Genre Pedagogies

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Although every writing course uses genres—whether literary or academic, digital or hybrid, personal or public—courses based in genre pedagogy go well beyond asking students to write particular types of texts. Contemporary understandings see genres as rhetorical acts rather than textual conventions. In addition to romances, mysteries, or Petrarchan sonnets, genres encompass grocery lists, literacy narratives, and creative hypertexts. Since the 1980s, Composition Studies, and particularly Rhetorical Genre Studies (see Bazerman or Devitt, "Generalizing" for overviews), has redefined genre rhetorically, stemming primarily from Carolyn Miller's 1984 article "Genre as Social Action." Miller defines genres as "typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations" (159). In simple terms, genres become what they are because writers faced with similar writing tasks ("recurrent situations") make similar strategic choices ("rhetorical actions"); readers come to expect those similarities and come to recognize the rhetorical situation when they see its rhetorical traces ("typified"). When teachers make students aware of genres as rhetorical, they give access to strategies and choices as well as cultural expectations. Genres make rhetoric visible. Since all writing courses use genres—at least through the traditional, hybrid, or mediated genres that students write—all teachers should understand the rhetorical nature of genres and their potential to help students enact their goals. With genres understood as actions rather than forms, and as rhetorically meaningful rather than just conventional, writing teachers can use genre-based pedagogies to do much more than teach students the conventions of a few genres. If genres are rhetorical actions, then genre pedagogies can help students learn to act rhetorically; and if genres are based in situations, then genre pedagogies can use genres to help students perceive, understand, and even change situations.

COMBINING THREE APPROACHES TO TEACHING WRITING THROUGH GENRES

Ann M. Johns, in the Preface to her edited collection *Genre in the Classroom: Multiple Perspectives*, notes that there is no "one 'true way' to approach genre theory or

practice" (i). Hence, this chapter is entitled "Genre Pedagogies," plural. Since the 1980s, genre theories relevant to composition have developed from multiple traditions distinct in theory and institutional practice (see Bawarshi and Reiff's *Genre: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy* for a full introduction to these bodies of scholarship). Because of their different student populations and cultural and institutional contexts, those traditions have emphasized different ways of teaching writing through genres. For our purposes in Composition Studies, though, we can draw relevant practices from each.

Drawing from and crossing multiple scholarly traditions, I define in this chapter three broad pedagogical approaches:

- teaching particular genres
- teaching genre awareness
- teaching genre critique

Rather than being mutually exclusive, these three approaches combine in effective college writing instruction. Their methods emphasize complementary goals:

- to give students access to and control of particular genres
- to help students learn how to learn any unfamiliar genres they might encounter, whatever the medium and context
- to help students see the cultural and ideological nature of genres in order to make their own choices and gain critical understanding

Each of these pedagogies has value and limitations for different students and settings. Although I begin here with teaching particular genres, most college composition courses would likely teach particular genres in order to lead students to genre awareness and critique. With the best of all three combined, as Richard Coe described in 1994, "we [teachers and students] are empowered by our increased control of each genre, by our increased ability to master unfamiliar genres, and by our increased understanding of how we can sublate the constraints of genre" ("Arousing" 186–187). Combining all three approaches creates a pedagogy that goes well beyond genre and supports lofty goals for our composition courses: to help students act rhetorically and consciously within and beyond the situations they will encounter throughout their lives.

TEACHING PARTICULAR GENRES

Perhaps the most obvious type of genre pedagogy, and the one with longest standing, is teaching students the particular genres they have to write. Sunny Hyon captures the essential rationale for teaching particular genres, especially as defined by Systemic Functional Linguistics (see Martin and Rose): "[Teach] students the formal, staged qualities of genres so that they can recognize these features in the texts that they read and use them in the texts that they write" ("Genre" 701).

The primary rationale for teaching particular genres is to let everyone play the game, to give everyone access to the rules and tricks. Whether Lisa Delpit arguing for African-American students in writing courses or Mary Macken-Horarik for

aboriginal populations in Australian primary schools, the belief holds that "students at risk of school failure fare better within a visible curriculum" (Macken-Horarik 17). Australian scholars J. R. Martin and David Rose state the case even more strongly: "[A]ccess to the discursive resources of power is the democratic right of all citizens, and . . . it is our responsibility to make these resources available to all" (229). That rationale has been a long-standing one for teachers in many contexts who teach particular genres (though too often teaching only formal conventions), including new media and multimodal genres: You will need to write this research paper/argument/lab report/Web page; I will teach it to you and then you can write one of your own.

