

Getting Things Done and Getting Along at Texas Tech University

When we think of writing classrooms these days, we often use words such as “community” or “group interaction” or “safe classroom environment.” These words seem especially common in descriptions of networked computer classrooms, where teachers are increasingly confronting the challenges of helping students negotiate the perceived anonymity of cyberspace.

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What we sometimes forget is that networked computer classrooms often cultivate a particular coterie of teachers who might also describe themselves as a community, who interact with each other as a kind of group interested in and knowledgeable about teaching language arts on computers, and who strive to make the process of learning from each other both safe and supportive. In such a setting, discussions of pedagogy are at the center, a decidedly different perspective than Jane Tompkins’ description several years ago in *College English* where she explains that, throughout graduate school, she learned implicitly that pedagogy was exactly like sex—something you weren’t supposed to talk about, but were supposed to be able to do properly when the time came. The current edition of *Wings* seems to undermine the silence that higher education often observes about how one becomes not just a scholar, but also a teacher. That is, it portrays pedagogy as, first and foremost, the consequence of community.

The Computer-Based Writing Research Project at Texas Tech University is directed by Fred Kemp, but those of us who know him also know that being directed by Fred is kind of like being directed by a nuclear reactor: You absorb a lot of energy just from being around him. That said, three things strike me the most about the current collection of essays from Fred’s program.

The first is obvious—scope. As I read through the submissions, I immediately notice a dramatic range of pedagogical expertise and application. From this range, of course, comes a rich sense of possibilities, where understanding and knowledge-making are just around the corner or, even more likely, in the thoughts and applications of another colleague’s classroom.

Which leads me to my second observation. Openness. Those who work in the Texas Tech project seem to exude support and the willingness to take risks. That kind of feeling doesn’t necessarily emerge from stand-alone individuals, but usually comes from a collective spirit that recognizes the value of seeing pedagogy as a process for both students and teachers. I find such openness and risk-taking sadly lacking in higher education, especially in terms of classroom access, and I applaud Fred and his colleagues for modeling how it can be done.

Finally, I noticed a genuine sense of camaraderie among the teachers and scholars in this edition of *Wings*. These people truly seem to like each other and their work. I don’t know why that surprises me, except to say that higher education is often, as Mike Rose reminds us, a “contentious enterprise” (especially in print). It helps us all to see how some are undermining this habit in the interest of quality teaching and research.

Nancy Peterson
Editor, *Wings*

Focus on . . .

Serving the Student Through Technology at Texas Tech University

The English Department at Texas Tech University has had an interest in microlabs and computer-based writing instruction ever since the mid-1980s, when Professor Thomas Barker published and distributed the ground-breaking English Microlab Registry, a quarterly survey of microcomputer labs in college and university English Departments (1985-1987). In 1987, as a result of a Texas state technology grant, the department was able to purchase 23 IBM PS II Model 25s and an IBM PS II Model 50. Together with various older IBM PCs the department had purchased for various reasons, Barker was able to assemble a computer-based classroom. This non-networked facility was used by Barker and one or two faculty each semester during the '87-'88 academic year. During the same time, Professor Don Cunningham, in charge of Technical Communication, equipped another room with 25 Macintosh Plus computers (again, from a state grant), but this room was set aside as a walk-in lab for technical communications students, not as a classroom.

In the fall of 1988, I was hired by Texas Tech largely to support Barker in his advocacy of technology in instruction and information access. During my first year on campus, Professor Barker was able to buy and install a Novell network in what was called the Microlab, and we acquired a copy of DIWE 3.0. At that time our general pedagogical emphasis shifted from a presentational base to collaborative group and peer work. Most of the four or five instructors who taught every semester in the computer-based classroom were either Rhetoric and Composition faculty or teaching assistants. Our efforts to shape a coherent computer-based effort at Texas Tech were crude but exciting.

Two events of major importance occurred in the spring of 1990. I obtained a grant of \$120,000 worth of Macintosh II CX computers, printers, and ethernet cards from Apple Computers, and Barker was able to ethernet faculty offices and computer classrooms throughout the English building. This networking allowed all three computer-based classrooms (the Tech Comm "lab" was being used more and more as a classroom facility) to run DIWE and to engage students more and more in file exchange and ENFI (Electronic Networks for Interaction) activity. We could also access the Internet, and that was when I started MBU (Megabyte University), an electronic discussion list concerning computers and writing.

At that time I gave the collective effort of the classrooms and instructors the name of "English Department Computer-Based Writing Instruction Research Project." This mouthful established an identity and a set of formal goals for those teaching in the computer-based classrooms. Among these goals, we included

- 1) discovering better methods for using computers in the teaching of writing and literature,
- 2) training graduate students in the use of computers in writing and literature instruction, and
- 3) providing graduate students methods and procedures for entering and participating in the computers and writing community.

