Table of Contents for *Correspondences*, Four: 1986

The titles below are links to the articles

See image of original layout

Start with page one

Return to *Correspondences* Index

Berthoff, Ann E.	Dear reader
Bruss, Neal	Writing without confidence
Deen, Rosemary	Bread and salt [response to Neal Bruss]
Zebroski, James Thomas	Tropes and zones [response to Susan Wells, Correspondences Two]

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Correspondences Four **Broadside opinions and conversations al fresco**

Dear Reader:

In our fourth issue, Neal Bruss picks up on something we hear almost every day from students: "I don't have any confidence." He explores the implications in the light of what certain revisionists have come to see as the authentic center of Freudian theory, viz., the concept of *psychical continuity*. Those who identify Freudianism with a rigid determinism, a strictly linear causality, will be surprised to discover the difference this point of departure makes. Neal's apprehension of the heuristic power of the idea of psychical continuity is appreciated by Rosemary Deen who expounds on the practical implications. We welcome your further comment. Neal's exploration here reminds me of Kenneth Burke's flexible and unintimidated deployment of Freud throughout his career. In our next issue, we will have an essay by Robert Garlitz on Burke's recapitulations.

James Zebroski responds here to Susan Wells's "Vygotsky Reads *Capital*" with an incisive comment on the implications of Vygotsky's philosophy of learning for our pedagogy. The "zone of proximal development" is so powerful a concept that I think we must learn to tolerate the jazzy short term, *zo-ped*. Jim's idea of an "ethnocomposition" is full of interest for those who find themselves thinking about the social contexts of the making of meaning.

Recently, a correspondent wrote expressing approval of the format and style of our broadside, noting that "there is something salutary in the very short essay form, something hindered by our usual self-indulgence in print." Yes: one model I've had in mind is Brecht's *Tales from the Calendar*—the idea of telling political fables in as succinct a manner as the moral tales featured on religious calendars prepared for the edification of peasants in earlier times. Think of *Correspondences* as *The Writing Teacher's Almanac*.

Your response to Neal's observations is welcomed, along with further comment on Vygotsky. And send your comments on *method*—what it shouldn't be, why we must have it, why we mustn't allow it, how to think about it—to me at the address below:

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Writing Without Confidence

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So much popular psychoanalysis affects the composition classroom—from the teacher's assumption of the value of personal experience to the student's assumption that a teacher will consider his motives. What counts as psychoanalysis? The bizarrely meaningful symptoms? The interpretation of dreams? The theory of development? Oedipus? The Freudian slip?

Almost a century after Freud and Breuer first argued that the tics of hysterics were meaningful, it is possible to identify the first principle of psychoanalysis to bring it into the composition classroom validly—and to help the composition teacher make progress with that same task which faced Freud and Breuer, to explain seemingly incomprehensible human activity. In this essay, that principle will provide a route to understanding that promising student who, despite the composition teacher's most dedicated efforts, fails to realize his or her promise.

According to Norman Reider, a contemporary American psychoanalyst, "The only absolutely necessary assumption for a psychoanalytic theory is the concept of psychic[al] determinism and the continuity of psychic[al] life." The *locus classicus* for Reider's position is Freud's definition of the meaningfulness of the symptom: "Let us once more reach an agreement upon what is to be understood by the 'sense' of a psychical process. We mean nothing other by it than the intention it serves and its position in a psychical continuity."

For Freud, then, the meaningfulness of a symptom was the motive it served and its relationship to other meanings in a "continuity," a connectedness, of all other experience. If an individual suffered a significant memory gap, or if his behavior was incongruous or inconsistent, the assumption of continuity would demand an explanation. By restoring such gaps and interpreting incongruities, first through hypnosis,

later through free association, Freud inferred that the repression and distortion of parts of the continuity served the purpose of *defense*. The gaps and distortions were *compromises* between *at least* two types of thoughts—thoughts moving toward awareness and thoughts which sought to keep them from awareness. In other words, the gap and distortion were signs of psychical *conflict*. *All of psychoanalysis—the Freudian slip, dream interpretation, the Oedipus complex, id-ego-and-superego—follows from the basic assumption of psychical continuity and the first inferences about the defensive nature of apparent exceptions of the psychical continuity.*

In the terminology of the basic assumption of psychoanalysis—Freud's definition of the meaningfulness of the symptom—if a gap or incongruous behavior is a "symptom," then defense is the "intention it serves": the conflicting repressed or distorted thoughts are its "meaning," and the compromise it achieves between the conflicting thoughts is its "position in a psychical continuity."

