

## InterChange: Local Conversations, Global Concerns

This edition of *Wings* is dedicated to the Daedalus InterChange® module. Overall, the general consensus seems to be that something significant happens—whether productive or problematic—when people use this particular piece of Daedalus technology.

One reason for the struggles to understand our InterChange program is, I think, its ability to blend the best features of local and wide area networks. DIWE has traditionally been set up in LAN classrooms because, as Robert Royar at Morehead State University has recently pointed out, LANs are what the humanities has generally pursued when it has pursued computers at all. The advantages of such small networked places seem increasingly limited in the age of the information superhighway, but those that do exist, I would argue, include the ability to create intimacy and a definable community of familiar voices in an often densely populated and frequently alienating computer-mediated world.

The disadvantages, as Robert has also pointed out, are the three C's: cost, currency, and control. LANs go out of date and are much more expensive to maintain than wide area networks if for no other reason than nearly every LAN classroom ideally needs its own support staff to manage its often idiosyncratic hardware and software configurations. There is also the matter of who is in control. LANs can allow teachers to recreate current-traditional classrooms if they so choose—and many, of course, do—thus undermining what research in composition studies has been telling us for quite some time now: the more control writing teachers exercise at the level of utterance, the fewer risks student writers will take.

But there's a less tangible, though perhaps more important, quality to wide area networks that writing teachers are becoming increasingly obligated to offer students: exposure to the global nature of information, and the collaboration and knowledge that is available via computers, that cannot be controlled by the confines of English classrooms and current-traditional writing curriculum. The days of quiet, tidy, correction-oriented composition pedagogy are not long with us. Indeed, with the advent of the World Wide Web, we are seeing the best of intuitive interfaces meeting up with the best of freedom of access and expression. While we owe our students the training and knowledge to capitalize on these opportunities, I have found that InterChange sessions help to moderate those urges for global expression more commonly found on wide area networks and offer more intimate local-area occasions for students to find their center again. The program also gives students the interactive quality of being in hyperspace on the Internet where anyone can say anything to anyone—and we all know that they will and do—while creating a sense of community where they can be actually heard and physically recognized. It's about the need for all of us to find a way to accommodate the velocity of the present postmodern moment that both excites and terrifies us with the threat of its unmatched boundarylessness. The Daedalus InterChange program, it seems, engenders the feeling that our educational lives are both subjectively and objectively significant, that they are both narrow and wide, safe and scary, because its bottom line is about learning to converse responsibly in the world of flesh and blood as well as in the world of ideas. In my opinion, this is what education, in the humanities or otherwise, is all about.

**Nancy Peterson**  
Editor, *Wings*

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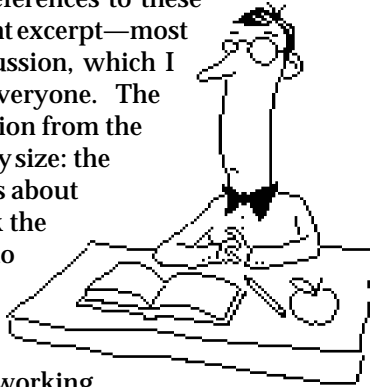
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# The Best of Teach, January 1995:

## "Prove this is worthwhile"

### Editor's Note:

The title of this section is a gross misnomer, especially after reading through the transcripts for January 1995 of teach@daedalus.com. Indeed, this excerpt represents only one compelling thread among many, and the ones left out—on keeping InterChange focussed, on gender and InterChange, on plagiarism in computer classrooms—can be browsed on our ftp or Gopher servers or WWW home page (see page 5) for those who are interested. There are some references to these other threads in the present excerpt—most notably, the gender discussion, which I heartily recommend to everyone. The main reason for its exclusion from the present transcript is simply size: the gender discussion alone is about 60K!! Most likely, I'll talk the gender participants into fleshing out something for a future edition of *Wings*, since it appears that quite a few folks are working in this area as they teach. Stay tuned.



I want to mention that, despite the fact that we've never met f2f ("face-to-face" in Internet lingo), I am nevertheless indebted to Eric Crump and his "Voices from the Net" for ideas on how to maintain the spirit of an on-line conversation that is neither realtime nor (necessarily) synchronous. You'll find that I've slightly edited (that is, no actual message-proofing) the following excerpt in order to achieve some continuity, though we all know that the desire for continuity is more the consequence of never having witnessed an InterChange session than of the fear that the center cannot hold. Indeed, the contributors to this piece of conversation seem to demonstrate that the center is probably not where or what we thought it was supposed to be.

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**From:** Pauline Buss <GigiGirl3@aol.com>

**Subject:** Prove this is worthwhile

Outcome assessed writing: Justify the cost

Cost of equipment and staff is forcing administration to ask us to PROVE this [teaching writing on computers] is worthwhile. And they will not accept our cheers that it works. Outcomes !! That's the jargon I am seeing. So it may be fun to talk male-female traits—But folks, we have more serious concerns. If we can't prove it helps students,

the schools that are just beginning to use computers won't get them. Is anyone else under pressure to prove it is worth the cost? One of our retired profs reminds me we can't prove students learn to write.

**Pauline Buss**

**William Harper Rainey College**

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**From:** Kristine Blair <kblair@falcon.tamucc.edu>

**Subject:** Re: Prove this is worthwhile

Pauline:

You are not alone in your concern about proving the technology works to the powers that be. Our composition director, who is on the university's academic computing committee, called a special meeting today to figure out our program's response to a growing concern that we may lose our access to the computer labs as our sections of first year composition and technical writing increase. Part of the problem is, of course, the gap between what outside administrators consider to be good writing, usually an emphasis on precision and correctness, and what we as compositionists consider to be good writing, an emphasis on developing new perspectives, an increase in critical inquiry and the overall emphasis on revision, traits fostered, I would argue, through such interactive technology as Daedalus. Equally problematic is the fact that so many outside of composition studies who make these financial decisions are unfamiliar with the field of computers and composition and concept of the computer as a tool of literacy, not realizing that computer-assisted instruction is something more than word processing, something more than a tool to correct grammar and syntax. It is clear we have to work to broaden the notion of what writing is, what a class in first-year "English" can and should be, as all too many people outside of our programs are skeptical that we should have access to this technology in the first place.

One area where we have made some headway is to dialogue constantly with systems administrators about our academic computing needs; these people have a lot to say to Computer Services directors about what people are doing in classes and why such an approach is beneficial. We have even joined forces with them to work on joint proposals to increase the memory for additional ram so that more sophisticated applications can run in our technical writing classes, and we even worked to get a new server last year to accommodate the increased traffic that Daedalus fostered.

Changing people's attitudes about what we as English folk do is our biggest obstacle, it seems. We left our meeting today all a little more dedicated to fighting this battle and to not giving up a single opportunity to schedule classes in electronic environments.

**Kris Blair**  
Texas A&M, Corpus Christi

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**From: Traci Gardner <traci@daedalus.com>**  
**Subject: Re: Prove this is worthwhile**

Exactly Pauline. We have no proof that pencils, typewriters, legal pads, computers, dictaphones, or any such technology truly help students learn anything.

However, I cannot share your implicit statement that male-female traits are less serious matters. As a woman who has faced gender-based discrimination which has certainly influenced her education, I cannot accept that it is inappropriate to talk on about how issues of gender, ethnicity, and authority affect what we do in the classroom.