We were and are primarily a support facility for research and training in computer-based writing and literature instruction.

Since 1990 we have averaged 23 sections of computer-based writing instruction, 14 instructors, and 385 undergraduate students per semester. This semester, the Computer-Based Writing Instruction Research Project includes 19 instructors serving 32 sections and about 600 students.

The pieces included in this edition of *Wings demonstrate, I hope, the ingenuity and personal commitment of our instructor/researchers.*

- Dean Fontenot is a Ph.D. graduate student in creative writing and for two years has directed our IBM computer-based classroom.
- John Chandler, a Ph.D. student in our Technical Communication and Rhetoric Program, is new to the Project but has become enthusiastically attracted by the concept of hypertext used in fiction instruction.
- Joanna Castner completed her M. A. in Rhetoric and Composition this past spring, writing a Master's thesis on Bakhtin, Bruffee, and social constructionist theory in computer-based writing classrooms. Joanna, who was the temporary director of our Writing Center this summer, has taught in the Macintosh computer-based classroom for three semesters and this semester is teaching in the IBM classroom.
- Patti Thompson, a literature Ph.D. student, has taught in the Mac classroom for two-and-a-half years and, like Joanna, has become well qualified in writing center practice and theory.
- Ty Lambert is ABD in technical communication and is well known to members both of the spring 1993 Interclass (Texas Tech, San Francisco State, University of Texas) and the summer 1994 Interclass (Texas Tech, Bowling Green, and University of Houston). She is also a frequent visitor to MediaMOO and the Netoric.
- Joseph Unger received his M. A. in literature this past spring and is now the full time Instruction/Information

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TEACHER TALK

Linking Literature with InterChange at Texas Tech University

The Computer-Based Writing Research Project at Texas Tech University has been using DIWE in the computer classrooms since 1988; however, until the summer of 1992, the focus of this project has been research grounded in writing instruction, primarily composition courses and technical writing. This fall is the first time that the Department of English at Texas Tech has adjusted scheduling and class sizes to accommodate literature courses being taught in the computer classrooms. Although there have been five literature courses taught in either the IBM or the Macintosh classrooms since the summer of 1992, scheduling of these literature courses was constrained by the availability of computer classrooms and reflected enrollments typical of traditional literature classes taught at Tech with approximately 30-35 students in a section. Since each of the computer classrooms only accommodates 20-23 students, the instructors teaching literature in these classrooms (Dr. Lady Falls Brown and Dean Fontenot) were forced to adapt to the problem of too many students/not enough computers by teaming students at workstations.

This semester, the Tech English department—in response to a research proposal we submitted to conduct an ethnographic case study of computer instruction in sophomore level Introduction to Fiction courses—expressed its confidence in computer-based instruction by scheduling two simultaneous classes and limiting the size of those classes to 20 students each. It was necessary to schedule the two sections so they could be taught simultaneously because one element of our research plan was to study the dynamics of discussions conducted between two classes linked together by InterChange. Specifically, we are interested in observing if the classes perceive themselves to be two distinct discourse communities linked by computer, or if a single community arises from the arrangement.

Both sections are taught in Macintosh classrooms connected by a combination local talk/ethernet network. Each section will work independently of the other on assignments and InterChange discussions except for the interclass discussions in which the two sections will be linked together one day each week. Class Assignments are exactly the same for each class, as are the prompts for all other work the classes do separately. The interclass discussions will be handled by setting up a separate class in DIWE which students from both sections will log onto, allowing them to converse on InterChange without being in the same classroom. Instead of using their names, students will be assigned random numbers as pseud-



onyms and log in under these numbers. While we realize that we will not be able to maintain strictly anonymous InterChanges (students always seem to find ways to confound such attempts), our real purpose in assigning pseudonyms is to force as much interaction as possible in the interclass discussions. One of the things we are interested in observing is the frequency of comments that

can be viewed as necessary for creating hierarchical structures among students in a classroom, such as establishing gender, cultural and economic background, race, etc. New pseudonyms will be assigned each class meeting, and we will study transcripts of the InterChange sessions to see if we can detect any patterns for the formation of such structures.

Because DIWE allows us to save InterChange transcripts, we hope to be able to track some of the sources students draw on in their interpretations of the material they read. For example, a student's discussion of a particular element of fiction could be influenced by a number of different sources, among which might be the instructor's comments, material from the course texts, discussions with other students, and ancillary material from the library. We hope that by identifying key phrases and illustrations from the course texts, instructor's comments, and on-line student discussions and by counting the frequency of these phrases and illustrations in the InterChange transcripts, we will be able to gain some idea of which sources students seem to draw on most in interpreting fiction.

