It's a wonder that fistfights don't break out every day, given Tim Mayers' assessment of the "massive power imbalance that exists in most English departments between the interpretive study of literature ... and the study/practice of textual production" (xv). Of course, decorum wins out, and fighting words are generally reserved for private conversations and scholarly publications buttressed with citations and appropriate qualifications of claims. This could have been an angrier book, but it's more proposal than polemic, more thoughtfully reasoned gerrymander than jeremiad. Mayers chooses not to point accusatory fingers or aim full-voiced scolding at literature faculty in the way that many compositionists have and perhaps still do, sotto voce, as we toil in English departments dominated by criticism and theory. Although delivered calmly, Mayers' exhortation that "creative writers and compositionists together should strive to invert the traditional hierarchy of English studies" (xv) will be heard as a call to arms in the battle to shift the balance of power, with the desired result of raising the banner of writing studies. Marshalling the army might be more complicated, though, than putting together the Fellowship of the Ring.

At one point late in the book, Mayers, referring to a 1997 CCCC presentation by George Kalamaras on the "killer dichotomies" that continue to haunt us, offers this paraphrase of existing stereotypes held in both camps: "Many compositionists view creative writers as naïve, anti-intellectual romanticists who flee from the rigors of academia into enclaves of like-minded colleagues and students. Many creative writers view compositionists as dull academic drones obsessed with rules and classifications for expository writing" (111). As someone whose undergraduate degree is in literature and the writing of poetry, whose graduate training is in
fiction writing, and whose professional work has been largely in composition programs, I have ample cause to take myself to task in any situation. Stifling the urge to slap myself around for some particularly wrongheaded in-class activity or painfully obtuse revision advice could be a full-time occupation (since anything we do or say is wrong-headed and obtuse from some entrenched disciplinary perspective). My sense is that many of us carry these contrasting identities and identifications within us. Scratch a compositionist, reveal a poet. Claw a fiction writer, expose a literary critic. When Mayers asserts in his Preface that literary study "should be, at best, a peripheral part of the discipline" (xv), he risks shooting some of us in the foot, if not the heart.

However, he says he wants a revolution, and I appreciated hearing the plan. Mayers provides a succinct historical overview of how creative writing programs developed in English departments, summarizing as well the development of composition programs, a story quite familiar to most readers of *JAC*. He provides a useful definition of "institutional-conventional wisdom" (13), a set of approaches to creative processes that limits creative writing pedagogy to a narrow set of craft issues. Crucially, this standard wisdom isolates student writers as they make creative choices, separating them from the rich, complex cultural contexts in which poets and fiction writers work. Given Mayers' background in composition, I assume he's well aware of how neatly his term parallels "current-traditional rhetoric," the enshrined bugaboo of Dark Age composition classrooms. In this instance as well as others in the book, I would have liked Mayers to articulate the parallels at greater length as part of his case for the two disciplines merging to form writing studies. In particular, moves made in both areas to vanquish fossilized teaching practices could form the basis of a common heritage, helping disprove the stereotypes we might hold about each other (and giving us ways to bring warring parts of ourselves together).

Refusing to accept the tradition that creative writing processes are too mysterious and delicate to be displayed and discussed openly (or tampered with by teachers), Mayers offers useful
renderings of a range of articles from poets willing to explore the inner and more public workings of poetic practice, deploying these critical statements to inform us of the current configuration of the genre. Here is Mayers' definition of his primary term: "Craft criticism, then, refers to critical prose written by self- or institutionally identified 'creative writers'; in craft criticism, a concern with textual production takes precedence over any concern with textual interpretation" (34). Thus, a key motive for many of the writers Mayers cites focuses on the need to expand a reductive view of craft (parallel to the desire to expand current-traditional rhetoric beyond its focus on surface features and genteel correctness) to address larger concerns, notably how writing is culturally and historically situated. The poet making formal choices, then, about meter, rhyme, and other text features also joins a conversation about what poetry has done and can do: "Craft criticism attempts to situate the writing of poetry and fiction, and the teaching of poetry and fiction writing, within institutional, political, social, and economic contexts" (34). This description will be familiar to composition teachers who have taken the social constructionist turn to engage students in the classroom with the exigencies of the outside world. Mayers goes on to specify rhetoric as the potential meeting place for creative writers and compositionists. In his reading of selected articles and books, he often puts creative writers into conversation with folks (canonized and not) from rhetoric and composition. In the chapter on craft criticism, he lauds Katharine Haake's What Our Speech Disrupts: Feminism and Creative Writing for its rhetorical illumination of writing practice, particularly her inclusion of invention exercises and sample curricula for a range of courses. More of this kind of specific direction for creating a rhetorically informed field of writing studies would be welcome.

Some of this necessary work has been done by fiction writers, who seem somewhat underrepresented in comparison with the poets Mayers includes. Charles Baxter's Burning Down the House generates one strong example Mayers salutes. Other writers who have contributed to this project of expanding the contexts that
fiction writers may explicitly address in workshop settings are Janet Burroway in her many editions of *Writing Fiction*, Nicholas Delbanco in *The Sincerest Form: Writing Fiction by Imitation*, Madison Smartt Bell in *Narrative Design: A Writer's Guide to Structure*, Michael Petracca in *The Graceful Lie*, and Jewell Parker Rhodes in *Free Within Ourselves: Fiction Lessons for Black Authors*. Certainly these books (and others like them) have their "institutional-conventional" elements (as most books in composition have current-traditional elements), but they warrant attention for beginning to move in promising directions. Wayne Booth's classic *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, while emphasizing interpretation, posits creative writing as rooted in persuasion, leading naturally to the kinds of discussions Mayers sees as appropriate to the creative writing curriculum.

