"Whether Writers Themselves Have Been Changed": A Test of the Values Driving Writing Center Work

Michelle Deal

University of Massachusetts Amherst, drmdeal@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/open_access_dissertations

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation

Deal, Michelle, ""Whether Writers Themselves Have Been Changed": A Test of the Values Driving Writing Center Work" (2011). Open Access Dissertations. 443.

https://scholarworks.umass.edu/open_access_dissertations/443

This Open Access Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Open Access Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact scholarworks@library.umass.edu.
“WHETHER WRITERS THEMSELVES HAVE BEEN CHANGED”:
A TEST OF THE VALUES DRIVING WRITING CENTER WORK

A Dissertation Presented

by

MICHELLE L. DEAL

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

September 2011

Department of English
"WHETHER WRITERS THEMSELVES HAVE BEEN CHANGED": A TEST OF THE VALUES DRIVING WRITING CENTER WORK

A Dissertation Presented
by
MICHELLE L. DEAL

Approved as to style and content by:

_________________________________________________
Donna LeCourt, Chair

_________________________________________________
Anne Herrington, Member

_________________________________________________
Mathew Ouellett, Member

_________________________________________________
Joseph Bartolomeo, Department Head
Department of English
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor, Donna LeCourt, for her many years of support. Her writing, teaching, and mentoring have helped make me a better writer, reader, thinker, and educator. I also extend my gratitude to the members of my committee, Anne Herrington and Mathew Ouellett, for their helpful comments, questions, and patience throughout this project. I equally thank the students who volunteered to participate in this study. I am especially grateful for their openness. Their writing, tutoring, and reflections have complicated my understanding of changed writers.

Many thanks go to the International Writing Centers Association for awarding me a dissertation research grant and to the staff at the University of Massachusetts Amherst Translation Center for their first-rate transcription services. Without grant funding, I would not have had the assistance of UMass transcriptionists, and without them, my data analyses would have taken significantly more time than I had to offer. Thanks also go to Neal Lerner for having read and responded to an early version of chapter 3, and to members of the NEWACC writers group who read and responded to a related conference paper/manuscript. I am also indebted to Patricia Zukowski, Haivan Hoang, and Lois Brown for having hired and mentored me as a tutor, administrator, and teacher. Their contributions to my professional development while researching and writing this dissertation have been invaluable.

This project may never have been completed without the support of family and friends who helped me to stay focused on this project and provided encouragement to persist: a special thank you to Adam Barcroft, Hannelore Deal, James Deal, Vicki Hamill, and Carla English.
ABSTRACT

"WHETHER WRITERS THEMSELVES HAVE BEEN CHANGED": A TEST OF THE VALUES DRIVING WRITING CENTER WORK

SEPTEMBER 2011

MICHELLE L. DEAL, B.A., UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

M.A., UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

PH.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Donna LeCourt

This project questions a core value that writing center workers have long held about tutoring writing: that we change writers. Applying sociocognitive and Bakhtinian lenses, I was able to complicate theory-practice connections. Tutor-tutee negotiations during tutorials, tutees’ perceived learning outcomes, and their revisions were compared with their reasons for revising so that I could investigate what tutees potentially learn from their tutors, how, and why. Data indicated if tutors’ information/advice became, in Bakhtin’s terms, internally persuasive to tutees. When the authoritative discourses tutors represent or endorse converge with students’ internally persuasive discourses, they converge in students’ revision choices as tutor-tutee interdiscursivity. I proposed that such a convergence can lead to “changed” writers, writers who alter their understanding of themselves as writers and/or modify their thinking about a given paper, concept, or process.
Even though students granted their tutors considerable authority, most tutees examined their tutors’ comments to see if they made sense and were worthy of internalizing as generalized concepts to help them meet current writing goals. In short, tutors do indeed change writers, as I have defined change in the context of this study. Work with specific papers can impact students in terms of their larger process and development as writers; tutors’ strategies/concepts can become writers’ strategies/concepts to be applied again in new contexts. However, even when tutees were internally persuaded and appeared to have changed as writers, analyses into their tutorials, revisions, perceived learning outcomes, and reasons for revising showed that some students took up their tutors’ information/advice in ways beyond their tutor’s control.

What some students internalize can be situation-specific and may not necessarily translate to other writing projects, can be significant yet limited understandings of rhetorical concepts, and may not appear in their revised drafts. Students can also be resistant to rhetorical concepts and revision strategies, especially those they perceive as antithetical to their ideological views about process, content, or structure. Given the variety of reasons students revise, the multiple contexts and influences affecting tutorials, and the ensuing challenges inherent in assessing tutorials, I recommend that tutors do not measure their success based on the Northian idea of a writing center. Though we do change writers, I recommend writing center workers think about successful tutorials in more complex ways than our Northian goal might imply. Tutors’ successes are not dependent on changes to writers but on their ability to collaboratively negotiate with writers. Instead of trying to prove the efficacy of writing center tutorials as direct cause and effect relationship, I recommend that writing center administrators try to
demonstrate how tutorials foster several habits of mind that college students need to cultivate to become successful writers.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Efficacy in Writing Center Tutorials: In Search of Better Writers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Center Research: What We Know and What We Don’t Know</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success with Tutoring Strategies</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success with Tutorials</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success with Writing</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success with Writers</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Outline</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Research Methods</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Writers</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Center Tutors</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Role as Researcher</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writer Information Forms</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Audio-recorded Tutorials...............................................................54
Transcripts of Tutorials..................................................................55
Students’ Drafts.............................................................................59
Discourse-based Interviews with Tutees...........................................60
Follow-up Interviews with Tutors......................................................63
Data Analysis ..................................................................................63
Research Memos.............................................................................64
Analyzing Student Writing...............................................................65
Analyzing Tutoring Approaches.......................................................66
Analyzing Tutoring Sessions and Discourse-based Interviews.........67
Triangulating Tutorials, Texts, and Interviews.................................73

3. A COMPARISON OF TUTORIALS, REVISIONS, AND PERCEIVED LEARNING

OUTCOMES ..................................................................................74

Tutorials.........................................................................................75
Information/Advice Requested.........................................................76
Rhetorical Situations ......................................................................78
Information/Advice Received..........................................................80
Revisions.........................................................................................82
Information/Advice Received and Used............................................83
Self-assurance, Motivation, Material Constraints, and
Comprehension: No Additional Revisions Beyond Tutor’s
Information/Advice..........................................................................86
Unnecessary Changes, Personal Preferences, Instructor
Preferences, and Misunderstandings: Information/Advice
Received and Not Used ..................................................................88
Revisions as Extension of Tutorials..................................................90
Revisions Not Connected to Tutorials..............................................92
Discussion ........................................................................................................................................93
Perceived Learning Outcomes ........................................................................................................95
Comparing the Data ........................................................................................................................98
Expected Tutorial Outcomes ..........................................................................................................100
Unintended/Unexpected Tutorial Outcomes ..................................................................................102
Desirable By-products ..................................................................................................................103
Conclusion .......................................................................................................................................106

4. HOW AND WHY TUTEES REVISE: FROM METACOGNITION AND NEGOTIATION

TO INTERNALLY PERSUASIVE DISCOURSES ...........................................................................110

Convergences of Authoritative and Internally Persuasive Discourses .......................................111
Sofia: Applying and Extending Can Change Writers .................................................................114
Mona: Applying But Not Extending Can Change Writers ..........................................................132
Al: Even Minimal Revisions Can Change Writers .....................................................................149
Conclusion .......................................................................................................................................169

5. WRITERS/WRITING: THE AFFECTS OF EXPERIMENTATION, REFLECTION, AND

NEGOTIATION ................................................................................................................................171

Lisa: Situation-Specific Outcomes ...............................................................................................172
Cassandra: Complicating Contexts ..............................................................................................191
Emma: Writing with Power ............................................................................................................207
Conclusion .......................................................................................................................................234

6. CONCLUSION: THE VALUE OF WRITING CENTER WORK ..................................................237

Testing Assumptions ....................................................................................................................237
Redefining Success Theoretically ..................................................................................................240
Measuring Success Differently .....................................................................................................246
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tutee Participants ..................................................................</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tutor Participants ...................................................................</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Data Collected ........................................................................</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Data Collection Totals ................................................................</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Close Vertical Transcription: Conventions and Classifications Used to Analyze Discourse Between Writing Tutors and Tutees</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Information/Advice Requested ..................................................</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A core belief among writing center workers, including myself, is that tutors improve students’ writing through improving students as writers. This position is central to writing center workers because it encourages tutors to help students cultivate writerly knowledge through a consultation about their tasks and goals. To only improve students’ writing means that tutors risk commandeering students’ projects to the degree students learn little to nothing that is meaningful to them. Writing center workers want students to base their revision choices on rhetorical, epistemological, aesthetic, and/or ethical concepts and practices that lead to their own expanded writerly knowledge and capability. Despite this goal, writing center workers do not know if they are meeting it.