The bright, sincere, "promising" students who never realize their promise are an enigma worthy of Freud. Despite important personal differences, they all seem to share one or more of a set of characteristics:

- At worst, these students do not complete a course, though they do not seem to have serious health or work problems, and if they receive incompletes, they do not finish the work within the time mandated.
- Certain essays that these students *do* write seem in bits, in fragments, brittle, with no coherence, or with childish problems of spelling or punctuation; or,
- the essays are irrationally far from what was assigned, so that it is impossible for a teacher to create a bridge between what the student wrote and what the assignment requires.
- In class, their answers are not appropriate to the question, or the discussion is off the point.
- In conferences, or in the hall after class, the student may explain the source of the difficulty, or may not. Occasionally, there is a sort of pressure on us to take on some other role, of friend, paramour, confidante, member of the family, even child with some of our older students—anything but teacher.
- Often in conferences—often conferences on the day the paper should have been submitted—I find myself giving encouragement or working through an assisgnment that was due. Usually the student leaves the office buoyed up—and here is the crucial thing: between the appointment and the next class, the work somehow does not get done; the effort has served no useful purpose.

What do my colleagues and I tend to do? We may ask the student what the source of the difficulty is that stands in such contrast to the student's potential. We may try to analyze this extramural information and, perhaps, assign something out of our composition theory—prolific writing, or the stages of composition in Ann Berthoff's double helix—or try to find some flaw in the student's composing method. But it doesn't work.

When everything fails, the teacher gets tough—gives F's, changes course procedures in the sixth week, and expounds a pedagogic libertarianism to sympathetic colleagues about not depriving students of freedom to fail.... This, to my mind, expresses nothing more than the teacher's total frustration. The single most important thing about students of this type is that they tend to receive more time and attention than all other students, but that the time and effort produce no result whatsoever. Whether or not the student is not meeting his potential, I am not meeting mine, and at some cost.

One thing that does strike me consistently about promising students who don't come through—and they can be hockey players from Neponset or returning women from the suburbs—is how often they say that their basic problem is that they "lack confidence." When I last taught Intermediate Composition, one student used the clause, "I don't have confidence," and the class picked it up like a Greek chorus or a revival meeting.

* * *

Reider refers to an elaboration of the basic assumption of psychoanalysis, viz., the meaningfulness of the symptom in the context of a psychical continuity. It comes from David Rapaport's essay, "The Scientific Method of Psychoanalysis": "If one historical event in the psychic[al] life is to

have anything to do with another, it has to be assumed that there is a psychic[al] continuity. . . ."

What happens if we assume this *psychical continuity* in thinking about the familiar declaration, "I lack confidence"? We can rewrite the statement to recognize explicitly that if it is meaningful, it has an intention: "I lack confidence for a purpose," or "I disavow confidence—I *need* to lack confidence." But we now have the problem of understanding *what* intention would be served by warding off confidence, and why our office hours make no difference. This question can also be approached in the light of the basic assumption of psychical continuity; that is to say, the particular motive for lacking confidence must rest in the psychical continuity—in some part of the student's psychical life. Assuming that motive does not originate in the student's relation to us or our class, it must rest in some current or prior experience outside of class. Lacking confidence may not get the student very far with us, but we're not the whole picture—there's more to the student's psychical continuity than our pedagogic contact.

However, to be an interpreter, espionage agent, busybody, prober, counselor, questioner-into-the-personal-life and *especially* to be the student's therapist is not appropriate. It is an invasion of the student's privacy, which the student, particularly given his or her lack of performance, may feel inadequate to resist. To act like a therapist will complicate and may compromise the role of teacher. If we obtain the relevant "personal" information, it may seem unfair, to the student and to ourselves, to place that information aside and make academic demands on the student. Further, unless we are trained therapists, we now have information we are not professionally trained to use, except perhaps to refer the student to a qualified therapist (which is what we might have done in the first place).

