REVIEW: Teaching Writing in the 21st Century: Composition Methodologies, Reading, and Transfer

Stephanie L. Kerschbaum

Securing a Place for Reading in Composition: The Importance of Teaching for Transfer. Ellen C. Carillo. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2015. 224 pp. Print. ISBN 978-0-87421-959-3.

Chasing Literacy: Reading and Writing in an Age of Acceleration. Daniel Keller. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2014. 160 pp. Print. ISBN 978-0-87421-932-6.

Assignments across the Curriculum: A National Study of College Writing. Dan Melzer. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2014. 160 pp. Print. ISBN 978-0-87421-939-5.

Retention and Resistance: Writing Instruction and Students Who Leave. Pegeen Reichert Powell. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2013. 136 pp. Print. ISBN 978-0-87421-930-2.

A New Writing Classroom: Listening, Motivation, and Habits of Mind. Patrick Sullivan. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2014. 223 pp. Print. ISBN 978-0-87421-943-2.

What does a twenty-first-century writing pedagogy look like? What principles should undergird contemporary writing pedagogy and practice? How should writing teachers today design writing courses, motivate student engagement, and promote literacy practices? Each of the five books reviewed here takes up these questions in calling for sensitivity and care in understanding students and the many ways that they are positioned in the world, for more attention to reading pedagogy in conjunction with writing, and for the continued study of transfer. Collectively, these works present writing instruction as a vibrant means for contributing to

Stephanie L. Kerschbaum is associate professor of English at the University of Delaware. Her book, *Toward a New Rhetoric of Difference* (NCTE 2014), won the 2015 Advancement of Knowledge Award from the Conference on College Composition and Communication. She has been a member of NCTE since 2000.

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student learning and development, and they challenge and reinforce recent arguments about the value of higher education and what students learn in college. Engaging these five texts returned me again and again to questions about what students are asked to do in college-level writing as documented by Dan Melzer, while Patrick Sullivan forwards a theoretical foundation that might undergird teachers' pedagogical designs. Ellen C. Carillo and Daniel Keller join Sullivan in urging composition teachers toward a more well-rounded pedagogy of writing that does not neglect reading, and Pegeen Reichert Powell reminds us that the value of the work writing teachers do with students is not limited to college and university contexts, because students often have career and life paths that take them away from college. In what follows, I first provide a brief synopsis and evaluation of the five books under review. I then address some methodological considerations across these studies and move into a discussion of three key themes: implementing change in writing pedagogy, teaching reading, and teaching for transfer.

The Teaching of Writing (and Reading)

Pegeen Reichert Powell's *Retention and Resistance: Writing Instruction and the Students Who Leave* focuses on retention, a current higher education buzzword that has come to be significant for many writing programs. Typically defined in terms of the number of students who continue at a particular institution, retention is understood as a means of measuring and ensuring students' success. However, Reichert Powell shows that despite the proliferation of countless programs and initiatives, current approaches to retention tend to resist, rather than facilitate, institutional change. Reichert Powell juxtaposes profiles of three students who participated in a major retention initiative at her institution alongside critical discourse analysis of institutional language about retention. She shows that while institutional discourses have coalesced around the term "retention," treating it as something that can be readily named, identified, counted, and measured, students' stories emphasize the messiness and chaos of individual lives and the impossibility of devising a system that will fit every circumstance. For Helen, Cesar, and Nathan, the students Reichert Powell profiles, decisions about college persistence are not simply about succeeding in college; they are about figuring out how they want to live their lives. When institutional and programmatic discourses shore up institutional interests by framing retention as a problem in which individual students fail to acclimate to an institution, those discourses enable the institution to avoid making changes. Reichert Powell identifies this resistance to change as a key challenge for writing teachers and writing program administrators who care about educating all of the students who participate in their programs. Focusing too much on retention runs the risk of expending too much energy on a pedagogy of *chronology*, which emphasizes the next course in the