Research into the effects writing centers have on students’ writing and on students as writers is scarce and difficult to prove. Casey Jones published an assessment of the literature since 1970 on the relationship between writing centers and improvement in writing ability. He speculated that the overall scarcity of empirical studies into writing center efficacy resulted from methodological problems, such as: the difficulty in defining writing ability, “the complexity of the writing process itself,” the inability to control “the influence of confounding factors” on student writing, and the lack of generalized outcomes because “no two writing centers are alike” (5-6). Jones concluded that “evaluation of writing center efficacy is an elusive goal” because writing and writing centers do not “lend themselves very well to empirical study” (1, 17). Bearing these dilemmas in mind, writing centers workers have tried to assess the impact their centers have on students, largely due to increasing demands from deans and provosts to assess learning outcomes (Ianetta 39).
Tracing "the delicate line between measurable and intangible outcomes that researchers tread in this field," Jones organized his findings into five categories of writing center efficacy (5): “direct” (quantitative) evidence of student writing ability, “indirect” (qualitative) evidence of student writing ability, evidence of tutors’ roles in writing center efficacy, the connection between faculty support and writing center efficacy, and the effects writing centers have on faculty and staff. Of most interest to me are studies Jones cited from the first two categories. Studies of improvement in students’ writing abilities have been correlated with higher grade point averages (Sutton and Arnold), better freshman composition course grades and improved grades on proficiency exams (Sandlon, Naugie), increased error or grammar recognition (Wills), writing center instruction (Roberts) improved attitudes toward writing (Van dam), and greater self-confidence (Matthews). These writing center assessments often equated success stories with student satisfaction and retention. Missing from previous research into students’ writing abilities are contextualized studies of what students learn about writing from writing center tutors—outcomes also valued by educational institutions. Even so, research into what students learn about writing from writing centers is not the focus of most of the recent published scholarship either.

In this dissertation study, I try to answer questions I see as central to writing center work. Tutors tutor writers and not just writing, so what about those writers? For what reasons do writers make writerly choices with regards to a writing center consultation? What aspects of the tutorial were persuasive, not only satisfactory, to the writer and why? How did the student perform the tutor’s suggestions? Writing center workers need to know what students learn as writers because it is their goal, and this goal affects their role in educational institutions. My investigation into students’ writing
presents an analysis of what and if students learn as writers and, for that reason, tests the values driving writing center work and the value of writing center workers’ worth as educators distinct from others.

**Writing Center Research: What We Know and What We Don’t Know**

Controlling for outside influences on students’ writing, collecting and measuring writing samples, defining improvement in writing, and generalizing from one student to another and one writing center to another pose significant challenges for research into assessing learning outcomes (Jones, Lerner “Writing”). Though methodological and practical concerns have arguably restricted writing center research, Beth Boquet and Neal Lerner contend the problematic reception of Stephen North’s essay “The Idea of a Writing Center” (published in 1984) has had a greater impact on the range and reach of writing center scholarship. Editors of the *Writing Center Journal* from 2002-2008, Boquet and Lerner write, “No article about writing centers has been invoked more frequently to identify, justify, and legitimize the work that writing centers do (or hope to do) in their institutions” (171). Having examined references to “Idea” published in the *Writing Center Journal* from 1985 through 2005, Boquet and Lerner claim North’s essay has been “loreified” in writing center studies—“practice without critical reflection” (184). The articles Boquet and Lerner surveyed typically invoke North’s “Idea” “to confirm a commonly shared understanding” and not to assess his ideas (178). Due to this “epistemological trajectory,” writing center studies have rarely addressed “whether writers themselves have been changed by the instruction offered” (Boquet and Lerner 172, 184).

Most writing center workers hail North’s “Idea,” particularly North’s idea that tutors help “make better writers, not necessarily—or immediately—better texts” (441).
Likewise, tutors “must measure their success not in terms of the constantly changing model they create, but in terms of changes in the writer” (North 439). And by extension, “The essence of the writing center method, then, is [the] talking” between tutor and writer (443). North believed that talk is everything. If the writing center is ever to prove its worth in other than quantitative terms—numbers of students seen, for example, or hours of tutorials provided—it will have to do so by describing this talk: what characterizes it, what effects it has, how it can be enhanced. (444)

Statements such as these have initiated 25 years of writing center lore without much questioning even though North wrote another essay the same year as “Idea” calling for research into “our assumptions” (see North “Writing”; Boquet and Lerner 183). Boquet and Lerner point out that while North asserted the goals and values of writing centers in “Idea,” he urged writing center workers to question them in “Writing Center Research.” No longer talking to English faculty but to tutors and administrators, North called for research into “the specific effects of writing center work” by asking, “What happens in tutorials?” (Boquet and Lerner 183; North “Writing” 29 qtd in Boquet and Lerner 183). North proposed research possibilities such as “categorizing types of tutorials, identifying ‘effective’ tutoring, or comparing ‘tutorial content with written products’” (North “Writing” 32 qtd in Boquet and Lerner 183). In short, North was asking writing center workers to become researchers in their own writing centers to assess theory and practice.

A decade later, due to the overwhelming “public idealization” of “Idea,” North published a response to writer center workers who “take [“Idea”] at anything like face value” (North “Revisiting” 9 qtd in Boquet and Lerner 179; “Revisiting” 12). He revised
and qualified three points concerning the relationship between tutor and writer, tutor and teacher, tutor and institution (“Revisiting” 10). Each shares a common concern: North’s clarification of tutors’ roles. Most important among them are tutors’ relationships with student writers. In “Idea,” North explained to his English faculty audience that writing center tutors are participant-observers of students’ education as writers; tutors enable writers to make sense of their composing processes because they are able to observe writers in process and intervene. In “Revisiting,” North explained to writing center workers that they were mistaken about his portrayal of tutors when or if they equated participant-observer solely with a minimalist, hands-off, unassuming tutor liberated from the social contexts circulating in writing center consultations (12). Overall, North’s response to writing center workers indicates a field entrenched in assumptions that he made and hoped would be tested. Ironically, North’s maxims have dominated writing center studies to the point at which “North’s aphorisms have become a kind of verbal shorthand, a special handshake for the initiated, an endpoint rather than an origin” (Boquet and Lerner 184, 171). Boquet and Lerner encourage their readers to self-reflect on “the ways in which one scholar—or, perhaps more to the point, one article or even one line—can come to define a field” (172).

Like Boquet and Lerner, I argue that writing centers studies has followed a trajectory that takes for granted what student writers potentially learn from tutors. My own assessment of this trajectory follows four categories for studying writing center tutorials: (a) theories and practices of tutoring that lead to (b) commendable tutorials and (c) skillful writing by (d) able writers. Perceptions of successful tutorials have focused on collaborative tutoring strategies. Those strategies have been most debated from two places, either directive and hierarchical, or nondirective (minimalist) and nonhierarchical
theories of collaboration. The majority of the research assumes that students filter their tutorials through the same lens as the researchers use to define instances of collaborative tutoring. Few studies have shown that success in tutoring depends on other factors than success with tutoring styles. Efficacy in writing center tutorials is more recently connected to students’ perceptions of satisfaction. However, the question remains whether improved writing leads to improved writers as a measure of success. Writing center researchers are left with the considerable challenge to identify types of improvement in writers. What would indicate that a writer has improved? In what ways is she better than before at writing? Is she more aware of something she does and/or doesn’t do?

The assumptions I am testing in this dissertation pertain to whether and how writing center workers help to create changed writers. My dissertation tries to identify the reasons for what students do and/or do not do with their writing during and after a tutorial as an indicator of what and whether students learn. This investigation into what happens during and after tutorials represents a step towards defining what we think of as success with students as writers, namely as a type of improvement that is relative to what students own in their writing.

