

are also one of the chief pleasures of this book. She delves deep, and her meticulous examination not just of the ways in which haunting informs both the form and content of each, but of the historical contexts that tropes of haunting and possession expose, will be useful to those who study or teach these texts.

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Works Cited

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David Fleming. *From Form to Meaning: Freshman Composition and the Long Sixties, 1957–1974*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011. 273 pp.

As I started reading *From Form to Meaning*, a book discussing in great detail the ups and downs of one course at one U.S. university during one decade, I kept asking myself why instructors of first-year English courses at Canadian colleges and universities today would find this text useful. After all, Freshman Composition is widespread in the United States but few Canadian institutions require all their students to take such a course. In addition, the cultural contexts and historical events that have influenced courses offered today at U.S. institutions differ greatly from those that have influenced the creation and development of courses at Canadian institutions.

Why, then, should everyone involved in the teaching of writing and literature to postsecondary students read this book? First, because it is a captivating historical account of an era punctuated by momentous events whose effects have spread farther than one state or one country. Second, because learning about what has happened at other institutions may help reformulate and clarify what has happened and is still happening at our own institutions. Third, and most importantly, because the conversations that were taking place at the University of Wisconsin (UW) during the “long sixties” are still taking place today ... in our own institutions.

The discussions presented in *From Form to Meaning* revolve around a number of topics and questions that are familiar to anyone involved in higher education. For example, is the literacy level of younger generations declining? Are high school teachers responsible for not getting their students ready to meet the demands of higher education? What is the responsibility of the university as a whole and of individual departments in teaching students to think, write, speak, and read well? Should first-year students all take the same universally required course to ensure some homogeneity amongst students at the same institution? Should first-year English courses focus on content (for example, literature) or on form (for example, grammar and style)? How do we decide who needs remedial help and who does not? How do you support a student population that is increasingly diverse in socio-cultural and educational backgrounds and needs? Who should teach undergraduate courses and how should these people be trained, supervised, and evaluated? How can graduate teaching assistants (TAs) juggle with being at the same time instructors and students themselves? How can tenure-track and tenured professors focus on the pressures of research and publication while still remaining involved in undergraduate education? These are some of the many critical and often-controversial questions heatedly discussed at the UW in the sixties, but, as Fleming explains, his is a case study done “on the assumption that the example (the ‘case’) is in some way typical of a broader phenomenon” (21).

For his “case study,” Fleming thoroughly investigated hundreds of documents (such as department meeting minutes, memos, newspaper articles) and other voices (including a number of TAs) to tell this story—a truly impressive accomplishment (at times it reads like a mystery novel). These many voices show how the unsteady times in U.S. history (the launch of the *Sputnik*, the Vietnam war) and the history of the University of Wisconsin itself (riots, bombings, strikes) were the perfect background for a profound pedagogical revolution that ultimately led to the elimination of the Freshman Composition course, English 102, in 1969 and for the next twenty-five years.

The book starts with a discussion about the concerns of Harvard faculty regarding the literacy levels of their incoming students and the first Freshman Composition course that was created there in the 1870s in response to these concerns. Fleming explains that this course has remained quite stable and unique since then: a stand-alone course required of most university students in the U.S. (and some in Canada), it is usually taken early in students’ academic careers and is a preparation for their future lives as students, citizens, and professionals. Fleming calls these features “first,

generality (that is, independence from any particular academic discipline, specialization, or body of knowledge); second, *universality* (that is, applicability to all or nearly all students on campus, regardless of background or aspiration); and third, *liminality* (that is, location at the threshold of higher education—between high school and the major, the every day and the expert” (4). The purpose of this book, then, according to Fleming, is to investigate the history of this unusual course as it evolved since its creation at Harvard by looking more specifically at its evolution in the University of Wisconsin’s English Department, from the *prehistory* (1848–1948) to the turn of the twenty-first century, with, of course, a strong focus on “the long sixties” (1957–1974).