curriculum. Instead, Reichert Powell advocates a pedagogy of *kairos*, which focuses on where students are here and now. When students leave (and, she emphasizes, there will always be students who leave), a pedagogy focused on chronology does not serve them well. But a pedagogy focused on kairos can imagine different possibilities for students beyond the next course in the curriculum. As Reichert Powell points out, students go many places outside of the college classroom, and a pedagogy that overemphasizes claims about future college writing necessarily frames student departure as failure. To move toward broader institutional and pedagogical change, Reichert Powell cites Jay Dolmage's work on retrofit and universal design, arguing that "retention efforts are a kind of retrofit that, like basic-writing courses or ramps for people with physical disabilities, treat failure as the problem of the individual rather than that of the institution" (98). The key turn Reichert Powell makes is that of presenting students as active decision makers about their own lives, not passive vessels needing to be filled with institutional knowledge and benefit.

Imagining students as agents who actively determine the goals and purposes of their writing is central to Reichert Powell's argument for a kairotic pedagogy, and the survey of writing assignments performed by Dan Melzer in *Assignments across the Curriculum: A National Study of College Writing* further reinforces the need for writing teachers to sponsor students' investment in writing that extends beyond the classroom. Melzer takes a "panoramic view" of writing assignments across the college and university spectrum, updating a 1975 study led by James Britton. Using a random sample of 100 colleges and universities (twenty-five from four institutional types: doctoral/research universities, master's comprehensive colleges, baccalaureate colleges, AA colleges), Melzer collected one syllabus from each of four different areas: social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and business. From these 400 syllabi—four classes from 100 institutions—Melzer extracts 2,101 writing assignments that comprise his sample. Reading across these assignments, Melzer focuses on emergent assignment genres, coding each assignment for its purpose and audience. Through this generic lens, Melzer finds that the preponderance of writing that students are asked to do involves transactional writing, such as short-answer essay exams and research papers (83% of the sample), and that the predominant audience to whom students are asked to write is an audience of "teacher-as-examiner" (64% of the sample). Assignments that serve an "exploratory" function are a small yet still-significant part of the sample (13%), while poetic and creative assignments are nearly absent (9 out of 2,101 assignments were coded as poetic, less than 1%). Melzer also uses the frame of the "discourse community" to examine how academic and classroom contexts are communicated and thus establish discourse norms and expectations. His findings here are discouraging: across these assignments instructors tend to imagine "the formal essay" in broad and limiting terms, overemphasizing correctness and grammar while simultaneously deploying diverse notions of what it means to

"analyze," "describe" or "explain." Where the picture gets more encouraging is when Melzer takes a closer look at the most common types of assignments—short-answer essay exam questions and research papers. He suggests that given the myriad ways that college teachers imagine research papers, such papers may be an important site for Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) and Writing in the Disciplines (WID) outreach. Perhaps the most exciting—and also the most limited—part of Melzer's study involves syllabi from twelve courses at three institutions that had strong WAC programs. Melzer's attention to these assignments suggests that where WAC has an impact, its effects are significant.

Melzer's book is important not only for what it documents empirically about current writing assignments but also because it serves as a backdrop for arguments about the need for change in writing pedagogy, such as Patrick Sullivan's *A New Writing Classroom: Listening, Motivation, and Habits of Mind*, a long-form theoretically focused invitation to teachers from middle school up through college to orient differently to the work of teaching writing. Central to Sullivan's argument are three key terms—indicated in the book's subtitle—that are components of a new kind of writing instruction. Sullivan calls for teachers to turn away from argumentative forms of writing, to place increased emphasis on teaching reading and modes of engagement with others' ideas, and to tap into students' intrinsic motivation by cultivating particular habits of mind. The book is comprised of nine chapters divided into three major sections—Listening (six chapters), Motivation (one chapter), and Habits of Mind (two chapters), along with an appendix featuring sample assignments and student essays. Not surprisingly, given the number of chapters, the section on listening is the largest of the book. Sullivan critiques the predominance of the argumentative essay because it pushes students away from complexity and limits their imaginative potential. As Sullivan puts it, drawing on scholarship in neuroscience and developmental psychology, "Our focus should be less on certainty and closure, and more on exploration and reflection" (28). The sort of work Sullivan wants to promote will, he suggests, encourage transfer beyond the writing classroom by "equip[ping] students with the skills, habits of mind, and orientations toward the world that will help them productively engage new discourses, genres, and fields of knowledge" (49). Where the book is most successful is when Sullivan demonstrates the theoretical connections he develops with examples from his own teaching practice. (One of my favorite examples was the "Bonnie Awards"—a way that Sullivan encourages students to engage their classmates' work, critically develop criteria for writing, and cultivate intrinsic motivation [142–44]). These moments of specificity helped balance the breadth of the book's audience (literacy teachers from grades 6 to 13) and the potential sites of impact he imagines (anywhere students might go).

