THE INQUIRY PRACTICES OF NONFICTION WRITERS

By

Suzanne Webb

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Rhetoric & Writing

2012

ABSTRACT

THE INQUIRY PRACTICES
OF NONFICTION WRITERS

By

Suzanne Webb

In the study, I take an innovative effort to investigate "the inquiry practices of non-fiction writers." I am especially interested in how creative non-fiction gets made – a process that has often been either shrouded in complete mystery and attributed to the genius of an individual writer, or rendered as a work routine focused on drafts and/or editorial processes. There is little work that seeks to understand non-fiction writers as researchers themselves. I believe that in David Foster Wallace and in the papers recently made available to researchers via the Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin that document his non-fiction work, I have identified a singular opportunity to explore the work of a brilliant researcher as well as writer.

My work primarily falls in the realm of rhetorical analysis. In this project, I conduct a detailed analysis of materials in the DFW archive that others might well ignore who are "Wallace scholars." I sought out traces of Wallace's practice, indicators of where he worked – as a well-known writer of fiction – to keep his non-fiction essays anchored in experience, in fact, in emotion true-to-life, while maintaining the compelling narrative for which he is so well known. In the end, my work is not a literary biography or a derivation of that, as valuable as those works on Wallace might undoubtedly be. My work will instead reveal a portrait of a working writer that can be compared with others – nonfiction essayists, yes, but also other writers – bringing both clarity and perhaps some critique to the boundaries of work resulting from ethnographic

research, investigative reporting, and a host of other similar genres that we perhaps more readily consider the products of "genuine" inquiry.

These traces of inquiry – sources, if not "evidence" - are occluded or perhaps just lost for the reader of Wallace's nonfiction—in most creative writing. We occasionally hear references in the prose to those moments when, faced with an opportunity to stray from the facts he chose, instead, to consult some other text – an encyclopedia, perhaps, in "Consider the Lobster" – to tack back towards truth.

DEDICATION

Boys, I've done this all for you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A thank you to my mentors and peers at R&W, especially my Chair, Dr. Bill Hart-Davidson and committee members, Drs. Malea Powell, Leonora Smith, and Jeff Grabill. Thanks for putting up with me over the miles during this last year of dissertating. A huge thank you to my friend, Jamie Lewis, who came all the way to Michigan to move me back home to Kansas. Thanks to my boys, Matt, Michael, and Mark who've loved me and supported me—whichever part of the country I lived in. I could not have done this without each of ya!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CTL	Consider the Lobster (the essay)
CTL	Consider the Lobster (the edited collection)
DFW	David Foster Wallace
FYW	First Year Writing
HRC	Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin
.mp3	audio file format
OCR	Optical Character Recognition
.pdf	portable document format (fixed form)(often associated with Adobe)
R/C or rhet/comp	Rhetoric & Composition
TVFMT	The View from Mrs. Thompson's
.txt	plain text documents (used by JuXta)
C1	Consider the Lobster version 1 (Harry Ransom Center)
C2	Consider the Lobster version 2 (*Gourmet Magazine)*
C3	Consider the Lobster version 3 (*Consider the Lobster*)
C4	Consider the Lobster version 4 (Time Warner Audio)
T1	The View From Mrs. Thompsons version 1 (Harry Ransom Center)
T2	The View From Mrs. Thompsons version 2 (Harry Ransom Center)
T3	The View From Mrs. Thompsons version 3 (Harry Ransom Center)
T4	The View From Mrs. Thompsons version 4 (*Rolling Stone Magazine*)
T5	The View From Mrs. Thompsons version 5 (*Consider the Lobster*)
T6	The View From Mrs. Thompsons version 6 (Time Warner Audio)

Introduction

FOREWORD: In this project, I contribute to scholarship on writing instruction by building a framework for guiding students through the writing process using a series of inquiry practices. I constructed this framework through a detailed analysis of materials from the David Foster Wallace Archive at the Harry Ransom Center (HRC), University of Texas, Austin. I chose Wallace for several reasons: my PhD concentration, his corpus, access to his archive, his popularity, but mainly, his doggedness for detail. In my analysis, I tracked Wallace's rhetorical moves as indicators of inquiry, looking across multiple versions of "Consider the Lobster" and "The View from Mrs. Thompson's." By looking and tracking, I could literally *see* moments of Wallace's inquiry in his work. One example I like to share with my students from my dissertation is a moment of my own improvised inquiry. To write "Consider the Lobster," Wallace went to Maine and attended the Maine Lobster Fest (2003) in order to report on the event for *Gourmet Magazine*. I acquired four versions of this essay. As I tracked the changes across the versions, I saw that Wallace had changed attendance numbers from 100,000 to 80,000. I suspected he had consulted a more up-to-date source. This seemed simple enough to verify, I thought. I'd just call the Maine Lobster Fest Corporate Offices and ask for their official numbers. I did not plan this moment of inquiry, I seized it. No assignment sheet ever says, "call the source to verify." And, yet, that is a viable way to continue moving forward with a project—whether in First-Year Writing or in the middle of a dissertation. I used my available means; my work helps students use theirs.

"[David Foster] Wallace attempted to join the Catholic faith twice.
He failed on both occasions because, according to him,
he asked too many questions during the period of inquiry."
—Cath Murphy[1]

This project, an in-depth pedagogical piece, looks at the inquiry practices of one nonfiction writer: David Foster Wallace. Wallace's works are meticulous. Wallace's works are enlightening. Whether we like him or not as an author, the quantity of his work, along with the popularity is reason enough to look more deeply at his inquiry practices. Moreover, the amount of detail he put on the page—for us to learn from—gave rise to this project.

Before you begin reading this, I highly recommend you first read the Wallace essays I draw from in this project. You can access all three of them online. "Consider the Lobster,[2]" "The View From Mrs. Thompson's,[3]" and "This is Water[4]" are footnoted below as links to each publication. Don't read them all at once. Read one; digest it. Ponder it. Come back and then read another. After all that, come back and read this. You'll thank me later.

In the next few pages, you'll first read a creative piece about me and Wallace and the relationship we built during this project. "Living with David Foster Wallace" is Chapter 1. The complexities of gathering my research materials and gathering my thoughts are represented here. Then, in Chapter 2, I'll offer an informal literature review on the topic of inquiry practices. Inquiry has a complicated past. I attempt to look past and since the work of Janice Lauer, who has helped the field locate inquiry within invention.

---

[1] Quoted Kath Murphey from here: http://litreactor.com/columns/the-blaggers-guide-to-david-foster-wallace#comment-105206. Original interview with the actual Wallace quote here: http://patrickarden.com/DavidFosterWallace.html

[2] "Consider the Lobster"

[3] "The View From Mrs. Thompson's"

[4] "This is Water"

In the third chapter, I'll take you through my chaotic research methods. They are messy, unorthodox, and unorganized. But, they are what they are because this project bubbled bottom-up—much like Bertram Chip Bruce's "Building an Airplane in the Sky." In Chapter 4, we look at "When Inquiry Happens," addressing that it's not just during Invention. In Chapter 5, "The Whens of Inquiry," we take this project one step further and discuss the various moments of inquiry I saw in Wallace's work. It turns out that inquiry happens throughout a writing project. In Chapter 6, I discuss Empathy, Civic Engagement, Fundamental Impulses, and Democracy as the more I work on my project, the more aware I become of our need to address engaged citizenry in our classrooms. Wallace can help us do this as well, not to mention Dewey. And Smith. I will have them help me. In Chapter 7, I'll cover the specific pedagogical rationale and implications brought forth with this research. In Chapter 8, I'll ask you, my audience, to consider an inquiry practices approach to your pedagogy.

The minute I was introduced to David Foster Wallace and his nonfiction work, I wanted to know how he got the vast detail into his works. Next, I began to wonder how I could help my students do the same. So, I proposed a project that was part creative nonfiction, yet would still meet the requirements of my dissertation, the needs of my committee, and contribute to the field of Rhetoric and Composition. The process has been lengthy. For two years now, I've been studying two essays by Wallace. I ended up learning about Wallace's work in such detailed ways that I may be the only one to see the level of his attention to detail and his decision making process. For instance, in some versions of "The View from Mrs. Thompson's" he refers to a convenience store in Bloomington as the KWIK-N-EZ. In others it's the Qik-N-EZ. The actual store name (I've been there. Took pictures, too) is Qik-N-EZ. It's spelled "correctly" in the *Rolling Stone* version of TVFMT. But, Wallace uses, KWIK-N-EZ in all of his drafts and again

in his edited collection which came out after the *Rolling Stone* publication. Why? We don't know. But *this* is the level of detail I've been working with. A change like this is/could be my actual data!

The essays I chose are "The View From Mrs. Thompson's" (TVFMT) and "Consider the Lobster." TVFMT is a rather short piece for Wallace. It's a spur-of-the-moment essay on the town of Bloomington, IL and the 3 days following "The Horror" of 9-11. The piece appeared in *Rolling Stone* in October 2001. "Consider the Lobster" is considerably longer and considerably more famous. "Consider the Lobster" was commissioned by *Gourmet Magazine* and provides a more-than-complete coverage of the Maine Lobster Fest event in 2003. In this essay, Wallace moves outward from the event itself to ask readers to question their own eating habits. He opens up the essay to talk about a social issue.

Through my research, what we get are stories – and "[w]hat we almost never get are the stories from a book's [or essay's] gawky teenage years, when the narrative is slack, the prose awkward (Shannon). Altogether, we get to look across six versions of TVFMT and four versions of CTL. And, while Wallace's narrative wasn't slack and his prose weren't awkward (lengthy and complex but not awkward), we do get stories omitted and numbers changed.

I was able to compare these versions paragraph-by-paragraph, line-by-line, and even word-for-word. It took several months. I scanned and scanned and scanned. I saved as pdfs. I converted the pdfs to text. I copied and pasted and saved as .txt. I was able to use a comparison software to then compare version 1 to version 2 to version 3 and so on. I could see where Wallace changed a word or a number or a neighbor's occupation. I could see where he changed his mind and then changed it back again. At times, I could tell that he had conducted additional inquiry.

Two important arguments rise from my research. First, I have an increased sense of urgency about our students needing help finding ways to become engaged citizens. I worry about the state of things in the US (a lack of fellowship and empathy), and I can't help but include these worries in this project as I see a need and one way to fill that need. Second, I see ways to help students write better. And, by better I mean more complete, more thorough, more thoughtful, more insightful, college-level research papers. Or—YouTube videos or PSAs—whatever medium of delivery works best for their specific writing project. I don't think students should always be required to write our standard research papers. I see multiple kinds of important mediums that are more useful than standard research papers. And, I see how to help students be better writers by using the inquiry practices I talk about in this project. I intend to bring all of this forward so we can be a better help to our students. I intend our students find their "fundamental impulses" (Charles Bazerman). I am certain my work will help us do this.

Sadly, not everyone is an engaged citizen in our country. And yet, this is fundamentally what education is about. At least it is to me and the folks I studied with. As I worked on this project, I often watched the news. I heard about shootings and muggings and senseless beatings and bullying. And I wondered what I could do to help stop these travesties. I watched the news. I started doing the math. It seems that we (teachers of writing) have the ability to reach approximately 3 million young minds a year across this country.

I teach using a piece by Wallace called "This is Water[5]." It's Wallace's 2005 commencement speech to the graduating class of Kenyon College, and this short piece really seems to make a big difference to many of my students. Seeing the student reactions to this short speech, I began to write a rationale for engaged citizenry. It's a framework for the way I like to

[5] http://moreintelligentlife.com/story/david-foster-wallace-in-his-own-words

teach. Students have responded in positive ways. They've told me "This is Water" should be required reading for every American. I don't know how to get it to "every American," but I can get it to my spring students, and next fall's students. And the year after that. Not only does this assignment fit with my call for more empathy for one another and increased citizenry, students like it. They like reading it. They like responding to it. They respond well to it. It's something we could do further work on—something I did not actually "research," but it is still a major part of this project.

We already seek to have student participation in real-world issues. My mentors and my peers teach activism, community service, tolerance, inclusion (just to name a few). I do as well. Most of the places I've taught do the same. But, some do not. And, then there are all the people who aren't even in college but who oh-so-badly need to find empathy for their fellow man.

We really have a lot of work to do. My project can help.[6]

[6] This dissertation had to be re-formatted to meet the requirements set forth by my graduate school. That is, it has to have all type be at a 12-point font size and clear and crisp. Many of my images are of words. Wallace's words. Some hand-written, tiny scrawls—not clear and crisp at all. I've had to remove my images and my appendix tables from my dissertation in order for the graduate school to accept my project. But, so that you can still read it—in its entirety, with the images of my data included—I've posted it to the web in my own server space. Here, I link you to the "real" dissertation. It's available at webbsuza.com/THE INQUIRY PRACTICES OF NONFICTION WRITERS.pdf). I apologize for any inconvenience. Please follow this link and retrieve this project the way it was intended to be read. The way it was accepted for my graduation by my dissertation committee. The way it's "supposed to" be.

Chapter 1: Living with David Foster Wallace

I am living with David Foster Wallace.

No I'm not. I never met the man. And, he's gone. He passed (killed himself I'm saddened to say) in 2008. He was only about six months younger than me. I'm not living with David Foster Wallace, but I am studying the inquiry practices of nonfiction writers, focusing on Wallace. I would like to add, that researching Wallace's inquiry practices certainly has felt, at times, like I'm living with this man.

I first "met" Wallace in an English creative writing course at Michigan State. Our advanced nonfiction workshop was assigned to read "Consider the Lobster" and "Ticket to the Fair"---two of Wallace's nonfiction essays. And, some of his most famous work.

I immediately hated him. Pompous. Verbose. He seemed to love the sound of his own voice. He went on and on. Windbag.

Well, upon re-reading these two essays, I started to see a troubled and funny and brilliant man. As I read more of his nonfiction, I started to see that Wallace scrutinized a topic until he laid out a torrent of possibilities. Through minutiae, particulars, intricacies, digressions and detours, Wallace gives readers the big picture. Then, he goes on to give us something to ponder. That's when I noticed I was learning through him. Through his details. Through the way he looked, not only at the event he attended, but at the larger social issues that surrounded that event.

Where did all these facts come from? How long did it take to gather them? In what order? How did he piece them together? Who did he talk to? What did he read? What changed each time he made a new discovery? How did he learn about all this stuff? And , could other writers do it too?

As of today, I have met several David Foster Wallace's. I have enough data gathered to talk about three of them. First, there's The David Foster Wallace. in an archive, in Austin, Texas, under the lights, behind the walls, only brought forth from the trained workers with kit gloves. The University of Texas. The Harry Ransom Center. The Pristine. The Untouchable. The David Foster Wallace Archive.

Then, there's a second Wallace I've "met." I call him "Dave Wallace." Dave Wallace. This guy from Bloomington, IL. A regular guy. A guy with issues. A college prof. A friend-of-a-friend-of-a-friend--with an addiction for TVs. A guy who liked to write in Denny's. He'd sit in Denny's in Bloomington, Illinois, chain-smoking --- hours on end. Sitting. Thinking. Listening. (My guess is you'd get some pretty interesting dialogue if you sit in a Denny's long enough.). Listening. Writing. About addiction. About recovery. About consideration.

And, there's the third Wallace I've met. The Internet DFW. Back in April of this year, as spring rolled around, The Internet caught fire when DFW's posthumous novel *The Pale King* hit the stores. Prior to April, in the earlier months of 2011, I started scouring the web for traces of DFW. So, I signed up for Google News Alerts. No big deal.

Google would send me "news" about "DFW" But when *The Pale King* hit the stores, HUNDREDS of alerts appeared in my inbox … DFW this. DFW that. DFW and Robinson Caruso. DFW and Shakespeare. DFW's widow. On and on it goes. I was bombarded by DFW news alerts and listserv digests and people posting on my Facebook and ongoing twitter feeds. Every few minutes, there was DFW again. Knocking on my email inbox. It came to a head. I knew what to do. I simply just "stopped taking his calls". This Wallace invaded my space. My inbox. Even my psyche.

Let me backtrack and talk in a bit more detail about The Archived David Foster Wallace. I went to the David Foster Wallace Archive in Austin December 2010. There, I saw 1000s of things this Wallace left behind. Books, notes, notebooks, drafts-upon-drafts… and more. Almost immediately upon his death, the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas knew they wanted those things.

They bought these pieces of David Foster Wallace. They Purchased them for show. In the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas, there's David Foster Wallace's personal library—several hundred books he owned and read—all with his annotations and notes to self and arrows and circles and comments to their authors. There's his dictionary—another annotated masterpiece. There's letters to him. Letters from him. There's some of his teaching materials. There's draft after draft of some of his essays.

In order to access any of these materials, you simply go to Austin, Texas. Go to the U of Texas. Go to the Ransom Center (they do recommend you make an appointment beforehand). Go to the second floor (where they send you to a little room to watch a training video about handling their objects--sometimes with gloves). You create a user account. You'll use this account to access (their) David Foster Wallace. Then, you go back to the second floor receptionist. She makes you put everything you own (except for your laptop—sans bag) into a wooden locker. Nice wooden lockers too. Very fancy.

Then, you give her your ID, and she fills out a yellow slip for you. This is your ticket in the door. You'll get your ID back when you leave. Into the next door, a librarian will help you find the on-site computers (no--you cannot use your own). On their computers, you may look up their finding guides (guides designed by librarians to help you find what you're looking for in an archive).

Then, you wait.

Someone will notify you when the materials you've requested are ready. They'll bring them out in a little box. To a certain table. You're only allowed one folder from said box at any given moment. You pick a folder. Go back to your table. Peruse said folder. Once you return that folder to the box, you may get a new folder. No, you are not allowed to take pictures. The archive is very protective of Their David Foster Wallace.

But, in Bloomington Illinois, where Dave Wallace worked (at Illinois State University) and wrote (Infinite Jest, … and… Brief Interviews with Hideous Men …and... "The View From Mrs. Thompson's") and *lived*... there's a whole different guy. Here's how I "met" Dave Wallace: I was going to Bloomington over spring break to visit my friend Angela. I remembered, back to December and The Archive. There, I had seen Wallace's "personal notebook." On it, he had scrawled (in all caps):

> DF WALLACE
> R2 BOX 361
> BLOOMINGTON, IL
> REWARD FOR RETURN

I wondered if I could drive by his house. So, my friend Angela called her friend Julie who's other friend so-and-so had known Wallace when he lived there and taught at Illinois State. No, she didn't know where his old house was (neither did Google maps), but she did know that he used to buy TVs. He'd buy a TV and begin to watch it. And he'd find himself getting absorbed by it. So absorbed, he began to be concerned for his productivity. He'd place said TV on the curb in front of his house and someone would come along and take it. He'd get back to writing, but before long, he would be longing to watch TV.

So, he'd buy another television and before long—it too went to the curb. After several reps of this, the rumor goes, other professors at Illinois State started complaining (Wallace had a

Macarthur grant --- A friggin' genius award). And the profs thought he was wasting the award money on TVs. And Wallace defended himself saying something like "Can't you see I have a problem here?" I imagine a smirk when he said it.

The friend of a friend of Angela's also said Wallace liked to write in Denny's (according to GoogleMaps, 701 Eldorado Road, Bloomington). I've been able to verify this as fact. On the acknowledgements page inside *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men,* Wallace thanks "the management and staff of Denny's 24-hour Family Restaurant, Bloomington, Illinois." I got to write in that Denny's in March. I went back there in August. I love that Denny's. I'm inspired in that Denny's.

Wallace, the writer, allows the Bloomington / regular / quirky-yet-concerned Dave Wallace to come out in "The View from Mrs. Thompson's". He tells audience about a panic attack he had. Basically, during the research for the essay, he was talking to neighbors about their flags. It's the day after 911 and everyone but everyone (except Wallace) has a flag.

He goes to a few stores in town, looking for a flag. And, following a piece of neighborly advice, heads to the Qik-n-EZ. Here, he finds himself afraid to go home. Dave Wallace literally had to sit in the back room of this small store and try to compose himself in order to be able to leave the store. This part of the essay seemed to stop time for me as a reader. …As a fellow human. I imagine that's exactly what a panic attack feels like. That time has stopped and you're freakin' out. About everything. And, you can't move and can't speak to explain the feeling of not being able to move and not being able to speak.

And of not having a flag.

Dave Wallace makes us *feel.* Sure, he does this with his style, his tone, his voice. But we also feel because of his details. Dave Wallace wrote about the human condition. And, he wrestled with issues of being human in excruciating detail. His "Consider the Lobster" essay for *Gourmet* teaches us damn-near everything there is to know about lobster. And then it goes on to teach us something about ourselves…

This third Wallace, this Internet phenomenon … this DFW… Now, he is something else. Wallace's posthumous novel, *The Pale King,* came out on April 15, 2011. In the days surrounding the release of the book, DFW was King. The media buzz was like nothing I've seen before. Back in January, before all this flutter (as I mentioned earlier), I set up some Google News alerts in my GMail. What this does is send me an email any time there is "news" about DFW. Do not confuse this. it's not an alert every time Wallace has a post about him—some aren't news. I set up my alerts to give me just the NEWS.

> FACTOID
> In May 2011, there were 1.2 million hits on Google for the exact term "David Foster Wallace". The morning of April 11, 2012, there are 2,690,000 results. DFW's popularity is without question---and it only continues to grow.

But…Back in January 2010, emails about him filtered in every few days, or maybe only once a week. In the month of April, from my GoogleAlerts alone, I received 122 separate email alerts. Some had multiple strands of up to 20 notifications. In other words, even in limiting my inquiry to only April, I still have over 200 different pieces I needed to sift through---articles, links, mentions---all regarding DFW.

The majority of my alerts notified me about articles related to release of *The Pale King.* But, some talked of his suicide. Others discussed his corpus. A few condemn his style. Others

praise it. These articles appeared in publications ranging from *GQ* to *Salon* to *The New York Times* to *The New Yorker*.

They came at me night and day. DFW THIS. DFW THAT.

And for me, all of this was information overload! I just couldn't look at them anymore. It's like he "called me" two-three-even-four times a day- everyday, to the point I was kinda annoyed with him. It was sorta like DFW was stalking me.

I had to quit reading. It was overwhelming. I needed a break. Besides...Wallace was already in my head. When I began studying "The View From Mrs. Thompson's," I listened to Dave Wallace – in a monotone almost drone-like delivery, read the essay. Recorded in 2005, Time Warner Audio Books---this is an essay read by Wallace himself. He told me his story.

I also learned that back in 2008, the night he hanged himself (and I think he'd rather I called it what it was), before he did that, he printed out the finished portions of a manuscript; his third novel, *The Pale King.* He printed several chapters, stacked them neatly on his desk sat a lamp over them to illuminate them. Then, he did himself in.

With spring break behind me, and back in Lansing, Michigan, and back to work, and back to my own isolation as teacher and researcher and 3rd year PhD student, Wallace's voice was starting to resonate in my head. I was beginning to feel that same sense of loneliness he did. We had to break up. At least a temporary separation -- for sanity's sake. I needed my space.

Since I KNEW I couldn't see him anymore, I began archiving Wallace, to preserve my sanity. His invasion into my life was teaching me about great inquiry---as it also sucked life from me.

I took the summer off. I shut down my computer. I quit thinking about Wallace, and I moved across the country. I was "single" and loving it --- May June and July. But, in August, I

started missing him. Besides, I needed to move along with this project. I needed to look for specific signs of Wallace's inquiry practices. So, I started listening to his interviews, posted online. I re-read his essays. I followed up on articles about him on twitter. I looked at some of those 122 email alerts. And, right in the middle of all these videos, articles, Q&As, all the internet flutter, and all the essays he wrote… literally—in the middle of hundreds of thousands of words—I saw: "Ask three different people." Scrawled – HAND WRITTEN -- in the margin of the original draft of TVFMT. This is Wallace thinking about method…It's his inquiry. It's A glimpse. A snippet. But, it is Wallace …inquiring. It's inquiry he left right on the page. He notes that he wants to ask "three different people:" the question "If somebody like a TV reporter or foreigner were to ask about the purpose of all these flags was exactly, what do you think you'd say?" "Ask three different people." An indication that Wallace knew that very minute he wanted to triangulate the results of his informal interview.

I have six drafts or versions of TVFMT: One hand-written, two type written, one galley proof, one audio version, one published version from *Rolling Stone*, and the one in Wallace's edited collection *Consider the Lobster*. This is actually pretty typical in terms of numbers of drafts for Wallace who once in an interview called himself a "5-draft man"[7] But, some of his other works like his Kenyon College commencement speech This is Water – have 8 or 9 available drafts back in the archive plus an audio version. Plus, the transcript published online. Plus, the book released last winter[8].

[7] https://www.amherst.edu/aboutamherst/magazine/extra/node/66410

[8] Wall Street Journal http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122178211966454607.html, The Economist: http://moreintelligentlife.com/story/david-foster-wallace-in-his-own-words, The Guardian: http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2008/sep/20/fiction

Hints regarding Wallace's inquiry practices are starting to emerge in my research. I learned that while teaching at Pomona in the early 2000s, Wallace took a semester off so he could take a class. He audited an accounting course[9]. His book, *The Pale King*— It's situated in an IRS office. This is yet rich another tidbit for me regarding the man's inquiry practices! He took an accounting course to learn more about his subject matter. These morsels and bits are the exact kinds of things I am looking for as I do my project. These are glimpses into Wallace's inquiry process. Though Wallace told one interviewer he wrote 5 drafts for everything, so far I've only located ONE "draft" of Consider the Lobster. But, I also have 3 copies that are finished, published, printed (if you will), circulated versions of the essay.

There are substantial changes from the audio version on Time Warner Audiobooks to the original published version printed in *Gourmet Magazine*. I made searchable, digital documents so I could comment, highlight, note, and search the drafts. I was able to search for changes between all versions—looking both line-by-line and paragraph-by-paragraph. Interestingly, I find through doing this project that my own inquiry practices are very different today than they would have been 10 years ago. The ability to scan print documents and turn them into searchable digital documents may have been in place, but the costs would have been exorbitant. Now this ability is virtually cost-free. Basically, all I needed was an OCR reader and a scanner.

Wallace makes specific, numeric changes. The attendance numbers above and also the audio version of CTL, is considerably changed from the original version in *Gourmet.* Wallace seems, to me, to be self-correcting when he says: "…besides the fact that is incorrect in about 11 different ways" in *Gourmet* and "…besides the fact that is incorrect in about 9 different ways" on

[9] In a transcript of a 1998 interview that appeared in Dazed & Confused magazine, "A FUN THING THEY'LL NEVER DO AGAIN: Gus Van Sant meets David Foster Wallace", Wallace discusses his then-current inquiry. He's at Pomona, but he's on leave; not teaching.

the audio. Perhaps that AFTER *Gourmet*, he continued to work on this project. The numerical change in this passage amazes me. It's not a stylistic change in my opinion, but a deliberate change. A change to be more factual. It's a simple change, from 11 to 9, but why would someone make that kind of change UNLESS they learned something new? The cadence isn't better. The tone doesn't change. Were these changes the result of his additional inquiry? It seems, Wallace just couldn't put this stuff down once it took hold of him. It's hard to say, for sure, merely looking at the pieces themselves. But, I can't go ask him, either. I have to infer.

Wallace knew how to draw us in, entertain us, make us think, make us FEEL. But, how did he GET all those details??? It's up to me to figure some of this out. He left me draft after draft and changes to printed and published works for me to use. It's time consuming. Sometimes, almost infuriating. But, it's also rewarding. It seems, to me so far, throughout my research that Wallace did EVERYTHING he could to really learn about and understand and report on his subject matter. That is, he used every possible means to cover a topic. He talked to people. He looked things up. He asked questions. He took notes. He read. He thought. He synthesized and analyzed. And then he'd do it all again. And, then, he would make even more changes…even between published versions of the same piece!

I was supposed to be researching the inquiry practices of nonfiction writers, looking specifically at three nonfiction published works by David Foster Wallace. I had originally intended to go to Austin, gather copies of all the drafts of each essay, and do a line-by-line (if not word-by-word) comparison of the successive drafts. This project was going to be strictly an archival research project.