With genres redefined as powerful perceptual and embodied approaches to the world, though, choosing which genres to include in a writing course matters. Writing to secondary teachers, Deborah Dean notes some of the distinct stances and goals of popularly taught genres: "the genres we select favor and develop certain perspectives more than others. Repeatedly selecting five-paragraph essays promotes logic and distance. Repeatedly selecting personal narratives promotes individual and chronological perspectives. Consistently choosing work-related genres shows a valuing of one worldview, while consistently choosing poetry shows another" (39). Add in digital genres and electronic spaces, and deciding which genres to teach to students becomes even more fraught with epistemological as well as academic significance.

Because genre no longer means a simple classification of textual forms, too, teaching a particular genre no longer means teaching a static set of formal rules. One metaphor that I have found useful is Anne Freadman's metaphor of a game, especially, for this pedagogy, the rules of the game. Freadman suggests thinking of genre rules as "rules for play" (46, original emphasis) so that "knowing the rules is knowing how much play the rules allow and how to play with them" (47). Teaching the etiquette of a particular genre (57) involves teaching the context, time and place, audience's expectations, and strategies for working within the genre. Students writing blog posts, for example, investigate where blogs appear, who reads and writes them, what subjects and styles are usual, and how to attract readers. Later in this chapter, I include a critical view of working within the game, as Freedman and Medway in "Locating"; Luke; and others note that we shouldn't teach students to accept the rules of games as given, inflexible, and not open to critical action. As Freadman concludes, "Learning to write . . . is learning to appropriate and occupy a place in relation to other texts, learning to ensure that the other chap will play the appropriate game with you, and learning to secure a useful uptake: the rules for playing, the rules of play, and the tricks of the trade" (63–64).

Teaching the rules for playing particular genre games often leads to methods referred to as "explicit teaching," wherein the features and rules of the genre are taught directly. The most fully detailed and rationalized method is the "teaching-learning cycle" (see Feez for the historical development of this pedagogy). Although college writing teachers in North America generally have not adopted this specific method, it has been widely used in the Australian schools for which it

was designed, may be more widely adopted in second-language pedagogies, and illustrates how one might make the textual regularities of a particular genre more fully transparent to students whose backgrounds require such explicit instruction. The teaching-learning cycle usually consists of three components, typically depicted in a wheel to indicate that the cycle repeats: modeling, joint negotiation of text, and independent construction of text (see Macken et al.'s diagram in Cope and Kalantzis 11). This method of explicit instruction begins with the teacher giving students model texts of the genre being learned. In a process simplified from Macken et al.'s wheel, the teacher leads students in analyzing these models for their social function, organizational structure, and linguistic features, drawing from Systemic Functional Linguistics discourse analysis. The class then works (with teacher as note-taker) to compose collaboratively a new text that conforms to the features of the genre being learned. In the third phase, each student individually drafts a new text within the genre. Ideally, the third phase includes "creative exploitation of genre and its possibilities," with students, for example, writing the genre in a different context.

While not always as fully specified as the teaching-learning cycle, other methods also analyze discourse to describe particular genres explicitly, especially for teachers of advanced second-language students within English for Specific Purposes (ESP, see Swales, *Genre*). In John Swales' analysis of rhetorical moves, for example, he describes introductions to research articles (which he later divided into theoretical and experimental articles [*Research* 208]) and their characteristic three moves: establishing a territory, establishing a niche, and occupying the niche (*Genre* 141), a set of moves that Brian Sutton has adapted to teaching the research paper genre in composition courses. In teaching such genres as the research article, dissertation, and research presentation, Swales teaches students to discover those rhetorical structures themselves, for effective instruction requires more than simple description. In her observation of two composition students, Elizabeth Wardle found that learning the conventions of a new genre required that the teacher have students "write the new genre, be told the conventions, and reaffirm those conventions among themselves [in peer workshops], hearing the conventions again, and revising" ("Understanding" 111). Some teachers follow ESP scholar Johns (*Text* 105–113) in having students conduct ethnographic research, including interviews and observations, to understand more fully the disciplinary-specific contexts of the genres within which they are learning to write. Teaching needed genres in discipline-specific courses, rather than college composition courses, can embed instruction in context more deeply so that, as Mary Soliday concludes from studying a Writing across the Curriculum program, "Giving skills flesh and bone . . . turns 'conventions' into meaningful rhetorical craft and opens up one pathway to a genre" (103). In all these methods of teaching particular genres, the goal is, in Aviva Freedman and Peter Medway's terms, "demystifying" genres (*Learning* 12). Freedman is perhaps the scholar most critical of explicit teaching, however, arguing that teachers cannot explicate any genre fully or out of the genre's authentic context, as I describe later in this chapter. She argues instead for situated learning of genres in their authentic settings.