The exploratory engagement with others' ideas that Sullivan advocates places reading at the center of much of the activity in the "new writing classroom." In this

renewed focus on reading, Sullivan is joined by Ellen C. Carillo, whose *Securing a Place for Reading in Composition: The Importance of Teaching for Transfer* bemoans the decline of attention to reading in composition studies. Carillo juxtaposes a historical trajectory of reading in the field alongside a survey- and interview-based study of 100 composition instructors' orientations to reading in the writing classroom. Tracing the field's attention to reading, Carillo notes that not only has reading nearly disappeared from the titles of presentations at major conferences, but also that the period of time representing the heyday of composition's attention to reading—the 1980s and 1990s—is the least-well-represented in major anthologies of the field. To take this absence seriously is to note not only that reading is not present in disciplinary conversations but also that there is a recurring slippage between reading as a practice (as in "how do I read?") and reading as a text (as in "the reading I assigned"). Carillo finds that for many instructors, attention to reading means selecting and assigning texts, but not always a deeply theorized approach to reading-as-a-practice that substantively informs classroom and pedagogical design. The most common approach to reading that instructors mentioned was "rhetorical reading" or "rhetorical analysis" (cited by 48% of Carillo's sample), in which students read texts as models for the sorts of writing they are expected to produce (30). Given the frequency with which instructors referenced rhetorical reading, Carillo spends some time unpacking it, pointing to Haas and Flower to document this approach (even as she notes that the instructors she surveyed did not specifically name Haas and Flower's work as their influence). To address the paucity of reading pedagogy in composition-rhetoric, in her final two chapters Carillo builds on scholarship from educational psychology from the 1980s and 1990s as well as current writing studies research on transfer to offer a model of reading that she calls "mindful reading" that aims to "prepar[e] students to read in a range of contexts as opposed to teaching them a single or even several reading approaches *without* a metacognitive framework" (119). Carillo makes a number of useful observations in her study, most particularly in unpacking how scholars and instructors alike address *readings* rather than reading *practices*, but overall the book does not make strong connections between its empirical study of instructors' perspectives on reading and its suggestions for a pedagogy of reading in the writing classroom.

Like Carillo, Daniel Keller's *Chasing Literacy: Reading and Writing in an Age of Acceleration* takes reading as its central focus, but unlike Carillo, Keller's text creates a foundation that can sponsor further research on reading as well as undergird instructional practices with reading in the writing classroom. In *Chasing Literacy*, readers are introduced to high school and college students as they read in a variety of contexts. Through careful case studies of student readers, Keller presents compelling arguments about the need to theorize reading alongside writing and articulates four key concepts emerging out of his data: accumulation, acceleration, attention,