But, my interests in what I call "The Bloomington Years" (1996-2002)" and in "Dave Wallace" took over after that visit to Bloomington. My interests in this other angel intensified

when I began studying "The View From Mrs. Thompson's.[10]," For me, TVFMT is Wallace's most riveting work. It's not his best. Not his most renowned. But it speaks to me in ways that his other essays do not. It's a moment in time he and I shared. It's a moment in time we all share in some way. Wallace, though admittedly "written very fast in what probably in what qualifies as shock4" immediately began to try and make sense of the senseless attack on the Twin Towers on 9/11/2001.

Wallace grabbed his notebook and began to take notes and ask questions. He quickly, in a 10-point, black ink hand scrawl, set a scene. He asked questions. Of himself. Of his neighbors. Of other townfolk in Bloomington. Of us all. Wallace—even in that hand-written draft written during the three days following the attack— uses writing to try and make sense of things. It's not reflect-then-write; it's write-to-reflect. He asks questions. He builds scenarios. He explores them. Wallace's TVFMT is a piece of writing that resonates (should resonate) with anyone alive on 9/11/2001. It also resonates with me as a researcher.

Essays are so much more than the words we readers get to see. Essays are finished products. But, writers create a paper trail (or more likely today, an electronic document trail) that exposes their process. Sure, these documents can show us simple editing changes like spelling and grammar, but, I believe, they can also show us a process of inquiry a writer followed. I believe we stand to learn a lot from these processes.

[10] FACTOID: I found 656,000 hits on Google related to just this essay (TVFMT). I've found it reprinted in its entirety, excerpted from, and written back to.

"Consider the Lobster" took Wallace 11 months of researching. Of writing. Of revising. Of edits and changes…from the time Wallace went to the Maine Lobster Fest until the essay was published in *Gourmet.* Eleven months of researching and writing.

Rolling Stone Magazine published TVFMT only 6 weeks after the day of the attack. This too, intensifies my interest in this particular essay. How can one live through, examine, question, explore, write about, revise, think through, rewrite, and be published in such a short amount of time?

My project has been and continues to be a journey—it's endpoints were not predetermined. I did not know that I would be drawn specifically to TVFMT;I did not know that I would come to value Bloomington as a research site over the Ransom Center. But, I remember so well my very first connection between Dave Wallace and Bloomington and me.

In summer 2010, I had just decided to work on this project. I proposed my project to the GRN at the Computers and Writing Conference. Accepted and provided with a small travel allowance, I headed toward Purdue.

Dr. Angela Haas, who assists Dr. Janice Walker with the GRN, sat me at a table with a former colleague of Wallace's. We introduced ourselves. He asked me what my project was. He said something like: "You're studying Dave? Dave. That guy, I swear. I used to think what doesn't he do perfect? I mean his writing and his teaching were tops. He did everything to perfection. …And, then he killed himself." This moved me. It made me feel a loss. It made me know that Dave Wallace had a personal impact on a whole lot of lives. That's when he started to have a personal impact on mine. That's when I knew I wasn't only writing about his inquiry practices.

I was getting to know someone in really deep and meaningful ways, I had formed a relationship, and I wasn't sure I could only look at those essay drafts. I began to think I would have to do a lot of my work through other people. People who knew him. He's not here for me to ask questions to. My work is limited to what he wrote and to the interviews he gave—and to the people he knew. These are significant limitations to my work. There are limitations to every study, but I cannot interview Dave Wallace; I can only look to his body of work. It worries me, that I will lose context if I limit myself to just his essays. They simply do not tell the whole story.

I guess you could say that I'm living with several David Foster Wallaces. And there are others, too. There's the Wallace who taught. I've not been able to research the Teacher: Professor Wallace who taught at Illinois State and Pomona. Or Wallace, the son, who grew up in Illinois. Or Wallace, the student, who went to Amherst. I have no idea who Wallace, the husband, is. ---I've not really "met" these guys yet at all. I probably won't get to either. I can't really "separate these Wallaces" from one another either---since they really are just one very complex guy. I, even now, especially now, have to limit how much time I spend with him. The more time I spend, the more possibilities there are, the more complex my relationship grows. And, the more I like him. The more I want to know about him.

But, I have to focus. This project is "the inquiry practices of nonfiction writers," and that's where I need to situate myself. But, what would happen if I did shift my lens to "The Bloomington Years" and to Dave Wallace the guy who wrote in Denny's? That changes my whole project. I'd need IRB approval and travel funding and time to conduct interviews. But, what is lost if I limit my inquiry to only what's on these draft pages? That surely doesn't tell the whole story. The realization is this: Even if I focus my entire academic career on Wallace, I won't ever be able to know "the whole story" about him.

This relationship is complex. It's time consuming. It's heart breaking. It's messy. And, it's inspiring. THIS is what it's like to be "Living with David Foster Wallace."

He wasn't as good at tennis as he claimed
He once plotted murder
He voted for Reagan
He had hygiene issues
One of his best short stories is about Elizabeth Wurtzel
He was a ladies' man
—*Rolling Stone*, 6 Things You Didn't Know about David Foster Wallace[11]

[11] http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/six-things-you-didnt-know-about-david-foster-wallace-20120827

Chapter 2: Consider the Field

I began this project thinking I'd be learning, through process documents and finished essays by David Foster Wallace, about producing nonfiction. I thought that through studying the writer's inquiry practices, wading through Wallace's documents, I'd learn how to produce compelling writings that reach large audiences. That was my goal. But, that's not really what happened.

It took a long time to sift through all my data—looking to see what it showed me. I believe it showed me ways to help students become more skilled and practiced writers—by imitating some of the inquiry practices that Wallace used. Through my project, I now see that inquiry happens throughout an entire writing project or entire writing process. While most of the work in our field concentrates on inquiry during invention, inquiry doesn't stop there. Inquiry is the key to writing thorough and thoughtful and meaningful prose. Sometimes that inquiry is internal. Sometimes it's external. I'll explain this shortly.

I've found that inquiry not only happens, it happens repeatedly, as a writer moves through their writing process. I've found that inquiry happens in order to write. It happens as we write. And it even happens as our audience reads us. My work adds, substantially, to the field in that inquiry can and should and does continue past the canon of invention. Allow me to explain by way of the following short list essay.

CONSIDER THIS—Inquiry. An art of invention. Systematic discovery. A release. REASONING. Knowledge creation. Speculative. Questioning. Contradictions. Sorting. EXPLORING. Exercise. Analogy. Testimony. Calculations of Chance. UNDERSTANDING. *A quest.* Turning the unknown into the known. Tension. Rhetoric. Intellectual acts. "no inquiry, no discipline." The search for rational arguments to support theses. Identify. Stimulate. Raise questions. Interpret. Constructing new knowledge. Creating truth. To engage. To explore. *The process of inquiry.* Tagmemic Invention. Initiation. Puzzlements. Framing. A series of questions. Guides. Preparation for intuition. Opened-ended. Recursive. Multiple perspectives. PROBING. Direction. Examination. Catalyst. Imagination. *The initiation of discourse.* Goal-based. Planning. Stating. Developing. Reviewing. Evaluating. Revising. Directing. *Rhetorical planning.* Discovery of new knowledge. Writing. Natural. Mysterious. Creative. Local knowledge. The role of reading. Scientific Inquiry. An informal logic. A logic of rhetorical invention. A logic of inquiry. "The Rhetoric of Inquiry." Networks. Stories. Metaphors. Measurements. Experiments. Meaning. Persuasion. Inference. *The social construction of knowledge.* A set of questions. A repertoire of methods. TRYING. Scaffolding. Interplay between observation and inference. Progymnasmata. RHETORICAL INVENTION. Observation. Description. Generalization. Hypothesizing. Analyzing. Generating. Deciding. Predicting. Dispatching. Writing as a process of inquiry. Seeking insights and new understandings. Raising questions. Start with questions. Start with dissonances. EXPLORATION. Frame. Focus. *Writing as reflective practice*. Bringing multiple perspectives into play. Looking forward. Looking backward. Uncertainty. Open questions. Seeking alternative voices. Generating hypotheses. Building consensus. Defining a problem. Developing research questions. TO LEARN HOW. To figure out what. Legal reasoning. Planning and thinking by means of writing. Creating new knowledge. Rhetorical analysis. MAKING VISIBLE. Ways of Reading. A means of production. Deliberative discursive action. Aligning lived experiences with readings. Writing as inquiry. Freewriting. Natural process. Dialectic. Debate. Dissonance: A starting place for inquiry. Epistemic. Questions. Explorations. Possibilities. Situational. Locating possible disagreements. Examining features and variations. Rogerian.

INSIGHT—the outcome of inquiry.[12]

[12] From *Invention in Rhetoric and Composition* by Janice M. Lauer (2004).

What we talk about when we talk about inquiry, and when I say we (unless otherwise noted), I mean Rhet/Comp, the field—what we talk about is *most usually* inquiry as a form of invention. Sure, we *do* inquiry. That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about a different way to *look* at inquiry. I'm talking about a way of *seeing i*nquiry. And, I'm talking about what we can do with it once we can see it. So, when I say we haven't talked about it much in the field, I mean we haven't talked about it much in this way.

It's our job, no matter which theoretical background we have, no matter which parcel of the field we stand in, no matter how many things we don't see eye to eye on—it's our job— to help our students be better writers. I'm looking for ways to help us do that. I'm looking for ways to *show* students how they can better *do* inquiry for *their* essays.

George Hillocks, Jr., emeritus professor in the Department of Education, with a joint appointment in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Chicago writes about inquiry in this way:

> "It is almost intuitively obvious that if a writer knows how to produce effective syntactic structures, how to write for a given audience, how to organize, and so forth, but does not know how to conduct the inquiry which will be the basis for the essay, then the resulting essay will almost certainly be trivial and inconsequential" (Hillocks 1).

Hillocks provides one framework for this: observe, describe, generalize, compare and contrast (define), hypothesize, and test generalizations (664). Here, the work is to explore and to record. So, we seek student work much like the work in my project here (the inquiry practices of nonfiction writers), though most often students produce work on a smaller scale. We want, according to Dr. Bruce Edwards, from Bowling Green State University, students to discuss

goals and expectations; provide a chronology of their investigation; offer an overview of the data generated and/or explored; state conclusions; and project further research questions to pursue in follow-up (Edwards).

According to Young and Koen, "Students are expected to learn, and they need to learn, to use language to explore their own experiences in search of ordering generalizations, to do so rigorously and responsibly, and to communicate their beliefs clearly and persuasively to others. Yet they are seldom given formal instruction in the arts of inquiry, argument, and persuasion" (3). I believe that, through the work of this project, teachers of writing will be able to give more formal instruction to their students into the art of inquiry.

Janice Lauer tells us that "when students raise meaningful questions about incongruities in their own worlds, they gain genuine motivation and direction for writing, and that when students discover new understandings through writing, the writing becomes valuable to them and worth sharing with readers" (Lauer 89-90). How can we help them to raise meaningful questions? Find that motivation? Discover new understandings? Because I prefer to read student papers that are valuable to not only my student, but also worth sharing with readers—with a real-world audience. I believe that, by returning to a focus on inquiry and by looking at inquiry in deeper ways, we can help our students do this kind of work.

Young and Koen showed us in 1973 that student work improved when there was "strong personal involvement in an intellectual activity" (v). These authors felt that "[c]onventional instruction is heavily biased toward the properties of good prose--a worthy goal but inadequate in itself, and perhaps unattainable when isolated from intellectual and social concerns" (3). These scholars suggested we "redefine the activity of writing as an effort to understand and to

communicate what has been understood" and that this be "brought to bear on genuine problems students face as thinkers and participants in a highly diverse society" (5).

Young and Koen go on to note that "[t]he wide range of "real world" problems which may be dealt with in rhetoric courses provides an opportunity to develop the student's ability to inquire into these kinds of problems he must face as an adult" (5).

Charles Bazerman would like to see us help students get their fundamental impulses flowing and it seems to me that between Hillocks and Young and Koen and Lauer's work, we can help students find meaning in their writing projects. We must offer them ways to see required writing course as more than "required." I believe to do that, we must help students see that their writing can make change. We have to find ways for then to engage. Lauer tells us that "[g]ood inquirers deliberately explore questions, guided by heuristic procedures that help them vary their perspectives, scan their memories, and create new associations" (91). Lauer's heuristic aligns not only with Young and Koen's Tagmemic Rhetoric, but also with my own work on inquiry practices. The most accessible references to "inquiry practices" come to us from Education, as Hillocks' work is in our peripheral view instead of directly situated within Rhetoric and Composition. Don't get me wrong here; Rhet/Comp does certainly include inquiry as an important part of invention, we just see inquiry talked about inquiry very very little in relation to the other canons or to revision. This leads me to ask question: Where is *inquiry* in relation to Rhet/comp historically? Where is it today?

Janice Lauer helps us answer that question as well. The "list essay," above ("What We Talk About When We Talk About Inquiry"), are the "instances of inquiry" in Lauer's *Invention in Rhetoric & Composition*. Her extensive bibliography shows us, across 280 pages, the state of "invention" in Rhet/Comp in 2004. My list essay above shows the instances of the word

"inquiry" throughout the Lauer book. The list essay is modeled from David Foster Wallace's opening section in "Tense Present[13]," which appeared in *Harper's Magazine.* Unlike Wallace's critical-yet-nearly slapstick tirade, my list essay represents terms and phrases associated with "inquiry" in Lauer's text[14] from our field's scholars. These "instances of inquiry" in Rhetoric and Composition helped me to denote a gap in the studies. My work will seek to fill this gap. I call for others to do similar work and uncover the value in helping students with their "inquiry practices." As rhetoricians (writers) and compositionists (writers) and teachers of writing (writers), we should all be aware of and employ this rich mode of engagement that uses inquiry practices.

ONE POSSIBLE APPROACH

I began by wondering: Could inquiry practices be situated on a finished page of writing, right in front of our eyes? It's kind of a weird question. But, I don't think we've, as a field, looked at inquiry in this particular way. What would happen if we had multiple drafts from a specific writer? Could we look across those drafts and see what kind of inquiry practices took place during the writing of that piece? Do inquiry practices even occur from one draft to the next? If they do—if inquiry practices are evident on the page, what could we *do* if we knew more about them? Could we look at the inquiry practice located in a finished piece and actually *see* what a writer did? What steps s/he took? What kinds of inquiry practices s/he used? What if we had examples of this kind of "on-the-page inquiry?" Couldn't we then show our students what these inquiry practices look like? Wouldn't that help students be more successful with *their*

[13] http://harpers.org/media/pdf/dfw/HarpersMagazine-2001-04-0070913.pdf Specifically all of page 39.

[14] I used CONTROL>F and searched the book for the word "inquiry." At each occurrence, I used the descriptors located in that sentence regarding inquiry as the words for my list essay.

inquiry practices? —Allow me to posit one way of looking at the inquiry practices of nonfiction writers.

We talk a lot. It's how we build knowledge. It's how we contribute to our field. It's what we do. But, we come from different camps. It almost seems, at times, to be in our very nature to disagree how to best teach writing; how to best write; what the process should be; what the product should be. Too often X disputes Y. A agrees with B but only on point C. Yet, we all have similar goals. We just don't really agree on how to get there. Stephen North separated us into four camps. And, that's four camps just within Rhet/Comp. Think of how many camps there really are. Rhetoric. Composition. English. Creative Writing. Poetry. Fiction. Non-fiction. Professional Writing. Technical Writing. Journalism, Advertising, Speech, and Communication.

Despite all our differences, we all have two really big things in common—the desire to communicate well and reaching our audiences. Shawn Wilson, Indigenous scholar (father of three, knowledge seeker, knowledge keeper, etc), tells us that research is ceremony and the purpose of any ceremony is "to build stronger relationships or bridge the distance between aspects of our cosmos and ourselves" (137) and the "ability to bridge this gap becomes important in order to ease the tension that it creates (44). My job here is to build bridges between some of the best aspects of our ideas and theories of past as we go forth into the future. We can't just keep digging at our differences. Our progress as a field and as a society wanes because of it. We have to come together. I think inquiry can help us do that.

Sure, I'm an idealist—a Pollyanna. I think we should be able to work with some of X's findings and merge them with some of Y's findings. I think A and B and C all have valid points. I think we can find ways to help our students be engaged citizens, critical thinkers, *doers.* I

believe in students being part of The Writing Public[15]. We really share a host of commonalities when it comes to how to best teach writing, it's just that we tend to focus on our differences more openly. Now, please bear with me here. I may go at this problem a little unorthodox. Please realize that my main writing teacher these last two years has been David Foster Wallace. Some of his work, when compared to traditional scholarship in Rhet/Comp, does seem a tad unorthodox (or at least more main-stream-journalism than scholarly, Rhet/Comp work). I have good reason for my voice, my style. It's part of me and part of my message, and I am going to try and keep it.

Also, I choose to use footnotes in this project. I still honor the MLA and provide both in-text citations and a Works Cited page, but I have made many a formatting choice based on the style(s) of David Foster Wallace and his usage of footnotes. Besides it being *immitatio* of some of Wallace's work, the footnote is a very valuable addition to our works; we should consider it more often. While I am emulating Wallace here, I don't do maximalist writing like he does, but I do use footnotes—they are, for me, a way to be just a little "Wallaceonian." For you, my reader, they are a way to offer related information immediately. They're handy. They're useful.

The list essay above is my part of my inquiry on what we, Rhetoric and Composition scholars, have said about *inquiry*. In the past, what we've said about inquiry tended to be linked to the rhetorical canon of Invention. Lauer's book—the source for those phrases in my list essay—is about Invention. And, it situates inquiry within the canon of invention. That is our precedent for work on inquiry.

---

[15] Kathleen Blake Yancey. http://www.marshall.edu/wac/website%20media/Yancey.Made%20Not%20Only%20in%20WOrds%20copy.pdf

But, I think my project shows is that inquiry is also linked to the other canons as well. Inquiry happens in invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery, and my point is that we need to think of inquiry as being present *throughout the entire writing process.*

To begin to see—really see—inquiry, I have been looking at some specific inquiry practices—some that serve the writer in order to write; some that serve the writer while they write; and even some that are inquiry the writer asks of his audience. These practices are all related to Young and Koen and George Hillocks' ideas (all mentioned earlier), but they also glean from the idea of "prewriting" as well as work within the field on revision. Through this looking, I've begun to see inquiry as part of invention; inquiry in arrangement; inquiry embedded in reflection; inquiry in revision. I believe I have some proof that inquiry happens (should be happening) throughout an entire writing process. To "see" this inquiry, a thing that is often made invisible when we only see the final products, I've been studying in-process versions of two famous essays. These are not just any ole' essays, but two of David Foster Wallace's essays.

David Foster Wallace left us in 2008 having published around 150 different pieces. His work is extensive and relevant enough to have been purchased by the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas in Austin. They boast having 34 boxes of documents and 8 folders, divided into work, personal and career-related materials.[16] Additionally, through the archive and other sources, David Foster Wallace left me four (4) versions of "Consider the Lobster" (CTL) and six (6) versions of "The View From Mrs. Thompson's" (TVFMT). He makes changes from version to version. Sometimes, he made changes even after a piece was published. Some of his

[16] http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/press/releases/2010/dfw/

changes reflect his continued inquiry. And, I've been able to see his inquiry on the finished product as well. I'll show you some of these moments of inquiry in just a few pages.

For now, we need to start by acknowledging that we don't all agree—not as individual teachers nor as "the field" as a whole, and we needn't all agree. But, I hope we can sift through all of the existing scholarship looking for things that do work—looking for ways to improve scholarship and writing and student outcomes and advance our field(s) and improve our lives. I'm working toward a more inclusive field—an alliance—as Malea Powell calls it. I ask that we find "a middle ground teeming with change and possibility" (Powell 40). It's my belief that by looking at things in a new light (a new key?), we can find more places where X agrees with Y, and A agrees with B on more than just point C. It's my belief that by looking at inquiry, we can continue to build our field and our alliance.

WAYS OF DEFINING INQUIRY & "INQUIRY PRACTICES"

"An inquiry is any process that has the aim of augmenting knowledge, resolving doubt, or solving a problem. A theory of inquiry is an account of the various types of inquiry and a treatment of the ways that each type of inquiry achieves its aim"—according to Wikipedia. And, "inquiry is defined as an examination into facts or principles, a request for information, a systematic investigation often of a matter of public interest" by Merriam-webster.com.

A little closer to home, in Janice Lauer's *Invention in Rhetoric & Composition*, Lauer defines inquiry as:

> [A] pedagogical approach to writing in which students begin with questions rather than a thesis or a focus. Based on the idea that writing creates new knowledge, inquiry-based pedagogies believe that by starting a writing project with questions, curiosities, or puzzlements, students will be more invested in their work, more

> likely to go beyond what they already know, more likely to explore, and therefore more likely to learn something new. In short, writing to inquire is writing to investigate, gain insight and communicate that insight.

Inquiry can augment knowledge, resolve doubt, solve problems. Inquiry is question-based. Inquiry helps us investigate, learn, and communicate our findings. But, even with these three definitions, we still don't, as of yet, have a breakdown of what inquiry actually *is*. Here, too, Lauer is helpful. Lauer says:

> If inquiry begins with dissonance and well-articulated unknowns, further questions arise. How can we encourage students to become sensitive to the enigmas in their experience? How can we help awaken questioning minds often numbed by an educational system that rewards right answers? What kinds of writing assignments can we set to avoid trapping students in contexts so narrow or artificial that they preclude genuine puzzlement or curiosity (91)

Inquiry, the word, has been used extensively in other disciplines. It's picked up baggage along the way. I want to focus a specific lens here. I want us to look at "inquiry practices."

Instead of looking at everything inquiry, I chose to focus in on *inquiry practices.* These can be defined as "Moments when knowledge gets made or transformed as visible in changes to a text." These moments are my indicators of inquiry.

USING INQUIRY-BASED TOOLS

In *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing Vol. 1*, Steven Lessner and Collin Craig offer us some tools for generating inquiry-based writing and for multiple audiences. They say that "[a]sking rhetorical questions provokes a process of inquiry-based thinking that is useful for learning how to participate in academic conversations in a way that investigates the decisions

writers make when they compose and arrange compositions" (13). Lessner and Craig are on the mark. These are steps in *getting started* in an inquiry-based process of writing. The work they ask of students, while framed as inquiry-based, is also similar to conducting a rhetorical analysis. But much like we teach inquiry as part of invention, we teach rhetorical analysis as a starting point. But, George Hillocks' "Strategies of Inquiry" offer us some tools for working with inquiry that may allow us to keep moving forward as we progress through a project. First, Hillocks says, observe and then describe (662); gather facts, see if they suggest explanations. Test those plausible explanations. Compare sets of observations and generalize about the phenomenon (662). In other words, research: observe, describe, generalize, compare and contrast (define), hypothesize, and test generalizations (664). These strategies are another way "in."

WHAT CONSTITUTES WRITER'S EXPERTISE?

Do we draw from the "Hillocks Strategies" when we write? Do we realize that's what we're doing? Do we draw from the "Hillocks Strategies" in our classrooms? Do we use general knowledge? Localized knowledge? Does it have to be one or the other? I believe those that write best write by using some of both. And, that belief of mine goes a bit against the grain of what has been argued in Rhet/Comp. However, Michael Carter seems to help me make my case. Carter says "writing as the ability to bring to a writing task certain rich, well developed, general strategies that guide the process and increase the chances for success (266). We pit two views of writing against one another, and "neither the general nor the local perspective alone provides a complete picture of the complexity of writing" (266). Carter contends that "human performance is a complex interaction of general and local knowledge" (271) and as such, we, teachers of writing, need to be able to give the students we serve the complexities of both. There are ways of gaining expertise using both approaches. Carter calls it a "pluralistic theory of expertise" (271).

We, "expert writers," have imbedded inquiry so deep into our nature as writers, we take for granted every little move that we make to figure things out. Inquiry is a tacit part of a writer's repertoire, so embedded that we may not think to teach it when we teach writing to others. This project is meant to demonstrate ways that we can *see* the inquiry that is imbedded in a piece of finished writing as we also look at the inquiry across the drafts of those same pieces. We may use Hillocks' the broad-sweeping strategies—but call them something else. Do we think about each time we asked someone something? Do we think about each time we questioned our own arrangement? Do we think about each and every intricate inquiry-based moment? I do not think we stop to realize just how much inquiry we actually *do* to write.

RHET/COMP: IN OUR PERIPHERAL VIEW

More recently, and in our peripheral view as well, in Library Sciences, Battleson, Booth, and Weintrop, in "Usability Testing of an Academic Library Web Site: A Case Study," offer us some additional ways of thinking about inquiry—through the lens of usability studies. And, by thinking through what Lessner and Craig offer, what Hillocks offers, we start to get a much larger repertoire of inquiry. In usability studies, "[m]ethods of inquiry include focus groups, interviews, questionnaires, and surveys. Interviews and focus groups are structured methods of inquiry" (189). Other methods of inquiry include card-sorts. While these methods of inquiry are more often based in usability-studies, we can employ them, too, in order to enhance our writing and our student's writing. Between Lessner and Craig's "rhetorical asking" and Battleson, Booth, and Weintrop "asking and sorting," we can start to see that inquiry methods are about "finding things out." And, there are other ways as well.

For instance, Edward Corbett says that our first task with our writing is to "dispose our audience to be receptive," and perhaps there are some things to glean from Rogerian Argument

to help us do this. Once we align our goals with our audience, we are to "set forth the pertinent facts, then argue our case, and finally recapitulate and reinforce the main points" (163). While Rogerian-style argumentation has its naysayers, there are certainly some reasons to re-consider some of its value, and if it helps us to better connect with audiences, then its merits are certainly worth another look. Doug Brent, University of Calgary offers us this thought on Rogerian:

> "Rogerian rhetoric may have retained its appeal in composition studies not so much because it helps students win arguments as because it may help them grow into more tolerant, more inclusive, and more dialogic human beings."

Rogerian Argument is a means to help students begin to take on perspectives other than their own. What does my audience need? What are they receptive to? What kinds of things will have them turn away? How can I help them to see my point? What viewpoints does my audience have that I should consider? What is the reason that line of thinking is so strong? Thinking about inquiry practices as ways to understand ideas that are in opposition to one's own not only makes for better scholarship, but a more understanding society. I will address, in depth, the need for a more understanding society in Chapter 6.

CHOOSING WALLACE

It is becoming increasingly clear to me that we, as teachers in higher ed, have a unique opportunity to help students grow into more tolerant, more inclusive, more dialogic human beings. Choosing Wallace for this study was no accident. Wallace helps me in my classroom to help students with empathy as well to latch on to way to write in far-reaching detail. They learn to use Wallace-like inquiry practices.

The occasion for my work is to bring to the infamous parlor a discussion about "the whens of inquiry." It is my belief that inquiry happens throughout all the stages of writing—

during the entire writing process. And, I have some "proof" to bring to bear on this conversation as well. To help substantiate my claims, I bring forth the inquiry work of David Foster Wallace.

In fall 2008, I read "Ticket to the Fair;" I thought Wallace extremely condescending. But, at the same time, I also found him a fun read. I had trouble negotiating between the two. Do I tire of his details or embrace them? Do I struggle with his sarcasm or welcome it? DFW made me mad. He had become an "Eastcoasterner" and he was dissin' his homeland, the Midwest. He invoked my emotions. I had a heighten awareness. I *wanted* to write about issues of class and sexism that are so persistent in his essay, but the more I read him, the more I began to *LIKE* him. And, the less I wanted to pick his work apart. So, once I set my irritation aside, I began to see that the beauty of DFW's work comes *in* his fine details. And, it's in those details that we readers really *learn.* This discovery made me ask: What does it take to produce a piece of creative nonfiction like "Ticket to the Fair" or "Consider the Lobster?"

DFW crosses all sorts of boundaries in his essays. In them, we can see DFW as journalist, sure, but his attention to detail provides us evidence of the inquiry he did in order to write his nonfiction. We see evidence of inquiry by immersion, by observation; we see empirical research, archival research, and interviewing, all to report on state fairs, 9-11, and lobsters. David Foster Wallace was a researcher. Capital R. DFW's work is journalistic; it entertains; it's scholarly; it's rhetorical. It starts small with an event but broadens out into larger social issues. It reaches its audience. It asks them to reconsider their own beliefs. It is a call to action. Wallace's essays are an excellent example what creative nonfiction can do when it "rear ends" rhetoric.

