapshots illustrating the development of our practices. With this, we see the foundations for positioning lore as

cultural artifact or phenomena that influences not only how we perceive ourselves and our communities, but also how we engage our practices and participate in a sociocultural dynamic.

Expressly, lore serves to shape present culture and acts as one type of historical record. Lore produces valuable cultural knowledge and is potentially capable of legitimately articulating less temporally situated accounts of practice when contextualized as theoretically influenced abstractions. That is, when we recognize that lore functions as a postdisciplinary method in which we can begin to extract the similarities and differences of experience in an effort to contextualize the cultural knowledge we create, develop, and disseminate, we are simultaneously admitting that lore inherently includes additional frameworks (such as other methodologies and theories; feminist methodology or speech act theory, for example) that are a part of the knowledge of the narrator, or practitioner. To illustrate, I listen to a tutor recount a tutorial that took place the previous day. Within his account, I can identify his knowledge of peer tutoring, performativity, and, as he reconstructs the session and his hypothesis of the effect on the student writer, case study. His narrative creates a lore artifact using practice, theory, and method that now becomes part of my knowledge base, informing my practice and understanding of disciplinary culture. If we are created by the knowledge we accumulate and identified by how we use or engage this within ourselves and in our environment, then it stands to reason that our lore is merely an extension of us, a reflexive reflection of our momentary being. Ultimately, how we practice, report, and engage lore affects not only our pedagogical and theoretical knowledge, but also our positionality within the academy.

Recuperating Lore in the Postdisciplinary Academy

Addressing lore as postdisciplinary necessitates a more detailed discussion of what it means to be "postdisciplinary" within Composition Studies. Multiple explanations exist across

the disciplines, and we have yet to accept a singular concept of postdisciplinarity; perhaps we should not come to agreement. For the purposes of this study, postdisciplinarity is a flexible space, cooperatively and critically adapting alongside disciplinarity to reflect changes in the culture of the academy. Among the scholars who have attempted to situate this framework for our field, David Shumway includes theoretical, interdisciplinary, and alternative marginal formations in his distinctions of postdisciplinarity. He explicates four constructions of postdisciplinarity: a theoretically grounded understanding incorporating "phenomenology, semiotics, and poststructuralism;" a construction that is synonymous with interdisciplinarity; a combination of the two; and, a final understanding "locating itself on the margins, not only of disciplines but of the university itself" (8, 9). His critique of the first three constructions asserts that the fault with theoretical association is that "there are no signs that theory is actually producing a new system of knowledge," and conflating post- and interdisciplinarity speaks to specialization, rather than a move away from disciplinary confines, standards, and expectations (8). Shumway claims the initial three constructions convey the disciplinary tradition because they require "a counterweight to other centers of power" (9). The complication arising from his final conceptualization of postdisciplinarity is not unlike that seen in the others: when located on the margins, it's difficult to materially realize or access the power required for changing the system. Shumway foreshadows the ultimate postdisciplinary formation as "a response to changing intellectual, technological, and social conditions," citing "the unembarrassed pursuit of profit" as the postdisciplinary academy's ideology (11).

Alternatively, Susan Brown Carlton, situates postdisciplinarity within Shumway's third construction of theory and interdisciplinarity, but does not specifically align with Shumway's critique on this framing. That is, Carlton compares postdisciplinarity with poststructuralism,

claiming, "Poststructuralists do not reject the insight of structuralism but identify within structuralisms very assertions a need to think beyond its limits, the need to reject structuralism as an origin and a *telos* by rethinking its cultural implications and methodological blind spots" (79). Including lore in a list of exemplary postdisciplinary behavior already functioning in the field, Carlton notes, "postdisciplinary practitioners think and act beyond the limits of traditional discipline" (79).

Additionally, Carlton picks up the conversation started by Rankin and pursued by Harkin: what happens to lore when Composition is seen as postdisciplinary? Her premise is that a postdisciplinary construct can alleviate a degree of the conflict surrounding the two features North considers the most potentially damaging to our field: "methodological difference and the devaluation of practitioner lore" (Carlton 83). Carlton points to Rankin and Harkin and connects their work to Janice Lauer's "Rhetoric and Composition: A Rhizome." Through Lauer, Carlton provides rhizomatically-structured solutions to dilemmas each posits. Rankin's call toward a restructuring or reframing of practitioner knowledge is both agreeable and dangerous, leading Carlton to suggest, "A rhizomatic structure runs counter to the prevailing norms of disciplinarity. It constitutes a material, extratextual critique and alternative to a university norm" (82). Here, Carlton implies the malleability afforded in a postdisciplinary approach provides the types of opportunities needed to construct Rankin's "dialectic of the mind."

Turning her attention to Harkin's "Postdisciplinary Politics of Lore," Carlton suggests Harkin's example of using teleconferencing as "a new material practice" promoting the revaluation of practitioner knowledge and lore "appeals to disciplinary, university codes of authority [that] allow a postdisciplinary practice to be smuggled in under the very gaze of the disciplinarians" (83). Carlton's assessment that Harkin's practical application affords our field the opportu-

nity to turn the institution's value system on itself while concealing postdisciplinarity is equitable as it aligns with Shumway's final postdisciplinary construction, yet the underlying deviousness suggested in this reading is incongruous to that which we, as practitioners, are trying to achieve. That is, if we are going to revalue lore, and therefore practitioner voices and knowledge, and if we hope to achieve the institutional changes Harkin suggests, finding valid, forthright channels into and through these shifts will likely render far more enduring and sustainable change than pirating our way through the academy. To this end, as I use it here, postdisciplinarity speaks to our shared critical, reflective interaction with our practices and identities as we seek new ways of thinking, doing, and being that signal a culturally negotiated, evolving disciplinary position.

Both Shumway and Carlton bring to light valuable readings of postdisciplinarity and its potential function or application in Composition Studies. More importantly, however, we must see how these readings create our disciplinary expectations of "postdisciplinary" and how it applies to our lore, its applications and complications. Postdisciplinarity's various constructions hold in common a primary concern with identifying cultural implications tied to traditionally recognized disciplinary standards and questioning how we might effectively alter, resist, or embrace those standards to reflect the dynamic nature of education and the academy. That is, postdisciplinarity runs parallel and counter to disciplinarity, fluctuating between centered and marginalized locations to best enable access to power and authority, and ultimately serves a social or cultural agenda rather than that of the theorized "institution." In its best practices, postdisciplinarity is malleable, functioning both irenically and agonistically with tradition and using socially created markers to critically engage and negotiate cultural expectations and standards. We cannot effectively situate lore's organic, fluctuating structure or its cultural agenda firmly within disciplinarity because lore is informed by agents and experiences located both within and outside of

the academy. Lore is postdisciplinary in its representations and reflection of sustained cultural negotiation.

Schilb's explication of theory reflects the interdisciplinary constructs emerging in the field in the 1990s, and points toward postdisciplinarity. Noting the prevalent belief that theory "will enable us to coalesce as a field," Schilb believes the interdisciplinary influences through which we shape theory, "challenges the notion of disciplinary borders" (92). The importance of disciplinary status not only leaves the field reticent to challenge existing notions of authority or validity, it also helps locate one of the primary conflicts we face in reconciling theory and practice. Lore's struggle for legitimacy within disciplinary expectations and limitations reflects its cultural agency, its ability to both convey and revise how we situate practice, practitioners, and the culture of writing.

In focusing on a particular location where we engage lore, Nancy Grimm implicitly speaks to the postdisciplinary nature of lore as she challenges the perceived neutrality of "talk" and returns to the question of empirical rigor. In "Contesting 'The Idea of a Writing Center': The Politics of Writing Center Research," Grimm posits that writing center experiences and research are "politically and ideologically charged," stating, "writing centers have much to teach the profession about how difference is managed in the academy and about how students' subjectivities are constructed by educational discourse" (5). She further notes that while North declares writing centers as teacher-support locations that are not determined by the curriculum, centers are, to unavoidable degree, contextualized by the curriculum, and therefore by the institution (5). This is not meant to suggest a contextualization limited by disciplinary or interdisciplinary standards; rather, writing centers are contextualized by the culture of writing embodied and cultivated within the academy as well as outside of it. Contributing to this is the web of experiences

brought to the location by the people within it. As with classroom communities (but perhaps more overtly expressed), members of the writing center community and the writers engaging the space are the unpredictable, politicized variables within lore that limit our ability to situate it disciplinarily. This infers a postdisciplinary situating of lore in practitioner development, both for tutoring and teaching. She suggests that writing center research is limited because of its failure to explicitly articulate the evaluative, reflective connections afforded by writing center experiences and practices illustrating the "effect of our curriculum and teaching practices" (5). To be clear, Grimm does not support the use of lore because of the neutrality in which we continue to frame it. Grimm's ideal goal for writing center research, and I offer as an extension Composition research, does not focus on improving practices and institutions, but challenging them in the interest of uncovering subjectivity and identity in relation to our existing practices. The local and administrative (if not also empirical) applications of lore within institutions potentially work to inform the field's and the institution's culture of writing with both political and philosophical recognition of writers' experiences. This assertion indicates that our narratives—our experience and our knowledge—can and do suggest key movements in identity construction, institutional ideology, and praxis, particularly when we accede this type of knowledge is culturally bound and postdisciplinary.

As our scholarly conversation and concerns with lore developed, we see lore shift from a prominent place in our leading field-wide journals to more specialized locations, such as writing centers or writing program administration. The constraint afforded by the limited audience of these texts and spaces signals lore's gradual, if not quiet, move to the margins. This is to be expected of a conversation that reached no clear solution in a quarter century, and yet we cede critical cultural understanding if we resign to lore's complications as terminally unresolved or

irreconcilable. Lore is present in our everyday—our classrooms, hallways, conference rooms, listservs, and scholarship. We rely on lore to help educate and professionalize new colleagues and teachers. We draw on lore to articulate or confirm practices, theories, notions, and gut-feelings. We celebrate our experiences and the knowledge constructed by them, but only insofar as the institution permits. In many ways, we continue to quietly, surreptitiously reinvent how we meaningfully share and incorporate lore across disciplinary spaces. Silencing our authority and agency as practitioners, our reticence as scholars to acknowledge this material as lore perpetuates the devaluation of practitioners, practitioner research, and practitioner knowledge. Postdisciplinarity encourages the recognition of our practices and theories in relation to the culture of writing we work within and shape. Moreover, it acknowledges the dynamism of what we do, how we do it, and why. With this, lore is no longer looked at as a partial methodology or a supplemental method; rather, we can contextualize lore, its strengths and its weaknesses, as a postdisciplinary approach for grounding research that is continually in a fluid state of reflecting the practitioner, the practice, the institution, and the discipline within individual, collective, and collaborative experiences.

In the next chapters, I situate lore's postdisciplinary role in both shaping community and individual practice. Chapter Four, "Practitioner Community, Community of Practice: Development and Narratives of Experience," discusses the importance of shifting our social framework into a community of practice and illustrates how a community of practice functions in reference to lore's impact on members' experiences and knowledge. Here, I point to the narratives of key participants as examples concurrently demonstrating that lore helps developing practitioners make key choices in professionalization and pedagogical application, and that communities of practice are a necessary construct in revaluing practitioners.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRACTITIONER COMMUNITY, COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: DEVELOPMENT AND THE NARRATIVES OF EXPERIENCE

Much of the praise for North's *The Making of Knowledge in Composition* centered on the work's focus on practitioners. North calls for revaluating practitioner work and knowledge because, as he discusses at length in "The 'Revolution' of Composition," practitioners have carried much of the public blame for the state of writing education for (currently) more than fifty years (*MKC* 322). Contemporaneously with our lore conversation, our social structure (discourse community) also came under analytic scrutiny. While we heralded North's claim for practitioner recognition, we questioned the ability of discourse community to uphold the social constructivist ideals on which it is built. The scholarly conclusion we have reached, according to Paul Prior in *Writing/Disciplinarity*, is that we need not question the social nature of what we do, nor need we question that what we do is social in its nature; rather, we need to question how we have framed and "conceptualized the social" (5). Shifting our field's social structure or framework from one that narrowly privileges language to one that privileges the *work* that its members engage promotes, among other things, the recognition and value many supporters of lore have called for over the past thirty years. Moreover, when we rethink how we frame community, we rethink those who create it; this social shift promotes reconceptualizing how we position ourselves within culture and possibly how we explore, analyze, and discuss academic culture and the culture of writing.

Clifford Geertz distinguishes between culture and social structure, stating, "Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their

action; social structure is the form that action takes, the actually existing network of social relations" (145). Culture and social structure, then, participatorily engages the same experiences, actions, discourse, and rituals, but from different positionalities. Geertz states, "[culture] considers social action in respect to its meaning for those who carry it out, [social structure] considers it in terms of its contribution to the functioning of some social system" (145). The basic understanding Geertz offers of both culture and social structure informs how the individual within the community and the community, itself, are situated within the culture.[11]

With a similar understanding of culture and society as that which Geertz presents in his work, Joseph Harris addresses Rhetoric and Composition's early forays into sociocultural research in "The Idea of Community in the Study of Writing." Harris notes the importance of acknowledging the distinctions within "community" and our talk of what is "social," with regard to the rhetorical power and individual subjectivity each term carries. That is, when we approach sociocultural research or theory within our field, we must attend to the implied politics each framework maintains. Coupling Harris's work with Geertz's, we establish that, although terms such as "communal," "social," and "cultural" have shared meanings and intentions, each positions the individual member with distinct and various degrees of authority, agency, and ideological identity. Harris calls our attention to the fact that the individual is not always subject to empowerment within these structures, but may often experience an oppressive silencing as they maneuver within and among their communal and social groups. Therefore, when we discuss

[11] This representation of the strata comprising culture is a highly condensed, oversimplified model due in part to the vast work offered in the field of Cultural Anthropology focusing on the differentiation between culture and social structure as well as cultural formations. The intent of this study is not to provide a thorough introduction to anthropological models, theories, or scholarship; rather, I use this generalized understanding to establish an intellectual common ground from which we can begin to reconsider how we, as individuals within communities and culture, function with and through established paradigms and ways we might shift those paradigms to more accurately represent the work we do and the culture in which we do it.

the sociocultural implications of a particular event within a communal or social structure, we must attend to issues of membership, as well as the theory or theories grounding the structure, itself.

In addition to the differences between culture and social structure, understanding how membership within a community (social structure) is anthropologically established aids in understanding the intentions of this chapter. Geertz asserts,

> The everyday world in which members of any community move, their taken-for-granted field of social action, is populated not by anybodies, faceless men without qualities, but by somebodies, concrete classes of determinate persons positively characterized and appropriately labeled. And the symbol systems which define these classes are not given in the nature of things—they are historically constructed, socially maintained, and individually applied. (363)

Complying with Geertz suggests that the existing sociological hierarchies Rhetoric and Composition has continually butted against are necessarily integrated components of community membership and cannot be fully eliminated regardless of our attempt to dispel them through our work in social construction and social learning theory. While these hierarchies may be considered a cultural or communal truth, we need not give up the fight to extinguish these politically oriented fires. To this, I suggest reorienting our sense of social structure in order to center our *practice*, particularly in relation to graduate student development. In opening ourselves to the possibility of new structural paradigms and examining the potential effects created within these shifts, we are able to provide a different perspective to how our profession, practitioners, and work are constructed, maintained, and applied.

During the course of data collection for this study, I asked participants a series of community-related questions to better understand how graduate students within a local community construct and function within their social structure(s) and if this affected reflective practices. In the analysis of their interviews, it became clear that participants' communities and their lore actively informed their practices, professional choices, and participation. The following sections of this chapter juxtapose discourse community and community of practice as frameworks for our social structure to illustrate lore's tenable role in shaping practices and cultural knowledge.

Discourse Communities

Discourse communities, the current social framework we predominantly use to theorize our knowledge-making, act as social structures with a shared language but not necessarily shared purpose(s) or action(s) and are formed by individuals (would-be members) primarily through talk and writing.[12] Although (and perhaps because) "discourse community" has been accused of carrying a degree of ambiguity and limiting discursive possibilities, the field continues exploring and critiquing this social-constructivist framework with little, if any, overarching consensus (Vandenberg Hum, and Clary-Lemon; Bizzell). Initially, discourse community was theorized as a means of moving the writer outward, from an internal (arguably ethos-driven) perspective to a more contextual, audience-centric recognition (Vandenberg, Hum, and Clary-Lemon; Chiang).

[12] Considering the over thirty-year conversation attempting to define what discourse communities are and how they function—a conversation that includes among its prominent participants Patricia Bizzell, Peter Vandenberg, Martin Nystrand, John Swales, Clifford Geertz, Kenneth Bruffee, Joseph Harris, Jimmie Killingsworth, John Schilb, and David Bartholomae—there exists a purposeful vagueness in the description offered here. That we continue to struggle with what these types of communities are, how they function, and what they mean for and to our field and to academia strikes a bold imbalance between our tendency to simultaneously critically engage and unquestionably participate in them. The following section attempts to call to question the suitability of this framework as a sole socializing structure in which we conceptualize the members of a specific field (notably for my purposes, Compositionists).

The complication or conflict arising from this assumption, however, is that discourse communities often function within their own space (i.e. the audience is directed to those with some vested interest in the community and/or communities members). Therefore, while this structure may push the writer (the community member) outside of him- or herself, it risks failing to push outside of the localized community. Nevertheless, one significant success of this social structure is that it permits the construction and negotiation of both shared and developing knowledges, providing a framework in which to consider, explore, and critique our ways of knowing and articulating our field and our work.