Although teachers of college composition likely find the other two emphases—genre awareness and critique—more compatible with contemporary educational goals, all teachers confront students' questions about the genres they are writing. And, in all courses, teaching particular genres explicitly might well benefit students, especially those who are first-generation and second language writers (see Matsuda and Hammill's chapter, "Second Language Writing Pedagogy," in this volume). As is true of so much instructional practice, what serves well one student with particular needs would serve all students well. Ken Hyland argues that the advantages of such explicit genre-based instruction for second language writing teachers are that it is explicit, systematic, needs-based, supportive, empowering, critical, and consciousness-raising (10–11).

Many of the better practices for teaching a particular genre apply to all composition instruction: embedding the writing in meaningful tasks, not just classroom exercises; sequencing the activities and scaffolding learning; and not dominating during modeling and collaborative composing. Other issues arise more dramatically for this genre-based pedagogy. For second language teachers, Brian Paltridge notes several difficulties: identifying relevant contextual information, gathering authentic texts to serve as examples, minimizing the repressive effects of generic models, encouraging students' "individual voices" within a generic pattern, and recognizing that genres change, are embedded within another, and mix (122–124). Tony Dudley-Evans cautions against "teaching of a set of generalized moves" without confronting the particularities that a writer encounters in actual situations (235). Some reservations have in fact led to the development of the two other pedagogies I describe in this chapter, genre awareness and genre critique, including reservations that Hyland counters: that "genres are too complex and varied to be removed from their original contexts and taught in the artificial environment of the classroom" (16), that teaching genres reproduces "the dominant discourses of the powerful and the social relations that they construct and maintain" (18), and that genre teaching "inhibits writers' creativity and self-expression" (19). Although these methods of teaching particular genres may include awareness of context, critique, and creativity, in the end they emphasize textual production following explicitly learned formal features. Learning to write a credible text within a particular genre remains the primary goal.

Even teachers with different primary goals will need at times to address particular genres and will encounter some of the same benefits and difficulties. Though their motives and methods differ, all genre pedagogies use particular genres. Teachers whose goals are to teach genre awareness and genre critique, for example, use particular genres as examples to analyze, practice, critique, parody, and change. In the textbook I wrote with Mary Jo Reiff and Anis Bawarshi, *Scenes of Writing: Strategies for Composing with Genres,* which follows largely a pedagogy of critical genre awareness, we lead students through analyzing, critiquing, and writing academic analysis papers. We chose that particular genre not only because it matters to college writing but also because it can serve as an "antecedent genre," a genre that, once learned, can serve as a grounding for writing new genres with some similar elements (see Devitt, "Proposal"). To avoid prescription and formula, we included samples from student papers rather than ideal models; began with the

academic cultural context rather than the features; interpreted all textual features for their rhetorical meaning; and used those features to reveal and question academic values and assumptions. For some who teach genre awareness and critique, assigning any particular genre is troubling. Kevin Brooks encourages critical genre awareness, including the "remediation" of existing genres, through a hypertext autobiography assignment in his advanced courses, but worries that "assigning a single genre, particularly in a class that has no explicit goal of teaching certain genres, may send students the message of rigid, formal requirements to be met, even if I try to emphasize the looseness of genre conventions" (349). In fact, Byron Hawk criticizes Brooks' use of creative hypertext as being focused on product and form (247), but he does so by assuming that genres equal form and that some compositions might be devoid of genre, two assumptions challenged by contemporary genre theory. Any view of genre as inhibiting creativity ignores that all creativity works within constraints (see Devitt, "Creative Boundaries: An Argument for Genre as Standard, Genre as Muse"). Better for students to see the constraints within which everyone works than to pretend that one can compose free of existing culture. Even in the media-rich environment of digital technology, and even with hybridity becoming a marker of digital composition, writers still create texts—alphabetic, visual, and digital—within a genre-rich environment of their existing genre repertoires. Hybrids combine, merge, or invent new genres not in a communicative void but out of previous as well as new rhetorical actions.