In addition, issues of gender, ethnicity and authority can add fuel to your arguments about outcomes in the electronic classroom. Maybe women or those with female traits, those who are introverts, those with minority status and so on, get more attention in the computer based classroom. Do comparative analysis of discussion transcripts in class InterChange sessions and in traditional oral class discussion. Your Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action people care about such things (or better at any rate). Further, you might investigate whether, for instance, women (or whatever group) might show cognitive gains that they do not in other learning environments. While the overall population might show one set of tendencies, you may find that sub-groups can provide you with useful data.

In working on evaluation and assessment at Virginia Tech, I found that the constant emphasis was cognitive gains. What I did was focus my evaluative work carefully and gather extensively. Consider carefully how you focus—if you look at entry and exit essays are they truly testing the same kinds of writing which students completed in the classrooms? You need to look very carefully at the things your classes claim to teach—and determine how those things might be demonstrated. If classes claim to teach critical thinking skills, for example, holistically grading writing samples for grammatical errors as part of an outcomes assessment program is not a viable evaluative technique.

Also consider carefully how you define outcomes—that's part of gathering extensively . . . maybe writing quality does stay the same, but student apprehension of computers or writing decreases. You need to look at how much students write, what they write, how well (by whose

standards) they write it, how they feel about what they write, how they feel about writing in general, how they feel about computers, and so on. There are expansive categories to consider.

You might consult Bruce, Peyton, and Batson's *\_Network-Based Classrooms\_* Cambridge UP, 1993 for description of a situated evaluation and why it is useful in a computer classroom.

**Traci Gardner**  
The Daedalus Group, Inc.

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**From: Becky Rickly <becky.rickly@umich.edu>**  
**Subject: Re: Prove this is worthwhile**

Appreciate your concern, Pauline, and it certainly is an imposing task: prove (to people who don't really understand what we do, in ways they probably won't consider legitimate) that computers are worthwhile.

Yet I don't think you should dismiss our discussion of gender as merely "fun" and completely outside the scope of the concern you voiced. One of the aspects of computer use—and I'll limit my thoughts to the use of InterChange here—that does, in fact, make the activity appear "worthwhile" to those outside of English is how marginalized students—women and minorities—are given a "voice" in the classroom. Granted, you'll have to prove to your administration that giving students voice, and encouraging de-centered, uni-lateral participation is a thing to be desired, but there's been a plethora of articles written lately theorizing just that....and when you put the results of an empirical study where your mouth is—administrators take note. In our case, we proved that in traditional oral discussions, those who tested as feminine did not participate (or participated only rarely), and that when using InterChange, every one of the students who tested as feminine not only participated and participated more frequently, but they did so at a level which was statistically significant (and at a level which rivaled those who tested as masculine)....In fact, socially constructed gender was \*the\* controlling variable which determined how frequently students participated in oral discussions, and InterChange neutralized that variable. Fun, huh?

**Becky Rickly**  
University of Michigan

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**From: Fred Kemp <YKFOK@ttacs1.ttu.edu>**  
**Subject: Re: Prove this is worthwhile**

I argued in my CCCC presentation in Nashville last year and in other places that nothing regarding writing instruction can be "proved" in any empirical sense. Those of you have web browsers can view this paper at the following address:

[http://prairie\\_island.ttu.edu/cccc94.html](http://prairie_island.ttu.edu/cccc94.html)

## "Prove this is worthwhile", cont'd

This essay surely won't convince administrators about anything, but I think it clarifies what I consider a bogus demand that technology "prove" itself. The simply fantastic spread of word processing technology and computer-mediated communication (both local and the Internet, which is growing at the current rate of over 100% per year) makes obvious that American life will continue to be powerfully influenced—at an increasing rate—by computer-based communications. TIME magazine last week (January 23, 1995) for instance, called it "the nation's inevitable immersion in cyberspace" (page 16), in its cover story.

Claims for "proof" are usually disguised defensive measures intended to ward off the inevitable expenses, since almost all other instructional practices are not mandated from "proof" (prove to me that athletics builds character, that student teaching makes better teachers, that student-run television studios provides professional skills, that "moot courts" in legal training provide student lawyers valuable skills, that cutting open mice and frogs better informs biology students . . . well, you get the point. Most instructional practices in other discipline are considered intuitively proper, but even though the wide-spread use of computers as writing and text-delivery devices would suggest an intuitively valid use of computers and networks in writing instruction, the technologically conservative attitude of most administrators brings to bear a sudden, aggressive, "prove it" attitude).

The only consolation I can give to you folks trying to move more quickly into technology and are struggling with "skills assessment" stuff . . . is that it is going to happen. The efforts you put into it now will bear fruit eventually in defining you as resident experts when your administrators look around them and see a tide of computer-based instruction engulfing all major institutions and (it's coming!) public schools.

**Fred Kemp**  
**Texas Tech University**

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**From: John Slatin <john@daedalus.com>**  
**Subject: Re: Prove this is worthwhile**

This is by no means a comprehensive response to the challenge of "proving" that computer-based composition classes work, but:

There are virtually no work environments left, either inside or outside the academy, where significant writing is done off-line. Certainly not in the private sector; not in government; not in education. How could a university or college possibly claim to be preparing students to enter the workforce if they do all their college-level writing on legal pads?

Do a quick survey of administrators at your institution; talk to a few local business executives; ask them whether they would hire someone who couldn't sit down at a computer and write a memo or prepare a report.

About proving things:

There's been considerable discussion in the business press lately (e.g., Fortune, Business Week, etc.) about the problems of assessing "productivity" where \*intellectual\* labor, "knowledge-work" is concerned. As with early studies of the impact of computers in composition, there's been some disappointment in the business world about apparent failure to achieve expected productivity gains through computerization. Lately it's begun to appear, however, that people may have been measuring the wrong things, on the assumption that benefits would manifest themselves in more rapid performance of the same tasks that were important before computerization occurred. But computerization changes the nature of the task, so you have to look at what new kinds of work are being done in order to see what kind of difference computers make. I think we might apply that sort of reasoning to instruction, and especially to writing instruction.

Take the growth of the World Wide Web for example: it's geometric, exponential—see the graph in Wednesday's NY Times (1/18/95), in the business section. They're measuring packets of information (i. e., little bits of data moving across the Web), but still it's astonishing by any measure: from near 0 in 1993 to over 10 TRILLION (yes, that was a T) in Jan. 1995. The number of WWW documents indexed by the Carnegie Mellon Lycos search engine has risen from 863,000 in November 1994 to 1,53 million as of January 13 1995—almost a hundred per cent increase in less than 2 months. The number of commercial WWW sites is up 400 per cent in 1994. MCI has recently signed a major agreement with Netscape; Prodigy has just announced it will begin providing Web services this year. Etc. The number of scholarly journals published in electronic form is up over 400 per cent since 1991. I think it could be argued that administrators who DON'T make computer-based writing courses available to students are behaving in an irresponsible manner.

Good luck.

**John Slatin**  
**University of Texas at Austin**

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## Virtual Reality Classroom

Another service Daedalus provides is a virtual space in which you can interact with other Daedalus users, introduce your students to a virtual classroom, 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. At a unix prompt, 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!