More simply, when experience generates lore and a member's valued expression of it rests solely in the community's manifestations of discourse, we reify North's claim that lore primarily exists orally, rather than physically or practically (32). While reinforcing the importance North places on talk and writing (as well as a limited version of this study's assertion of myth as an additional form of developing lore), this perspective, fundamentally undercuts ritual as an integral form of lore. It is within the conflict of learning what our rituals are and distinguishing this from what we *think* they are or should be that many of our myths take shape. In negotiating these often-competing notions, we find our own disciplinary approach, practice, and identity.

In describing the foundation of discourse community, Peter Vandenberg illustrates the various degrees in which discourse community serves as a (limited but legitimate) lore-based social framework[13] when he pairs Northrup Frye's contention that discourse reflects the ideological foundation of a social structure (or community) with Jimmie Killingsworth's

[13] While Vandenberg's intent is to explicate the development of discourse community as a concept within Composition Studies, his particular construction's inclusion of Killingsworth's scholarship speaks directly to lore's inclusion and value (even if it remains silenced or unrecognized) in the social structure of discourse community.

assertion that discourse community, through its reliance on social interchange and its incorporation of context, is useful to us in both theorizing and analyzing writing (68). Discourse community's contextual social interchange focused on ideologically informed theorizing compares strikingly to Composition's lore's contextual social interchange focused on experientially informed knowledge building. Scholarship has seemingly determined that lore leads us to developing practices and that discourse communities lead us to developing theories, yet what appears still to be missing is the acknowledgment that discourse communities fail to represent accurately the "work" (the action, the ritual) of its members and the recognition that lore provides theorizing spaces in its contextualization of practice, practitioners, and praxis—that valid theories of practice may occur through our interaction with and negotiation of lore and those who help shape it.

Turning our attention to the specific discourse communities existing in the profession of Rhetoric and Composition as exemplar, we likely recognize that these communities rely on communicative interaction that is often—but not always—reflective in nature. When one graduate student teacher observes another in the classroom, they are not engaging in their discourse community practices until after the class has concluded and they enter into conversation about the experience. While each participant in this scenario is likely experiencing reflection-in-action during the class, this reflection is most often an individual, internal act and is not yet part of the community activity. It may become part of the reflection-on-action that occurs after the experience, but as this synthesis occurs, the process necessarily ceases to be reflection-in-action and the "work" of each practitioner is de-centralized from the knowledge produced

within the structure of the discourse community.[14] As discourse communities do not necessarily directly involve *practice*, they are limited to reflection-on-action rather than also including reflection-in-action.

When the two student teachers discuss their individual and/or shared experience, their talk becomes part of the local lore-building act within their department. When two scholars, such as North and Bartholomae, engage in a published exchange or debate, the written discourse builds lore globally within a specialized discourse community that likely transcends physical location. Not only do we see lore's talk and lore's writing embedded in these examples, we also recognize the former illustrates a geographically-bound sense of a discourse community's lore-building and the latter illustrates a more abstract positioning of both concepts, discourse community and lore-building.[15]

As with lore, discourse communities often produce what is perceived as a local knowledge. While the localizing of lore's knowledge-building has historically been painted as geographical or physical, the localizing of discourse communities' knowledge-building is more often considered philosophical. That is, the act of creating knowledges is centralized within a group of members focused by a shared ideology, rather than a shared action or space.[16] However, lore is no more limited by its physical environment than discourse communities, and yet many of us consider lore's knowledge far more restricted and less transferable as that which we build in our discourse communities.

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[14] See George Hillocks, *Teaching Writing as Reflective Practice*, and Donald Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, for more discussion on reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action.
[15] For more on the local and global orientation of discourse communities, see Jimmie Killingsworth's 1992 article, "Discourse Communities—Local and Global," in *Rhetoric Review* (vol. 11).
[16] The shared action or space is secondary to the ideological commonalities and is not considered as important to the community's constructive determinants.

Several participants in this study identify family members as contributors to their discourse community. We might consider Sonya's account of a family discussion as an illustration of the global/local locations of knowledge for both discourse community and lore. She states:

> I come from a family of educators. Every time we get together, especially since I now feel myself to be a professional, we have conversations about pedagogy. Last summer I was telling them about my interests in comic books and graphic novels and my dad … asked why we aren't focusing on reading and writing. Through the conversation he realized that this is another way to interest [students] in higher-level discussions about ideas and audience engagement.

Sonya explains in a later comment that the conversation included stories of her experiences using graphic texts in the composition classroom as well as pointing to scholarship to help validate the use of this particular genre in the teaching of writing. Her experiential and scholarly knowledge helps her father, also a teacher, understand the impact of bringing together visual and written rhetorics. She uses her story, her lore, to exemplify for a fellow practitioner the philosophical approach to multiliteracy pedagogy.

Additionally, Sonya and her father practice and participate in different communities, located several hundred miles apart. What might be perceived as a localized lore artifact, Sonya's classroom narrative, moves out of her local environment and is now situated to become part of a separate discourse community's body of lore if her father conveys the story to those in his immediate community. With this perspective, the lore-building ability of discourse communities appears relatively limitless—whenever we share our stories with those not directly connected to our physical location, we are building a global lore narrative.

While we could consider the shared language of the community part of its ritual,[17] the notion of ritual's inclusion in discourse communities is hampered by the de-centralized importance of both practice and location.[18] A contributing factor to ritual's limitation within the context of discourse communities is that ritual is seen in our practices, specifically those we share and have incorporated as tradition, signs of authority, or signs of community membership (North 30). Further, as noted earlier, because building lore in this type of social structure relies predominantly on its talk and writing, the "work" of the community (the crafting of everyday practices) becomes abstractly de-centralized.

For example, discourse communities liminally include practice but not necessarily a *shared* practice. To illustrate, a graduate teacher asks two people to observe her classroom practices: one is a tutor in a writing center without classroom teaching experience, and the other is the administrator of First-Year Composition courses in her department and no longer regularly teaches this particular course. While both observers share commonalities in their practices with the graduate student teacher and both undeniably maintain membership in her discourse community, it is misleading to consider the observers' practices as shared because neither observer functions in the same space as the graduate student teacher. The administrator is likely viewed as a leader within the discourse community and the tutor is likely considered a novice. The administrator functions in this observation space as a teacher but also as an authority figure;

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[17] For example, the knowledge of our language, itself—the jargon with which we are expected to communicate as community members—proves our right to membership. To illustrate, an idea or framework is social-construct*iv*ist while a person is a social-construct*ion*ist, and rarely do we use them interchangeably within our field; outside of the field, little difference might be acknowledged.

[18] Discourse communities can have a location (such as those which exist on the localized, department level of most academic institutions) but the formation of the community is not reliant on this determinant; the primary determinant of discourse community is ultimately the ethereal or abstract space of language.

the tutor functions as a peer but also as a student. Further, we might consider "shared practices" indicative of pedagogical positioning. It is as possible that these three individuals enact three distinct pedagogies in the classroom as it is that they enact the same pedagogy in three distinct ways. However, The chance of each of these community members enacting the same pedagogy in the same ways is minimal, at best. If we consider shared practice simply to be a generic conceptualization of "teaching," then we can effectively argue that our discourse communities have a common, shared practice. However, the moment we acknowledge the intricacies and variables that shape and inform each member's teaching practices, this suddenly becomes a much more difficult argument to craft.

The valuative prioritizing in a discourse community potentially rests in the consideration of the community's expectations regarding discursive determinants. This infrastructure's importance resides in our reliance on the research and the scholarship generated within our field's larger cultural structure to determine how we communicate what we do and why we do it. Discourse communities necessarily remain limited in what is discursively acceptable and what is not within each social group. When a member steps too far outside of those regulatory boundaries, he or she is no longer functioning with the discourse of Community A but are likely moving into the discourse of some other community to which the person belongs. Patricia Bizzell points to this, stating that the inherent hierarchy existing in discourse communities (particularly those in education) establishes a structure of expectations and acceptance that oppresses variant discursive behaviors (and thus its users):

> Community seems to be an utterance that helps middle-class teachers fend off criticism from those both above and below them in the social order. To those below, it seems to promise that we're not excluding anyone. To those above, is

> seems to ensure that we're not admitting anyone truly disruptive of the status quo, either. (59)

Discourse communities, then, necessarily function as gates and its members as guardians. In part, this is a result of the inherent responsibility of discourse communities to uphold the expectations and standards of disciplinarity. This was not the original intent of using discourse community as a framework for Composition's social structure in that early scholarship points to the idealistic, if not romantic, notions we held about it as a way of diminishing these very types of hierarchies. Nonetheless, we have witnessed this divisive affirmation as part of discourse community's evolution—a part that cannot continue ignored and a part that renders it less suitable to our existing milieu.

Because of the extent of discursive possibilities each permits, discourse communities remain limited and limiting in ways that lore exists in mutable spaces. Although lore is part of a community, it is not relegated to disciplinarity in the same fashion as discourse. Lore is shared among multiple discourse communities to whatever degree each community is willing to accept but its inclusion of ritual affects community members on an immediate, individual, if not also personal, level—it not only affects how we talk about what we do or why we do it, it also affects how we do it *as* we do it. Revaluing lore (and thus revaluing the practitioner) requires acknowledging the limitations of discourse communities and seeking a framework that more centrally locates practice. Further, to understand the role lore plays in professional and pedagogical development in graduate student communities, we must shift our social structure to one that prioritizes the *work* of community members, as well as their discursive practices.

Constructing Communities of Practice

Arguing for an alternative to "structuralist notions of communication, knowledge, learning, and the person that are at the heart of the notion of discourse communities," Prior suggests turning to a sociohistoric approach and points to the viability of community of practice as an organizing social paradigm for our field (5). Rendering a positionality that more readily values practice and minimizing the constraints structuralism affords current research interests, complexities, and conflicts within writing and literacy, Prior contends the sociohistoric paradigm "offer[s] accounts of communication, knowledge, learning, community, and the person as concretely situated, plural, and historical phenomena" (19). With this, Prior suggests that we might consider *community of practice* as a post-structuralist, postdisciplinary approach to community that functions less as a formal structure and more as an active, reflective, reflexive process.

Common among the participants of this study, when asked how they defined and constructed "community," graduate students evoked this notion of engaging community as an active process. Sonya states:

> [Community is] a series of relationships that are interconnected. It's also a relational space where communication can happen between and among individuals who also share a set of assumptions and/or relational practices—kind of like a discourse community…but that makes it sound so cold and clinical. I think of community as something you want to be a part of, that you can choose to be a part of. It doesn't just select you. It's not something that's just automatically there. It's also something that you can create, too. If you have a set of goals or

> ideas or set of values, they're not just going to maintain themselves. You have to keep doing that. You have to work at it.

Sonya identifies community not as a static creation put upon individuals; rather, she perceives her community as dynamic, involving shared practices, values, and assumptions that members must work to sustain. As with most participants' answers to this set of questions, the process Sonya points to directly reflects Prior's contention that the formal structure offered by discourse communities is too restrictive to accurately reflect the impact community membership has on graduate students in development. Even as we increase our awareness of what means to be *post-* (post-process, post-disciplinary, post-feminist, post-structural, etc), the constraints put upon our conceptualization of social structures by the sociohistoric construct are far more malleable and dynamic than those existing in discourse community.

Communities of practice have three basic components: an area of shared and specific interest (a domain); a group of individuals engaged and invested in the interest (a community); and action performed by the individuals and connected to the interest (practice). The concept is born out of social construction and, according to Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, it is a framework not for how learning ought to take place, but rather for how learning actually comes to be. It is a community founded on knowledge-building within a culture of learning. Jason Hughes notes, "the work of Lave and Wenger marks a more fundamental break from the standard paradigm by proposing that learning *consists of* social participation—of the whole person in the lived-in world" (31, orig. emphasis). That is, working within this framework, learning is no longer something acquired, instead it is a

lived act born in social engagement and grown through shifting relationships and activities. It moves us from a space of knowledge keepers to one of knowledge builders.[19]

Writing Center scholarship recently attempted the social shift I call for with this chapter, identifying community of practice as a construct through which the importance of the everyday work of writing centers becomes centralized (Geller et al). In their critical review of community of practice scholarship, Jason Hughes, Nick Jewson, and Lorna Unwin point out "Lave and Wenger's work … exposed and directly challenged some of the shortcomings of formal education in its reliance upon the teacher-learner dyad as the principal educational form" (3). This is particularly resonant with writing center scholarship, given our concern with authority in the tutoring session and also within the space, itself. The authors of *The Everyday Writing Center* note, "Wenger's explanations are integral to considering the potential of returning tutors and new tutors, returning writers and writers new to the writing center and the ongoing cultivation of a learning culture" (56). Community of practice, then, allows writing centers to shift their focus from a dichotomized us/them structure emphasizing an authoritative hierarchy in knowledge making and dissemination (such as tutor/writer or director/tutor) to one which acknowledges that "all these participants come from their own many sites of practice, within the writing center they become members of the writing center community of practice and, as such, should be viewed as

[19] Considering the afore mentioned limitations inherent to discourse community, their authoritative hierarchy prioritizes knowledge as something to safe-guard or *keep*. Its comparison to communities of practice as locations of building knowledge suggests that, because they offer a more complete contextual allowance, communities of practice provide a framework in which we can re-center the learner-based ideology and de-center the teacher/leader model. I believe this alteration (from discourse community to community of practice as an organizing model in theory, practice, research and work) acknowledges the driving needs that originally brought Composition scholars to the tenets and uses of discourse community with recognition of its limitations. As with discourse communities, communities of practice are not without flaws or complications but, unlike discourse communities, this framework encourages flexibility and criticism throughout the learning (knowledge-building) process for all members.

learners on common ground" (Geller et al 7). I contend this structure exists throughout the graduate student community of practitioners, including both tutors and teachers, in that both present situated learning opportunities.

Community of practice is grounded in the idea of situated learning, specifically legitimate peripheral participation, and rests on social practice theory.[20] Situated learning and peripheral participation aim to highlight and facilitate "the relations between learning and pedagogy, the place of knowledge in practice, the importance of access to the learning potential of given settings, the uses of language in learning-in-practice, and the way in which knowledge takes on value for the learner in the fashioning of full participation" (Lave and Wenger 42). Legitimate peripheral participation "concerns the whole person acting in the world," not merely pieces of the individual or of their knowledge (Lave and Wenger 49). Legitimacy depends on not merely taking into consideration the entirety of the person and their context (situated learning), but the community's commitment to engage the individual member and the member's ability to reciprocate with and through a more complete rhetorical and cultural conceptualization. Lave and Wenger position community of practice as a social structure facilitating a community's ability to then engage, analyze, critique, and theorize not only that which signifies the community as a whole, but also that which affects singular members and that which affects the community's impact on its broader location, or its culture.

Membership in communities of practice ultimately is determined by the engagement of action performed by the individuals and connected to the community's interest or enterprise. Unlike membership in discourse communities, Wenger posits that "it is by its very practice—not

[20] Not altogether unlike Composition's theory of social construction, Lave and Wenger define social practice theory as "[emphasizing] the relational interdependency of agent and world, activity, meaning, cognition, learning and knowing" (50).

by other criteria—that a community establishes what it is to be a competent participant, an outsider, or somewhere in between" (83). To this, Dean describes his community, stating,

> That's the common denominator among all the people in this community—we do the same thing. We all have different lives, opinions, politics—everything. What binds us together is what we do. [Our differences] certainly gives the community a lot of material to discuss but fundamentally … what we do on a day-to-day basis is what binds us together.

Dean exemplifies how participants determine community membership through shared practice. According to Dean, his community consists not only of fellow graduate students, but also administrators and faculty. Noting that he takes "bits and pieces of their experiences into my day-to-day experiences," suggests that membership in the community not only relies on mutual practice, but also sharing the experiential knowledge born within that practice.

An important signifier of membership, according to Lave and Wenger, is apprenticeship. They situate the apprentice model as a vital technique in developing what it means to be a member in a specific community of practice because of the opportunities to exchange knowledge within and through practical application and engagement. This relational space signals not only the accomplished position the mentor holds as an old-timer in the community, but also the newcomer's membership potential. Lave and Wenger's reliance on apprenticeship as a construct illustrating members' enculturation of practice and knowledge is problematic because they conceptualize the relationship as one of "observation and imitation" (95). Particularly in an educational community of practice, the student/master dyad connotes a distribution of power that is not as recursive as Lave and Wenger claim for communities of practice. Rather than as a systemically sustained power distribution including both established and new members,

apprenticeship suggests an atmosphere of gate-keeping and knowledge privileging. Responding to this, in *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*, Wenger works to disassociate the term and its negative connotations with communities of practice, replacing it with the metaphor of *constellations* to describe the intricate network of social relations. This offers a dynamic interchange among members of knowledge and responsibility to the community. *Constellations*, however, is equally problematic due to its vague nature. Wenger explains that conceptualizing as a constellation the relationship among various communities of practice, as well as within a singular community, illustrates the importance of the singular community or the community member's location of perspective (126-133). In his critical response to Wenger, Yrjö Engström points out that, given Wenger's definition of constellations, this relational construct may then take any form and thus becomes overdetermined and impossible to adequately address (43).

Wenger constructs constellations as "changing participation and identity transformation in a community of practice," rather than the dualistic notion of "master/student" we often conjure when we think of "apprenticeship" (*Communities of Practice* 11). While participants of this study illustrate that there remain markers of apprenticeship, they also speak to the constellations metaphor. Within this study, both Dean and Hammond are exemplars of acknowledging the importance of practical experience with the guidance of established community members. While professional development-related apprenticeship potentially occurs in a variety of locations, for Dean and Hammond it is most readily apparent in classroom experiences. Hammond describes two moments that greatly impacted his professional development. In describing his first experience teaching literature, he states,

> I got to teach several [weeks] of [an English professor's literature] class for an independent study I was doing and that taught me a lot. I had to focus on 'here's the material we have,' 'how am I going to present it (what would be the best way to do it),' and 'I need to get feedback from him and the students.'—and I'd never taught a literature course at that time. It really helped…. He'd say, "Here's what we're doing. Now I'm going to let you go and see what you do with it."

