literary analysis. “The Usefulness of Classical Rhetoric,” “A New Look at Old Rhetoric,” and “Teaching Style” stress the merits of applying classical rhetoric to writing. “The Rhetoric of the Open Hand and the Rhetoric of the Closed Fist,” “Rhetoric, the Enabling Discipline” and “The Ethical Dimensions of Rhetoric” offer excellent discussions of the merits of rhetoric to realizing human development through critical thought and expression. Finally, “John Locke’s Contributions to Rhetoric,” “The Roots of Writing across the Curriculum in the Ancient Schools of Rhetoric,” and “The Classical Paideia in the Ancient Greek and Roman Schools” are fine illustrations of historical scholarship. The concluding essay, “Where are the Snows of Yesteryear? Has Rhetoric Come a Long Way in the Last Twenty-Five Years?” is unique unto itself: Corbett’s retrospective view on his own work, the field of rhetoric and composition, and the worth of our discipline’s enterprise.

*Selected Essays* is essential reading for everyone in rhetoric and composition, but the profit of reading essays in this the volume transcends even our deference to the scholar who wrote them. The *studia humanitatis* of the Renaissance laid the foundation for humanistic thought in five disciplines: grammar, rhetoric, poetics, history, and ethical philosophy. All five of these disciplines are discussed by Corbett; rhetoric dominates and the remaining four are colored by rhetoric in the spectrum of Corbett’s essays. In total they reach across the humanities, enriching our appreciation and knowledge of the humanistic thought to which rhetoric contributes. Corbett’s great contribution is the enactment of rhetoric as a grounding for composition, a compatibility of scholarship and *praxis* that few disciplines achieve. Just as Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria* established rhetoric in the curriculum of the West, so does Corbett’s revitalization of his master. When the time to write the history of rhetoric in the twentieth century comes, the historian will have to turn the manuscript over to the scribe so that the name, “Edward P.J. Corbett,” can be illuminated. *Selected Essays* is the vellum on which his name will be inscribed.


Reviewed by Art Young, Clemson University

For Marilyn Cooper and Michael Holzman, writing is situated in the social world and is constituted by and constitutive of this world. Writers and readers are not abstract concepts or remote images of authors and audience, but people who interact through writing and who continually modify them-
selves and their worlds through ongoing discourse. If writers are social beings constituted by discourse in a social world, then writers are not solitary individuals who write to equally solitary readers. Writing is not a series of discrete skills that taken together (or learned in sequence) add up to a form of social action. As Holzman says about adults learning to write in the California Conservation Corps, "Why learn to say, to write, words that do not matter?" Writing is not, then, simply a cognitive process but more fundamentally a way of interacting with others. This distinction not only anchors Cooper and Holzman's argument but also points the way for their considered approach to teaching, program design, writing research, and social action.

_Writing as Social Action_ is a collection of fifteen essays written over the past decade—seven new, eight previously published; three co-authored, five by Cooper, seven by Holzman. Cooper's work on the ecology of writing and Holzman's work on adult literacy programs, both of which first appeared in _College English_, have shaped our thinking about those issues, and their critique in _College Composition and Communication_ of Linda Flower and John Hayes' theoretical assumptions, research methodology, and pedagogical claims provoked a lively discussion in the pages of _CCC_ and in the corridors of academia. Yet, to reread the familiar within the context of this new collection is to think again about the work of these scholars from a more fully presented theoretical framework and, perhaps more importantly, to consider anew questions of what, how, and why we teach.

Cooper's "The Ecology of Writing" contributes to the discussion begun by Kenneth Bruffee and James Reither in analyzing the shortcomings of writing process pedagogy/research and arguing for the essentially social purposes of writing. Instead of a cognitive process model for writing instruction, she proposes an ecological model in which the central metaphor is the "web": "anything that affects one strand of the web vibrates throughout the whole." Cooper criticizes traditional concepts of audience in which students are asked to analyze or invent their audience in some abstract sense, concepts which keep audiences located in the mind of the writer rather than in the real world of action and reaction. She argues that writers write for audiences they know and communicate with; when you or I write for _JAC_, we write to those we have met at conventions, to those who have taught with us, to those whose writing we have read, to those who have also published in such places, and to those whose editorial comments on a draft we must consider. When Linda Flower now writes for readers who include Cooper and Holzman, Bruffee and Reither, Bartholomae and Bizzell, she in some sense writes in a different social context and to different readers than she did previously. And those of us who have followed the discussion about cognitive versus social approaches to the study of composition now read, write, and act differently than we did before.