## On-Line Teaching Materials at daedalus.com

Daedalus maintains an FTP archive for distribution of software upgrades, product information, newsletters, articles, bibliographies, and sample course materials. These items are available via anonymous ftp at daedalus.com. When asked for a username, type 'anonymous'; and for your password, use your e-mail address.

These materials are also available through our Gopher server, which can also be accessed at daedalus.com

A third (and probably the easiest) way to find these materials is on our World Wide Web home page. If you're using a web browser, you can access the Daedalus home page at: <http://daedalus.com/>

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# FAVORITE DAEDALUS MOMENTS

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When I was learning the DIWE system, I never really thought about *why* I wanted to teach in the ENFI [Electronic Networks for Interaction] environment. I just thought it was a natural (ah-hem, well, a conveniently constructed technological) writing space. I was surprised, and even a little upset, when my basic writing class asked me why we were spending (gasp!) one third of the class talking (writing) to each other. After a particularly fruitful discussion (15 students, 1 hour discussion, 54 pages of commentary), I began the first class with a discussion/critique of InterChange.

"Why do we waste so much time in there?"

"Yeah, what's it doing?"

"What is the point?"

I took out the substantial transcript and unfurled it melodramatically in front of the class. They hadn't realized that the transcript was print-able (a novice's oversight—my first ENFI classroom, remember). They looked at the words—their words—and realized that they had together produced more text than any of them had produced before in their lives (15 students dividing 54 pages, more than three pages each! in an hour!). Of course, I was using their belief in product over process, but I even scored points for process when I began to explain why I enjoyed the computer discussions.

I wish I could get every class to enjoy DIWE as much as we did for the remainder of that semester. I love telling this story and my colleagues here are tired of it. Now I use the transcripts as the texts in the following class, and I explain my interest in DIWE and its apparent ability to get students writing—a lot.

**Michael Salvo, SUNY Binghamton**  
[salvo@bingsuns.cc.binghamton.edu](mailto:salvo@bingsuns.cc.binghamton.edu)

I've been lurking on this [the teach@daedalus.com] list and applied something I must have picked up from the thread on keeping InterChange focused. First day of class only one student was on task, the "f" word showed up and I was able to fulfill my objective though not as planned. I wanted to work on the idea of writing as doing or accomplishing a task, so I had asked the students to describe themselves so others could match their names to their faces. The only person who was on task was a Chinese student who said the typical "Hi! I'm from Taiwan. My name is such and such. My American name is Kevin. Please call me Kevin." Some jerk (pardon the French) responded, "Hi! I'm from America. My name is Andrew. Please call me Andrew." I asked the class to examine the messages and pick the one that best did its job. They all decided it was the Chinese fellow's and someone said this was because he said where he was from. So, I countered, "What about Andrew's message? It said where he was from?" They got the point that since there were no other Chinese males in the room, Kevin's description did the job whereas, obviously, Andrew's didn't. I hope he got the message that maybe the guy he was making fun of was a better writer than he was. So, as a result of lurking and learning from the postings on teach@daedalus.com, I killed two birds with one stone. Sorry I don't remember who from, but whoever you are, you know. Thank you. Now that I've said all this, aren't you glad I lurk?

**Roni Keane, SUNY Stony Brook**  
[vkeane@ccvm.sunysb.edu](mailto:vkeane@ccvm.sunysb.edu)

# TEACHER TALK

## Peer Review Workshops on DIWE: The Logistics of Pedagogy (or Trying Out a New Terministic Screen)

I've taught writing classes with computers before, but they weren't interactive. I am sure most of you reading this essay have: Students come with disks, exchange them, discretely analyze each others' essays with the questions I passed out, and I run around in gymnastic form helping them with myriad problems. With DIWE, I've discovered that early in the semester some gymnastics is still necessary; that fades, however, as students quickly learn to operate in the various, relatively easy-to-use Daedalus modules.

Nevertheless, I have run into certain "Interactive" mechanical bugs and logistical concerns that were troubling to me (the type that Fred Kemp might say creates Lone Rangers of us) (*Wings*, Spring 1993), and that affected my pedagogy. I think part of the problem is a collaborative one as Fred points out, yet another significant portion of the problem we all have tends to be in the vision realm. In my "regular" classes (non-computerized) I had been holding flexible peer review sessions for years, but with an interactive computerized writing class my vision, my terministic screens, my gestalt, if you will, wouldn't let me see simple "other" possibilities.

You see, for the last ten years in my way of teaching process writing, I used to have students come with two photocopied essays for peer review sessions, and I would pass out the questions that I would like them to address about each others' essays. This process worked well, but it had many problems: students wouldn't bring their essays, they wouldn't bring two copies, they had to shift around the class for groupings, etc. I brought this process vision to the interactive computer classroom, and it worked in a squeaky way, but I wasn't happy and I started thinking like a Lone Ranger (wait, Fred, put that whip down!).

With DIWE, I discovered new "Interactive" concerns with peer reviewing. This interactive method I thought was even more difficult than my "old" classes. There was the planning on the computer, and still the printing and copying of the handouts with questions. And so forth.

Ah, ha! After spending about 40 hours a week with DIWE at my office computer and in the interactive classroom, I've discovered some simple techniques to make the writing class interactive and smooth, that is from a logis-

tical and gymnastics perspective. I'd like to collaboratively share this with you. Through trial and error, here's a step-by-step description of how I conduct and set up peer review sessions. Some of this might sound familiar, but the whole package and the vision probably won't:

ONE: I create a list of peer review questions in the CurrentAssignment window, and post them (See Figure 1).

TWO: I create separate InterChange sessions composed of three students each, usually for a total of eight sessions.

I use InterChange because I've had better luck with its efficiency than Mail, e. g., it's faster, freezes up less.

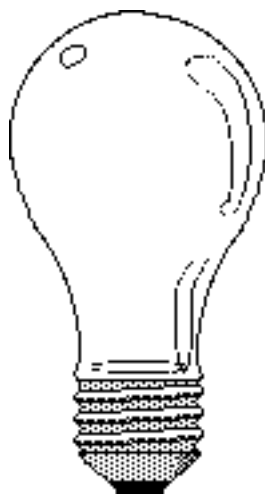
THREE: I tell students to reduce the CurrentAssignment window with the questions and place it at the top of the screen so only the questions show; this avoids their having to pan back and forth from screen to screen or for me to print or photocopy the questions for each student.

FOUR: Students go to their assigned InterChange sessions, and they send their rough drafts out; only the other two members receive them.

FIVE: They adapt the InterChange screen beneath the CurrentAssignment window questions, and are then able to hold a purely interactive workshop with no extraneous papers, extra copies of essays, no moving around, and they have immediate access to the questions, etc. (See Figure 1).

At the end of the class, I usually compact the InterChange sessions so the writers can copy the documents to their disks, or print them. After I compact the rough draft of the InterChange sessions, students can then work with their revisions. Again, a little use of interactive Daedalus software and screen space goes a long way. To avoid print-outs, all your students need to do is open up their group's compacted InterChange session, and position their peer's numbered responses at the top of the screen. Next, they open up their essay and position it beneath the suggested revisions. The screen looks something like this (Figure 2):

With this strategy and positioning, students can go to the specific points their peers suggest and make the revisions in direct relation to their peers' suggestions. This method works better than having the students copy and place the responses from the InterChange transcripts on their own disks. With the method I illustrate, the peer critiques are always easily accessible and in front of the



students, instead of posted in some remote place and forgotten. These simple procedures have helped me to make my process-oriented computer writing classes more interactive and smoother than they ever have been.