The way DFW presented his findings—his mode of delivery—made him a *very* public intellectual. He brought logos, pathos, and ethos to bear on lobsters and the Midwest (as well as a host of other sensitive and provocative topics). He published his observations in very public

places like *Gourmet* and *Harpers* and *Rolling Stone.* His work reached an audience beyond the halls of academe just as Steven Mallioux asks of us rhetoricians. Public intellectuals are rhetoricians. They are rhetoricians who reach out to the public. They, I believe, are the ones who do the most good. Mallioux says that rhetoricians have an "obligation" (134) to be "translator of disciplinary knowledges and specialized perspectives to non-academics" (135). We are supposed to offer "narratives of change" (135), and using and producing creative nonfiction can help rhetoricians do just that. Mallioux *urges* us to be public intellectuals. I believe David Foster Wallace can help us with this as well.

THE INQUIRY PRACTICES IN WALLACE'S WORK

Wallace's body of work is immense (even daunting). Most pieces are intricate. Meticulous. Exhaustive. Accurate. He wrote at length and defended his outpourings with his molars bared (Pietsch 11). My research only looks at a couple of Wallace's nonfiction pieces, but I look at these nonfiction pieces across ten drafts. I work specifically with "Consider the Lobster" and "The View from Mrs. Thompson's" because those are the two essays I had access to. I believe that looking across the drafts ("between the drafts," if you will), we can ease some of the field-wide concerns about how to best teach writing. The occasion for my work is the need for our student to become members of "the writing public." The occasion for my work is to address these needs (and to earn my PhD). To do this, next we will look at my methods for "uncovering" the inquiry practices in these two Wallace works of nonfiction. Before we begin, though, it may be helpful to have a synopsis of the two essays.

WALLACE'S WORK: INTRO TO "THE VIEW FROM MRS. THOMPSON'S"

In "The View From Mrs. Thompson's" (TVFMT), David Foster Wallace takes us to Bloomington, Illinois the day of 9-11 and the two days thereafter. This essay appeared in Rolling

Stone Magazine a mere 6 weeks after the attacks. Wallace's investigative eye takes a look at "Bloomingtonians" and his simple almost recession-proof Midwest town. He lets us get to know some of his neighbors. He takes us through town, looking at the 1000s of flags on display following the attack. He doesn't have a flag and he takes us on his quest to find one. Wallace, in the end, questions those responsible for the attacks and says that the people who did that were not like his neighbors and his townsfolk. He uses Bloomington as a character in his essay and shows us that, though some qualities are not positive, it is a good place with good people.

WALLACE'S WORK: INTRO TO "CONSIDER THE LOBSTER"

"Consider the Lobster" (CTL) is a very popular Wallace essay. On Google today there are well over 1 million hits for this essay alone. In it, Wallace is assigned by Gourmet Magazine to cover the Maine Lobster Fest in 2003. Not only does he cover (most thoroughly) this event, but he opens up the essay to discuss the lobster's "preference" for pain and our own eating habits. Wallace was sure that the exploration on pain and the coverage of our meat-eating ways would not make it through the editorial phase at Gourmet, and yet, they let it stand with very few marks for deletion. In CTL, Wallace makes us think. He asks us questions. He covers every single topic on the lobster that can be imagined. And he does it as impartially as a self-proclaimed meat-eater can.

Chapter 3: Consider the Methods

THE INQUIRY DIAGRAM

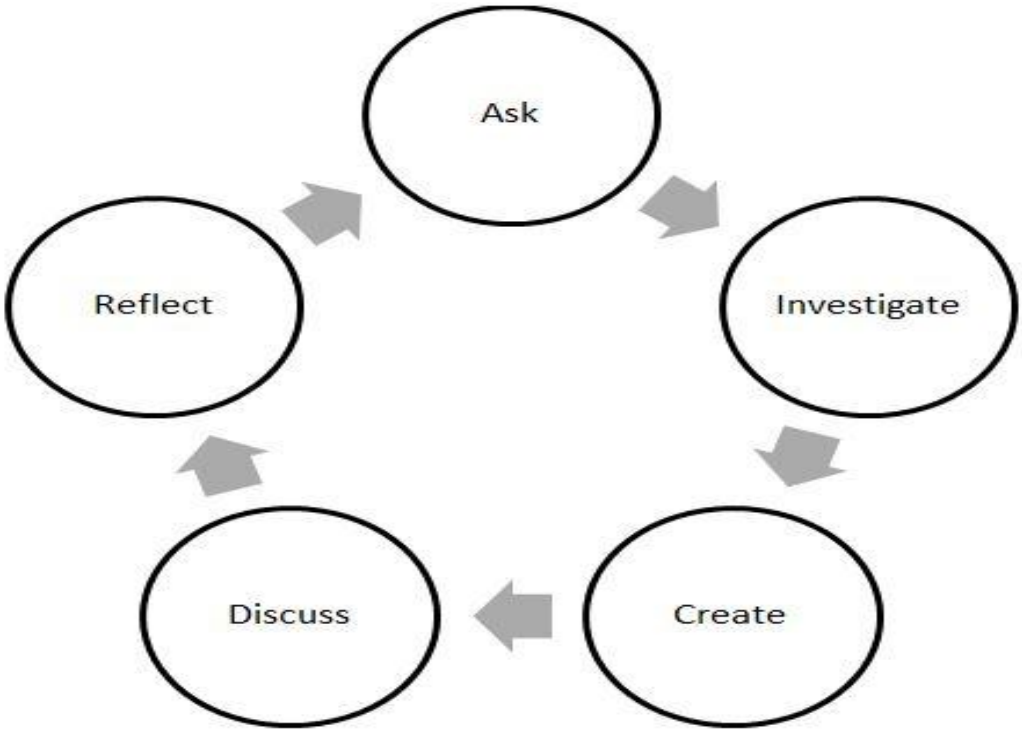

Figure 1: Bertram "Chip" Bruce's "Inquiry Cycle"

I use inquiry practices *as* I write. I ask, investigate, create, discuss, and reflect. These terms are the active terms in Chip Bruce's "Inquiry Chart[17] (shown below in Figure 1)," but the flowchart Bruce gives us doesn't really dictate which phase we do when. That is, it "looks like" it "flows" neatly and from one step to the next, but truth is, I may investigate then reflect then ask then reflect again. My work does jump around. For instance, I begin this section with "Reflect."

[17] http://chipbruce.wordpress.com/resources/inquiry-based-learning/the-inquiry-cycle/

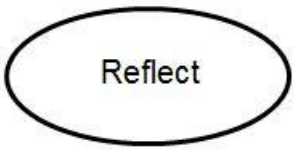

Figure 2: Reflect

While Bruce's inquiry diagram helps us get our heads around the flow of the work and the major steps, it doesn't show the reflexive actions we must take in between the asking, the investigating, the creating, the discussing, and the reflecting. I do these things in a haphazard manner. I jump back and forth and repeat, and when I think I'm done with a piece of writing, the inquiry doesn't stop there. My finished product asks my audience to practice inquiry as well. I might ask the audience to agree with me. Or, I might ask they sign a petition. Or, I might ask them to attend an event. While Janice Lauer's *Invention in Rhetoric and Composition* (2004) gives us a great deal of insight on inquiry, all of it is located within the rhetorical canon of invention. My instinct was that inquiry occurred in other phases of writing as well, and I set out to be able to show that.

I was specifically drawn to the idea of talking about inquiry practices because I believe that by understanding them—by being able to *see* them—I can help my students see them as well. Maybe I can help your students. That's my goal. All that said, today, I'd like to talk about the "whens" of inquiry.

INQUIRY IS A MESSY THING

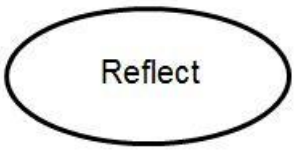

Figure 3: Reflect

Today's work session has been all about inquiry into arrangement. I'm trying to figure out what to say when. In this, I'm asking questions (reflecting), and this a part of my inquiry. This chapter is about my methods—what I did and why I did it and when I did it. This chapter is about the steps I took and the thoughts I had. And, it's not "organized" in a formal sense. It's organized chronologically. It's what-happened-when. It might be maddening to read, but the workflow that resulted from my question (what did Wallace do to be so thorough and so detailed and how can

knowing this help my students?) is presented here as it happened. I will work in subsequent chapters to organize my findings in other ways—ways that help my readers and other researchers follow along. But, for now, I'll tell the story of my own inquiry, as it happened, and as informally as I can.

I say some may find this chapter maddening because it seems, on the surface, that I used a "fly-by-the-seat-of-my-pants approach. It is organic. It is, as Bertram "Chip" Bruce calls it "building an airplane in the air." Bruce's work helps me situate my chapter chronologically. I worked on sections as I could and as time and technology allowed. Therefore, some of this section may seem to be unorganized. Rest assured, it is organized. Organized by date. This kind of "bottom up" approach allowed me to be somewhat freer of bias. I waited for the data to present itself, then I began to make decisions on what to do next. There was not a protocol in place. I "winged it." My audience should know that I do not recommend this particular procedure, as it seems to me to be much more lucrative and even acceptable to have a step-by-step process in place to at least try and follow. But, this is what I did. Let me explain…

In order to better follow my chronology, I bring forth the "inquiry chart" from B. Bruce's website[18]. I will use the five steps on this chart throughout this chapter, showing—at a glance—the kind of inquiry practice I was experiencing as I produced my data.

METHODOLOGY

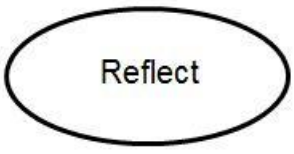

Figure 4: Reflect

I am a curious soul—always questioning. My Dad used to say I came out asking why and hadn't shut up since. I didn't come to higher ed with a predetermined research trajectory either. Instead, I

[18] http://chipbruce.wordpress.com/resources/inquiry-based-learning/the-inquiry-cycle/

just brought my curiosity. What I developed in grad school was an ability to inquire and learn both "why" and "how." I brought this approach to my dissertation as well.

In August 2009, I needed a project. I was assigned to read Wallace. Though I hated him at first, I read on and discovered that I was interested in "David Foster Wallace, the Researcher." I thought, this man has written—in excruciating detail—and in volumes. I pondered that, although he was gone, couldn't he still teach us about writing? This made me want to know how he did it—how he reached so many people; how he got so much info onto the page. This was my "in."

SORTING THROUGH THE FINDINGS

In order to see these “moves” or instances or these “whens of inquiry,” I had a lot of hand-work to do in this project. I had 6 versions of TVFMT. I had 4 versions of CTL. Most were pdfs. But, one was HTML Two were in a book I bought. Two were mp3 files in my iTunes. At least one was uploaded illegally online.

It took some time to be able to just look at these documents in these ways. Like Months. It was tedious. Wallace’s work isn’t digital. Not a Word document digital file. Wallace, instead, left behind a paper trail—process documents and published documents. And, my methodology allows for the digitalization of these kinds of print materials. We can take any print documents, scan them, save them as pdf, do an OCR read and that text becomes searchable. Save that text as a txt file and drop it into JUXTA, and we can compare that version to another subsequent version. I believe all of the print-to-digital (searchable) can be done at no cost. Open Office is free. It comes with a pdf maker. Adobe reader is free. I bought a printer/scanner last summer for $35. That’s damn close to free. I wonder if this methodology might be valuable to archivists and historians? Oh. And if we can start with digital documents, like something in Google Docs,

we cut data collection time in half.

Whether or not this digitization process is useful—I don't' know. But, the process is usable. And Repeatable. It's there if someone wants to use it.

Figure 5: Investigate

First, I had to decide what DFW to study. Since I'm a nonfiction writer/nonfiction rhetorician, I naturally gravitated to his essays. Since "Consider the Lobster" enjoys a unique popularity, I picked it. This essay took an entire year to produce and was commissioned. That is, *Gourmet* went to Wallace and asked him to produce the piece. My second choice was to look at "The View from Mrs. Thompson's." There was a striking contrast to my first pick. This essay was produced by Wallace, then submitted to *Rolling Stone.* The whole process, from dates in question to publication was only five weeks. I thought the two essays offered excellent separation.

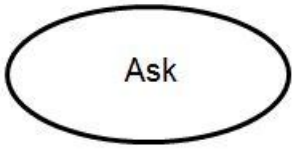

Figure 6: Ask

I had picked "This is Water" as my third piece. However, due to some unforeseen issues in acquiring the piece, I've had to since scrub that "leg" of this project. I wanted all of his drafts of "This is Water." They are only available two ways: going to Austin, or via email. I sent an email query in January 2012 to the Harry Ransom Center. They sent me the following response via email:

> Thank you for your interest in the Ransom Center's holdings. We have received your inquiry concerning our collections, and a staff member will respond as soon as possible. Due to the very high volume of inquiries and limited staff resources, a response may take up to a few weeks. Please do not contact another staff member with your query in the meantime.

This was ten months ago. I've still not heard from them. I guess they are busy.

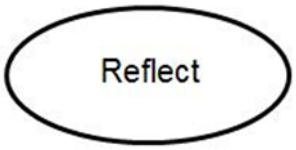

Figure 7: Reflect

Still, between the two essays, I have a total of ten versions—hopefully enough to make some educated observations about them—and about Wallace's inquiry practices. Also noteworthy is the fact that I don't decide things ahead of time like "I'm going to prove X." I wait and see what the data shows. Well, I do have to make some guesses in order to move forward, but I don't have an agenda (other than meeting my mid-August defense date).

I WANT TO BE A BETTER WRITER, A BETTER TEACHER OF WRITING

I want to be a better writer. I want to be a better teacher of writing. I want to find ways to better reach my audience. I want to be able to communicate more clearly. I want to entertain. I want to enlighten. I want to help make change. I want to be a public intellectual.

Figure 8: Investigate

How can I do these things? This project is about figuring out how Wallace worked and it's about improving how I work. It's my job to tell you (step-by-step and move-by-move) what I see in Wallace's essay versions, and what I did to see this. And, perhaps, improve the ways you also work. I want my work to be replicable. While no one need pick "Wallace's nonfiction" and repeat exactly what I did, I do intend that another research would conduct a similar study—on an author of their choice. There are, I am quite sure, other ways to learn about "the inquiry practices of nonfiction writers." I could have picked someone still with us and simply gone and asked them. I could have asked them to show me their drafts of a piece as it came to be. But, I wanted to study Wallace.

Figure 9: Investigate

MY METHODS

Back in December 2010, I went to the David Foster Wallace Archive at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas Austin. During this adventure, I read through one version of "Consider the Lobster" and three versions of "The View From Mrs. Thompson's." HRC does not permit photographing or photocopying. They accept orders. They fulfill them at a later date and make low-resolution .pdf files available online to complete the orders. They were charging 70 cents per page at the time.

In total, I have four versions of CTL and six versions of TVFMT. But, they didn't all come from the archive. Besides the versions at the Ransom Center, I found several versions online, and I purchased a couple in edited collections.

November 16, 2011

1. I took the essay "Consider the Lobster" (CTL) from *Gourmet* (available online) and saved it to pdf
2. Then I did a CONTROL>A (to select all)
3. And pasted it into a Word doc.
4. This process copied all apostrophes as little boxes. I saved it nonetheless.
5. Then, I did a search for {box} and replaced with apostrophe {'}
6. Next, I started making corrected line breaks and paragraph breaks *by hand* (I didn't see a search and replace option)
7. Once I got this formatting done, I saved and uploaded that version to JuXta.

JuXta is a comparison program, open source, where we can take .txt files and compare them. I gathered up my pdf copies. In the beginning, these versions of the two Wallace essays were in varied formats. I needed them to all be .txt files. There were pdfs and html pages. Some were photocopied and then scanned and saved as pdfs. One version was a scanned of a copy of a hand-written draft, also saved as a pdf.

If the information was on a web page, I would "control>P" on that web page and "print to pdf." Next, I'd open the pdf and do an "optical character read" (OCR)[19]. The OCR recognizes the characters in the image and renders them as text. It's not 100% accurate, but it is close—at least when working in recognizable fonts. Not so much when working with hand-written text.

I saved the file new (still as a .pdf), but this new version allowed me to copy and paste the actual text. I would copy it[20] then paste into Open Office Writer[21] (my trial version of MS Office had expired). Now I could save this as a .txt file—the only filetype that Juxta accepts.

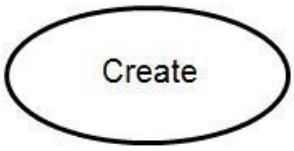

Figure 10: Create

All of the published versions had the signature Wallace footnotes in different places in the text due to the differing page sizes of each publication. So, in order to be able to compare the drafts, line-by-line, I had to cut and paste each of the 20+ footnotes in CTL to the end of the essay. This was terribly time-consuming.

I also made line break at every page header from *CTL*, the book. I made a line break before every footnote. I made a line break at the end of known paragraphs. I thought I would

---

[19] In Adobe, the steps are DOCUMENT > Recognize OCR > Find all

[20] (CONTROL > A; CONTROL > C)

[21] http://www.openoffice.org

search for and note any software misreads, any change in wording, and note my initial thoughts on the changes Wallace made. While doing this, I was also looking for changes in arrangement and any notation of sources used. The text did not OCR cleanly and, of course, was full of page breaks and footnotes as well as misreads. I had to physically rearrange the chunks on the page into the same order—if this was going to make any sense.

I was hoping to see what "moves" Wallace made—not only *in* an essay, but *across* versions of an essay. What changed from the first moments of invention to the moment of publication? What changed in between? There were even changes from one published version to the next! My main goal was to learn about Wallace's inquiry moves and to help others do similar inquiry about inquiry. To do this, it was imperative that I did further formatting on the CTL in the edited collection *CTL* (C3) file as the arrangement was governed by the page size in the edited collection and not the straightforward approach of HTML. Let me explain. In the C3 version, the footnotes occurred where there were page breaks in that print collection. In the *Gourmet* version (C2), the footnotes all occured at the end of the essay.

The other thing I had to adjust for was leading. Leading is an old printer's term for line spacing. Once the text flows (without sub heads and footnotes), and the leading matches, I thought I would see the versions flow in similar lines. Then, and only then, could I check for changes across the drafts themselves. These small changes in design between versions were tremendously time-consuming. These small changes also made it more likely that I would use paragraph number markers instead of line numbers (sadly, JuXta works only in line numbers, and those line numbers were still off).

Sometimes, in typical composition methodology/pedagogy, an "expert" writer will be analyzed so that students can "replicate" what that writer did. It's the art of *imitatio*[22]. The idea is that students should do the same what and how and when professional writers do. And, the field is ripe with discussion of this approach—both pro and con. My work isn't looking to have students replicate Wallace's style, but instead, I want to look for Wallace's *moves* or *moments of inquiry*. I think this will allow me to suggest ways to make the rest of us better writers. I see this as a useful place to start a conversation about what and how different types of inquiry happen over the course of a writing project. And, it's about being able to talk about those things so that we can start to see how a "story" or a "best-seller" or an "essay" or an "argument" happens—and how we can best make use of this newfound knowledge.

Also, this isn't about Wallace. It's about the process of writing and the inquiry that happens during that process. I hope to help myself become a better communicator and help others communicate better too. It's not too lofty a goal. Hopefully, it's clear. I'll try to keep to the step-by-step presentation so that these goals of mine become reality.

GATHERING DATA BY LISTENING TO STORIES

Figure 11: Investigate

I recently attempted to teach my computer DFW's voice. My computer was not interested. But, I had audio versions of both CTL and TVFMT (C4 and T6, respectively). I needed these .mp3 files to be .txt files. And, I wanted to use the built in dictation function in Windows to record DFW reading the two essays. If this worked, I could then save them as text documents. This presented its own set of complications as the computer wanted to hear two specific sentences for its training: "Peter dictates to his computer. He prefers it to typing, and

[22] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imitatio

particularly prefers it to pen and paper." In other words, the software is geared for a person to speak live and be recorded—the software is not geared to record a speech or lecture or a reading or an audio essay from a recording and convert that voice to text. It wanted to learn only mine. Yet, I needed to capture DFW's voice. So, I went back to considering: What to do with the damned audio?

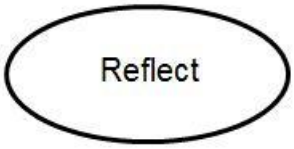

Figure 12: Reflect

Surprisingly, I don't like to read. I've *listened* to DFW read both CTL and TVFMT. I've probably listened to Wallace read these essays close to a hundred times now. I like listening. I like hearing him tell his story. And, it's ok to listen to stories. Listen to Thomas Kincaid. Or Malea Powell. Stories, like the stories of their forefathers, are the way that knowledge is *made*. Stories give new knowledge to an audience. I don't like to read. Don't be shocked; I've said it all through grad school. I just don't get it if I have to read it. It takes me three or four times. So, that's three or four times *the time*. I read much slower than all of my colleagues. But, hey, if I can listen, I get it. So, that's what I did with Wallace. I listened to him as much and as often as I could. Finally, I listed to the audio versions and compared them to the edited collection versions (C4 and T6). I listened and I noted any changes. And, my research moved faster because of this. I listened to DFW read CTL, from the Time Warner Audio Book *CTL* (C4), I also looked at the text version, from *CTL*, the edited collection (C3), at the same time. I highlighted any inquiry evident within. There were moments where Wallace looks things up, moments where he asked somebody a question, moments where he interjected his opinion. I took note of the change he made from one version to the next. I noted his explicit inquiry moves. In sum, I have a total of four versions of CTL, and I found that changes occur version to version.

CHANGES ACROSS DRAFTS IN "CONSIDER THE LOBSTER"

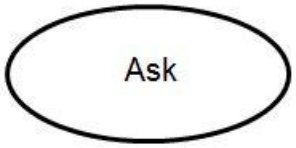

Figure 13: Ask

I was working on the edited collection version of CTL (C3) txt file, moving all the footnotes to the end of the text so it would be organized like the *Gourmet* version (C2). That's when I noticed that Wallace changed the attendance numbers from 80,000 to 100,000 between the two versions (Figure removed. See footnote 6). This change indicated to me that Wallace continued his inquiry even after publication in 2004. The Gourmet version stated 80,000 in attendance, but when published again in 2006, C3 stated there were 100,000 paid attendants at the 2003 Maine Lobster Fest—the one he'd attended. Did it just occur to him to look that up and change it before going back to the press? Did he re-read the essay and say "oh! I can fix that; I have updated stats!"

In the screen shot (from the JuXta program)[23], we can see that Wallace adds the specificity of *Gourmet* to the 2006 version. That information was a given in the 2004—the version that appeared in *Gourmet.* So, readers knew without the specific magazine name being present on the page. We can also see that Wallace changed 80,000 to 100,000. Then, he listed *Food & Wine* magazine in the 2006 version, but says "a certain other epicurean magazine" in 2004. While two of these changes are clearly governed by *where* he was published, the change in attendance numbers is not. That seemed to me to show additional inquiry.

With these two versions readied for comparison in JuXta, I set out to ready the type-written-hand-edited version of CTL (C1) that I'd procured from the archives in Texas. The type-written-hand-edited version promised more hand-work for me, because Wallace had written notes on the manuscript. The OCR software made many misreads.

[23] (original file with images available at: http://bit.ly/SWOCzp)

The hand-written changes in the above version[24] presented their own issues. One, the OCR didn't know what to do. It understands strike out, but the "delete" mark added in other characters that weren't accurate. Sometimes Wallace had to fight the editors to keep something he'd written. In the figure below (Figure removed. See footnote 6), Wallace marks "Please Stet" after someone marks to delete the passage. And, without that particular passage (in footnote 14), some of the deeper meaning of this essay would be lost.

What kind of inquiry is present[25]? Wallace performed some kind of inquiry in order to *find* the video he references, *Meet Your Meat*. Someone marked it for deletion. Someone else wrote "Please Stet." The author, it seems, is arguing with an editor to keep his prose intact—and to keep his inquiry on the page for his readers.

A NOTE ON FOOTNOTES: WALLACE'S AND MINE

In doing my preliminary pass, I had to find each footnote and move them to the end of each draft for JuXta to compare them side-by-side. While the footnotes were published at the bottom of each page, each publication renders differently, so the only way to do the line-by-line comparison was for me to find and then move each footnote to an end section (the same placement as in *Gourmet*). This gave a more consistent format to each of the versions and allowed for the comparison in JuXta.

MY INQUIRY > AN INQUIRY STORY

In trying to determine the actual attendance numbers at the 2003 Maine Lobster Fest, I tried to talk to the Maine Lobster Fest. I found their contact information online: UO Maine Lobster

---

[24] (original file with images available at: http://bit.ly/SWOCzp)

[25] (original file with images available at: http://bit.ly/SWOCzp). There will be no more mention of the URL. Please visit the URL for the complete dissertation project, with images included. And, see Footnote #6 for the complete rationale for this change.

Festival, P.O. Box 552, Rockland, Maine 04841; (207) 596-0376. I wanted to know how many were in attendance in 2003—to verify Wallace's attendance numbers. I wanted the festival pamphlet from that year. Wallace mentioned the pamphlet in the essay—as a source. I called the Rockland Chamber of Commerce. I wrote to the mainlobsterfest.com. I spoke with the Chairman of the Board. I got exactly nowhere.

The nice lady at the Chamber to whom I spoke said if I could "go online and access an email that might be helpful" --- To which I asked, "What do you mean by that?" She said well, go to mainlobsterfestival.com and there should be a contact phone number—I had just used that very number to call her.

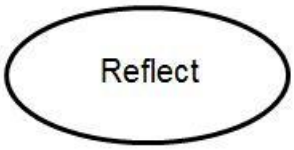

Figure 14: Reflect

I went back to my documents. With all versions of "Consider the Lobster" converted from their original files into text, I could simply copy and paste them into the JuXta program. Now I could check the versions side-by-side for changes across the drafts. The completed chart of changes across the drafts of CTL is available in the appendix section, below.

FORTY-FOUR CHANGES NOTED IN "CONSIDER THE LOBSTER"

Forty-four times in the four versions of "Consider the Lobster," David Foster Wallace changed something *between* his drafts. Sometimes it was as simple as adding or removing a dash. Sometimes, it was a word-level change like "copyrighted" to "official." But, sometimes it was a change in. Then, in the image below, we move to large chunks of text marked for deletion between C1 and C2. C2 is the version published in *Gourmet.*

Wallace, or an editor, wanted these large chunks removed, and they were. Interestingly, they reappeared in C3, Wallace's own edited collection, which leads one to speculate that the changes were initiated by the editor. But the smaller changes may be changes due to inquiry. He

changes tailmeat to tail meat. He changes Anyone to Any one. He changed Nyquil-cup-sized to NyQuil-cup-size. But, do *any* of these changes indicate inquiry?

The snippet above shows another change regarding the size a lobster can reach. According to The Lobster Institute,[26] an average size eating lobster is 5-7 years old and weighs 1-2 lbs. The world record is 44 lbs. 6 oz. Wallace did not list the source of his data. His footnote #7 refers to the number of pounds caught annually (80,000), and not the weight of a lobster. With what source did he inquire? Were there conflicting reports? Why the change in numbers? Surely this can't be a change based on anything other than *inquiry*.

Figure 15: Investigate

Wallace wastes no time upon arrival in Maine to begin this phase of inquiry. He is in a cab, late at night, querying the other passenger as well as the cab driver. Here, he draws on their local knowledge regarding the Fest. He establishes their ethos (the wealthy political consultant lives in the bay half the year and the cabbie is in his 70s and wearing a US flag lapel pin). These guys become sources for material for the essay. This is Wallace *doing* inquiry.

We can see Wallace consult TM Prudden's *About Lobs*ter for some of his information. So, some of his inquiry occurred before we had access to the draft. Perhaps there was a hand-written version. Perhaps he looked it up as he typed. This is something we will never know, but we can, literally, see the inquiry he did in order to produce the sentence on the page. Wallace looked something up.