Occasionally, over the years, *without* prying, we get enough factual information from lack-of-confidence students to suggest what motives we might find:

• Many students are the first in their families to attend college, and we occasionally discover that no one at home supports their doing so. Families and friends may be jealous, frightened or angry—and not without reason: the student who does well with us changes. Those at home may be left behind, or left. To lack confidence serves this *intention*—a compromise: the student goes to school but doesn't accomplish enough to warrant a split with his or her family.

• For a woman to go to school, putting a strain on housekeeping and making demands on the spouse, calling into question a spouse's lack of equivalent ambition, may lead to scenes of violence. Preventing a separation, maintaining a family with young children, may thus be a motive for disavowing confidence.

• There is the truly psychoanalytic realm of persistence of the past, the student with promise who has been told that he or she is stupid by past teachers who, in turn, may have replicated parents who might also have attacked the student. To disavow confidence may serve to protect the student's love for a cruel figure in the past.

• Any student who truly does what we ask is rebuilding his mind, acquiring new mental structures, and that is terribly difficult. The mental stress of learning may be a motive for "disavowal," which has been defined simply as "refusing to recognize the reality of a traumatic perception."

• The basic assumption of psychoanalysis is fully compatible with the sociolinguistic analysis of status-related discourse phenomena. It is safe to say that code-conflict between the student and the teacher may provoke enough anxiety to motivate disavowal as a defense.

The ubiquity of psychoanalytic clichés encourages us to assume that teachers have access to students' "Unconscious." But something different is meant by this "Unconscious" than out-of-consciousness aspects of the physical continuity, and Freud himself, late in his career, accepted this second type of unconscious. Let's agree to take the term "Deep Unconscious" as the locus of human instincts and the domestication of those instincts in the infant in order to create a real person. This domestication carries the classic nickname of the "Oedipal conflict." If you believe in Carl Jung, the unconscious also contains memories of a racial evolution from animal to human. I would argue that composition teachers do not have access to such a deep, instinctual unconscious. We work with our students' fundamental ways of dealing with reality—with ego functions, if you like—and they are partly unconscious, but not deep like the instincts.

I would illustrate the difference with a parable that David Rapaport tells for precisely this purpose of differentiating the deep unconscious from the mechanisms of dealing with reality:

> There was an Eastern king who heard about Moses. He heard that Moses was a leader of men, a good man, a wise man, and he wished to meet him. But Moses, busy wandering forty years in the desert, couldn't come. So the king sent his painters to Moses and they brought back a picture of him. The king called his phrenologists and astrologists and asked them, "What kind of man is this?" They went into a huddle and came out with a report which read: This is a cruel, greedy, self-seeking, dishonest man. The king was much puzzled. He said, "Either my painters do not know how to paint or there is no such science as astrology or phrenology." To decide this dilemma, he went to see Moses and after seeing him cried out, "There is no such science as astrology or phrenology." When Moses heard this, he was surprised and asked the king what he meant. The king explained, but Moses only shook his head and said, "No. Your phrenologists and astrologists are right. That's what I was made of! I fought against it and that's how I became what I am."

The point is that even for a major psychoanalytic figure such as Rapaport, depth is not equivalent to importance. We need not be in contact with the deep unconscious to be doing something important, helping our students to develop. In fact, our case is stronger than that in Rapaport's parable, because as teachers we have no business with the students' Deep Unconscious, while the development of the mechanisms for dealing with reality is very important, and nobody else is contributing much to that except teachers.

* * *

If a student is disavowing confidence as a compromise-solution to a conflict, he or she is unlikely to admit it, for the admission would be an *avowal*, the opposite of the defense. If a teacher forces his or her interpretation of the disavowal onto the student, the defense will lose its power as a compromise-solution, and the student will be forced to adopt a harsher defense against his or her conflict.

