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{ SAVE THE DATE }
From Boys to Men
Rhetorics of Emergent American Masculinity
Leigh Ann Jones

Institutional, organized expressions of male coming-of-age encourage Americans to believe that emergent masculinity is an enduring natural phenomenon and an essential component of American identity, and that the outcomes of the transformation process from boy to man have important consequences for the United States as a nation. Leigh Ann Jones explores performances of developing young male identity in case studies from twentieth- and twenty-first-century federal and civic organizations that recruit boys and young men using appeals to American national identity, often coding these appeals as character building.

Examining documents from the Boy Scouts of America during the Progressive Era, the Sigma Chi college fraternity in the 1960s, and the US Army’s “Army of One” recruiting campaign in the early 2000s, Jones explicates rhetorical strategies that position the young male figure as a source of enduring national identification and as a citizen who is the product of a distinct trajectory of development and transformation. These strategies emerge from an intense interest among community leaders in the psychology of boys and are characterized by language that directs and shapes boys’ consciousness of themselves as males, tying that consciousness to an American identity. Applying Kenneth Burke’s concept of rhetoric as identification, particularly his understanding of constitutive rhetoric, Jones outlines a framework for understanding how such organizations for boys have endured, along with their myths about masculinity, in spite of the ways in which these stories are troubled by economics, gender, race, and sexuality.

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Adult basic education for older learners remains a vital but largely unexplored area for literacy studies. Rosenberg approaches the people in this excellent book with that most precious human instrument for researchers and novelists: an attentive ear. —Eli Goldblatt, Temple University

Rosenberg reminds us that even those who are nonliterate have a relationship to writing—usually one charged with violence. Yet she also reveals how that relationship can change, even late in life. Keenly observed and gracefully written, this book enriches our understanding of the extracurriculum of composition. —Tom Deans, University of Connecticut

equally likely to assume that nonliterate people do not know, think, or understand in the ways they do, that the silence of nonliteracy is both intrinsic and deserved. But as Lauren Rosenberg illustrates, marginalized adult learners are quite capable of theorizing about their position in society, questioning dominant ideas, disrupting them, and challenging traditional literacy narratives in American culture. In Desire for Literacy: Writing in the Lives of Adult Learners, Rosenberg takes up the imperative established by community literacy researchers to engage with people in motivations and desires to become more literate when they choose reading and writing for their own purposes. Focusing on the experiences, knowledge, and perspectives of four adult learners, she examines instances in which participants resist narratives of oppression, particularly when they become authors. Rosenberg’s qualitative study demonstrates that these adult learners are already knowledgeable individuals who can teach academics about how literacy operates, not only through how students, instructors, and scholars of composition think about the meanings and purposes of literacy.

L AUREN  R OSENBERG

Freedom Writing
African American Civil Rights
Literacy Activism, 1955–1967
Rhea Estelle Lathan

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Through a blend of African American cultural theory and literacy and rhetorical studies highlighting the intellectual and pedagogical traditions of African American people, Rhea Estelle Lathan argues that African Americans have literacy traditions that represent specific, culturally influenced ways of being in the world. She introduces gospel literacy, a theoretical framework analogous to gospel music within which to consider how the literacy activities of the Civil Rights Movement illuminate a continual interchange between secular and religious ideologies. Lathan demonstrates how gospel literacy is deeply grounded in an African American tradition of refusing to accept the assumptions underlying European American thought and institutions, including the oppression of African American people and the denial of full citizenship rights.

Lathan’s critical historical analysis of the Citizenship Schools on South Carolina’s Sea Islands draws on oral histories, personal interviews, and archival data, allowing her to theorize about African American literacy practices, meanings, and values while demonstrating the symbiotic relationship between literacy and the Civil Rights Movement. Central to her research are local participants who contributed to the success of citizenship education, and she illuminates in particular how African American women used critical intellectualism and individual creative literacy strategies to aid in the struggle for basic human rights.
Redesigning Composition for Multilingual Realities
Jay Jordan
CCCC/NCTE Studies in Writing & Rhetoric Series
$34.00 member/$36.00 nonmember

Redesigning Composition for Multilingual Realities argues that students of English as a second language, rather than always being novice English language learners, often provide models for language uses as English continues to spread and change as an international lingua franca. Starting from the premise that “multilingualism is a daily reality for all students—all language users,” Jay Jordan proceeds to both complicate and enrich the responsibilities of the composition classroom as it attempts to accommodate and instruct a diversity of students in the practices of academic writing. But as Jordan admits, theory is one thing; practical efforts to implement multilingual and even translingual approaches to writing instruction are another. Through a combination of historical survey, meta-analytical critique of existing literature, and naturalistic classroom research, Jordan’s study points to new directions for composition theory and pedagogy that more fully account for the presence and role of multilingual writers.