Regarding my allusion to Kenneth Burke's notion of terministic screens in my title, Burke believes that we all have screens that allow and prevent us from seeing various things in our lives. "Terministic screens" is a term he borrows from photography where there are actual screens that photographers place on their cameras to highlight, hide, or expose otherwise unseen qualities in a picture. At this moment in my career, I am trying out new screens in my computer environment because I have to, and because I feel fortunate enough to have the facilities: All of our writing classes here have to be in interactive computer labs. Fortunately, our administration is very supportive towards computers and writing, so we have several up-to-date, and several brand new labs.

**John Scenters-Zapico, Texas A&M, Corpus Christi**

## Call for Contributions

*Wings* invites you to react and respond to any part of this newsletter. If you have a short (800-1000 words) response or a longer, more complex contribution (1000-1500 words), please send it in disk form (3.5") in Microsoft Word (ver 4 or 5) for Macintosh or plain ASCII format to:

The Daedalus Group, Inc.  
1106 Clayton Lane, Suite 280W  
Austin, TX 78723  
512-459-0637

or send it via e-mail to [wings@daedalus.com](mailto:wings@daedalus.com)

If we accept your submission, we will pay \$25 for short pieces and \$50 for longer pieces.

(Scenters-Zapico)

### Figure 1

CurrenAssignment

WRITING CYCLE 2: ROUGH DRAFT WORKSHOP 1

1. Read the essay.
2. In a five minute freewrite, respond to whatever comes to your mind about the essay.
3. What is the overall point or claim that you believe the writer is trying to make?
4. Are there any sentences that you find confusing? Let the writer know which ones, and rewrite one or two to show what you mean.
5. Give the writer three overall suggestions that he/she should consider as he/she revises.

InterChange:Natalie,Clara,John

Natalie@Nenuca:

DiscriminationirSociety

Discrimination has been going on for many centuries now. We may ask what exactly is discrimination, and how does it affect our lives? Throughout my entire life I have been discriminated against in varying forms and ways and because of this I feel as if I look at discrimination in a different way. I have discovered that discrimination can be defined in a number of ways, but I would like to key in on the types that have affected me the most. . . .

DearNatalie,

2. I felt your essay was a riveting exposure of the varying ways that you have been . . .

SEND

### Figure 2

Clara@Pitina:

DearNatalieNenuca,

2. I felt your essay was a riveting exposure of the varying ways that you have been . . .
3. Your main point fascinates me. I like how you discuss the evolutionary nature of types of discrimination, and then how it has affected you on many occasions.
4. In the second paragraph, I liked the third sentence, but I was a little confused about . . .

Natalie@Nenuca

DiscriminationirSociety

Discrimination has been going on for many centuries now. We may ask what exactly is discrimination, and how does it affect our lives? Throughout my entire life I have been discriminated against in varying forms and ways and because of this I feel as if I look at discrimination in a different way. I have discovered that discrimination can be defined in a number of ways, but I would like to key in on the types that have affected me the most. . . .

## TEACHER TALK, cont'd

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### On Problems and Potentials of a Networked Graduate Class

This essay is informed by our interest in whether, to what extent, and under what conditions InterChange can be used as an instructional tool to mediate or facilitate learning at the graduate level. In one sense, our interest in these questions is prompted by the potential we (and others) associate with the networked classroom. In another sense, our interest in such questions is prompted by recent experiences in using Daedalus InterChange as part of a graduate course set up as a seminar and organized around readings focused on relations between language and thought. In a third and more critical sense, our interest is prompted by three tentative conclusions about twelve students' verbal performances during seven InterChange sessions generated during the first three weeks of the current semester, sessions which—in our judgment—provide little evidence that the students (a) have attained adequate conceptual knowledge or understanding of the theories encountered through the readings, (b) are capable of reflecting critically on the course readings or responding critically to fellow students' contributions to InterChange sessions, and (c) are capable of engaging in sustained "talk" about or explorations of theories or theoretical constructs derived from the course readings. Moreover, several of the students have indicated that the InterChange sessions do not attain the level of exploration of idea they anticipated.

It is important to note that with these tentative conclusions, we are not asserting that any of the student participants are incapable of the sort of conceptual and critical thinking for which there seems to be so little evidence in InterChange sessions. Indeed, at least half of the students have demonstrated in previous classes with the instructor that they not only can engage in the sorts of thinking expected but also that they can represent such thinking through their oral and written language. In a very important sense, it is the verbal performances of several of these students in previous graduate classes that, for us, render the above conclusions so troublesome. Although there are obvious differences between the present class and previous ones (e. g., different uses of classroom space, more and different readings, different classmates), such factors often vary across graduate courses with no appreciable negative effects on graduate students' verbal performances.

Although we are unwilling to dismiss the possibility of multiple and/or interactive factors contributing to the students' performances, we have increasingly turned to InterChange—as graduate students working within the context of one particular classroom community operationally defined its use—as a source of hypotheses that might be explored as part of a program designed to account for

the limited evidence of conceptual and critical thinking in the InterChange transcripts. In our preliminary examination of those transcripts, we charted the initiation, development, and longevity of topically organized conversational threads, tracked the contributions of individual students to the threads, and analyzed the content of individual student messages.

Our examination suggests that the students' engagement in the InterChange sessions typically takes three interactional forms, which may be seen as participatory strategies: a *multiple-focus strategy*, a *single-focus strategy*, and a *second-order alternating strategy*.

Students employing a *multiple-focus strategy* tend to move quickly back and forth between various conversational threads once the threads emerge during InterChange sessions, even though those same students are often the ones who introduce the specific topics that become constructed as the various conversational threads. As the number of threads increases, those students' responses tend to become shorter and to take the form of simple approval or disapproval of other students' posted messages (e.g. "Carol #54: Good point"; "Jim #72: I disagree") or the form of questions, often cryptically worded and directed at some small point in a previously posted message. Among students employing this first strategy, evidence of in-depth conceptual and critical thinking, though often present in early postings, tends to diminish considerably or disappear completely by the end of the InterChange session.

Typically, the student employing the multiple-focus strategy produces three or four times as many messages as students using a different strategy, but only ten to twenty percent of those messages appear to be ideationally loaded. From time to time, multiple-focus students also make some attempt to draw conversational threads together; but such messages tend to simplify or change threads rather than develop or elaborate the key ideas and concepts at their cores.

In contrast, students employing a *single-focus strategy* tend not to move back and forth across conversational threads, remaining largely focused on one conversational thread at a time, often for the duration of an entire InterChange session. Compared to multiple-focus participants, students using the single-focus strategy post significantly fewer messages, direct their messages to a smaller number of participants, and appear to ignore intervening messages not related to their topic of choice. Depending on the particular topic and the number of interested participants, the single-focus strategy may manifest itself as dyadic or triadic interactions or as small-group discussions.

Although some variation occurs among this group of students, the typical single-focus student posts longer and ideationally more complex messages in connection with

one or perhaps two conversational threads. Students employing the single-focus strategy tend to produce messages roughly twice the length of multiple-focus students and to post messages from one-fourth to one-third as often. In comments tagged onto the ends of messages, these students frequently express, often through apologies, their frustration in trying to “keep up” with the number of posted messages.

