

Professional Development Leave Reports: 2006-2007

DR. DEBORAH CRUSAN

Associate Professor, Department of English

I wish to thank the College of Liberal Arts and Wright State University for granting me professional development leave for the academic year 2006-2007. During my leave, I was able to complete drafts of all six chapters of my book, *Assessment in the Second Language Writing Classroom* [proposed title], to be published by the University of Michigan Press. At present, I expect a contract to be issued by the beginning of 2008 following the resubmission of Chapter 5 and the submission of Chapter 6. Overall, my research and writing over this year is already enriching my scholarship and my teaching in both undergraduate and graduate courses in assessment, especially regarding political issues of large-scale assessment.

In terms of my scholarship, the research for the chapter on the machine scoring of essays has led me to examine more closely issues of power and agenda in writing assessment and in assessment in general. Although I read widely about writing assessment and have always considered its far-reaching effects on students, teachers, and school curricula, my concentrated examination of the use of technology to assess writing opened my eyes to the possibility of even larger threats to the autonomy of teachers. On the other hand, I have come to appreciate *some* of the advantages of using technology for writing assessment – that is, I have a more balanced view and have come to see the role that some automated writing programs (e.g. My Access!, WriteToLearn™) might have in supporting teaching and learning.

Similarly, my research for the chapter on the history of writing assessment in America has allowed me to investigate major shifts in assessment brought about by the rise of behavioral psychology, the beginning of World War I with the need to fill various positions in the armed forces, the differing definitions of good writing, and changing attitudes toward the teaching profession. This chapter lays foundations, both historical and theoretical, which are important for teachers. It is vital that teachers study different theories of writing assessment to understand why they believe what they believe about assessment. Equally important is an understanding of the past as it is fundamental to an understanding of the present. Such study grounds teachers theoretically.

I have also examined the biases inherent in assessment in general and writing assessment in particular. Chief among these are teacher bias, peer bias, administrative bias, and political bias. These biases and the differences they uncover in the definition of good writing create problems for all students, but magnify the problems for second language writers.

In terms of my teaching, clearly the in-depth research for my book has already enriched my understanding of the issues our students have with assessment, both in-class and large-scale, that they might have to administer in their classrooms or assessments which might affect them and their opportunities for education and employment. My thinking on assessment will continue to influence how I think about the problems students bring to my classes and how best to help them learn about assessment.

This leave also gave me necessary time to prepare for invited presentations at the Symposium on Second Language Writing at Purdue, West Lafayette, IN and at the Midwest Association of Language Testers (MwALT) at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI. I appreciate the extra time I had to develop my presentations to their fullest. Also during my leave, I was able to develop several successful proposals for presentations at International TESOL in addition to initiating, planning, coordinating, and hosting an important Evening with Second Language Writing Scholars at TESOL in Seattle. Further, I became Chair of the Second Language Writing Interest Section and had the time to fulfill some of the most pressing duties of my office.

In conclusion, I am grateful to the college and the university for giving me this time to develop professionally in ways that I believe will be tremendously beneficial to my future teaching and scholarship.

DR. MARY DONAHOE

Professor, Department of Theatre, Dance and Motion Pictures

Overview of Project (See Appendix A for information on Alexander Technique)
(1) to research and begin writing the first draft of a college textbook entitled Enhancing Performance with the Alexander Technique for Theatre Arts, Dance, and Music programs;
(2) to make an audio and filmed record of interviews with master Alexander Technique teachers; and
(3) to create a comprehensive curriculum for teaching the Alexander Technique (AT) to student actors, dancers, singers, and musicians which will be included in the proposed textbook.

I had an ambitious schedule for my PDL but discovered that I was unable to complete it all due to personal circumstances that occurred. My 88-year-old mother had an emergency operation in July 2006 and the anesthesia pushed her into pre-alzheimer's dementia. Since I am her only child, I became her caregiver and brought her to Ohio where she resides in a facility near my home. During the first six months, I needed to be nearby while she made the transition.

Despite this interruption in my schedule, I was able to accomplish the following research:

- (1) a review of all the literature of the Alexander Technique (including video and audio);
- (2) preparation of a preliminary bibliography for the textbook;
- (3) preparation of an outline of the proposed textbook for submission to publishers;
- (4) telephone interviews with practicing Alexander Technique teachers during which I presented my proposed textbook and received their advice and wisdom regarding arrangement of topics and sequential development of lessons;
- (5) audio and video interviews with three master teachers in Los Angeles, New York City, and Columbus OH;
- (6) preliminary contact with several publishers (as Routledge, Mayfield, MacMillan (Palgrave), and Holt) in regards to ascertaining their interest in publishing a textbook of this kind;
- (7) a first-draft of a comprehensive curriculum for teaching AT to student actors, dancers, singers, and musicians which I am now teaching in my AT movement classes in the Department of Theatre. By testing the curriculum on my students, I will be able to revise and refine it for publication with the textbook;

(8) a presentation to the Ohio Musicians Educational Association convention in January on the uses of the Alexander Technique in enhancing the performance skills of musicians and singers. This was an opportunity for me to present my research to date and to network with teachers of music and singing.