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From the Editor

Kelly Ritter

Even though July is usually a time of beginnings—namely a new fiscal year for those working on budgets, and a fast-approaching new academic year for those of us in colleges and universities—July is always the end of a volume year for College English. As such, we honor our reviewers for this, our 78th volume, alongside a subject and author index of all the fine work we’ve published this past year. As I’ve said many times to colleagues, at conferences, and on social media, any journal is dependent upon its peer reviewers for its quality. A journal must be stalwart in its quest to publish the very best scholarship possible; reviewers help to discover what that scholarship is and, in suggestions for revision, how it can be even better. We are fortunate to have more than 300 peer reviewers in our CE database, graciously volunteering their time and expertise—in many cases, multiple times over the course of my editorship. I want to draw your readerly attention to that invisible labor so critical to scholarly publishing so that we can appropriately spotlight and thank this year’s set of reviewers for their efforts. My exceptional assistant editor, Pamela Saunders, compiled that reviewer list (a feat not quite as simple as you might think) as well as the author and subject indexes, so I thank her well. Really, I am grateful for everyone who helps make CE what it is, for the job of editing is not a job undertaken alone.

As for our feature articles and review essay for this July issue, we once again present a range of topics—rhetoric, writing, and posthumanism, multilingual writers struggling with contradictory academic literacies, histories of nineteenth-century rhetorics of Americanization and multilingual identities, and creative writing theory and pedagogy—that represent just some of the breadth of work that we can publish in College English, a range that I hope will continue to not only draw you, as readers, into our pages, but also expose you to scholarship that you may not otherwise have sought out in your own research, writing, and teaching. We begin with Casey Boyle’s article, “Writing and Rhetoric and/as Posthuman Practice,” which takes as its starting point, and core conversant, the Frameworks for Success in Postsecondary...
Writing document—which, as Boyle points out, has received some past attention in pages of this journal. Boyle zeroes in on the Framework’s attention to metacognition as part and parcel of the “habits of mind” emphasis it promotes for student writers. Boyle encourages us to reconsider the place of reflection within metacognitive acts by rethinking how rhetorical studies takes up “metacognition and reflective practice, both entrenched in humanist notions of a literate self” in order to consider posthuman practice, which “unfolds not through the traditional conception of rhetoric as critical reflection about an object but as an ongoing series of mediated encounters” (534). In doing so, Boyle brings into account ecological models of writing as well as ecologically based rhetorics, as represented in recent field scholarship.

In his argument for a conception of writing and rhetoric that is more cognizant of larger systems, Boyle proposes the term current-critical rhetoric—a play on and revision to a term many readers know, current-traditional rhetoric—which he defines as “critical rhetoric based in reflective practice” (536). This type of rhetoric “reinforces a humanist orientation as it focuses on developing one’s ability to articulate decisions through increasing an individual’s agency” (537), and serves as a possible starting point for reframing rhetorical action toward an ecological model, which is “less concerned about conscious awareness of being embedded and more concerned with inventing techniques, many of which operate on nonconscious levels, with which we exercise that embeddedness” (538). He ultimately contends that posthumanism is a lens for “reconsidering rhetorical training as an orchestration of ecological relations and not simply methods for increasing an individual’s agency” (539) but an occasion “to use practice’s repetitions to become attuned to and help foster the repetitions, rhythms, and relays that emerge across different media ecologies of which we also emerge” (543). Boyle’s argument, while highly theoretical—particularly in its examination of the emerging area of posthumanism—challenges us to be more practically critical about many charged and complex terms that we currently take for granted, both in the teaching of writing and in the study of rhetoric—as well as the ways in which those two endeavors may be even more ecologically connected in our classrooms. I appreciated the careful and different attention that Boyle pays, through extended example, to a document so many of us know so well—the Frameworks—with the aim of ultimately unpacking our historical accepted sense of both the “writer” and his or her conditions for, and approaches to, composing.

Moving from rhetorical theory to theories about multilingual writing and writers, we next have two articles that examine the role of language, literacy, and politics in the Middle East—in the present day and in the nineteenth century. The first of these is Nancy Bou Ayash’s “Conditions of (Im)Possibility: Postmonolingual Language Representations in Academic Literacies,” which takes us into an “American-style” university in Lebanon, and the linguistic experiences of four of its multilingual student writers both in and out of school. Ayash conducted semistructured interviews with
these writers in order to determine their “conceptualizations of language as they mediate[d] between macro institutional demands and micro individuated practices” (557). She argues that these students were “subject to not one but multiple, even shifting and competing, language representations mediated by the society at large, the nation-state, the academic institution, and significant others in their surrounds” (561) as informed by the competing theoretical lenses and attendant social and intellectual pressures of monolingualism, multilingualism, and translingualism. Specifically, Ayash observed that the teachers subscribed to “a conventional multilingualist orientation as they remained conditioned by the central assumptions of English-only monolingualism about the stability, neutrality, and separateness of SWE” (562) as the privileged mode of discourse in the school.

