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## On Location

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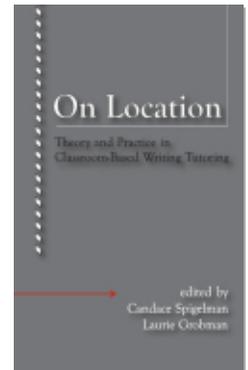
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## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

1. Our understanding of genre is closely related to Kenneth Burke's sense: each genre produces its own *orientation*, a "sense of relationships" (1984, 18) or "view of reality" (3). From Hans George Gadamer, we have borrowed the parallel notion of conceptual "horizon" (Weinsheimer 1985, 157).
2. As Brian Stross observes, the "cultural hybrid is a metaphorical broadening" of the biological hybrid, which is the "offspring of a mating by any two unlike animals or plants" (1999, 254). The cultural hybrid is "heterogeneous in origin or composition."
3. While such work for multiculturalists is steeped in contentious and perhaps irreconcilable debates about power, culture, and social otherness (see Grimm 1999 for an examination of cultural issues regarding tutoring work), the notion of generic hybridism helps us to emphasize the "play" among the various theoretical and methodological influences that have helped us to theorize classroom-based writing tutoring.
4. According to Brian Stross, cultural hybridity is marked by the "heterogeneity of relevant elemental factors contributed by the 'parents'" (1999, 256).
5. Since at least the early 1970s, writing centers have served as models for tapping the power of peer influence. Writing centers are marked by collaboration that is student-centered, nonhierarchical, and equally respectful of "the voice of everyone involved" (M. Harris 2001, 436). Moreover, writing center theory and practice stress liberation from institutional structures and constraints (436). The best writing centers are abuzz with informal, energized peer interaction and learning (437). In general, tutors do not hold the same kinds of evaluative authority that teachers do and, as a result, student writers are more likely to regard tutors as allies who will help them to overcome institutional obstacles (M. Harris 1995a, 27–28). At tutoring sessions, tutors and writers exchange information and build on each other's ideas in informal and, at times, circuitous, freewheeling conversations; peer tutors also offer encouragement, support, and "insider" knowledge about being

a student as well as about being a writer. Because writing centers have traditionally asserted that their central role is “to produce better writers, not better writing” (North 1984, 438; see also M. Harris 1992a), they emphasize instruction rather than correction and the attendant processes of inventing, reseeing, composing, and revising through readers’ and writers’ conversations.

6. Muriel Harris implores her colleagues in composition and English studies to “step in [to writing centers] and look around” in order to “envision alternative forms of writing instruction” (2001, 439). Pragmatically, too, offering expanded services, including training, resources, and theoretical perspectives for tutors working in classroom settings, helps to secure for writing centers an integral role within their institutions.
7. It was their observing the benefits of students’ working one-to-one with tutors in writing centers that prompted some writing teachers to seek similar applications in their own classrooms, initially adding a required lab component to first-year or basic writing classes and later “expand[ing] the scope of [lab] activities in new and much more sophisticated directions” (Kail and Trimbur 1987, 6). One of the earliest published reports of such a project is Mary Soliday’s program at CCNY, in which writing center tutors were appointed to several sections of a two-semester experimental course, College Writing I and II (Soliday 1995, 59).
8. Writing across the curriculum initiatives emphasize writing in (what are commonly called) “content” courses. Even more than writing centers, WAC programs focus on writing to learn, although they have a complementary goal of teaching students to write in their specific disciplines (McLeod and Maimon 2000, 577). Writing is thus considered “an essential component of critical thinking and problem solving . . . a way of constructing knowledge” (McLeod et al. 2001, 3; see also McLeod and Maimon 2000). WAC approaches encourage ungraded exercises, in which students write for themselves in order to figure out what they mean and what they don’t understand. WAC goals may also include fostering disciplinary knowledge about writing through programs that help teachers to construct effective writing assignments or guide students in particular genre conventions. Both writing to learn and learning to write activities encourage instructors to reflect on course objectives and methods (McLeod and Maimon 2000, 580). Like writing centers, WAC programs encourage “profound change[s] in pedagogy and curriculum” based on an active, engaged learning paradigm (578).