Here, Hammond indicates he draws from the model the professor offered as he shapes his understanding of institutional expectations of teaching literature. Although Hammond's experience with the apprenticeship model illustrates a more traditionally informed approach to teacher education through modeling, he couples this example with one that more readily speaks to the conceptualization Lave and Wenger likely had as they chose the apprenticeship metaphor to demonstrate knowledge transfer and enculturation:

> I co-taught a [writing-intensive course offered by the Department of Modern and Classical Language]—on a subject I knew absolutely nothing about. I taught it with a really great literature professor in the [Modern and Classical Language] department here and, although I couldn't teach the [literature] parts because of language barriers with the text, I felt like, at a certain point… that we did a really good job of co-teaching. I thought we shared a lot of interesting ideas with each other. It was a nice collaborative experience with someone who is further along in his career than I am. I learned a lot from the professor….

The collaborative and cooperative learning environment created between the professor and Hammond speaks to learning and teaching dynamics that encourage a shared responsibility within the "apprenticeship" model. Situating himself as the newcomer and the Languages

professor as the established member does not impede the sharing and negotiating of knowledge, nor does it diminish the importance to newcomers of receiving guidance from old-timers. Rather, Hammond's experiences indicate the importance of receiving structured, modeled examples of cultural practices as graduate students develop their professional identities and locate their ideology within that of the field and the academy.

Dean acknowledges the existence of the apprenticeship model as he explains what it means, to him, to become a professional, noting, "It's a gradual transition from being more of an apprentice in the classroom to being someone who is more of a stakeholder in the situation. I would say that with added responsibility has come a more professional attitude toward the things around me." The distinction between "apprentice" and "stakeholder" Dean makes indicates the shift in his perspective as he's moved from newcomer to old-timer within his community of practice. He states,

> Given the way academic jobs work, most [jobs] are going to have that administrative service component and I think that filling those types of roles, in whatever kind of capacity it may be, is one of the most important aspects [of professionalization], even if it's just being an officer in [the Graduate English Association] or Sigma Tau Delta. All of those things contribute to the multifaceted job that most of us will end up with.

Dean chooses a viewpoint of the global constellations at work within his communities that focuses on what, for him, constitutes developing practices and knowledge that will carry him into his role in his next primary community of practice. As Dean gains experience and stability in his community membership, he has simultaneously expanded and restricted his understanding of disciplinary culture. Recall that he states he now looks to administration as well as faculty as

exemplars of disciplinary standards and expectations. Both Hammond and Dean share the language of the apprenticeship model, suggesting the metaphor's value to their community of practice, but neither relegates the term to negative power relations as critics have suggested of Lave and Wenger's use of the model/metaphor.

Further, similar to that found in discourse communities, a shared ideological use of language may (and, arguably, often does) exist among community of practice members; however, the individual's extent of membership in the latter directly reflects his or her degree of engagement with and ability to contribute to the shared practice which functions as the community's primary connective determinant (i.e., whatever it is that creates the "practice" of said community). Dean refers to this as he describes his community as "a continuum of community," noting that he believes he "added to something that has been going on well before I got here and will continue long after I leave." The transitory nature of graduate student communities supports the notion that the community and the practice engaged by the community cannot exist in stasis. Rather, because of fluctuating degrees of engagement and an ever-changing body of members, it becomes necessary then for individuals to maintain their membership through ongoing engagement, continued negotiation of knowledge, and upholding responsibility to fellow members. That is, because the individual member is continually developing while they are participants in this community of practice, their role in the community is also continually developing and changing. Of note, the majority of graduate student participants in this study recognized their entry into the community as equally actively constructed and inherited. Graduate student participants unanimously stated that, initially, they took more from their community than they were capable of offering in return. They denote a constructed sense of community as new members and often readily position themselves as

indebted to their community for their practices and knowledge. As they advance in their programs and grow into their role as burgeoning colleague, participants noted they felt a sense of responsibility to contribute knowledge and support newer members.

With a Bakhtinian perspective, Prior notes that, unlike discourse community, "the accretion and active appropriation of concrete historical knowledge of practices-in-use, knowledge that traces the trajectory of an actively orienting person through a complexly differentiated sociohistoric landscape" offers "multiplicity and agency" for the community and its members (20; 18). At the foundation of this dynamic atmosphere rests the tenets of membership in a community of practice. As Wenger states in *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*, inclusion in communities of practice requires mutuality of engagement, accountability to the enterprise, and negotiability of the repertoire (137). Given that Wenger's scholarship is not yet popularly read in Composition, Writing Program Administration, and Writing Centers, exploration of Wenger's concepts, how they apply to the field and Composition's lore, and how participants expressed these values helps situate how this framework functions in our already existing communities. Further, examining how communities of practice function also assists in understanding postdisciplinary spaces and how their influence manifests for developing practitioners.

Mutual Engagement

The first component Wenger discusses is mutual engagement. In defining "engagement," he states,

> The first characteristic of practice as the source of coherence of a community is the mutual engagement of participants. Practice does not exist in the abstract. It exists because people are engaged in actions whose meanings they negotiate with

> one another. In this sense, practice does not reside in books or in tools, though it may involve all kinds of artifacts. It does not reside in a structure that precedes it, though it does not start in a historical vacuum. [...] Practice resides in a community of people and the relations of mutual engagement by which they can do whatever they do. (73)

Within a community of practice, the contextualized whole of the experience serves as the social structure's driving creative force. Communities of practice require members to reflect both in and on action, critiquing the structure of standards that exist or have existed with an informed voice. De-centering discourse to provide equal recognition of and space for practice to impact our knowledge and knowledge-making provides the opportunity to create and implement broader cultural forms of knowledge.

For a graduate student community of practice, an example of this is the use of observations in the development of new teachers, particularly. Observation is considered an effective educational tool for a variety of reasons, but for the informed newcomer to the community of practice, it becomes an invaluable modeling experience.[21] For Morgan, the early stages of her pedagogical development took root in the classroom but quickly turned to informed observations of peers and faculty:

> I took the Pedagogy class and started reading the theory. It gave me more guidance in terms of thinking about what my goals were in the classroom—how I thought about how students learn and so forth. And I observed a lot of people. I

[21] Both Wenger's and Lave and Wenger's work positions apprenticeship as observations among developing teachers and claim that it is not so much a one-on-one activity as it is a community investment for the enhancement of members' contributions. Translating their philosophy of apprenticeship to developing practitioners, we might say that we become better teachers when we have better teachers with whom to practice.

> got into this pattern of observing people whose teaching styles I thought were good or strong or reflected some of my own ideas about teaching. The more I observed, the more I picked up on different techniques and then I included some of that in my own approach…. I observed [peers and faculty] to get some ideas about how to, for example, facilitate the classroom discussion. I already had in my head what I wanted my classroom to look like or to feel like—I de-center power and authority in the classroom so instead of lecturing, which I do sometimes, I really wanted to engage students in a critical discussion or approach. I knew that's what I wanted to do but wasn't sure I had all the tools to do it. So, I went to all these different people to see what they did. I knew that [this peer] had sort of the same idea or philosophy about teaching so I went to see *how* she did it, how she facilitated the class.

As an informed newcomer to her community of practice, Morgan brings a constructively critical eye to her observations, allowing her to reflect on the action as it occurs. That is, as Morgan observes practitioners in her community, she actively negotiates her ideal classroom, which is informed, if not built, by her knowledge of theory and scholarship. Within this negotiation, she adjusts her conceptualization to include specific pedagogical actions she observes. Relying on her community to help her develop the "tools" to embody her pedagogy effectively, Morgan is provided diverse illustrations that help her negotiate a broader understanding of the malleability of a variety of pedagogical approaches. Contributing to the benefit of observations, Morgan notes the support she gleans from her community through shared experiences, "discussing ideas about teaching, the challenges with teaching, ideas for assignments," and the shared successes and failures—her participation in the community's lore narrative, influences her practice. She

states, "I value that because I think in isolation I wouldn't be successful in any of the stuff I do or try to do." Morgan's interaction with her community involves mutual engagement not only in the practice of teaching, but also in the practice of developing pedagogically and professionally—in the practice of learning.

While discourse communities actively create lore through talk and writing, the mutual engagement within communities of practice extend their lore practices to also include ritual and myth. Morgan illustrates the importance of having an active model as newcomers shape their own classroom practices. Considering lore within communities of practice, mutual engagement ensures a degree of both talk and writing given that with mutual practice necessarily comes a degree of mutual discourse.[22] The direct inclusion of practice, however, allows this social structure to include ritual more readily than what can be afforded within the narrow confines of discourse communities. As examples of ritual, North lists: the "Summer Vacation" essay; the codes for commentary; the assigning of modes of discourse; the position of the teacher in the room (29)—all of which de-center the community's discourse and center its mutual engagement of a specific or shared practice.[23] For Morgan, her observations exposed rituals of the professional culture and also those held by her immediate community of practice.

Wenger's assertion that practice considers its evolutionary foundation, but is not limited to or by it, supports the notion that myth exists as the fourth form of Composition's lore. Although myth is addressed more thoroughly in the next chapter, a brief discussion here helps illustrate how the community of practice, as a social framework, impacts our understanding and

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[22] Mutual discourse does not, however, ensure mutual practice (as discussed in the previous section of this chapter).

[23] As ritual is defined by North as, "patterns of practice which acquire what amounts to a ceremonial status, and which get passed along mostly by example" (29), mutual engagement as Wenger describes it is, to great degree, required to produce North's explanation of Composition's lore.

use of lore in relation to developing practices. When practice is in part defined but not limited to its history, practitioners must develop an understanding of that history by negotiating its meaning, form, and purpose to most effectively suit contemporary needs. As this shift occurs and the "traditional" is replaced with "transitional" or "new" practices, what once held as truth is now transferred to spaces of history and myth.

For an example of this, we can look to the development of assessment practices in Composition. Many participants nodded to the "assessment debate" or "conflict" in their interviews as one tension with which they wrestled as developing practitioners and professionals. However, few explained in detail what they meant by this and instead would point to their own philosophy or approach to assessment, often with uneasiness or hesitation. I posit this hesitation and avoidance likely results from traditional practices giving way to transitional practices. That is, we once considered the teacher as the ultimate authority of the cultural writing standards and expectations held by universities and society. Assessment came under critical scrutiny by those outside of our community when students entering the university were beginning to appear un- or underprepared for college writing and those who were matriculating seemed less prepared for professional communication than those who came before them. This led to Composition scholars examining our assessment practices from within the community and the classroom, ultimately declaring that assessment practices and teaching practices needed to connect with each other, if not also reflect one another. As Brian Huot notes in *(Re)Articulating Writing Assessment*,

> Constructing an agenda for writing assessment as social action means connecting assessment to teaching, something people like Edward White (1994) and Richard Lloyd-Jones (1977), among others, have been advocating for nearly three decades. Instead of envisioning assessment as a way to enforce certain culturally

> positioned standards and refuse entrance to certain people and groups of people, we need to use our assessment to aid the learning environment for both teachers and students. (8)

Huot refers to the turn toward a transitional assessment practice that empowers the writer—the student—through educating him or her and facilitating their own assessment of their writing. As we gradually engaged this new approach to assessment, what we considered "traditional" practices worked to guard this ability, keeping it locked safely within the teacher, who likely provided little constructive response to writing, choosing instead to focus on what we would now consider local or lower-order concerns in the name of maintaining standardized cultural expectations. The "transitional" assessment practices we have been building over the past forty to fifty years use both liberatory pedagogy and social construction as the foundation on which to place a greater degree of responsibility on the writer and diminish the current-traditional approach. As Huot argues, "people who write well have the ability to assess their own writing, and if we are to teach students to write successfully, then we have to teach them to assess their own writing" (10). While some of our traditional assessment practices have carried over (most of us still comment on grammar, mechanics, sentence structure, etc.), the intention of the practice has shifted along with the positionality of the student within the rhetorical situation that is taking place. We have slowly but surely incorporated the transitional practice to the extent that many newcomers to the community of practice (teachers of writing) likely struggle to comprehend two things: the reasons this recognition took so long to make in the first place; and, why it's taken so long to effectively change the ideology supporting and creating the original gate-keeping mentality. I contend the "transition" practice is the foundation of what the field will eventually consider "traditional" assessment practice, and what is referenced as the "traditional" in this

example becomes part of the community's mythohistory. The ability to create shared revisions to and of traditional methods and meanings (including rituals) is indicative of communities' of practice ongoing critical acceptance of its tenets—specifically, accountability—as well as myth as a form of lore.

Accountability

Accountability to the enterprise is the second condition communities of practice require. Just as practice is a concrete action as well as an abstraction, but never fully one or the other, enterprise requires similar flexibility.[24] While defining this characteristic may seem straightforward, Wenger explains,

> Defining a joint enterprise is a process, not a static agreement. It produces relations of accountability that are not just fixed constraints or norms. These relations are manifested not as conformity but as the ability to negotiate actions as accountable to an enterprise. The whole process is as generative as it is constraining. [...] It invites new ideas as much as it sorts them out. As enterprise is a resource of coordination, of sense making, of mutual engagement; it is like rhythm to music. (82)

Considering Wenger's definition of mutual engagement along with accountability to the enterprise reveals three constructs of community of practice: 1. Members are accountable to the enterprise so much as they are knowledgeable, contributing members of the community and are willing to continually learn with and from their fellow members and experiences; 2. Mutual engagement and accountability permit the contextualized shaping of the practice by community members; and, 3. As mutual engagement relies on dynamic interaction to sustain itself, the

[24] Wenger's work suggests that practice is not abstract yet the moment of the practice is always already read as an abstraction once it passes and becomes part of our history(ies).

would-be hierarchical structure diminishes insofar as the responsibility of both the knowledge-building and its repercussions continually oscillates among members. While levels of accountability may remain consistently stronger with old-timers, newcomers' accountability correlates directly to their degree of engagement.[25] A new member is just as accountable to the community and its activity as those who have held membership for decades, even though the old-timer is likely a "full participant in the cultural practice of the community" (James 132). Here, there is a distinction that newcomers are likely considered peripheral members on the cultural level of practice but full time on the community level.

How accountability functions in a community of practice is reliant on the negotiated space among the community members' individual expectations and standards, which are informed by their experiences both within and outside of the community, and the cultural expectations and standards, which set the agenda for the enterprise. For graduate students, this means negotiating their individual subjectivity with that of their local department and also with disciplinary expectations, traditions, and knowledge, in an effort to understand accountability in relation to their immediate communities of graduate students and of their department, school, or division, as well as their extended communities of the profession and field. Graduate students' perspectives cannot be located in a fixed set of expectations because it is in constant evolution in relation to the enterprises of the various communities of practice they actively engage. As such, their perception and performance of accountability evolves, too. The systemic negotiation

[25] In *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, Jean Lave and Wenger use the terms "old-timer" and "newcomer" to indicate a member's degree of mastery within the joint enterprise and the duration of membership, itself. These labels cursorily appear to have little difference than the teacher/leader and student labels often accompanying discourse community membership distinction, yet there remains a degree of peerness sought in Lave and Wenger's terms not found in scholarship associated with discourse communities.

graduate students experience runs alongside and counter to disciplinarity, at once confirming and questioning its standards and expectations.

A complication occurs within this negotiated space, however. As graduate students begin constructing their understanding of the professional community that they are preparing to join, they also remain accountable to the student community of which they are also an active part. Lave and Wenger point to this complication as "conflict between the forces that support processes of learning and those that work against them" (57). While membership in both the student and professional communities involves this conflict as graduate students move from newcomer status to established members, the increased variation of roles within and responsibility to their communities position them within a liminal space that is informed, at once, by their roles as teacher, student or learner, and community leader. Often these roles converge incongruously, and it is in this conflictive space that graduate students engage disciplinary culture and begin forming their perceptions of the profession.

Arguably, the professionalizing that graduate students receive serves as a guide to the function of accountability in the communities they both actively participate in and those for which they are working toward membership. While participant responses to defining or explaining "professionalization" varied, most agreed that it is generally any preparation to work in the field. What constitutes professionalization, however, varies widely among the participants, largely determined by their career goals and field(s) of study. The preparatory activities and obligations of professionalization[26] expose the community members to the local standards of accountability and the broader cultural expectations of the field as well as the discipline—

[26] Participants provided examples such as preparing and submitting teaching portfolios, attending conferences and workshops, mentoring, publishing, serving on committees, and engaging peers, faculty, staff, and administrators in dialog.

essentially, the enterprise—and provide a space for graduate students to negotiate how their internal realities meet, intersect, or diverge from those of their community.

Accountability to the enterprise for graduate students, then, is shaped by what writing center and writing program administrators and practitioners more generally consider professional development—that which exposes the graduate student to the expectations, standards, and practices of our field and the professional academy. With this, graduate students become teachers and colleagues. Dean describes it as "the process of moving from one side of the blackboard to the other—of moving from student to instructor—mainly because in graduate school we occupy both zones." This multiple occupancy creates complications that are often worked through with fellow graduate students, many sharing similar concerns and bringing their individual experiences and knowledge to the community's conversation in an effort to find resolution. Participants in this study unanimously noted the importance of this dialog to their professional development. Many cited the conversations they experienced in their offices, professional development communities,[27] over coffee, and at conferences as invaluable to their understanding of best practices, both in and outside of the classroom.