**Success with Tutoring Strategies**

Student ownership is central to the belief and goal, the theory and practice, of creating better writers. A student needs to own his writing and his responsibilities as a writer in order to grow as one. Founding editor of the first writing center peer-reviewed publication, the *Writing Lab Newsletter*, Muriel Harris explained in 1995 to *College English* readers why writers need tutors. Harris cited student ownership as the first of four
characteristics of writing center tutorials that distinguish them from classroom instruction. She described student ownership as a matter of “encouraging independence in collaborative talk” (“Talking” 30). The key to students’ independence comes from how they think differently in tutorials because of “exploratory talk,” a term Harris borrowed from Douglas Barnes (Barnes 50; Harris “Talking 31). Harris made a critical distinction between the types conversations that occur between tutors and writers and the conversations between teachers and students. Exploratory talk, contrasted with presentational talk, helps students formulate their thinking without the pressure of performing. Without this pressure, “tutorial talk encourages knowing,” which is Harris’s second reason why writing center tutors matter (“Talking” 32). Tutors help writers acquire “strategic knowledge,” a term Harris borrowed from Linda Flower (Flower “Studying Cognition” 23 qtd in Harris “Talking” 32). In short, tutors teach writers the “how to’s” through exploratory talk about their writing, both of which are core characteristics of writing center work that help students to make meaning. The logic runs as follows: If tutors’ tutoring strategies are collaborative strategies such as exploratory talk, students are more likely to own their writing, become more strategic, and learn as writers.

This is the reasoning that leads writing center workers to still agree with North and Harris even though they don’t know for sure how and if this works. Research into students and tutors’ conversations has not directly addressed development in writers as, for instance, writing strategies they have acquired and has instead attended to the nature of collaboration. Since 1984, writing center scholars have paid considerable attention to tutor and student talk as collaboration. After all, North and Harris made it clear that the talking that goes on during writing center tutorials is what sets them apart from
classroom pedagogy. Through the lens of collaboration theories and practices, some writing center workers have taken up student ownership through occasional but critical challenges to collaboration as particular tutoring strategies as talk that lead to students’ development as writers.

Writing center scholarship links the origins of collaboration as a writing center theory to Kenneth Bruffee’s collaborative learning model (e.g., Lerner and Boquet “From the Editors,” Kail “From the Guest Editor,” Hobson, Gillam). In a special issue of the Writing Center Journal on Bruffee and the Brooklyn Plan, Peter Hawkes summarizes Bruffee’s model as a pedagogy of reacculturation and social change, terms Bruffee used himself (Bruffee “Social” 784, Hawkes 31). Bruffee argued that the conversations peer tutors and students have about writing mirror the recursive and social nature of acquiring knowledge within discourse communities and, therefore, has the potential to change students’ “relationship to the authority of knowledge” (Hawkes 30). As intermediaries between “the new language of the knowledge community [student writers] wish to join” and “the language they already know,” peer tutors provide writers with a “kind of critical consciousness” that has the potential for social change (Hawkes 30, 31). Specifically, students have the potential to enter new discourse communities and “question [their] values and perspectives,” which could lead to changing those communities in productive ways (Hawkes 31). In his landmark essay “Peer Tutoring and the ‘Conversation of Mankind’,” Bruffee described writing center collaborations between tutors and writers as a conversation in which peers reach a consensus comparable to how knowledge is contested between colleagues. On a practical level, Bruffee’s model is one that “offers students task-guided conversation and negotiation to reach a consensus on their own authority” (Hawkes 30, 31). Collaborative learning between peers, as Bruffee described it
and set it into motion across campuses around the country has been heralded as critical social action and as not entirely true.

Although student-tutors are usually considered peers with student-tutees, John Trimbur pointed out in 1987 how “peer tutoring” is not collaboration between equals because students seek the knowledge that tutors impart as members of larger institutional authorities. Four years later, wary of the collaboration “bandwagon,” Andrea Lunsford advised readers to reconsider collaboration from cultural and postcolonial stances: Collaboration, for all its libratory merits of harmony and peaceful solutions such as consensus, runs the risk of social elitism, of “erasing differences” (7). Anne DiPardo’s 1992 case study showed how class and ethnic differences, for instance, can undermine the ideal of “peer” tutoring and can lead to a naïve use of collaborative tutoring strategies. She observed, in one particular case, a tutor's lack of training and supervision contributed to ethnocentric tutoring and an “inadvertent appropriation” of a student’s writing (365). Collaboration, as this tutor understood it, was reduced to a small set of tutoring strategies that should work for every student.

The editors of Intersections: Theory-Practice in Writing Centers, the first book to interrogate writing center theory-practice connections, addressed related concerns: “how various forces in collaborative relationships determine texts” and ways “to negotiate the thin lines between the conflicts which prevent true collaborations” (Mullen and Wallace vii, xiii). A significant conflict for all of the contributing authors was the use of social constructionist theories to only idealize and not critique collaboration in writing center tutorials. For instance, Christina Murphy warned readers that collaborative learning theory risks disregard for the “subjective experience” of the individual and status quo
practices of accommodation and consensus that suppress agency and diversity (28). Through a specific case example, Alice Gillam raised critical questions about “the explanatory power as well as the limitations” of current conceptions of collaboration when applied to practice (“Collaborative” 45). Gillam showed how “there is no such thing as a ‘typical’ session” (“Collaborative” 45). What is typical are tutorials’ “resistance to easy assessment” (“Collaborative” 45). In short, the contributors to Intersections are among the first to interrogate the “the gaps between what [writing center workers] theorize and what they practice” (Mullin “Introduction” ix, Hobson).

In addition to the theoretical challenges some scholars’ pose to “peer” tutoring and “consensus” building, collaboration in relation to tutoring practice is associated with two primary types of tutoring strategies, directive and nondirective. Nondirective tutoring has been considered (and probably still is for some) to be more collaborative, associated with sound ethics and teaching practices, whereas directive tutoring has connoted negative practices (Clark “Perspectives,” Jones). In The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring (2004), Neal Lerner and Paula Gillespie explain that nondirective strategies such as open-ended, content-clarifying, or leading questions do not have a “canned” answer for content- or process-related matters:

You may ask, ‘Why did you [the student writer] choose to put this section here?’ The writer is still going to hear this question as ‘This doesn’t belong here.’ She may ask, ‘Should I move it?” You can then rephrase the question: ‘Is there a good reason why it belongs here?’ That allows her to assert that indeed it does but that maybe she needs to show the reader why. (37-38)

This type of nondirective tutor talk puts the student in the position of a writer owning her writing, making her own decisions about her writing, and puts the tutor in the position of
a reader responding to a text.

In contrast, directive tutoring approaches do not typically position the writer as owner, per se, but as novice. Linda K. Shamoon and Deborah H. Burns showed how advanced beginners have benefited from directive tutoring in which rhetorical processes were modeled, imitated, and questioned. Another critique of nondirective tutoring comes from Paul Kei Matsuda: ESL students do not share the basic assumptions some native speakers of English have about academic writing conventions and therefore require more explicit instruction. Judith K. Powers discovered that tutors in her writing center had to explain to ESL students what an American writer’s audience expectations might be, to direct them in how to say something and the amount of evidence to provide as adequate support for an argument, and to locate errors that these students cannot hear editing by ear (42-43). All of these authors support a theory and practice of directive tutoring approaches that are legitimate, though arguably outside “processed-based, Socratic, private, a-disciplinary, and nonhierarchical or democratic” writing center theories of collaboration (Shamoon and Burns 177).

Collaboration has also been shown to have many variables aside from directive and nondirective tutoring strategies. Carol Severino published a short case study that categorizes several of the “situational and interpersonal dynamics” that impact tutorials and our evaluations of them as more collaborative or better than others, including age, gender, ethnicity, language, personality, experience, status, motivation, frequency and duration of tutorials, the written text in question, and topic knowledge. She referred to these forces as “features for rhetorically analyzing collaboration” that, as her study showed, complicate the uses of directive and nondirective tutoring strategies in relation to
a variety of features that help define successful collaborations. Building from Severino's work, Blau, Hall, and Strauss conducted the first linguistic study of conversational features in writing center tutorials. They further analyzed two of Severino's eighteen factors affecting tutorials: “Length of contributions to discussion (number of words of sentences each speaks)” and ‘Rhetorical functions of contributions to discussion (leading questions, open-ended questions, complaints, appeals)” (Severino qtd in Blau, Hall, and Strauss 21).

The authors coded three recurring rhetorical strategies within conversation-based tutorials: “questions” (who asks, what type of question, and for what purpose is it asked), “echoing” (of non-content words/phrases, syntactic patterns, and play), and “qualifiers” (posing suggestions as questions and modifying comments) (23, 27, 32, 33). After analyzing their data, they believed “that in a number of cases that we examined, an undue—or misdirected—emphasis on the collaborative [nondirective] approach resulted in tutorials that seemed to waste time and lack clear direction” (38). From their point of view, reliance on primarily nondirective tutoring approaches did not constitute success of a writing center consultation.