Three new essays by Cooper entitled "Unhappy Consciousness in First-Year English: How to Figure Things Out for Yourself," "Women's Ways of
Writing," and "Why Are We Talking About Discourse Communities? Or, Foundationalism Rears Its Ugly Head Once More" all show us a thoughtful teacher and scholar examining the theoretical and social implications of what and how she teaches, examining the implications of the curricula she designed for a first-year college course populated principally by engineering students and for a shelter for abused women for whom language had been diminishing rather than empowering. "Unhappy Consciousness" and "Discourse Communities" are companion pieces which describe and analyze Cooper's experience in a first-year writing course at Michigan Technological University. In describing a case study of a particular writing class and then attempting to interpret her experience with reference to current theories of collaborative learning and discourse communities, she not only explains some of the inadequacies of these theories but constructs an adequate and, to my mind, satisfactory definition for what college composition courses should be. Our primary goal, Cooper explains, is for students and ourselves to use not only reading and writing but also collaborative inquiry, cognitive dissonance, and critical thinking in order to come to know. To establish such a goal is to teach the values of the academic community: "the inclination and the ability to examine things from different points of view, to develop, test, and apply theories in order to understand experiences." Cooper argues that the discourse community we are inviting students into is "the community of professional nonfiction writers, people who analyze ideas in writing as an occupation or as part of their occupation." She writes, "What we offer is useful in all academic disciplines but that also enables one to act on and in one's social environments.... Our role is to try to give our students the ability to criticize and change the world and thereby claim it as their own." In other words, a college composition course should be an invitation to join the community of professional nonfiction writers and to learn how to read, write, and think as such writers do.

Cooper arrives at this conclusion through close observation of her own teaching and her students' learning. We see her happy choice of Herbert Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man* as a text for her first-year science and engineering students, a text that asks them to consider an unfamiliar (and for many a threatening) point of view about the role of technology in their society, leading to cognitive dissonance (what Hegel calls "unhappy consciousness") which spurs inquiry, critical thinking, and the desire to act in the world through reading and writing. We meet several students: Stan and Warren, apprentice engineers, skeptical but eager to succeed; Margaret, the working mother, whose schedule makes collaborative work more of a handicap than a help; Bartleby, who steadfastly refuses to consider any perspective with which he doesn't already agree; and Robin, whose analysis of onedimensionality helps her teacher construct the argument we are reading. We see a course in which computer technology is used (classes are taught in a computer center, and students read and write to each other on disk) to
support a collaborative community dedicated to critically examining the role of technology in their lives. We see students engaged in critical reading and informal written response, in critical thinking and peer response to drafts of nonfiction essays. The experience of teaching this class moves Cooper to write, "It makes me feel good about teaching writing." (I might add that the experience of reading Cooper and Holzman’s book had a similar effect on me.)

Cooper looks critically at her use of the concept of discourse community to explain her instructional goals and experiences. Based on her readings of Richard Rorty, Michel Foucault, and Clifford Geertz, she examines the political and ethical implications of discourse communities as a rhetorical and pedagogical concept susceptible to becoming yet another academic justification for separating insiders from outsiders, for making English teachers once again the gatekeepers for a society bent on making distinctions between people—separating those who are like us and share our values from those who aren’t and don’t. When the notion of discourse communities becomes a foundation for truth apart from any specific social situation, as the “rules” of standard English sometimes do, then it is opposed to the needs of individuals and a democratic society which seeks full participation. Cooper examines the case of Bartleby from her first-year English class, who in substance said “no thank you, I don’t wish to join this discourse community, especially if it means I must suspend disbelief long enough to consider fairly Marcuse’s ‘socialist’ point of view.” Here is her reflection:

In requiring Bartleby to demonstrate a certain kind of critical thinking in his work in the course I acted on the assumption that valid evaluation must rely on standards that are prior to and external to the discourse of the class itself. Instead of responding to Bartleby, I tacitly excluded him from the legitimate discourse of the class by ignoring the comments he made in the common computer file that I felt to be irrelevant or inappropriate. I might better have asked Bartleby to explain why he responded to Marcuse’s ideas as he did and evaluated his work on the basis of what it contributed to the discourse of the class. His comments might have helped other students understand better their own resistance to Marcuse’s ideas, and validating the usefulness of Bartleby’s contributions in this way certainly would have moved Bartleby closer to an appreciation of the social value of writing. (219)

In other words, Cooper had unwittingly become a gatekeeper—welcoming only the participation of those willing to accept her academic values, values which a priori determined what kinds of writing would be taken seriously by her class’s discourse community.