Yet another writing province that could be formally invited into the fray is creative nonfiction; practitioners there have built bridges between the crafts of creative writing and composition in books such as Root and Steinberg's *The Fourth Genre*, Miller and Paola's *Tell It Slant*, and Carol Bly's *Beyond the Writers' Workshop* and *Changing the Bully Who Rules the World*. Still a relatively new field in academic terms, creative nonfiction may be the best candidate for exploding the insular world of the old school craft workshop because the genre insists on developing dynamic relationships between writer and subject, writer and audience. Many writing teachers working in this burgeoning area will respond that a process-oriented approach interwoven with a rhetorical sense of context, genre, and audience has already achieved many of the pedagogical goals of this book in their writing classrooms.

For Mayers, craft criticism opens up possibilities for reinventing writing of all kinds, for helping the creative writing workshop look beyond the local concerns of the day's poems and stories, and by extension for the composition workshop to look beyond the essay draft. A recurrent argument in the articles Mayers elucidates is that writers (whether creative or rooted in the essay form) must fight against conformity, against accepting too easily the inherited,
existing (often restrictive) structures that create the status quo of any age. The German philosopher Martin Heidegger serves Mayers as a theoretical touchstone whose work has been referenced by both creative writers and compositionists, helping him develop a philosophical framework in which craft criticism can flourish. Importantly, “Heidegger’s concept of craft eradicates the problematic and artificial distinction between craft and talent” (71), opening up a space for all users of language to become poets forging a dynamic relationship with language and world. Heidegger exhorts writers to fight technologies with language, striving to avoid ready-made paths in mastering “the difficult art of listening to language and not forcing language to submit to intention” (72). The desire to move beyond a strictly instrumental sense of language has certainly marked progressive composition pedagogies for decades, and Mayers’ positioning of Heidegger provides a lens through which to consider what’s at stake.

In his final chapters, Mayers returns to the root institutional problem, the privileging of interpretation over production, asserting again “that genuine reform in English studies today can occur only if composition and creative writing band together to challenge the institutional dominance of literary study” (101). He’s well aware of how difficult such a banding together will be, noting that both camps have turf to protect. Without a guarantee that the revolution will be successful, why take the risk of consorting with people who understand writing so differently and who work with such different texts? Mayers rightly points out that any progress must incorporate both theoretical and institutional change. My sense is that he could have pushed his assessment of our current situation further in both realms. First, as noted above, Mayers could have given more voice to writers/scholars who have begun the work of building the bridge between the two production-centered areas of English studies. Some of the work in fiction and creative nonfiction listed earlier, along with heuristic-driven books such as Hans Oststrom, Wendy Bishop, and Katherine Haake’s Metro and Anne Bernays and Pamela Painter’s What If? Writing Exercises for Fiction Writers could be put into conversation with Peter Elbow’s Writing with
Power to develop a more inclusive sense of writerly craft. (And books of this kind illustrate the cross-pollination between composition and creative writing that has been occurring for at least the last 25 years.) In the area of style and form, Winston Weathers' Grammar B and the articles in Schroeder, Fox, and Bizzell's Alt Dis: Alternative Discourses in the Academy show how lively the discussion of breaking up predetermined structures has been for some time.

Overall, germinal work on process, which can be read as composition's approach to "craft criticism," gets short shrift. How process incorporates invention and peer work, breaking down the mysteries of the individual imagination and inspiration, warrants more extensive treatment. While Mayers states that methods and strategies differ widely between composition and creative writing courses, workshop models such as fiction writer Jane Smiley's show a move away from methods that wall writers off from engaging fully with their own work by requiring multiple revisions of stories. In my own workshops, whether in composition, fiction, or creative nonfiction, I combine Smiley's multiple revision format with peer review letters that explicitly locate drafts in the world outside the classroom. While the gears may grind audibly at times when I ask students to shift from one kind of rhetorical concern to another, the dissonance itself speaks to students of the complexity of writing and response.

On the institutional front, Mayers could have highlighted existing departments and programs in writing studies (whatever they may be called pre-revolution) to show how creative writing and composition might be able to govern together. His chapter proposing the merger surveys a good range of issues, from the curriculum to department structures and career arcs for writers/teachers/scholars in this new world. Again, an example of how a current program has grappled with these issues could document the challenges more concretely.

The tension between individual/expressivist and social constructionist views of writing keeps creative writing and composition separated. The solution, of course, is rhetoric, which Mayers
predicts will provide the linchpin for a new conception of writing studies bringing together composition and creative writing. In his discussion of how to revise standard courses in composition, creative writing, and literature, Mayers summons some of the stereotypes he exposes earlier. For instance, he describes the risk of first-year composition courses “falling into a strictly instrumental, technical interpretation of writing and thus of closing off the potential for students to glimpse the ‘poetic,’ revelatory, and heuristic possibilities in writing” (134). This rendering seems to ignore much of the progressive work in composition. Without denying that much writing instruction across all provinces of English keeps the stereotypes alive, I would suggest that Mayers highlight curriculum designs that mix genres (and premises about writing) effectively. He mentions expanding the genres available to composition students as well as assigning more reflective writing on the choices they make in completing assignments; these are already features of the curriculum in composition in many writing programs.

Ultimately, teachers and scholars of composition will be attracted to this intelligent and timely book for its close reading of a number of articles by creative writers (primarily poets); for its definition and description of craft criticism as a potentially rich meeting ground for compositionists and creative writers; and for its detailed exploration of specific ways in which the citizens of these separate writing provinces might band together to challenge the dominance of literary studies.