The challenge for all writing teachers is to use existing genres without reinforcing a rigid—or worse yet, inaccurate—formula for writing. Swales observes, "While there can be no doubt that a fair amount of poor explicit teaching takes place, that does not imply that all such teaching is necessarily poor" (*Research* 243). All teachers who use particular genres—and especially the teacher who wishes to give students access to particular genres through explicit instruction—can attend to the cautions of others and resist teaching formulaic models:

- Keep the genre contextualized, and remind students continually that their unique writing situations are more complicated than the situation described for a genre.
- Provide a wide range of models and demonstrate the variation within that genre, including perhaps across time or culture.
- Encourage students to vary from the models in their individual texts for rhetorical purposes.
- Require students to reflect on their practice using the abstract concepts and principles of genre to aid transfer to other genres.
- Critique the genre to be aware of its limitations and discourage mindless conformity.

TEACHING GENRE AWARENESS

Another genre pedagogy aims to give students access not to particular genres but to strategies for learning any genre in the future. As Anne Beaufort argues, we

should be producing "students who are expert at learning writing skills in multiple social contexts, rather than expert writers in a single context" (8).

Bawarshi and Reiff, in their comprehensive *Genre: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy*, frame the problem as how to "teach genres in ways that maintain their complexity and their status as more than just typified rhetorical features" (189). Teaching genre awareness rather than genres is one answer to the problem, as I argued more fully in "A Proposal for Teaching Genre Awareness and Antecedent Genres" in my book *Writing Genres*. Genre awareness pedagogy treats genres as meaningful social actions, with formal features as the visible traces of shared perceptions. Analyzing the contexts and features of a new genre provides an inroad to understanding all genres. In an advanced writing course, for example, Coe sequences assignments so students write a brochure, a description of how to write an unfamiliar genre, and a political brief, with the result, he states, that "most students also come to understand generic structures as rhetorical strategies and genres as social processes" ("New" 207).

In the textbook I co-authored with Reiff and Bawarshi, we try to enact a genre awareness pedagogy that is also critical. For genre awareness, we teach students a process for understanding contextually any genre they might encounter:

- Collect samples of the genre.
- Identify the larger context and the rhetorical situation in which the genre is used (including setting, subject, participants, and purposes).
- Identify and describe patterns in the genre's features (including its content, rhetorical appeals, structure, format, and sentence and word style).
- Analyze what these patterns reveal about the situation and larger context (*Scenes* 93–94).

Simplified, the process helps students see what genres people read and write, where, in what forms, and why. Students apply this process to any genre that interests them. My students have used this basic process to analyze birth announcements, college viewbooks, nutrition labels, legal briefs, syllabi, scouting reports, children's picture books, movie reviews, lesson plans, an online meme, how-to websites, and dozens more. Coe, in "Teaching Genre as a Process," describes assigning students to analyze any genre and then write a "mini-manual" for others on how to write that genre (164). Irene Clark argues that students can be taught to analyze writing prompts so they may better understand their roles and respond to the prompts more effectively. For K-12 teachers, Sarah Andrew-Vaughan and Cathy Fleischer describe their Unfamiliar Genre Project, in which students select a genre they find challenging, collect and cull samples of the genre, keep a research journal, write their own version of the genre, write a reflective letter, and solicit response to their version from a parent or guardian (38). Like the teaching of particular genres, this teaching of genre awareness begins with samples of a genre and describes specific textual patterns, but the goal is understanding the context and rhetorical meaning of those patterns, rather than producing a similar text, and, as I've stated before, "the ends make all the difference" ("Proposal" 198). The goal is not to learn to write a better birth announcement or lesson plan, though that might be a result.

The goal is to learn to write any genre better through tackling it not as a neutral set of required conventions but as meaningful social action.

Genre awareness must highlight not just rhetorical and textual features but also social and ideological contexts. Like Johns, Reiff recommends having students do mini-ethnographies to "[cultivate] a consciousness of the rhetorical strategies used to carry out the social actions of a community, thus making that community more tangible and accessible" (46). In *Scenes of Writing* (Devitt, Reiff, and Bawarshi), we offer students Guidelines for Observing and Describing Scenes, including gaining access, taking observation notes, observing specific situations more closely, and only then identifying the genres within the scene by interviewing participants and noticing patterns and repeated actions. Text and context must interact in this genre pedagogy. The goal of the entire process is for students to write, to write with a fuller understanding of how, why, and for whom, and as they write to make deliberate decisions about their own purposes, motives, and strategies.