Each of the researchers mentioned in this section have shown writing center workers that strategies other than nondirective strategies, plus a variety of rhetorical features, can affect “peer” tutoring, student ownership and revision, and the overall success of tutoring. Writing center researchers who complicate collaboration point toward the failings of writing centers’ “good intentions,” words Nancy Grimm uses to describe problematic assumptions underlying glorified theories and practices (Good Intentions). Empirical research into collaboration recommends writing center workers broaden their perceptions of how to create better writers considering a range of values not fully examined. Because writing center scholars have spent so much time defining
successful tutorials through a lens of nonhierarchical collaboration and tutoring strategies, they haven’t looked for success as change in writers evidenced through, for instance, their writing strategies or strategic knowledge. Even though authors such as those I cited above have made considerable contributions to the field by challenging conjecture, current writing center research continues to correlate writing center success with tutorials themselves, including tutoring strategies, as evidence of student satisfaction.

**Success with Tutorials**

The difference between early studies and more recent research into the effects of writing center tutorials on writers is a shift in perspective: Writing Center research since 2000 focuses on identifying characteristics of successful tutorials primarily from students’ and not researchers’ points of view. Types of tutoring strategies are not necessarily the focus, or only focus, of current writing center research; students’ overall perceptions of their tutorials are. Previously used measures such as improved student attitudes and confidence and the relationship between grades and tutorials continue to represent research categories for satisfaction. Writing center instruction, however broadly conceived, is given more attention. The authors cited in this section cumulatively generate a sizeable list of tutoring outcomes related to students’ development as writers: tutors meeting student objectives (e.g., mutual agendas), tutors’ courtesy (e.g., rapport, care), tutors’ knowledge and ability (e.g., generalist/specialist tutors), students learning and applying information and believing writing improved (e.g., thesis construction and development), students procrastinating less (e.g., earlier drafts), students’ ownership of writing (e.g., agenda setting and tutor recommendations for the instructor’s input), and students’ comfort level (e.g., receiving positive feedback). Even though successful tutorials
are usually equated with different kinds of satisfaction from additional perspectives, success overall is still determined by who defines it—usually the researcher.

James Bell defined student satisfaction in two ways: satisfaction with the process (tutors/tutorials meeting objectives) and satisfaction with the product (learning and applying information) (“When” 19). Bell’s small-scale survey responses show that most students were satisfied with their tutoring sessions immediately after tutoring, two weeks later, and two months after tutorials (20-23). On the contrary, the results of Julie Morrison and Jean-Paul Nadeau’s study indicates that students’ initial satisfaction ratings dropped once students received grades that were lower than students expected from their instructors (33). Morrison and Nadeau defined satisfaction for students using five scales: “overall conference satisfaction (Satisfied), satisfaction with the topics covered (Topics), ability to apply what was learned to school work (Apply), ability to use what was learned in the future (Future), and rating of consultant friendliness (Friendly)” (30). Student satisfaction for Peter Carino and Doug Enders’s survey is categorized as tutors’ courtesy, knowledge about writing, and ability to help students apply writing knowledge without “taking over” the session (97, 98). Students were satisfied if they experienced greater confidence as writers and believed that their writing improved as a result of their writing center consultations (96). Though most students reported satisfaction with tutors, Carino and Enders found no statistically significant correlation between frequency of students’ visits to writing centers and their satisfaction with tutors (96). However, frequency of visits significantly boosted students’ confidence and sense of improving their writing. The authors report that the results of their study are questionable but nonetheless challenged the authors’ assumptions that regular writing center users are more satisfied than one-time clients (85). These three studies suggest writing center instruction effects students’
perceptions of their writing and themselves as writers. Additional research further investigates the impact of writing center instruction.

Another form of student satisfaction and writing center success, reduced procrastination, is described in Beth Rapp Young and Barbara A. Fritzshe’s research into students’ composing processes. They discovered a link between writing center users and fewer procrastination behaviors. High procrastinators only wrote their papers in advance of the deadline when they met with a writing center tutor. Young and Fritzshe report that the high correlation between writing center users and decreased procrastination behaviors supports claims that writing centers help to create better writers (53). Though Young and Fritzshe’s study points toward an important aspect of what it means to be a writer, the authors note it’s not clear if the students participating recognized revision as a recursive process as well as a linear one. Writing center users may procrastinate less but nonetheless perceive composing as discrete steps. Still, it is clear that students recognized the value of writing drafts well before the eleventh hour and sharing them with tutors. In this case, better writers are those who procrastinate less because they use the writing center.

Students are also likely to be more satisfied with their writing center consultations if tutors address students’ agendas for revising and help them utilize this knowledge. Terese Thonus conducted a sociolinguistic and ethnographic analysis that broadens the scope of tutorial success to include tutors’ perspectives alongside students’ perceptions. She reports ten “interactional and pragmatic” features students and tutors attributed to the success of writing center consultations (“Tutor” 130). Key among these is tutor and students’ similar “understanding of the other’s intent,” or “parallel orientations to the
conversation,” as evidenced through linguistic and interactional features such as volubility, overlaps, backchannels, laughter, and negotiation of directives (129, 124). Also, students and tutors believed that successful tutorials included thesis construction and development, student ownership of the writing, and tutor recommendations for additional support from instructors—a negation of absolute tutor authority (125). Thonus’s study further complicates collaboration from the perspective of those who experience writing center consultations. Successful interactions between students and tutors that are likely to contribute to changes in writers are not only contingent upon nonhierarchical tutoring practices but also on how tutor and student “negotiate” what the student can expect to learn and apply.

The relativity of success as a matter of expectations is also evident in Sarah Cushing Weigle and Gayle L. Nelson’s research into students’ and tutors’ perspectives. Their study of tutors’ identities as tutors shows “no direct connection between specific roles [that tutors play] and the perceived success of tutoring” for students whose primary language is not English (222). Success for their tutors meant having the knowledge required, communicating writerly knowledge, and boosting student confidence. However, “whether or not the tutor has a collaborative or directive stance towards the tutee, focuses on content or sentence level concerns, or talks less than the tutee appears to be less important in terms of [students’] perceptions of success” than tutors negotiating an agenda the writer anticipates, providing information the writer needs and can apply, and demonstrating an understanding of, or empathy for, the writer’s situation (“establishing rapport”) (Weigle and Nelson 221). For each of the three cases Weigle and Nelson analyzed, different tutoring roles did not affect tutees’ perceptions that they got “what
they wanted out of the tutoring sessions” (221).

These results speak to another study by Terese Thonus in which faculty, tutees, and tutors radically differed in their expectations of tutors’ roles, from surrogate teacher to peer reader (“Triangulating”). She found that tutors’ roles are constantly changing within and across tutorials, suggesting students’ perceptions of success are likely to involve other aspects of writing center consultations. Likewise, Irene Clark’s study of student’s perceptions of directive and nondirective tutoring showed that students’ perceptions differed considerably from tutor’s perceptions (“Perspectives”). Students were more likely to perceive tutors as more directive than the tutors thought of themselves and “seemed satisfied with the consultant’s degree of directiveness” (45). Her research suggests that no matter which of the two tutoring strategies tutors use, students will experience a writing center tutorial from their own perspectives and needs. Other aspects of the tutorial and the tutor’s tutoring strategies are driving student learning—at least their perception of it.

Most recently, Isabelle Thompson et al. deliberately examined similar mandates from writing center “lore,” namely, dialogic collaboration, tutor expertise, positive feedback, and comfort level. Out of more than 4000 tutorials they surveyed, both students and tutors were most satisfied with their tutorials when tutors used directive strategies. However, it is not clear to me what those strategies are other than “answering students’ questions to improve writing quality” (96). Student and tutor satisfaction also corresponded with “comfort” level, “receiving positive feedback,” and tutors’ “caring”—a result that supports some of Weigle and Nelson’s findings (Thompson et al. 80). The biggest predictors of student satisfaction were having their questions answered by tutors
they perceived to be advanced writers—experts of genre conventions and subject matter. Thompson et al.’s study supports the lore about attending to students’ comfort and providing positive feedback. The lore about generalist tutors and dialogic collaboration is neither supported by this research nor other studies (see, for instance, Mackiewicz; Kiedaish and Dinitz; Davis et al., Wolcott; Clark “Perspectives,” “Maintaining,” “Collaboration;” Flynn and King; Harris “Modeling,” Hubbuch; Thonus ”Tutor”). Overall, results of the Thompson et al. study show a deconstructed form of collaboration, “asymmetrical” (81). Asymmetrical collaboration means “both the tutor and the student have power” (81). The tutor is more experienced with writing and the student “has the power to initiate the collaboration and set the agenda” (81). This finding is critical because it further undermines the rigid binaries between directive and nondirective tutoring. However, their research advances another binary, generalist and specialist tutors—a binary that some writing center directors reject as false (personal communication, Haivan Hoang). Still, Thompson et al. are among a handful of scholars to test our assumptions about writing center work through empirical research. Their work deepens our understanding of what successful tutorials look like depending on the students' expectations and experiences.