According to WAC historians, WAC programs trace a course parallel to writing center expansion, intersecting with tutoring assistance in the disciplines (McLeod et al. 2001, 13). In terms of genealogy, it is difficult to assign primary parenthood because “two basic models drive WAC-writing center connections: writing centers beget WAC programs or WAC programs beget writing centers” (Mullin 2001, 183). Often the WAC-writing center association occurs when faculty in the disciplines request peer tutors to augment discipline-specific writing instruction or to provide feedback to students’ papers. Because they do not view themselves as writing teachers, “content” faculty often deem themselves ill equipped to describe methods or explain ways of thinking about how to write. Therefore, they may seek support from tutors who can address students’ assignments in disciplines besides English. At some schools, WAC initiatives remain apart from writing centers, separately training and linking tutors with faculty who teach courses outside of English studies.

9. In 1992, Tori Haring-Smith reported over one hundred writing fellows programs (in various incarnations) at numerous schools (182). Margot Soven’s 1993 survey of ninety-five institutions that had requested information from Brown University or had attended workshops on curriculum-based tutoring at the 1988 or 1990 CCCC convention yielded twenty-six returned surveys (59). Of the twenty-six, eighteen reported some kind of curriculum-based tutoring program (59–60), and anecdotal information suggests to us that interest is growing.

WAC tutoring programs have these common features: tutors are integral to the course, coming to class to introduce themselves, collect papers, and set up conference times with students; tutors work with all students in a particular course, not just those identified as “needy” by self or teacher; tutors assist faculty members with assignment design; and they present the classroom instructor with strategies for responding to student papers (Haring-Smith 1992, 178; Soven 2001, 203–4).

The writing fellows program at Brown University has become the model for many curriculum-based peer tutoring initiatives. Initiated by Harriet Sheridan and developed by Tori Haring-Smith in the early 1980s, the Brown University Writing Fellows Program involves undergraduate peer tutors who serve as first readers for papers written for particular courses in the university. In the Brown model, tutors come from a variety of majors and fields and act as “educated lay readers” without particular discipline-specific knowledge (Haring-Smith 1992, 179); however, other programs find it advantageous to match writing fellows with courses in their majors (Soven 2001, 211–15).

10. Developing in tandem with writing centers and WAC initiatives but focused on content acquisition rather than on writing to learn or learning to write, SI was initially designed as academic support for students in courses designated “high risk,” or extremely difficult. SI aims at assisting students in a wide range of courses and of wide-ranging academic abilities, serving an estimated quarter million students each academic term (Arendale 2002, 19–21). Numerous studies reveal that SI programs contribute to student participants’ increased self-esteem, lower attrition rates, and higher grades (see, for example, Blanc, DeBuhr, and Martin 1983; Commander et al. 1996; Arendale 2002).
11. Although SI is curriculum-based and similar to some writing fellows initiatives, typically such programs emphasize course-content acquisition and course-related learning strategies, not writing as a skill or as a strategy for learning. However, some SI practitioners have used SI in writing classes. Gary Hafer argues that it is a common misperception that tutoring works better than SI in composition courses, which are not identified as “high-risk” courses and which are thought by those outside the discipline to be void of “content” (2001, 31). Hafer asserts that SI and composition pedagogy share many similarities, including their focus on learning strategies; on problem solving; on process, not content; and on collaborative group work with student interaction and peer support (32,34). In Hafer’s view, the goals of SI have more in common with collaborative composition pedagogy than do the one-to-one tutorials of writing centers.
12. More than two decades ago, collaborative learning and collaborative writing theories reinvigorated composition studies’ appreciation of both peer tutoring and writing classroom peership activities. Kenneth Bruffee’s early articles called for educators to tap the “powerful educative force of peer influence” (1984, 638; 1998, 127) and to dismantle traditional, authoritarian instructional practices (1972, 1973). In “Collaborative Learning and the ‘Conversation of Mankind” (1984), which argues for the importance of peer response in writing instruction, and “Peer Tutoring and the ‘Conversation of Mankind” (1998), which extols writing center tutoring, Bruffee stresses “conversations to promote intellectual growth.” In Bruffee’s view, students develop knowledge by reflecting on their products and processes, while reflection is “learned” socially by talking with others (1998, 129). Therefore, Bruffee argues, students must engage in conversation at various points in their writing process (131) in order to externalize and reflect on their composing activities as well as on their written texts.