The course texts includes Charles May's Fiction's *Many Worlds*, an anthology of short fiction, which has as a supplement HyperStory or hypercard stack of selected stories from the text. We tested this stack in a summer Introduction to Fiction course and found it to be a very simple tool that students can learn to use quickly. Additionally, we are using Kelly Griffith's *Writing Essays about Literature* because it provides explanations of literary terms that the students need in order to perform their own interpretation of the pieces of fiction. This text also has sample interpretative essays that the students can use as guides for their own papers.

We expect observations in these classes to help us begin to understand the dynamics of discourse in computer-based literature study and help us identify variables that could be addressed in future research. We speculate that the groundwork we are laying has potential not only to test the efficacy of various methods of computer-based instruction in literature, but also to study student behaviors in an environment that undermines the effects that gender,

TEACHER TALK, cont'd

race, culture, economic background, individual personalities, etc. can have in a proscenium classroom.

This project would not have come to fruition without the support and effort of Dr. Fred Kemp, Director of Composition and Rhetoric; Dr. Carolyn Rude, Director of Technical Communications, for adjusting technical communications program's schedule to allow us to use the Technical Communications Production Laboratory; and Dr. Wendall Aycock, Department Chair, and Dr. Richard Crider, Assistant Department Chair, for approving the scheduling of these two sections and for reducing the number of students to match the number of computers in the classroom.

John Chandler & Dean Fontenot
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Exploring the MediaMOO in a First-Year Writing Class

One of the great things about teaching in the English Department at Texas Tech University is having the freedom to dive into uncharted waters in the computer-based-classroom. As a result, in the First Summer Session 1993, I taught a first year composition course in which I asked my students to visit and become familiar with the MediaMOO. Their learning experiences there not only affected their compositions, but resulted in a stimulating teaching experience for me, as well.

At the time, I had just recently learned to navigate the MOO myself, but my enthusiasm for its unique rhetorical parameters made me anxious to ask my students to try it, wondering whether their experiences with textual virtual reality would affect either the style or content of their compositions. As it turned out, my expectations were not satisfied in the way I had imagined, but were nonetheless amply rewarded.

I expected my students to respond to the MOO much like I did, with an expanded range of understanding of the concept of reality. Instead, my students surprised me by responding to their "imaginary" experiences in the MOO by synthesizing the meaning behind their MOO actions to gain a greater understanding of a reality that turned out not to be distant from their own.

Before my students' trip into virtual space, I had "prepared" them by describing the MediaMOO and giving them a handout listing the basic commands used to speak, maneuver about, and create actions. I instructed them to meet at "The Laughing Tree," a place I had created earlier, where we would discuss our purpose in the MOO and our goals for the class. Before I could help the first of the more

tentative arrivals, the majority of my previously subdued and diligent students "broke loose" and ran (virtually) through the MOO with abandon, shooting at each other with virtual uzis until class ended. I was disgruntled, thinking that my experiment failed and that my students gained nothing "educational" from the experience.

The next day I began class with a DIWE InterChange session in which I asked students to discuss their experiences in the MOO in order to develop a topic for their next composition. I was surprised to find that the students seemed to be shocked by their own actions in the MOO. Many students wondered why their first response to the MOO was to erupt in violent activity. Their questions about their own virtual activity led to a discussion of the increase in real-life violent activity in America and several students made issues concerning violence the bases of their papers.

Because I thought that some of the students would be more comfortable writing in InterChange if they could maintain anonymity, I asked them to use pseudonyms for the next sessions. I was surprised that when a thread of conversation on gangs developed, one of my students discussed her experiences surrounding membership in a gang. She wrote about the sense of belonging that the gang provided and eventually told the class how this was lost to her when she had decided to attend the university and was considered an outcast not only by the gang but by her family as well. She explained her tentativeness to join into class discussion and her special fear of encountering professional academicians in the MOO. After class ended, however, she asked if I would leave the classroom open so that she could go back to the MOO.

By the next class day I found my once tentative student anxious to enter the MOO again. She told me of the conversations she had the previous day with a physics professor, a graduate student in computer science, and a philosophy professor from another country. I have to believe that her experiences in both InterChange and the MOO bolstered her confidence in the value of her own expression. In addition, her compositions improved in both grammatical quality and content.

The MOO experiment that I had thought was a failure turned out to provide students with avenues for insights that I could not have anticipated. Not only did students produce thoughtful, well-developed papers, they began to make intellectual and personal connections that made the experience unique to a typical course in first year composition. I am fortunate to be a part of a department that allows for the kind of experimentation in the classroom that leads to special insights, not only for the students, but for their instructors as well.

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TEACHER TALK, cont'd

Encouraging Peer Responding through InterChange

It is hard to get students to read peer comments carefully and to take them seriously. Oftentimes, I have my first-year composition students conduct their peer responses through Respond. At the end of the period, each writer is supposed to download the comments made on their drafts to their disks and read them later. However, I have noticed that many students do not ever download these comments at all. The disheartening thing about this is having to grade a paper down for problems such as poor organization or lack of development when the peer responses pointed out those same problems when the paper was still in its drafting stages.