Challenges to long-held assumptions about writing center work, particularly the idea that tutors are peers or “pure” tutors, are in greater supply today than twenty years ago. Writing center workers know a lot more about tutors’ and students' perceptions of tutoring and the conversations they have with one another. Fortunately, many students’ expectations and experiences correspond with our foremost goal to foster writers. The most recent literature shows that successful tutorials are likely to be those in which students get what they came for: information or strategies for writing in an exploratory
and considerate yet expert setting. Even so, writing center research tends to focus on the tutorial as the central site for evaluating and assessing writing center effectiveness. The role students’ texts play in defining writing center success is seldom a benchmark.

**Success with Writing**

North’s axiom that tutors create better writers, not necessarily better texts, does not mean that tutors get to know writers more through their conversations with them than through students’ writing as a kind of conversation. Changes in the writing suggest if tutors have contributed to changes in the writers. If writing center workers want to know more about the effects of writing center tutors on writers, they need to investigate students’ writing and compare this writing to their tutorials—a point North made in “Writing Center Research.” With the exception of Byron Stay’s study published in 1983, only three studies since 2000 analyze students’ writing as a measure of tutorial success, and none of them directly compare students’ writing to their tutorials.

Luke Niiler’s statistical analysis of writing center outcomes supports his earlier research into how much students’ essays were “impacted globally and locally by writing center intervention” (Niiler “Continued” 13). Using a multiple trait-based assessment, independent raters scored students’ tutored and non-tutored drafts. Niiler’s findings, in both studies, show raters favored tutored drafts, suggesting that writing center tutors have a significant impact on the improvements students make to their drafts. Likewise, Roberta Henson and Sharon Stephenson report in their study a statistically significant improvement in overall quality of tutored essays than non-tutored essays (4). James Bell also conducted research into students’ writing as measure of success; he set out to determine if they became better writers, better revisers: students who “have better
writing processes or more usable knowledge of conventions or both” (“Research” 5). He discovered that the peer tutors participating in his study performed as editors and that the professional tutor acted more as a teacher. The professional tutor initiated significantly more macrostructural changes (higher or first-order concerns) than the peer tutors, who initiated almost none and focused instead on surface changes. Bell was unable to determine if students became better writers when working with peer tutors because most of the changes to a student’s text were made during the tutorial and not after. Nevertheless, he doubts if students of tutor-centered sessions noticeably improved as writers because they were not active participants and had been presented with too many “rules” to remember, having gone through most of their papers in one tutorial. Taken together, these three studies reveal some of the difficulties assessing writing center instruction. Outside raters can speak to the improvement of students’ writing but not improved writers. To compare writing and writers, researchers must analyze students’ revisions along with their understanding of those revisions.

Valuable as they are, research into students’ writing still leave writing center workers wondering why students make changes (or not) to their texts. So far, we have only part of the story about the effectiveness of writing center work—the part that tells us how tutors affect change. But how do students affect change in their writing as a consequence? What are some of the factors that contribute to their revisions? The purpose of my study is to examine students’ writing in response to writing center consultations, particularly students’ reasons for their revisions. To better understand ways writers themselves have changed, if they have, I investigate what students choose to adopt or discard from their writing center tutors. My analysis rests on a qualitative
approach that is interested in, as Deborah Brandt writes, sense making:

In other words, both ethnomethodologists and cognitive theorists in composition argue for approaching social actions as they are subjectively meaningful to the actors themselves, studying, that is, the acting, thinking, articulating perspectives of people in the process of doing something. The aim of both kinds of analyses, at one level at least, is to establish how actions make sense to those who make them. (323)

Success with Writers

Writing center workers need to look at the reasoning behind students’ choices because it is tied to how writers think. If students understand the choices they make regarding their revisions, they have mostly likely adopted some aspect of, for instance, rhetorical knowledge (e.g., audience, purpose) that helps them become better writers. For students to make choices about their revisions, they need to be convinced of their utility before they own them. According to some studies I mentioned earlier (e.g., Weigle and Nelson; Thonus “Tutoring”), students want to own their revision choices; they want to be strategic. Instead of studying the tutorial itself for success and satisfaction, I propose that writer center workers consider the effect of tutors on writers and their writing. While navigating new knowledge communities, what do writers take from writing center tutors and use (or not) in their writing? In a sense, writing center researchers need to look for convergences of tutor and tutee discourses.

Convergences of internally persuasive and authoritative discourses are Bakhtin’s words for the process of discerning social patterns of language that lead to new relationships and knowledge (see “Discourse in the Novel”). In the context of writing center tutorials, students come to tutors with ways of making meaning that are internally
persuasive to them, or that they have internalized. Tutors present additional ways for students to make meaning, particularly within academic discourses, which are authoritative discourses. That is, academic discourses have authority and power in knowledge making (Halasek 122-124, Grimm Good Intentions 113). When the authoritative discourses tutors endorse or represent converge with students’ internally persuasive discourses, they converge in students’ revision choices. Such convergences represented for Bakhtin instances of enculturation: “the ideological becoming of a human being… the process of selectively assimilating the words of others” (41, emphasis mine). When an authoritative word becomes an internally persuasive word, it becomes part of an infinite struggle among “points of view, approaches, directions, and values,” yet this convergence is “not so much interpreted by us as it is further, that is, freely, developed, applied to new material, new conditions; it enters into interanimating relationships with new contexts” (Bakhtin 44). Writing center tutorials as sites of enculturation offer students opportunities to try out new discourses/strategies and further their own writing agendas.

A published example of Bakhtin’s theory in practice comes from Paul Prior’s study of disciplinary enculturation. Prior analyzed revision-response rounds between a graduate student and her academic advisor. What compelled Prior to question this student’s writing choices were her advisor’s directive comments. The advisor rewrote portions of the student’s text, raising the issue of ownership. Discourse analysis and discourse-based interviews showed a convergence of authoritative and internally persuasive discourses occurred (315, 320). In Prior’s case study, a graduate student entered and altered her academic discourse community while writing part of a collaborative research study; she negotiated a point with her advisor that resulted in a
change within the study’s methodology. From a Bakhtinian perspective, the student was internally persuaded to use authoritative discourses she had been taught by her advisor to intervene in the authoritative discourse community of her discipline. This example of enculturation depended on the student’s process in learning metadiscourses that helped her critique both internally persuasive and authoritative discourses.

Likewise, in instances when a student chooses to follow a writing center tutor’s information/advice, it is possible that a tutor’s “discourse performs here no longer as information, directions, rules, models and so forth…; it performs here as authoritative discourse, and an internally persuasive discourse” (Bakhtin 41). In other words, during a writing center consultation, tutor concepts and strategies can become writer concepts and strategies as students revise. Granted, writing center tutors do not have the authority of graduate advisors, and students might not perceive peer tutors as representatives of authoritative discourses, per se, or their comments as authoritative. However, students generally perceive peers tutors as offering useful information or strategies for writing, as sharing knowledge acquired through practice and profession, and, therefore, as peer authorities whom are more advanced writers than they are themselves (e.g., Thompson et al.). I assume that authoritative discourses embodied in peer tutors interact regularly with internally persuasive discourses embodied in students, who are encouraged to appropriate parts of those discourses while negotiating their subjectivities. When a student’s thoughts shift from her tutor’s comments to her text, she thinks about changes she might make and ultimately acts on her known revision choices within several contexts (e.g., the tutorial itself, the assignment, personal/political goals). Convergences of authoritative and internally persuasive discourses are indicators of tutor-tutee interdiscursivity that can lead to student ownership and writerly knowledge. This
dissertation is an attempt to locate such convergences as evidence of changed writers.

Convergences of tutors’ authoritative discourses and students’ internally persuasive discourses are evident in ways students articulate reasons for their revision choices. As I mentioned earlier, writing center tutorials are collaborative learning environments in which students are engaged in exploratory talk. It is the tutor’s job to elicit the student’s understanding of what is inferred, implied, or implicit in his text: “Could you explain to me your thinking about this?” Students are asked to consider why they are doing what they are doing in their writing. This usually leads to students’ reconsiderations and revisions such as adding, deleting, rearranging, and substituting, or leaving things as they are. Because tutors enhance students’ metacognitive processes, I turn to metacognition studies as another frame for analyzing students’ revision choices.