The gap between promise and accomplishment in our students, like other psychical splits, tends to get more severe, the student identifying more with the negative side. The student's split expresses a good-bad idealization: the "good" promise vs. the "bad" failure-to-deliver. Ironically, our interpreting the student's behavior deepens the split and contributes to the student's identifying with his incompetence, for the teacher's act of interpretation implies that the teacher knows the student better than he knows himself. Our showing our wisdom by interpreting to him puts us on the side of the good intelligent promise, and the student more on the side of the bad failure—regardless how grateful the student appears at the end of the office hour in which the interpretation was given.

Being interpreted is frightening, especially if one has not voluntarily entered a therapeutic relationship. It may seem like being possessed. Michael Balint, in *The Basic Fault*, has criticized overly-deep interpretations by Kleinian therapists on the grounds that it is frightening to have someone seeing inside oneself and defining one with his interpretations, whatever they are. The fright may be all the greater if a teacher, whose role is not defined as therapist, proceeds under the therapeutic aegis.

Anyone who relies on as debilitating a defense as disavowing confidence is not going to surrender it upon hearing the first interpretation. Teachers are not credentialed as therapists, not trained to understand the long-term nature of mutative interpretation. In other words, therapists must respect the power of resistance as much as the power of insight. Teachers may provoke a sudden outburst of relief by interpreting, but every therapist knows that what matters is the long term process, year after year, and that for many patients the darkest time is *after* the dawn.

Guided by the inference of a powerful hidden conflict in students' psychical continuity, a teacher should act so as to lessen the need for defense, rather than trying to bring it to light. To avoid deepening the good-bad split of the "lack of confidence defense," a teacher might design assignments which *de*-idealize and integrate the student's composition work. If one is teaching literature, one might assign the collection of observations, or metrical scansion, or word-level exercises—anything to get away for the moment from "vision," "psychology," "politics" and other millenial concepts which contribute to the idealization. Students might be asked to work every day in class, and to do small-scale, humble activities at home—anything to develop patterns of ordinary work, to build patterns of habits and strengths, rather than to stimulate conflicts between the ideal and a felt worthlessness.

My title, "Writing Without Confidence," then, is not facetious. The idea that a student must develop "confidence" to write exacerbates this type of unconscious conflict. The crucial thing is this: if you have a student "full of promise" who isn't doing much, teach to the "not doing much" and not to the "promise."

There are, of course, many close variants of the "lack of confidence" student; the assumption of physical continuity and intention remains valid. A colleague at a university with somewhat wealthier students notices that instead of referring to their "lack of confidence," her students make earnest promises to do better work—which they do not keep; but the two types of declarations perform similar functions. Students who make such promises place higher value on moral resolve against the negative side of their split than students who report the inner condition of "lack of confidence."

Another variant is the habitually bored student—who does no writing. The boredom, of course, puts the burden of guilt on the *teacher* for "being boring." This student projects his or her inner conflict outward, disavowing responsibility in a way that the "lack of confidence" and "new resolve" students do not. But the bored student is *not* "doing nothing" because the assignments are beneath him or are unworthy of him. A teacher should therefore *not* give bored students special assignments *more* idealized, more "worthy" of them. *No* assignment will be worthy of a student who expresses boredom to camouflage an inner conflict about doing productive work. When the defenses of idealization, splitting, denial, and projection assert themselves, the basic assumption of psychoanalysis suggests that the teacher de-idealize the pedagogy, thus moving below the threshold of such conflicts. They should simply get the pens moving, ask conflicted students to turn their wheels like the Samsons Agonistes that, psychologically, they are.

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Reider is quoted by Judd Marmor, "Validation of Psychoanalytic Techniques," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 3(1955), p. 499. Sigmund Freud's definition of the symptom appears in his second lecture on parapraxes, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, trans. James Strachey. *Standard Edition* 15. London: Hogarth Press and Institute of Psycho-Analysis, p. 25. David Rapaport's comment on psychical determinism and his story of Moses appear respectively in "The Scientific Method of Psychoanalysis," and "The Autonomy of the Ego," in *Collected Papers*, Merton M. Gill (ed.). New York: Basic Books, 1967, pp. 194, 357-358. Michael Balint, *The Basic Fault: Therapeutic Aspects of Regression*, London: Tavistock Press, 1968.