Figure 16: Investigate

Something certainly noteworthy is a final set of change in "Consider the Lobster." Near the end of the essay, in the penultimate paragraph, Wallace changes things to suit an editor. That is, he wrote the paragraph one way, but it appeared

[26] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_lobster

in Gourmet in changed form, but then was re-published in the edited collection the way Wallace had originally written it. I think it safe to say this was an area he did NOT wish his words to disappear and he made damn sure he said what he wanted to in his own collection of essays. Here, then are the snippets from C1, C2, and C3:

> **C1 (hand-edited typed version from the HRC)**
> Given this article's venue and my own lack of culinary sophistication, I'm curious about whether the reader can identify with any of these reactions and acknowledgments and discomforts. For those Gourmet readers who enjoy well-prepared and -presented meals involving beef, lamb, pork, lobster, etc.: How much do you think about the (possible) moral status and (possible) physical sufferings of the animals involved? so, what conclusions do you reach that permit you not just to eat but to savor and enjoy flesh-based viands (since of course refined enjoyment, rather than just ingestion, is the whole point of gastronomy)?
>
> **C2 (the *Gourmet Magazine* published version)**
> Given this article's venue and my own lack of culinary sophistication, I'm curious about whether the reader can identify with any of these reactions and acknowledgments and discomforts. I am also concerned not to come off as shrill or preachy when what I really am is confused. Given the (possible) moral status and (very possible) physical suffering of the animals involved, what ethical convictions do gourmets evolve that allow them not just to eat but to savor and enjoy flesh-based viands (since of course refined enjoyment, rather than just ingestion, is the whole point of gastronomy)?
>
> **C3 (from the edited collection *Consider the Lobster and Other Essays*)**
> Given this article's venue and my own lack of culinary sophistication, I'm curious about whether the reader can identify with any am is more like confused. For those Gourmet readers who enjoy well-prepared and -presented meals involving beef, veal, lamb, pork, chicken, lobster, etc.: Do you think much about the (possible) moral status and (probable) suffering of the animals involved? If you do, what ethical convictions have you worked out that permit you not just to eat but to savor and enjoy flesh-based viands (since of course refined enjoyment, rather than mere ingestion, is the whole point of gastronomy)?

In the middle example, Wallace's whole message changes. In his own versions (C1 and C3), Wallace asks the audience a question—he asks them to inquire of themselves. He asks them to *inquire: "*Do you think much about…" Gourmet magazine didn't allow this question. They, quite literally, removed the inquiry Wallace asked of his audience. The sections above, I copied

and pasted from the process documents I made (after the OCR read and before the JUXTA .txt file). They are word-for-word Wallace.

ANALYZING "THE VIEW FROM MRS. THOMPSON'S"

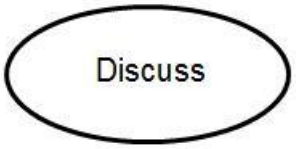

Figure 17: Discuss

Working with TVFMT had its own issues. The first version was hand-written (Figure removed. See footnote 6) and 100% illegible in spots. In the following figure (Figure removed. See footnote 6), we can see the original hand-written TVFMT. The OCR software highlights where the software was able to transcribe. The grey highlights was all it could read. That left a lot of holes.

Figure 18: Investigate

It's January 16, 2012. I have procured a second monitor now. I put the Hand-written version (T1) on the bigger monitor, and I type into the smaller monitor. I'm transcribing into an Open Office document on my laptop. Reading Wallace is tough. And, my guess is that not many people have read him this way. His handwriting is atrocious! It's rare if "and" has an "n" in it. Other words are missing letters too. Thoughts and asides run down the margins. I have to stop typing and zoom in on the monitor to try and make out words. Is that the word "edges?" I don't know.

What we have here is an artist's "sketch" and some of the thoughts and feelings he's sketching do not register for me. Astonishingly, some of these thoughts do not even appear in later drafts. There are whole chunks of text on racism that weren't in the published works. Racism is a theme that probably could have carried really nicely along with the theme of "The Horror" of 9-11. The connections seem natural. Nevertheless, that content isn't in the published

versions. Were editors responsible? Did Wallace decide it better to go to press without the explicit conversation about Bloomington? We have no way of knowing from what is on the page.

CONVERTING VOICE-TO-TEXT

Figure 19: Investigate

Meanwhile, I was still trying to use an audio-to-text converter so I didn't have to transcribe the audio version of the two essays. For a while, I even considered using someone else's phone and calling my GoogleVoice number and leaving a series of voicemails of Wallace reading his essays. Google transcribes voice mails to text, but they do a horrendous job.

To find an audio-to-text transcriber, I started with a Google search that led me to *The Chronicle* and an article[27] about this very topic. I needed to transcribe two different audio essays. I already knew there were substantial differences between the audio CTL and the *Gourmet* CTL. I suspected there were between the published versions of TVFMT as well.

Sure, I could teach my Windows pc my own voice and then do transcription. That doesn't work—the essays are in Wallace's voice. Sure, I could buy Dragon Dictation software, but I don't have any money. One of the comments in the *Chronicle* article referenced Soundbooth. I did another search. I found a guy who reviewed this software[28] who said that quality recordings seemed to do well. Time Warner didn't put out crap, so I took one of the six separate (.mp3) tracks from TVFMT and imported it into SOUNDBOOTH[29]. I chose English>US for the

27 http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/5-easy-speech-to-text-solutions/23016
28 http://www.mightybytes.com/blog/entry/step-by-step_adobe_soundbooth_cs4_metadata_transcription/
29 To find the transcriber in this version it's: EDIT > SPEECH TRANSCRIPTION > TRANSCRIBE.

language and “HI” quality (this takes longer). The 10-12 minute clip took 15 minutes to transcribe. I anxiously awaited the results.

FIRST DRAFT: A HAND-WRITTEN MESS

Figure 20: Investigate

With the hand-written pdf of TVFMT on the 40” and with the Adobe view set to 200%, I could get “most” words. I had to stop and zoom to 600 and 800% sometimes to make things out, though. Sometimes the context helped me. Sometimes it didn't. I began taking my own notes within the document as I transcribed. If I was not 100% sure of a word, I circled it in red on the pdf. It took me three hours to type up four pages. 1.25 pages per hour. Figure 5 (Figure removed. See footnote 6), below, demonstrates why this process was so tedious.

VOICE-TO-TEXT CONVERSION, CONT.

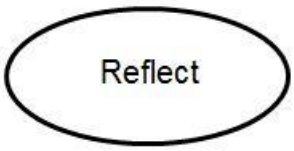

Figure 21: Reflect

The software for audio-to-text that we have available is most limited. I’m sure I could have bought some piece of text-to-audio editing equipment, but I didn’t have the funds. I did think of at least a half-dozen workarounds before I found SoundBooth. I simply wanted Windows to listen to the essays and transcribe them for me, but it would not work with a recording. SoundBooth didn’t prove any more helpful than the other of the attempts. It miss-heard close to a third of the two Wallace essays. They read like “word salad” – a gibberish. In the end, I looked at the text from the edited collection on the computer and listened to Wallace myself, marking any changes. There were a few word-level ones, but nothing that helped my research. An example of the word-level type change was changing “ie” to “such as” – which makes sense considering the delivery was, after all, audio.

DEVELOPING A CATEGORY SYSTEM

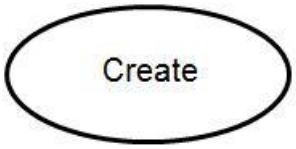

Figure 22: Create

My next task was to begin developing a category system. As a result of pass one, I started to think about ruling out the changes that weren't relevant to my work. Having some kind of categorization gives a framework for understanding indicators of inquiry. If done right, this tool could get used in another study. And now, I feel I've made something of value by developing my heuristic, and I am imagining interesting things will emerge between pass 1 and pass 2. I should start to see patterns and interesting quirks.

THE SECOND PASS OFFERS ADDITIONAL CLARTIY (AND MORE QUESTIONS)

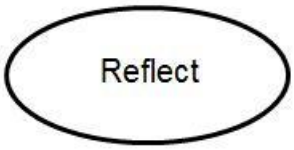

Figure 23: Reflect

I made two passes through the essay versions looking for my "data." These two passes have names. Both of them are a type of discourse analysis (DA)[30] (quick clarification: DA, not CDA). The first pass, quite general in nature, is often referred to as the "emergent coding pass." This is where I looked for things that could be groups into keywords, terms, categories—the *types* of inquiry moves in a given piece of writing. My list changed as I read and re-read and listened and learned. My lists grew and shrank. I added terms and I took terms away. Sometimes I added them back again. My second pass would allow me to reconcile all the initial coding categories with a set of cross-studies. The second pass is known as the axial coding pass. In it, I looked "across" the versions. The kinds of moves I made are generally related to the tradition of grounded theory[31], though I

[30] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discourse_analysis

[31] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grounded_theory

would not say I did grounded theory. I would say I draw from grounded theory in order to justify my chosen inquiry method.

What I did is quite similar to Textual Criticism. In TC, scholars search across drafts to find changes—much like my work here. My work varies from this, though, as I don't attempt to recreate a text as close as possible to the original. I actually wish to look at the change that occurs. So, there, the similarities end for me except that where I use "draft" or "version," a textual scholar will likely refer to that document as a "witness."

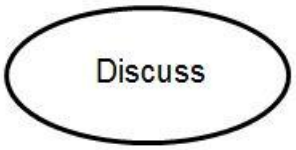

Figure 24: Discuss

So, I draw from these theories here as I look for patterns. The basic idea was to read and re-read the two essays by David Foster Wallace, looking for categories of inquiry and interrelationships amongst those categories. To do this, I began to look for written signs of inquiry. I looked for places where I could see (literally, on the page) that Wallace had asked someone a question. Or, that he had observed (usually in great detail) some phenomenon. Asking and observation, I deemed as two kinds of inquiry, so it was only natural that I looked for signs of those "moves" in his essays. So when Wallace says "Overheard in Burwell Oil," I mark "observation." When he says "It's all right here in the encyclopedia," I mark "consulted secondary source." Part of my analytic process was to identify both general categories and specific moments of inquiry—the *instances* of inquiry. I "coded everything for everything."[32]

[32] http://www.groundedtheoryonline.com/what-is-grounded-theory

KEYWORD SEARCH (AND RE-SEARCH)

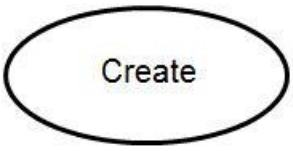

Figure 25: Create

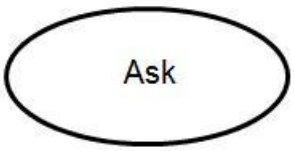

Figure 26: Ask

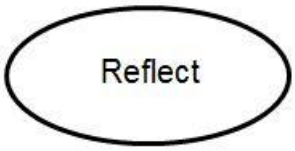

Figure 27: Reflect

I began the next phase of my research by choosing the words to represent the data. My data comes from two essays with ten versions total. Thinking I will see X. If I see Y, though, I will adjust my keywords to reflect that move as well. That's how I work.

My keywords changed umpteen times in this process; they have been a "living" thing. I attempted to find keywords indicative of the inquiry moves Wallace made as he produced his essays. I continued to wrestle with which keywords I needed to use to describe "the inquiry that produced the change" in any given version of these two essays.

As I proceeded with this project in Winter 2011-12, I loosely documented everything in what I call “The Journal(s) of Process: Procedures.” There are three of them[33]. The three

[33] Link to Procedures I
Link to Procedures 2
Link to Procedures 3

procedural documents that I linked below are not even rough drafts; they are writings-ramblings-rantings-discussions-steps-procedures-shortcomings and successes. My methods section here is written based on my journals of process.

FINDING INDICATORS OF CHANGE IN A MOUNTAIN OF CHANGES

Some changes may merely be arrangement (but couldn't arrangement changes be due to inquiry?). I decided to try and determine these things as I worked through the data. The amount of difference between the two versions above is incredible. As I work with the other drafts of this essay, things should become a lot clearer (literally, less grey). I took a break from the hand-written to prepare the other five versions for JuXta.

RECOGNIZING INDICATORS OF CHANGE

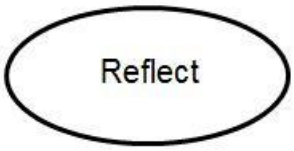

Figure 28: Reflect

There are direct and indirect indicators of change. A direct indicator is when Wallace relays the information on the page itself. For instance he says "No source I could find..." in "Consider the Lobster." That's Wallace *telling us* he inquired. On the other hand, indirect indicators are changes in these documents where I have to infer whether or not inquiry happened. These are a subset are the indicators. For instance, there are some changes in fact.

This change, a change in fact, occurs early in CTL. This particular change occurs between C1 and C2 (C2 is the version published in *Gourmet*). Here, we see Wallace make a change from 20,000 lobsters to 25,000 pounds of lobster. Why did he change from the number of lobsters cooked to the number of pounds of lobster cooked? Which terminology did his records use? Was the change in order to maximize the impact? Did he change the unit to see the impact? Surely, wherever a change occurs to a fact, there must have been an inquiry moment. Perhaps after typing up the C1 draft he looked back over his field notes. We do not know what caused the

change, but 25,000 pounds of lobster was the phrase also used in the edited collection (C3) and in the audio book version (C4).

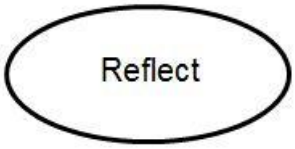

Figure 29: Reflect

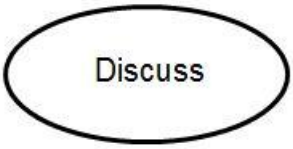

Figure 30: Discuss

I imagine Wallace wanted complete accuracy. I imagine this based on studying his meticulous work—he made painstaking attempts to present every single lobster fact known to man. Was he trying to be more accurate? Or be more impressive? What kinds of change indicated the writer has used a kind of inquiry? I should note that these changes themselves are not the focus here. The changes are actually indicators of possible inquiry. These indicators are present from the very beginning to the last draft. It's safe to assume that varied forms of inquiry happened to begin with. In order to begin writing, Wallace must have inquired. What we see in subsequent versions is DFW's follow up inquiry—the things he missed the first go-round.

THE HAND-WRITTEN MESS, CONT.

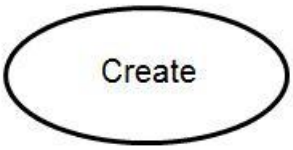

Figure 31: Create

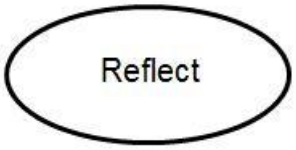

Figure 32: Reflect

I decided I had to print out the handwritten but transcribed version of TVFMT. The only way I could think of to get the essay into the same order as the published version was to print it, cut it apart by paragraph, and tape it back together. This is because when JuXta did my comparison, it didn't let me really "see" anything because the order of the hand-written was so very different than the order of the other versions. Each step of this was so tedious. And boring. This portion of my work bored me out of my mind. All I could do was to hope that it would all mean something when I got the versions compared.

NAMING & CATEGORIZING THOSE MOVES

Once I had all 10 versions in usable form (editable text), I had to start thinking of ways to gather and organize the moments of inquiry I was now seeing. In the beginning, this was an exercise in brainstorming, looking for keywords I could use to describe "the inquiry that produced the change." Next, I thought about meaningful ways to "group" these keywords. I also looked for hierarchy. Then, I started thinking about directionality as well. What I mean is: some changes narrow the scope of what is being said, some expand, and others are more lateral in nature.

Through these stages of the project, in more researcherly terms, I conducted a standard discourse analysis that used nominal coding. This, restated, means I put bits of text into categories with labels. The keywords are my labels. I'm looking for and coding "instances" of each of Wallace's "inquiry moves." I read for my object of inquiry (the unit of analysis) by looking through all the versions of two Wallace essays. Once I have the coding complete, I'll be

able to compile the number of instances of each move and then make some educated guesses as to when-why-what for Wallace made them and eventually theorize as to what that means for other writers and teachers of writing.

FROM CATEGORIES TO KEYWORDS

In order to categorize the kinds of moves I saw, I needed to develop a set of key words that I could search for and tally and report on. Some of the keywords I originally used were: clarify, quantify, identify, qualify, justify, pacify, personify, typify, personalize, humanize, analyze, reflect, correct, affirm, authenticate, substantiate, corroborate, distinguish, separate, empathize, soften, and moderate. This original list did not clarify what I was seeing in the texts. I changed the list. Through the readings I've done in both Rhet/Comp and Creative Writing, I developed a list that spanned both fields, showing over 100 possible "moves" that denoted inquiry. The list in its entirety is in the Appendix section.

KEYWORD SORT: A SORT OF CARD SORT

In a move that made my family question my sanity, I used post it notes (granted, they were all over a large mirror and half a wall) to gather, display, and then categorize my chosen keywords. Doing this, I was able to *finally* begin to see how all of these words could make sense. This was my inquiry into how I would categorize my inquiry. Janice Lauer's says, "The scholastic method of inquiry let one take a set of topics and use them to sort out theoretical problems" (33). That's what I did here. I now fondly call this "the post-it note method." Card sorts are popular in usability studies but might be quite useful in the composition classroom as well when thinking about (sorting out) inquiry *as* we write. Eventually, I began to see Wallace using many of the same "moves" we typically relate to "invention" (as in, the canon). I began to see literary techniques used in fiction writing. I started a new keyword list. The following piece

is a short list essay comprised of my final keyword selection. I'll explain it in the text after it appears.

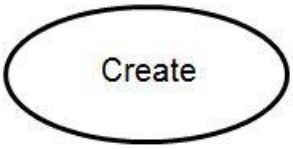

Figure 33: Create

WDDFWD?

QUESTION—Analysis, argument, arrangement, ask, assertion, assumptions, audience, bridging, cadence, cause, change, characterization, claim, clarification, compare, contrast, delivery, description, deletion, design, detail, dialog, empathy, ethos, evidence, exaggeration, examples, extended example, fact, generalization, hedge, history, humor, hypotheses, illustration, information, interview, inward reflection, juxtaposition, list, local knowledge, MLA style, public interest, memory, metaphor, mini-ethnography, mini-survey, musing, narration, negativity, observation, opinion, outward reflection, pathos, political-correctness, place, plot, problem, purpose, question, quote, reflection, research, resolution, revision, scene, secondary source, ways of seeing, senses, setting, situation, speculation, specificity, spelling, survey, suspense, symbolism, synecdoche, testimony, theme, tone, visuals, vivid description, the journalistic questions (who what when where why how), word choice.

ANSWER—What Did David Foster Wallace Do? Wallace either made these moves to *do* inquiry in order to produce the essay, or he used the move in his finished piece as a way to demonstrate the inquiry he'd done. Students can adapt and use this model.

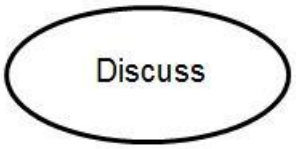

Figure 34: Discuss

I produced the list essay above using the keywords I finally decided upon for my project. These words, then, are my current indicators of inquiry. These words come from the *inquiry moves* Wallace made. In Chapter 3, we see how many of these were actually used and how frequently these moves occur. This is how I charted what David Foster Wallace *did*. And it bears saying: we do not have to do our inquiry to the extent that Wallace did. But, we *could* now do our inquiry to the extent that Wallace did. And, it could make a difference in our finished products. Also, it should be said, we absolutely do not need to sound like Wallace. I do not by any means advocate for that; we do not need emulate his style. But, we do need to learn from his inquiry practices, and we do need to think about how they can help our inquiry practices and our student's inquiry practices. Acts of inquiry and acts of writing/revising are parallel. That is, they happen, along the way, throughout the writing process—side by side. Both serve the writers' rhetorical purpose. That both inform the other. But, only one of the pair gets top billing in a writing course. These are implications we will discuss in Chapter 8.

As I said, this project helps us to *see* this thing called inquiry. Through it, we will begin to see what inquiry looks like (on a page; in a draft), and we'll be able to see *when* inquiry occurs. I firmly believe that, using this study as our springboard, we will be able to help our students to *do* more inquiry. My project gives us a way of naming inquiry moves so that we can really look for them and find them and expand on them—truly *see* them—and finally explain them to others. We will look at the data itself and what it shows in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: When Inquiry Happens

In this project, I advocate for an inquiry-based writing approach in university-level writing classes. The people I've studied with already do this, but some of the places I've taught do not. I believe this approach allows our students to engage with their subject matter in new, deeper ways. I have confidence that through an "inquiry-based" approach, we help them "locate the fundamental impulses to communicate important messages to others through writing" (Bazerman in Lauer xv). I feel that we should incorporate this style of teaching to help students become more engaged citizens, show more empathy, and become "members of the writing public" (Yancey). Using two of David Foster Wallace's nonfiction essays as my objects of inquiry, I lay out a well-framed argument for WHY and HOW and WHEN we should be having students do more inquiry. First, though, we need to discuss the whens of inquiry.

THE WHENS OF INQUIRY: INQUIRY TO WRITE

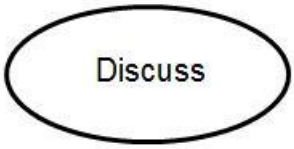

Figure 35: Discuss

We typically locate most of the work on inquiry in Rhet/Comp within the rhetorical canon of invention. Lauer's work on invention shows us this. But, inquiry is not located only in invention. Or, shouldn't be. I believe that inquiry happens during the other canons of rhetoric as well. A tangential way of looking at this might be: invention likely carries through an entire writing project. There needs to be invention in arrangement. There needs to be invention in delivery. It may already be there and we're just not capitalizing on it. I might be willing to say that inquiry is the way we invent.

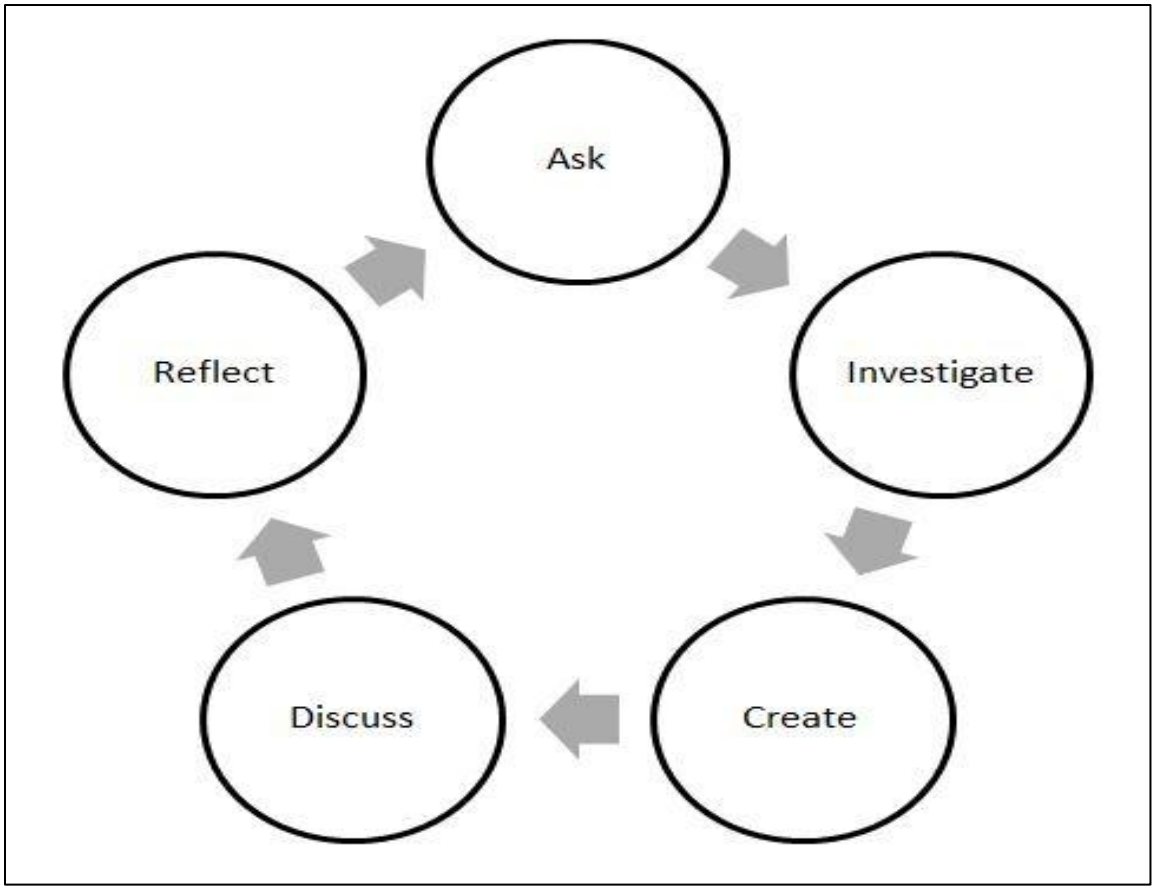

Figure 36: The Inquiry Chart

This, again, is Chip Bruce's Inquiry Chart. I use this in this project to show which step or phase I'm doing in my own work. But, the variations are many. A simple Google search reveals this[34]. Bruce shows this in a fairly linear fashion, but inquiry needn't be restricted in that way, as my own work in this project clearly shows. Charts vary. Some are flow charts; some are tables; some are just like Bruce's'; some are more complex; some are layered. Choosing to look at the images of inquiry flow charts has let me get a handle on the inquiry people have done about inquiry

[34] Inquiry flowcharts

In order to write, we must first *ask.* We (rhetoricians, but perhaps not so many compositionists, according to Sharon Crowley[35]) often begin our asking by invoking the rhetorical canon of "invention." We inquire through invention. We may ask questions—of ourselves and of others. We may conduct surveys. We may look things up. We may do interviews. We may observe. We do these things in order *to* write. Invention helps us *begin.* That's where we've situated it all these years: at the beginning. But, what if we look at inquiry as something more? Something that begins in invention but crosses through arrangement, and in some ways even determines delivery. Inquiry is something we do to write, while we write, while we revise, while we check our style and our tone, and while we deliver. Yet, most scholarship in Rhet/Comp focuses the inquiry during invention only. My data indicates that inquiry is (should be) ongoing throughout a writing project.

Our goals when we write vary. Most often, though, our #1 goal is to reach our audience. The writing we do is actually a means to an end in this regard. We seek to reach our audience. Sometimes we want to inform; sometimes we seek funding. Sometimes we seek a job interview. Sometimes we want to change people's minds regarding public policy. But, most of the time, we are looking to reach an audience. Audiences vary. The purpose for which we write varies. But, throughout it all, we must inquire.

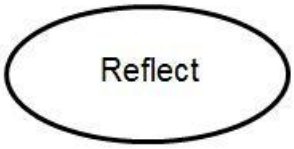

Figure 37: Reflect

The field literature seems to promote inquiry as a way *to* write. This, friends, is not enough. The prevailing view of "inquiry *to* write" leaves us less than able to reach our audiences in the best way. We

[35] Sharon Crowley argues that Rhetoric isn't really present in our 100,000,000 or so sections of FYW each year in this country. Crowley says: any practice entitled to be called "rhetoric" must intervene in some way in social and civic discursive networks. Crowley is advocating that we teach our students to advocate. http://enculturation.gmu.edu/5_1/crowley.html

need to continue our inquiry *as* we write. And, once in fixed form, we will, most likely, ask our audience to do inquiry as well. Janice Lauer says that inquiry happens when "current ways of thinking or current knowledge cannot accommodate changes or new data" (90). This means there is a "gap between a current set of beliefs or values and some new experience or idea that seems to violate or confound those beliefs" (90). This gap can be addressed with a sense of "curiosity, a sense of enigma, sometimes of wonder, a pressure to restore equilibrium. While some people suppress such tension, the inquirer, the learner, strives to resolve it by searching for new understanding, by going beyond the known" (90).

The process of inquiry
is the discovery of insight.
--Janice Lauer

I'm still gaining insight into this project. As I move forward to understand one thing, I begin to question something else. I take my curiosity, and I dig a little deeper. I inquire about things like: "*Who did this writer cite*?" Or, "*how does one define of 'the art of inquiry'*?" Or, "*George Carlin used Stasis Theory?; lemme Google that*!" Some of my intermittent queries fit my project, others don't, but I keep attending to the gaps and holes in the field's current set of beliefs and values, looking for how to better state my meaning.