The ways in which graduate students embody accountability changes in accord with the local community in which they are members. Moreover, accountability and enterprise are both sustained flexible, negotiated spaces, meaning that neither of these concepts function in exact replicable ways and that, at any time, the authority of the community members within a situation can (and often does) transfer among members recursively and reflexively. Here, I point to the importance of mentoring as part of the professional development practice among participants.

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[27] Organized by the Department of English, professional development communities (PDC) offer small group settings for mentoring and peer-to-peer interaction. While the department determines each graduate student's placement in a PDC, administrators work with students who request a specific PDC.

While mentoring nods toward apprenticeship, in a graduate student community of practice it aligns more directly with Wenger's constellations of practice. Specifically, mentoring cultivates a variety of relational interactions within the community and, potentially, throughout the institution. Moreover, as a field we generally accept the act and practice of mentoring, and of being mentored, as a mutual and reflexive space of learning, particularly as it occurs among peers. Regardless of the role the graduate student plays, mentor or mentee, each community member engages and exchanges new and old knowledges with the goal of better understanding the practice, enterprise, and cultural expectations their community of practice functions within. Additionally, the sense of responsibility felt by established community members to help newcomers understand the enterprise, how to function within it, and how to challenge and negotiate individual and cultural expectations is generationally acquired and performed. For example, Renn explains that his mentors have been integral in shaping his understanding of the classroom, the field, and the profession. He notes that because of these experiences, he saw mentoring incoming graduate students as a way to give back to his community what he had received. Similarly, Alfred explains,

> I've greatly enjoyed having the opportunity to impart what I've learned and what I've experienced and what I've been taught onto others who are just starting out in terms of teaching or their graduate program. … I've had more experience teaching in front of a classroom here and going through the grad program so I had something to offer them….

Alfred implicitly speaks to the notion of accountability as it shapes itself in the responsibility to pass along established community knowledge regarding the existing enterprise of the community of practice. That his desire to mentor is bound to his recognition that he "had something to offer"

suggests the he transitioned into a place within his community in which mentoring became a possible form of demonstrating his accountability only after acquiring experience and knowledge within and of his local community of practice.

Additionally, Helen noted the importance of the community's impact on her developing sense of accountability and enterprise as she entered the program. For Helen, it was the lack of attention she received as a first-year graduate student that spurred her determination to provide mentoring for new teachers. She states,

> [One] experience that I had that was really a turning point for me was the first year that I was here, I had a mentor. I didn't really have much interaction with my mentor. I was sort of on my own that year. The second year that I was here I decided that I would be a mentor and do all the things as a mentor that I didn't get. I would try to put some good karma out there or something. Instead of pay it forward, I would put it out there since it wasn't there before. […] Where I didn't form that bond with my own mentor, I've been able to form it with [my mentee]. This is a way [to give back to my community]—I want to continue to be a mentor. Actually, I think she's taught me just as much, if not more than I've taught her. I think we all learn best from teaching somebody else. It's made me think more carefully about my own teaching in the classroom and also how I'm teaching her....

For Helen, negotiating her accountability within the community and the field comes from the absence of the guidance often found in mentorship, as opposed to Renn and Alfred's experience with strong mentor relationships. Not only does Helen's example illustrate the importance of a shared conceptualization of what it means to be an accountable member of the community, her

reflective statements concerning teaching and learning suggest part of her notion of accountability is formed in that reflective space—the space of negotiation—and that this space impacts her *practice*.

Taking into consideration from the previous chapter the many ways lore is formed, accountability and the process of determining accountability promotes a reflexive space within the practitioner, or community member, for lore to impact the practice of the community through its use in sorting out or making sense of the various expectations and standards of the enterprise. Lore is one way in which we accomplish the critical recursive revision of knowledges and practices that sustains a community of practice. If lore is created through the interchange of experiential knowledge that influences how research, practice, and theory evolve, then providing a space in which lore necessarily becomes bound to reflection situates the knowledge built within and by the community's lore as reflecting more than simply its practices, but also its ideologies, politics, theories, etc. Accountability, in relation to creating lore, reaches not simply to members and/or their practices, but to the cultural implications of those practices and the knowledge that they produce in relation to the disciplinary enterprise. Simply, whereas discourse community, as a structure, fails to provide a whole connection through and with lore, and arguably fails to articulate its culture beyond its limited distinction of members, community of practice embraces, via accountability, a reflexive approach to the maintenance and development of lore that facilitates a more critical, if not also more complete, exploration and analysis of the community's cultural implications.

Shared Repertoire

The third and final element composing community of practice, repertoire, is the most expansive in regard to what, exactly, it can and does include. Wenger claims,

> The repertoire of a community of practice includes routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice. [...] It includes the discourse by which members create meaningful statements about the world, as well as the styles by which they express their forms of membership and their identities as members. (83)

This component of communities of practice, unlike mutual engagement and accountability, includes the tangible objects that identify the community. Further, the shared language between Wenger's description of repertoire and North's description of lore indicates that lore, as we have historically contextualized it within our discourse communities, is readily approachable within the community of practice social structure as both a local artifact and cultural phenomena. That is, the repertoire is at the center of a community of practice's ability to share and sustain its lore. Lore does not become more replicable because of the structure of the community of practice; it becomes more readily accessible as social phenomena establishing and influencing congruencies and disconnections in the development of the community's members. For example, "words," "stories," and "gestures" speak directly to the orality of lore, while "routines," "tools," and "symbols" most readily represent lore's embodiment of ritual. "Stories" and "symbols" are building-blocks for myth; and writing, as North constructs it, is represented in Wenger's inclusion of "words," "tools," "stories," "symbols," "genres." Additionally, "routines," "ways of doing things," and "actions" connect to practice, while "stories," "symbols," and "concepts" nods toward theory and theory-building. Given the remarkable level of overlap between repertoire and lore, the two concepts become inextricable. For our understanding of lore, this means we can no longer position it as an after-thought or a peripheral social response; instead,

we recognize lore's interdependent relationship with our repertoire as one that signals lore's integration with practice, research, theory, and work. It is the similarities we see between repertoire and lore that position lore to have the impact it has on community members, particularly those in graduate student communities.

Not only does the repertoire encourage the creation and sustainability of particular lore, it also most clearly identifies the community's ability to produce cultural artifacts. The "tools" and "stories" Wenger points to correlates with North's description of artifacts generated by written and oral lore. Consider an assignment that is generated by a graduate student and passed along to another who uses it and decides to pass it to another who then does the same and so on. After a few turns of hand, the assignment has been revised by a variety of members' experiential lenses and has come to represent more than the first graduate student's best practices. The assignment is a functioning tool for an individual's classroom and also an example of the community's cultural understanding of the enterprise and practice in which they are engaged on both the local and the global levels.

Moving Toward Reflective Cultural Knowledge

Mutual engagement, accountability, and repertoire arguably provide the existing foundation for practitioner communities in both writing centers and in graduate programs. The acts of tutoring and teaching serve to connect community members as they practice and negotiate the enterprise of the institution in diverse locations and to varying degrees. Members are as accountable to the mutual practice of the community as to fellow community members and the community itself. Sharing stories of success and failures with each other, introducing new knowledge that shapes practices and histories, is a consistent, popular means by which to achieve tutor and teacher education.

The common ground for community members within these spaces is not primarily their shared language, but rather is constructed by the everyday practices occurring in the physical locations, as well as the social interactions among members. That is, the practices of tutoring and of being a tutor, of teaching and of being a teacher, of writing and being a writer, of research and scholarship, of theory and administration—these help create the everyday expressions of classroom and writing center practice. This is what community of practice assists in highlighting. While some of these moments of practice have been adequately recognized, analyzed and discussed through discourse community, much of what is done within graduate student development is lost to the confines of this structure. Perhaps one reason writing center work continues to be misunderstood or misplaced, devalued or misjudged, is the lack of appropriate social metaphor framing the whole of the experience and communicating it more readily. Another way to approach this might be to consider our desire to acknowledge our culture of writing—the *work* of what we do, as well as our theory and research.

Both Wenger and the authors of *The Everyday Writing Center* assert that, while community of practice encourages a "leveling" of authority in considering all members as learning members, the social structure is "neither a haven for togetherness nor an island of intimacy insulted from political and social relations" (Gellar et al 7; Wenger 77). Therefore, while altering the social conceptualization of graduate student communities to one of community of practice allows a greater degree of liberatory pedagogy to exist within the structure of developing practices, this shift diminishes but does not eliminate irresolvable conversational threads and encourages new conversations that potentially challenge existing practices and paradigms in effort to negotiate into the transitional practice that Wenger asserts is vital to the continuation of learning and of the community.

The following chapter, “Shaping Cultural Knowledge: Myth in Graduate Student Development,” points to myth as one location or site of lore’s postdisciplinarity in which members’ negotiation of cultural standards exposes the practical application of reflective behavior as new and developing professionals craft their disciplinary practices and identities. Here, I identify and define myth, its distinctions with lore, and how it affects practitioners’ cultural and individual development. Positioning the cultural negotiation inherent to myth in the community of practice social framework is important in understanding the reflective and social components that contribute to the participants’ overall cultural pedagogical and professional understanding of what it means to teach writing in a college or university setting.

CHAPTER FIVE

SHAPING CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE: MYTH IN GRADUATE STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Lore provides means to explore and share our experiences, knowledges, and progressions through its three forms: talk, writing, and ritual. Our always-present focus on *discourse* communities' use of lore limits our intellectual consideration of what lore is, how it functions, and why we care.[28] North's definition and organization of lore lacks the understanding that, particularly for newcomers (here, graduate students), it is both cultural phenomena and artifact within communities of practice, helping shape how professionals in the teaching of writing identify, acknowledge, and function in relation to our field's expectations and standards. In part, lore is a product of the postdisciplinary space we embody as we negotiate what it means to *be* a professional writer, teacher, researcher, scholar, administrator, etc.—the narrative, practical, and material historicizing that represents our reflective, critical engagement with our field and the institution. Lore unquestionably and consistently remains furtive material for theoretical development, yet our uncertainty of how to *use* our experiential knowledge thus far impedes our acceptance of it as legitimate intellectual material and, as a result, limits the research we might do with it in the founding of new theories and practices. To this, I posit that,

[28] The development of social construction theories demanded a greater understanding of the social structures at work within the classroom, our centers and institutions, and the profession. As we are a discipline rooted in language construction, I contend in the previous chapter that we became myopically focused on discourse community. Without contention, our scholarship and research in this area is vital to our field. Here, I reiterate that, while this is an important social structure to critically engage, it is not the *only* structure functioning in our departments and institutions. Particularly in relation to lore, the narrow scope of community legitimately recognized within discourse community's structure restricts our research on and potential applications of lore.

in a community of practice, developing practitioners actively use lore in their sociocultural negotiations as a reflexive reflective space impacting practices and identity formation.

Additionally, lore's ability to serve as disciplinary reflection suggests that lore is the space in which our cultural history is created and yet we continue to address lore as second-rate phenomena incapable of creating legitimate, transferrable knowledge. Stating, "disciplinary activities and discourses do not appear to be closed, autonomous systems: disciplinarity is embroidered in history and sociocultural values, beliefs, narratives, tropes, and ways of life," Paul Prior asserts why we might choose to culturally frame disciplinarity (17). Situating lore as postdisciplinary does not diminish the intrinsic connection of our narratives and experiences to disciplinarity; rather, as I have argued, it broadens our potential access to the value of lore concerning how the various symbolic formations occurring within communities, as well as among practitioners as they negotiate membership in the profession.

Within postdisciplinarity, the inclusion of additional forms that lore may take—those that work outside of or in conjunction with the existing forms—aims to situate these concerns so that we may address them. Here, I focus on myth in Composition's lore to explore the impact of lore on newcomer efforts to culturally identify within their practice, as well as the community's ability to culturally historicize. In his discussion of the Historians, North notes that "it is not only acceptable, but desirable—even necessary—that competing versions of the narrative be represented" (70). That is, North believes we must maintain alternatives to the "normative" history of the field if we are to remain reflective and critical in our endeavor to historicize ourselves. It is in the postdisciplinarity of lore that these alternative histories are best represented; one form or familiar historical construct that we engage in this space is myth.

Myth helps identify and illustrate the tensions, particularly in a community of developing practitioners because, as Prior notes, graduate student experience offers a unique location for developing practitioners (xii-xiv). Defined as an ideological, political, and/or historical cultural discursive marker signifying narrative trends or moments that symbolically represent the practices and theories valued within practitioner communities, myth serves as one thread within the transitional narratives provided by this study's graduate student participants and represents one incarnation of lore's postdisciplinarity. Important to lore's role in professional and pedagogical development, myth helps identify conflicts existing between and among burgeoning practitioner experiences, knowledges, and practices. Also of import is myth's ability to illustrate sustained transferrable global cultural knowledge impacting both practice and theory.

Two concerns should be glossed before continuing, namely: why myth is a *part* of lore as opposed to its own constructed methodology or genre; and, the understanding that myth both generates and is generated by lore. Both of these concerns suggest a more generalized notion that myth cannot exist on its own and must use lore as its communicative vehicle. As such, myth relies on lore to shape it—to give it a voice and empower it. Within lore, myth is a type of building block in historical construction. That is, while the cultural myths built both within and outside of the institution inform and contribute to not only our oral tradition, but also find their way into the negotiation and composition of our practice, they represent only one constellation in the nebulous structure of practitioner lore. Serving as only one frame or form of lore, myth is positioned as a distinct, integrated narrative phenomena influencing both current and developing practices. Louise Wetherbee Phelps notes that lore distinguishes itself from common practices "by virtue of symbolic expressions and exchanges" (869). This knowledge is made public and then accessed by the community as we engage and theorize new experiences. Most importantly,

Phelps notes, "Lore is experience that has been expressed, circulated, imitated, sustained, and confirmed by repetition, achieving canonical status as 'common sense' through its range of *cultural distribution* and staying power" (869; emphasis added). Fundamental to the sustainability and power of lore, and thus myth, is the community's critical acceptance and transmission by and through cultural engagement.

In *The Making of Knowledge in Composition* (*MKC*), North briefly addresses the concept of myth, comparing lore to the conceptualization of myth offered by Clinton Burhans as few years earlier, in 1983.[29] North asserts that lore and myth are nearly identical. Situating myth as a form of lore recognizes Burhans' positioning of myth and North's rationale for their similarity, but also locates their primary difference as resting in lore's fundamental need for *critical* acceptance. Thus, lore is sustained and perpetuated through the informed practitioner's experiences, authority, and ideology. Burhans states, "Myths are beliefs accepted uncritically; they require neither evidence nor proof, neither research nor theory" (650). Conversely, lore requires critical selection by the practitioners who both share and receive it. Additionally, lore influences and is influenced by research and theory, and is often transmitted as written or oral testimony (Phelps; Rankin; North). Ultimately, North claims, "Burhans' 'myth' is not very far from my own choice of lore. The main difference between us, whichever term one chooses, would lie in his pejorative, and perhaps methodologically chauvinist, usage" (330). North's use of "methodologically chauvinist" is unclear but does beg attention considering the consistent reaction to *MKC* as an oppressive, colonizing taxonomy. With this, framing lore as a liberatory or feministic methodology may initially seem misguided. In the introduction to *MKC*, North

[29] In *MKC*, a few instances occur in which North uses myth strategically to acknowledge the synonymous connection and the difference of "myth" and "lore". For example, he uses the term "mythic image" to help explain ritual in his discussion of lore's forms. Embedding it in ritual ensures its inclusion without requiring much development.

explains the text's primary concerns, which mirror lore's primary purposes, as: focusing on *how*, rather than *what*, community members "claim to know about doing, teaching, and learning [writing];" articulating how individual "inquirers" function in "methodological communities;" and, finally, seeking to revalue the Practitioner voice (1-3). *MKC*'s focal points are consistent with empowering underprivileged populations, seeking to understand how community functions, and considering the contextual impact on content.[30] With this, North attempts to distinguish Composition's lore from Burhans' myth by using the tenets of a liberatory framework.

The difference between lore's myth and Burhans' myth becomes further problematized with Burhans' explicit assertion that while myths are uncritical representations of practices and standards, they exist nonetheless, informing and encouraging our bodies of knowledge. However, their distinction rests in the frame in which each construct is positioned. While Burhans sees myths as haphazard constructions born from generally uninformed and untested practices, North views lore as a positive, liberating framework that enables the field to embrace multiple types of knowledge as equally valid, he simply neglects making this connection explicit. Rhetorically, we situate lore's oral and written modes as extrinsic proof, or testimony, which is powered by the ethos of the speaker and thus requires critical engagement from the audience. Lore, then, is rendered as a type of experientially-based evidence that perpetuates itself, in part, through the authority of the speaker or practitioner as recognized by fellow community members. Similarly, lore's myth endures similar critical engagement of authority and agency. Moreover, while lore and myth may be considered by some as empirically less rigorous or scholarly, I argue

[30] Whether North achieved the goals he set forth in the text is irrelevant to the current question of how North perceived the framing theory of the work, itself. While popular reception of the text remains strained and I think few would consider it overtly (or even minimally) feministic in its approach or theoretical grounding, North's introduction to the text illustrates that perhaps he did have what one might consider feminist or liberatory intentions.

that myths nonetheless influence the development of our field and its members as they illuminate various tensions experienced between our practices and our sociocultural renderings of them.