The benefits and limitations of a genre awareness approach to teaching writing differ from those of teaching particular genres, though the same general strictures of good practices apply. Because it uses genre samples for strategic analysis rather than models for mastery, this pedagogy teaches metacognitive reflection and explicitly discourages formulaic writing. Because students often gather the samples, though, teachers have less control over their quality and range; they must ensure that samples include sufficient variation, demonstrating the possibilities within a single genre. Since context is so important to understanding the meaning of the textual features, teachers generally have to spend time teaching students how to observe, interview, or otherwise gather contextual information. Still, teachers and students both must recognize that the context that anyone can describe is necessarily limited and can't capture the full complexity of writing situations. The move from analysis to writing requires particular attention, as it does in any writing course that emphasizes rhetorical analysis. Especially tricky can be deciding what genres students should write. If writing the genre being analyzed, students might retreat to seeing the samples as models; so additional writing should call special attention to their unique situations and choices. Students can write improved or resituated versions of that genre, parodies, hybrids, or, perhaps most common, rhetorical analyses of the genre (which require applying their genre awareness skills to the rhetorical analysis genre they need to write). Coe emphasizes letting students "appreciate genre as choice" ("New" 205), so students can choose their situations and genres. Teachers must emphasize that students are learning strategies to apply later when they are immersed in contexts other than the writing classroom. Essential to the argument for teaching genre awareness rather than particular genres is the notion that genre awareness can help students transfer their knowledge to other writing tasks and contexts (a topic I address more fully later), so teachers must assign frequent reflective writing to encourage metacognitive awareness.

I argue in "Proposal" that genre awareness may "[arm] students against rigid prescriptivism as well as against hidden ideologies" (212). For students in college writing courses, a successful genre awareness pedagogy that understands how to

help students transfer their knowledge can create lifelong learners who can write strategically and knowingly in any context they might encounter.

TEACHING GENRE CRITIQUE

Rather than teaching students particular genres or strategies for learning new genres, genre critique teaches students to think critically about existing genres and their cultures. In the introductions to their two 1994 collections, *Learning and Teaching Genre* and *Genre and the New Rhetoric*, Aviva Freedman and Peter Medway tell us in their section headings of "The Need to Criticize Genres" and head us "Toward More Critical Genre Studies" that would enfranchise students not just by giving them access to genres but by enabling them to subvert, legitimize, or revise genres ("Locating" 15). Sixteen years later, Bawarshi and Reiff review the work on teaching critical awareness of genre and conclude that "genre analysis can move beyond teaching academic forms to teaching purposeful rhetorical uptakes for social action and can enable students to engage more critically in situated action" (*Genre* 202).

Although teaching particular genres gives students knowledge of a genre and its contexts that they could critique, two of that pedagogy's major proponents, J. R. Martin and David Rose, define their practice as "interventionist rather than critical" (20). They seek to address inequalities of access to those genres of power, not to critique the genres themselves. Another proponent, Feez, asserts that "Through making the literacy practices and literacy demands of different types of texts in English-speaking cultures more visible, genre pedagogy also makes more visible the values and worldviews embodied in those texts" (57). For most genre critics, visibility is not enough. Commenting on early versions of explicit genre teaching, Bill Green and Allison Lee argue that students need to "acquire a critical dimension to literacy, one which allows them to adopt various authoritative positions within a discourse or subject area field, yet not to assume 'identity' with these positions" (221).

Those advocating genre awareness typically support genre critique as well, and genre awareness might be necessary for genre critique. "[W]e need to teach them the process of genre analysis," Coe argues, "so they can think critically about genres" ("Teaching" 163). Some argue that raising students' rhetorical awareness of genres alone enhances their critical awareness: Swales comments, "We are never free of our institutional roles, but becoming more aware of their constraints somehow loosens their grip" (*Research* 252). Coe asserts that understanding the rationale for generic structures is a means for overthrowing the "tyranny of genre" ("Teaching" 161). Viewing genres as social actions, not formal rules, already reframes genre "as a social strategy historically located in a network of power relations in particular institutional sites and cultural fields," as Allan Luke details in his critique of the notion of "genres of power" (333). In their collection on *The Rhetoric and Ideology of Genre*, Coe, Lorelei Lingard, and Tatiana Teslenko include Coe and Freedman's list of "critical, meta-rhetorical questions" to help students discern the ideological import of genres:

- What sorts of communication does the genre encourage, what sorts does it constrain against?