True, the responder gets just as much or more as the writer from peer response sessions. Responders get experience in analyzing texts in terms of what the larger community of writers deems effective and ineffective. Still, writers can also benefit from responses to their papers. For example, writers can see if their main ideas are clear, organized, and fully developed. However, first-year composition students often underestimate the benefits of having readers respond to their drafts. They do not automatically know that problems sometimes render themselves invisible to writers with overly close ties to their text. These problems are not invisible to readers, and so readers are of the utmost importance during a paper's drafting stages.

When students are not taking into consideration the comments made on their drafts during peer response sessions done in Respond, I like to encourage the interaction between writers and readers through a more interactive assignment done in InterChange subconferences. For these assignments, I put response questions and directions for how to proceed with the response session into the subconferences ahead of time. The response questions deal with whatever writing issues the class is working on at that time. For example, if the class is working on writing clear focus statements and organizing their information under those focus statements, the response questions put into the subconferences would ask about those elements.

Then, I divide the class into groups of three to four and assign each group to their own subconference. The students in each group read the first draft on the screen and respond to it in terms of the questions I put in the subconference ahead of time. All of the students respond to the same draft at the same time. The writer does not respond to her own draft, but does take part in the conversation about the draft. For example, the writer may ask questions about aspects of the draft she is having problems

with; the writer may agree or disagree with advice, or the writer may expand on the advice given by readers. When the conversation about the first draft on the screen is finished, the readers read the next essays on the screen and comment on each of them in turn.

The hope, in creating these assignments, is that the readers and writers will become engaged in an electronic conversation about the texts instead of the reader sending a monologic message to the writer, who many times never even acknowledges the message in any way. The following are excerpts selected from one such peer response session. The students had written several different titles, introductions and conclusions for an essay in progress. They pasted these drafts into their assigned InterChange subconferences, and responded to each in terms of the following criteria, written by our director of composition, Fred Kemp.

1. Did the writer's titles show action?
2. Were the writer's introductions clear and interesting?
3. Did the writer's introductions have a focus statement?
4. Did the writer's conclusions seem repetitious?

[Shanna comments on Lars' work]

Shanna:

Lars - I think that if you combine certain things in each of your introductions, you will have a good one. However, if I were to pick one of the two I would choose the second.

As far as conclusions go I definitely prefer the second one. The last sentence in your first conclusion makes the paragraph weak and almost comes across cheezy. It does not sound sincere. I don't think however, that you should start the paragraph with so, yes. But it is a good conclusion.

You need to bring in some action to your titles. Maybe you will be able to get a good title idea, once you have written your essay. It sounds as if you are writing a documentary about alcoholism, not a personal family story.

[Lars reads Shanna's comments and asks about another title for his essay]

Lars:

ok, thanx, shanna...how about "The Schlegel Family Knows Alcohol."

[Lars agrees with Shanna concerning her preference for either his second introduction or his second conclusion.]

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Focus on . . . cont'd [from page 2]

Technology Specialist for Tech's English Department. We feel that what Joseph doesn't know about the Internet and Internet resources is probably apocryphal.

What these people and the other twelve involved in this semester's Computer-Based Project have in common is a fascination with new pedagogies, an uncommonly adventurous spirit in trying out new technology, and a willingness to risk time—precious time—in the search for new instructional possibilities. Nothing is more frightening to a graduate teaching assistant than the likelihood of wasting time. Yet one cannot grow without risk.

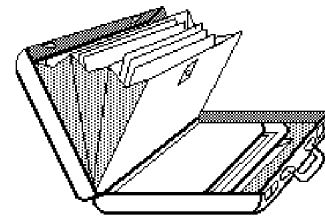
We hear that computers are essentially a male activity, but six of these eight researchers are female. Nor are the eight without family commitments. Six of the eight are married, and three of those have children. The ages of the eight include every decade from 20 through 50. As fields of study, they emphasize literature, technical communication, rhetoric and composition, creative writing and writing centers. If you knew them as well as I know them, you would see that they are as different in personality, ideology, and professional aspiration as one could imagine.

But they have one quality among them that is irrefutable. They have courage. And that is why I am so very proud of them and their efforts to learn more about ways to help their students.