Despite the many valid critiques of consensus and community that define Bruffee's work, composition scholarship confirms that peer writing groups benefit student writers. Whether they are imagined as cities in which conflict and dissensus thrive (J. Harris 1989) or as "social networks" that support learning and student needs (Wiley 2001) or as something in between, peer writing groups create practicable settings for stimulating peer conversation. In his most recent effort to rethink the notion of community in favor of "more open, contested, and heteroglot spheres of discourse," Joseph Harris proposes three alternative terms: public, material, and circulation (2001, 4). In the most effective writing groups, members share drafts, offer response, and collaboratively construct knowledge.

13. Peer group communities are configured as sites of autonomy; fostered by writing teachers, their independence from teachers often marks their success. According to Karen Spear, in effective writing groups, "students explore and resolve ideas together. Writers share with readers the responsibility for generating and testing ideas, while readers . . . pool opinions and reactions, explore differences, and come to conclusions" (1988, 57). In peer groups, Spear stresses, the reader "shares responsibility for the content of the revised piece" and is not only involved in "asking questions and making suggestions, but also in thinking through new possibilities *with* the writer" (59; see Bishop 1988, 121).

Today, writing groups are so intrinsic to composition classrooms that they may seem unremarkable. Yet, instructors continue to seek better ways to orchestrate writing groups where trusting and meaningful talk leads to active draft revision and a more comprehensive understanding of what it means to be a writer (see, for example, Brooke, Mirtz, and Evans 1994a; Roskelly 1999; Moss, Highberg, and Nicolas 2003). As a result, some teachers invite more experienced peer writers to serve as writing group facilitators or "leaders," thus combining peer writing group theory with writing tutoring to implement a classroom-based tutoring model.

14. Carino explains that for many early theorists, "center" represented a first "move toward empowerment," from the marginalized idea of "clinic" and the more negative connotations of "lab," to a conception of collaboration that "claim[s] to be central to all writers" (1995, 43; see also Addison and Wilson, 1991).]
15. Although the writing fellows program at the University of Wisconsin–Madison is *curriculum-based* rather than *classroom-based* as we use the

terms in this book, we chose to include Jennifer Corroy's chapter because the salient issues she addresses are pertinent to classroom-based writing tutoring.

### CHAPTER THREE

1. My study does not account for the particular characteristics of online tutoring. However, as Candace Spigelman and I suggest in our concluding chapter in this volume, electronic forms of classroom-based writing tutoring beg further exploration.
2. Margaret Weaver (1995) rightfully acknowledges the debate over authority and peer response groups in basic writing research. That is, some theorists advocate consensus, that peer response enables students to join our conversations, while others advocate dissent, that peer response groups enable basic writers to resist academic discourse, though she perhaps creates a false dichotomy. Nevertheless, because I believe the use of peer group leaders can facilitate both dissensus and consensus, debating the issue itself is beyond the scope of this essay.
3. I received this grant in conjunction with a former colleague, Claudine Keenan. Claudine used a peer group leader in her basic writing class at the Lehigh Valley campus of Penn State University, Berks–Lehigh Valley College; my study involves my class at the Berks campus.
4. Throughout this article, I use pseudonyms for both the peer group leader and the students in my basic writing class.
5. Melissa Nicolas's chapter in this collection also addresses Harris's discussion of peer collaboration.
6. I am not encouraging teachers to disappear completely, however. Indeed, I introduced a writing rubric to my students, one that closely resembled my own set of writing assessment criteria, with greater emphasis on content and meaning than mechanics, and throughout the semester, we circled back to these issues in numerous ways. However, my attention to rhetorical issues had more to do with my general approach to teaching academic discourse, rather than specifically focused on modeling for peer response groups.
7. I have edited the transcripts to make them intelligible (students writing online tend to rush and transcripts can be difficult to read), but I have been very careful not to appropriate their words or language.