Bread and Salt

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The reasoning patience of Neal Bruss's essay leads us from a first principle: "Mental life is intentional and continuous," through familiar, psychoanalytic terms, to a problem teachers face but can't solve: promising students who don't fulfill their promise. The problem appears neatly in ironic action, as the dedicated teacher makes it worse: to interpret such students to themselves deepens the split. They project their "good" promising self on to the idealized, wise teacher, and so more easily identify themselves with their incompetence.

Along with the bread of patience, we find some dialectical salt: analysis of student problems exposes some teacher problems when the teacher is the student's interpreter, counselor, questioner, therapist. For example: political problems of teacher power ("an invasion of the student's privacy which the student may feel inadequate to resist") or identity problems—for the student's imperfect self-identification is matched by the teacher's. The teacher is not a therapist; therapists, for one thing, "respect the power of resistance as much as the power of insight."

At first the essay's psychoanalytic citations seem to be telling us what we already know. But we obviously don't believe it if our acts belie it. Bringing Freud's hypothesis back to its context enables Neal to show, with reasoning *from* psychoanalysis, why teachers cannot treat their conflicted students psychoanalytically. The conclusion is very important: we help them with de-idealized work which keeps the pens moving.

How? Do "small-scale, humble activities" mean that we give conflicted students special assignments, make-work from the current repertoire of "the writing process"? No. For "any student who truly does what we ask is rebuilding his mind, acquiring new mental structures, and that is terribly difficult." All students need assignments designed to integrate their work. That's the teacher's proper job.

> ...teachers do not have access to...[the] deep, instinctual unconscious. We work with our students' fundamental ways of dealing with reality—with ego functions....

That means we work with habit and elemental skills—though the word *skill* is too mundane for the rapid vocabulary expansion of today's theory, and *habit* is a hard saying for teachers who get bored easily and want to bring their capacity for boredom into class work. But skill is, properly, power over self, and habit is the way to make writing easy and fluent. Our activities, I believe, must be as kernels are, small but containing their own power to develop and proliferate.

When I started to define such activities, I thought of a common type of "promising" student: she writes well, even brilliantly, on the first essay but slips, in later papers (though I fail to recognize the signs of stress because her "promise" had seemed accomplished), and finally blows the last necessity—sits through the final exam and hands in an empty blue book. But having learned one real skill in the early days of the course, she could, at the end, be assigned pages of observations (fragments, but right on the point) and pull herself through.

We want pen-moving work which:
—begins early,
—is done by the whole class,
—is in itself mind-building (is useful right away in other courses),
—is a rejoicing sort of work.

Two practices fill this bill: rewriting single, key sentences, and writing observations.

By rewriting I don't of course mean copy-editing, tinkering with cracked sentences, but the recasting in three to five—or eight to ten—versions of a single good sentence (an aphorism, an opening or closing sentence, a defining sentence) written by a class member. "All writing," Marie Ponsot says, "is an ordering of what the writer has in mind." What she calls "the fertility of syntax" means that rewriting can *handle* an idea: unpack it, turn it, take it a step further: it's "the natural way to keep thoughts going." Rewriting teaches rereading, an act most students don't know (a fact most teachers don't know). Irresistibly easy to learn, rewriting can also teach, Marie tells her students, that "words rewritten are taken deeply into the mind. If you really want to learn something, write and rewrite about it until you envision it, and then write out what you see."

Writing observation (as distinguished from inferences) is to say, "The poem begins in the past tense, goes to future

tense, and ends in the past without ever having gone through a present," instead of, "I feel the poem is mysterious." The impressionistic, opinionating, "critiquing" talk that buzzes on in writing and literature courses, like the "millenial concepts" Neal mentions, keeps students afloat among the indefinite and indeterminate. But observations foster a student's nearness to one of the best parts of himself: the unpremeditated response of intelligence to emphasis and relationships.