At various times, some students use what might be called an *alternating second-order strategy*. This second-order strategy is not used at all by students who prefer the single-focus strategy, but it is used by students who prefer the multiple-focus strategy. This second-order strategy is used when those participants become engaged by some aspect of a particular conversational thread they have encountered while dancing back and forth across threads. We call this third strategy *alternating* and *second-order* because the students who advert to it do not actually abandon the multiple-focus strategy in favor of the single-focus strategy; rather, those students adopt a temporarily narrow focus with respect to one of the conversational threads.

Whether and how these strategies interact is unclear. Initially, only multiple-focus students post messages; single-focus students lag sometimes ten minutes behind. Thus, there is little evidence of initial interaction between the strategies. During the middle of the session, however, multiple-focus students read and respond quickly to messages, producing more and shorter messages, as they dance across the various conversational threads, creating more messages for all to read. As the flow of messages increases, multiple-focus students tend to respond more quickly, not more selectively. In fact, multiple-focus students generally speed up to maintain their strategy, but when they do so, there results a corresponding loss of ideational content and a corresponding loss of focus.

Single-focus students, on the other hand, maintain their focus and consequently lag even further behind the flow of messages, up to twenty minutes behind and generally twice as far behind as multiple-focus students. Thus, as multiple-focus students are posting more messages with less ideational content across a wider range of topical threads, the single-focus students experience increasing difficulty in keeping up with the InterChange session because their commitment to the single-focus strategy requires them to “slow down” relative to the number of messages posted. Whether the breadth achieved through the multiple-focus strategy is in the long term necessarily less productive educationally than the depth achieved through the single-focus strategy is unclear. Furthermore, whether these strategies even compete for dominance within the InterChange session is also unclear. Both questions merit further study.

The foregoing brief description focuses on a very limited data set collected from a group of students in a course

whose goals are probably significantly different from those of composition courses in which InterChange seems to be used most frequently and in which explorations of ideas through InterChange often assume or require very little by way of prior topic knowledge. Nevertheless, our description—framed as it is by a very preliminary and tentative taxonomy of participatory strategies—suggests that the strategies the graduate students employ, the conceptual depth evidenced in posted messages, the pace of the InterChange sessions, and the number of conversational threads are somehow related and in perhaps problematic ways. In other words, the varying effects of different participant strategies in InterChange may render a session less successful than it might otherwise be.

Whether, to what extent, or how the components discussed might be causally related are for us important issues because those issues bear on whether, to what extent, and under what conditions InterChange can be used as an instructional tool to facilitate or mediate the sort of learning we associate with graduate courses and, no less important, whether InterChange can produce reliable evidence of that learning. Such issues need to be explored systematically, particularly if curricular and instructional goals are to drive the use of Daedalus technology rather than the reverse. The data we have examined do nothing to undermine what we see as the educational potential of this new technology, but at the same time, those data underscore the need to better understand how the technology can serve educational goals of the graduate course. Only by exploring issues of the sort we have raised and then embedding the results of those explorations within instructional designs will the tremendous potential of InterChange and the networked classroom be realized.

The issues are complex. And the exploratory process required is likely to be simultaneously iterative and recursive and just as likely to demand a great deal of time and hard work with very messy data sets that resist tools and methods associated with traditional analyses of oral and written discourse. In the end, the time and hard work will do nothing but increase the educational value of Daedalus technology.

Raymond Craig & Steve Witte, Kent State University

### **DIWE E-mail User Forum**

***teach@daedalus.com***

Don't forget the Daedalus internet electronic mailing list dedicated to the issues associated with teaching with DIWE. Discussions range widely from issues of interface to pedagogy to theory. Join us!

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

## TEACHER TALK, cont'd

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### Authority, Resistance, and Empowerment: The Possibilities and Constraints of InterChange

At Texas A&M, Corpus Christi, our English program has adopted the Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment for use in its networked sessions of first-year composition. As someone who has taught in networked classrooms for several years but is a newcomer to DIWE, I eagerly utilize the program in all my courses, including technical writing and a graduate course on teaching English in electronic environments. Perhaps the most appealing aspect of DIWE is InterChange, mainly because its interactive conversations allow students to publicly test opinions and gain a sense of solidarity with others, while at the same time receive challenges to those attitudes that limit diversity and ethical treatment of others, e. g., sexism, racism, and homophobia. However, as some of my early experiences with InterChange have taught me, it is important to recognize both the possibilities and the constraints of such open interactive dialogue.

Recently in an InterChange session on stereotyping, several women in my class were addressing the lack of role models for women and the very limited definitions of heroism in our society, while two men responded that the women were being too sensitive about the whole issue. What I liked most about the nature of this discussion was that the students were able to teach each other about their differing perspectives and I didn't have to jump in to guide the conversation.

In a writing class, this type of interactive conversation becomes a valuable form of invention, and the computer has the potential to become an epistemic tool, fostering revised perspectives about society and the student's role in it. In this sense, students' writing becomes a form of "strong discourse," a term that Jasper Neel utilizes in *Plato, Derrida, and Writing* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1988) to describe the push and pull of ideologies that help students develop more informed attitudes about culture, including electronic culture.

This concept of empowerment through on-line communities is one that I embrace and use as a justification for my pedagogy in networked classrooms, but transcending the traditional authority issues is a tough job. There are times when, after a dialogue goes on too long, InterChange lends itself to digression or "flaming," with students feeling less of a sense of responsibility for what is said because it all seems very isolated, very private, when, of course, it is not.

For example, in an electronic discussion we were having about writing myths (echoing a recent MegaByte Uni-

versity List discussion), everything went rather smoothly for a while, but toward the end of the hour, the students shifted topic, chose pseudonyms, and began making suggestive comments to each other, some involving profanity. I felt very out of control, the way a high school teacher might feel when her class is throwing spit balls, or some other quintessential act of rebellion. I realized electronic communication isn't always ideal, and in fact takes on the same types of authority and resistance dynamics as face-to-face communication.

Deciding what to do in these situations is always difficult because I never want to silence students; however, I think we have to teach the (n)etiquette of using electronic dialogue in an academic culture, to show students that the discourse community is different from the Star Trek or David Letterman usenet groups they might like to read. This is especially important in setting up peer reviews in DIWE, for while the instructor may not want to intervene in these collaborative efforts, it is nevertheless important to instill the same types of courtesy and professionalism that are encouraged in face-to-face review sessions.

Also, by selecting a topic that was of more value to me than perhaps to my students, I bought into some traditional authority issues that in part fostered my students' electronic rebellion. Since then, I have made it a point to select topics that are related to those the students are working on, topics that dealt more with their values and interests, and less with mine. And while I recognize student digression as a form resistance and the collapsing boundaries of authority, such digression isn't all that different than a face-to-face group where students digress for the last five minutes to talk about what they're going to do over the weekend.

But because the student's electronic resistance is both oral and written, it somehow becomes more tangible, more blatant, more lasting, when it is more than likely another manifestation of that familiar form of resistance to the demands of the writing process by novice writers. While I wouldn't advocate total anarchy or chaos in the computerized classroom, my experience has taught me that when I am less concerned with control and more concerned with creating new levels of student engagement in our electronic writing community, my students seem to feel more comfortable trying out ideas and less intimidated with the technology and the writing process.