### CHAPTER FOUR

Our thanks to the following writing center consultants for their contributions to the pilot Bridge Program in 2000 and to this article: Nick

Aguina, Sharon Gissy, Dana Lord, Benjamin Miller, Joseph Ruzich, and Julie Shannon.

1. Jim Ottery is former coordinator of the basic writing program and Bridge Program writing instructor; Jean Petrolle is director of composition and Bridge Program writing instructor; Derek Boczkowski is assistant director of the writing center; and Steve Mogge is former coordinator of college reading and Bridge Program reading.
2. Elizabeth Silk, Columbia College's director of institutional research, was hesitant to provide statistics regarding students in the pilot Bridge Program because "the size of the cohort was really not large enough from which to draw any conclusions" (e-mail, 23 April 2002).
3. Since this chapter was drafted, the economic downturn that has affected colleges, universities, and their programs across the country has taken its toll on Columbia College's Bridge Program. During the summer of 2002, while class size remained small, the roles of teachers and writing center consultants changed. Two consultants were still assigned to work with two teachers, but they split their three hours of class time between the teachers' separate classes. Two consultants were thus responsible for working with up to thirty students and for only half the time as in 2000 and 2001. As one professor of reading who taught in the summer of 2002 told me, this watering down of the consultants' role made it impossible for them to establish close relationships with students, faculty members, and course subject matter as they had in the past.

## CHAPTER FIVE

I would like to thank Professor Candace Spigelman for her guidance on this project.

1. The students' names are pseudonyms, and they have given written permission expressing their willingness to participate in the study. The project received approval to conduct research on human subjects from the Penn State University Compliance Office.

## CHAPTER SIX

1. While North was not the first or only author to advocate a nonintrusive, noneditorial model for writing center tutorials, his essay stands as one of the most-cited statements of writing center philosophy. It is referenced in numerous writing center mission statements, as well as the predominance of subsequent writing center scholarship. At Eastern, when our president expressed interest in establishing a writing center, our writing program director immediately sent him a copy of North's

essay in order to provide him with an enlightened understanding of what such a center would be about.

2. That handbook, entitled *It's a Whole New Ballgame*, contained classroom-based tutoring strategies that Holly had discovered in her work as a tutor and that Barbara suggested from her perspective as instructor. It comprised the first incarnation of what has become this article.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

1. With George Dillon, I focus on issues of power and authority in another decentralizing-writing-centers essay, "The Rhetoric of Online Conferencing" (forthcoming).
2. The issue of plagiarism is given considerable treatment, most notably for our purposes here, by Clark; Haviland and Mullin; Shamoan and Burns; and Spigelman in the 1999 *Perspectives on Plagiarism and Intellectual Property in a Postmodern World*.
3. Beginning in the mid-1980s, immediately following North's (1984) impassioned argument for writing center autonomy (see Decker, chapter 1), writing center theorists/practitioners began to (counter) argue the need for writing centers to decentralize by sending tutors into classrooms. In a *WCJ* 2003 special reprint of "Independence and Collaboration: Why We Should Decentralize Writing Centers," first published in 1986, Louise Z. Smith critiques North's "Idea of a Writing Center" (1984) by drawing upon the Queens College model and, especially, the UMass-Boston's tutoring program to illustrate how "the idea of the 'center' has gotten in the way" of productive writing center/classroom collaborations (22). Smith urges writing center directors and faculty across the curriculum to look at the "choreography" between UMass-Boston's English department and writing center. This dance pairs one tutor to each section of first-year English. Tutors and professors negotiate the role of the tutor according to the teachers' pedagogical preferences. Tutors, in turn, help teach in the class with the professor with the goal of trying to present to students an approachable, knowledgeable person who functions more as a concerned peer (listener) than a judge or grader (Smith 2003, 20). And over fifteen years later she still believes in the relevancy of this original message. In a brief introduction to the 2003 reprint, Smith jokes, "As pink-bewigged Mrs. Slocombe on the British sitcom 'Are You Being Served?' proclaims, 'I am unanimous!' In fact, today I am even more unanimous than when *WCJ* published this article in 1986" (15). In 1990, Muriel Harris recognized that this trend "is the melding of our pedagogy with classroom instruction in interesting new ways. . . .