and reading-writing relationships. To answer his central question, "What does it mean to be a reader in the twenty-first century?" Keller performs an interview- and observation-based study of nine high school students (four of whom he follows into their first year of college). While the small sample size prevents *Chasing Literacy* from fully answering the question Keller poses, he nevertheless extracts from his case studies concepts that should be taken up and extended by composition researchers and teachers engaging reading and writing as complementary literacy practices. For example, when Keller distinguishes between "fast" and "slow" rhetorics and the sorts of attention that students pay (or don't pay) to texts within these frames, he focuses not on valuing one end of the continuum or the other, but on pushing his readers to understand the unique affordances of each. *Chasing Literacy* asks writing teachers to be on the one hand less skeptical of "shallow, fast" rhetorics and on the other hand, more sensitive to the challenges—the competition and conflicts among various literacy practices—that arise as a result of accumulation and the porous boundaries for reading and writing. Keller and Carillo both point to some of the same moments in composition history to trace the absence of reading in contemporary composition research, and both argue that composition's struggle for a disciplinary identity was a major factor in its turn away from reading. Where they diverge is in the exigence each provides for studying reading today: for Keller, it is not simply about the paucity of attention to reading within composition-rhetoric, but rather about the importance of recognizing the forms that reading can take in today's media-saturated environment. Teaching students to strategically orient to what they are doing when they are reading is thus vital for writing pedagogy. *Chasing Literacy* generates important knowledge about how high school and college students are making purposeful, strategic decisions about how to read that is not currently a robust part of composition teacher training nor carefully theorized within writing studies.

Studying the Teaching of Writing

The methods of research cutting across these books offer a snapshot of current research on the teaching of writing. These authors adopt diverse methodological approaches to working with and representing their data, including case study (Keller; Reichert Powell), genre analysis (Melzer), critical discourse analysis (Reichert Powell), theory-building (Sullivan), and historical analysis (Carillo; Keller). A variety of data was generated across these five studies: surveys (Carillo); interviews with students and/or teachers (Keller; Carillo; Reichert Powell); observation of literacy practices (Keller); institutional rhetorics (Reichert Powell); composition-rhetoric journals and conference materials (Carillo; Keller), writing assignments and syllabi (Melzer); practitioner research and theory (Sullivan). The sorts of data not generated is also interesting to note: all of these books focus in some way on the teaching of writing

but only Sullivan extensively addresses pedagogical theory and only Melzer closely analyzes classroom materials. Carillo and Reichert Powell draw on substantive examples from their own teaching, but when they do so it is not to collect data for analysis but rather to show how their research informs their own pedagogy.

Reichert Powell's, Melzer's, and Keller's books all provide useful models of data generation and analysis, although the methodologies and approaches here all have their limitations. Each author presents clear links between research questions and data generation. For example, Reichert Powell's study zooms in and out, alternately zeroing in on close-up portraits of three students as they negotiate complex educational challenges and then pulling back to reveal broader patterns in institutional and scholarly discourses about retention. The students' stories are not generalizable and yet they *are* generalizable in their uniqueness, as Reichert Powell emphasizes the impossibility of predicting which students will stay and the limitations of retention programs that emphasize students' need to acclimate and implicitly reject possibilities of institutional change. As with Reichert Powell's, Keller's data is carefully triangulated around his central research questions. While Keller's data does not aim at the depth or richness reflected in the ethnographic tradition of literacy research that has proliferated in the wake of Shirley Brice Heath's foundational work, he nevertheless effectively slices his data to highlight key theoretical concepts. A significant limitation of his study, however, one that I hope will be addressed in future work, is its focus on a predominantly White sample of self-described "good readers." This homogeneity means that Keller misses important opportunities to understand how reading is not only context-dependent but also culturally situated and connected to identity. Keller does provide brief profiles of the nine student participants in the book's appendix, but these descriptions do little to indicate awareness of intersections between identity, culture, and literacy. (A sample description: "David does not like reading. He reads more than he suspects, but he struggles with school reading. The visit to David's home, and the vast array of media surrounding David, inspired the topics of attention and multitasking" [172]). Keller makes a brief nod to the relationships between literacy and identity in his second chapter, and his analysis of what motivates students' reading points to the value of affinity groups and social connection; but the study as a whole elides complex issues of identity and the ways that race, gender, class, disability, geographic origin, and religion—among others—inform and shape students' engagement with reading. The strength of Keller's analyses is that he persuasively invites readers' attention to the situated nature of reading and sets the ground for others to extend the theoretical concepts and strategies for reading that he identifies.