- Who can—and who cannot—use this genre? Does it empower some people while silencing others?
- Are its effects dysfunctional beyond their immediate context?
- What values and beliefs are instantiated within this set of practices?
- What are the political and ethical implications of the rhetorical situation constructed, persona embodied, audience invoked and context of situation assumed by a particular genre? ("Introduction" 6–7).

Whether teaching particular genres or genre awareness, instructors need, as Bawarshi and Reiff write, "to be critical in their uses of genre and to teach this critical awareness to students" (*Genre* 197).

Teaching strategies for genre critique include, from Coe, having students "reinvent a genre" by tackling a task with purposes, audiences, and contexts of situation similar to an existing genre; and teaching students multiple genres with similar functions so they see generic choices ("Teaching" 163–165). Such practices lead students "to notice genres, to make sense of genres, even to renovate genres" ("Teaching" 165). Within *Scenes of Writing*, too, we (Devitt, Reiff, and Bawarshi) worked to incorporate critique alongside analysis, though less successfully than we might achieve today. In one activity, for example, my co-authors and I ask students to analyze the course syllabi they received at the start of the semester, looking for expectations and roles, and then to critique the syllabus genre for what it enables and limits, for both teachers and students. Another activity asks students to rewrite the genre, to work in groups to create a new syllabus that violates those expectations in some ways, perhaps by reconceiving the appropriate roles for students or creating it in a wiki. Seeing that the syllabus could be different opens students' eyes to ways that the current syllabus genre defines and constrains their behavior and actions as they take up the expected role of student.

The very choice of what we assign students to write can promote or discourage genre critique, of course. Brad Peters argues that teachers should allow students to write antigenres, when the urge arises, "helping them rather than resisting their experiments" (214). Peters also teaches what he calls the genres of autobiography, cultural critique, and biography in critical ways, saying that he wants to help students "to acquire—rather than acquiesce to—the grammar of a genre" (202). Genres from times and cultures not their own, like war posters, remove students from familiar settings and make them more capable of critique, Heather Bastian argues. Calling students' attention to hybrid, blurred, or emerging genres can help students gain a critical stance toward genres more fully normalized. Brooks argues that his pedagogy for creative hypertexts applies to "whatever blurred or evolving genres students are inspired by and see fit to explore" (338). Brooks's three-stage genre-based pedagogy for creative hypertexts (and presumably for other blurred or evolving genres) involves

- Having students understand that all texts, including hypertexts, are rooted in one or more genres.
- Having students choose a genre that will meet their communicative needs.

- Encouraging students to reinvent genres, to play with conventions, and to play with one or two specific texts as a way of engaging a genre (343–344).

Genre is especially helpful for Web-based and hypertext instruction, he argues, because it enables teachers to talk about more than form and structure and "provides a succinct, useful way of talking about the interplay of looseness and structure, the combination of the familiar and new" (341).

A critical perspective on genres can be used to critique not just the genre but also the society or culture within which the genre is embedded. Viewing genres as "cultural artefacts" (Miller, "Rhetorical" 69) lets genres offer insight into cultures, as scholars have demonstrated by examining our own academic culture through the lens of its genres. Summer Smith analyzed "The Genre of the End Comment," delineating the habitual moves that teachers make (for example, positive comment, then negative evaluation) and arguing that this genre's stability constrains teachers' ability to comment on student papers effectively. Bawarshi analyzed the common classroom genres of syllabus, writing prompt, and student essay for their roles as sites of invention in which students and teachers position themselves. These and other critiques demonstrate that genre can, as Luke prescribes, focus attention on the "social identities and power relations" in particular sites as their "primary objects of analysis, critique, and study" (333).

