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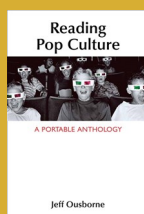
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What We're
Reading:



Reading Pop Culture by Jeff Osborne provides a range of essays connected to pop culture along with critical questions to engage students' thinking and writing skills. The anthology is arranged according to rhetorical style and includes sections on Narration, Description, Cause and Effect, and many more.

Comp Talk

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

CSUF TEACHING WRITING CLUB

Comp Talk Presents: Ask A TA!

CSUF's Teaching Associate (TA) program gives students interested in careers in teaching writing the opportunity to teach their own classes while taking a course designed to help them make the most out of that experience. The English 590 course provides an opportunity for these new teachers to hash out ideas and gain feedback from other TAs and faculty on their classroom methods. Most TAs gain experience in the Writing Center on campus before getting hired to teach two English 101 classes, one in the Fall and one in the Spring. Some of this year's TAs have agreed to share some of their experiences with us.

Comp Talk asked our TA's to share their teaching philosophies with us.

Kim George responded: I see the role of a writing instructor as a kind of writing trainer or coach: I set up writing tasks for students that will help them become stronger writers, and then we work to develop the skills and techniques they'll need to be successful at these tasks. Thinking about it this way helps me work with the students as they tackle each assignment. My classroom is definitely student-centered, and I try to design my lessons in a way that helps students figure out concepts/ techniques through activities or analysis of readings rather than a lecture. But this is something I'm

definitely still working on discovering.

Stephanie Flint told us: Since this is my first time teaching, I think my general "philosophy," if you want to call it that, is to stay flexible. Because I'm so new at this, I don't really know exactly what is going to come my way in terms of students' needs or what

constantly reassessing to figure out what seems to work for my students and what fits my personality. There are so many approaches and ideas that I've seen in other people's classes or read about in articles that sounded great but didn't work too well when I tried them. At other times, classes surprised me by how well they went. It's been a trial-and-error process for me.

Stephanie replied: I think everything that I've experienced in the TA program has helped form this philosophy.

When we asked our TAs what the most surprising part of their experience was, they both had similar replies:

Kim: Being an authority. You can't avoid it when you're the teacher. I expected the students to interact with me and connect with me the same way they did when I was a tutor. The first time a student asked me "So what are you looking for in this essay?" I thought, that was strange. That's when it really hit me how being the distributor of grades was inherently different than being a peer tutor.

Stephanie: Honestly, it's still bizarre to think of myself as a teacher. Having been a student for... jeez... 18 years, it's hard to suddenly realize that your role is (literally) on the opposite side of the classroom.

Comp Talk wanted to know about the experiences TAs are having in [continued on page 2]



goes on in class from day to day. I try to keep my schedule and lessons based around the students' needs, and that requires a large amount of scrapping ideas, getting creative on the spot, and re-working assignments so they benefit most from the class.

Comp Talk then asked our TAs if anything they had encountered so far in the TA program had altered their teaching philosophy. Kim said: All of it. I don't think I really had a teaching philosophy before I started teaching. It was all abstract until I got in front of students. Although, ultimately my core beliefs are probably similar to what they were before I started teaching my class. I'm con-

Continuing the Conversation: Service Learning

Service learning is a trend in education that attempts to move the classroom into the community and the community into the classroom. Pedagogically, service learning works to create a curriculum that incorporates actual hands-on community service. The idea is that, as students become involved in community-based service (like tutoring in homeless shelters, creating brochures for non-profit organizations, or working with agencies to find solutions to issues currently plaguing the community), they learn in new and better ways. In the field of composition, instructors often use service learning to teach the importance of community awareness, critical thinking, and a variety of rhetorical skills. Service learning is a widely-used but not universally-implemented program; therefore, scholars and instructors have differing definitions of service learning and different opinions of what can be helpful, for whom, and how.