**Fred Kemp, Director of Composition and Rhetoric
Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas**

TEXAS DIWE USERS ATTEND WORKSHOP IN AUSTIN

On August 27, 1994, nearly fifty participants representing twenty Texas schools participated in a full-day workshop sponsored by the Division of Rhetoric and Composition at the University of Texas and The Daedalus Group, Inc. This multi-session seminar, designed to meet the needs of both new and experienced DIWE users, offered hands-on experience of the full range of DIWE features as well as roundtable discussions of the software's pedagogical applications. Daedalus programmers and technical staff also conducted a session for system administrators on installing, configuring, and troubleshooting DIWE. In addition to providing useful information about the software, the workshop served to strengthen the community of DIWE users in Texas, a community Daedalus hopes to support through its electronic bulletin board, its MOOs, and its newsletter *Wings*. The Daedalus staff and workshop facilitators appreciate the enthusiastic response to its Texas workshop, and look forward to working with schools and instructors throughout the country to foster similar regional communities.



DIWE E-mail User Forum

TEACH@daedalus.com

Now that we have an Internet connection, we are maintaining an electronic mailing list dedicated to the issues associated with teaching with DIWE. Instructors using DIWE and the developers of DIWE (current version and developmental versions) discuss issues of interface, pedagogy, and theory.

To subscribe, send an electronic mail message to:

sub-teach@daedalus.com

After that, you can participate by sending e-mail to

teach@daedalus.com

Virtual Reality Classroom

Another service we are now able to provide is a virtual space in which you can interact with other Daedalus users, bring your classes on field trips, collaborate with our software developers on the next generation of software, and generally get to know your way around CyberSpace. To visit the DaedalusMOO, you'll have to use a machine that is connected to the Internet. If you're at a unix prompt, you'll type `telnet daedalus.com 7777`

On VAX machines, `telnet daedalus.com/port=7777`

Once logged on, make yourself a character by typing `create <name> <password>`. To see who else is visiting the MOO, type `@who`. If you see someone you know, type `@join <character>`. And don't forget to enjoy yourself!

Frequently Asked Technical Questions about Daedalus Software



Macintosh Questions

How can we use DIWE with AtEase?

AtEase from Apple Computer restricts the access of individual users of a single Macintosh computer. It can prevent unauthorized access, moving, renaming and deleting of files. In order to use DIWE with AtEase, follow these steps:

1. If you have already installed AtEase, disable it by opening AtEase Setup and selecting the Off button. Then, restart your Macintosh.
2. If you have not installed DIWE, do so now. Follow the instructions in the DIWE Technical Guide.
3. AtEase allows you to permit users to access Minimal menus or All menus. If users do not have access to all menu items, they will not be able to use the Chooser and will not be able to open the file server disk on which the DIWE network files reside. If you are going to allow users to access only minimal menu items, you must use the Chooser now and set the appropriate file server disk to be automatically opened at startup time. Refer to your Macintosh User's Guide if you do not know how to do this.
4. If you have not logged into DIWE from this Macintosh, do so now. Follow the instructions in the DIWE Technical Guide. After logging in once, you should be able to run DIWE without being asked to locate the Daedalus Preferences file.
5. If you have not installed AtEase, do so now. Follow the instructions included with AtEase.
6. Add DIWE to an AtEase user's list of items: Use AtEase Setup to Open or make a New user. Follow the instructions included with AtEase on how to do this. When you get to "Items for this User:", click on "Add Applications..." and add the DIWE application. The user will then be able to run DIWE.

7. Setting up the Question Series folder: If you have allowed an AtEase user to open and save files only in his or her user's folder or only on disk, you must make a special copy of the Question Series folder. This copy should be placed in the user's folder or on a floppy disk, respectively. This will allow the user to select a question series when using Invent or Respond.

8. If you disabled AtEase in Step 1, enable it now by opening AtEase Setup and selecting the On button. Then, restart your Macintosh.



DOS Questions

Someone has changed the system passwords and now we cannot change them.

System passwords, along with default drive information and external programs information, are stored in the config.rez file, so you will need to regenerate this file. To do so,

1. In DIWE/CONFIG, rename the config.rez to something safe, like config.rex, just in case the next steps fail
2. Insert your installation diskette 3 in drive a: (or b:)
3. Change to drive a: (or b:)
4. Type `genrcon4 s:\diwe\` to begin regenerating the config.rez resources. (instead of `s:\diwe\`, use whatever the full path to the diwe directory on your network is — don't forget the final backslash).
5. Type `genrprn4 s:\diwe\` (to add printing resources to the config file — again, use your full path to the DIWE directory and don't forget the backslash)
6. At this point, you've got a virgin copy of config.rez, which means that SUPER and INSTRUCT are again your default system passwords. It also means that whatever work you've done on the "default drive" or "external programs" has now been lost (well, it's in the old config.rez, to be accurate).

If you have questions you would like to see addressed in Wings, drop us a line or send e-mail to wings@daedalus.com

Lars:

Yeah, I also preferred the second one, shanna. It was well done, not rare...but really, you seem to have done a very good job...i like what i see...keep it up, never go flat!

[Lars asks the group for more suggestions.]