While I did not reach all my goals, I feel ready to build on what I accomplished. For instance, I will be going to Ohio State University for an AT workshop at the end of December where I will be able to interview another master teacher for my book.

APPENDIX A: THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE AND PERFORMANCE

A training that teaches the student:

- 1) to free oneself from the domination of fixed physical and mental habits that interfere with peak performance;
- 2) to free oneself from established patterns of tension and stress that cause discomfort when performing;
- 3) to learn ease and economy of movement when performing;
- 4) to increase awareness of one's psycho-physical life for the purpose of enhancing performance skills.

For the performer, the Alexander Technique can—

- 1) eliminate stage fright
- 2) address individual performance issues
- 3) decrease fatigue and stress
- 4) improve breathing
- 5) improve vocal production
- 6) provide a maintenance program for the body's well-being
- 7) increase self-confidence
- 8) improve observation skills

WEBSITES:

Alexander Technique International: <http://www.ati-net.com>

American Society for the Alexander Technique: <http://www.alexandertech.org>

The Alexander Alliance: <http://www.alexanderalliance.com>

DR. CAROL ENGELHARDT HERRINGER

Associate Professor, Department of History

The first several months of my leave were occupied primarily by revising my manuscript, "Victorians and the Virgin Mary: Religion and Gender in England, 1830-85," for Manchester University Press. I sent the manuscript to MUP in early December 2006. (I am currently proofreading the galleys and doing the index; the book is scheduled to be published in the spring of 2008.)

In December I was able to turn my full attention to the project for which I was awarded this Professional Development Leave, researching the Eucharistic debates in the Victorian Church of England. This research will culminate in a book, *The Bodies of Christ: Doctrine and Culture in the Victorian Church of England*.

From January to August, I divided my time between researching in the US and Great Britain. I took three three-week trips to Britain: from 20 January-10 February, from 10 April-1 May, and from 13 July-4 August. (The air fare and a small part of the expenses for these trips were paid for by a Professional Development Grant.) During these trips I did research at the British Library, London; St. Deniol's Library, Hawarden, Wales; and Pusey House, Oxford. In March I spent a week doing research at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The rest of my research was done in Dayton, with many books obtained via OhioLink.

This Professional Development Leave enabled me to acquire an extensive body of research, enough to begin drafting the book. I have already drafted one chapter (on how the debates allowed clergymen to define Jesus as a rational, assertive man, so that he would be more compatible with mainstream Victorian culture), and I plan to draft at least two more by the summer. After I draft the entire book, I will return to Britain to do more research. The research I did this past year made me realize two things: that there are many sources on this topic, and that many of them are repetitive. That knowledge will enable me to research more selectively.

Attached is the bibliography of sources for the project I have acquired to date. The dates when the sources were read is noted; this will give a sense of what I accomplished this past year.

This period of leave also enabled me to resume academic contacts in Great Britain. The primary result was that, while at Pusey House in July, I spoke with Fr. William Davage, the Custodian of the Library, about a conference to be held in September 2009 on the legacy of Edward Bouverie Pusey. I agreed to serve on the program committee for the conference and to help promote it on this side of the Atlantic.

DR. KATHRYN MEYER

Associate Professor, Department of History

I received a Faculty Professional Development Leave for the academic year 1906-1907. My primary objective for the sabbatical was to finish an eight-chapter manuscript called *Taking Care of Business in the Garden of Grand Vision*. The book is based on a 295-page report prepared by a group of three Japanese police officers operating in Harbin China during the Second World War. It is a survey of the residents of a flophouse complex who struggled to survive the harsh climate in northern China in the 1930s and 40s. The residents earned a living through crime, scavenging, prostitution, narcotics trafficking and gambling. They spent what they earned in much the same way.

During my year of leave I finished six chapters and made drafts of two others. I also wrote a paper about prostitution in the Garden of Grand Vision, which I presented on a panel of the American Society of Criminology at their annual convention in Los Angeles in November 2006. I gave a talk about prostitution to the Women's Studies Department at Ohio State University on January 12, 2007.