For example, as many of the participants in this study pointed out, new teachers and tutors often enter the classroom or writing center with preconceptions of what teaching and tutoring are, or rather *ought* to be. These ideas are influenced by experiences ranging from personal (often as a student) to external, including others' experiences and those constructed by media. Distinguishing between Burhans' myth and lore's myth, the former expressly renounces need for the critical acceptance of evidence, research, and theory whereas the latter, as I conceptualize it here, includes a critical awareness of itself and acceptance by its community and is generated within and by the "evidence" of our mundane; our daily events, practices, and speech acts.

Further, North indicates that while myth and lore equally play parts in the "revolution" of Composition Studies, they do not serve to create order, simplicity, or expediency. Rather, lore and myth serve to complicate this turn because, "Practitioners not only have ideas how to do things, but they actually believe in them" (330). With ideological revolution, change becomes slow and unyielding. Building on North's work, I posit that the addition of myth to our forms of lore promotes the flexibility needed for change (of any sort) to occur while supporting our need for spaces that incorporate our own voices—Practitioner voices—in the construction of our present state, in the making and telling of our history, and in the shaping of our culture.

The definition of myth offered at the beginning of this chapter may appear to be self-sustaining and therefore unconnected to lore, yet without lore there is no myth. Lore serves as the means through which we communicate the types of knowledge most suited to mythification. Through talk, writing, and ritual, the seeds of the mythonarrative expose themselves to those

who actively advance and nurture the myth, the community—the societal, and cultural members whom it most directly affects. Simply, myths must be communicated and accepted in order to survive. Once we cease relaying and/or accepting a specific myth within our community and to those outside of it, the myth loses its power and dies. The cyclical nature of lore's myth is similar to the theoretical construct established by other disciplines and will be part of the following explanation of the use and function of lore's myth. As our lore circles back on itself, it changes and shifts from story to narrative to myth. Additionally, because myth is a reaction to tensions between disciplinary norms and cultural expectations, it is perhaps most clearly situated as postdisciplinary phenomena. Myth runs both parallel and counter to our standards as it reflects and questions aspects of the enterprise. It mirrors its community and environment as it perpetuates elements of our approach to practice as well as alters these same practices through the critical tension it creates.

Approaching the Definition and Use of Lore's Myth

Producing a concrete definition of myth is not simply problematic; it's next to impossible. Lauri Honko, a leading folklore specialist, notes that various fields hold different understandings, and not all of these align with each other. He explains that while most fields agree that there are four types of approaches to myth—historical, psychological, sociological, and structural—this is nearly all we can agree upon. There are, however, two common truths when defining myth: 1) that "these theories in fact overlap and complement each other to some extent;" and, 2) that "myths are multidimensional: a myth can be approached from [multiple] angles, some of which may have greater relevance than others depending on the nature of the material being studied and the questions posed" (Honko 46). That is, whereas various intellectual groups attempting to study and theorize myth will come to diverse understandings of what myth

is, can be, and the purpose(s) it serves, these definitions will be in conversation, fundamentally. Further, regardless of how myth is delineated, myth embodies the varied definitions equally but remains dependant on the rhetorical situation.

Limiting myth to a rhetorical device, however, impedes our ability to understand the whole of myth. Waldo Braden builds on several scholars' work to craft an applicable definition and use of myth for his own field, Speech Communication.[31] Most applicable to Composition's lore (and lore's myth) is Braden's use of Burke's *A Rhetoric of Motives* to illustrate that myth "provides a potent means of establishing identification" between the myth-teller and their audience and the myth-holder and their community (74). Myth, in this context, serves to reinforce ideologies, approaches, and practices already in place within a community and by its members. Further, as social or cultural membership "often depends upon continued overt demonstration of faithful acceptance of various facets of the imaginary picture," myths often serve as the socially constructed and confirmed epicenter from which these facets can be accessed by anyone within the community (Braden 76). Communities construct myth to help bind or draw together varietal threads of discourse and action in an effort to make sense of the individual within the shared experience. Applying Roland Barthes to Braden's work, we begin to witness Barthes' assertion that myth evolves from a single or series of events, experiences, encounters and knowledges existing in some form or fashion within a community's reality (110). They cannot be tested as it is antithetical to the nature of myth to apply empirical structure to them; they can, however, be witnessed as facets of history.

While nearly any academic or intellectual community is quick to identify myth's lack of empiricism, Peter Heehs aligns with Roland Barthes as he reminds us that, if we look closely, it

[31] Braden incorporates Leo Marx, Henry Nash Smith, R.W.B. Lewis, Joseph Campbell, Richard Hofstader, and Kenneth Burke.

is possible to critically distinguish fact from fiction within myth and therefore recognize the historical foundation serving to support both the individual myth and a culture, society, or community's mythology. The historicity of lore's myth—that our myths represent aspects of our past practices, expectations, experiences, and ideology—is what grounds it as one point or genesis of tension between our perceived and our actual disciplinary culture. In Barthes' *Mythologies*, we are reminded,

> …one can conceive of ancient myths, but there are no eternal ones; for it is human history which converts reality into speech, and it alone rules the life and the death of mythical language. Ancient or not, mythology can only have an historical foundation, for myth is a type of speech chosen by history: it cannot possibly evolve from the 'nature' of things. (110)

Barthes, and later Heehs, position myth as fundamentally historical and socioculturally constructed—at least to the extent that myths are grounded in events, people, societies and cultures that have or do exist. Drawing from Barthes, as well as Jürgen Habermas, Heehs defines myth as "a set of propositions often stated in narrative form, that is accepted uncritically by a culture or speech-community and that serves to found or affirm its self-conception" (3). Aligning with Heehs, lore's myth is grounded in our history but, contrary to his position, because its audience is a community of practitioners, our myth is subjected to critical scrutiny as we engage, accept, alter, and reject it.

However, myths must be built before we can analyze, accept, and disseminate them. The complexity of myth's evolution is difficult to explicate succinctly because most scholarly communities present the process with shades of difference reflecting each field's varied conceptualizations of myth's purpose. For lore's purpose, the simplified structure of this

evolution begins with stories. Stories are episodic, building the narratives that become a foundation for our history. Predominantly, our stories are oral in nature and often arise as we seek connections between existing knowledges and experiential occurrences. They reflect community members' need to talk through our existing knowledges as we endeavor to discover where this disconnects with our experiences. As we share our stories, they are incorporated into the knowledge base of fellow community members, influencing their reflection on both the community and its practice. As members reflect on individual lived experiences and those shared by fellow community members, we begin to develop an understanding of both the local and global narratives of our practice, and also our location and identity in relation to them. Narratives are created from an accumulation of stories, folded into each other, that often elucidate a guiding principal and serve to help a community, society, or culture historicize events, movements, or ideologies.

When we shape narratives locally, they impact our department, our institution, perhaps even our statewide or regional communities; when we create narratives globally, we begin to see the field-wide effects in and on our published scholarship, conferences, and on our local communities. In our desire or need to identify ways in which we can strengthen a particular element within our practice, we identify guiding principals within the stories we receive and the narratives that we build. As we establish the commonality of these experiences with those we find reported in our scholarship, we come to recognize our place in the global narrative of the field. Regardless of how these stories are treated by our audience or the location of their telling, when a community recounts their stories (to others or to themselves) they become part of our lore and also part of our historical narrative. Lore is present—our history is present—in nearly every narratological exchange we make. Therefore, in the definition of myth offered at the

beginning of this chapter, when we recognize myth as a signifier of narrative trends or moments, we acknowledge that we are already engaged in the construction and use of myth as we share our stories and build our narratives, engage and alter our practices, critique and challenge the tenets of our communities.

Lore's myth relies on community involvement and acceptance. Provided this and our field's area of study, the definition of myth most applicable to Composition's lore stems predominantly from rhetorical theory and political rhetoric. In *A Theory of Discourse*, James Kinneavy notes that effective persuasion incorporates current cultural myth with an awareness of how the myth is changing (280).[32] Although we have not expressly discussed the persuasive power of lore in our scholarship to date, it nonetheless exists. One of lore's primary purposes is to articulate experiential knowledge to others with the goal that this information will then influence future practice, research, theory and scholarship. Lore is therefore a type of discourse within our communities and culture and inherently carries with it a degree of persuasion. With this in mind, myth is characterized by its discursive form, subject matter, cultural currency, and social functions (Flood; Barthes). Adding to this list, Christopher Flood, an accomplished scholar dedicated to developing the disciplinary and cultural understanding of political myth, tells us that, "mythicality arises from the intricate, highly variable relationship between claims to validity, discursive construction, ideological marking, and reception of the account by a particular audience in a particular historical context" (7). Both Kinneavy and Flood inform the conceptualization of lore's myth through their treatment of political myth. For Kinneavy, who

[32] Although Kinneavy expressly states, "*if* [the myth] is changing," (emphasis mine) this statement should be adjusted to reflect the knowledge that myth is always in a fluctuating state, as the nature of myth cannot sustain a static existence. While this emphasis minimally changes Kinneavy's intent, it is important to remember that theory grows and sustains itself when we apply new knowledges to that already existing.

draws from the work of Harold Lasswell, myth is "the current underlying assumptions or explicit formulations of political theory, laws, and the popular manner in which these are realized in a state" (280). He extends this definition, offering three essential features of myth: "things believed, things legislated, and things admired" (280). Considering "things believed" as ideological assumptions, "things legislated" as rules or guidelines governing the varied types of practices (i.e. pedagogy, research, theory, and scholarship), and "things admired" as the elements and practices within the existing situation and context that community members aspire to, the applicability of Kinneavy's use of political myth begins to align with Composition's lore and lore's myth. Additionally, acknowledging that our perception of admirable practices is also constructed by cultural representations existing outside of the academy, such as film or literature, reinforces the parallel construction between political myth and lore's myth.

Flood, working within a political science framework, explains that myth "carries the imprint of the assumptions, values, and goals associated with a specific ideology or identifiable family of ideologies, and that [it] therefore conveys an explicit or implicit invitation to assent to a particular ideological standpoint" (42). Myths, in this context, are the narratological carriers of beliefs and therefore can and often do serve as elements on which to ground or accentuate ideological arguments (Flood 42). Following this trajectory, then, myths might be seen as existing in the polyvalence of postdisciplinarity, generating from and within, sanctioning, and also altering disciplinarity's ideological conventions and expectations.

Because of their symbolic and ideological nature, myths must compete with one another for survival sociologically, historically, and psychologically. Barthes claims, "some objects become the prey of mythical speech for a while, then they disappear, others take their place and attain the status of myth" (110). What survives then grows to compete with the myths that are

inherently born out of previous myths' existence, helping to shift myth construction and existence between the agonistic space of conflict and the irenic space of cooperation and collaboration. Simply put, the construction and survival of lore's myth occurs as the particular audience—practitioners, researchers, theorists and scholars—nurtures, supports, and internalizes our current myths in effort to enhance, extend, reconstruct and/or argue new practices, which then generate new myths. New myths compete with old myths and bear the fruit of yet another generation of lore's myth. The polyvalence of myth is evidenced in the ways myth functions in, through, and among these discursive and practical spaces.

One contention Rhetoric and Composition may have with accepting myth as a viable form of our lore is that as a discipline we resist including rhetoric or rhetorical devices that we perceive as necessitating uncritical acceptance or blind faith (arguably and ironically, this is an ideological contention throughout the institution).[33] But again, myth, in relation to Composition's lore, is not necessarily 'accepted uncritically.' We are trained to question practices—including the stories, narratives, *and* myths connected to them. However, the critical eye that we turn on myth does not, or perhaps cannot, empirically function identically to that which we turn on our research and scholarship. Myths evolve from our experiences (our stories) and our history (the narrative produced from our stories and our actions as they are collected over time). As a result of its evolutionary process, myth is flexible knowledge—it continually changes to reflect the cultural themes present in its lifespan. The criteria applied to produce a critical acceptance or reading of myth must act similarly to the nature of myth, itself. If we explicate codes to which we must adhere in order to critically accept myth, these codes then place static barriers on future myth and readings. Further, once we commit these codes or criteria

[33] This assumption denotes our acceptance of popular constructions of myth, in the vane of Burhans and Heehs, without the context of our lore as its framework.

to publication, we constrain our maneuverability and adaptability in critically engaging the mythoknowledge. Discussed earlier in Chapter Three, Rankin applies similar thought to lore with the assertion that the criteria for critical interpretation and use likely must remain unstructured by necessity of the process; this does not mean, however, that schema does not exist or that we blindly accept all that we witness.

Ambiguity has been a consistent point of contention within our field whenever we encounter a transitional space or marker, thus further complicating our acceptance of lore's myth and the multiplicity embedded in the term's connotative structure. Culturally, we frame myth according to our material, intellectual, and spiritual contexts. Philosophically, we find such minds as Adorno, Habermas, Levi-Strauss, Weber, Nietzsche, Geertz, and Barthes (most in conversation with one another to some degree) addressing these frameworks and explications on the phenomena of myth.[34] Historians have tended to dismiss myth as history's "antithetical mode of explanation," yet many disciplinary circles have accepted the concepts of historiography and mythistory as valid avenues of historical research and exploration (Heehs 1). Heehs claims that when mythos and logos are brought into dialectic, rather than positioned in a destructive, oppositional binary, what results is the empowerment of both mythohistory and historiography.[35]

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[34] This list, while incomplete, provides a sweeping view of the complex conversation sustained in the effort to pinpoint what myth is and how it functions.

[35] Influenced by the work of McNeill, Heehs defines mythohistory as the point in which "the prevailing logos-view becomes an uncritically accepted, self-affirming [myth]. Each mythical view is drawn to the use of logical language to validate itself, and if it succeeds it sets itself up as a new enlightenment" (15). Scholars likely agree (resoundingly) that an uncritical acceptance is generally dangerous and any material produced within this acceptance would not be considered "scholarly"; however, given that Composition's lore is often used to pass on knowledge between and among generations of scholars, researchers, and practitioners, it can be said that Composition's mythohistory already serves as part of our educative practice and is revised through practitioners' sustained critical attention.

That myth holds both the real and the fictional in its form suggests that the "truth," or factual element, within the myth can be parsed out of the myth and folded into our history separately. This does not override the goal or purpose of the specific myth, however. Rather, we begin to look upon the myth and the factual material as separate narrative events. An accessible example of this is the myth of the red pen. Most of us have witnessed or participated in conversations about whether or not to grade in red ink. We share our knowledge and opinions on the issue with established community members, incoming and new community members, as well as those who potentially could become a part of or have a connection to the community of teachers. I've thus far experienced the red pen conversation in classrooms, mentoring exchanges, tutoring and tutor education workshops, conference talk, social gatherings, digital media, popular literature—in other words, the talk sustaining our conflict with the use of lore exists not only in communities of teachers of writing or in educational culture, but also in popular culture. At some point in time, our discussion of red ink transcended our practitioner community and culture and became part of a broader cultural representation of writing and the teaching of writing.

How we *talk* about the red pen varies—some of us care little, if at all, about it, while others consider it ideologically important. Those who consider it a matter of political, psychological or pedagogical ethics have associated it with emotions such as aggression, fear, and righteousness, for example. This group considers the politics of the color choice: the affect color has on the writers as they review comments, the effected appearance of the text, the authority presented in text in conjunction with that presented in the classroom, and so on. Perhaps some even consider the pen, itself, as a point of pedagogical political awareness. The ideology driving our talk both perpetuates the conversation and encourages continual reflection on and assessment of our choices as teachers. That is, our desire as educators to critically reflect

on our choices and practices sustains the talk (lore) and informs how we shape our practice. Regardless of the amount of thought or depth of intellectual engagement we provide to our choice of what color of pen (or pencil or text) to use in assessment, we all must choose at some point.

Contributing to understanding the difference between the myth and the factual, or historically traceable, elements in our red pen narrative is the written lore, through which we historically trace our conversation. Likely, our concerns with red ink began around 1913, when *The English Journal* published Walter Barnes' article "The Reign of Red Ink." Barnes equates the red pen to a royal scepter and the English teacher to the King or Queen of the classroom. He contends that while there are multiple elements feeding into poor assessment practices, the use of the red pen must certainly encourage undesirable practices. By including in his article the politics of power, authority, and voice; the ethicality of assessment practices; and, psychological effects (suggesting that when a writer sees red ink on their composition, he or she connects this to a negative reception of the work), Barnes calls our attention to red ink as a symbol of unreflective practices that hinder developing writers and reinforce antiquated or inaccurate notions of what writing instruction ought to be.

As a more recent, and perhaps more familiar, example of the evolution of our lore regarding red ink, Cindy Johanek uses the lore of the red pen in her sample study in *Composing Research* to illustrate that using the contextualist research paradigm could provide access to rigorously engaging threads of our lore and, more specifically, access to separating the fact from the fiction. She pulls together a narrative snapshot of our varied applications and consistent attitude toward the red pen, citing scholarship by Patricia Harkin, Gail Hawisher and Cindy Selfe, Shearle Furnish, Nancy Sommers, J.T. Gage, and Lynn Brigs and Ann Watts Pailliotet.

Having established a thread of consistent conversation and concern regarding the red pen, Johanek explains her sample study and provides her results: "These surprising results, which showed either no difference in students' reactions to red vs. blue ink or showed that red ink was slightly preferred should cause our field to rethink the lore of red ink that it has created" (180). Of note, Johanek specifically states that we have *created* the lore surrounding the red pen and demonstrates through her data that much of what we believe to be true constitutes lore's myth. A full review of the red pen (or red ink) in scholarship is not feasible or necessary here, but it is important to note that this myth has affected fields beyond our own. More recently, Abraham Rutchick's psychological study somewhat aligns with Barnes' theory, suggesting that red ink encourages harsher grading practices ("The Pen is Mightier than the Word").