Although some digressions are not all that helpful to the classroom discussion, very often a digression can bring about a better sense of awareness about diversity. In an InterChange session within my technical writing class that focused on the criteria for successful collaboration, one male complained about how he "hated being in groups with women" because they so often "couldn't follow technical discussions" and usually "rambled off topic." The resulting conversation led to a better awareness of stereotyping and its affect on group interaction, plus one

person learned that blanket statements that were sexist in nature would not be tolerated by other members of the class.

But if we advocate the more decentered, democratic environments that interactive classrooms have the potential to foster, then I think we have to recognize that there are risks about what will be said in the classroom culture. While for the most part I do not intervene in such digressions and give the students a chance to regain focus, there are times when intervention is needed. Recently, I had one student create a pseudonym in an InterChange session, choosing to be another male student, and then sexually harrassing a female student, telling her how much he wanted to work in a group with her "because she was so pretty." I felt I needed to explain the potential sense of violation felt by both the female student and the male student whose identity was stolen, and how that also violated a sense of community as well as trust in individuals within the class.

Perhaps part of the cause of these InterChange digressions is that our students are aligned with that "hardcopy" notion of textuality and don't have the same sense of accountability with something that appears to be mere "conversation." Ultimately, the goal is to get students to see that InterChange is a form of public discourse, complete with community standards and a sense of ethical treatment of others. While our own theory and pedagogy acknowledges a broadened definition of writing and textuality, our students themselves must expand their own definitions of texts beyond those traditional academic forms that can be mastered through lecture and imitation, to see our electronic conversations as a form of invention and community-building, and to see my role as teacher as one voice among several, as opposed to the single voice of authority behind the lectern, be it traditional or virtual.

**Kristine Blair, Texas A&M, Corpus Christi**  
kblair@falcon.tamucc.edu

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## Hurry Up Please It's Time

I always feel like Eliot's pub keeper at the end of classes that have been engaged in an InterChange discussion. I have to remember to watch the clock so that students aren't late for their next class, and often have to resort to mild threats to get my class out before the next one comes in. InterChange has been my favorite part of the Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment since we bought the program in 1990 and I take my students' reluctance to leave as assurance that it's their favorite part, too.

InterChange lends itself well to all kinds of pedagogy. When I teach prewriting, I have the class use InterChange as a brainstorming session from which they can freely steal ideas for papers. Sometimes I insist that they quote others in their papers by pasting in a comment from an

InterChange transcript and that they document the source. But the most fun I've had has occurred when I approached InterChange as virtual space in which students are free to experiment.

My first foray was a lesson in using titles to focus an essay (from Donald Murray's *Write to Learn*). Instead of calling in a list of possible titles, I set up an InterChange session something like this:

Imagine that you are walking down an alley where no one can see you. As you come to the end, you see a freshly painted wall. In your hand is a spray can of paint. Go ahead. Spray as many comments about education on the wall as you can think of.

They did. And then we were able to compare what examples would be needed to support the various slogans. For some reason they found it much easier to think of possible titles when they were writing graffiti. It's great that students have a permanent record of their electronic discussion, but even better that it's accessible to the teacher.

I learned something important about my class the day that I set up a virtual "counseling session." For several semesters, I have taught the story "Three Thousand Dollars" by David Lipsky. The plot revolves around a family that has become dysfunctional through divorce. The father, who has remarried and lives in another city, has sent the son \$3000 for college tuition. Richard, the son, has spent the sum on things other than tuition and the college has begun demanding payment on the past due bill. Richard has been able to convince his mother that the bills are a mistake but his father has become aware of what has happened and has told Richard that, although he will pay his tuition the following year, he will not send him money to cover the \$3000 already owed the college. The mother, not knowing the history of the problem, sees this response as yet another piece of evidence that her ex-husband has no interest in Richard's welfare and acts only out of his own selfishness. Richard can read his mother easily, and like many children of divorce, has become expert in manipulating his parent.

In past semesters, I had been unable to move the class beyond condemning Richard for wasting the money or blaming his father for not being "a real dad." They never seemed able to see the dynamics of the family situation, which seemed strange to me because if students have preknowledge about anything, it's about how families work. Last semester, I handled the discussion differently in an attempt to have them walk in these people's shoes.

When my class had assembled, I had them count off by threes and told all the "ones" that they were each to adopt the persona of the mother (regardless of gender), the "twos" that they were each the father, and the "threes" that they were each the son, so that no two people sitting beside

## TEACHER TALK, cont'd

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each other had the same identity. I set InterChange on the pseudonym function (which will allow several people to take the same pseudonym) and invited them to join as their assigned character. The opening prompt told them that they, the family, had agreed to come together with a counselor to discuss the problem. Since I direct the Writing Center here at East Texas State, I have a secretary. She just happens to be a graduate student working on her doctorate in Guidance and Counseling, and since she was then working on her practicum in counseling, I asked her to sit in and run the session. She acted as a catalyst, encouraging each of the “family members” to discuss what they saw as the problem. Then, as the session progressed, she invited each of the “clients” to tell the others what they had always wanted to say.

I was amazed how each student fit into the persona he or she had been given. Some of the “Richards” apologized for not taking responsibility. Others spoke about the divorce and the fact that the family didn’t talk to each other. Some of the “mothers” spoke out against the husband and his lack of involvement. A good time was had by all.

Later, my secretary told me that the session went pretty much as a real session does. I printed out the InterChange sessions for her and after she had read through it, she pointed out to me that there were “Richards” and “Moms” and “Dads” at different stages of human development, an important insight that I would never have had from a regular class discussion. She wrote the class a letter in which she responded to the InterChange transcript as she might to a family, and I posted this letter in Daedalus Mail.

The class discussion that followed was much more fruitful, with students seeing the hidden agendas of the characters. For the first time, the story had become real to them, and this made it possible for them to relate what they knew about real families to this story. When we read the counselor’s open letter and discussed what divorce had done to this family, some members of the class were able to support these conclusions with examples from their personal experiences. Later, students wrote essays in which they discussed the importance of communication in families and used “Three Thousand Dollars” as one of their examples.

I capitalized on my InterChange discoveries when I helped an instructor who was teaching *Jurassic Park* set up a virtual MOO-like “seminar.” She told her class that, for the duration of the class period, they were Renaissance men and women who had expertise in many fields. They had been called in to advise the park developers on safety, genetic engineering, computer use, and chaos theory. They were to go to each of the “meeting rooms” (InterChange conferences) and answer the question that

was being discussed there. In each conference, she described the meeting room in detail and created a persona who posed the question under consideration. The class had fun, but still attended to the difficult questions they were being asked to consider.

I am coming to believe that many of our students read essays badly through a failure of their imaginations. InterChange can stimulate them to puzzle out what characters are going through and why they act as they do. It can lead them to make inferences and use critical thinking. Later, it is possible to stand back from the dramatic experience and analyze how one constructs knowledge.

I will use InterChange again this summer to teach my students how read and respond from an engaged and invested perspective. The next time my students and I read David Lipsky’s “Three Thousand Dollars,” I might invite someone from the counseling center to role-play or I just might play the counselor myself. In virtual space, a person can be whomever she pleases.