Rewriting and observing are personal and authorial, yet public: recognizable and confirming. They are practices which teach inductively, are consecutive, cumulative, and can be repeated incrementally. They are writing which, apparently done "in bits," actually ranges through and connects mental powers. This is calming and constructive. In order to make place for them and put them into play, a teacher may have to do a little "de-idealizing" of self and work more purposively on course design.

Near the end of their dialogue Socrates asks Meno whether he has observed the statues of Daedalus, curious things which run away unless they are tied down:

> If you have one of his works untethered, it is not worth much; it gives you the slip.... But a tethered specimen is very valuable, for they are magnificent creations. True opinions are a fine thing and do all sorts of good so long as they stay in their place, but they will not stay long. They run away from a man's mind; so they are not worth much until you tether them by working out the reason. Once they are tied down, they become knowledge, and are stable. That is why knowledge is something more valuable than right opinion. What distinguishes one from the other is the tether.
>
> trans., W.K.C. Guthrie

The beauty of the statues is not for Socrates incompatible with the homeliness of the tether, working out the reason. So the ordinariness of rewriting produces a sentence from each student which it is rejoicing to see on the board amidst sentences of all the other students, different but equal in excellence. The moments of observation are reviving because they keep us near the heart of what we read. Make-work "processing" is disheartening. We teachers work with a reality which we construct as orderly and reasonable to handle. Then the fact that mental life is intentional and continuous works in favor of all our students.

Tropes and Zones

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Susan Wells, in *Correspondences Two*, has performed a valuable service for writing teachers: in "Vygotsky Reads *Capital*," one of the most significant and stimulating explorations of Vygotsky's theory available, Wells shows us both how to read Vygotsky—dialectically and philosophically—and how NOT to read Vygotsky—as a "social" Piaget or Kohlberg, as a brass instrument psychologist unaware of and uninformed by the rich contributions of the humanities and the fine arts. Though ignored in most American discussions, much support for Well's reading exists among students and colleagues who knew Vygotsky and worked with him in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Wells states, "No empirical researcher can use Vygotsky's categories as they stand...(rather) they enable us to analyze concepts *rhetorically*." D. El'konin, a co-worker of Vygotsky, confirms Wells's intuitions. He wrote in the Spring 1967 issue of *Soviet Psychology* concerning the misreading of Vygotsky's chapter on concept development in *Thought and Language*:

> It should be especially stressed that the studies mentioned were not devoted to establishing the empirical course of development, but were abstract experimental models of the developmental process.... Unfortunately, it is still rare to meet with the interpretation of Vygotsky's research as *modeling*, rather than empirically studying developmental processes (36).

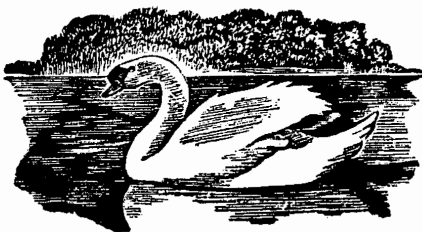
Vygotsky was apparently working out the theoretical and conceptual implications of his position; Well's interpretation is a rare but welcome gloss on this very issue.

Such a dialectic reading of Vygotsky helps us to place his work in its proper philosophical and historical context. Vygotsky's theory of mind comes out of a dialectic world view that finds its sources in Marx, Hegel, Leibnitz, Spinoza, and Heraclitus, a tradition quite different from, and often at odds with, the notions popular in Anglo-American circles. Such a view stresses the dynamic, the relational, and the social. When we lift Vygotsky's text out of this context, when we try to understand Vygotsky's ideas apart from the form they take, when we try to read Vygotsky without reference to the work of Karl Marx, we tend to narrow and distort Vygotsky's ideas, and then we are surprised to find that those notions don't seem to have any potential application. And so composition theorists (among others) have been fascinated by Vygotsky's work for several years, but haven't known exactly what to do with it.