Further, this myth has not been perpetuated through scholarship and conversation, alone. Consider popular notions of the ritualized self image we hold: North, Harkin, and Furnish all point to the red pen as a element within the ritualized idea of what a writing teacher does and the materials they use therein. This image of the writing teacher helps perpetuate or encourage newcomers' concern with what color of ink they should use, as well as suggest an identity construct to resist, deny, or renounce as they develop their practice. It seems perhaps absurd that we would get upset or anxious about something as simple as a pen, but when it threatens to confine or define who we are individually within our community or our ideological purview, the absurdity abates and the frustration is perhaps justifiable (if not simply understandable). Equal to finding offense when someone reduces our identity to an unfitting stereotype, we may be just as guilty of judging fellow community members' practices if we see someone using a red pen. Johanek recalls her own experience with this:

> In the Spring of 1997, one day I had a short break from my duties as a faculty tutor in a writing center, so I took the opportunity to grade a couple of last-minute papers for a class I would teach that afternoon. Much to the horror of two tutors on duty at the time, I used the only pen I had in my purse: red. Their questions, in short, were filled with dismay and centered on the notion that someone like me (i.e., someone in a doctoral program in composition at the time, someone in writing centers, someone who should be well-versed in composition theory) would use, of all things, a red pen. They asked me everything but "Where have you been*?!?*" (168)

As Johanek illustrates, we are influenced by our knowledge of the lore, however right or wrong, which socially conditions us to question the legitimacy of practitioner choices in how they engage or realize myth behaviors and practices, regardless of impetus or rationale.

Lest we think this part of our ritualized self-image confined to the world of academia, the children's book *The Little Red Pen,* the *Harry Potter* series, and films such as *Bad Teacher* offer examples of this image perpetuated and sustained by popular culture. In Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel's *The Little Red Pen*, a band of office supplies (led by the red pen) work together to grade a stack of papers. The stapler can only provide staples in place of comments and the scissors end up cutting the papers to shreds. The highlighter brightens the papers but cannot seem to make legible comments and the pencil, using the added benefit of its eraser, corrects the papers for the students. The red pen, which is cast as the leader of the group, is the only supply imbued with the ability (re: authority) to actually grade the papers. Adding to the context is the image and attitude of the red pen—she wears a variation of half-frame horn-

rimmed glasses and her features bear the marks of maturity; she is goal-oriented, kind but firm, and exhausted.

A trailer for *Bad Teacher*, a film released in 2011, depicts the main character, Elizabeth Halsey (played by Cameron Diaz), illustrating the cultural perception of what it means to be just that—a bad teacher. She is shown sleeping in class, commenting inappropriately to colleagues and students, and in perhaps her most notable moment of "bad teaching" she is seen scribbling and scrawling on student papers with a red pen.

Dolores Umbridge, of the *Harry Potter* series, is another example of a fictionalized representation of the cultural expectations surrounding teacher behavior, appearance, and instruments. Umbridge uses writing as Potter's punishment when he contradicts her (and the Ministry of Magic). An authoritarian with little patience for students or intellectual freedom, she forces Potter to write "I will not tell lies" with a particular quill that magically etches the phrase onto his hand, draws in his blood, and uses it as ink for the scroll—the ultimate red pen. While the list of examples could continue ad infinitum, these illustrations sample the variety of popular sources offering a particular ideal of teaching and the role something as seemingly harmless as a red pen plays in socially constructing it.

The myth of the red pen has grown, over time, to reflect the changing atmosphere of educators' concerns regarding general teaching practices, student reception of assessment, and student function. Some community members uphold the myth of the red pen while others suggest that the color of ink used to grade holds little to any value on the quality of teacher assessment or student work. Most important to this study is that, while empirical rigor has been applied to the myth and we have offered evidence of factual elements within it, the myth continues to inform our developing practices and philosophies. We identify, in part, both the fiction within the myth

and the ideology driving its reproduction through cultural representations and the political positioning it renders for our practice. Neither fact nor fiction is more relevant or important in sustaining the myth; they merely in- and interdependently work to support the purpose or goal of the myth. For the red pen, perhaps our purpose is to ensure we maintain a critical, concerned awareness of the potential impact of our assessment of students' writing and rhetoric.

When we recognize myth as a valid element within our historical narrative, we acknowledge that our social influence moves beyond a community or groups of communities intertwined by common goals and practices. We acknowledge our culture, with its diverse ideologies, politics, and positionalities (Geertz *Interpretations of Culture*). While myth cannot function in empirical space adequately (after all, if we could *test* myth, it ceases to be myth and folds itself into the part of our historical narrative that we consider "fact"), without it we miss a unifying piece of our culture—the marker(s) indicating a movement beyond social structure. With both myth and narrative functioning as active lore[36], we can parse the fiction from which our facts are derived with a recognition that we learn, theorize, and practice with each of these knowledge forms always already engaged. We legitimize our narrative in the historical accounts we craft and disseminate in our written artifacts (textbooks, collections, monographs, journals, etc.) insofar as community history permits. Building our mythology[37], or perhaps merely giving it footing as "acceptable" academic pursuit and field knowledge, permits our lore to move beyond tertiary method or scholarly accoutrement. Myth, born of lore as a collection of

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[36]*Active* lore is that which is included in scholarship, serves as the foundation for critical, rigorous inquiry, and helps shape our practices, knowledges, and scholarly discourse.

[37] Arguably, we have been building our mythology since we began as a field. Whether we date our history to ancient Greece with the study of Rhetoric or we place our beginning in the 1970s with the development of Rhetoric and Composition programs and curricula, myth begins when the individual communities start to come together in social structure—when the conversation among us began.

meaningful stories, narratives, symbols, events, etc., deepens the potential of community as it serves to connect them in a social structure that bears culture.

Myths and Pedagogical and Professional Development

For practitioners, myths are sites of both acceptance and resistance. They highlight points of tension and conflict within our practices and thus help us determine what works and what does not, identifying the historical foundations on which our practices are built. They also help us identify disciplinary expectations and criticisms through sociological and structural applications. That is, while I am aware of the iconic image of the corduroy blazer with elbow patches, the glasses seemingly worn with an authority evoking both disdain and frightening intelligence, the pristine spoken English illustrating not only an expansive vocabulary but also perfect grammatical command, even the red pen of death, I do not relate to these images and yet I can identify a reflective, responsive awareness to them in my own self or my practice. North points out that this particular ritualistic construction provides cues toward community membership and practitioner authority (*MKC* 30). I carry these conceptions as part of my own understanding of how an English Professor looks, acts, and talks. These legendary expectations serve to support my immediate authority when I walk into the classroom but I also find them limiting, conflicting. They no doubt are a part of my history as much as I am a part of this profession and the community of practitioners; however, the ritualistic self-image becomes increasingly unstable when informed by my lived experience and I am faced with the question of whether what I do and how I do it is "right" or "normal". I do not *fit* into these mythic, heroic images and so I am positioned as "other"; I do, however, work *from* them as I develop my practices, and acculturate.

The resulting reflexive tension developed as practitioners critically construct authority and identity within practice is one to which many, if not all, of us can relate. Donna Qualley

asserts that this particular conflict is keenly experienced by graduate student teachers as their "desire to be 'liked' by those persons with whom they have the most contact can compromise any obligation they have to abstract standards" ("Learning to Evaluate…" 279). Illustrated in this section, as participants gain classroom experience and acculturate disciplinarily, the myths on which they once relied become points of reflexivity and reflection that inform their practice. The ongoing exposure to practice-in-action and practice-imagined creates an "[ongoing and recursive] engagement with the other" (Qualley, *Turns of Thought* 11). Through discussion of several participants' "new teacher" experiences, we begin to see their polydirectional, contrastive responses to myth—that is, the reflexivity within reflection and practice.

One participant, Alfred, offered an extended explanation of his experience with the mythic teacher construct. In it, he points to actions that help locate myth's impact on pedagogical and professional development. He describes his approaches during his first year as a teacher and then notes his current practices, indicating myth's shift from an overt catalyst to an embedded awareness. Describing his first days as a teacher, Alfred states,

> …I was 23 yrs old and I looked seventeen. I had this ridiculous fear that I wouldn't be taken seriously as an instructor, so I wore a suit and tie everyday to class. I had this briefcase my father had given me as a graduation present and I would go in there with all of my materials—folders and pens and all the textbooks; I would bring all the class related materials everyday. I would get up and I would lecture for the full 50 minutes, writing on the board all of the important points, underlining key words and everything. I was very stiff, self-conscious, and self-aware of everything I did. I was very aware of where I kept my hands and how quickly I was speaking. I would try to gesture illustratively or

> authoritatively. There were no student questions. There was no class discussion. There was no group work. I was the singular authority in the class. I was everything I warn my students about now. Anytime there was a difficulty in class—for example, any time students were late—I would lecture about it. If an assignment had been turned in that was not up to the standard I held them to, I lectured about it. Any grumblings about the amount of work or kind of work in the class, I lectured about it. Everything that would come up, I would lecture. That's all I did, the whole semester.

For Alfred, achieving classroom authority guided the initial decisions he made regarding his pedagogical approach. He identified his need to be "taken seriously" and the physical barrier many traditional graduate students encounter as they enter the classroom; that is, he thought he looked too young. Concurrently with dressing the part, he is performing the authority he sought by pedagogically decentering the students.

Alfred continues, explaining a particularly overt moment of teacher-centrism that resulted in completely undermining the authority he was attempting to achieve. He recalls a class in which a student attempted to leave the classroom without permission or explanation. He began "lecturing about the importance of staying in class, of listening to the material, and how you can't just come and go whenever you want." He didn't realize until it was too late that the student was attempting to leave class because she was ill. Alfred states, "[The students] realized 'here is somebody who doesn't care about us. We, as people, are not important to him.' After that, there was no recovering my ethos, my professionalism—there was none of that. I was devastated. I had failed as a teacher, as an instructor." The myth(s) driving Alfred's decision to approach the class as he did was constructed through a combination of his previous experience as

a student, his exposure to and reception of popular cultural constructions of "serious" teaching, and his desire to validate his newfound community membership through classroom authority. In his description, we can see a confrontation between his experiential reality and the myth that focuses the tension experienced in finding both classroom identity and authority. Alfred notes that, after talking with peers, he realized he needed to revise his pedagogical approach with this moment intact as a catalyst or a point of reference. Explaining the new direction he took in his second semester of teaching, Alfred states,

> …the first day of class, I told my students who I was, where I was coming from—that this was my second semester teaching and the first hadn't gone so well but that I was committed to the work and I wanted to work with them. I put desks in a circle and sat down with them so that we were all sort of equal in the classroom. I almost never lectured in that class. Everything was generated by group discussion or group work. … I wore casual clothes, not too casual but enough to show I was relaxed. I worked with each student one-on-one as much as possible. I encouraged them to come and see me; I encouraged their questions, problems, writing… and that experience greatly informed how I approach teaching because it was everything that I wanted it to be.

Alfred rejects the primary teaching model he embodied in the first semester, but not the teaching myth. Leanne Warshauer contends, "Repositioning the small group as authority is simply a reformation of the more traditional teacher-as-authority classroom" (93). Choosing to approach teaching as student-centered, Alfred works against the lecture-based pedagogy and instead seeks authority through inclusive learning acts (placement of desks, types of classroom activities, etc.). Further, just as he changed his approach, he also changed his appearance to reflect this new

teaching persona. He's still functioning with the same set of mythic constructs; only they are now reflexive sites of pedagogical resistance.

This conflict continued to inform Alfred's pedagogy, indicated within his description of his current classroom practices and approach. Just as he grappled with establishing authority in the first semester, and attempted to completely relinquish it in the second—both responses to mythic notions of what effective teaching is and who an effective teacher appears to be—the issue of authority continues to play a primary role in his teaching practices. He explains how he has since repositioned authority in a critical framework. That is, rather than trying to establish or reject it, his matured dialectic with practice and authority now seeks to publicly critically question it. Alfred states,

> Part of being a critical thinker is about questioning everything. Questioning sources from which they're constructing knowledge, from which they are deriving their education. So I think it's important that they question me. I stand up there—I'm the big authority figure. I've got all the texts and information. I assign the papers and quizzes. If they're not questioning my motivations, my expertise, then I think I've already failed as an instructor. They're just taking what I say at face value. No matter how noble and sincere as my intentions may be...they're not getting the "real" education that is available to them.

In his struggle to find his authority in the classroom, the representations of teaching and classroom practice he initially held had to be reconciled with the reality of practice. The conflict resolution he sought was in direct response to the mythic foundation; the myth was never fully separated from his practice and continues to inform his choices, increasingly becoming less problematized but remaining nonetheless. In describing his current practices, the description of

his physical appearance also shifts to indicate the myth's continued presence. Now, he overtly acknowledges aspects of his person, including his appearance, in an effort to encourage transparency and critical engagement within the class. He explains,

> The story I always tell people is: The first week of class, I stand in front of them and say, you know, 'I'm the *man*. I'm upper class, white, heterosexual, Christian, male…. I am that embodiment, that representation, of that authority, that patriarchal power structure. So absolutely they shouldn't trust me. They should be questioning my motives, my background, my approach, my judgment—all of it. Often, they're coming from a place where they don't experience privilege in ways that I've always experienced privilege. I look at the places that my students are coming from and where I'm coming from and they're very different places and I have to be aware of that. If I'm going to reach them and help them develop awareness, I, too, have to be aware.

Here, the myth is embedded in the embodiment of the practice. Instead of trying to assert a particular type of authority, he spotlights the authority he culturally represents as a point of access and inquiry for his classes. As Alfred has revised his approach over the course of his graduate student teaching career, the myth remains a consistent site of reflection serving to influence his practices.

Sonya notes similar reflexive evolution in her experience, explaining that she, too, has struggled with classroom authority and the role that negotiating culturally constructed notions played in her initial construct of the teacher self-image. Her teaching experience led her to grapple with authority in conflicting educational cultures as she taught overseas and then

returned to the United States to attend and teach in the university's graduate program. She explains the contrastive responses she developed and the conflicts these generated,

> [In the country where I began teaching,] they rule by authority and that's not to say that there aren't amazing close and wonderful relationships between teachers and students…but that's because teachers have and take so much authority over students in their lives. They're not just in there, in the classroom. They're in there with the sports clubs. They go to them in the morning before school. They're visiting their homes at night after school…and there's this sense that they have to maintain this image that students always see—a consistent image—they're always knowledgeable. They'll always have the answer for the students. They will always do the right thing. And the student also agrees to enter into this fallacy because they then have a sense of security that the teacher will always know what to do. So there's much less togetherness working things out. The teacher was presenting what was already worked out to the students. Even though I don't think that's the most productive way to teach and to learn, having been in that environment, and having been the teacher in that environment, inculcated me in some ways. And when you're a fearful, anxious person, when you're an insecure person, ruling by fear is easier than being open to other people. It's less scary. So I have to fight that….

She affirms the pedagogical awareness created within the conflicting ideas presented by her experiences and her developing cultural awareness, concluding that the notion of authority is challenging for her because, "If your goal is to teach [students] to be critical, you have to let yourself be criticized, too, in a productive manner and I think [new teachers] are afraid to do

that." Echoing Sonya's experience, Celestine Woo asserts, "Working with international students has taught me how culturally fraught notions of authority are. We cannot defamiliarize student expectations of authority figures until we acknowledge their existence and validity" (140). Indicating the balance she seeks in her practice, Sonya states,

> …There's so much that's associated with 'teacher': the knowledge base, the authority, the "total control of power" that teachers can exert over [students'] lives. Unless we are consistently challenging the definition of teacher as someone who is a know-all, be-all, end-of-existence with your grade, then it's hard for students to engage with us. I keep talking about authority as if it's a completely bad thing and sometimes you can use your authority or your "powers" for good, rather than evil. 'Yes, these are my experiences (authority of experience); yes I have read this; yes this is information that you need to know in order to improve your writing process or to understand this concept'—it can be a good thing….

For Sonya, just as for Alfred, functioning from the cultural myths surrounding teacher authority and ethos has provided a site of conflict that now is both a teachable moment, or point of critical inquiry, and a reference with which she attempts to achieve an authority in the classroom that is affirmed or positively received by the students.

Similarly, Renn explains the cultural myths that informed his initial constructs of practice and classroom, noting the relief these myths provided in his initial teaching experience. After explaining that he modeled his past teachers, he also indicated how theatrical constructions of teachers (what we might call the body of narratives creating the "Hollywood Teacher" myth) helped him overcome his shyness and his desire to relate with students:

> …I had two [classes] and I didn't find out I was teaching them until about ten days before the semester started. I was sort of in a panic and I had to put together a syllabus, which I hadn't really ever done, and I had to read the whole textbook, which I hadn't done yet. So I had a total breakdown for about a week and, in those first semesters, I think I was really lenient. I think I was really caught up in "I hope they like me" because I'm sort of personally an introverted person so all-of-a-sudden-standing up in front of 25 people is a little distressful. So I kind of thought of it as acting, like 'I'm going to pretend I'm Robin Williams in *Dead Poets Society*' or whatever—Edward James Olmos in *Stand and Deliver*. And so I thought of it that way and I think I spent too much time worrying about being a likeable teacher and so I let them get away with a lot.

As with Alfred and Sonya's experiences, embodying the myth (playing the role of familiar characters) provides Renn with an initial framework that he can then work from as he develops his practice. Returning to Kinneavy's three characteristics of myth mentioned earlier, Renn illustrates the desire for "things admired" as he mimics these characters. He later states that his approach has become less lenient but the greatest challenge is "trying to find a place in between being friendly and being the *instructor*." He indicates that as he continues to negotiate and revise practices in an effort to "be the teacher that I want to be," his initial mythic teacher self-image still contributes to the conflict he faces.