I had originally planned to spend some time traveling through China to visit places of historical interest that have never seen. In the meantime I learned about a research collection of Japanese materials located in Dalian, China. Dalian is located at the tip of the Liaodong peninsula in what was once Manchukuo. It was an important center of Japanese military presence in China. Thus the materials could be valuable. Learning about the collection, I changed my travel plans. I spent a month between June and July, 2007 in Dalian, where I found quite a bit of material about the structure of the Japanese colonial police system. I had long felt that my work about the Garden needed more details about the Japanese police. Finding the material is a valuable addition to the story I am trying to tell in *Taking Care of Business in the Garden of Grand Vision*.

On the way home from Dalian I stopped in Tokyo for two weeks. While I was there I visited the National Diet Library where materials by of one of the Japanese police officers who conducted the original survey are located. Again, it was a short research trip, but the resulting information is critical to the telling of the story behind the survey that led to the police report, *The Autopsy of the Garden of Grand Vision*.

Having found new material over this past summer I am now in the process of revisiting two chapters of the book, the two I have indicated are still in draft form. Finishing the book is delayed as a result, but I am sure the result will be a stronger final product.

The Chinese library was open six days a week. Mondays I was free to wander the city. That is where I got a chance to play with Lulu the elephant, visiting from Thailand.

PENNY S. PARK

Associate Professor, Department of Art and Art History

I began teaching as an assistant Professor in fall of 1999. In spring of 2005, I was promoted to Associate Professor. The following fall, I was granted a Professional Development Leave for the 2006-2007 academic year.

My sabbatical has allowed me the time to devote to the projects outlined in my proposal. During the past year I have been able to continue work with fewer interruptions on landscape paintings. My sabbatical has also given me the time to begin learning the ancient medium of painting with encaustic. For me, this has been an entirely new and difficult medium. My sabbatical made it possible for me to conduct research, which included seeking out and personally viewing historic and contemporary examples of encaustic painting. In order to work in encaustic, I have had to purchase and set up new equipment and materials. And, I have required extended time to experiment before arriving at a way of working with encaustic, which possesses properties unlike those of oil, my preferred medium.

In this ongoing project, I found it enormously beneficial to attend a workshop in encaustic at R&F in Kingston, NY, where I had access to experienced instructors, a wide range of materials, and a collection of contemporary encaustic paintings. The workshop answered so many questions and opened up possibilities which I would not have discovered on my own.

One of the most important events of my sabbatical year was traveling to London and Madrid to visit great museums, where I was able to see examples of encaustic in both ancient and contemporary works. During my visit, I was fortunate for the first time to view many of the masterpieces, which I have studied, admired, and used as teaching examples over the years. What an exhilarating experience it was to see those works in scale, to look up close at their surfaces, and to see their actual color. It is impossible to truly grasp and appreciate those characteristics and the full impact of a work of art without seeing it firsthand. In teaching, I can now draw from personal experience when referring to any of the dozens of master works I saw on my visit.

The Department of Art and Art History considers curatorial projects to be scholarly activity. In 2006, I traveled to the University of Connecticut (Storrs), to visit the studio of Deborah Muirhead. At that time, I selected paintings, drawings, prints, and sculpture to be included in the Deborah Muirhead exhibit, "Past is Present", which I co-curated with my colleague, Professor Kim Vito. The exhibit took place in the Wright State University Art Galleries from January to March, 2007. A substantial amount of time was devoted to the exhibition preparation, which included coordinating a well-attended public lecture by Deborah Muirhead. The exhibit was significant because it was the first time a solo show of work by an African American artist had been featured by the Wright State University Art Galleries.

My original proposal was more ambitious and contingent upon the receipt of funding from a Professional Development Grant, which was not awarded by the Research Council. I used funds from my 05/06, 06/07, and 07/08 CoLA travel Grants to assist in paying for travel components of my sabbatical projects. While I had to scale down the projects, I was still able to work toward accomplishing the goals outlined in my proposal.

I continue to build a cohesive body of landscape paintings. Locally, smaller landscape paintings from the past year were exhibited at DVAC Gallery and at the Miami Valley Cooperative Gallery. I also continue to learn a different medium, encaustic painting. The resulting landscape and encaustic paintings will be exhibited in the University Art Galleries in January of 2009.

In writing this PDL report, I realize that it is very difficult to quantify the benefits of a sabbatical year. So much of what takes place is a deeper connection with the subject. This is made possible by the additional time to focus, without the demands of teaching. Its evidence will continue to be revealed in scholarship and teaching as time progresses. I will always be grateful for the opportunity the college has given me through my Professional Development Leave. Thank you so much for your support.