Unlike *Chasing Literacy* and *Retention and Resistance*, *Assignments across the Curriculum* does not attend to lived experiences around literacy and learning. Instead, Melzer focuses on the broader terrain of writing as it is assigned in a wide variety of disciplines. In the wake of the social turn—and more recently, the ethical turn—in

studying literacy, scholars have frequently examined literacy and teaching on a small scale, but Melzer reminds us that there is a real gap in terms of a "macro" lens for examining writing practices. I appreciated the way he laid out his coding scheme and explained the terms he used to sort and analyze his sample. While Melzer's study is not broad enough to be generalizable across all college and university writing assignments, it is nevertheless suggestive, and it opens the door for others to expand his findings. However, given the premium attached to original research findings and the (lack of) value attached to replications and extensions, I am uncertain about the field's interest in sponsoring such research.

Carillo's *Securing a Place for Reading* explicitly takes up Richard Haswell's call for RAD—replicable, aggregable, data-supported—studies that methodologically and conceptually build on previous research on reading in classrooms. However, compared to the research designs implemented by Reichert Powell, Keller, and Melzer, *Securing a Place for Reading* is less methodologically successful because of a persistent mismatch between the research questions Carillo identifies and the data she generates to answer those questions. For example, a question like her first one, "To what extent and how do writing instructors overtly address the process of reading in their classes?" (24) might be answered using several sources of data. That Carillo relies on a study comprising a survey and follow-up interviews with instructors (and to a lesser extent, with students) does not invalidate her findings, but it does require that we approach her data carefully: what are the limitations of asking people to characterize their pedagogical approaches in an interview? How do narratives and examples shared at one particular time contribute to an overall portrait of the decision making and theories that inform writing instructors' approaches to reading in the writing classroom? Carillo writes of her survey that although "the sample cannot be understood as systematically representative of all first-year instructors' perspectives and viewpoints, it offers access to how reading currently figures into a range of first-year composition classrooms" (29). I disagree: I wouldn't say that she has access to how reading figures into their classrooms. Instead, she has access to how instructors perceive that reading figures into their classrooms, which is only one part of a larger picture. To more fully understand how reading figures into composition classrooms would require a range of data, perhaps including classroom observations, syllabi, assignments, student writing, and/or logs of in- and out-of-class reading.

This mismatch between research questions and available data permeates Carillo's book. When she develops a framework for reading instruction in writing classrooms, she asks how instructors' focus on rhetorical reading "prepare[s] their students to read effectively in other and future classes" (42). Importantly, Carillo finds that instructors value rhetorical reading in part because they see it as a means of facilitating transfer—that is, they teach rhetorical reading because they believe students can use this form of reading to motivate their writing in many other contexts. I was

unpersuaded that asking instructors questions about how they teach reading gives an effective portrait of what sorts of transfer are actually happening in these instructors' classrooms. I am persuaded, however, that Carillo's finding that instructors did not raise issues of higher order transfer might inform a subsequent study examining higher- and lower-order transfer moves that students make around reading. With the data presented here, Carillo simply cannot make compelling claims about whether or how metacognition (or lack of metacognition) around reading contributes to students' uptake of transfer—what she can do is raise questions for further study and theorize potential pedagogical approaches based on her work.

A New Writing Classroom is a bit of an anomaly among the books in this review since it neither sets out with a research question nor generates specific data in response to that research question. In many ways, it reads as a manifesto authored by a dedicated teacher with long and extensive experience in the classroom. Sullivan has built a theoretical apparatus that undergirds an approach that—if Melzer's panoramic study is an accurate portrait—stands in contrast to the way writing is often taught in many college classrooms. Sullivan's primary methodology is theoretical and reflective: he draws on research from education, composition-rhetoric, and literacy studies to assert the importance of the framework he assembles and he uses his experiences in the classroom to put his theories to the test. Where I see limitations in Sullivan's presentation is in the depth of engagement he performs with his source material. In many places I found myself writing in the margins and underlining claims that I found interesting, provocative, and sometimes compelling, but I left the book wishing it did more than repeatedly and assertively claim his hopes for a new writing classroom. I often wanted him to do more with the long block quotations that pepper his text. Sullivan's book is nevertheless an important provocation for others to take up, and there are many places within the text that beg for exploration, innovation, and extended conversation in our scholarship and in our everyday practices.