One definition of service learning comes from Thomas Deans' "English Studies and Public Service." Deans defines three major models of service learning: Writing for the Community, Writing

about the Community, and Writing with the Community. Writing for the Community is exemplified by such things as students producing brochures or fliers for a non-profit agency. In this case, an agency is understaffed or needs assistance, and the student steps in to perform some sort of task that will be of use to the community. The second type, Writing about the Community, occurs when instructors send students out to provide service. They serve at soup kitchens, make and donate blankets, or do some other type of community service and then come back and write a report about it. The texts produced in these models are for use only within the classroom and typically provide material for reflection and evaluation. Finally, Writing with the Community is when a student partners with a community to write a text collaboratively. These projects are often research-based and are often in response to a pressing problem within the community.

Deans is partial to this type of service learning because, he says, that it is only by working directly with the community that we can impact real and lasting social change.

A different set of definitions comes from Keith Morton in his essay, "The Irony of Service: Charity, Project, and Social Change in Service-Learning." Morton breaks service up into categories of Charity, Project, and Social Change. He argues, though, that these do not exist on a continuum but rather as separate paradigms. He explains that engaging in one type of service does not necessarily lead to another type of service, and while it is tempting to envision an evolution from one service to another, that is simply not how it works. Morton defines charity as the direct service one provides to another (again, such as in soup kitchens). Projects are more involved and can include building homes for victims of a natural disaster. [Cont. on facing page]

Ask A TA! Continued

their classrooms. We wanted to know what their favorite and most challenging experiences were. Kim describes her favorite part of being in the classroom so far: So far, my favorite thing has been getting to know my students in various ways. Much of this has been through the elements of their life and personality they've revealed through their writing. I've changed my last 2 essay prompts so they have the option to pick their own topic because I've really enjoyed reading the topics they choose that are personal to them in some way. Kim's most challenging experience: Dealing with the silence has been difficult. My class is pretty quiet on the whole. I've had to get used to calling on people, or giving them opportunities to write/ talk with a partner before we start discussion. This has been getting better the last couple of weeks and I'm definitely getting more comfortable so that may have helped. Stephanie's favorite part of her class: It is unbelievably rewarding when we get into really thought-provoking discussions that everyone seems to be into. It really feels like everyone (including me) is learning on multiple levels, and we are all bettering each other's perspectives by providing our own ideas. Stephanie's most challenging experience: Adjusting to a 50-minute class period is a lot harder than I expected it to be. I was pretty freaked out about it at first, but I've now learned to come to terms with the fact that sometimes lessons and activities need to carry over into the next class. Check back next month as *Comp Talk* hears from other TAs! What do you want to know from them? Tell us at teachingwritingclub@gmail.com or on [facebook.com/teachingwritingclub](https://www.facebook.com/teachingwritingclub).

Continuing the Conversation: Service Learning Con't

Social Change, similar to Deans' Writing *with* the Community (Deans was in fact influenced by Morton), is a way of re-researching to find the solutions to larger social issues; it is a way of attacking the root of the problem rather than simply applying an ointment. Many scholars, such as Bruce Herzberg, complain that we are not impacting the community enough when we engage in service learning. He explains that students are rarely able to connect their service to concrete changes in their lives and attitudes, and the communities served, *if* they are served, receive only short term assistance. Other scholars, though, like Rosemary L. Arca, feel that the real potential in service learning is that it endows basic writers with a sense of power and authority; by looking at the ways they are already influencing the communities around them, they begin to see themselves as authorities and authors and, in turn, they take control of their texts. In this way, whether or not service learning has lasting impacts on the communities the students work with, it still has lasting impacts on students who would not normally view themselves as writers.

What can service learning do in our classrooms? Is it helpful for students? For the community? Is it worth all of the time and effort required to establish it? What are the potential benefits and pitfalls of service learning? **Continue the Conversation** with us at [facebook.com/teachingwritingclub](https://www.facebook.com/teachingwritingclub).

Further information on service learning, including all of the articles referenced here, can be found in:

Writing the Community: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in Composition, edited by Linda Adler-Kassner, Robert Crooks, and Ann Watters.

Writing and Community Engagement: A Critical Sourcebook, edited by Thomas Deans, Barbara Roswell, and Adrian J. Wurr.