Current interest in Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development is a case in point. Zo-ped (short for "zone of proximal development" or ZPD) is the "distance" between a person's ability to solve a problem independently and the ability to solve a problem with the help of a more capable peer. To be sure, zo-ped is a powerful corrective to the atomism on which school tracking, letter and number grading, and programmed learning rest. Yet we must also remember that zo-ped is not simply the new fundamental "particle" of experimental analysis, one more variable to add to our multi-variate analysis. We must keep in mind that the social and class dimensions of zo-ped are essential, even when the apparent subject of study is a mother-child or teacher-student "dyad." Relations between people collaborating on "problem solving" (or problem *posing*) are not simply individual interactions but are profoundly social. An analysis of the social contexts and their class implications ought to *precede* a discussion of the interactions, not simply be ignored or tacked on to the end.

Zo-ped suggests that composition is always ethnocomposition, a social act as well as an individual activity. So when I lift my pen to compose, I speak—but so too do all those others with whom I am intertwined in the word. I speak *through* others *to* others and *to* myself. Writing, then, in a Vygotskian perspective, is more than an individual product, more than an individual's process or set of processes; writing is a relation, a social relation, first shared by a community (by others) and then transformed by the writer in her unique way. Zo-ped shows us how such social relations are passed on, modified, and further developed: zo-ped is useful only when we keep this social-individual dialectic in mind.

We all have our zones of proximal development and those who help us are often present in a symbolic sense: literacy creates new zo-peds. The help we receive is by means of the "words" we recognize: *slovo* in the Russian has the wonderful chracteristic of referring to both an individual *word* and to discourse generally. Both individual words and extensive texts are internalized, constantly enfolding and unfolding depending on the situation. The "words" that we recognize in our reading often lead our writing—we know intuitively what the "word" means long before we can properly use it in writing, let alone speech. Even in the writing act, this reading/writing dialectic manifests itself when the writer alternates between "hearing"the eloquence or awkwardness of words hitting the page and "creating" the rest of the utterance. My style, then, is the struggle, the movement, the dialectic, between the particular voices that I hear—the specific discourses and words I have internalized—and those voices and texts that I am creating, that are emerging from this dialogue. Style emerges from the zone of proximal development.



But zo-ped is obviously not limited to literate activities. Vygotskians have been clear about the importance of all forms of art in social and individual development. Vygotsky wrote *The Psychology of Art* in which he argues that "Art is the organization of our future behavior" (249). The collaboration central to zo-ped goes on even in the seemingly individual experience of art since "Art is the social within us, and even if its action is performed by a single individual, it does not mean its essence is individual" (249). We educate our feeling and individualize our emotions through art.

Wells's interpretation of Vygotsky helps us to put his work in its proper context; her interpretation also suggests the usefulness of a close reading of *all* his works. (As Warren Herendeen points out, we need complete, *unabridged*, and reliable translations to do this.) Wells says, "Vygotsky found in Marx the tropes and figures of thought that he needed." I find it curious that no one has examined Vygotsky's metaphors, *his* tropes and figures, in spite of his popularity and the faddishness of deconstruction.

If we do look at Vygotsky's tropes, we find that he is a *contextualist*, to use Stephen Pepper's term. Vygotsky sees mind and society as event. The four-stage model that Vygotsky borrowed from Marx (and P. Blonsky) suggests the various moments of what Kenneth Burke calls the four master tropes: metaphor (heaps or simple equivalence); metonymy (complex or serial exchange); synecdoche (pseudo-concept or universal equivalent); irony (concept or money). Burke's Appendix D in *The Grammar of Motives* thus becomes a gloss on Vygotsky (and Marx).

Finally, Vygotsky talks of mind in specifically topographic, geologic, geographic images. Thinking is a cloud shedding a shower of words; the word is a raindrop reflecting the spectrum, the rainbow, of consciousness; motive is the wind moving the clouds. Vygotsky is earth-y. His tropes are of the earth, of the biosphere. Vygotsky leads us out of the factory and the brass instrument lab and into the open fields where we can better contemplate the weather of mind and society.

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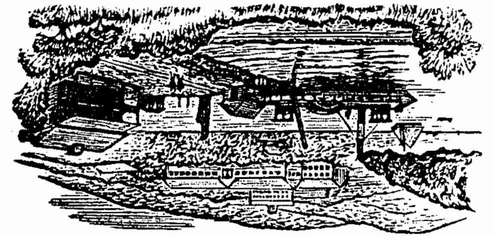

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