DR. NORMA SHEPELAK

Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

I am pleased to have received a three quarter leave from September 2006 through June 2007. I wish to thank the administration for providing this opportunity to conduct research on a major social topic facing our American society.

The objective of my professional development leave was to conduct research on the nature and scope of school violence. The focus was on recent high profiled cases of multiple shootings on school campuses. I became interested in the topic of lethal school shootings after the fatal event at Columbine High School in 1999. I began to notice there was a pattern in the types of cases where youths were involved in a multiple homicide event. Yet, at the time of my proposal in 2005 social scientists had not provided any explanatory models to account for this unique phenomenon, and one that was growing.

Recent research revealed that youth violence during the late eighties and early nineties (Moore and Tonry 1998) had reached epidemic proportions. The number of youth under age 18 that had been murdered between 1988 and 1992 had increased by 55 percent (Elliott, Hamburg & Williams, 1998: p. 3). Between 1974 and 2000 there were forty-one high profiled cases of violent deaths at schools, including the cases of multiple killings of students by their classmates (Dedman, 2000).

Despite lawmakers', school administrators' and community leaders' efforts to prevent and respond to youth violence, shooting sprees in America's schools have continued into the 21st Century. Despite community programs to reduce violence on school grounds, interpersonal conflicts between students as well as students and teachers continued to rise. The need for renewed efforts to explain why students bring weapons to school and seriously injure their classmates and teachers has never been more critical. Directed research has focused on predicting the trend in youth violence for the next decade (Fox 1996; Bennett, Dilulio and Walter 1996) as well as examining past patterns of youth violence (Tonry and Moore 1998). However, there has been an absence of theoretical models that have sought to explain the dynamics behind multiple homicides on school grounds.

Some of my original plans and timetable were altered due to three important factors in 2006-07 that tied directly to my research project. First, there were a number of new school shootings that needed to be reviewed. Second, two new books on school shootings were produced in 2006 and 2007 and they covered material that I had planned for my book. Thus, it was important to re-organize the chapters for my book. Third, new information was being disseminated in the fall of 2007 that needed to be incorporated in my book. Below, I describe the details of these factors.

New school shootings. Starting in September 2006 there were two major shooting events at American schools. On September 27, 2006 Duane Morrison, a 53-year-old man, entered Platte Canyon High School in Colorado. He held six teenage girls hostage and sexually assaulted them. As a SWAT team entered the room, Morrison fatally shot one of the teens and then killed himself. Only five days later on October 2, Charles Carl Roberts IV killed five girls in a one-room Amish schoolhouse before committing suicide. Roberts' penned letters to his wife and family suggested that he may have planned to sexually molest the girls. Then, on April 16, 2007 the nation witnessed the worst mass shooting on a college campus. The day's moments of terror began when a lone gunman entered a dorm room in the early morning and killed two students. Two hours later the same gunman entered a classroom building and killed 30 students and teachers while wounding 24 others.

Literature review discoveries. In fall of 2006 a new book entitled Rampage: The Social Roots of School Shootings, was published by Katherine Newman. She received a data set from the Secret Services (one that I had formally requested and was denied) that allowed her to analyze high profiled cases. In addition, she had chapters on the Paducah Kentucky shooting and the Jonesboro, Arkansas shooting. In 2007 Ralph Larkin published his book entitled Comprehending Columbine.

New data and information. After the Virginia Tech massacre, a governor's panel was directed to report on this particular tragedy. The report was slated for publication and dissemination in August, 2007. The 2006 School Indicator's report will be released by the Department of Education in December of 2007.

Outcomes. One of the outcomes of this research is an offering of a new course for undergraduates. The course, SOC399, is scheduled for this coming Winter Quarter 2008. This special topic's course (SOC399) will add to our department's course offerings.

The research has culminated in a working draft of a book entitled, Moments of Terror in America's Schools: Understanding the Motives Behind Lethal School Shootings. The book that I am writing will provide a review of the nature and scope of school violence in America's schools. Specific attention will be focused on a number of high profiled cases as a basis for providing a theoretical model of school multiple homicide events. This book is unique from recent publications in that it has a chapter on the Virginia Tech massacre as well as a new chapter on the history of lethal violence in American schools. These two chapters were not originally planned in my project. This book will make a significant contribution to the literature. (See attached working draft of the book).

A third outcome is an article regarding lethal school shootings as related to the Virginia Tech massacre. It is planned for the ASA sponsored journal Context. It will be completed for journal review in the summer of 2008.

A fourth outcome is the discovery of a unique data set that can provide an assessment of the process of bullying at schools and its impact on student attainment, motivation and self-concept. I received no funds at the college and departmental level to purchase this data set in 2007, despite my formal requests in the spring quarter.