CCCC Survey for Graduate Students in Rhetoric, Composition,

and Literacy Studies

The CCCC is asking current or recently graduated students from an MA or PhD program in Composition, Rhetoric, English Studies, Communications, Technical Writing, or a related field to participate in a survey about

their experiences. Participants do not need to be members of CCCC. The survey should take about ten minutes and is designed to determine the needs and interests of students. The responses they receive in this survey will be used to create new programs and support new research

and resources to help graduate students. To participate and help change the way CCCC thinks about graduate programs, complete the survey here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ccccgradstudentsurvey>

Teaching and Composition Calls for Papers

The University of Wisconsin-Madison's tenth annual Graduate Conference on Language and Literature is calling for papers addressing the theme of "Texts and Violence" and is looking for abstracts of no more than 300 words by December 15th.

<http://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/node/53808>

CSUF's ACACIA conference theme this year will be "Spaces and Places." Submissions can include how we create spaces in writing centers, classrooms, or elsewhere. 250-300 word abstracts should be submitted by December 15th.

<http://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/node/53138>

UNC Charlotte's English Graduate Student Association's 14th Annual Graduate Student Conference theme will be "Processing and Performing Paradigms: How (Non)Literary (Con)Texts Construct Realities." Some topics they are looking for are the

ways language constructs reality, the way that evolving literacy and multiple literacies play a role in constructing the future, and the ways that perspective and context can affect the world and

texts around us. Abstracts of 250-400 words are due by Monday, December 2nd.

<http://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/node/53687>

The Thomas R. Watson Conference on Rhetoric and Composition's theme for 2014 is "Responsivity: Defining, Encouraging, Enacting." The conference asks submitters to consider how material conditions of education are at play and how we can level that playing field, how we can create academic-community partnerships, and what teaching practices can help those whose voices are underrepresented or unacknowledged, among many more questions. The proposal deadline is March 1st, 2014.

<http://louisville.edu/conference/watson/2012-conference-cfp.html>

Upcoming Events

Join us for lunch to support the Teaching Writing Club! On Monday, November 18th, the TWC will hold an all-day fundraiser at The Habit on Nutwood. Grab a flier from the department (or an officer) and stop by for lunch. Or, better yet, come have lunch with us from 3-4 p.m.!

Let's beef up those CVs! The TWC will be holding a "**CV Building**" workshop later this month. Watch your email for details.

This month, the Office of Graduate Studies is offering:

Critical Methodologies Workshop—Wednesday November 7th, 5-6 pm, (H 409)

Evaluating Bias and Objectivity in Sources Workshop—Wednesday, November 28th, 6-7 pm (H 522)

Writing Boot Camp—productive space to work on projects is offered on Saturday, November 24th in the Graduate Studies office (MH 112).

See their full list of workshops at (http://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/news_letter/newsletter_vol-7.pdf#page=6).

Teaching Writing Club's *Pupil* 2013

The Teaching Writing Club's 2013 edition of *Pupil* is finally here!

The Teaching Writing Club produces a yearly journal designed to help students and faculty members share their experiences, concerns, and assignments and to hear



what others have to say in the field of rhetoric and composition pedagogy. This year, *Pupil's* CFP was open to the public, and while many of the contributors came from writing center staff, TAs, and adjunct faculty here at CSUF, some outside contributors also pro-

vided a new perspective to the conversation. This year's issue of *Pupil* is available exclusively online and can be found on the Teaching Writing Club's page of the English Department's website.

http://english.fullerton.edu/students/teach_writing_club.asp

The CFP for *Pupil* 2014 will be available in February so be on the lookout!

TWC Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I join the TWC?

A: Complete a membership envelope in the English Department Office (UH 323) and ask them to put it in our inbox.

Q: What can I do as a club member?

A: Besides attending our workshops and activities, you can get involved by joining one of our club committees. Our committees include workshop planning,

fundraising, *Comp Talk*, events, and community service.

Q: Do your workshops count toward the Teaching Writing Certificate?

A: Yes! All of our workshops and many of the Creative Writing Club's workshops will satisfy the workshop requirement for the certificate. There are also department-sponsored events that sometimes count toward the certificate. If you're involved in the program it's pretty easy to

take care of that requirement.

Q: Does the TWC do community service?

A: We're currently looking for teaching-based community service opportunities and would love to hear your ideas.

Q: How can I contact the TWC?

A: via e-mail at teachingwritingclub@gmail.com or facebook at [facebook.com/teachingwritingclub](https://www.facebook.com/teachingwritingclub).