Ways Forward in the Teaching of Writing

All of the authors discussed here question the relationships between the work students do in writing classes and the work they do across (and beyond) the college curriculum. Sullivan's move is to emphasize "habits of mind" as a way of articulating the sorts of behaviors and intellectual orientations teachers should encourage students to adopt vis-à-vis writing, reading, and learning. According to Sullivan, these critical elements of his framework, including mindfulness, motivation, and listening, will serve students well wherever they go. While Sullivan's exhortations sometimes brought me back to claims about the democratic potential of writing classrooms (for example, arguments that through close immersion in thoughtful debate and lines of inquiry, writing classrooms will cultivate better citizens), I ultimately see him as

pulling together educational and learning theory with writing pedagogy to invite teachers of all kinds to embrace theoretical principles that can help them develop pedagogical practices that will foster engagement and creative exploration.

Like Sullivan, Carillo and Reichert Powell offer examples of the sorts of pedagogical moves they want to sponsor in the field. In Carillo's case, she presents a framework she calls "mindful reading" that serves as an overarching framework within which students are taught how to pay attention to their reading practices. She shares two assignments: in one, students perform a close reading of a passage from one of their readings; in the other students keep a reading journal in which they document and reflect upon the different reading strategies they use. I was on board with Carillo's urging that I should do more with reading in my classroom, but it was only in reading Keller that I was able to really imagine how reading could become a more conscious and intentional aspect of my pedagogy. Keller suggests, for instance, that teachers might counter students' resistance to school-based reading by addressing *how* to read in school-based contexts. He writes,

> I would argue the purposes and strategies we teachers give—or do not give—to students have a major influence on not only how students read, but also whether students read an assignment at all. If that is the case, then perhaps we should pursue a different angle, not simply by finding more interesting readings or by imploring students to read, but by helping students do more with reading. What if students were given fewer readings and more support with strategies that could give them a wider range of experiences and understandings of those readings? What if the curricular trend toward accumulation—more objectives and assignments, more genres and media—creates shallow learning experiences for both reading and writing? (82)

As Keller unpacks the different ways that the students in his study read, depending on the context, he helped me think about different kinds of reading strategies that I might ask students to attend to. For example, when he observes Tim and Diana, he witnesses them "oscillating"—moving back and forth "between different levels of depth" and "between rates of speed" as they searched for websites and negotiated search results (118). In this way, Keller identifies moves that students make and he explains how different contextual and situational factors shape students' attention to texts.

Keller's arguments about students' reading practices in *Chasing Literacy* challenge Carillo's claim that a focus on what she calls "foundational print-based literacy" (15) is justified because such print literacies are fundamental to students' reading in digital environments and/or with new technologies. Keller's analyses suggest to me the opposite: that while there are some similarities that cut across print and digital practices (for example, he makes a terrific parallel between browsing the library stacks and opening multiple websites from a Google search), in order to really understand how students move around with literacy requires attention to the technologies that

(re)mediate literate practice. Thus, while I find persuasive Carillo's push to ask students to build conscious reflection into their reading strategies, it is Keller, not Carillo, who illustrates for me the sorts of constraints, challenges, and opportunities students experience as they read and write. As a teacher, I have at times felt frustrated when students have brought assigned readings to class on their cell phones, or when they have told me that they are not distracted by multiple browser tabs being open while doing a focused writing activity. Keller gives me generative ways of thinking about the different kinds of reading choices and strategies that students are employing that open up possibilities for connecting with them around these classroom issues.