Lars:

How would you two say i should improve on my intros...i have a good way to do the coclusion now, thanx to shanna, but what about those stinkin' intros...we don't need no stinkin' intros...)

[Shelly comments on Lars' work.]

Shelly:

Lars - your intros and conclusions are pretty good.They don't repeat one another at all. Your first introduction is a little brief.

[Lars agrees with Shelly about his introduction and asks her about the last title he wrote.]

Lars:

Yeah, i know...i was in a hurry to write them. but overall, i liked the second intro best myself, and the second conc. what did ya think of that third title i spouted out with a few moments ago?

This method of peer responding is just one way to get writers more involved in the comments made on their drafts. The readers and writers are placed together in the same electronic space for a more conversational, interactive format. Another element I like about this assignment is that the writers can ask readers specific questions about their drafts. The questions instructors come up with for these response sessions do not always conform to the questions that writers may be having about their own texts. Furthermore, readers may see problems with the text that the prescribed questions do not deal with, and in the more conversational InterChange format, students do not feel as tied to the questions. Thus, both readers and writers have more control over the response sessions. One of the main strengths of DIWE is its ability to bring students and texts together in an interactive, text-based space. Peer response sessions done through InterChange subconferences is just one of the many ways writing instructors can capitalize on this strength.

Joanna Castner
Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas

Some Thoughts on Pseudonyms and InterChange

Most instructors view the computer-networked classroom as a relatively calm, quiet learning environment that controls all student interaction through the written word. Because a computer monitor replaces the faces of the individuals, a certain detachment from the words on the screen seems to occur. Students will laugh at a particularly funny phrase and maybe want to know who wrote it, but a strong emotional reaction to written InterChange sessions does not normally occur.

But one day, a year or so ago, I learned how dynamic the computer based classroom can be. I was into my second semester of using networked computers for teaching writing and pretty much figured I had everything under control. This particular section of freshmen had some really good writers who could spit out amazing comments during the InterChange sessions that would break up the whole class. Yes, there were those few members who failed to participate as enthusiastically, but most students were working hard.

This class had learned to use the Pseudonym feature in InterChange to change their identity and had taken advantage of the anonymity to send a few messages implying other students had less than normal characteristics. Jeff, one of the slower class members, took exception to a particularly tart statement from Phil, the undisputed champion writer in the class. I had been flitting between students, trying to get everyone commenting and reading, so I didn't realize what Jeff's intentions were until he shoved Phil out of his seat and started hollering at him.

Afraid that Jeff might throw a punch next, I grabbed him by the back of the shirt to get his attention and told him to get out and to stay out of class. Phil appeared to be unharmed (except for his pride), and we tried to discover what had caused such a violent reaction on Jeff's part. It appeared that Jeff, a good-old-boy from West Texas, believed that Phil had used his anonymity on InterChange to imply that Jeff was less than a complete man. I stepped outside and found Jeff standing there. He was embarrassed for overreacting and scared that I would kick him out of the class. After I told him that he wasn't ten years old now and to grow up and that names couldn't hurt him anymore, I announced his punishment. He must immediately apologize to Phil in front of the class, admitting his error. We walked back in; Jeff apologized to Phil, who accepted and then pointed out that he had not written the statement that set Jeff off.

Because of Jeff and Phil and all the other students who have taught me over these years, I have learned that I don't know near as much as I think and that computers encourage writing in ways that the traditional classroom cannot. This incident reinforced my belief in the power of the

written word to create within the reader a reaction leading to action. I had thought of the computer network as a nice, safe, sterile environment that my class would visit to learn to be better writers. Instead, I discovered that the network is a dynamic arena for people to express ideas and others to read and respond to those ideas. And when emotions become involved—and they frequently will—action outside of the network can occur. The computer doesn't separate us from each other, putting us in individual little cells; it encourages connections between people who might never verbalize their thoughts to each other.

Patti Thompson
Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas

Daedalus Discipline for the Novice Instructor

The student was reassuring. "I think you'll do fine," she said, a big smile on her face. "You've never taught before, have you?" another asked. No, I hadn't. It's not that I told all the students on that first day of classes that I was brand new to teaching, and it's not that I made any major gaffs, they just *knew*. And we hadn't even started using the computers yet.

This first day of teaching occurred a year ago and was in a paperless Macintosh-based first semester composition course using the Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment. A Master's degree student in literature at the time, I had convinced Texas Tech's Director of Composition, Fred Kemp, that sooner or later our Computer-Based Writing Instruction Research Project would have to let in an inexperienced teaching assistant. After all, what's the point of a research project if you don't keep innovating? I admit, though, getting in ultimately had more to do with my familiarity with the computers than any special new trend here, but I am convinced the computer-based pedagogy with its clearly-defined sequence of possible activities warrants encouraging just such a trend.