Education, psychology, and linguistics scholars theorizing metacognition generally credit John Flavell for pioneering its research; he defined the term as “knowledge and cognition about cognitive phenomena” (“Metacognition and Cognitive Monitoring” 906; Brown; Griffith and Ruan; Hacker; Sitko). Researchers from a variety of academic disciplines studying the acquisition and application of knowledge rely on enduring features of metacognition (Flavell qtd. in Hacker 2). Those features contribute to relatively consistent beliefs that metacognition means knowledge and control of one’s thinking (Hacker, Dunlosky, and Graesser; Weinert and Kluwe; Israel, Block, Bauserman, and Kinnucan-Welsch; Metcalfe and Shimamura). Knowledge about one’s thinking “requires that learners step back and consider their own cognitive processes as objects of thought and reflection” (Brown 65). Control of one’s thinking “consists of the activities used to regulate and oversee learning” (Brown 68). In short, knowledge and control of
one’s thinking involves “self-regulation” or, to say it another way, “cognitive monitoring” (Griffith and Ruan 3).

Students’ thoughts and reflections about the writerly choices they make, considering what they talked about with a writing center tutor, are examples of cognitive monitoring. Flavell’s model of cognitive monitoring categorizes how metacognition operates through reciprocal relations among four variables: a person’s metacognitive knowledge, a person’s metacognitive experiences, the goals to be achieved or tasks to be performed, and the strategies a person uses to reach those goals or execute tasks (“Metacognition and Cognitive Monitoring”). In the context of writing centers, a student comes to a tutor with degrees and types of knowledge of her/himself as a writer (e.g., an expert or novice writer, a writer who...). This knowledge may or may not be articulated as “any coherent representation” and may or may not be accurate, resulting in a “misunderstanding” of how well one knows oneself as writer in order to reach a particular writing goal (Flavell “Metacognition and Cognitive Monitoring” 907). Likewise, a writer comes to a tutor with interpretations about the goal or purpose of his/her assignment or writing task. A writer also comes with a sense of how challenging the writing project is/will be, given previous writing experiences. In most cases, a writer comes to the writing center because he/she needs a tutor’s guidance and impressions. During a consultation, a tutor tries to elicit the student’s thinking about his writing goals and revision choices as a way to engage the student in his own learning process. From asking questions to offering suggestions, tutors persuade students to act upon information and strategies for composing and revision. Tutors encourage students to strategize, to make deliberate choices, to acquire strategic knowledge—an argument already made by Muriel
Harris ("Talking").

Therefore, writing center consultations, by design, generate metacognitive experiences for writers, opportunities to articulate their thoughts about their thinking. Debra Myhill and Susan Jones, among several other authors they cite, argue that metacognition in the writing process is “integral to the execution of effective revision” (326). Their claim suggests that writing centers are integral to the execution of effective writers. Writing center tutorials as metacognitive experiences surpass error detection and are a form of individualized yet collaborative instruction for which faculty may not have time and classroom peers do not have expertise (Harris “Collaboration”). Though many studies in the field of college composition focus on developing students’ revision skills, few studies investigate students’ metacognitive understandings of the revisions they make (Myhill and Jones 328). Within writing center scholarship, there are no published studies. The emphasis has been on the interactions between a student and tutor as a matter of satisfaction with process and product. Locating instances when students self-assess their own development of or advancement toward a writing goal or task should lead writing center workers to a better understanding of how students make sense of what their writing center tutors say and do, and if students’ revisions are meaningful to them—a theoretical convergence of discourses that leads in practice to changed writers.

Of course, changed, better, or more effective writers do not necessarily do everything their tutors suggest. Also, better writers are not experiencing more convergences per tutorial than another. Furthermore, texts do not necessarily need to change in order for writers to change. I am as interested in what students choose to adopt from their tutors as I am curious about what they reject and extend. Students’ reasons for
not following their tutor’s suggestions or for coming up with their own ideas are also possible evidence of writerly knowledge and student ownership. I look for those occurrences, too. Nonetheless, results of this study show that convergences are more likely to occur than not to occur at all. Students come to writing center tutors for professional guidance, and most students apply what they think they learn during tutorials as a course of action toward improving their texts. After all, tutors’ recommendations, explicit or implied, are worth consideration, and students perceive their tutors as providing something worthwhile (i.e., information, concepts, strategies, support).

**Chapter Outline**

The following chapters elaborate my research into the effects tutors have on writers. In Chapter 2, I describe my role as researcher, the site and participants, and my methods for collecting and analyzing data, which include transcripts of tutorials, copies of students’ drafts before and after tutorials, and discourse-based interviews with students. Chapter 3 reviews the types of projects students were working on with their tutors, the kinds of changes students made to their texts during and after their tutoring sessions, and their perceived learning outcomes. After comparing tutorials, revisions, and students perceptions, I then delineate in Chapters 4 and 5 how writing center consultations are metacognitive experiences for writers, opportunities to articulate their thoughts about their thinking. I also explain how these experiences often lead to what Bakhtin described as convergences of authoritative and internally persuasive discourses, or what I am calling tutor-tutee interdiscursivity and acculturation of writers in writing centers. In other words, I describe how tutors elicit students’ tacit knowledge about their composing
processes and the rhetorical moves they make in their texts. I also show how, in response to tutors, students monitor their reasons for their revisions and think strategically about their choices. This kind of metacognitive experience opens up a space for tutors to recommend apt writing strategies and information and for students to articulate and practice their understanding of them as generalized concepts that suit their own writing goals. As students revise, tutors’ strategies and concepts can become writers’ strategies and concepts to be applied again in new contexts. For these analyses, I focus on tutees who best exemplify a continuum of changed writers. In Chapter 6, I close with a summary of the findings, implications for writing center assessment and tutor education, and possibilities for future research.
CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH METHODS

The idea for my dissertation project came in spring 2005, shortly after I started working at the University of Massachusetts Amherst Writing Center as a graduate student tutor and an Assistant Director. While I was facilitating an undergraduate tutoring practicum, I was also enrolled in a research methods graduate seminar. One of the essays assigned to us especially affected my thinking about collaborative theories and practices in writing centers. Paul Prior, whom I mentioned in Chapter 1, discovered that directive approaches to teaching were integral to a graduate student’s growth as an emerging member of her scientific discourse community. His interview with the student writer showed that she had become a better writer in her discourse community because of the direct instructions she received from her advisor. The connection Prior made between teaching strategy and student learning was, to me, worth exploring in the context of writing centers.

As a pilot study for my seminar, I investigated tutors’ perceptions of collaborative tutoring strategies and how they associated them with student learning. Using Carol Severino’s 18 rhetorical features for collaboration (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, language, personality, experience, status, motivation, frequency and duration of tutorials, the written text in question, and topic knowledge), I indentified the main rhetorical features of collaboration for 11 undergraduate writing center tutors and tried to map those features onto tutors’ descriptions of their tutoring approaches. What tutoring strategies did they believe most effective during tutorials? How do rhetorical features for collaboration affect their tutoring strategies? I learned that their education as tutors had an enormous impact
on their subjectivities. They equated nondirective tutoring strategies with the peer in “peer tutor.” Even though they had read and discussed a range of essays about tutoring (i.e., *St. Martin’s Guide to Peer Tutoring*, *Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring*), some of which questioned binaries such as nondirective/directive and peer/tutor, they believed that nondirective tutoring strategies were better, preferred, and maybe even trumped the other features for collaboration. Mired in collaborative learning theory, neither those tutors nor I asked as a matter of serious inquiry what writers thought they learned from us and how—assuming students learned something. We took it for granted. Through my pilot study, I found my dissertation topic: the relationship between writing center consultations and students’ development as writers.

That same year, I attended the International Writing Center Association Summer Institute and learned, among many useful things, that several higher-ed institutions required assessments of student learning outcomes in order for writing centers to remain in operation. Program leaders encouraged Institute participants to conduct writing center research that complemented the need to “count beans,” research that accompanied statistics on students served or quantitative comparisons with standardized assessment scores and grade point averages (see Carino “Searching,” Lerner “Counting” and “Searching”). I returned from the Institute with a more intimate sense of audience and a clearer purpose. I wanted to talk to student writers about their revision decisions so that I could understand what students learn as writers as a result of their writing center consultations.

As I mentioned in Chapter 1, previous research into writing center assessment primarily focuses on students’ perceptions of satisfaction and success. Though students
are usually satisfied with their tutorials, writing centers workers still do not know what students learn from us—particularly if their perceptions correspond to their tutorials and revisions. Therefore, I decided to conduct a qualitative study in which I could achieve a thorough understanding, as much as possible, of what students do with the guidance they receive from tutors and why, hence providing an analysis of possible student learning outcomes from multiple sources of data. With this in mind, I composed the following research questions: (1) What kinds of information/advice do students seek or expect from writing center tutorials? (2) What kinds of information/advice are students presented with during writing center tutorials? (3) What information/advice do students use to revise their papers? (4) Do students’ perceptions of what they learned correspond to their tutorials and/or revisions? (5) What metacognitive knowledge about writing are students enacting during and shortly after writing center tutorials?