As a way to help our colleagues learn about what we do, this may be a particularly encouraging trend. In addition, it offers us some interesting new ways to expand the role of the tutor” (24). In that same edition of the *WCJ*, Thomas Hemmeter argues that “we can recognize in classroom practices traces of writing center instruction. . . . Similarly, the group instruction assumed to belong to the classroom belongs as much to the writing center, suggesting that the writing center always contains within itself this trace of the classroom” (1990, 43). And in her essay “Shifting Roles in Classroom Tutoring: Cultivating the Art of Boundary Crossing” (1995), Mary Soliday talks of the potential for richer collaborations between classrooms and centers where the lines between teachers and students are blurred, where the roles of tutors can be more teacherly or studently, where tutors can use their outsidersness or insidersness to advantage. But this hybridized role, Soliday admits, turning to the work of Kail and Trimbur (1987), is politically charged and the potential for conflict exists with each expedition.

4. Other IWCA/ NCPTW 2003 Joint Conference sessions that emphasized classroom negotiations among students, tutors, and instructors further contributed to my thinking about directive versus nondirective tutoring efforts. Ackerman’s session discussed the importance of tutors’ establishing trust and helping students in classrooms feel comfortable. Interestingly, the presenters emphasized how to negotiate some of the logistical and collaborative issues among classroom teacher, tutors, and writing fellow director. Ryan, Zimmerelli, and Wright’s session offered rationales for tutors’ leading peer response groups, including: being able to see and react to the instructor’s concerns about writing on their turf and noting how much students appreciate tutors visiting them versus the typical writing center visit.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Occasionally, we had PWCs and 110W students who were nontraditional students, returning to college after an extended absence. The interpersonal dynamics in groups in which there are significant age differences are often very different from same-age groups. Many of the differences are related to issues of life experience. Unfortunately, exploring these dynamics is beyond the scope of this essay.

## CHAPTER NINE

1. The students participating in the study have been given pseudonyms and have given approval to be part of this study through written consent.

**CHAPTER ELEVEN**

1. Our strongly felt alliance with faculty arose not only because of our relationships with them, but also because we faced direct institutional pressure for our funded program to show results. Biweekly meetings between the WAC administrators and a representative of the Provost's Office were requested by administration for updates on efforts and results. In addition to the biweekly meetings, written reports were required weekly. And by Fall 2001, the state's growing budget crisis left us with a sense of emergency: if we could not prove the program's merits, we feared it would be cut. (Indeed, our worst fears were realized during the fall term when we received word that the program could not be funded for the spring.)
2. For an excellent discussion of ways that tutors are viewed as authorities, see Gillam 1994.

**CHAPTER TWELVE**

I would like to thank Noreen Groover Lape for her insightful reading of an earlier draft of this essay.

**CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

1. As part of my grant, peer group leaders received free textbooks for the seminar and also texts for my developmental writing course, so that they could stay abreast of the readings and assignments that their writing group members were doing. In the seminar, we discussed articles relating to response group processes, writing processes, revising, basic writing, and so on. The peer group leaders also kept journals, recording the problems, breakthroughs, and activities of their weekly group meetings. As the culminating activity for the seminar, each tutor conducted qualitative research, in which, with their permission, writing group members became research subjects. In this way, the students at both levels found they were integral to each other's academic progress. In succeeding years, our classroom-based writing tutoring program grew and evolved. Today, sophomore-, junior-, and senior-level students in a dozen different majors enroll in the seminar each fall semester, train in classes taught by instructors other than me, and become writing fellows in classrooms across the college.
2. The students remained within their assigned writing groups throughout the semester. Using an opening-day writing sample, I organized the groups according to their apparent writing ability. In each group, I tried to balance strong writers with those who appeared to have moderate