**Liz Buckley, East Texas State University**  
**COMSKILL@etsuadmn.etsu.edu**

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## Using Computers to Teach Literature: A Novel Approach

Because I often have trouble getting a high percentage of students to participate in class discussions and because those who don’t participate are often “shut out” of such discussions, I decided to use InterChange to get more participation in discussions of literature. I soon realized that students were not only discussing the literature, they were actually coming to a better appreciation of what they were reading. They seemed to be truly engaged in the discussions, and they seemed to have serious responses to the literature, as if they were actually interested in what they were reading.

Though I always have a few students who are interested in discussing literature, my experience has been that students sit through class discussions with frozen faces and vacant eyes. In the sophomore literature classes I teach, many students try to make it through the semester without reading anything. With the computer discussions, they have to read the material in order to participate, and they seem to enjoy participating when they get to stare at a computer screen rather than a teacher’s face.

Several things seem to happen as students discuss literature via computers. For one thing, they can actually see what they are saying before they communicate that information to someone else. Also, they can look at what others say more carefully and, perhaps, are less likely to misunderstand one another. They can also go back and reread what someone else has said, something that should allow them to create more thoughtful responses. Students

can also go back at a later time and reexamine a particular discussion about a particular piece of literature.

The following (an exact reproduction, including errors) is an example of a discussion one group had about Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem "The Eagle":

**Student 1:** Does anyone else feel that this is a poem about suicide?

**Student 2:** Sometimes we may feel like we can fly, but we may not land on our feet.

**Student 3:** I see the eagle from a different perspective now. He is a free animal that is surrounded by so much beauty. He is closer to the heavens than any human can get on his own.

**Student 4:** I feel that this poem tries to capture two aspects of the eagle. The first stanza shows the eagle to be a solitary creature while the second stanza suggests power and action.

**Student 5:** "The Eagle" describes the peaceful existence of a predator before he makes his deadly dive.

**Student 2:** Yes, I see this relating to human life not just an eagle's life.

**Student 3:** I don't know if it is talking about suicide or not. I think it is talking about power.

**Student 1:** [Student 2], is the eagle truly flying? Notice in the last verse of the second stanza, the eagle simply falls. It says nothing about his trying to take loft. Does that make sense?

**Student 4:** I agree with [Student 5]. I feel that this poem tries to give people a different kind of look at the world of the eagle.

**Student 6:** The poem makes the eagle seem free in its colorful world.

**Student 1:** I agree with [Student 4]. The first stanza represents the eagle's concentration concerning his surrounding world. The second illustrates his actions concerning the thoughts he has made.

**Student 3:** I agree with [Student 4] also that the poem suggests a feeling of power.

This discussion is obviously being undertaken by a group of students who are clearly involved in the poem and have come to a reasonable understanding of it. Everyone seems to be engaged in the discussion of the poem, and no one begins the discussion by saying "This is stupid" or "Why do we have to do this?" Though such comments occur, usually more substantive comments follow. In fact, even if readers start out not understanding something, their classmates quickly help them come to some kind of understanding of what they have read. The following is a discussion about Alice Walker's short story "Everyday Use":

**Student 1:** Does anyone feel that the story took place in the seventies?

**Student 2:** What is everyone's opinion of why Dee is the way she is? And do you think that it is guilt or anger or what emotion does she feel for Maggie?

**Student 3:** This story is very confusing to me. At one point the mother is talking about how TV shows only show the happy family with out problems. The TV shows do not show the things that go on in the background. The mother was talking about how her oldest daughter will probably never come back to see her or the youngest daughter.

**Student 4:** This story is about a younger sister who was very ugly. Her older sister got everything that she wanted. Towards the end of the story the younger sister was finally happy because she won against her sister.

**Student 1:** I think that Dee feels that her past is not glamorous enough and so she wants to deny everything.

**Instructor:** Does anyone think this story has anything to do with heritage?

**Student 5:** I think that Dee is the way she is because the mother treated her better than she treated Maggie. Maggie knew the different way she was treated and probably felt smaller, not as pretty as Dee. A person can be just as pretty on the inside as a person can be on the outside.

**Student 3:** I'm sure the heritage has something to do with the story because it reflects how we live our lives.

**Student 2:** I interpret Dee's feelings to have been resentful of her mother, her sister and her "heritage" then after she grew up or rather got older it was quaint to appreciate the same "heritage"

**Student 1:** I think that culture is a big part of this story. . . . I feel that during this moment of history black people wanted to get away from their rather normal past and be closer to their African roots.

**Student 6 (from another InterChange subconference):** Hey [Student 2], I hopped over from the other group to tell you I like what you just said.

**Student 2:** She changed her name because she said the old Dee was dead. Does this mean that she doesn't want to remember her childhood, but doesn't mind looking back on it from the perspective that she isn't that person anymore and it can't hurt her or tie her to her past.

**Student 7 (from another InterChange subconference):** I believe that Dee is unhappy with the way her past life has been going and the way it is going now, that is why she wants to place more emphasis on her culture now.

**Student 7 (from InterChange subconference):** Also, I agree with [Student 2] about the heritage. Maggie and her Mom have always known about and practiced their culture whereas Dee is just acknowledging and learning to appreciate it.

**Student 8 (from another InterChange subconference):** The story said that Dee changed her name because she did not want to be named about the people who oppressed her, yet she wanted to have all of the "priceless" things that these same people made. She is contradicting herself.

As a way of learning something about what students think of the experience of discussing literature through InterChange, I gave students a homework assignment to read the comments of other groups. The following are some of those comments:

When I first entered this room to complete the homework assignment, I never expected to find what I did. I was drastically surprised at the comments I read. I never expected that everyone in the different groups saw the poems as I did!

There were a lot of interesting comments. . . . each group gave me different ways to look at each poem I hadn't considered.

In all the poems I found so many different points of view on one subject. It has enlightened me to the different ways people view things.

## TEACHER TALK, cont'd

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I think it's amazing how people can read the same story and have a completely different interpretation than other people.

Most of these [comments] were different than mine and that's good because that means the author succeeded in what he was trying to do. Some of the points that were made made me see the poems in a different way.

The surprising thing to me was not the diversity of how each person looked at the readings, but it was more how they tended to agree with each other. I also got the impression that in some way or another each poem meant something special to everyone.

From looking at other people's comments, I saw many different opinions. We all had our own way of looking at the poems. Their opinions were usually different, but the overall views of the poems were about the same.

**Students have gotten so much out of the computerized discussions that they have mentioned this in their evaluations of me and the course:**

Another "best aspect" would be the computerized discussions and evaluations.

The computer discussions were great!

I loved the class discussions we had on the computers. I felt it really helped me to understand a lot of things I read, when normally I wouldn't have known what they meant.

This class was kept interesting by our use of the computers. The class discussions that we had made the material that we covered more understandable. It's good to be able to hear different views about the things that we read.

[The best aspect of this course was] the interaction of students on the computers. This taught people to see and understand other people's view points.

I loved having the computers in the class room because I'm not one to talk much in class, but I'll type it.

The computer discussions were really great in helping us to learn.