In this chapter, I describe the site, participants, and methods for data collection and analysis. Participants consisted of nineteen undergraduates who had made writing center appointments with one of three undergraduate tutors during the spring semester 2008. I used qualitative analyses to examine data, which included transcripts of tutorials, copies of students’ drafts before and after tutorials, and discourse-based interviews with students about their revisions. The research I am conducting helps define what writing center and composition scholars think of as success with students as writers, namely as a type of improvement that is relative to what students own in their writing.

**Site**

The site I chose for my dissertation study is the University Writing Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass Amherst). I selected this site over other
nearby colleges because of its scope and familiarity. UMass Amherst is the flagship campus of the Commonwealth's university system and the largest institution of higher education in the region, enrolling about 24,000 students. The number of tutoring sessions dramatically increased beginning fall 2004 when the Center increased the number of tutorial hours available each week and moved from the English department building to the main library’s Learning Commons. According to annual Writing Center reports, the Center held 430 tutorials fall 2000-spring 2001 and 3275 tutoring sessions fall 2006-spring 2007. I knew the chances were high that I would be able to work with a variety of tutees spring 2008. Also, while writing my dissertation prospectus, I worked as an Assistant Director of the Center and, therefore, co-taught tutoring seminars, helped hire new tutors, facilitated ongoing tutor education workshops, observed tutors, and tutored. I had first-hand knowledge of the tutoring curriculum, the tutors’ perspectives on tutoring, and the Center itself. Though my research focus is more on writers than on writing tutors, I believed that my familiarity with the site, including some of the study participants, provided me with insider advantages, namely an insight into context and information for which I already had access (e.g., reports, forms, schedules).

I also agreed, and still do, with the philosophy of the University Writing Center, which presents a view of literacy as social practices in which communities of readers and writers inform one another:

...all writers can benefit from talking with an interested reader. For this reason, we ask lots of questions, give feedback, and offer advice. And we ask the writer to do the work. We hope that those visiting the Center will have learned a little something about themselves as writers. (Retrieved 9/26/09 from the Center’s homepage at http://www.UMass.edu/writingcenter)
Overall, the four lines quoted above invoke North’s axiom that tutors tutor writers through a commitment to writers’ ownership and development as writers. More important than the text they bring with them is the learning that can occur during this type of consultation: to learn about oneself as a writer. To this end, all students and employees of the University are invited to work individually with educated writing tutors for 45-minute consultations.

All tutoring consultations are held in person at the University Writing Center. The Center is centrally located on campus in W. E. B. Du Bois Library and is part of the Library’s Learning Commons. The mission of the Learning Commons is to “bring together library, technology, and other campus services in an environment that fosters informal, collaborative work, and social interaction” (retrieved 9/28/09 from the Learning Commons homepage www.UMass.edu/learningcommons). Students can expect to find Academic Advising, the Learning Resource Center for peer tutoring in subjects other than writing, the Office of Information Technologies Help Desk, Library Services such as reference and research assistance, and the Writing Center. The Center is located in a room in the Commons and is generally open 43 hours each week (Mondays through Wednesdays 10 AM to 9 PM, Thursdays 10 AM to 6 PM, Fridays 10 AM to 2 PM, and Sundays from 2 to 6 PM). Within the space are five tables with chairs and computers, a receptionist desk, and the administrators’ office. A minimum of three and a maximum of five tutors work at the Center during business hours.

Students who make appointments at the University Writing Center range from walk-ins to students who schedule consultations one to two weeks in advance, but most appointments are made one to three days in advance of due dates. When making
appointments in person or through the Center’s website, students must complete an online writer in-take form and respond to following questions: For what class are you writing? What is your assignment? When is the assignment due? Where are you in the writing process? What do you feel good about and what are your concerns? Such writer in-take forms are common at writing centers, and most writing center appointments often begin questions like these so that students can set their own agendas (e.g., see Lerner and Gillespie 43).

The direction any tutorial takes depends on students’ rhetorical situations and goals. However, to ensure some consistency across tutorials, tutors participating in this study were taught to follow a tutoring process described in the second edition of *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring* (see especially pages 28-38). For instance, during tutorials, tutors or students often read drafts aloud, which places tutors “in the role of the learner and the writer in the role of the expert” (Gillespie and Lerner 30). While reading aloud, tutors listen and take notes and students become spectators of their texts, listening for ways a draft is working or not working (Gillespie and Lerner 30). Also, tutors focus first on what Thomas Reigstad and Donald McAndrew call “higher-order concerns,” also known as “first-order concerns,” of revision, such purpose, audience, organization, and content. Therefore, tutors ask students questions such as: What is your thesis? Do you arguments support your thesis? How is the draft organized? How does your draft accomplish your assignment goals? What types of revision strategies have you already used? Based on students’ drafts and responses, tutors are then able to offer students “a reading” in which they explain what they got out of the drafts and can check with students if their reading is accurate (Gillespie and Lerner 35-36). Questions like these emphasize student ownership; tutors encourage writers to make their own decisions about their
revisions. Asking questions about students’ drafts and composing processes also help "the writer see what kinds of questions she should be asking of her own paper" so that "next time, she will ask them herself" (Gillespie and Lerner 37).

At the end of a consultation, students usually respond in writing to another set of questions about their satisfaction with tutorials/tutors and what they think they learned. Students’ responses are confidential at the University Writing Center, which means tutors do not see students’ post-session reports until a few weeks have passed. Even so, students’ reports help tutors gauge their effectiveness. Tutors at UMass Amherst are also responsible for completing post-session reports, as is the case with most tutors at most Centers. Questions include: What did you and the student work on? What strategies did you use? What do you think the student learned? Questions like these promote self-reflection and hold tutors accountable for what they do with students as writers. Their post-session reports also provide a history for other tutors to refer to when working with students who are not new to the Center. The UMass Writing Center, like most Centers, relies on both in-take forms and post-session reports to contextualize and document tutoring consultations.

**Participants**

In this section, I explain my selection criteria for study participants and my role as a researcher. First, I describe my rationale for limiting the sample of student writers and introduce students who met my criteria, agreed to take part in my study, and participated in each stage of data collection. Next, I explain how students are educated and hired as tutors, including the terms and conditions for employment at the UMass Writing Center. Then I explain my rationale for selecting tutors and introduce them. To provide a portrait
of each tutor, I share their responses to interview questions I designed for this purpose. Last, I describe my role as researcher and ways I tried to mitigate my presence during tutorials.

**Student Writers**

I limited tutee participants to students who represented the majority of UMass Writing Center users at that time: undergraduates who were working on individual writing projects and who designated English as their primary language or one of their primary languages, or who reported that English was not their primary language but they were comfortable or fluent writing in English (see Appendix A). I limited students based on their perceived language proficiency not only because most students who use the Center designate English as their primary language but also because of writing center research into tutoring English as a second language. In 2004, Ben Rafoth and Shanti Bruce published the first book-length collection of essays offering practical advice for writing center tutors working with second-language (L2) writers. In the Forward to this text, Ilona Leki reports tutors are often disinclined to work with L2 writers because “these writers do not fit the profile of the students [each] tutor was trained to help; their differing needs and expectations have made tutors feel incompetent and sometimes even annoyed” (xi). I doubted that L2 writers annoyed UMass Writing Center tutors, but I knew that tutors wanted to learn more than they had about working with L2 writers and did not feel as competent as they could as L2 tutors. Their education as writing center tutors did not include the practical advice appearing in *ESL Writers*, such as setting session agendas both verbally and visually (Bruce) or ways to read L2 writing (Matsuda and Cox) and avoid appropriation (Severino). Therefore, I was concerned that UMass tutors struggled with
“mindlessly applying writing center dogma” with students for whom the usual might not work. Of course, the usual might not also work for students with, for instance, learning disabilities. But neither the tutors nor I knew if students had learning disabilities unless those students self-disclosed during consultations.

When I first designed this study, I thought I would also limit tutee participants to students working on higher-order or first-order concerns and not lower-order concerns or later-order concerns, such as editing and proofreading. I wanted to focus on first-order concerns because they can easily become the most difficult and most neglected stages in a writer’s composing process but are the most important factor leading to successful writing, writing that meets academic expectations (Beach, Faigley and Witte, Flower et al, and Sommers). Though writing is a recursive process and editing often occurs during revision, I also wanted to study tutorials that I suspected would lead to conversations primarily about a range of revisions. However, students’ in-take forms usually indicated a desire to work on both revision and editing or indicated that students were not sure about the differences between the two, so I rejected this selection criterion.