- or limited writing experience or skill. However, early in the semester, some of the peer group leaders observed expressions of inadequacy from weaker group members, which suggests that this was not the best arrangement (see Gonzalez in this volume). In later semesters, I tried to group students of similar ability together, and I have encouraged this model when instructors request group leaders for their writing classes.
3. With the exception of Casey You, the names of all peer group leaders are pseudonyms. You's article (published as Gonzalez), "Building Trust While Building Skills," appeared in *Journal of Teaching Writing* (Spring 2002), and is reprinted with modifications in this volume.
  4. While I agree that tutors do face various crises of authority arising out of their conflicted status as peers and instructional assistants, I question the absolute distinction between writing center-based and classroom-based arrangements. In "'Peer Tutoring: A Contradiction in Terms?'" (1998), Trimbur shows that role conflict occurs in writing center tutoring too. When good students begin tutoring in the writing center, they too struggle with their desire to identify with teachers or to seek teacher approval marked by grades. Furthermore, Kail and Trimbur (1987) and Healy (1993) assume that peer tutors and tutees will naturally build knowledge together. Quite often, however, the writing center tutor in the role of "expert" will guide, suggest, and edit, deriving authority from his or her tutor status and from the tutees' expectations of learning center instruction (see, especially, Grimm 1999).
  5. Basing her arguments on the distinctions drawn by Muriel Harris, Nicolas asserts that training for tutoring and peer group work must remain separate and distinct "because, as the separate models imply, there are different skill sets required to have effective tutorials and productive peer response groups" (1999, 6). Interestingly, Soliday (1995) calls for greater integration of consultants into classroom life while Nicolas's critique of her initial Ohio State tutoring project suggests off-site tutoring, more like the present CUNY model (1999).
  6. For student writing, the spelling has been standardized.
  7. Contrasting this perspective with other forms of "teacher power" in K-12 classrooms, O'Hair and Blase confirm that egalitarian, student-centered approaches seem to increase student learning, while "coercive power" and "legitimate power" both decrease student learning (1992, 15). They advocate small doses of "expert power," in which the teacher derives authority from his or her subject-area knowledge, but emphasize an approach that uses "referent power," in which teachers use a form of communication that responds directly to the personal and academic needs of their students (13).

8. According to John Trimbur (1998), such concerns are typical of new writing center tutors as well. Because higher education makes grading the absolute measure of success, tutors gauge their instructional effectiveness by their tutees' grades (117).
9. Over the years, I have found that portfolios help to diminish grade anxiety in classes where this kind of classroom-based writing tutoring occurs. In portfolio classes, peer group leaders can engage with the instructor in ongoing formative response while summative evaluation concerns only teacher and student writer at the end of the semester.

## CONCLUSION

Special thanks to the following Penn State Berks writing fellows for their assistance with the section of this essay entitled "Promoting Successful Classroom-Based Writing Tutoring": SaraLouise Howells, Natalie Kakareka, Nicolas Moyer, and Ray Rishty.

1. Ashton-Jones (1995) cites numerous studies about male-female group and one-to-one conversations that she applies to collaborative learning in writing classes. For example, she refers to Pamela Fishman's studies of conversational dynamics, pointing to the finding that men's attempts to get topics to become conversations succeeded 97 percent of the time, while for women it was 38 percent (Fishman 1983, 97; cited in Ashton-Jones 1995, 12). "Thus," Fishman asserts, "the definition of what is appropriate or inappropriate conversation becomes the man's choice" (98; qtd. in Ashton-Jones 1995, 13). Furthermore, Helena M. Leet-Pellegrini's study indicates that even when women have expertise and power, men's "conversational advantage" remains (cited in Ashton-Jones 1995, 15).
2. Grobman's chapter in *On Location* did not specifically address issues of race or other forms of difference, but her article points to the need for study in this arena. The peer group leader, Tyisha, is a female African American sophomore who worked with white students in a basic writing class.
3. From another vantage point, James A. Inman and Donna N. Sewell observe the myriad ways electronic media have "enable[d] writing center professionals to stay connected to each other" (2003, 177); we envision electronic media to function similarly for faculty, administrators, and tutors involved in classroom-based writing tutoring.
4. Stan and Collins note, however, that some studies suggest that CMC silences some students while providing safe venues for others (1988, 27).