Providing alternative access to myth's function in graduate student development, Dean discusses the effect tutoring had on his initial constructs of the teaching identity. He points to the community access afforded to him through his tutoring experiences and the assistance this gave

him as he worked to develop his practices and understand the myths informing his initials conceptions of the teacher self-image. He states,

> I would say [tutoring] was critically important for me because I had ideas about what teaching in the college classroom would be like but after spending a year in the Studio, I came to understand what the power dynamic was, what the nature of the students was and how all of that worked together. I think not having that experience, I would have gone in much less prepared and would have had ideas about the classroom dynamic that weren't true and would have taken a lot longer to work out had I not had that experience first."

For Dean, working as a tutor provided him the opportunity to work through some of the mythic constructs of teaching with which he came to institutional practice. He elaborates, indicating that the community-based experiences and examples did not negate his issues of authority, but merely helped him identify them as he began developing his practice. He explains,

> When I started off, I was much more directive than I am now. I was more authoritarian; I liked rules, I wanted things a certain way. I found that this wasn't really reflective of my personality or effective in the classroom so I started off very directive, very lecture oriented, and over the years, I've become less so—more collaborative, more discussion [based], more input from the students toward the direction of the course… and [I am] less likely to just direct the class.

Dean credits his continued tutoring experience with the revisions he has made in his developing processes. Part of his demythification of classroom practices has come from the negative examples he's witnessed as a tutor. According to Dean, "seeing all the negative comments [teachers made on papers]—they're great…they help students learn academic standards, but it

doesn't tell the student what works and doesn't help them figure out what to do in the future." Seeing first-hand the effect certain types of comments have on students and their writing processes has encouraged Dean to develop a practice that facilitates "getting [students] to arrive at an idea on their own" because, "I don't really perceive myself as the authority on what the student is doing. I'm more of an experienced reader…." In blending tutoring and teaching pedagogies, Dean works reflexively with the myths he first held and the practices within his institutional community to shape his teaching identity and authority. He admits this did not negate the existence of teacher-centered practices in his first semesters as an instructor, but that, "The idea that it should be a collaborative space, a space for discussion is a hold-over from my tutoring experience. Even when I was more directive in the beginning, I never went into the classroom as the 'recorded professor' lecturing. There was always going to be some element of discussion; I think that's important." The dialectic Dean develops between teaching myths, tutoring myths, and the reality of practice in each space postdisciplinarily informs his recursive revision as he develops professionally and pedagogically.

Hammond confirms that tutoring has helped him critically engage many of the myths pertaining to classroom authority. Unlike Dean, Hammond began tutoring after he had classroom teaching experience and had already begun using myths to actively address tensions in his developing practices. He states,

> …tutoring is one of the main things that allowed me to let go of some of that authority. If you're directive in a tutoring session, you find very quickly that you aren't doing anyone any favors; you're just proofreading. It's when we dispense with hierarchy and I give you my honest response as an experienced reader and, yeah, you have to trust that I'm a pretty good reader. But when you focus less on

> what's wrong, and more on an honest reaction and give suggestions, that's a different model from the traditional 'I'm going to tell you what you did wrong and now you go home and fix it.' And tutoring is a dialog, too. You need to have feedback from the writer. [ex.] 'Where did you want to go with this and what do you want to do?'…and it forces you to see the writer as a person instead of a face in a sea of persons.

Tutoring helped Hammond address his classroom practices and the myths informing them. For example, he notes how quickly he realized the lack of learning sustained with directive approaches to writing and that developing writing processes is a conversation that must include the writer. Moreover, in representing both writing tutor and teacher practitioner roles within the institution, Hammond uses the personal interaction afforded through tutoring to help students position writing center work as critical engagement with writing processes and writing culture. Explaining his conversational efforts to deconstruct some of the myths facing student-writers (who are often inexperienced with tutoring and writing centers), Hammond states,

> You can see it as—lets look at it from the writer's perspective—either I am deficient and I'm being sent to 'study hall' or, I'm paying you. Why aren't you telling me what I want? Why aren't you available when I want? [laughs] You know, things like that. A lot of it depends on the student's attitude toward tutoring. It's either a consumer mentality or "I feel terrible because I need extra help," which I go out of my way to explain to people that, simply, going to a writing studio is what a conscientious engaged writer does. It's not a remedial thing. It's not a punishment. It's not study hall. It's not detention. It's what somebody who's really conscientious about their writing will do at some point.

Here, Hammond denotes not only the effect tutoring has had on the myths surrounding teacher authority, but also on the myths surrounding writing center work in developing writers. The multidirectional response to and application of the postdisciplinary mythoknowledge indicates a similar but separate responsibility to the community's enterprise as Dean's narrative articulates. That is, both use the exposure to community practices they experience as tutors to critically engage and question their own assumptions and mythic constructs. Dean focuses on potential application to his teaching and asserts that it is because of this experience that he believes the tension authority creates in developing classroom practice was somewhat relieved. Hammond, who similarly focuses on the reflexive, recursive application of teaching and tutoring practices and myth-related or –generated assumptions his classroom practice rested on, applies this awareness not only to his own practices, but attempts to contribute to the communal responsibility of deconstructing the myths of writing center practice and work.

Each of these examples illustrates how a particular site of myth within professional and pedagogical development, that of the new teacher's authority and identity, alters practice through a postdisciplinary engagement. Each participant seeks to align with disciplinary culture's expectations and standards of what it means to be "the teacher" by using myths as an initial entry point and then as a reflexive point in their reflection on and crafting of professional practices. I focus here on one experiential site (the "new teacher" experience) because I believe it is a familiar conflict for most practitioners; this does not, however, mean that it is the *only* site of myth's influence and contribution to our approaches and actions throughout various developmental stages. Moreover, it is likely that as graduate student practitioners move into full-time teaching positions as faculty and administrators and continue to develop, similar conflicts will occur. Suggesting that myths are applicable to maturing practices just as they are to

developing ones not only points to the endurance of myth, but also to the postdisciplinarity of communities of practice. That is, regardless of our practitioner sites, we continue to share and develop lore as a way of critically engaging disciplinary, cultural conventions. Myths inform professional disciplinary practices, helping us situate our cultural identity by affording a necessary and negotiated dialectic between what we think we know and what we experience. Ultimately myth's function is to help us critically engage and identify the cultural tension practitioners experience in the negotiation of developing practices and professional identities.

CHAPTER SIX

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE AS POLYVALENT SITES OF POSTDISCIPLINARY DEVELOPMENT

In order to emphasize the shared mission between writing center professionalization and graduate teacher education, I have illustrated ways in which lore reflexively informs the individual practitioner's professional development within a community of practice. Because graduate students often embody a transitional professional space, their communal structures reflect the central import of practice and experiential learning. Moreover, the developing practitioners in these communities are influenced simultaneously by both disciplinary and counter- or non-disciplinary knowledges, standards, and expectations, which are shared and negotiated within the community. These findings suggest that lore serves a vital task in professional and pedagogical development with its ability to generate, transmit, and negotiate knowledge that affirms, questions, and sometimes contradicts disciplinary culture.

Situating learning as a lived experience, communities of practice center the acts and experiences that construct knowledges reflective of individual and social negotiations of the enterprise, or purpose, of the community. The interdependent relationship this social framework constructs between practitioner knowledge and the disciplinary enterprise suggests a departure from valuing either a dichotomized or singular locus of authority. For example, in *The Making of Knowledge in Composition*, Stephen North suggests that valuing the practitioner voice de-centers institutional expectations and prioritizes the traditionally marginalized knowledge practitioners construct and share. Proposing that one or the other must be centered presents an irreconcilable agonistic relationship between the practitioner and institution—one that reifies an

overdetermined, politicized cultural duality within our field. However, a community of practice encourages a recursive and malleable transmission of value and authority between the individual, the community, and the institution in shaping disciplinary culture.

One illustration of this is writing center practitioners' ongoing endeavor to shift disciplinary understanding from writing centers as sites for remedial help to sites of learning and writing disciplinary culture. From North's "The Idea of a Writing Center" in 1984, to Harry Denny's *Facing the Center* in 2010, writing center scholars continually attempt to challenge the images and practices of our founding locations and reposition our community as one that situates learning and writing as lived acts. Indicative of this cultural conflict, Beth Boquet argues,

> If we accept that contemporary writing centers grew out of early methods, then we have strong support for a reading of writing centers as producing and sustaining hegemonic institutional discourses. Such a reading leads us to theories like that of Grimm's regulatory model, which constructs the writing center as an institutional site concerned with controlling the production of literacy. If, on the other hand, we locate writing center origins in the extracurriculum, we then set the precedent for a counter-hegemonic model of writing center operations, one which attempts to wrest authority out of the hands of the institution and place it in the hands of the students (44).

The conflict Boquet articulates intimates the core of the postdisciplinary work writing centers can foster and engage, but she also reinforces the polarized notions of authority and politics we have remained in for far too long.

Rather than seek a limited or central "placement" of authority, I contend that writing centers promote a *fluctuating* authority. By this I mean that writing centers attempt to empower

the authority of the student (both writer and tutor) with the recognition that the institution's inherent authority cannot be ignored or entirely silenced. The institution will always retain a degree of authority; in response, writing centers negotiate power dynamics between stakeholders in an effort to serve the institution, the student, and the practitioner. Thus, writing centers' paracurricular origins enhance the developing practitioner's ability to identify ideologically with reference to their personal accountability in shaping and sustaining the disciplinary culture of teaching writing. Never fully subscribing to disciplinarity or to counter-disciplinarity, writing centers are sites in which communities of developing practitioners learn to engage, revise, observe, sustain, and balance disciplinary and non-disciplinary cultural expectations.

To illustrate the potential to acculturate developing practitioners from this disciplinarily polyvalent space, consider the variety of historically-grounded representations of writing center *work* in contemporary practice: some writing centers focus on peer collaboration and process over product; some embody laboratory models emphasizing lower-order concerns and basic writing skills; some incarnations, such as studios and online writing centers, seek a third-space for learning and writing; etc. To point, the design of the metaphor, philosophy, or mission—and the practices demonstrating and perpetuating a center's ideological foundation—is dependent on the needs of the institution (including disciplinarity and the "extracurriculum"), the student body, and the practitioners. Similarly, the pedagogical choices practitioners make in order to reflect their individual disciplinary ideology in the classroom are often marked by conflicts occurring in their attempt to reconcile these needs with their own cultural expectations and experiences. The narratives of this study's teacher-tutor participants suggest that when members of a community of practice experience the postdisciplinarity of writing center work, they reflexively incorporate this knowledge in their classrooms and their teaching practices, as well as share it with fellow

community members. For example, recall from Chapter Five Hammond and Dean's discussions of how tutoring practices inform their pedagogy and influence their classroom practices. For both, tutoring altered their construction of classroom authority, with Dean approaching his first class as a teacher with a multidirectional perspective and Hammond reflexively altering his existing classroom practices to reflect the experientially-based cultural knowledge developed through tutoring. Further, both participants served as mentors within the graduate community and often engaged classroom observation (as both the observer and the observed), which suggests both the social and the individual transmission of postdisciplinarily-informed practices developed through participation in a writing center community of practice.

Participants find lore to be both a practical learning tool and a site of critical cultural engagement and negotiation for developing practitioners because communities of practice are grounded in experiential learning. The structure of communities of practice suggests that a primary point of knowledge construction and reflection is located in the expression and internalization of lore. More directly, the centering of practice and practitioner experience that communities of practice foster increases the social and cultural value we place on lore institutionally by acknowledging practitioners, and therefore their knowledges, as agents reflexively influencing disciplinarity. Acquiring and sharing experientially based knowledge ensures disciplinary continuity while also promoting critical inquiry of current and historical events, expectations, and standards. One site of lore in which we readily see both of these purposes fulfilled is lore's myth.

While myth, itself, is a term fraught with disciplinary conflict, it is through this form of lore that participants most readily exposed cultural tensions graduate students negotiate as developing practitioners. In the previous chapter, I define lore's myth as narrative markers signaling

perceived disciplinary and non-disciplinary representations of practitioner work and communities. Myths influence how we engage and historicize disciplinarity and practitioner culture. To this end, one goal of this work is to encourage listening to our alternative histories with regard to how they inform the current practices and the cultural mores of our profession. North establishes lore as representative of "competing versions" of our historical narrative and suggests that lore helps establish a recursive, reflective (re)interpretation of our historical dialectic (*MKC* 70-71). One prominent benefit of exploring lore's myth is the access it grants us to our alternative histories about our work as well as our practice. Christopher Ferry points out that "practice is not just a genteel way to say work; instead, practice elides discussions of actual work by abstracting it from its material conditions" (13). Arguably, historicizing our work necessarily maintains this abstraction, but our lore helps expose the unique and the recurring material conditions we work within as we develop, negotiate, and revise our practitioner understanding of disciplinary culture. Thus, lore is an essential element within the professionalization of graduate student teachers, both socioculturally and practically.

Although substantial research on lore exists in the field, there are still new directions in which we can explore lore's effect within communities of practice and professional development. While I have focused on lore's influence in a physically- or geographically-located community of practice, future studies can expand this research to explore how lore's myth enhances a postdisciplinary approach to development in digital communities and environments as well. Technology alters our talk and writing in ways that help break down the barriers of physical location and "localized" communities, offering instead a more flexible, globalized notion of social interaction and structure. In other words, as technologies have altered our professional practices, both in and out of the classroom, they have also transformed how we

theoretically and geographically construct location. Lore is no longer bound, just as we are no longer bound, by the constraints in which North's material reality positioned our narratives. Projects such as the Digital Archives of Literacy Narratives (DALN) and educative materials such as *Take 20* serve to concretely illustrate ways in which lore's talk and writing have progressively expanded beyond what North could have offered in *MKC*. This expansion helps realize the importance of revisiting lore and reclaiming its significance within the field while also centralizing lore's postdisciplinarity. Further, exploring lore and lore's myth in technologically-based teaching, tutoring, or professional writing communities of practice may help us better understand the nuances of myths, their origins, and ways that practitioners are working toward a negotiated understanding of disciplinarity.

We might also consider exploring myths that affect the mature practices of established community members by looking at myths influencing, for example, administrators, faculty transitioning through tenure and promotion, or adjunct faculty. Implications from this research could easily influence not only how we structure graduate professionalization, but also faculty and administrative professionalization throughout the field. Additionally, considering how lore, lore's myth, and postdisciplinarity influence and inform the practices of community members practicing in K-12 settings might also lead to a more complete understanding of lore's cultural function within the global community of writing teachers and professionals.

In slightly more pragmatic terms, developing a sense of the influence myths have on the practitioner's reflective negotiation of practices helps us shape professional development curricula for both tutors and teachers. Practitioners develop a cultural awareness when we engage professionalization and pedagogical discovery as acts within a community of practice that are neither singularly institutional-, counter-institutional-, nor individual-centric, but rather

negotiated among these locations to best reflect the values of the enterprise. While tensions exist because of the postdisciplinary negotiation developing practitioners engage, it is within this negotiated dialectic that community members reflexively and reflectively locate their own practices and positionality within disciplinary culture. That is, the conflicts that occur between cultural knowledges developed through institutional practices and those which are derived from institutionally external or counter-institutional sites or interactions position the practitioner to reflectively craft practices that demonstrate a re-interpretation of disciplinarity that is suggestive of both the individual's and the institution's perceived subjectivity within academic culture's dominant ideologies. Applied practically, postdisciplinary formations of teacher education might include acts such as embedding observations with peer interviews in reflective teaching portfolios or supporting collaborative teaching experiences between tutors and new or developing teachers.

Although we cannot artificially reproduce or "force-replicate" lore within professional and pedagogical development, we can find ways to provide graduate students with opportunities and exposure to these types of moments as well as foster the accumulation of tools that will help graduate students use these "organic" moments critically within their practice as tutors, teachers, researchers, scholars, and community members. One practical approach to incorporating lore and the negotiation of postdisciplinary knowledge with disciplinarity, in particular, is exemplified by the interview process within this study's design. The final interview question asked of participants positioned them to discuss the effects, if any, that participation in this study had on their understanding of their individual practices and professional development. The seven participants in this dissertation echoed the responses this question received throughout the larger community

of participants. For each, the survey and interview process promoted unique nuances in reflectively engaging their own work in relation to institutional or academic culture.

Some participants, such as Renn and Hammond, noted that there was a basic reflective function the interview and survey process enacted. Renn notes, "It's made me interrogate myself in an interesting way that I haven't done before. To think about my role as a teacher, my different classes, the assignments that I give, the lectures, the discussions—it's made me consider them to a greater depth than I think just my personal reflection on classes or semesters has given me." Similarly, Hammond also discusses the importance of having an external prompt for reflective inquiry, stating,

> Sometimes I get caught up in everything that's going on and I'm not taking classes right now so all of my reflection has to come from me and the conversations I can have with my friends when we have the time. So, to sit down for an hour or so and reflect on my teaching persona, what I think about *this* or *that*, is a welcomed opportunity for me that I don't often get. [The interviews] have a topic (laughs) whereas if I'm just talking to my friends and colleagues, I may touch on some of these things, but we're going to go off into a variety of things. This is a good, guided reflection.

Hammond and Renn both point to the importance of social engagement and inquiry in their reflective processes. Dean, Helen, Alfred, and Sonya also suggest that the act of articulating their approach to and positionality within the profession for a peer or colleague meaningfully enhances their reflective processes. Dean states,

> These questions have made me interrogate some of those fundamental issues that I've not really thought about in a while.… They have helped me look at the

> deeper issues. I'm not sure [the interviews] necessarily changed anything, but I think that I have a firmer grasp, for my own sake, on where I stand on a lot of these issues because I had never really articulated those stances before.