What the computer-based classroom does for the novice teacher more than anything else is enforce organized preparation. The instructor knows that the computer network has to be up and running before the students enter the class, therefore preparation is mandatory.

Step one is to prepare a class assignment using Daedalus Write. Following the advice of Dr. Kemp and other experienced instructors, I structured each assignment in three parts: an overview of what was due from the day before, a numbered set of tasks for the class period, and a homework assignment at the bottom. Each assignment was saved to a folder on the file server so that my supervisor and colleague instructors could review them and offer advice. Once the assignment was saved, I created InterChange, Invent, and Respond prompts in Daedalus Write, depending on the activities of the day. These, along

with important mail messages, were saved to the same folder as the class assignments. Following this, the class assignment was posted and the prompts and mail messages were posted by copying and pasting, leaving a permanent archive of class materials in my folder. Eventually, I got in the habit of doing all assignments and prompts on my home computer with Daedalus Write, saving them to disk, and dragging them to my folder on the file server the next day at school. In class, I used Mail's ability to record readers to check roll on a daily-posted roll message, and thereafter I allowed the students to follow their own pace through ClassAssignment. Following class, I checked for messages to me, evaluated performance, and restarted the routine by creating the next day's ClassAssignment.

This routine perhaps sounds simplistic, but it greatly helped me organize my preparation for class. So many novice TAs I know prepare by merely glancing over the textbook 15 minutes prior to class, resulting in sporadic and improvisational teaching performances. Robert Conners' and Cheryl Glenn's advice to "Give yourself a structure for each class that is carefully thought out; it is better to find yourself carrying some of your plans over to the next class rather than to take a chance that you will be gazing helplessly at the end of your prepared notes with half an hour still left in class" goes largely unheeded because written plans and notes are not mandatory. The DIWE-based pedagogy, though much more time-consuming, forces a discipline on the instructor's preparation because the class assignment and all prompts have to be written and inserted into the computer system prior to class. Also, the structure of Daedalus' functions, like InterChange, Mail, Invent, and Respond, determine not only the range of activities for one day, but assist the instructor by suggesting a day-by-day order throughout the semester. Invent can start out a unit, followed by days of InterChanges and Mail, followed by a couple of days of Respond series. Such a routine frees the novice instructor from the most dreaded of worries, "What do I do next?" Unless the instructor chooses to ignore functions like Invent and Respond or mixes ad hoc lectures into the formula, DIWE has the course pre-arranged.

Two months ago, I had the opportunity to teach with Texas Tech's VAX miniframe computer. My goal was to bring to the students some Internet utilities DIWE does not yet offer, like Internet mail, Usenet News, and MOOs. In order to minimize student confusion, I decided to stick to the VAX interface throughout the course and not use DIWE at all. Unfortunately, unlike DIWE, the VAX was a blank slate. In order to make the VAX as easy to use and least troublesome as possible—student-proof, if you will—I had to spend a good couple of weeks prior to classes preparing each student's account. I set the accounts up with login.com files that redefined many of the VAX's arcane commands into simpler commands, automatically received incoming network files, and typed out to the

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New Faces, New Voices, New Roles at Daedalus

Susan Meigs, Marketing Management & Customer Service

Hello. Mine is the voice many of you will hear when you phone our Austin office for customer support or sales information. I came on board Daedalus in July 1993, and as of September 1994 will be assuming some new responsibilities. In addition to maintaining the office and overseeing orders, I will be gathering information about current and prospective clients that will allow us to initiate new product lines and marketing strategies, and will be coordinating training and consulting services. So, I may be contacting you in the months to come as Daedalus prepares to release its new net-friendly version of the Integrated Writing Environment. Of course, you are always welcome to contact me with questions, concerns, requests, orders, and suggestions.

To introduce myself more fully, I should say that, like many of Daedalus associates, I have been a graduate student at the University of Texas. Also, like many associates, I am not a native Texan, though I am what one might call a native teacher. My first teaching experiences, apart from playing "school" with my younger brother, were as an adult education sign language instructor in my hometown Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. After growing up in South Florida, I moved north to Tallahassee where I completed a B.A. in English at Florida State University, spending one year studying education, psychology, and fine arts in London. I then migrated to Austin and the University of Texas.

Having earned a Master's in English, assisted the editor of *Theatre Journal*, and served on graduate policy and professional development committees, I recently set aside my Ph.D. work in contemporary gender and performance studies to take this full-time position with Daedalus. In fact, this will be the first year since I moved to Austin in 1986 that I won't be teaching something related to language studies; at Austin Community College I have taught developmental writing and grammar reviews, and at the University of Texas, British and world literature surveys, world drama and a drama-based writing course, technical writing for engineers, and oral communication and cultural studies for international Fulbright scholars. I also bring to Daedalus a range of experiences in business, from marketing at Dell Computers, to editing a newsletter on Mexican commerce. I am excited, however, that my position at Daedalus will allow me to remain connected to my first interest, teaching.