Within the canon of invention, we use many rhetorical modes: exposition, argumentation, description, and narration. With these, also come compare and contrast, extended definition. There are also classification, exemplification, and cause and effect. Sometimes, we describe a process. Sometimes we personify. Sometimes we use characterization. We see these inquiry methods used by Wallace in TVFMT. He employed many of these "moves" and he employed them repeatedly. These "moves" became my keywords.

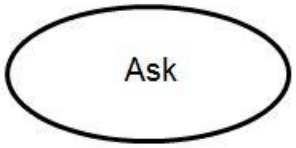

Figure 38: Ask

But, what do these moves "do?" Does the amount of inquiry we can *see* make a piece more likely to reach the audience? That's my big question here; that's the goal: reach the audience. Is it more believable? Acceptable? Reasonable? Do we believe? Will we act? It seems to me that inquiry and writing are both part of something bigger—the purpose for writing in the first place.

THE FIRST "WHEN": INQUIRY AS INVENTION

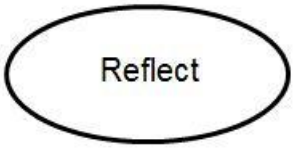

Figure 39: Reflect

Inquiry, in our field's literature, is most oft associated with the rhetorical canon of invention. However, based on my research, I can now see inquiry in *all* stages of writing. I can see it throughout the entire writing process. Inquiry is there. In each moment—in almost *every* moment. This moves away from our more conventional view inquiry *to* write. Later in this chapter, I will break down these "instances of inquiry" based on where, when they occurred, and be able to perhaps speak to why.

As a field, and even outside of our field, we talk a lot about invention. Rightly so; it's one of the canons of ancient rhetoric. These canons came from the Greeks, and those Greeks are probably the most renowned, reprinted, and oft-cited. The canons themselves are attributed to Aristotle, but many people before and since the Greeks have said many-a-smart thing about how to *begin*. John C. Bean in *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom* says, "Presenting students with [a] problem-driven model of the writing process … allows them to link the teaching of writing to their own interests … the modes of inquiry and discovery." It's rather strange because while Bean wants us to use "the modes of inquiry," he doesn't seem to explain what they are. Not in terms of

"inquiry" anyway. He does give "15 Tips for Encouraging Revision" which include "encourage[ing] students to pose questions or problems and explore them. Show how inquiry and writing are related" (33). Bean goes on to say that students "need to be *seized* by questions and to appreciate how the urge to write grows out of the writer's desire to say something new about a question or problem" (33. emphasis mine). Here, then, is Bean's connection to Bazerman's wish.

We can physically see Wallace's desire to say something new about lobsters and about 9-11 in the two pieces I've studied. And, in just a few paragraphs, I will show you the inquiry that is imbedded in those two Wallace essays. First, though, we should talk about inquiry as part of process.

COMBINED PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

Figure 40: Investigate

The online writing lab at Purdue, or OWL[36], offers the age-old "textbook formula:" State your thesis. Write an outline. Write the first draft. Revise and polish. This method, many of us realize, is a crock—even though two schools I've taught at used this method. But, the OWL also tells us that "prewriting" is one set of guidelines meant to help get a project underway—a set of guidelines on how to *begin.* Some sources say that prewriting can be brainstorming, clustering, free-writing, looping, and asking who, what, when, why, where, how—the six journalists' questions (and, right here, Composition meets Communication)[37]. Prewriting helps to generate ideas. In prewriting, we have embedded inquiry steps to help us really get going. Prewriting was/is part of the Process Movement, and while that Movement has

[36] http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/673/01/

[37] We have more in common than we think we do.

mostly come and gone, in hindsight, it seems that some of the steps suggested in Prewriting are something we should embrace today.

Figure 41: Investigate

Flinn and Shook's Process Model Bibliography is a flow chart that gives us additional steps to prewriting such as goal setting, reading, incubations, freewriting, talking, improvisation, data gathering, invention, the rhetorical modes, and teacher conferencing. All of these are or at least can be parts of the prewriting process. And, in order to do these things, we do inquiry: What should I read? To whom should I talk? What ideas do I already have? What do I need to look up? Where? Prewriting is a form of invention. Inquiry is the way we invent.

Figure 42: Investigate

Another inventional schema is Stasis Theory—a kind of heuristic, used mainly for forensic argument. But, Stasis Theory offers value beyond the court system. It gives us some additional means to inquire. Stasis theory guides the writer/researcher through given set of questions. Statis Theory asks for four things:

1) the facts (did something happen? How did it begin? What are its causes?)
2) the nature (what exactly is the problem? What kind of problem? What are it's parts?)
3) The quality (is it good or bad? How serious? Who is affected?)
4) Policy (should action be taken? Who should help? What should be done?)

Inquiry. Inquiry. Inquiry. Inquiry. Some sources say[38] that Stasis Theory is the "correct" order to compose an assignment. For the courts it might well be. My instinct is that Stasis offers us some additional ways to inquire. More ways to begin.

[38] http://rhetoric.byu.edu/canons/arrangement.htm

SEEING INQUIRY: INQUIRY ON THE PAGE

Before we go on, another thing that we should consider is that inquiry is rarely linear, sometimes not recursive, sometimes just downright messy. Below is a screen shot of my inquiry (Figure removed. See footnote 6), as I began looking at a Wallace essay. At a glance, it might look like the doodlings of insanity.

But, it was my "way in" to this chapter. It's messy, but it *is* inquiry. It's my inquiry. In a close read (and right here, Rhet/Comp meets English[39]) my inquiry ended up including a lot of circling and underlining. I highlighted and I scribbled quick notes; I started to see that Wallace had left much of his inquiry right there, on the page, for us to see. I could look at his prose and simply see some of the inquiry he'd done. I hurried through, marking my thoughts quickly—marking those moments I could see what he'd done to build his essay.

Figure 43: Reflect

I used

- highlighting
- underlining
- circling
- looking for connections
- seeing connections
- asking questions (usually just to myself)

I learned that

- inquiry runs throughout the writing process

[39] We have more in common than we think we do.

- inquiry is parallel with writing (both happen, alongside one another—inquiry is the slower-moving US Hwy that runs parallel to the non-stop, smooth sailing US Interstate.)
- inquiry is messy too
- rhetorical analysis is inquiry
- prewriting is inquiry
- style takes inquiry
- arrangement takes inquiry
- delivery takes inquiry

THE MOVES WALLACE MAKES

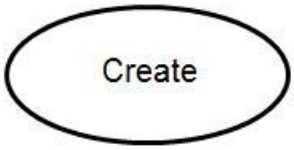

Figure 44: Create

A move is an instance of inquiry (SEE: Chapter 1). This move—this instance of inquiry—is something I can see. It's something I can name. It's something I can collect, categorize, and tally. Something I can show. I will continue to use this idea of an inquiry move in subsequent chapters as well. To see these moves at a glance, refer to the screen shot above; I noted where Wallace observed. I noted a rather complex move he did called "bridging." I've noted the use of testimony in the form of a quote. I've noted where Wallace established place. I noted what I've called a "mini-survey" – where he provided 6 examples of two different objects of inquiry. I noted where he asked where, how, and when. I noted the use of an extended example. He does all this in the first two paragraphs of "The View From Mrs. Thompsons." The entire essay is laden with inquiry. I link you to the *Rolling Stone* published version below in footnote 34 for a much cleaner version.

In order for us to begin to see these kinds of inquiry, and thus discuss their value, I offer for consideration two works from David Foster Wallace. First, "The View from Mrs. Thompson's" (TVFMT) was composed by Wallace "on-the-fly" in the minutes and days after 9-11. Wallace's intense inquiry process is evidenced from draft-to-draft and also in his published essay—even though this essay appeared in *Rolling Stone Magazine* a mere 6 weeks after "The Horror" that was 9-11.[40] As far as we know, no one asked Wallace to do this piece. He saw. He felt. He questioned. He wrote.

In sum, 25 paragraphs and three footnotes make up the body of TVFMT. Following is a list of the kinds of inquiry present in only the first 10 paragraphs.

INQUIRY MOVES IN TVFMT (*Rolling Stone* 2001)[41]

PAR 1

- Establishes place (Bloomington)
- Bridging. Brings readers together (a Rogerian-style move)
    - "As if we were all somehow standing right there and saw the same traffic accident"
- Observation ("overheard in Burwell Oil")
- Testimony: quotes lady in Burwell Oil

PAR 2

- Establishes time (Wednesday)
- Provides data (mini-survey)(mini-ethnography)
    - Lists 6 kinds of flags

[40] "The View From Mrs. Thompson's" direct quote.

[41] TVFMT http://bit.ly/O2VYmb

- Lists 6 kinds of buildings on which flags are displayed

PAR 3

- Extended example: “My own next door neighbor” (Mr. N-)
  - Explicit details of Mr. N-’s flag and flagpole.

PAR 4

- Interview: “Say, Mr N-, suppose somebody like a foreign person or a TV reporter or something were to come by and ask you what the purpose of all these flags after what happened yesterday was, exactly – what do you think you’d say?”
- FOOTNOTE: Interview continued with others in the footnote
  - “Plus: selected other responses from various times during the day’s flag-hunt when circumstances permitted the question to be asked without one seeming like a smartass or a loon.” – (4 additional responses noted).

PAR 5

- Makes a claim: “It seems like at a certain point of density of flags you’re making more of a statement if you don’t have a flag out.”

PAR 6

- The “flag-hunt”: Here Wallace asks a series of research questions
  - Where has everyone gotten these flags?
  - Are they all from the Fourth of July?
  - How do they know to do this?
- The “flag-hunt”: inquiry into who sells flags
  - Bloomington’s grocery stores
  - The novelty shop downtown

- The VFW
- The KWIK-N-EZ

PAR 7

- EMPATHY & RESOLUTION
  - The KWIK-N-EZ proprietor "(a Pakistani, by the way) … offers solace and a shoulder and a strange kind of unspoken understanding."
- Wallace creates his own flag

PAR 8

- Wallace consults a print resource (*The Pantagraph*)
- Rogerian-style argumentation ("Everyone here gets the local news organ")
  - Provides 5 examples from this resource
  - 5th one is an "extended example"
- Testimony: quote from the op/ed page

PAR 9

- Establishes "place" or "setting"
  - Bloomington as "character"
    - Gives facts on infrastructure, physical size, history, economy, and class structure (5 examples)
    - Establishes the "ethos" of Bloomington

PAR 10

- Claim: "[Bloomington] is all but recession-proof."
- Builds on an "ethos" of Bloomington
- Uses (quickly) a compare & contrast

- "Winter here is a pitiless bitch"
- "Summer is intensely green … explosive gardens and dozens of manicured parks and ballfields and golf courses."

These "moves" are shown, in part, in Figure 14 (Figure removed. See footnote 6), above. We may never know what exact steps Wallace took to put this kind of detail onto the page. Using a combination of ancient rhetorical modes and literary techniques associated with fiction, Wallace weaves us a believable account of Bloomington, Illinois. Through his discussion of Midwestern, Bloomington ways, farm country, neighbors, and TVs, Wallace establishes the "feel" of this place. He lived in Bloomington. He knew the area. He wrote in the Denny's[42]. He asked questions. He listened. He looked things up. He observed. Then he wrote it all down and shared his insight (or his continued perplexity) with us.

INQUIRY MOVES IN "CONSIDER THE LOBSTER" (*Gourmet.* 2004)

Figure 45: Investigate

In the previous section, I traced the "instances of inquiry" evidenced in the published *Rolling Stone* version of "The View From Mrs. Thompson's." Below, I will demonstrate the kinds of inquiry present in the published (*Gourmet*) version of "Consider the Lobster." The essay "Consider the Lobster" appeared in *Gourmet Magazine* in August 2004. *Gourmet* hired Wallace as journalist to attend the Maine Lobster Festival in Rockland, Maine in 2003. Wallace attended and produced a lavish 8,500 word accounting of the festival and the lobster. Production time on this piece was an entire year—giving Wallace ample time to attend the fest, research lobster, and make a compelling argument for the ethical treatment of animals (at least for

[42] On the acknowledgements page inside *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*, Wallace thanks "the management and staff of Denny's 24-hour Family Restaurant, Bloomington, Illinois."

lobster)—all the while, continuing his inquiry process. CTL was 33 paragraphs in length and included 20 footnotes.

PAR 1

- Establishes setting (56th Annual MLF), July 30 to August 3, 2003
    - Cites Source: (www.mainelobsterfestival.com)
- Does "mini-ethnography" of the festival grounds
- Lists 5 events: concert, beauty pageant, parade, race, cooking competition
- Lists 8 types of lobster dishes available
- Lists 4 kinds of souvenirs for sale
    - Establishes ethos / credits his observation
        - "Your assigned corresponded saw it all"

PAR 2

- Bridging: "For practical purposes, everyone knows what a lobster is"
- Bridging: "There's more than most of us care about"
    - Here, the bridging also builds ethos
- Lists 6 kinds of flags
- Lists 6 kinds of buildings on which flags are displayed

PAR 3

- Gives domain, kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species.
    - These are Classic rhetorical modes of invention
    - "All of this right there in the encyclopedia" (a semi-citation)

PAR 4

- Visual description ("giant sea insects") (color, claw, antenna)

- Feeding habits of lobster ("the garbagemen of the sea")

PAR 5

- Paints a dark history of lobster as food item (detail, tone)
    - Lobster as food for the institutionalized

PAR 6

- Juxtaposition: Compares views of lobster today w/ those in par 5.
    - Posh—"a step or two down from caviar" (compare/contrast)

PAR 7

- Secondary source: Maine Lobster Promotion Council
    - According to both presentations and pamphlets (source)
        - Lobster is good for you
    - Juxtaposition
        - Health benefits of lobster vs. the way it's served
            - Lobster, 4-oz butter, chips, roll, butter pat ($12.00)

PAR 8

- Negative view of MLF (tone)
    - Styrofoam and more Styrofoam
    - Elbow-to-elbow ("cheek-to-jowl" in C4)
- Compares MLF to
    - Tidewater crab festivals, Midwest corn festivals, Texas chili festivals, etc.

PAR 9

- Lobster is essentially a summer food

- Gives details of lobster industry

PAR 10

- Lists: 8 ways to cook a lobster
  - The most popular is boiling
- Instructions on how to boil a lobster
  - Shedders vs. Hardshell

You can *see* these moves, on the page, in the *Gourmet Magazine version of CTL*[43] . This is the inquiry Wallace leaves us. Its inquiry we can see. It's inquiry *on the page.* Like TVFMT, CTL is ripe with inquiry too. The lists Wallace produced in CTL equal an unparalleled amount of data gathering. But, then, we wouldn't expect anything less from David Foster Wallace—who is renowned for his lengthy, encyclopedia-like coverage of his subject matter.

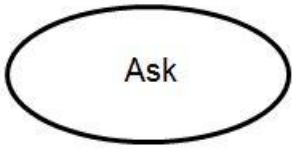

Figure 46: Ask

The thing I would like to do here is wonder how all that inquiry got on the page. What was the process. Have we stopped and noted the kinds of inquiry we can *see*? For the most part, we don't really "see" them at all. Typically, when we read an essay, we read for content, perhaps admiring some of the moves. We don't tend to spend much time thinking about the kinds of inquiry that sit, rooted in the page in front of us. Janice Lauer says,

> [T]o prepare a person who "intelligently generates and critically evaluates every scientific object, every incautious statement, every rigorously logical resting place that offers prematurely a home for the restless dynamism of human understanding" (90)

[43] http://www.gourmet.com/magazine/2000s/2004/08/consider_the_lobster

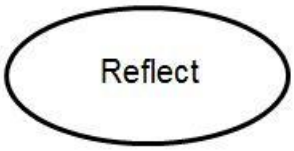

Figure 47: Reflect

Would not composition courses with such a goal stimulate students to become both better writers and more liberally educated people?

To think more in-depth about the kinds of inquiry we do as writers and the kinds of inquiry we can help our students do, it's important that we also look *across the drafts.* Wallace made notes-to-self and changes from draft-to-draft of TVFMT essay that also show "instances of inquiry." This is what I call "*inquiry as we write."* We will look in-depth at this in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: The Whens of Inquiry

Think of writing then not as a way to transmit a message
but as a way to grow and cook a message.
--Peter Elbow[44]

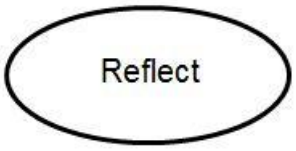

Figure 48: Reflect

Figure 49: Investigate

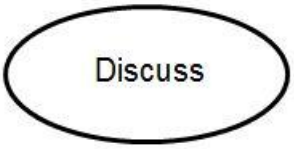

Figure 50: Discuss

As I work on a writing project (this writing project; any writing project), I often pause and think "what should I do to get started?" Sometimes I think "to whom could I speak with about this?" Sometimes I begin by thinking "what kinds of resources could help me with this?" I might make lists. I might make an outline (this one is doubtful with me). The bottom line is I do inquiry *to* write. During the writing process, I stop and think "I might need another source; to whom could I speak with about this?" I sometimes think "is that worded correctly? Or, "should this go here instead of there?" I do inquiry *as* I write. Then, my finished product asks my audience to do inquiry as well. I might ask them to agree with me. Or, I might ask they sign a

[44] Elbow, Peter. *Writing without Teachers*. ©1998.

petition. Or, I might ask them to attend an event. What troubles me, though, is that I don't see where we've discussed any of this in this way in the prevailing conversations of our field. Therefore, I'd like to talk about the "whens" of inquiry.

In order to see these moves or instances or these "whens of inquiry," I had a lot of and-work to do in this project. I had 6 versions of TVFMT. I had 4 versions of CTL. Most were pdfs. But one was HTML. Two were in a book I bought. Two were mp3 files in my iTunes. At least one was uploaded illegally online. It took some time to be able to just look at these documents in these ways. Like Months. It was tedious. Wallace's work isn't digital. Not like mine or yours---a Word doc digital file. Wallace, instead, left behind a paper trail: Process documents and published documents.

And, my methodology allows for the digitalization of these kinds of print materials. We can take any print documents, scan them, save them as pdf, do an OCR read and that text becomes searchable. Save that text as a txt file and drop it into JUXTA, and we can compare that version to another subsequent version. I believe all of the print-to-digital (searchable) can be done at no cost. Open Office is free. It comes with a pdf maker. Adobe reader is free. I bought a printer/scanner last summer for $35. I wonder if this methodology might be valuable to archivists and historians? Oh. And if we can start with digital documents, like something in Gdocs, we cut data collection time in half. Whether or not this digitization process is useful—I don't' know. But, the process is usable. And Repeatable. It's there if someone wants to use it.

When I could finally compare one draft to another, this is how they looked in the comparison program I used called JuXTA. It highlights changes from draft to draft---once you have them in txt documents I learned…that 44 times in CTL – Wallace made a *change between versions*.

44 times. They don't *all* denote inquiry – but some changes certainly do. Sometimes it was a change as simple as adding or removing a dash. Sometimes, it was a word-level change like "copyrighted" to "official". But, sometimes it was a change in fact: he changes the number of attendees from 100,000 to 80,000, or where he changes 20,000 fresh-cut lobster to 25,000 lbs of fresh-caught lobster). Sometimes he even changes a title. My job was to see if any of these changes denoted inquiry. Now, right here at this point this particular project *on a deceased author* becomes more difficult. Or at least less transparent.

I can't go ask Wallace about his stuff.

THE FIRST WHEN OF INQUIRY: INQUIRY TO WRITE

We do inquiry to get started with a writing project. This is not news. We do inventive moves to help us get started like brainstorm and free write and look things up and make clusters or outlines. We've talked a lot about inquiry as invention. We may have a key question (or questions). I don't use the exact same process on any two projects, but I do make these kinds of "moves" to get started. These inquiry moves are not necessarily dependent upon one another; they are not necessarily independent of one another. But, this kind of inquiry is everywhere. We can see evidence of inquiry-based writing in our field's literature—we just don't consistently call it "inquiry." Truth is, our field seems to talk a lot about the inquiry needed "to" write. We most often think of it as included in the canon of "invention," as I described in detail in Chapter 3. The part of Process we called "pre-writing" certainly has inquiry imbedded. Stasis has inquiry. Janice Lauer shows us many, many places where "invention" contains inquiry. In sum, the canon of invention is laden with inquiry. We treat inquiry in invention as the inquiry we do "to write." Let's though, move past that, and look at inquiry *as* we write.

THE SECOND WHEN OF INQUIRY: INQUIRY AS WE WRITE

This morning, I had a meeting with my chair (as I do every Thursday morning). We were discussing my progress on this project and how it was coming together. Earlier today, I sent him the "new" or "updated" first two pages of this chapter. But, even before our meeting began, I saw that I didn't like the order of things on page two. So, I cut a section from later in the chapter, pasted it into page two, and started to write an introduction to that idea. That's when I noticed that some of my subheads were not parallel in construction, so I began revising those. By the time my chair and I talked, I had a whole new draft of Chapter 4 before me.

Figure 51: Investigate

What prompted me to make these "moves" were questions I had like "will my audience understand what it is I'm saying here?" and "Did I give them enough foreground information?" and "How else might I say that?" I thought about whether my subheads were really helping to guide my audience—or not. I even thought about design and what a 3rd-level header should look like. These questions I asked of myself in regard to this piece of writing were inquiry-based questions—these are the inquiry moves I am making in order to produce draft three of chapter four. —I'm doing inquiry *as* I write.

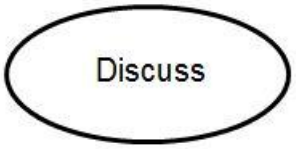

Figure 52: Discuss

The amount of inquiry we do *to* write is substantial. We have to think about the project at hand and gather resources to help us write. We have to think about what will go where and how to best say that what. But, there is also a substantial amount of inquiry that we do as we move through the stages of a writing project. Thus, we inquire as we arrange. We inquire as we revise. We most likely inquire about some of our stylistic choices. We tend to inquire about our citation style (and submission guidelines), too. And, thus far, we as a field, have not talked a

lot about these inquiry moves—the moves that keep cropping up *while* we continue to write—moves that happen during the canons of arrangement and style and delivery. Well, our inquiry is happening, friends; it's happening in subtle ways that actually make big changes to our finished products.

For instance, my inquiry is running parallel to my writing of Chapter 4. That is, my inquiry is happening *as* I write. And, to better understand inquiry as we write—inquiry as parallel to writing—we can look at two creative nonfiction essays by David Foster Wallace. In these process pieces and in their finished counterparts, we can actually *see* his inquiry. In both "The View from Mrs. Thompson's" (TVFMT) and "Consider the Lobster" (CTL), we will be able to see the trails of inquiry moves that Wallace left behind for us.

DISPLAYING WALLACE'S INQUIRY MOVES

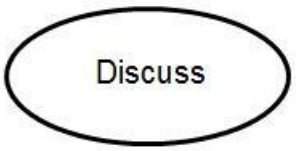

Figure 53: Discuss

I've been studying two essays by David Foster Wallace for the inquiry he did in order to produce the pieces. Now, I do not aim to "write like Wallace," but I do think I have something to learn from this man's work. I think I can learn to be a better writer by studying him. It's possible that we all can. I have looked at these two as finished, published pieces, and I've looked at several in-process drafts of each piece as well.

Former Figure 18 (Figure removed. See footnote 6), is a Wordle[45] of the terms I've chosen as markers of inquiry. These terms are inquiry moves that Wallace makes in TVFMT. These words coordinate with the specific inquiry moves I've seen as I have examined, even scrutinized, his work. I have a rather extensive list of words assembled—117 of them to be exact. These words, to me, are the indicators of inquiry. These indicators of inquiry are a combination

[45] http://www.wordle.net/create

of the words I found in my readings and my resources as I've researched and written this project in combination with the instance/thing/move that was happening on Wallace's page. This list can be seen in its entirety in the appendix section). An analysis, on the page, took inquiry. Providing an anecdote takes inquiry. Making an argument takes inquiry. The arrangement on the page, takes inquiry. Asking questions is inquiry. Making an assertion (should) take inquiry. These terms come from Janice Lauer's book. They come from George Hillocks' work. They come from Young and Koen's work. And, they come from Wallace's work as well. There are probably more words, even better words in some cases, but I took what I saw in the field's literature I've read to do this project, and based off that, made this list of keywords that represent inquiry moves. Then, I looked through the two Wallace pieces, looking for each particular move. I marked each time I saw a move, tallied the kinds of moves he made, and made the Wordles using that data. The size of the word as it appears in its Wordle (above) is in direct proportion to the number of times I saw that move in "The View from Mrs. Thompson's" by David Foster Wallace.

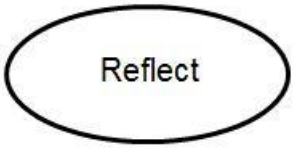

Figure 54: Reflect

In Chapter 1 of this project, I briefly discussed Michael Carter's conception of the need for "local knowledge" in our writings. In this piece by DFW, Wallace gives us a plethora of characteristics of Bloomington, Illinois and the Bloomingtonians who inhabit the area—himself included. It is through his rich details that we understand the synecdoche of Bloomington to the whole Midwest. Seeing this, in this way, we can also begin to envision the amount of inquiry it took to give us all of these details—all this "local knowledge." When one is submerged in a location--grows up in a town, or is involved in a community—they develop local knowledge. They can then bring that local knowledge to bear on their writing.

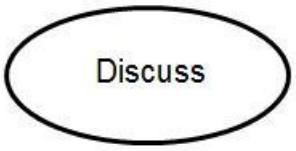

Figure 55: Discuss

The Wordle above demonstrates the "sum" of inquiry in TVFMT. That is, it's a snapshot of *all* the kinds of inquiry I see—on the finished page and the changes across drafts (or, more correctly, versions, as three of my "drafts" are actually published pieces). Some of these inquiry moves happened, I presume, *before* Wallace started writing. Others, *while* he was writing. I noted the inquiry in both. This Wordle, then, gives us a "10,000-foot view" of my data, and it helps us see not only the *kinds* of inquiry moves, but also, patterns in Wallace's inquiry process. It is my hope (belief) that we will next be able to show these moments of inquiry to our students as well, introducing new ways to help them with their inquiry practices.

We can see after reading the essay itself and looking at Figure 9, above, that Wallace used his local knowledge and dug up more local knowledge and reported that local knowledge in TVFMT. He also used, rather heavily, the extended example, observations, and comparisons. It is worth noting that looking anew at this inquiry cloud, as I write this section today, I see that *local knowledge* may well be akin to *place* and that *comparisons* might be similar to *juxtapositions*. I can see where some of these categories might well need to collapse into one another. Changing the keywords that denote the inquiry moves would help see even more clearly the inquiry Wallace did. I will briefly address an idea for revising the keywords (yet again) in Chapter 6.

DISCUSSING THE INQUIRY MOVES ACROSS THE DRAFTS

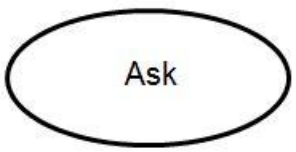

Figure 56: Ask

What *Did* David Foster Wallace do to write these two pieces? What kinds of inquiry did he do? Was there inquiry of invention? Inquiry of arrangement? Inquiry of style? Did he do further inquiry after a piece

was basically written down but before it was produced in fixed form? Yes, yes, yes, and yes. Hell, he even did inquiry after pieces were published one place but before they were published another. But, we never would have even seen this inquiry without taking this project on in the ways I have.

In order to see these changes, version-to-version, I used a program called JuXta[46]. JuXta allowed me to look across the versions by comparing them word-for-word, and it highlighted wherever a change occurred. I included a screen shot of what the comparison in JuXta looks like on page 63, Figure 12. JuXta allowed me to see *whenever* Wallace changed a word or a phrase or made a deletion—and any other kind of edit he made. Using this comparison, I began to see where DFW made changes to his descriptions. I saw where he added words to be more specific. I saw where he deleted things. I saw were he changed the spelling of some things. Through this, I was seeing the inquiry David Foster Wallace did *as* he wrote this essay.

In TVFMT, David Foster Wallace makes some changes draft-to-draft. He writes this essay, I believe, of his own accord in the days and hours immediately after the 9-11 attack. He writes one hand-written (exceedingly messy) draft. Then he types it up (T2), then he hand-edits it (T3), then *Rolling Stone* publishes him (T4). Next, he includes TVFMT in his own edited collection *Consider the Lobster* (T5). And, finally, it's included in the Time Warner Audio Book *Consider the Lobster* (T6). The most substantial changes occur as he deletes things for the *Rolling Stone* version and adds them back again in his edited collection.