For Dean, the interview process did not alter his practices, but he intimates that it did help him gain a better understanding of his personal "how" and "why" of teaching by positioning him to express specific experiences and knowledge connected to the development of a variety of professional practices, such as tutoring, mentoring, and administrative leadership.

Analogous to Renn, Dean, and Hammond, Sonya points to the benefit of articulating her practices and philosophy, stating, "Having to formulate consciously what I think about some things has been really helpful in seeing where I've thought about something a lot and know what I want to say or (discovering) what I'm thinking about *this* or *that*." While Sonya does not overtly suggest the interviews have functioned for her as a guided reflective activity, she implies similar benefits to those discussed by Renn and Hammond. Additionally, just as Dean believes his reflective knowledge has improved because the interviews helped him locate issues he felt he wanted to revisit, Sonya suggests a similar benefit to her professional development through reflective engagement.

For Helen, Alfred and Morgan, the interviews also helped them professionally in that each participant articulates the reflective preparation afforded through addressing the variety of questions posed in the interviews. Helen believes responding to the questions in the interviews will help her, "craft a more reflective and more accurate [teaching] philosophy." She notes that forcing herself out of the "shorthand" or "non-discursive way of understanding" her practices that she uses for herself and articulating what she does and why she does it for a peer has helped her "think more carefully about what I do and what I think I do." Alfred and Morgan, on the

other hand, reference the study's interview process as preparation for future job interviews. Both note that they feel more prepared to talk about their professional and pedagogical practices in relation to the field and various types of departments. Morgan explains, "To really think through some of these things has really been good for me. It's given me a little more grounding, grounding with my professional identity." Similarly, Alfred states,

> These interviews have pushed me to reflect on every aspect of what I'm doing here as a student, as an instructor, as a professional, as a scholar. So it's been very valuable for that and forcing me to articulate, not only to myself but also to others, what it is that I'm doing here. I think it's important and will have practical benefit when I'm grilled on the job market and have interviews at MLA.

For these participants, the reflection inherent to the interview process helped focus their understanding of their professional identity. Although Alfred sees an immediate benefit in preparing for his impending job market experience, he also sees a sociocultural purpose in participating in this study's interview process. He states,

> I appreciate the interview, too, because it's forced me to expand my thinking about the larger role that I'm playing in all of this—the fact that I *am* part of a larger community and that everything that we do and contribute matters to our students, either positively or negatively, and maybe messing with that impact a little bit. You know, taking steps and strides that I had not thought about before, which is always a good thing.

The cultural awareness that Alfred indicates has come from the reflexivity of the reflective processes he engaged throughout this study confirms that critically and socially engaging our practices offers (potential) immediate application and revision to how we do what we do and

why we do it. For writing program or writing center administrators seeking to facilitate or utilize postdisciplinarity knowledge in graduate student professionalization, combining a peer-to-peer interview process with peer teaching or tutoring observations positions developing practitioners to both articulate their own work and also begin understanding the experiential knowledge of fellow community members. Alternatively, not limited to but particularly manageable in programs with a small graduate student body, roundtables and presentations led by graduate students for their peers also fosters the inclusion of knowledges constructed through postdisciplinarity, lore, and lore's myth. Organizing opportunities for developing professionals to interact, share their experiential knowledge, and discuss the influences and foundations for their practices, is limited only by our creativity and imaginations. Bringing together graduate student practitioners who function in a variety of teaching spaces (traditional and online classrooms, writing centers, sites external to the institution, etc) through activities such as collaborative teaching, pedagogical focus groups, roundtable, presentations, or peer-to-peer interviews provides the opportunity for developing practitioners to acknowledge and incorporate the multitude of cultural knowledges informing disciplinarity and our practices.

The recognition of lore's postdisciplinarity in our scholarship throughout the 1990s was a breakthrough in relation to how we theoretically frame lore's function in our work and communities. As scholarship began stirring with references to communities of practice, we also experienced a similar progressive shift in how we theoretically understand the ideological priorities in our professional work and communities. The connection that this dissertation attempts to draw between these crucial turning points in our field's history is that the centering of practice (i.e. the foundation of the community of practice) enables a negotiated, recursive power relation between the institution and the practitioner, thus creating multiple, malleable sites of

authority and agency within disciplinary culture. Because practitioners use lore to critically engage disciplinary practices (both affirming and questioning its standards and expectations), I locate myth as one site of lore's postdisciplinary engagement with disciplinarity because myth readily represents cultural phenomena influencing practitioner ideology and practice. The postdisciplinarity of lore is one artifact or tool with which we negotiate disciplinary and non- or counter-disciplinary knowledges and experiences. If we are to value lore's contribution to the shape of our field, it is vital to understand its polydirectionality and the diversity of its influence within the culture of the academy.

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APPENDIX

Material included in this appendix represent sample interview questions and surveys, discussed in the Chapters One and Two.

Pedagogical Interview Questions (Sample)
[Participant with tutoring experience]

- Describe your pedagogical approach in the classroom.
- Who or what are the major influences in your teaching or pedagogy?
- Describe your "pedagogical path"; how did your teaching practice develop into what it is today? What has changed? What do you want to change?
- From whom or what do you seek pedagogical advice when you have a problem or issue?
- What role, if any, does reflection play in your pedagogy? Do you incorporate student reflective writing assignments? If so, what do you do with that information?

ASSESSMENT/ASSIGNMENTS

- Describe how you assess student work (writing).
- (If student reflective writing is involved) How do you incorporate student reflective comments in your assessment?
- In your survey response, it's unclear to me what assignment descriptions look like in your syllabus. Can you briefly explain what they look like?

GROUP WORK/WORKSHOPS/PEER RESPONSE

- What do you call "group work" in the classroom? Why do you choose to use that term? What are you doing when they are working in their groups?
- Describe how you coordinate peer response in the classroom and what you are doing while the students are working on their writing.

STUDENT CONFERENCES

- Describe your conferencing techniques and/or approach. What do you talk about with students? [How] Do you set the agenda? Do they bring their work with them, do you provide it for them, and/or do you look at writing samples?
- It was unclear to me if you require teacher/student conferences as part of your syllabus. Do you? If so, how do these conferences differ from those you do not require (student-initiated)?

TUTORING AND TEACHING (DEVELOPMENT)

- What parts of your classroom practice reflect your tutoring experience? What parts of your tutoring practice do you carry over to your teaching (or envision yourself carrying over)?
- Discuss the benefits, pedagogically, to being [in the classroom; in the Studio; in the classroom and the Studio] as you develop your sense of who you are as a teacher or an understanding of your teaching practice.
- Discuss the drawbacks.
- What is your primary goal in the classroom?
- Do you perceive a sense of community in our department? Who is part of your community (students, fellow instructors, faculty, staff, etc)? Does this pedagogical community extend out from the department?
- What does your community offer you? What do you offer your community?
- How would you describe your teacher identity/pedagogical identity?

Professionalization Interview Questions (Sample)
[Participant with tutoring experience]

- How do you define professionalization/professional development?
- Describe your professionalization as a graduate student (so far).
- What are your interests professionally (i.e. administrative work, subfields/specialties, research interests, side projects)? Career goals?
- Describe the last conversation you had about professionalization (without using names).
- Can you tell me about a few key moments in your professionalization/professional development?
- Where/When/By whom do you believe you get the most "professional" attention? (i.e. who/where/when do you feel you are mentored on how to be a professional academic most strongly or effectively?)
- Where/When do you see yourself exercising this professionalism as a graduate student?
- How has the classroom impacted your professional identity?
- How has tutoring impacted your professional identity?
- Discuss what you believe are the benefits, professionally, to being in both the classroom and tutoring.
- Discuss the drawbacks.
- Do you separate teaching/tutoring from "professionalization"?

COMMUNITY AND PROFESSIONALIZATION

- Do you perceive a professional community (one with interests in learning about professional aspects to the academy/writing career) among your peers? What do you get from this community? What do you give to it?
- What role does reflection play in your professionalization?
- What role has your PDC played in your professionalization?
- Describe your professional identity (teacher, writer, academic, administrator, etc.).
- Do you see yourself as a professional now?

Reflective Interview Prompts (Sample)
[Participant with tutoring experience]

- How do you define "reflection"? What acts/activities do you include in reflection? What reflective acts/activities do you engage in?

- Do you find that you reflect more or less on your teaching practice than when you first began? How has your reflective practice changed?

- I've asked you in previous interviews if you perceive a community around you. How do you define "community"? Who are your community members (peers, faculty, administration, etc)? How/When did you build your community (If you believe you were introduced to your community, how/when did this happen)?

- What are some of the shared characteristics of your community/ies?

- You note in our first interview that the Studio has played a significant role in your community and in building that community. Can you speak more specifically to how tutoring has played a part in building your community? Are you part of a tutoring community?**

- How do you define "peer"? Has this definition changed since you began graduate work? If so, how? Has tutoring impacted how you define peer? If so, how?

- Explain your "teacher education." What types of events, activities, classes, etc. do you include as "teacher education"? Do you feel well read in composition pedagogy/theory?

- Has tutoring played a role in your teacher education? If so, how?

- You noted in our first interview that tutoring in the Studio has provided you with a better sense of who your audience is in the classroom; has this sense of audience also transferred into your community of peers? If so, how?**

- How do you manage classroom authority? Has your perception of teacher authority changed or shifted since you began teaching? If so, how? How has tutoring impacted your understanding of and how you handle classroom authority?

- In our first interview, I asked you to describe your "teacher self." Some of your statements included: "...giving them part of the responsibility of their own learning;" "encouraging students to come and talk to [you] as a friend....more of a peer than an authority figure, but not to a detrimental point;" "somebody who can relate to them." Do you still agree with this or would you like to amend it (Are you confident in this description?) In this role? What complications do you see with this identifier? Pros/Cons?**

- Describe your "tutor self." How do you identify as a tutor? How do you talk about it? Who do you talk about tutoring with? What complications do you see with this identifier? Pros/Cons?

- In our second interview, I asked you to describe your "professional self." You noted that you are not an authority and that you are "constantly trying to get people to lower their standards so that [you] can then exceed them." You also stated that you feel that you are learning and that you try to approach professionalization from a feminist point of view. But are still trying to figure out who you are professionally. Do you still feel this way? (If possible, can you describe your professional self /(How) Do you identify as a professional now?) There seem to be some contradictions here—how do you reconcile these (if they do actually exist)? What complications do you see with this identifier? Pros/Cons?**

- Describe your "scholarly self." How do you identify as a scholar? How do you talk about it? Who do you talk about scholarship with? What complications do you see with this identifier? Pros/Cons?

- How do you believe these identifiers connect with each other? How do you reconcile these roles?

- What effect, if any, have our interviews had on you? Your understanding of your own practice/professionalization?

**Excerpts from the individual participant's previous interviews and portfolio artifacts generated the specific content of these questions.

Focus Group Questions (Sample)
[Rhetoric and Composition group]

PEDAGOGY

- How has the Studio played a role in developing your pedagogy? Does tutoring still play a role in developing your pedagogy? How has teaching played a role in developing your tutoring pedagogy/philosophy?
- Each of you noted that tutoring has impacted your teaching and vice versa. What do you believe are the most important contributions to your pedagogy that tutoring has provided you?
- Each of you reflects to some degree on your practice, both tutoring and teaching. What role has your Studio community played in developing your reflection processes? What role has tutoring played in developing your reflection processes?

PROFESSIONALIZATION

- I believe all of you have participated in both department PDCs and Studio PDCs, correct? Could you speak to the differences of the two PDCs? What do/did you see as strengths and weaknesses of each? Did/Does one type of PDC seem to foster community engagement more than another?
- How prepared do you feel for the market? What are your primary concerns and/or questions? Have/Do you felt supported by faculty and administration in your preparation?

REFLECTIVE/GENERAL

- All of you noted that you feel you are a part of both a tutoring and a teaching community, with varying degrees of participation in each community. (How) Do these communities overlap or work together to support you?
- I know you've talked with me briefly about this already, but I'd like you to talk about authority: tutor authority, teacher authority, classroom authority. What do these terms mean? Are they synonymous? How do we reconcile "tutor," "teacher" and "authority" (if these things need reconciling at all)?
- I found it interesting that when asked to describe "teacher education," all of you included some form of *lore* in your explanation. That is, you mentioned observation and talking to other teachers, learning from students and referencing materials (text books, scholarship, research, handouts/syllabi prepared by others). You also noted that this as an important element of your community(s) as a way of recognizing and offering support. Do you receive this support in constructed spaces (such as PDCs, TA conferences, classrooms) or informal spaces (such as social gatherings—readings, perhaps?--personal time/space)....How often do you seek out this type of interaction/instruction/information outside of "department" spaces (such as PDCs or classroom environments)? Has the Writing Studio played a role in your teacher education?

Pedagogy Survey (Sample)

This survey is designed to help contextualize your pedagogy and teaching practices.

Please rate your response:
5=Always 4=Often 3=Occasionally 2=Rarely 1=Not at All

Do you use technology in your classroom?
Do you lecture?
Do you have students workshop or peer review their writing?
Do you interact with student groups (engage with student writing) while they workshop or peer review compositions?

Do you assign a due date for rough drafts that you review/respond to?
If you do not assign due dates for rough drafts, will you read student drafts before the assignment is due?

Do you require conferences with your students to discuss a particular assignment (such as the final paper)?
Do you require conferences with your students to globally discuss their development as writers while in your class?
Do you require conferences with students to discuss their progress in the class (such as grades, missed assignments, etc.)?
Do you have unscheduled meetings with students (ex. During office hours or before/after class)?

Do you provide written descriptions of assignments to your class (handouts)?
Do you provide detailed assignment descriptions in the syllabus?
If you do not provide detailed assignment descriptions, do you provide general assignment descriptions in the syllabus?
Do you provide electronic assignment descriptions for your class (emails, ULearn or other online course environment, teacher/class webpage, etc)?

Pedagogy Survey 2 (Sample)

This survey is designed to inform me of *your* general assessment of your teaching practices. Questions ask you to rate your confidence and comfort in relation to your practice and performance as a teacher, both in and out of the classroom.

ASSESSMENT

Please rate your response according to the following scale:
4=Very 3=Somewhat 2=Least 1=Not at All

You are confident that your margin comments on student papers are clear.
You are confident that your end comments on student papers are clear.
You are confident that your grade determinants (rubrics) are fair.
You are confident that your students understand your grade determinants (rubrics).
You are confident that you assign grades fairly.
You are confident that your feedback reflects the grade given to each paper.
You consider the student (in relation to their writing process and to the class) when assigning grades.
You are comfortable talking to students face-to-face about their grades.
You are comfortable talking to students face-to-face about your comments (marginalia and/or end comments).

CONFERENCING

Please rate your responses according to the following scale:
4=Very 3=Somewhat 2=Least 1=Not at All

You effectively relay positive aspects about the student's writing.
You effectively discuss problems in the student's writing.
You communicate clearly during student conferences.
You set clear goals (agenda) for the conference.
You offer suggestions to help the student strengthen their writing process.
You offer suggestions to help the student strengthen a particular piece of writing.
You find student writing is stronger after conferencing.
You are confident that the quality of your conferences is consistent among all of your students.
You are comfortable during student conferences.

CLASSROOM

Please rate your responses according to the following scale:
4=Very 3=Somewhat 2=Least 1=Not at All

You are comfortable in the classroom as the teacher.
You are comfortable lecturing.
You are comfortable leading class discussion.
You effectively facilitate productive class discussion.
Your responses to student questions are clear/ thorough.
You believe that you effectively engage your class.

You effectively facilitate group activities.
You offer a variety of class activities (appeal to a variety of learning styles).
You are comfortable using technology in the classroom.

Professionalization Survey (Sample)

The following survey asks you to identify various professional activities you have engaged locally, regionally, and nationally. Please indicate Yes (Y) or No (N) after each question. Space has been provided for specific types of experiences or further information if you wish to include it.

WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES:
Have you presented a paper at a graduate conference?
Have you presented a paper at a regional conference?
Have you presented a paper at a national conference?
Have you presented during a poster session at a local, regional, or national conference?
Have you presented a workshop at a local, regional, or national conference?
Please list a few of the conferences you have presented at:
_____
Have you planned or participated in the planning of a local or graduate conference?
Have you planned or participated in the planning of a regional conference?
Have you planned or participated in the planning of a national conference?
Have you worked as a volunteer for a local or graduate conference?
Have you worked as a volunteer for a regional conference?
Have you worked as a volunteer for a national conference?

PUBLICATION:
Have you published a paper with a peer-reviewed journal?
Have you published conference proceedings with a peer-reviewed journal?
Have you published with an online journal?
Have you published a book review?
Have you published a textbook or chapter?
Have you published a work of fiction, nonfiction, or poetry (nonacademic)?
(If Yes, please note if you have published in journals, literary magazines, popular magazines, collections, your own collection/novel, etc.):
_____

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION:
Have you participated in a PDC?
If yes, how many different PDCs have you been involved in? _____
Do you feel your PDC is beneficial to your professional growth?
Do you have a sense of community with the members of your PDC?

Do you belong to a national professional organization?
Do you belong to a national academic organization?
Do you actively participate in local or national professional organizations?
Do you actively participate in local or national academic organizations?

Please note the organizations you belong to:

_____

Do you feel current faculty members in the Department of English (GSU) support your professional development?

If yes, please note how current faculty members in the Department of English (GSU) support your professional development:

_____