In the next chapters, Fleming describes UW’s expansion, not only in terms of numbers and curriculum but also in terms of pedagogical vision and purpose. As was the case in many universities at the time, the number of students at UW was growing quickly, and faculty members started establishing their own identities and disciplinary credentials by favouring research and graduate teaching over undergraduate teaching. Through the history of how English 101 and then English 102 were created, Fleming takes us through the ups and downs of a complex relationship that still exists today: that of the teaching of literature versus the teaching of rhetoric/composition/writing in first-year English courses. The influence of historical events such as financial crises and the aftermaths of World War I and World War II also demonstrated how student demographics and purpose for pursuing higher education changed. In response to these changes, the English Department initiated a process of stratification, with different sections created for students who had performed high, average, and poor on entrance tests. The resulting “basic (remedial) English” course is still alive and still as controversial today as it was at that time. All in all, however, the fundamental structure of English 101 and 102 remained quite stable for many years, with students writing a large number of in-class short themes and moderate-length research papers based on course readings and examples found in compulsory textbooks.

In the mid-1960s, while Americans everywhere were becoming increasingly involved in issues of social justice, human rights, and the war in Vietnam, things started to fall apart at UW. Fleming talks about “intellectual fragmentation,” “competition among ... faculty, prompted in part by their chase for external research funds,” and an “increasing suspicion felt by students toward the university and its leader, which they came to see as an impediment to the social and intellectual movement they were trying to wage” (63). Not unlike past and present faculty members in several

other U.S. and Canadian universities, faculty members in UW's English Department, wanting to de-emphasize general (undergraduate) education and to focus more on advanced research, became uninterested in the enormous freshman English enterprise; at the same time, the master's and doctoral programs in English were allowed to grow at a hurried pace. TAs organized their first union, asking for better training and supervision along with more independence and the right to decide which approaches and textbooks they wanted to use for the courses they taught. On top of that, according to Fleming, there started to be, for the first time in the U.S., "more candidates for faculty positions than there were jobs" (73). In the middle of these chaotic circumstances, almost overnight and with little discussion, the English Department decided to modify the university's freshman English requirement from two courses to one, keeping English 101 as a remedial course.

As mentioned earlier, *From Form to Meaning* touches on several critical issues for English departments even today. One of these issues is teaching assistants and their conflicting roles as both students and instructors. Chapter 5 presents in detail the roles, challenges, and experiments undertaken by the UW TAs in the 1960s: their increased involvement in the planning and delivery of the courses they taught; their thirst for more knowledge and training regarding the teaching of writing and literature; their discussions about the meaning of writing in students' academic, personal, and professional lives; their experiments with different evaluation and grading methods; their desire to make the course more relevant for their students; their (and their students') political involvement on a strongly politicized and highly volatile campus; and, in short, their "efforts to reinvent Freshman English at UW" (128) by gaining more and more power over the course and wrestling it away from tenure-track and tenured faculty.

Only in chapter 6 (out of eight), after having built some serious anticipation, does Fleming finally tell the shocking story of the "breakdown" (133) in the English Department, which ultimately led to the sudden and startling cessation of English 102. The reasons for this breakdown are many, and Fleming looks at every possible angle (from the faculty's and the TAs' perspectives to pedagogical, administrative, and political reasons). He also discusses at length the difference between "official" reasons (offered on the record to TAs and university administrators) and the "real" reasons behind this decision (but I will not ruin the suspense for you). Of course, this decision fired up a flurry of protestations from junior faculty members in the English Department (most of whom were later denied tenure), TAs (who lost their funding), as well as faculty members and administrators

from faculties and departments across UW (who suddenly had to modify the prerequisites to all their undergraduate programs). The fundamental question behind this uproar and the chaos that ensued was one that has still not been satisfactorily answered at most universities in the U.S. and Canada: Who should be responsible for teaching *all* university students how to express themselves clearly? How can *one* department (usually English) be responsible for such a considerable task? And at the same time, how can individual departments (of, say, biology or history) be responsible for teaching *both* biology or history *and* writing/communication/rhetoric/composition (an argument that a past UW TA called “as absurd as the Math Department telling the English Department that it should be responsible for the instruction in mathematics of English majors” (170)?