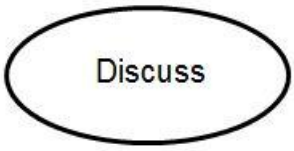

Figure 57: Discuss

As we write, we question ourselves and the evidence we've found, and as we revise, we seek to explore our topics even further. Peter

[46] http://www.juxtasoftware.org/

Elbow told us we must "grow and cook" our message. But, Elbow didn't use the word "inquiry." The word itself only appears in *Writing without Teachers* two times[47]. Still, he advocates that we *do* inquiry—that we grow and cook our messages. We might just want to revisit what his prewriting had to offer inquiry. For, if the act of writing is "a way to grow and cook a message," then we certainly need to put things together, mix things up, fold, blend, knead. Things need to simmer, be stirred, let rise. All this, before they are ever served.

In more writerly terms, and this is important, we start by asking questions, maybe looking things up. We write stuff down. We type it up. We read it through. We shake our heads. We scratch out. We write some more. We move this here. We move that there. We find more sources. Eventually, we deliberate our word choice, question our own tone and style, and we concern ourselves with how our audience will react. All of these "moves" are *inquiry moves*.— we use these moves *throughout* a given writing project. We rethink our word choice. We change our subheads. We give more description where it's needed. We delete things we don't need [48]. We can now physically *see* where Wallace added detail, made deletions, rearranged, and even hedged, looking across his drafts of his essays. His inquiry ran parallel to his writing. Wallace's inquiry for TVFMT not only spans the three days during and after 9-11, but his inquiry continues throughout six versions of the piece.

[47] I did a CONTROL > F in the text online on Google, and only located the word two times—both in a resource he drew from.

[48] FACTOID: I just made a file called "Ch4_Leftovers".

INTERIOR VIEWS: LOOKING DEEPER

Figure 58: Investigate

When I began working closely with TVFMT, I put the hand-written draft off till last. Wallace's hand writing measured in at about 8 point and was tight and scribbled. There were marginalia and notes to self, and insert this and thats everywhere. There were plenty of other things to do besides to try and make sense of *this* (SEE: below). This was a researcher's nightmare.

So, I, needless to say, put this version of this essay off till last. Instead, I listened to interviews with Wallace (found online). I re-read his other essays. I followed up on articles posted about him on twitter. I did Google searches. I did everything I could to avoid looking at the hand-written version of "The View From Mrs. Thompson's".

WALLACE SAYS: "ASK THREE DIFFERENT PEOPLE"

This spring, with no time left to procrastinate, I picked up the essay and began to transcribe it—by hand. And, right in the middle of all those hen-scratched scribbles, Wallace wrote "Ask three different people." Scrawled in the margin of the original draft of TVFMT, Wallace was thinking about method. He intended to conduct a "mini-interview." This is Wallace's inquiry. It's a glimpse. A snippet. But, it is Wallace inquiring. He notes that he wants to "ask three different people" the question "If somebody like a TV reporter or foreigner were to ask about the purpose of all these flags was exactly, what do you think you'd say?"

"Ask three different people." An indication that Wallace knew that very minute he wanted to triangulate the results of his informal interview. Relatedly, in this same section of the hand-written draft, we find responses to the interview.

The view above (Figure removed. See footnote 6), gives us a couple of things to talk about. First, it provides us the answers to Wallace's mini-interview.

- "To show our support and empathy towards what's going on."
- "They're to make a statement that we're all united on this and we're not bowing down to anybody."
- "For pride."
- "As a kind of pseudo-patriotism to manipulate people into going to war to profit corporations." (College student in Megadeath T-Shirt.") Wallace gives us an observation as well as the interviewee responses.

But, in the published version in *Rolling Stone*, several changes occurred.

- "To show we're Americans and not going to bow down to anybody."
- "The flag is a pseudo-archetype, a reflexive semion designed to pre-empt and negate the critical function" (grad student).
- "For pride."
- "What they do is symbolize unity and that we're all together behind the victims in this warn. That they've fucked with the wrong people this time."

Here, in the comparison between the two versions of the interview results, we see some strange changes. We have to presume that Wallace made these changes himself. Surely he did not return to his interviewees and ask them to revise their statements. Yet, the statements certainly do vary from their original forms. The most notable, here, for me, is the change from "college student/Megadeth shirt to "that was a grad student." *Why* change the responses? Why change the citation? Does "that was a grad student" give it more authority? Does it have a better ring to it? Did Wallace just want to sound smart on the page and felt like "a grad student" did that better

than “a college student?” And, how do the changes in the statements themselves change the meaning on the page? What kinds of inquiry went in to making changes to your interview responses? Do others do this? Is it ethical? Is this still nonfiction? Even a minute change such as this can raise a myriad of questions. These questions are new lines of inquiry that we could follow up on in the future.

THE WHENS OF INQUIRY: ARRANGING THE DATA

Wallace changes his mind on the order of things for The View From Mrs. Thompson’s. While many of the “scenes” below appear in both versions, they do so in very different successions. In order to see this inquiry, once I finished transcribing the essay using the two different monitors (zoomed in at 800%), I pasted the transcription into a txt document and decided I would print it and align the paragraphs by hand. My kids thought I was going nuts.

“What in the hell, Mom?”

It did look a bit nutty, but it also worked. I should have said: “Boys, it’s an object of inquiry from my dissertation; in doing this, I am demonstrating inquiry of arrangement. I’m going to rearrange this version of TVFMT so that it’s in the same order as the other versions.” Or somesuch comment. This, not only helped me see the sentence-level changes in TVFMT, it let me think of the essay as having “scenes.” This “scenic-view” of the data might prove quite useful. Here’s an example. T1 is the hand-written TVFMT and T4 is the version that appeared in *Rolling Stone:*

T1	scene 1	“WEDNESDAY—Everbody has flags
T4	scene 1	“SYNECDOCHE—People in Bloomington
T1	scene 2	“Nice Flag Mr. N—“
T4	scene 2	WENDESDAY—Everyone has flags out

T1	scene 3	Interviewing 3 people
T4	scene 3	My own next door neighbor (then the interview)
T1	scene 4	Illinoisans aren't unfriendly
T4	scene 4	Flags
T1	scene 5	There's a weird sort of pressure for flags
T4	scene5	Winter here is a pitiless bitch
T1	scene 6	Bloomington is a city of
T4	scene 6	Like most Midwest towns, B-N is crammed
T1	scene 7`	In the warm months
T4	scene 7	To keep in mind, the sense of the larger world is televisual
T1	scene 8	The city is loaded with churches
T4	scene 8	TUESDAY—10 days a year its gorgeous
T1	scene 9	A thing to realize, not just Bloomington
T4	scene 9	The church I belong to
T1	scene 10	Its just before serious harvesting
T4	scene 10	The house I end up sitting at
T1	scene 11	TUESDAY—the difference between B-N and NYC is televisual
T4	scene 11	In retrospect

This easily demonstrates Wallace's "revisional inquiry." In those few weeks after drafting T1 on-the-fly, but before going to press in, Wallace moved and moved both paragraphs and sentences. We can see at a glance that scene 1 in T1 is scene 2 in T4. He moved scene 4 from T1 to scene 2 in T4. He thought about how and where he had said something and he thought about if those things would better serve his purpose and the purpose of the essay if they occurred in a different

order. Sometimes, sentences from the middle of paragraphs become topic sentences, and vise versa. Wallace inquired as he re-arranged. He did inquiry parallel to his writing. This was inquiry *as* he wrote.

INQUIRY MOVES ALTER ARRANGEMENT --or-- ARRANGEMENT: IT'S NOT JUST FOR OUTLINES ANYMORE

How do we begin a journal article or a chapter? How do we start a paragraph? What goes first, second, third? In other words, what is the framework, or arrangement, of any given writing project? Do we really know that final shape of our work when we begin? Or, does it come to light as we *begin to finish*? In the field literature, it's easy to see that we still promote the outline and the cluster and the web—to get a sense of our organization before we begin. But, how much have we stopped to think about the inquiry regarding our arrangement *as* we write?

I rearrange at the paragraph-level, the sentence-level and often even at the word-level. And the thing is, my audience never sees *any* of this inquiry. I wondered and worried a lot about the arrangement of this project; it's imperative I say everything I need to say and in an order that makes the most sense to my audience. I have rearranged a lot. Each move in arrangement is a form of inquiry. "What must my audience know first?" This is quickly followed by "Wait! I need to say this!" I've completely revised this paragraph three times (now four). I think I've got it right. This "when" of inquiry occurs during arrangement—the third canon of classical rhetoric—smack-dab in the middle of a writing project.

WALLACE'S ARRANGEMENT: DIVISION & DIGRESSION

There are other strategies within the canon of arrangement, like "division and digression," that are exceedingly useful as well—especially when discussing particularly delicate or inflammatory or graphic issues. We can we see Wallace do this. He arranged his paragraphs in certain ways to provide a certain movement through TVFMT. The intense, vivid description

he gives of people falling from the twin towers appears in paragraph 17. The way that Wallace almost hides the story of "The Horror" throughout the stories of Bloomington and Bloomingtonians. He gives us a storyline that lets the reader take in a little horror just a little at a time. This is akin to what we teach our students to do in Professional Writing courses. It's very similar to the move of "buffering" the bad news in a "Bad News Letter" (aka "Negative Letters). Wallace weaves (arranges) the essay so that we (readers) don't get turned off by the graphic scene. Wallace's TVFMT is rich with this move and so is CTL. In CTL, most of the heavy lifting of the nastiness that is our food supply these days is hidden in a footnote.

Footnote 8 in CTL (C2) reads:

> N.B. Similar reasoning underlies the practice of what's termed "debeaking" broiler chickens and brood hens in modern factory farms. Maximum commercial efficiency requires that enormous poultry populations be confined in unnaturally close quarters, under which conditions many birds go crazy and peck one another to death. As a purely observational side-note, be apprised that debeaking is usually an automated process and that the chickens receive no anesthetic. It's not clear to me whether most gourmet readers know about debeaking, or about related practices like dehorning cattle in commercial feedlots, cropping swine's tails in factory hog farms to keep psychotically bored neighbors from chewing them off, and so forth. It so happens that your assigned correspondent knew almost nothing about standard meat-industry operations before starting work on this article.

Just like in a "bad news letter," *Gourmet's* readership was protected. They wouldn't get to the "meat" of the issue until way back at the last page and one third through the list of lengthy footnotes. This form of division and digression, having "the horror" buried like that, some readers wouldn't even trouble themselves with reading the footnotes.

AN "INTERNAL" INQUIRY MOVE: TO HEDGE OR NOT TO HEDGE?

At the very top of the hand-written draft of TVFMT (T1), Wallace scrawls: "Caveat: Written very fast and in shock." Then, in all the published versions (T4, T5, T6), Wallace changes this to "CAVEAT: Written very fast and in what probably qualifies as shock." Let us

just think about how much work that small change makes in relation to Wallace's level of certainty about his own state of mind—he has to *inquire of himself* the extent to which he is willing to claim he is or might be in shock. This small change—adding "qualifies as" and "probably" is an example of hedging.[49] And, as we all know, teaching this is a real problem—it's a kind of inquiry that students need to know how to do, but have a hard time learning. How do they know when/how/if to hedge claims? How often can one hedge? Deciding how to hedge, when to hedge, if to hedge, when and why we may want to hedge is not an easy move in writing. Certainly, using the hedge as a move takes inquiry.

AN INQUIRY MOVE (OR NOT?): CONTEMPLATING STYLE

I often worry about my academic audience in relation to my writing style. Will people want to read me? Do I have to argue for my less-than-academic sounding voice? Is my style my downfall? Or—is my style one of the best things about me as a writer? I've argued for my style during my work as a PhD student. I've argued for it earlier in this project. One of the reasons I worry is that I don't read much in academe that sounds like me. My goal, though, is to have people to listen to *me,* so I choose to *sound like me* when I write. I write in *my* style. Now, I am certain that's not what the ancient rhetors had in mind when they decided that style would be one of the five canons of rhetoric. As a matter of fact, my knowledgebase tells me they wanted about a 180- from what I am willing to do—they wanted an ornate style. I don't do ornate.

Style names how ideas are embodied in language
and customized to communicative contexts
-- Silva Rhetoricae[50]

[49] Hedging: A means of protection or defense. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hedge

[50] http://rhetoric.byu.edu/canons/Style.htm

My stylistic choices make a big difference in my finished works. In choosing to use a bit of slang or a tad of humor, for instance, I change the way my work reads. In order to know when to use a bit of slang or a tad of humor, I do an internal inquiry. In TVFMT, Wallace makes this same move. A noteworthy change from the *Rolling Stone* T4 to his edited collection, T5 occurs in paragraph one. First, Wallace says, "Bloomingtonians aren't unfriendly" (T4). Then he changes to "People in Bloomington" in the edited collection. Whether we can treat this as inquiry, I don't know for sure. There's no "sign" for us. No "proof." "People in Bloomington" may be more politically-correct. "Bloomingtonians" could be a local term of endearment —We simply do not know, and we can't ask Wallace. "People in Bloomington" sounds more "outsider." "Bloomingtonians" sounds more "insider." We cannot make a determination based on the data we have, but this move could well go in sync with the use of his local knowledge. My thought is that he'd already moved to California by the time the essay was published in *CTL* and he no longer considered himself a Bloomingtonian. Therefore, the change. That, though, is simply a guess.

Even though not every move can be considered an inquiry move, many can. Somewhere in that small change, a question was asked. Perhaps Wallace asked himself which term suited the context of the publication, or perhaps by an editor for *Rolling Stone* magazine asked for the change. Someone inquired, and the terms were switched. We don't know the details, but the change is certainly a matter of style, and it was looked at using inquiry somewhere in the publishing process.

SEEING AN INQUIRY MOVE: A CHANGE IN TONE CAN CHANGE A MEANING

Wallace's draft-to-draft changes, for the most part, occur between the two print-based, published versions of this essay, *Rolling Stone* and *Consider the Lobster*. For instance, "But now

there's something to talk about that outweighs all reserve," in *Rolling Stone* (T4), becomes "But now, thanks to the Horror, there's something to talk about that overrides all inhibition," in his own collection (T5). "Something" in the commissioned version, and "The Horror" in his own collection. This small change creates a dramatic alteration in tone, which is often considered within the realm of style. Wallace is always already keenly aware of his tone. Where he was free to say "The Horror" in his own edited collection, the editors of *Rolling Stone* may have not wanted that imagery in their magazine. Again, we just don't know. But, the change did occur. Why? —Well, somebody did some inquiry.

NOT EVERY CHANGE SIGNIFIES AN INQUIRY MOVE

A rather odd—and fairly unexplainable—set of changes occur in TVFMT regarding Wallace's neighbor, Mr. N-. In T1, above, Wallace says, "My own next-door neighbor, a postal supervisor and VFW" but in T4 (*Rolling Stone*), he says, "My own next-door neighbor, a retired CPA and vet." He changes this yet again to "My own next-door neighbor, a retired bookkeeper and USAF vet" (T5). This change gives us something else to ponder. Does this change give us added detail? A different "feel?" Is it inquiry-inspired? Perhaps we cannot infer inquiry in this particular change. It is difficult, using only my methods, to know what is inquiry-inspired and what isn't. Perhaps this is a place in a story where Wallace takes liberty with the facts? Maybe Wallace simply *needed* a Serviceman. We simply do not know. Perhaps a follow-up project could be working with a living writer and conducting an interview with them after locating the inquiry across their drafts. That might open up even more knowledge when it comes to the inquiry we do *as* we write. At least we could ask them why.

Are *all* of our changes (revisions, edits, clarifications, etc.) inquiry-based in some way or another? I'm not suggesting that they all are, but have we ever stopped to really think about it?

Do we *know* if they are or aren't? Here's a change in TVFMT, back and forth across all the versions, that we cannot really explain:

- T1 "His driveway and mine are almost right together.
- T2 "His driveway and mine are almost side-by-side."
- T3 "His driveway and mine are almost side-by-side."
- T4 "His driveway and mine are almost right together."

This is Wallace wrestling with terminology. Why? We don't know. But, there is an imbedded kind of inquiry happening here (inward reflection, perhaps) of which terms *best* suit the story. It could simply be that it's akin to Oscar Wilde saying, "This morning I took out a comma and this afternoon I put it back in again."[51] Sadly, we will never know this either.

INQUIRY MOVES THROUGH EDITING, EDITORS, AND SELF-EDITS

The majority of the edits across CTL come between the *Gourmet* and Wallace's edited collection, *CTL* (between C2 and C3). Most of the time, Wallace re-ads the words and phrases he had written before dealing with editors at *Gourmet.* Maybe the editors at the magazine made him delete his chosen words; editors certainly do that; they worry about things like word count. Wallace didn't have to worry about word count with his edited collection, though. It reads like *he* wanted it to read—not like editors wanted it to read.

Wallace shows us (Figure removed. See footnote 6), in C1 that he intends to cut his tirade about the Main Eating Tent. In C2, it is deleted, but in C3, it's back. It's not surprising that *Gourmet* didn't have that "picture" painted in the heads of their readers. But, that picture is there in Wallace's own book. And the detail is there and the humor and the frustration. Here, Wallace gives us a glimpse into several whens of inquiry. And, he's doing inquiry *as he writes*. He sees

[51] http://quotationsbook.com/quote/42880/

these things and he notes them. And, he couldn't stand for them to be omitted as they return in his own edited collection. These things that Wallace observed were integral to his story—even when editors removed them, he found a way to return them to the page. His observations—albeit with a sarcastic drip—are still his observations. Things he saw. Things he noted. They are a result of his inquiry.

Back in TVFMT, in T4. the story in *Rolling Stone,* Wallace's prose read: "Some cars have them [flags] wedged in their grille or duct-taped to the antenna (41). And in *CTL*, "A good number of vehicles have them wedged in their grille or attached to the antenna" (31). In an interesting twist, this, in the edited collection, actually seems *less* specific. We lose the specificity of "duct-taped." Why did he take that word out? Wallace typically edits *in*—for added detail.

THE WHENS OF INQUIRY: INQUIRY DURING REVISION

I do multiple drafts. I presume the majority of us do. Furthermore, I think it's safe to say that we do inquiry during those multiple drafts—during revision. And, I can't speculate as to why not, but one thing I did not see in our literature was anything explicit about inquiry during revision. But, now we know that Wallace did it. We could see his inquiry across the four versions of CTL and the six versions of TVFMT. David Foster Wallace called himself a Five-Draft Man. Stacey Schmeidel interviewed Wallace via email in Spring of '99 for *Amherst* magazine.[52] Wallace said in that interview that he had "a little system of writing and two rewrites and two typed drafts." He said he used it since his undergrad days and liked it. Judging from the works I've looked at of his, I'd bet there was inquiry present in each and every

[52] https://www.amherst.edu/aboutamherst/magazine/extra/node/66410

one of those five drafts for anything Wallace wrote—but that's pure speculation. We do know now that sometimes he didn't stop at five!

It turns out, revising is all about inquiry—and, more than one kind of it. We must inquire of ourselves: What is missing? Where do I get off track? Where do I need to go for this missing info? Who can I talk to? What should I look up? Do I have enough detail? Is this the right word? Is this needed? Should this go here? What if I move this there? To do this, we can follow Wallace's lead. We can look things up; we can talk to people; we can observe, we can watch, we can reflect and we can rethink. Then—we revise.

Revising is still too often treated as "editing"—finding mistakes in grammar and/or syntax. Revising, instead, needs to be considered everything from fixing commas to overhauling paragraphs to rearranging entire pieces. But, there's another popular concept of revision. Nancy C. DeJoy discusses in *Process This* a different kind of revision. DeJoy's *revisionary process* is about changing the audience's mind about something. And, DeJoy is 100% right on. The very reason we writers write is to have our audience come along with us. And, whether in a novel or a scholarly essay—we ask our audience to join us in going where we go, doing what we do; we want them to listen to us, consider our ideas, take action, to revise their way of thinking, and to also think about the ramifications of all of the above. There *is* a Revisionary aspect. This is the inquiry we ask of our audience. Using the term, revision, though, is confusing for students. Presented with both kinds of revision, students have two distinctly different but both viable definitions of the word—and two distinct but necessary kinds of inquiry to do. Revision of either kind *requires inquiry.*

So, what *did* David Foster Wallace do? Wallace does what Janice Lauer tells us good inquirers do. He "deliberately explore[d] questions … var[ied his] perspectives, scan[ned his]

memories, and create[d] new associations" (91). Lauer says this type of activity helps the writer (inquirer) incubate and mull through their findings, so there is an almost "unconscious mulling from which illumination springs" (90). Of course, illumination, or insight, is not guaranteed. But, we can tell by reading "The View from Mrs. Thompson's" that Wallace found some answers—some insight to "The Horror" that we all shared that day. In "Consider the Lobster," his questions to his audience near the end suggest that some of the insight Wallace was hoping to gain continued to elude him. After all, "there are limits to what even interested persons can ask of each other," he told us.

LOW HANGING FRUIT? THE INQUIRY ON THE PAGE

I talked a lot about the inquiry on the page in my Chapter 3. The thing is, we don't really talk about inquiry on the page. We don't look at inquiry in ways that let us show our students the inquiry *they* must do. In the field's work, we talk about inquiry, but we don't have any way to show it. Furthermore, in the majority of the literature, we don't tend to discuss inquiry as flowing throughout the duration of a writing project. Yet, sometimes, if we look, we can see the inquiry on the page in front of us. We can see the claim and the evidence and the description and the caparison. We can actually *see* the inquiry. I believe we can look for inquiry and develop better ways to show that inquiry to our students. I believe by looking at the inquiry on the page, we can offer students a catalyst to finding their fundamental impulses

In TVFMT published in *Rolling Stone* (T3), Wallace says, "It's a total mystery where people get flags this big or how they got them up there." In his edited collection, he says "It's a total mystery where people can buy flags this big or how they got them up there, or when" (T4). This small re-add of "or when" reminds us of Wallace's inquiry into the situation. He obviously wanted that inquiry to be present on the page. He wanted us to see his inquiry.

THE LAST WHEN OF INQUIRY: INQUIRY WE ASK OF OUR AUDIENCE

The last kind of inquiry I suggest we talk more about is the inquiry we ask of our audience. When we read "Consider the Lobster" by David Foster Wallace, we are asked to learn everything we can about the lobster, and also to consider how we keep and prepare and even name our meats. He asks us to think about (consider) our food supply. Both Yancey and Wallace ask us (their audience) to *do* inquiry. While the inquiry writers ask of their audiences shines through in most written work, audience inquiry may be most boldly evident in the area of technical and professional writing. Allow me to explain. Developing professional documents such as cover letters and resumes, proposals and RFPs requires an inquiry process where the audience actually conducts an inquiry. Pretend, for a minute, we are on a hiring committee together for a Fortune 500 company, and we, collaboratively, write a job ad for a Technical Writer. Potential applicants read our work. They are our audience. They want to consider answering this ad. They have many questions to ask: Who posted this ad? What skills do they need? What skills do I have that match their needs? What are their keywords? What are the hours? What are the benefits? What is the pay? Where are they located? Will they help me relocate? What is their mission statement? —This is just some of the inquiry process of our audience.

There are many situations where our readers are asked to perform their own inquiry. But, there is a such a subtlety in some of these genres that we don't even seem to think about this! It's so ingrained in us—we respond to what we read by a deep-rooted and internalized inquiry process—one we simply do not *see.* This study seeks to make these things a little less internalized and a little more transparent. When we read, writers ask readers to consider many things. We sometimes rethink our positions when we read. That takes inquiry. Whether that

inquiry be on ethical treatment of food animals in the United States, or how to answer a job ad, readers are always being asked to rethink their positions. Our readers must do inquiry.

Whatever the genre, whatever the writing project, we usually ask our audience to take into account the things we've said. Then, they have to inquire further (of themselves) as to how they feel about our words, topics, ideas. We ask the audience to think about things. We may want them to change their stance on a position. We may want them to write their Congress rep.

Typically, we pose some kind of a call to action in the things we write—whether we write academic essays, personal essays, fiction or nonfiction, business letters, resumes, or even recipes—our audience is asked to *act*. In the speech-turned-journal article, "Composition in a New Key," by Kathleen Blake Yancey, Yancey asks us to consider the moment at hand, to help move Composition into the technological era, and to help students become members of the writing public. She asks us to *act*. In this, she may even be asking some of her audience to rethink their entire teaching philosophy. She asks us to conduct an inquiry. So, we do an internal inquiry—thinking about the things she proposed in the call.

"[W]e need to ask students to create, to experiment,
to be bold and possibly fail with projects
and deliverables relevant in today's world."
—Michael Staton[53]

[53] http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2012/10/16/essay-calling-new-skills-be-added-liberal-arts-disciplines

Chapter 6: On Empathy
Civic Engagement, Fundamental Impulses & Democracy

ARE WE LIVING IN A MEANER WORLD?

A woman was shot, in the head, sniper-style at Adono Riverfront Park in Lansing, Michigan the 4th of July. Four men jumped out of a stretch limo in Chicago and fired shots into a crowd outside a night club in early July. Two people were shot in the ass while in their car at the intersection of Mt. Vernon and Oliver in Wichita, Kansas, also in early July. Then *The Dark Knight Rises* premiered. These pockets of violence are everywhere. In your city and in mine. And, right now is the time to do whatever we can to help increase the empathy we feel for our neighbors. I worry at times that we have become a very self-centered and meaner people. Yet, as rhetoricians, we have a *moment* where we can act.

HELPING STUDENTS HELP

We need students to be "the writing public." We need them to be public intellectuals. They must become engaged citizens. We need them to learn to write and write well, but we also need them to take on projects, to issue calls to action, to act and to have their words heard so that others can act. We need them to show empathy. Our job is to help them become public rhetors—working for the good of the democracy. And, I know we only have 16 weeks. But, our job is to give students each and every tool we can to go forth and be empathetic and be engaged citizens—to *BE* members of the writing public. We truly have a lot of work to do and very little time to do it.

As a nation, things are getting more intense. People react first and consider their fellow man second. And, we as rhetors have to find ways to act. In order to act, one of the first things I did was to have students stop writing to me. I wanted them to stop thinking of "me, teacher" as their audience. They must address their writing to a real-life audience, one who has a stake in

their topic, one who can help change things. Real-world issues need real-world audiences. The gal that grades the papers is not a real-world audience. If, together, we can reach 3 million minds each year, then surely we can help our students look around their lives, find social issues to engage with, think about what their message is, decide whom they need to persuade, and figure out what the BEST mode of delivery is for THAT audience. We MUST shift the platform of academic writing. We must change our culture (Powell). Yeah, sure: We assign the work. We scrutinize. We judge. We (hopefully) make recommendations for improvement. We post their grade. But, we (the teachers) are not going to change the way coal is burned in China or reach girls with eating disorders or help families deal with poverty. We must, instead, turn around and help another 25 students "learn to write." To do this, I encourage students to *make change through their writing.* Sometimes, creating a Facebook page or sending a quick tweet might just make all the difference.

ON THE PUBLIC GOOD: MISSIONS FROM THE FIELD

The mission statements and goals of many of our professional organizations reiterate the issues I've brought to the table today. The core principles of attw.org state they are here "to foster a sense of ethical responsibility to [students], stakeholders, and the public." Ethical responsibility. They seek to "promote the academic traditions of advancing and sharing knowledge, tolerating diversity of opinion, offering responsible criticism, and encouraging freedom of expression" (attw.org).

The Society of Technical Communicators also offers us their ethical principles by tending to matters of legality, honesty, confidentiality, quality, fairness, and professionalism. They "seek to promote the public good … [to] …provide truthful and accurate communications." They "endeavor to produce excellence" (stc.org). They "respect cultural variety and other aspects of

diversity in our clients, employers, development teams, and audiences." They "serve the business interests of clients and employers as long as they are consistent with the public good." These were adopted by the STC Board of Directors in September 1998 and are available on their website at stc.org.