As you can see, I'm continuing the rich Daedalus tradition of using teachers to run a computer company, a practice we think works pretty well. I look forward to talking with you, and to learning how you and your students use our software and services.

Traci Gardner, Technical & Internet User Support

I came to The Daedalus Group by way of Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia, and to computers and writing by a crooked route involving a mix of medieval literature and textual studies, modern poetry, rhetoric, and composition. Somehow that all fit together and landed me in Austin, Texas, in a new job where I answer questions from DIWE users about how the system works and about how it can be used to meet a teacher's pedagogical goals. If you're wondering what my qualifications are for giving such advice, allow me to outline my longstanding relationship with reading and writing.

I've taught English at the university level since 1984, and my teaching, like my studies, has been eclectic. I've taught everything from first year composition to business and technical writing, from Chaucer to Nikki Giovanni, and from remedial writing to upper-level transformational grammar. I've used DIWE with university students ranging from incoming first-year students to graduate students.

I first coupled computers and writing in 1987, when I snuck my summer school business writing students into the English Department's PC Lab to show them how to work the basic word processor during our class period. It was completely against the rules—classes weren't supposed to be in the lab. I had to beg the guardian of the lab for permission and promise to bear all responsibility for what they might do—that is, if they broke anything, I had to pay for it. This past July, I taught the first on-line, distance business writing class at Virginia Tech; my students were across Virginia, at least four hundred miles away from my office on the campus. One was even in Maryland. And I didn't have to beg for permission or worry about the rules anymore.

In addition to teaching students with computers, I've done work with evaluation of the networked classroom and training of the people who teach there. Last fall, I began an evaluation of Virginia Tech's networked classroom, which focused on students' behavioral and attitudinal changes and cognitive gains. Based on that work, I applied for and won a university grant, which is currently funding the English Department's continuation of that evaluation.

I've given training in such areas as how to scan textual and digital images, how to use an e-mail client, and how to use hypertext authoring tools, in addition to how to use DIWE. To help insure that computer training was available to everyone in my department, I applied for and won an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action grant focusing on empowering women and minorities. The Department is now using the money to finance a series of computer workshops.

Currently, I'm studying the rhetoric of computer-mediated communications and how composition pedagogy in the networked classroom can empower writers. I'm especially interested in the ways issues of gender and authority affect readers and writers in networked environments as well as how our language in these environments both creates and limits who we are and what we can do.

Here at Daedalus, I hope to help teachers and their DIWE sites use the software effectively and efficiently to meet their goals in the classroom. Over the next year, I'd like to gather a pool of assignments, tips sheets, and papers to help teachers plan their classes and to help site administrators to more readily access information on the latest fixes and technical updates. I'll also continue to answer technical questions and provide customer support over the phone, in electronic mail, and using internet resources such as the virtual classroom in DaedalusMOO. Hope to hear from you soon.

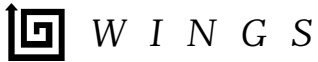
TEACHER TALK, cont'd

screen a ClassAssignment-like message from me once the student was logged in. The Internet's equivalent to InterChange, Internet Relay Chat, I judged too difficult for my students to use, so we stuck to plain ol' e-mail for both synchronous and asynchronous messaging, with a bit of MOOing on the side. My students used the TPU (EVE) editor to write both e-mail and essays, and they sent their drafts to me and the other students via the send/file command.

As with the previous courses I taught using DIWE, I followed the routine of posting a ClassAssignment, pre-

paring prompts, and responding to student mail. Though the course turned out—because of the use of the Internet—to be the most exciting and rewarding class I have ever taught, the nightmare of organizing the command-line interface revealed to me how much for granted I took those simple, neatly organized Daedalus functions and the routine those functions engender. Even so, the course taught on the VAX required the same discipline of preparation prior to class, because everything I prepared for my students had to be in that medium we most want them to learn, writing.

Joseph Unger
Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas

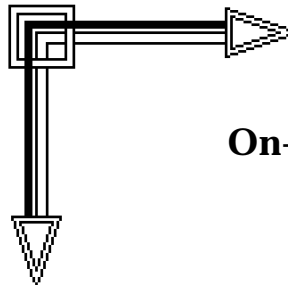


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Wings is published once every long semester (usually in October and April). It is designed to provide teachers and users of Daedalus software with tips, stories, and resources, both technical and pedagogical. Wings is sent to everyone on the Wings mailing list. If you are just seeing a second-hand copy of this newsletter, please drop us a line or write to us at wings@daedalus.com to be placed on the mailing list. We also invite Wings readers to submit their own ideas and feedback by contacting:

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These materials are also available through our new Gopher server, which can also be found on daedalus.com.

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