Simply explicating the "social identities and power relations" underlying a genre is not sufficient for Luke and others who wish to transform genres and their institutions. Pedagogies of genre critique may, then, ask students to rewrite genres to enable differences (as the assignment to rewrite the syllabus might exemplify), parody the genres (Swales' student writes a parody of a Research Article introduction, *Research* 251), or write for social action. Bawarshi and Reiff view Bruce McComiskey's paired assignments as critical genre pedagogy because the assignment leads students, after analyzing and critiquing "the cultural and social values encoded in the genre," to "produce new genres or genres that encode alternative values for the purpose of intervening" (Bawarshi and Reiff, *Genre* 201). A similar assignment common to my classes after students analyze and critique a genre is to write something that might effect change in that genre. Students have written letters to advertisers asking them to change their form of advertising, to newspapers asking them to allow more variation in wedding announcements, and to university officials asking them to change the depiction of their majors in brochures. None of these actions, of course, addresses the complexity or reality of power in our worlds. Luke would certainly not find these adequate ways of subverting and critiquing institutional sites. Rather, they merely create an opening for students to realize that what has always been is not what must always be.

Carolyn Miller notes that "what we learn when we learn a genre is not just a pattern of forms or even a method of achieving our own ends. We learn, more importantly, what ends we may have" ("Genre" 165). Helping students perceive the significance of—even challenge and resist—those ends is a primary goal of a pedagogy of genre critique, with benefits and limitations comparable to those of all

critical pedagogies, addressed well by Ann George's chapter in this volume. Learning to become aware of and critique genres may be especially powerful. As routinized and typified actions, genres may be especially difficult—and especially important—ideological nuts to crack.

HOW TO MAKE GENRE PEDAGOGIES WORK

If a teacher wishes to know only whether students have developed competency in producing a text of a particular genre in a classroom setting, then genre pedagogies all have the advantages of making formal criteria explicit and hence easily assessable. Such assessment might be sufficient for those teaching student populations who lack the background knowledge needed to acquire particular genres in context or through the more abstract approach of genre awareness (see Hyland for a fuller discussion of such classroom-based assessment for second-language writing). The question of whether those students go on to have access not just to genres but also to higher education, higher paying jobs, or other markers of longer term success is a question open to research.

For most teachers within contemporary Composition Studies, the assessment question is not whether students can demonstrate that they learned the conventions of a genre or how to produce texts like the models they have seen. The goal is not to enable students to produce competent literacy narratives, rhetorical analyses, or creative hypertexts. Rather, studying and producing those genres serve other ends, whether increasing rhetorical flexibility, writing more effectively within unfamiliar writing situations or within new technologies, or developing critical thinking and effecting change. As is true for virtually all writing pedagogies, the assessment question instead becomes whether students can use their knowledge and skills in other contexts. Students in our courses may successfully write in multiple genres, analyze unfamiliar genres, and explicate the link between textual and contextual features, but does that knowledge transfer to other writing situations? And how can teachers help students make those connections and transfer their genre knowledge?

Even if teachers can successfully teach students a genre that might be useful in the future, what they can teach will differ from what students need to learn. Freedman has presented an elaborated argument against the effectiveness of explicitly teaching particular genres. Based on research into language acquisition, Freedman argues that teaching a particular genre in order to acquire that genre "is unnecessary, for the most part not even possible, and where possible not useful (except during editing, for a limited number of transparent features)" (202). Instead, she advocates situated learning, acquiring a genre from expert insiders in the context and at the time it is needed. Most important for teachers to note, perhaps, is Freedman's warning that "explicit teaching may be dangerous, if the instructor is an outsider or alternatively is an insider with inaccurate representations of the genre," or if the students are ones who overgeneralize or focus too heavily on form (206). To my earlier list of cautions for teachers teaching particular genres, I need to add two more: know your stuff, and know your students.

Direct research into the effectiveness of genre pedagogies is still somewhat limited (see Christine M. Tardy for a comprehensive review of both first- and second-language genre learning). Studying the effectiveness of explicit genre instruction for second-language students' reading of texts, Hyon found that "a short genre-based course" was most effective for raising students' awareness of "rhetorical elements that correspond to readily identifiable linguistic cues" but less effective for more variable and discipline-specific features ("Genre and ESL Reading" 136). Hyon concludes, "knowledge gained about specific genres develops rhetorical sensitivity that students can apply to processing various texts" (137). Catherine McDonald conducted an ethnographic study of students in a writing course using a genre awareness pedagogy and concludes that students could "translate [their genre awareness] into an accelerated ability to discern new rhetorical expectations and to learn how to approximate effective writing" (227–228), even reportedly years after taking the course. The students who made best use of their genre knowledge to handle new writing tasks were the ones, McDonald states, who understood the ideological nature of genres, supporting a pedagogy of genre critique along with genre awareness.