Tolerating diversity of opinion and promoting public good. Respecting cultural variety. Serving clients in the interest of public good. These are the same qualities we must bring to our classrooms—consistently. Yes, you and I may already to this, but we have to increase our reach. We must attempt to reach each of those 3 million young minds each year. We must see to it that more and more instructors of writing encourage students to tackle real-world issues. And, somehow, we must find ways to branch out and reach the minds that aren't in college. We do have a lot of work to do.

Corbett calls for a return to classic rhetoric and now is the time to act. We need our students to work for the good of the people. There are many rhetors and rhetorics from which to draw. Scott Richard Lyons says, "work should focus on local and community levels in hopes of lending support to the work already being done there" (465). We should work "alongside the histories, rhetorics, and struggles of African-Americans and other "racial" or ethnic groups, women, sexual minorities, the disabled, and still others, locating history and writing instruction in the powerful context of American rhetorical struggle (465). In sum, we should all work for the good of the people.

And, I can't draw on Lyons without invoking the struggle and atrocity faced by the Native American on his/her own land. Lyon's piece on Rhetorical Sovereignty spoke to me my first semester in graduate school. It's speaking to me again today. It can speak to many. Writing like Lyons did is a call for participation in a conversation. Lyons calls for "the pursuit of social

justice" (461). "For without self-governance," Lyons tells us, "especially in America, the people fragment into a destructive and chaotic individualism, and without the people, there is no one left to govern and simply nothing left to protect (456). Let us hope it doesn't get to this point. I'm afraid I see it coming, though, unless we do something soon. Corbett and Lyons seem to support me here with my call to action. Or, perhaps I am supporting them. Nonetheless, now is the time. We have a moment.

INQUIRY TO EMPATHY TO ENGAGED CITIZENRY

Our goal for our students should be, first and foremost, increased civic engagement through writing. Edward P.J. Corbett helps to remind us that "rhetoric is a practical art" (162). Using writing to reach audiences and make change should be our goal for our students. Not having them write 6-10-page papers, double-spaced, in Times New Roman with 1" margins. Not having them write to us, the teacher. It's not really about their use of their/there/they're or the comma splice. These should not be our biggest worry. Neither should be information-dumps—papers where students dump everything they can about a subject onto a page. These things do no good in our world. Our focus should be on the *practical.*

Malea Powell, Chair of the 2012 CCCCs, tells us that "all cultures must change if they are to survive" (39). Powell asks us all to engage. I'm here to say that the *culture* of our field must change. We must strive to take the theories and practices we've built this field on and look at them anew, discarding ones that do not work, building on ones that do. We must adjust. We must adapt. We must move beyond the Greeks, past the Process, through the Cognitive because, with the rapidity of our changing world—we are not keeping up. We must seek to have our students' writing be *practical.*

Inside Higher Ed recently ran an article that reinforces my call to action. Michael Stanton says, "[Students need projects] that communicate with and potentially affect the wider world. While peer-reviewed journal articles and regression analysis may be the way that professors communicate, the rest of the world has updated its formats. Academe, and in particular liberal arts programs, may be on the verge of being left behind (Stanton. par 4). It seems both Stanton and Yancey have a lot in common with Webb.

BUT WHAT'S THIS HAVE TO DO WITH INQUIRY PRACTICES?

But what *does* all this have to do with inquiry practices? Well, my thought is that once we begin to focus more on inquiry, once we can *see* the inquiry we do, the inquiry other writers do—then we can better guide students to do their inquiry. Charles Bazerman wants us to help students "locate the fundamental impulses to communicate important messages to others through writing" (Lauer xv). Kathleen Blake Yancey wants us to help students become "members of the writing public" (298, 300, 301, 305, 306, 310, 311, 321). Yancey states:

> In helping create writing publics, we also foster the development of citizens who vote, of citizens whose civic literacy is global in its sensibility and its communicative potential, and whose commitment to humanity is characterized by consistency and generosity as well as the ability to write for purposes that are unconstrained and audiences that are nearly unlimited (321)

If we can show students multiple ways to *do* inquiry and give them the freedom to think about and write about subjects they are interested in, show them the value in both generalized and localized knowledges, my approach will get those fundamental impulse juices flowing. Let's face it, most of our students are *required* to enroll in our courses. Students *must* take and pass

first-year writing. Students are not always excited about this prospect. Yet, there are myriad ways to help them.

Once students start *seeing* inquiry, and *using* inquiry, they are on their way to getting those impulses pulsating. Once they understand the value they can offer their peers, their neighbors, their co-workers, we are on our way to helping them become more engaged citizens. One way to help this happen is to take an inquiry-based approach *throughout* their writing assignments—not just as invention. I posit that we look at inquiry as a way to proceed *throughout* a writing project. Look, this isn't about doing or not doing inquiry—it's about a way to proceed, using inquiry, throughout an entire writing project—throughout a lifetime of writing.

Rhetoric, I think is meant to be used for the public good. Quintilian said rhetoric was the good man speaking well. I, too, want to emphasize the good. We have lost a fundamental impulse in this country to look out for our fellow man. Through reading essays like "This is Water" and others with similar messages, we can encourage our students—about 3 million of them each year—to become more engaged, more empathetic, more democratic. We get to show 3 million people a year ways to make real change through their writing. We get to do this. It's really quite an honor. Oh, I know 3 million people won't become more empathetic just because we ask them to, but the number of minds we will reach will surely make a difference.

A UNITING FRAMEWORK

> *"Within human experience, intuition, and belief, there are numerous items which seem sometimes to differ sharply—to be distinct, or even contradictory—but which need to be seen in a uniting framework of thought if we are to have an integrated existence."*
> —Kenneth L. Pike

What might help us to see this uniting framework is the Rogerian style of argumentation. Using a Rogerian style helps student writers and their audience minimize their "sense of threat so that they are able to understand and then consider alternatives to their own belief system"

(Edwards). Rogerian principles help writers and audiences align along commonalities as opposed to differences. This, I believe is a key change in the type of writing we assign. Edwards states, "Locating a point of entry into a particular … problem, or challenge that will provide a true bridge for nonthreatening exchange and that, therefore, might make possible meaningful change."

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE, GENERAL KNOWLEDGE AND GAINING EXPERTISE WITH BOTH

In addition to thinking about Rogerian style, Carter contends that "human performance is a complex interaction of general and local knowledge" (271) and as such, we, teachers of writing, need to be able to give the students we serve the complexities of both. There are ways of gaining expertise using both approaches. Carter calls it a "pluralistic theory of expertise" (271). He and I both believe that "neither the general nor the local perspective alone provides a complete picture of the complexity of writing" (266). Perhaps we can show students ways to tell the stories they know—to use their local knowledge—in ways that make a real difference to our society. If we can give them tools to explore and expand upon their local knowledge while we also build their knowledgebase of general knowledge, surely they would become more aware of their own abilities not only to do inquiry and write in a convincing manner, but they would also have these tools for their future writing life as well. Besides, our students come to the tower with lived experience. They know their cities, their school districts, and their neighborhoods in ways that we have never considered. Our job is to help them tap into their local knowledge as they write so that they can tell the stories of their cities, their school districts, and their neighborhoods. Students can and should seek to make change. They can do this through inquiry. If they do inquiry parallel to the writing they do, if they take an aggressive inquiry-based approach to writing, they will more likely find those "fundamental impulses." Learning what

inquiry looks like and implementing a fuller skillset of inquiry practices will help them along their way to becoming members of the writing public.

I have been able to locate instances of inquiry in some nonfiction pieces; I have developed the tools to see that inquiry. I already share these practices with my students. If we revisit Hillocks, take into consideration Young and Koen, look at inquiry and invention as things located beyond "getting started," it is my belief that we are on the brink of giving a more formal instruction into the art of inquiry and helping students to make a difference with their writing. Through this guidance, students will learn they can advocate for change.

YANCEY'S WRITING PUBLIC WITH EXAMPLES BY MATT, SUE and JOHN

Advocating doesn't have to be difficult. It can be quite simple. To show the ease with which we can reach large, sometimes powerful audiences, I bring forth three examples of "the writing public" based on Yancey's call to action. First, let us consider Matt and his "Red Velvet Cake" page or group on Facebook (Figure removed. See footnote 6),. Created in 2008, Red Velvet Cake has over 120,000 "likes." While this particular page or group doesn't seem to have a "a call to action" – at least not a life-changing one, it's evident that the Facebook crowd has accepted this thoroughly. Matt, the creator only has 772 friends, so this has blossomed from all his friends, out into their friends, and to their friends of friends. It's Matt as The Writing Public and his words—about Red Velvet Cake in this instance—are being seen and heard. Yancey wants this of students.

My second example from "the writing public" is something I did. I am an avid NFL fan. Have been all my life. I also live in Wichita, Kansas. When most people hear Wichita, Kansas, they either think Dorothy or tornados or both. But, not much else. Every Monday at noon, if the sky is clear, Sedgwick County Civil Preparedness blows the tornado sirens. Every Monday. *Iff*

the sky is clear. The only other time they blow is during a tornado warning. Either a test on a clear day at noon or a tornado in the area. Period. But, whether a test or an impending disaster, the sound is *unmistakable* and it makes the hair on my neck stand on end. My skin crawls. I am keenly physically aware that those sirens are sounding.

I spend most Sundays grading papers and writing—while I watch football. This year, in the NFL, in games across the nation, the stadium sound systems had acquired tornado sirens—used to fire up the crowd when the home team does something amazing. Touchdown! Tornado Warning! Field Goal! Tornado Warning! The sound coming from my TV made the hair on my neck stand up and crawl. The following week, I heard the sirens again. On August 26, I had enough. I took to Twitter to contact the NFL (Figure removed. See footnote 6). I imagined that my tweet got lost in thousands of messages to the NFL that day.

We had a tornado come through Wichita this past April, but hardly any injuries and no loss of life. Thankfully. I can only imaging, though, how that sound coming through our televisions was affecting people in Tuscaloosa, Birmingham, or Joplin. Just two Sundays later (Sept 16), I heard those damned sirens again. So, I tweeted again: "@NFL I have asked before if you'd please stop using the tornado warning siren at your games. Please. 2nd Request. Find another sound. Thx." Since this tweet, I can report that the sirens have changed! I still hear them, but I have to strain to hear them. They are no longer blaring the siren at me (and thousands, if not millions of other viewers) through my television speakers. It's much more muted now. It's toned way down from earlier in the season. The siren seems to point away from the network audio feeds now. It's there, but it's subdued. It's hard to hear.

I don't know if my two little tweets made the NFL revisit the siren issue, or if it's all just coincidence. I do believe, though, that tweets have that kind of power. And, I firmly believe that

each of us—teachers and students alike—have the ability to make change with our writing—through something as small and simple as a 140-character tweet on a Sunday afternoon. On October 7, I tweeted to the NFL for the third time. "@NFL Thanks for not aiming the sirens at the audio feed these days. It's greatly appreciated." It's November, and the siren continues to be muted on Sunday afternoons.

My third and final example of "the writing public" comes from John. John posted a tweet the other day. John reached at least part of his 136 followers with his linked tweet. In his tweet, John linked us to "84 Dead Malls,"[54] and he did this in less than 140 characters. A few years ago, through Writing in Digital Environments (WIDE), I worked with the Urban Core Mayors in Michigan. They were writing a report on Brown Spaces in their cities. Brown spaces are places that are – or were – businesses, but have for one reason or another, been abandoned. In 2007, when I was helping them with their report, the multi-page work was to be printed and bound and would reach no more people than number of full-color copies produced. The costs were substantial. John, with one tweet, reached a portion of his 136 followers, and because I retweeted him, a portion of my 178 followers as well. The cost was nil.

Yancey asked us and our students to be the writing public. And, the reasons we write publically vary. Matt, Sue, and John had their reasons, and writing publically gives them (all of us) increased potential to be heard and to make change. Whether discussing Red Velvet Cake, tornado sirens, or dead spaces, there are ways to get the word out to an audience far far more relevant than "the teacher." Perhaps students have trouble finding their "fundamental impulses" because too many of us have only asked them to write to us? Too many classrooms still focus on "5-paragraph essays" and their longer counterparts. Perhaps more programs should encourage

[54] http://www.deathandtaxesmag.com/187511/84-pictures-of-dead-malls/

tweets and posts and event zines—things that students care about; places where a real audience already exists.

Some schools I've taught in press students to use the online databases as places to *get* their source material. (*Yawn*.) Oh, don't get me wrong. These articles and journals and electronic counterparts with their pdf generators are all very useful tools. After all, they're full of our written works. But, there should be a limit to their usefulness when it comes to teaching students to do *writing that matters*. Writing that makes a difference –public writing. Writing for social good. Writing for change. If we truly want to see our students become "the writing public," they need their "fundamental impulses." Their fundamental impulses are sure to be more prevalent when they pick their topic and their resources. Furthermore, if we share ways of seeing inquiry, we can get those impulses pulsating on issues that matter to the students, and we can amplify their abilities to see and to use inquiry in ways that make them *want* to be members of the writing public. I start each semester asking students to read and respond to Yancey's call, so that they may know where I'm coming from—where the field was. I ask then "What does Yancey Want" – and it's their job to tell me what she wants of each of them. Yancey helps to situate students, but Wallace helps students find their fundamental impulses. Toward the end of the semester, students "remix" their papers into formats for on-line delivery, they share those messages with their classmates—posting to YouTube or Facebook or making a website or starting a trend on twitter. These modes of delivery have enormous potential to engage others. These student messages could be the next viral video or trending topic on Twitter. These students have become engaged citizens.

Chapter 7: Consider the Pedagogy

In this chapter, I will suggest we continue to answer Yancey's call. I will demonstrate how I draw on Wallace's "This is Water" to help students be more empathetic and Wallace's "Consider the Lobster" to help students discover ways to see and implement a variety of inquiry practices as well as ways to think in terms of social issues. I will work with Bruce's and my inquiry strategies to help engage students so they may be more active, engaged citizens. I will discuss the tools I have created, together with the rationale for course that uses my methods to help students become members of the writing public.

WRITING FOR CHANGE IS NOT WRITING TO THE PROFESSOR

Nearly a decade ago, Kathleen Blake Yancey asked us to think of "composition in a new key." She asked us to prepare **"**students to become members of the writing public and to negotiate life." I feel that, through these new ways of looking at and seeing inquiry, students have new ways to get at their own "fundamental impulses" (Bazerman). Students will be well on their way to engaged citizenry. Furthermore, "if we believe that writing is social, shouldn't the system of circulation—the paths that the writing takes—extend beyond and around the single path from student to teacher?" (Yancey 310-11). As I mentioned earlier, I am vehemently against the "traditional academic research paper." Here's one reason: when I ask my students "who is your audience," they most often say "You are." If students consider me to be their primary audience, then they most likely write that paper simply for the grade. They don't write the paper to write a wrong or to "make change" – or to *be* a member of the writing public. By introducing them to a wide-scale look at inquiry moves, and to the ideas from the field presented here, we can help them see past the "student-to-teacher" frame of mind. We *must* give students more

opportunity to ask or inquire. We want them to engage. To care. To question. To inquire. And to write to make change.

Many of us already strive for this outcome in our classrooms. For example, in Wysocki and Lynch's *Compose Design Advocate*, students are given tools and encouraged to "use written, visual, and oral communication to effect change in their lives and communities." These authors advocate for students to advocate. And while many of us may do the same things as Wysocki and Lynch advocate for—it seems that not enough of us are advocating enough. Relatedly, Sir Ken Robinson, in a keynote address posted to TED online, says, "If you are not prepared to be wrong, you will never come up with anything original … and by the time they become adults, most kids have lost that capacity" to be wrong but try anyway (05:46). Robinson reminds us that we, as a society, "stigmatize mistakes." We must give students the tools to "go beyond the known" (Lauer. 89). We must help students find "the point of significance" (91). How can we help students take risks and give them space to make mistakes since these, too, are "integral to inquiry" (Lauer 92)? My body of work shows us some ways to do this.

The NCTE wants all students: "*to achieve full participation in society,*"[55] Full participation includes many things, but can and should include advocating for the betterment of our world, our society, our locality, our family, our friends, and ourselves—it seems to me to include being a member of the writing public. Students can do this through their writing, because writing makes change. To help with this, in the past two years when I've used Wallace readings in my classroom, students run with the idea of "doing" inquiry as they interview, observe, and look up for material for their own essays. They attend an event. They consider larger social issues, using their chosen event as a springboard for the subject matter. They keep

[55] http://www.ncte.org/mission

track of their field notes, and they attempt to "Do What David Foster Wallace Did" (DWDFWD). They don't try to sound like Wallace or write like Wallace, but they do emulate his inquiry practices. A few students have produced detailed, meaningful, thought-provoking works. They teach me.

Once, a student wrote and recorded an amazing song. He didn't name it, but I call it "The Argument Song." There are three stanzas that teach ethos, pathos, and logos and a chorus that reminds us to double check our MLA. I would link you to it, but that might violate the IRB rules—even though I have his permission. It's the only song so far, though one student, years ago, did do a rap song, but I was not able to get his permission to share. Some of my other students write *Fourth-Genre*[56]-quality essays. For instance, "Making Tortillas," is a story of a white girl learning to make tortillas from her Mexican boyfriend's mama. "Whooe! What's that smell?" is a story of a group of college students in Washington attending a Lutefisk dinner and the author seeing the tradition disappear in front of his eyes. Another student writes about the 19th Century art in an art museum in his dilapidated hometown of Muskegon, Michigan and he ponders a 500-year-old painting and what the artist would feel about where his art came to live. In "The Prices of Plasma," a first-year student rides the bus from the MSU campus across the city of Lansing, observing the change in landscape, attitude, and hope as he goes to sell his blood for money. As I said before, these students teach me. My student from Muskegon coined the DWDFWD term the first semester I taught this course. It stuck.

I always offer students the choice to use their DWDFWD project as a starting point for their research papers, but most don't take that choice. I don't know why. I'd love to ask them. I would guess they are afraid. Afraid to move away from the "traditional." It's a shame, I think,

[56] http://www.msupress.msu.edu/journals/fg/

for I'd sure love to see what they could do—building on a theme for 8 weeks instead of 4. The way our curriculum is too often set up asks us to move them through a series of writing projects rather than spending the time revising a couple projects into meaningful and useful documents. Their writing isn't finished—it's merely due.

Maybe someday we will revamp the ways we handle a series of assignments through the course of a semester. Maybe someday we will be able to let them students truly "grow and cook their message" to turn their writing projects into fruitful, useable, inquiry-rich, thought-provoking messages that have the ability to make change. Maybe someday, there will be time to see that everyone writes "shitty first drafts" and that each of us needs to be a "5-draft-man" and that they, themselves—our students— can help others see things from new perspectives. All it takes is them finding their "fundamental impulse" and "becoming members of the writing public."

Each semester I ask at least two students in each section if I can use their work as an exemplar. In these exemplars, the students—the authors—forgot about me the teacher and wrote things that taught the teacher. Their *pieces do things*. And, these are my best examples of the ideas I've presented in this dissertation and how they work. Students make some exciting interesting observations and their take (their writer's expertise) and implement that by asking questions about real-life, real-world issues. They discuss the social implications of an idea they formed by doing inquiry. With these tools to inquire of themselves—to ask questions of themselves and their society, who knows, one of them could be the next famous journalist or novelist or cartoonist or even rock star. Whatever their path, they are finding a voice to use, they are finding the confidence, or perhaps just the process, the steps, the moves, to make change with their writing.

WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THIS INQUIRY?

My process helps students develop the necessary skills to be more engaged, to show more empathy, to be members of the writing public. George Hillocks says, "[T]he basic strategies of inquiry … are evident in many disciplines [which] suggests that they are important to any writing concerned with reporting or analyzing data." He tells us that writing "is likely to be more effective" when a person skilled in these strategies. That person will "deal more thoroughly and effectively with the data in question" (665). We can either involve students in the process of writing and using the strategies intuitively, or we can (*now that we can start to see them*) explain what these strategies really are and provide illustrations of their use (667). Personally, I think we will make a greater difference in the to our student writers and, in turn, to the world as a whole, if we explain to our students what these inquiry strategies are and how to put them to use.

If students, according to Young and Koen, are "seldom given formal instruction in the arts of inquiry, argument, and persuasion," (3), is it because we haven't developed the actual tools to show them how to inquire, argue and persuade? Or, are tools out there, and we just don't use them? This project is well on its way to making or becoming a tool for student inquiry. George Hillocks, in his 1982 *College English* article "Inquiry and the Composing Process: Theory and Research" shows us, with data, that students who do inquiry (observe) self-report to have been more invested in the course as well as more engaged in the assignments. His results "suggest that involving students in using the strategies of inquiry requisite to and underlying particular writing tasks is likely to result in far greater gains" (672). Why aren't we more engaged with Hillocks' work? It seems to me that we develop skills by practicing. If we show our students how to implement some inquiry practices, then we will also see their interest level rise. We can first challenge them to begin writing (questioning) using a combination of inquiry

practices as I've discussed in chapters 4 and 5, then to craft thoughtful pieces engage them to make change with their writing.

LOCATING THOSE FUNDAMENTAL IMPULSES

John L. Bean, whose work somehow fell from the purview of our field, tells us that "there is something mechanistic about the way our students produce research papers, something disturbingly unlike the motivated inquiry and analysis we value" (197). But, do our students know that their inquiry must carry on after "invention?" Do they see the inquiry during "arrangement? Do they see that they must question (inquire) as to how to refine and revise a piece of writing into a finished draft?" And, are they working on a topic they care about? I hope to engage my students as members of the writing public by asking them to become aware of social issues in their neighborhoods. I am trying to find ways to show them empathy. This isn't easy, but David Foster Wallace helps me.

Wallace's celebrated Kenyon College commencement address "This is Water" helps students "see" empathy. They like reading it because it's not "preachy." They like it because it's not your typical "today is the first day of the rest of your life" speech. They like it because it finds ways to speak to them. Since "This is Water" is only 3,800 words long, it's a quick read with a big message.

THIS IS WATER (PROJECT 2: WDDFWW?)[57]

The message in "This is Water" is one I want to share, literally, with everyone, and while I think it helps students start to locate their "fundamental impulses." I am sure there are other readings and subject matter we can use to "teach" empathy, but Wallace does it in such a unique and concise way, that students receive it well and many reconsider their own selfish ways.

[57] http://webbsuza.com/1-201-FA12/shortresponse.html

Students really seem to step out of their own "hard-wired…basic self-centeredness" (Wallace) when exposed to a 20-minute speech given a number of years ago (2005). I know this because I assign them to read it[58] and/or listen to it[59, 60] and then I ask they write a response paper based on their perception of the piece. A few write a basic, semi-boring, pacify-the-teacher type response, and I can tell the message missed them. But, most students actually discuss how they are reconsidering what it feels like to be cut off in traffic, or what emotions they have in a crowded grocery store—two of Wallace's "parables" within the piece.

In this speech, Wallace warns of "boredom, routine and petty frustration" as students leave school and enter adult life. He asks his audience that day (and every new audience member that reads him or listens to him today) to attempt to avoid a "blind certainty—a closed-mindedness so total" that they do not consider things beyond themselves. Wallace was afraid we are hard-wired to have mostly a "critical awareness of [our own selves] and [our own] certainties" and that the real value of an education is "the choice of *what* to think about" Wallace states that "Learning how to think really means … learning how to *choose." He asks us to consider other perspectives, other possibilities.* Wallace words of wisdom carry year to year, student to student, audience member to audience member as he asks each of us to step outside of ourselves and consider other people's predicaments and other people's lives. He actually "teaches" empathy in about 20 minutes.

---

[58] Transcript http://moreintelligentlife.com/story/david-foster-wallace-in-his-own-words

[59] Audio Part 1: http://www.wordslingingwoman.com/201SP12/TIW.mp3

[60] Audio Part 2: http://www.wordslingingwoman.com/201SP12/TIW2.mp3

CONSIDER THE LOBSTER (PROJECT 3: DWDFWD)[61]

The next module in my course, after "WDFWDW?" (What Did DFW Want?) is "DWDFWD" (Do What DFW Did) . This project, based on "Consider the Lobster,"[62] asks students to read the essay, and encourages them to re-read the essay. Then, it asks them to mark all the places where Wallace asked somebody something; mark all the places where Wallace observed something; mark all the places Wallace looked something up. Then, we discuss his "inquiry moves."

The following text is the week 6 agenda from the current course:

LOBSTER, LOBSTER, LOBSTER :: Week 6 Agenda

English 201 :: September 23, 2012

Dear Students,

I am in deep admiration of your discussion---Robust, thoughtful, thorough. It raises some questions, I think. I'll address those here.

a) Larger social issues

b) Research and audience

c) Research and documentation

d) Logos, ethos, and pathos

a) Larger social issues

A few posts hinted at a "larger issue" that was part of the CTL essay. I would venture to say, an integral part. Wallace "opens up" his essay on "everything lobster" to discuss issues of pain (his original title for the piece was: "Lobster, Preference, and Various Kinds of Pain"). Let me call

[61] http://webbsuza.com/1-201-FA12/DFW_MODULE.html

[62] http://www.gourmet.com/magazine/2000s/2004/08/consider_the_lobster

your attention to something even bigger. Check out Wallace's footnote #8. Here, Wallace discusses the treatment of many of our food animals. Have you ever been to a commercial pig farm? I have. It's awful. Ghastly even. The 1000s of pigs never leave the buildings. They are housed in tiny concrete pens. And, while awful, I still eat bacon and pork chops.

Many of our food animals no longer graze fields. Some never even step on the grass. Our practices have changed as our populations have grown. It's quite a mess. Wallace wanted us to think about these things. I call this the "larger social issue." It's actually a second topic in CTL, after "lobster." It's also what I'm asking you to write. I want your next essay to be

1) About the event you attend, but also

2) About a larger social issue that branches out from the event itself.

For instance, if I attend a car show, I could address issues of the Big 3 and job loss or the economy. If I attend a horse show, I could discuss issues of horse as food animals. If I attend a football game, I could address issues of sportsmanship or issues of the types of dementia that often occur from multiple concussions. The possibilities are endless.

You may not know your "larger social issue" until after you attend you event and take time to reflect on it. That's ok too. And, there's a discussion board if you want to bounce ideas around with each other. Writing is a social activity and sometimes it takes talking through ideas to make the best surface.

You will need to describe your event in great detail before you "move" to discussing your larger social issue. Having a "larger social issue" is KEY to doing well on this next assignment.

b) Research and audience

You all discussed how Wallace did a lot of research for this essay and that the audience of *Gourmet* may or may not have needed the exact source documentation (APA or MLA or

Turabian or Chicago). Would you have preferred he had used a style guide (APA or MLA or Turabian or Chicago to name a few) even in *Gourmet?* Do popular press magazines often use a style guide? How about newspapers? What about novels or a collection of short stories or essays? Hmmm...

How would a lay audience react to having a peer reviewed journal-style article? Would it create a distance between writer and medium and audience? I do research in this very area. I think it odd that we write "academic essays" when we could make our words more accessible and more meaningful to larger audiences. I think what my students write could be / should be out there, reaching a bigger audience than just your teacher or even your classroom. And yet, the university forces us to follow some age-old convention. Why can't a research paper be written more like a magazine article? Why can't it be a YouTube Video? Who made this rule, and why can't we change it?

I'm not saying don't cite sources. I INSIST you cite your sources. But, an approach like Wallace's, I think, is more interesting than a traditional 5-paragraph (or 5-page) argument. He still makes many of the same writerly moves; he just brings along the audience in thought-provoking, witty, often ironic ways.

c) Research and documentation

You said that the essay would have meant more if Wallace had better documented his sources. I will ask that you document your sources in your upcoming essay. What I will allow though, is your ability to DECIDE which style guide to follow, or whether to use a footnote system, or link to resources directly in your text.

You need to make sure and document ALL sources. But you can also decide, based on writing an essay similar to CTL, *how* to go about documentation. You want to be informative

and reach an audience OTHER than professors and scholars. You may choose to use footnotes or adapt MLA conventions to fit your needs. These are decisions YOU will make. ***Document everything.***

d) On logos, ethos, and pathos

Facts do not always tell the whole story. There are 3 ancient rhetorical strategies to help carry a message. LOGOS: relies on Logic. Those dang facts. ETHOS: is a type of "ethics" usually associated with the author and his/her credibility. PATHOS: uses the power of emotion to pull on the audience and reach them with their heart. All three are important and most often all three are necessary. Not *too* much of any of the three, though. All things in moderation.