Clearly, the students gain some kind of appreciation for literature as a result of their opportunities to discuss what they read in class. It is my hope that they leave this class and their college career with a better understanding and appreciation of the literature that had previously seemed inaccessible to them. I hope that they look back at this experience with a fondness for literature rather than a loathing for reading works they didn't think had any relevance to their lives.

**Lynne Belcher, Southern Arkansas University**  
**lrbelcher@saumag.edu**

## **Daedalus Establishes Professional Development Fund**

As many of you know, the founders of The Daedalus Group are teachers as well as software designers, and as such understand the connections between classroom practices and professional research. Daedalus has appreciated the enthusiasm with which instructors have shared their experiences teaching with DIWE, both at conferences and in scholarly publications. To support our users in these professional activities, Daedalus has established a fund from which instructors may apply for honoraria of \$100.

To be eligible, conference presenters must:

- be speaking about Daedalus software or services;
- be listed in the official conference program; and
- submit an application with the conference paper and presentation handouts, as well as a copy of the conference program.

Those writing scholarly articles must:

- write an article of at least 800 words in published length about Daedalus software or services;
- have the article published in a recognized publication; and
- submit an application with a copy of the published article.

To request an application, please contact Susan Meigs at [susan@daedalus.com](mailto:susan@daedalus.com) or (800) 879-2144; you may also access application information and forms from our Gopher server at [daedalus.com](http://daedalus.com), or on our WWW home page at <http://daedalus.com/>.

Applications will be reviewed by the Daedalus Editorial Board, which will grant five awards of \$100 each for conference presentations made or articles published in each semester (September-December; January-April; May-August), for an annual total of fifteen honoraria. Individuals are eligible for only one award each year, but may submit multiple applications.

Macintosh Questions



IBM®

DOS Questions

# FAQ: How Do I Use DIWE to Work with Files in Different Text Formats?

by Traci Gardner,  
Customer Support & Internet Services

This FAQ is dedicated to all the questions I've received over the past months on the differences between RTF and Text files. The material below on DOS DIWE is important because the RTF/Text file compatibility issue is a new feature. The Mac approaches are also outlined here because, though they're in the user's manual, many DIWE users still don't seem to understand, so I thought I'd take this opportunity to take another shot at explaining how these files transfer and save work. As always, if you have additional questions, please let me know at [traci@daedalus.com](mailto:traci@daedalus.com)

## BACKGROUND

### *What's the difference between RTF and Text files?*

In general, the difference between these two file formats is that RTF files retain your formatting (boldface, italics, and so on) while a Text file includes only your words and punctuation (boldface, italics and so on will be lost). RTF stands for Rich Text Format, a format which translates formatting information, like fonts or italics, into text codes which can be interpreted by other word processors. The biggest family of supported word processors is Microsoft. You'll have to check your word processor to see if saving in RTF will be an option for you.

### *How do I save files with other software so I can open them with DIWE?*

DIWE (DOS and Mac) can open two kinds of files: Rich Text Format (RTF) files and ASCII Text files. Check the documentation for your software to see exactly how to save your document in one of these formats. DOS DIWE will not open your file unless you have used the right file extension. Be sure to include the file extension .RTF for Rich Text Format files and the file extension .TXT for text files.

## OPENING FILES

### *How do I open a file in DOS DIWE which was saved as text?*

To import Text files, choose Open on the File menu, and follow the usual procedure for opening a file. You may see a warning box telling you the following: "The file you are opening does not appear to be a Daedalus format text file. The previous

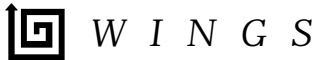
appearance of the file may be altered. Continue?" If you do not have a back-up of your file, you should answer NO and make a back-up of your file before you continue. If you have a backup copy, you can answer YES. You'll see a window titled, "Open Text with Paragraph Breaks." Read the information carefully and toggle the checkbox for inserting paragraphs on or off by using the spacebar. Your file will appear in its own window.

### *How do I open a file in DOS DIWE which was saved as RTF?*

If you have a file saved in RTF, either using DIWE or another word processor, use the Import RTF command on the File menu to open your file in DIWE. After you've chosen the Import RTF command, the program reads your disk and opens a Dialog box titled, "Import RTF File." The dialog box will show your default directory unless you have used the Change Directory command under the File menu. If you have access to drives besides the default directory and want to open a file saved there, either use the Change Directory command to get to another drive, or enter the drive letter followed by a colon to access the correct drive. Next, either type the name of the file you want to open under the word NAME, or highlight the filename using the arrow keys or mouse. Remember that only files with the file extension RTF will show in the list of Files. Once the name of the file you want to open appears in the thin rectangular area below the word NAME, select the Rich Text to Daedalus button to convert the file from RTF to a DIWE file. Your converted file will open in an Untitled window.

### *How do I open a file in Mac DIWE which was saved as RTF or Text?*

If you have a file saved in RTF or TEXT, open the file in DIWE as you normally would: Choose the Open command under the File menu and navigate to the file you want to open. Double click on the file, or highlight the file and choose the Open button. You'll see a box with either the message "Converting a RTF Document" or "Converting a Text Document." The file will convert automatically and appear in an untitled window.



1106 Clayton Lane #250 W  
Austin, TX 78723

## FAQ, cont'd

### **SAVING FILES**

#### ***How do I save a file in DOS DIWE as RTF so I can open it with other software?***

The Export RTF command on the File menu allows you another option for saving your text. After you choose Export RTF, you'll see a dialog box titled, "Export to RTF Format." The dialog box will show your default directory unless you have used the Change Directory command under the File menu. If you have access to drives besides the default directory and want to save to one of these drives, either use the Change Directory command to get to another drive, or enter the drive letter followed by a colon to access another drive. Type the name you want to save the file as in the space under the word NAME. Be sure to include the .RTF file extension. Once your file is saved, you should be able to open it using any word processor which supports RTF format.

#### ***How do I save a file in DOS DIWE as text so that I can open it with other software?***

To export Text files, choose Save as Text under the File menu, and follow the usual procedure for saving a file (saving to the correct drive, giving it a name, and so on). Be sure to include the .TXT file extension. Once you've chosen the OK button, you'll see a window titled, "Save with Line Breaks?" Read the information carefully, then toggle the checkbox for inserting line breaks on or off by using the spacebar. After

you've toggled the line breaks checkbox, choose the OK button. You may need to experiment to decide which choice works best with your other software. The file on your screen will not change. You should be able to open the saved file with any word processor which will import ASCII Text. You'll have to check your word processor's documentation to see how to open a Text file.

#### ***How do I save a file in Mac DIWE so I can open it with other software?***

There are two ways you can save text in DIWE in order to open it using some other software: as ASCII Text and as MacWrite II. Text files will contain only your words and punctuation (boldface, italics, and so on will be lost). MacWrite files will retain your formatting (boldface and so on), but you'll have to use either MacWrite or a word processor which can convert MacWrite files to open your file. You'll need to check your software's documentation to determine whether saving in MacWrite will be an option for you. To save a DIWE file in the Text or MacWrite format, choose "Save as . . ." under the File menu. Follow the usual procedure for saving your file (saving to the correct folder and so on). Once you've named the file, click on either the Text Only or the MacWrite II 1.x button to indicate your choice for the file's format. It's a good idea to add the word Text or MacWrite to your filename to help you remember which format you've chosen. Finally, click the Save button. Check the documentation for your software to see how to open exported files.