The last two chapters talk about the aftermath of this significant decision and its repercussions on the English Department, its programs, and all of its students, as well as on the university as a whole. In these last chapters, Fleming also looks at the literacy crisis that was taking place in the U.S. at the same time and at its positive and negative effects on schools and universities across the country. Twenty-five years later, rhetoric/composition came back to UW’s English Department with the hiring of composition scholars and the creation of faculty workshops, training courses for TAs, a doctoral program in Composition Studies, and finally, in 1994, “a new two-course requirement [for all UW undergraduates] in composition/basic rhetoric [with] course work in the four modes of literacy (writing, speaking, reading, and listening), with primary emphasis on writing, and in the skills of critical thinking” (192).

Although one might assume that reading through the minute details of one syllabus or the recorded words of every person present at a particular department meeting would be tedious, this book is simply fascinating. I only wish Fleming had talked a little more about how English departments at peer universities were handling their TAs, first-year English courses, and other writing-in-the-discipline (or writing-across-the-curriculum) courses. Fleming also brings up the UW’s writing clinic a number of times but does not give any details about its purpose (and it does not seem to be the same thing as the writing centre, mentioned a few times, too). Finally, I wish Fleming had offered a summary of the riots, bombings, and sit-ins to which he refers for those of us outside the U.S. or unfamiliar with the events that took place in Madison and UW at the time, as they seemed so distinctive and so closely related to what was happening within the university. In the end, and in spite of these minor shortcomings, there is absolutely no question in my mind as to why *From Form to Meaning*

received both the 2012 CCCC Outstanding Book Award and the Mina P. Shaughnessy 2012 MLA Publication Prize.

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Tiffany Potter, ed. *Women, Popular Culture, and the Eighteenth Century*. University of Toronto Press, 2012. 344 pp. 18 b and w illustrations. ISBN-10: 1442641819; ISBN-13: 978-1442641815.

First the disclaimer: I have known the editor of this collection and more than half of its contributors, some for more than twenty years, and have edited some of their essays in *Lumen*, the proceedings of the Canadian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, and *TransAtlantic Crossings*. Given that CSECS has had its own annual meeting since 1971 and that the pool of eighteenth-century scholars in this country is a relatively small one, it would be difficult to find a reviewer who was not connected in one way or another. However, I am not, at present, engaged in any projects with any of the authors in *Women, Popular Culture, and the Eighteenth Century*. In order to minimize a perceived conflict of interest, I intend to steer toward essays whose authors I don't know.

The dust jacket, featuring "A View of the Grand Walk," offers a splendid view of an outdoor concert at Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, well attended by women in the latest style of wide-bustled dresses. The first names of the Nuremberg-born engraver who set up a print shop in London *circa* 1744, Johann Sebastian Müller (*circa* 1715–1792), are not given in the credit, and the date of this, *circa* 1751, is missing. He worked with the painter-designer, Samuel Wale, who was a founding member of the Royal Academy in 1768. The design shows a woman, backed by a small group of musicians, singing from an elevated bandstand to a crowd of well-dressed strollers. In an age that knew no film, television, or radio, this was the perfect, genteel (and much healthier) afternoon entertainment.

The editor of this volume has previously published a monograph on Henry Fielding (*Honest Sins: Georgian Libertinism*, 1999), edited Robert Rogers's 1766 tragedy about Pontiac, *Ponteach, or the Savages of America* (2010), and co-edited collections on *Battlestar Gallactica* (2007) and *The Wire* (2009). Some essays fix on more customary subjects, "from the- atres, plays, and actresses, to novels, magazines, and cookbooks, as well

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