Ayash illustrates how each of the four students profiled—who work in a variety of other languages outside of school (including French, Arabic, and Greek)—struggles with “monolingualist representations in educational landscapes, which have real, detrimental effects” (572) on these students’ educational practices, and their own personal identities in relation to language and language use, including their previous practices, in some cases, of combining different languages to make the ultimate meaning(s) they desired to communicate. In comparison with other research settings for the study of multilingual writers, Ayash argues that Lebanon is a particularly interesting site for studying these effects, as an “apparently linguistically diverse context ostensibly more conducive to translingual representations of language at the level of sociolinguistic landscapes and national language policy” (572). She concludes by offering a number of specific suggestions for advancing our understanding of these kind of writers, including a careful re-examination of the representations of language and language policy in institutional documents (such as syllabi and program policies), wherein students must often “choose between defying language boundaries set by English-only curricular and institutional demands at personal risk or blindly submitting to them” (573). Ultimately, Ayash’s study demonstrates the depth and breadth of work that needs to be done on multilingual writers working in English classrooms outside the United States. It is also a keen illustration of the assumptions that writing teachers are still programmed, in some settings, to make regarding dominant languages and institutional discourse.

Following Ayash’s examination of English education in present-day Lebanon, we move to educational philosophies in 1880s Beirut with Lisa Arnold’s “An Imagined America: Rhetoric and Identity during the “First Student Rebellion in the Arab World.” Arnold examines the 1882 student protest at the Syrian Protestant College (SPC) led by students who “were deeply enculturated in an ‘ideal’ American identity, represented in and through their education, but their ability to claim such an identity—to succeed as rhetors in the public sphere—was inherently limited” (578) due to their construction of an “Imagined America” in the context of what Arnold
notes is the longest-running American-style institution of higher education outside of the United States. Through an archival examination of the conditions surrounding the SPC protests, as well as a thorough discussion of the historical trajectory of this type of US-influenced education abroad, Arnold demonstrates the importance of understanding institutions such as these for writing studies, as these institutions “carried the complementary ideology of the classic liberal model of schooling upon which Yale, Amherst, Harvard, and other American universities were based” (580) due to their founding by educational missionaries.

Arnold argues that “[a]s the economy for an ‘export’ model of US-based writing studies booms, we must be cautious and critical about the ways in which we participate, and are implicated, in it” (581), particularly when that export model of education also promotes a kind of citizenship that is ultimately unattainable for writers abroad—the case of SPC being an historical example. The protests, over the dismissal of a medical school professor who lectured on the theory of evolution and who was a native speaker of Arabic in a time when the university had recently voted to offer all of its instruction in English only, began a cascade of faculty resignations that ultimately decimated the medical school. Arnold argues that these protests—following from the policy change to English-only, which demanded a “cultural citizenship” of all SPC students and faculty—can be understood as “a response to the loss of faculty whose perspectives married the local and the global in their pedagogical approaches, which for the students represented what they would call an ideal American education” (589). Arnold’s study is important not only for its uncovering of a critical literacy-related event in international education, but also for its use of archival histories to demonstrate how the pressures of globalization, including the promise of success through the embrace of American educational ideologies—is neither new, nor easily solved through our “uncritical repetition of nationalist discourses in our classrooms and our curriculum” (598) that stands at odds with our current (competing) rhetorics of inclusion.

Finally, we close with a review essay by Stephanie Vanderslice on three recent titles in creative writing pedagogy. As many CE readers know—and as Vanderslice outlines in her review—the field of creative writing theory and pedagogy has been growing steadily over the last two decades. In her review, Vanderslice provides a valuable overview of several current perspectives on creative writing—including the key differences between British and Australian and American approaches, the relationship between other composition studies and creative writing in academic circles, the evolution away from historical models for textual production and toward the “digital turn” and multimodality, and the ongoing (and perhaps correct) primary emphasis on craft in many classrooms. In doing so, Vanderslice also provides a broader historical and scholarly context for these three texts under review (an edited
collection, a textbook, and a monograph), including their indebtedness to the work of Wendy Bishop, among others, and a snapshot of the emerging voices in this field, as represented in these books and in other efforts to grow creative writing theory and pedagogy as a field nationwide (and abroad).

Critically, Vanderslice’s essay illustrates the dynamism of the field and its attendant perils—knowing full well the romanticized reputation that creative writing has on many campuses, particularly with undergraduate writers, and the minor presence it has had (numbers-wise) against more prominent fields such as composition and rhetoric and literary studies. Nonetheless, Vanderslice boldly argues that creative writing “remains a growth field in higher education when other subjects in the humanities are stagnating” (604). More pointed still, she cautions readers, and teachers of writing, that “[t]he future of creative writing is a moving target. If we hope to give our students the tools to succeed and sustain themselves as writers beyond the university, as professors and researchers, we must continually move with it” (604). This admonition to keep moving with our discipline is one that we might profitably extend to all of English studies, particularly in these difficult budgetary and political times.