While Cooper applies to traditional college instruction the explanatory power of the theory that writing is social action, Holzman applies it to nonschool-based literacy programs. This collection includes four of his previously published essays: “A Post-Freirean Model for Adult Literacy Education,” “Evaluation of Adult Literacy Programs,” “The Social Context of Literacy Education,” and “Teaching is Remembering.” Holzman is one of
the few who publish about adult literacy in composition journals, and he reminds those of us who teach in the privileged world of college of the pressing needs within our society at large, deriving theoretical premises and instructional principles which cross barriers from ghettos to ivory towers.

Holzman asks us to examine how we teach—to see our actions as social agents: do we teach our students to write by grounding language in their social world and thereby empowering them to participation, or do we teach them to write by having them listen to specialized voices of authority and then testing their obedience? Much adult literacy instruction in our country is done by underpaid, underprepared teachers who often turn to readily available means: drill-and-kill workbooks and computer programs. If certain adults read at a fourth-grade level, they are often given fourth-grade materials in the hope that familiar remediation will teach them what it failed to teach in the past. Such teaching practices, whether in a prison literacy course or a course for basic writers at a major university, are the results of cognitive and behavioral approaches to language acquisition and development. After reading Holzman's explanation of adult literacy programs in the California Conservation Corps, I join him in asking "why anyone, anywhere, should be given an education that is not holistic, not democratic."

In three new essays, Holzman examines the ideological and social contexts in which literacy develops or fails to develop. In "Nominal and Active Literacy," he uses the theoretical constructs of Bakhtin and Labov to analyze the dichotomy between literacy and illiteracy to show that such oppositions obscure the fact that schools are social institutions with values similar to the immediate community and larger society. These values are so "overdetermined" that they become transparent, invisible, a form of "second nature," frequently working against literacy acquisition. In the United States, Holzman argues, we actually school people into illiteracy; for some children, school is where they learn how not to read and write. Children who are most like their teachers, who share similar social values, have learning facilitated; other children learn "that reading is something distasteful, something to be avoided." Indeed, this ideology feels so natural that parents of such children, themselves schooled in such a way, "model literacy education as testing, as punishment, when asked to read to their own children." This ideology is so invisible that it goes unquestioned, and people who understand that literacy means improvement in personal welfare unwittingly promote a social system that schools their children into illiteracy.

Cooper and Holzman ask us to look at what we are doing in order to make the invisible visible, and they ask that when we do look again that we focus on the social context of reading and writing, for context is what makes discourse possible or impossible. When we join Cooper and Bartleby, the first-year college student, and when we join Holzman and Olga, the Olympic athlete and literacy worker in the California Conservation Corps, we become participants in important stories—stories that suggest ways we can better
understand our individual teaching, reconceive our course curricula, define the emerging discipline of composition studies, and become actors in a world in which all of these activities matter.

_Expecting the Unexpected: Teaching Myself—and Others—to Read and Write_, Donald M. Murray (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton, 1989, 276 pages).

Reviewed by Susan H. McLeod, Washington State University

Donald Murray is a genial presence in our discipline, one of the earliest to discuss writing as a process and to speculate about how that process could best be taught. Many of us remember reading _A Writer Teaches Writing_ in the late 1960s and having that book transform our thinking about the teaching of writing.

For those who already know Murray and his work, _Expecting the Unexpected_ is a welcome book, since it collects many of his articles and addresses from the last fifteen years under one cover. The collection includes articles from _College English, College Composition and Communication_, and numerous essay anthologies, as well as four of his newspaper columns from the _Boston Globe_, and Carol Berkenkotter’s article analyzing Murray’s writing and revising processes, along with his reply. These pieces show Murray at his best, working at his craft and at the same time working to understand how he does what he does so that he can teach others to do it well. He is quite clear about his approach:

> My own revelations, perhaps better called confessions, are merely the speculations of one writer, and they should be suspect. They are not conventional research findings . . . I am not a researcher. I am a writer and a writing teacher, who looks within to try to understand my subject matter. I realize better than my critics how eccentric this may be, but I hope it can be a starting place for more authoritative research into how we read while writing and write while reading. (72)

One is constantly aware while reading these essays of Murray’s unique voice—warm, witty, self-deprecating, personal. Each piece has a chatty introduction telling us a bit about it. Before Berkenkotter’s article, for example, Murray describes how he met Berkenkotter after he had heard her give a paper at an academic meeting: “A group of us stood around, and I found myself criticizing some of the work being done by Linda Flower. I felt that the research was based too much on limited assignments executed in brief periods of time by inexperienced writers. After I had made my case Carol introduced me to one of the people in the group: Linda Flower” (254). Out of that embarrassing moment, Murray tells us, was born a friendship with Flower, as well as Berkenkotter’s research project with Murray as the subject.