For more on the Rhetorical Strategies:

- From RPI: http://www.rpi.edu/dept/llc/webclass/web/project1/group4/
- From Purdue: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/04/

ATTENDING AN EVENT AND PROJECT THREE (P3)

You will need a finished draft of your P3 in 2 weeks for peer review. So, you have another week or so to attend your event. This will give you time to reflect and think about "themes" (both the topic of the meeting AND the larger social issue) and write your draft. It will not go well if you write on the day before the deadline. Seriously. The events you chose and discussed in this week's discussion board sound excellent. Be thinking about "larger issues" that may springboard from attending them.

What Did Wallace Do? :: What Can YOU Do?

The Smart Things You All Said (in previous discussion board)

- Help the reader raise ethical questions. Or find ways to show empathy.
- Raise more questions than can be answered; it's most definitely not a negative thing.

- Present inquiries in a variety of ways, whether they be facts, questions, or personal experiences and observations.
- Do a lot of *asking.*
- Ask people questions. It adds depth. It's not just one person's observations and research; it's a few different people's ideas.
- In typical Wallace fashion, take a seemingly straight forward event, and analyze the snot out of it.
- Do a lot of analyzing.
- Detail and describe every aspect.
- Use your own life experiences.
- Use detailed description as it shows the amount of research.
- Give credit to sources throughout.
- Think of your readers and inform them as deeply as possible on the issue.
- Obtain information.
- Use footnotes when applicable.
- Try not to take a side.

Students said these things. They "got it." They take these ideas and these thoughts and they choose an event to attend. They write about the event and they open up their essay and write about real-world issues like Wallace did. In this module, they tackle complex questions. They make inquiry happen inside themselves and then inside their readers.

RESEARCH PAPER MODULES

I wish I had time for students to continue to revise their DWDFWD papers. They explore a social issue in in-depth, personal—engaged ways, but what if, like Wallace, they could take a

year on this project? What would happen? We won't ever know, because we only have a few weeks to get them to get that paper done. Then, we have to move on immediately to "a more traditional research paper." One that tends to demonstrate their ability to match the manual, letter-for-letter, in MLA. One that's a more "standard" "academic" "research" "paper." One that requires them to utilize sources from online databases—because these sources are what we consider most credible. The standard academic research paper assignment supposedly teaches them the kind of writing respected and required in far too many writing programs across our nation. For some reason, the curriculum directs that this is the kind of project they need to move forward with their education. To communicate in higher ed. This "traditional academic research paper" is, sadly, the status quo.

I've said it before: A research paper, where I am the audience—me, the teacher—isn't enough. It doesn't do any good at all. Not in the world. Sure, it may grant my student and "A" or a 3.5, but if my student writes a paper on illegal human trafficking, and I'm the only one who sees it/reads it, it has done very little good to save the lives of children across the world. So, to help alleviate this problem, students in my class always "remix" those standard research papers into a multimedia presentation and share their presentations with the classroom. Now, 25 people learn about the horror that is human trafficking. Now 25 people have empathy and a heightened sense of awareness.

THE *POSSIBILITY* OF GOING VIRAL

A paper written to me, the teacher has no chance of making change. It almost dies in its tracks when I give it a grade and return it. But, I watch the Today Show every morning while I grade and field emails and write. Every morning, the Today Show shows a couple of recent viral videos. Sometimes they are simply cute babies being cute babies. Sometimes they're the latest

dance craze. What if, one day, they showed my student's 3-minute video on human trafficking? Or, if they showed my student's anime on China's coal consumption? That would mean his/her work was reaching hundreds of thousands. And, my student's work has just as good of chance of going viral as "Gundam Style"[63] did – it really does.

This time last year, I saw a video called KONY 2012[64]. It had reached 7 million viewers at that time. I looked it up again on YouTube this past week. KONY 2012 had well over 94 million views. Now, this particular video is almost 30 minutes long. It's well-scripted. It's very professional. I encourage students to use free, online resources to go live on the web. I ask them to take pictures and shoot video with their phones, or use their web cams to record their video. But, if Matt can make a page for Red Velvet Cake on Facebook that gains over a hundred thousand "likes," then my student, who creates an alcohol awareness page on Facebook, can as well. They have the tools. They just need to find their "fundamental impulses" to make a change through their writing. The do that through "This is Water" and "Consider the Lobster" and through writing from their heads and hearts about questions they have—issues they see. Students realize that, through their writing, they are becoming members of the writing public. They are becoming engaged citizens. They show empathy for their neighbors. They are becoming public rhetoricians.

HELP GETTING STARTED

There are other great teachers I draw from as well. Steven Lessner and Collin Craig (Chapter 1) say that "[a]sking rhetorical questions provokes a process of inquiry-based thinking that is useful for learning how to participate in academic conversations in a way that investigates

[63] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xt_2v3T_yD8

[64] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4MnpzG5Sqc

the decisions writers make when they compose and arrange compositions" (13). I've adapted Lessner and Craig so that one can approach their process with practically any text. This piece, published in Writing Spaces by Colorado State University, is very much aimed at an audience of writing students. It can help us all; these scholars have developed an outstanding guide for getting students started:

- Does [the writing] attempt to invoke an emotional response from its readers?
- What makes [the author] credible to speak about language practices as a condition of access into a community?
- Does the author make any logical appeals to persuade readers?
- What assumptions about culture can we make based on the content of the text?
- What writing moves can you learn from a close rhetorical reading of [the] text to compose your own text?
- Begin to ask questions
- Engage with opposing points of view
- Develop new perspectives and then ask more questions
- Organize your thoughts in bullets to help generate possibilities
- Look for how you might sequence a coherent streams of ideas
- Main points, examples, or themes. (136)
- Work with a peer

Asking rhetorical questions provokes a process of inquiry-based thinking. In this piece, Steven Lessner and Collin Craig have a way to begin tapping into students "fundamental impulses"—the ones that Charles Bazerman wants to see more of in our students. I have to say, it's a real shame to bring so very little from that article my peers wrote to my work here; it's all

valuable. The entire 20 pages *is* an inquiry-based approach to teaching composition. It is an "in" for students. It's rich with the work of Gloria Anzuhldua and includes a sequence on texting as writing, both of which help to explode student's views of the world as they also learn ways to inquire. These approaches are also very similar to doing rhetorical analysis—the prompts vary, but the kind of work a writer does—their inquiry practices—remain quite similar.

Another similar approach is the one by David A. Jolliffe, author of *Writing, Teaching, and Learning: Incorporating Writing Throughout the Curriculum*. In this, Jolliffe suggests students use a series of seven steps—quite similar to Bruce's Inquiry Chart. Jollife says students need to spend time inventing, drafting, consulting, reviewing, revising, editing, and proofreading. But, if they work like Lamont, or Wallace, or myself, they may do each (or at least some) of those steps a second time. Or, even a third.

There are a variety of great resources to draw on. Mine, Joliffe's, Bruce's, Lyon's, and more. The most important thing is that we find some way to show our students what the inquiry process looks like so that they may implement their own inquiry process. We must show them ways to be engaged, find their fundamental impulses, care. That, too, is part of our jobs.

Chapter 8: Implications for Further Study

The need for inquiry is evident. Inquiry happens, and not merely during the invention stage; it runs throughout an entire writing project. Being able to see how to do inquiry isn't necessarily intuitive; we need to be shown what it looks like. We need to show our students what it looks like. The list essays I created for this project (page 22 and page 68) are not inclusive. They are not meant to be prescriptive, but they are tools for students. They give us ways of *seeing* inquiry. Bruce helped me. Lessner and Craig helped me. I think you can help me too. Many people have worked on issues similar to what I raise here and we need to draw from everyone we can to help our students be the most engaged and informed and skilled as they can be as they go forward to be our leaders of tomorrow. We only get 16 weeks with each of them. It's not much time. There's a lot of work to do. It's our job to help them—equip them—as best we can.

A lack or a gap I've discovered as I've worked on this project is that inquiry isn't talked about in ways that help our students get meaningful words out to a chosen audience. We say, many times, that we want them to *do* inquiry, but it seems we rarely explain *what we mean* by that. And, while we have a substantial body of work on inquiry, it seems for the most part that we located that work in "invention." Why have we imagined that inquiry only happens at the beginning? In just two essays by David Foster Wallace, we see his *inquiry* in the finished products, and we see it across his drafts. We see inquiry as he begins. We see inquiry as he writes. We even see the inquiry he asks of us, his audience. We need to concern ourselves more with when inquiry happens and with how to show those moments to our students, because we need them to be engaged citizens who are members of the writing public.

I was incorrect earlier in this project in my thinking. I thought we didn't talk about inquiry much. Truth is, I have found a lot on inquiry. We study it. We say it—we say "*do inquiry*." But we don't offer a very good explanation of what that means or what it entails—we don't really "show" what it *looks like*—at least not past the canon of invention. We don't have very good tools to our students so that they can actually *do* inquiry in their process. —*We don't show them how!* I believe this project gives us a way to tell them *how*. I believe what we now have is a catalogue of inquiry moves—moves students can make in order to inquire. I've made the indicators of inquiry clear in this project. On page 22, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Inquiry" is a list essay that gives the keywords related to inquiry in Lauer's Invention in Rhetoric & Composition (2004). It's a good solid list of inquiry "moves." Also, I've provided my own set of inquiry words in a second, shorter list essay called "WDDFWD?" which appears on page 68. Between these two lists, we have markers—indicators of inquiry—that we can see, learn, discuss, categorize, and teach with.

SHORTCOMINGS & SHOULD HAVES

When I started this project, I had no idea that it would be about new ways to think about inquiry and I certainly had not thought about a call to action to the field to help students develop into more engaged citizens. I just knew I was going to "show" the inquiry Wallace did, and I thought I would write about crafting creative nonfiction essays using those kinds of inquiry. Instead, I find the real significance here allows me to start a conversation about the kinds of inquiry that go into the actual start-to-finish lifecycle of a written text and the calling to be a public rhetor and help my students become public rhetors. We can now see the inquiry moves that Wallace made. We can now talk about inquiry in new and exciting ways. We can show what inquiry looks like. This is the value-added. This is important. This is something we can all use.

This project, though, comes up short. It does not include any other writers; it focuses solely on David Foster Wallace. I feel the need to know who else does what else in terms of conducting their inquiry? I want to know what Mark Twain did to inquire. I want to know how Ray Carver conducted his inquiry. Those are possible projects stemming from this one. And, though this project is rich with newfound details about what inquiry looks like, this project looks only at Wallace as exemplar, so in that way, it comes up short.

WALLACE HELPS STUDENTS SEE THE INQUIRY

Inquiry, it seems, runs parallel to the writing. We see this evidenced in the works of David Foster Wallace. We see inquiry *to write* (he writes down what he hears, what he sees, what he knows); we see inquiry *as he writes* (he asks taxi drivers and neighbors and makes notes to himself to "ask three different people." And, we can see the inquiry Wallace asks of his audience "Do you think much about the (possible) moral status and (probable) suffering of the animals involved?" (last paragraph of CTL). And, while Wallace is but one writer, and I've only looked at two of his essays, we can see that inquiry is (should be) ongoing as a writer takes on, begins, thinks through, writes down, and revises.

Maybe we can't see this just yet. Maybe I have more work to do to clarify this idea. Maybe we need to do more research. Maybe all I've found is an indicator that there seems to be a correlation. I feel confident I've found something important though—that inquiry is more than a moment (or moments) during invention. Eventually, with further research, someone might be able to say that invention itself is not the first canon of invention, but a path that runs alongside all of the canons—and the more questions that surface, the more invention a writer must do (inquiry included), and after that, the more thorough and meaningful a writer can be on the page. From investigating to planning to inventing to drafting to reviewing to revising to editing to

proofreading—we can and should do inquiry. Wallace shows us an actual path that Hillocks, Young and Koen and even Janice Lauer only allude to. We can see his process. We needed a clear path—one we can show to our students. David Foster Wallace helps us to "see" the inquiry.

Furthermore, students need to be the writing public (Yancey). Students need to be engaged citizens. Students need to be public intellectuals and empathetic rhetors. And, helping students become inquirers, engaged citizens and public intellectuals falls to us: You. Me. The field. And it is a tall order, but I think that looking at inquiry in these new and exciting ways can help us show students paths to clearer writing—writing that *does things.* They can learn to make change through their writing.

I'm really concerned for the future. No, I'm no conspiracy theorist, but in the month I've been drafting this dissertation, the news has been dire. The Horror in Aurora, Colorado. The temple in Wisconsin. I have no idea if we can change the future to prevent these kinds of acts, but I do know that we have a moment to not only help our students become members of the writing public, but to also give them tools so that their writing can make a real difference in the world—whether they reach someone on the edge or someone in need of food or peoples displaced or peoples' abused. We simply do not need them to write to us one minute longer. We need them reaching a real audience.

Our students have the power at hand today to deliver their messages via Youtube or Facebook and countless other ways. Just at Michigan State alone, we reach 7000 students every year through our first year writing courses. 7000 young minds walk through our doors. If we do the math, we can estimate that there are approximately 3,000,000 FYW students each year across our country. Three million minds. This approximation doesn't even include all the Professional Writing or English major courses or electives that are in our specializations (nonfiction, medical

writing, class studies, Native American Rhetorics, cultural rhetorics, etc).We need our students to have a *rhetorical* education, learn how to *use rhetoric,* learn to *be the voice for others,* and learn to persuade. We need them to write with *empathy.* We need them *engaged* and we need them to be *the writing public*.

"EDUCATION TRULY IS THE JOB OF A LIFETIME"

My work, using some David Foster Wallace essays as exemplars, has sought to expand on this need for a more engaged citizenry in ways that not only give us names for inquiry moves, but also locates the "whens" of inquiry—where it happens along the writing process. If I've learned anything, it's that inquiry happens throughout the writing process and that my work should help give students a well-rounded base from which to get started on their own inquiry. To substantiate this claim, I draw on Richard Young and Frank Koen who reported in 1971 that "scope of rhetoric has been reduced" (2). Young and Koen were worried that "problems of language [had been] divorced from problems of truth and inquiry" (2). In this, I think we need to think about how we approach the teaching of writing at a programmatic level—it's not just FYW, but writing majors, professional writing, WAC, WID. I have tried to align myself not only with the voices that support my ideas on inquiry, but also voices that issue a call to action to teachers of writing: we need to be public intellectuals, teach others to be public intellectuals, and work toward the good of the people. It really is our job. We may need "way more than luck" (Wallace). My work gives us a plan.

THE COVERAGE MODEL > ISSUES OF CURRICULUM DESIGN

Even today, too, too many of us teach the coverage model, where students are given a genre, and told to meet the genre expectations. It's the way our curriculum is designed. As soon as one project is done, we assign another project: narrative, expository, analysis, persuasion. We

assign four or five writing projects (products) and we grant little time to truly develop any of these products. This approach limits the amount of inquiry a student can do. Look how much inquiry Wallace was able to accomplish in the course of a year. What could students do if they were able to continue their inquiry process for six or eight weeks? What if they wrote a major paper (or produced a documentary or wrote a short story) for eight weeks? For sixteen weeks? What kinds of inquiry could they then begin to master?

WRITING IS NEVER DONE; IT'S MERELY DUE

How many drafts do you write? I claim to write eight drafts (even though I've done over 80 separate backup files for this dissertation!). David Foster Wallace claims to have been a "5-draft" man. Anne Lamont, author of "Shitty First Drafts" claims she must write three. How much time can we/do we afford our students for these kinds of revisions? David Foster Wallace took 12 months from the day he went to the Maine Lobster Fest until "Consider the Lobster" was first published in *Gourmet.* Twelve months. And we don't know, he could have started his inquiry about lobster before he even flew to Maine. Even "The View from Mrs. Thompson's" took Wallace (an expert, accomplished, "genius" writer) six weeks to complete. He did multiple drafts of both essays. Our students don't have that kind of time.

Within the current framework for First Year Writing, students don't have ample opportunity to *do* inquiry. Not in deep enough ways. We limit their ability in two major ways. First, we limit them to do inquiry because we suggest that they rely too heavily on their school's electronic databases provided by their libraries to gather materials for a writing project. Though these are excellent places to gather secondary data, students in my classrooms are far more engaged when they go out and observe and ask and see and record their own data—first-hand. Students need to do primary inquiry, not just secondary. Giving students "activities that represent

genuine exploration, that *engage and challenge* students' thinking, and that connect coherently to the students' writing assignments" (Porter, Jim. emphasis mine.) are ways in which they can conduct their own inquiry. I encourage going to events and taking field notes and then doing further inquiry in deciphering and interpreting their notes. I suggest they email a short set of interview questions to policy makers. I often suggest they use survey tools like SurveyMonkey[65]. The sad thing is, though, that I have to limit the amount of time students spend on such a project, because as our current courses are set up, they need to hurry up, turn it in, and move on to their next assignment.

And, that brings us to the second issue in our current lesson plans: we rush to assign multiple projects using multiple rhetorical modes (narration, description, exposition, persuasion) to fill our semester schedule for our students. These writings are assigned (essays, annotated bibs, research papers, remixes) on the heels of one another. Project 1. Project 2. Project 3. Project 4. And, in a mere 16 weeks, students have produced what really amounts to four rough drafts. These projects were not / are not "finished;" they are merely "due."

What would happen if we slowed down, let students really "grow and cook the[ir] message" (Elbow). This is, after all, what *we* do. It's pretty rare that we would have a concept, write a chapter or a journal article, and submit in only four weeks. We could, but how long does this process usually take for trained, professional writers? Do we bang one out every four weeks for 16 weeks straight? —I don't think so— Rushing our students through multiple assignments isn't helping them gain writing expertise. Experience, yes. Expertise, no. But, it's possible that continuing the inquiry process across less projects but producing instead a series of versions or drafts would be a viable alternative. Consider Wallace's self-admission of being a "5-

[65] https://www.surveymonkey.com/MyAccount_Join.aspx

draft man." When we (writers) write, we rarely rush. We stew. We stir. We revisit. We revise. We step away, and we let things simmer. Then we add a pinch of this; we realize we forgot an important ingredient, and we revise again. After all that—and only after all that—do we submit for publication. Then, based on our reviewers' comments, we have even more revision/inquiry work to do.

"ATTENTION TO THE CONDITIONS OF GROWTH"

There is no reason to suggest that just because John Dewey wrote a long time ago that his ideas weren't radical—and still need to be realized. What I mean is, an idea that has never been put into practice can still be new. Dewey said, to us, "By various agencies, unintentional and designed, a society transforms uninitiated and seemingly alien beings into robust trustees of its own resources and ideals. Education is thus a fostering, a nurturing, a cultivating, process. All of these words mean that it implies attention to the conditions of growth" (Dewey. Ch 2. Sec. 1). What I suggest is that we revise the ways in which our writing courses "bring up its immature members into its own social form" (Dewey. Ch 2. Sec. 1) and helps foster their growth.

FINAL THOUGHT

Students need to explore, analyze, gather testimony, explore tensions, learn rhetoric, question, view things through multiple perspectives, examine, probe, plan, develop, review, network, tell stories, use metaphor, try, and make visible that which is not. Literally millions of new freshmen entered college for the fall of 2012. The majority of them take first-year writing. We—you—me—the field—have a chance to make a difference. My inquiry, moving through this project, has brought me to think about such things. That's what we're supposed to do—as Rhetors—work for the good of the people. As teachers we are supposed to help others learn to do the same. Sharon Crowley is onto something when she says "composition is not rhetoric"

(*Enculturation*). It used to be. It still is in some classrooms. It needs to be in all our classrooms. I call for us (the field of Rhet/Comp) to ground the teaching of writing in inquiry and to find ways to engage our students so they may become members of the writing public.

Wallace's inquiry practices were just as important in him producing these definitive works of art as any other part of his writing. His inquiry ran parallel to his entire writing process. His curiosity must have been overwhelming. But, we don't need to be a stylist in the tradition of Wallace. Perhaps we do need to recognize him as a rhetorician. He's as much of an inquirer as he is a writer. We should all strive for his depth of inquiry. I didn't know this intuitively; being able to say this comes from 18 months of my own research (inquiry), looking for, finding, gathering, questioning, sorting, and then describing Wallace's inquiry practices. Through Wallace, I have been attentive to my conditions of growth and the conditions that affect my students. Someday, I would like to do research on Wallace as teacher. I've heard a few stories. Lord knows, he's taught me quite a lot. I know he's teaching my students every semester—about inquiry; about writing; about empathy; about one another and about ourselves. It seems that even though Wallace is gone, he still has a lot he can teach us. I am grateful for what he taught me these last two years.

WORKS CITED

WORKS CITED

Battleson, Booth, Weintrop. "Usability Testing of an Academic Library Web Site: A Case Study." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship,* Volume 27, Number 3, 2005. pages 188–198.

Bean, John C. *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrated Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom. San Francisco. 2001. pp. 282.*

Brent, Doug. "Rogerian Rhetoric." *Theorizing Composition: A Critical Sourcebook of Theory and Scholarship in Contemporary Composition Studies,* ed. Mary Kennedy (Westport: Greenwood, 1998), pp. 263-65.

Carter, Michael. "The Idea of Expertise: An Exploration of Cognitive and Social Dimensions of Writing." *College Composition and Communication,* Vol. 41, No. 3. NCTE. (Oct., 1990), pp. 265-286.

Corbett, Edward P. J. "The Usefulness of Classical Rhetoric." *College Composition and Communication,* Vol. 14, No. 3, Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, 1963: Toward a New Rhetoric (Oct., 1963), pp. 162-164.

Crowley, Sharon. "Composition Is Not Rhetoric." Enculturation 5.1 (Fall 2003): http://enculturation.gmu.edu/5_1/crowley.html

Dewey, John. *Education and Democracy*. (c) 1916. Institute for Learning Technologies. Columbia University. http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/publications/dewey.html

Edwards, Bruce L. "Tagmemic Discourse Theory." Professor of English and Africana Studies; Associate Vice Provost for Academic technology. Bowling Green State University. Bowling Green, Ohio 43403. http://personal.bgsu.edu/~edwards/tags.html

Hillocks, George, Jr. "Inquiry and the Composing Process: Theory and Research." *College English,* Vol. 44, No. 7. NCTE. (Nov., 1982), pp. 659-673. http://www.jstor.org/stable/376805

Jolliffe, David A. Writing, Teaching, and Learning: Incorporating Writing Throughout the Curriculum, HarperCollins College Publishers, 1994, pp. 6-19. http://courses.cs.vt.edu/~cs3604/support/Writing/Jolliffe.html

King, Thomas. "The Truth About Stories" (audio)

Kirschner, Paul; Sweller, John, and Richard E. Clark. "Why Minimal Guidance During Instruction Does Not Work: An Analysis of the Failure of Constructivist, Discovery, Problem-Based, Experiential, and Inquiry-Based Teaching." *EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST*, 41(2), 75–86. Copyright © 2006, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Lauer, Janice M. *Invention in Rhetoric and Composition. Parlor Press. West Lafayette, Indiana.* (2004), pp. 257

Lauer, Janice M. "Writing as Inquiry: Some Questions for Teachers.*" College Composition and Communication*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Feb., 1982), pp. 89-93

Lessner, Steven and Collin Craig. "Finding Your Way In." *The Journal of Process.* "Help[ing] to illuminate your own process." *Readings on Writing.* Edited by Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemliansky. West Lafayette. Parlor Press. June 14, 2010.

Lyons, Scott Richard. "Rhetorical Sovereignty: What Do American Indians Want from Writing?"*College Composition and Communication*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Feb., 2000), pp. 447-468.

Mallioux, Steven. *Disciplinary Identities: Rhetorical Paths of English, Speech, and Composition*. Modern Language Association. 2006. pp 163.

North, Stephen. *The Making of Knowledge in Composition: Portrait of an Emerging Field.* Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1987 - Language Arts & Disciplines - 403 pages

Pietsch, Michael. *5 Dials: Celebrating the Life and Work of David Foster Wallace 1962–2008.* Hamlish Hamilton Publishers. 2008. 18 p.

Pike, Kenneth L. Maxims. Summer Institute of Linguistics, Inc. http://www.sil.org/klp/klp-maxims.htm

Porter, Jim. 'How Do We Teach Composition as Inquiry?" English 111. Miami University. 2010.

Powell, Malea. "Down by the River, or How Susan La Flesche Picotte Can Teach Us about Alliance as a Practice of Survivance." *College English*, Volume 67, Number 1, September 2004. Pp 38-60.

Robinson, Sir Ken. *Schools Kill Creativity*. TED: Ideas Worth Spreading. http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.html

Schmeidel, Stacey. "Interview with a 5-draft man." *Amherst Magazine.* Spring 1999. https://www.amherst.edu/aboutamherst/magazine/extra/node/66410

Scocca, Tom. "My Big Problem With Magazines Is That They Tend To Have Word Lengths": David Foster Wallace on Nonfiction. *Slate Magazine*. 1998, Part 2 Posted Tuesday, Nov. 23, 2010, at 12:48 PM ET. Retrieved July 22, 2012.

Scocca, Tom. "There's Going To Be the Occasional Bit of Embellishment": David Foster Wallace on Nonfiction. *Slate Magazine*. 1998. Part 3. Posted Friday, Nov. 26, 2010, at 10:43 PM ET. Retrieved July 22, 2012.

Shannon, Noah Gallagher. Cormac McCarthy Cuts to the Bone. *Slate Magazine.* Oct. 5, 2012, at 11:30 PM ET http://mobile.slate.com/articles/arts/books/2012/10/cormac_mccarthy_s_blood_meridian_early_drafts_and_history_.html

Smart Thinking Writer's Handbook. Tagmemics. Chapter 3, Lesson 3: Section 6. http://services.smarthinking.com/static/document_library/docs/writeman/3_03_06.cfm

Wallace, David Foster, "Consider the Lobster" Type-written draft. The Harry Ransom Center, David Foster Wallace Archive. Retrieved 12-2010.

Wallace, David Foster, "Consider the Lobster" *Gourmet Magazine*. August 2004. http://www.gourmet.com/magazine/2000s/2004/08/consider_the_lobster

Wallace, David Foster, "Consider the Lobster" *Consider The Lobster and other Essays. Little Brown and Company. New York. 2006. Pp 343.*

Wallace, David Foster, "Consider the Lobster" *Time Warner Audio Books*. Time Warner. 2006.

Wallace, David Foster, "The View From Mrs. Thompson's" Hand-written draft (T1). The Harry Ransom Center, David Foster Wallace Archive. Retrieved 12-2010.

Wallace, David Foster, "The View From Mrs. Thompson's" Type-written draft (T2). The Harry Ransom Center, David Foster Wallace Archive. Retrieved 12-2010.

Wallace, David Foster, "The View From Mrs. Thompson's" Hand-written draft (T3). The Harry Ransom Center, David Foster Wallace Archive. Retrieved 12-2010.

Wallace, David Foster, "The View From Mrs. Thompson's" *Rolling Stone Magazine.* Issue 92. October 12, 2001

Wallace, David Foster, "The View From Mrs. Thompson's" *Consider The Lobster and other Essays. Little Brown and Company. New York. 2006. Pp 343.*

Wallace, David Foster, "The View From Mrs. Thompson's" *Time Warner Audio Books*. Time Warner. 2006.

Wallace, David Foster, "This is Water" *More Intelligent Life*. September 2008. http://moreintelligentlife.com/story/david-foster-wallace-in-his-own-words

Wallace, David Foster, "This is Water" Part 1. You Tube. March 2012. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vET9cvlGJQw

Wallace, David Foster, "This is Water" Part 2. You Tube. April 2012 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EEjVnB7AeBQ

Wilson, Shawn. *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods.* Fernwood Publishing. Winnipeg. ©2008. 144 pp.

Yancey, Kathleen Blake. "Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key." *College Composition and Communication;* Dec 2004; 56, 2; pg. 297.

Young, Richard E., Koen, Frank M. "The Tagmemic Discovery Procedure: An Evaluation of Its Uses in the Teaching of Rhetoric." Michigan Univ., Ann Arbor. Dept. of Humanities. July 1973. 179 p.