Not all research has found such smooth transfer of genre knowledge, so much so that Elizabeth Wardle argues that first-year writing courses should be redesigned either to teach students to transfer such knowledge or to teach students *about* writing, giving up on teaching students *to* write ("Mutt Genres"). Reiff and Bawarshi conducted cross-institutional research to investigate what prior genre knowledge students carried with them into first-year composition and how they were able to transfer that knowledge into new writing contexts. They found that students sometimes acted as "boundary crossers" who "repurposed and reimagined their prior genre knowledge for use in new contexts," but other students acted as "boundary guarders" who kept genres in distinct domains and tended to import whole genres rather than strategies when faced with new writing tasks (325). Natasha Artemeva and Janna Fox studied engineering students in engineering communication courses and found general inability to transfer their prior genre knowledge. Students largely knew the features of the assigned genre but did not recall or use that knowledge when producing their own texts. The authors discovered that students needed to have experience writing the expected genre, not just to know it analytically; that even prior writing experience might not be recalled without first raising students' genre awareness; and that teachers needed to alert students to the need to transfer their knowledge. Elizabeth Wardle's longitudinal study, following seven students from an honors first-year composition course, found that the one skill that the students did use consistently was meta-awareness of writing, language, and rhetorical strategies ("Understanding").

These researchers and others have suggested ways teachers can help students transfer their prior and newly acquired genre knowledge. Many suggestions involve developing students' metacognition. Artemeva and Fox recommend using a diagnostic assessment at the beginning of the course both to learn of students' competencies and to start them thinking about the need to use antecedent genre knowledge. To encourage students to cross boundaries and use their prior genre

knowledge in new situations, Reiff and Bawarshi recommend that teachers, when giving an assignment, ask students to reflect: "first ask students to tell us what they think the task is asking them to do, what it is reminding them of, and what prior resources they feel inclined to draw on in completing the task" to cue their prior knowledge (332). They also advise that teachers give assignments that "invite students to use a wider range of their discursive resources" and "reflect afterward on the experience of crossing between genres and domains" (332). Rebecca S. Nowacek, in her extensive study of transfer as a rhetorical act, emphasizes the need to "[get] students to question how the genre knowledge they already possess might apply or need to be reconstructed in order to provide an optimal framework for their work in other classes" (133). She recommends "a series of reflective assignments" for first-year composition courses that would help students see genre knowledge "as a flexible construct that might be applied but might also be reconstructed" (133). Her assignments include having students create taxonomies of their own types of writing and compare theirs to those of other students at the beginning of the semester; articulate aloud in conference the connections between what they've written in one paper and what they've written in other contexts; and end the semester by placing the writing done that semester into the taxonomy they created at the beginning, noting especially the writing that doesn't fit in neatly (133–135).

In her own research into transfer and her case study of a student "Tim" as he traverses first-year writing, history courses, engineering courses, and the engineering workplace, Beaufort concludes that teachers should follow three principles to help students acquire and transfer multiple knowledges, including genre awareness:

1. Teach learners to frame specific problems and learnings into more abstract principles that can be applied to new situations (177).
2. Give students numerous opportunities to apply abstract concepts in different social contexts (180).
3. Teach the practice of mindfulness, or metacognition, to facilitate positive transfer of learning (182).

Whatever genres they assign, whichever genre pedagogy they emphasize, teachers should consider their end goals and help students move their knowledge beyond the writing classroom.

CONCLUSION

All genre-based pedagogies for composition courses should incorporate all three approaches—particular genres, genre awareness, and genre critique. To avoid formulaic writing and enable transfer, teachers of particular genres must bring a larger metacognitive awareness and a critical stance on existing, dominant discourses. To make abstractions concrete and avoid accommodation, teachers of genre awareness must analyze particular genres and move to critique the values and assumptions discovered. To provide alternative genres and establish the basis

for genres as ideological, teachers of genre critique must help students discover particular hybrids, parodies, and antigenres and raise awareness of genres' social nature. How any given genre-based pedagogy incorporates the three, though, depends on the teachers' larger goals and the institutional setting, including especially the nature of the student body and their prior genre knowledge.

Understood as social acts within dynamic worlds, genres make rhetoric and culture visible. Helping students create their own unique meanings in the midst of shared social understanding is the heart of all genre pedagogies.

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