The emphasis on metacognition in Sullivan's, Keller,'s and Carillo's work also addresses an ongoing conversation about the importance of attending to transfer. Melzer's point that each syllabus and course constructs its own discourse community is well-taken and underscores persistent observations about the difficulties of cultivating transfer of specific writing skills. The Writing about Writing movement, first developed by Doug Downs and Elizabeth Wardle, along with more recent work on genre has thus reinforced the importance of thinking metacognitively about writing and genre in order to foster students' ability to use familiar skills in new contexts. These authors suggest, as does Sullivan, that rather than focusing on where students will go and what sorts of preparation they may need for particular contexts, writing classrooms can be spaces where students develop behavioral dispositions and metacognitive orientations toward literate practices.

Melzer's dataset raises questions about the work that happens in teaching writing, and the sorts of advocacy needed on behalf of writing in college environments. When Melzer describes the preponderance of assignments that ask for superficial responses, writing teachers will immediately recognize how social theories of composing, peer review pedagogies, and revision and drafting have contributed to student learning. The striking differences in the courses that were identified as writing-intensive at schools with WAC programs versus those from institutions without such programs are a tantalizing (yet not generalizable) argument justifying the important influence such programs have. Paired with the aforementioned challenges of teaching for transfer and facilitating metacognition, Melzer's book confirms the value of writing courses taught by well-trained writing teachers within programs that offer ongoing professional development.

In contrast to the other texts' emphasis on transfer and preparing students to use knowledge in new contexts, Reichert Powell takes a different tack. She notes that we cannot know where students will go after they leave our classes and, consequently, encourages teachers not to frame their conceptions of student success only in terms of whether students stay in college. In this, she is skeptical of the possibilities of transfer, in part because it is impossible for teachers to address how students may use a skill in another context with only limited knowledge about the sorts of circles

students are part of or where they might go with these skills. Even within the college context, Melzer's study reminds us that the attitudes and knowledge about writing that writing teachers seek to cultivate are not necessarily those that other professors and faculty members promote, so focusing too heavily on an imagined context of "other college classes" or "readiness to write in particular disciplines" may not be all that productive. Reichert Powell's kairotic pedagogy in many ways reinforces Rebecca Nowacek's rhetorical approach to theorizing transfer in which she frames students as "agents of integration" who do the work of pulling together disparate forms of knowledge and ways of knowing as they move in and out of different contexts. In the same way that Nowacek articulates transfer by recognizing students' agentive work as they negotiate different communities and contexts, Reichert Powell insists that writing teachers utilizing a kairotic pedagogy collaborate with students to identify the resources available to them. In this, she joins Sullivan in urging teachers to tap into students' intrinsic motivations and forms of engagement that can cultivate productive change in the academy. For too long, she argues, we've oriented primarily in terms of how what students do in our classes might be used in other college classes, and, as Keller implies, we've designed pedagogies aimed at moving students from where they are to where we think they should be (for example, "engage in slow reading, not fast reading!") that do not fully appreciate the sorts of changes we might make in ourselves.

To move teachers toward pedagogies that meet students where they are and that imagine how institutions might accommodate students' needs rather than always requiring students to change to fit the institution, Reichert Powell turns to disability studies work on universal design. While I agree that a turn to disability studies is an important move here, I'm not sure that the metaphor of universal design can do the work Reichert Powell wants it to do, particularly given the neoliberal higher education climate she critiques—through neoliberalism, universal design can serve as yet another mode of exclusion rather than as a means for facilitating inclusion (see Hamraie). I would have liked to see Reichert Powell engage a more complex and nuanced presentation of disability theory in suggesting how retention programs and writing classrooms might become radically inclusive.

Taken together, these books explicitly connect writing pedagogy, theory, and practice. Writing scholars will find that these books support their efforts to develop classrooms and pedagogies that take seriously students' diverse commitments, relationships, and motivations. Also, these books will help teachers sponsor students' agentive moves with and around writing and reading. There is much work to be done in our field as we argue politically and publicly for the significance of supporting well-trained writing teachers' work in designing writing classrooms that effectively prepare students for the many directions their lives may take. These texts help move us forward on that path.

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