It was critical that I meet with tutees to introduce myself and ask for participation. I did not want to hold tutors responsible for this job, and I believed that tutees would be more likely to continue to participate if they had already met the person who wanted to read their writing and interview them. Looking back, I think this was an important choice to have made. Some of those students indicated that they wanted to participate in my study because they believed in the value of research studies and wanted to support my cause as another student working on a research project. Most of the students who agreed to participate followed through with my additional requests for data (i.e., revised drafts
Out of 25 consenting students, I was able to collect data for 19 of them. Table 1 lists all 19 students who met the criteria for participation, consented to participation, and completed each stage of the data collection process (18 females, 1 male; or 11 freshman, 2 sophomores, 4 juniors, 2 seniors). Table 1 does not reflect four consenting students who, although permitting me to tape their tutorial and collect drafts, later declined an interview (1 female, 3 males). Two additional consenting students (females) are also not included because recording failed during one tutorial and because one student forgot to save a copy of her tutorial draft. To protect students’ privacy, I used pseudonyms.
Table 1: Tutee Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tutor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Social Thought and Political Economy</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>senior</td>
<td>Amy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mona</td>
<td>Hospitality and Tourism Management</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Amy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Amy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>junior</td>
<td>Amy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxanne</td>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>junior</td>
<td>Amy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Amy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>Pre-med</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Amy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra</td>
<td>Kinesiology or School of Management</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Deanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Recreation Management</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>junior</td>
<td>Deanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Animal Science</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Deanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa</td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Deanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>School of Management</td>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>junior</td>
<td>Deanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anika</td>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Susan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celine</td>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>Amharic</td>
<td>senior</td>
<td>Susan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Susan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>Sports Management</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Susan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie</td>
<td>Hospitality &amp; Tourism Management, or Bachelor's Degree with Individual Concentration</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>sophomore</td>
<td>Susan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tish</td>
<td>Hospitality and Tourism Management</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>sophomore</td>
<td>Susan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>Pre-med or School of Management</td>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>Susan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing Center Tutors

The University Writing Center employees an average of 5 graduate student tutors and 35 undergraduate student tutors, who work throughout fall and spring semesters. I decided to focus on undergraduate tutors because most Center tutors are undergraduates.
Also, I assume that undergraduate tutors at UMass Amherst are more educated in writing center scholarship than graduate student tutors because undergraduates are required to participate in a set of academic courses that do not exist for graduate student tutors.

Though current undergraduate tutors come from different disciplines, the tutors participating in my study were recruited through their first-year composition course—a requirement of all UMass Amherst students, except the few who pass the placement exam. More recently, Center administrators invite all college composition instructors, other faculty in the English department, and faculty across disciplines teaching writing intensive courses to encourage students who are good writers and peer reviewers to apply.

Applicants then and now must submit a cover letter, a resume, a writing sample, and contact information for a reference. During interviews, the Director and Assistant Director look for applicants who can “reflect critically on their writing process and decisions, who would be open to different processes, who would want to learn (as opposed to just tell others what to do), and who seemed socially mature enough to encourage and work with writers who visit the center” (personal communication, Haivan Hoang, Director of the University Writing Center 2007-2010). Selected students are asked to enroll in a year-long honors curriculum beginning in the fall with a 4-credit seminar “Writing Center Theory and Practice” to be followed the spring semester with a 4-credit “Tutoring Practicum.”

The seminar introduces undergraduates to writing center pedagogy through course readings, written assignments, observations, group discussions, and tutoring. Students must attend a one-hour and 40-minute weekly class throughout the semester, and after the first six weeks, students begin tutoring as interns in the Center for two hours each week. At the time of this study, course texts included The Allyn and Bacon Guide to
Peer Tutoring, The St. Martin’s Sourcebook for Writing Tutors, and A Tutor’s Guide: Helping Writers One to One. Student must pass the tutoring seminar with a B or better in order to begin the practicum. A faculty member of the English department teaches the seminar, and the Assistant Director of the Center, a graduate student usually from the English department specializing in composition and rhetoric, helps facilitate the seminar as a co-teacher or teaching assistant. During the spring semester, students tutor four hours a week in exchange for four course-credits and meet as a group one hour each week for reflection, discussion, and related projects. The Assistant Director instructs this semester-long pass/fail practicum. Students who pass the practicum are invited to tutor in the Center as paid staff earning $11.50 per hour of tutoring and must attend at least two tutoring workshops per semester. Workshop topics come primarily from tutors' interests, such as tutoring grammar, citation styles, personal statements, English language learners, creative writers, students with learning disabilities, and writing in the disciplines. Undergraduate tutors are also observed each semester. The Director and Assistant Director usually oversee this process and coordinate workshops.

The undergraduate tutors who participated in this project were chosen more for comfort and logistics than representation (Table 2; Appendix A). I preferred working with Amy, Deanna, and Susan (all pseudonyms) because I had facilitated their tutoring practicum two years prior to this study, but I had not taught or supervised the other tutors working at that time. They were also experienced tutors, and I did not want to place undo pressure on novice tutors who were still learning the ropes and did not know me. Plus, Amy, Deanna, and Susan worked a combined 28 hours a week at the Center, usually the same days but not the same time, which made it more convenient for me to collect data and increased the likelihood of securing at least one student participant per tutor each
week. Comfort and logistics aside, these three tutors still corresponded to the predominant demographics at the UMass Writing Center at that time; 34 of the 35 undergraduate tutors working at the Center during the semester I collected data were white females, and only one male student (also white) worked as an undergraduate tutor spring semester 2008.

**Table 2: Tutor Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutor</th>
<th>Academic Status</th>
<th>No. Semesters Tutored*</th>
<th>Total Tutoring Hours/Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Senior (4th year)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|       | Major(s): English, Comp Lit  
|       | Minor(s): Spanish |                        |                           |
| Deanna| Senior (4th year) | 5                      | 7                         |
|       | Major(s): English, Anthropology  
|       | Minor(s): Classics  |                        |                           |
| Susan | Senior (4th year) | 5                      | 11                        |
|       | Major(s): English  
|       | Minor(s): Education |                        |                           |

*These numbers do not include the semester that these tutors enrolled in the tutoring seminar but include their practicum semester as tutor interns, as well as the semester I collected data.

Amy, Deanna, and Susan were, at the time of this study, 21-year-old female senior English majors who had been recruited through their freshman composition courses to become writing tutors. Also, they had been enrolled in the same tutoring seminar and practicum and had worked at the Center for five semesters. Amy was completing her double major in comparative literature and English, and her minor in Spanish with a certification in interpreter studies. She was a member of the Commonwealth College, the
University’s honors college, and was writing a senior thesis about students’ rights to their own languages. During an informal interview I had with her, Amy self-identified as a white Italian American coming from a middle-class background but becoming as a result of her education, part of “an upper class.” Her career goals included graduate school in the humanities and working for nonprofits as a cross-cultural communications specialist.

Deanna, also a member of the Commonwealth College, was finishing her bachelor’s degrees in English and anthropology, with a minor in classics and a certificate in nonfiction writing. Her senior thesis was evolving as a collection of short stories. Deanna identified as a white woman of no particular ethnicity coming from an upper middle-class background and seeing herself as still a member of the same class. At the time of our interview, Deanna’s future goals included graduate school, possibly programs in publishing, writing, or English. She hoped to write her own books and work as an editor for a publishing company. Susan was finishing her bachelor’s degree in English, with a minor in education, so she could become a high school English teacher. After graduation, she planned to work until she had earned enough money to help pay for additional schooling towards teaching certification. During my interview with Susan, she self-identified as a white Polish American coming from a lower-middle class background and, as a result of her college degree, moving toward middle class. These details told me that the tutors participating in this study saw themselves as educated and therefore upwardly mobile as teachers, communicators, publishers, editors, and writers. In short, Amy, Deanna, and Susan shared relatively similar career goals and socio-economic backgrounds, but I do not know how or if those similarities affected their tutoring approaches.

Though they each had their own personalities and tutoring styles, Amy, Deanna,
and Susan shared general approaches to tutoring: to focus on students’ requests, ask questions, explain strategies/rules, and check to see if tutees understood them. These approaches position tutees as writers, yet these tutors did not see themselves as always working with writers. For example, Susan believed that she “mostly focused on the piece [of writing] that [students] bring in rather than them as a writer.” Unless she worked with the same student over time, which didn’t happen often, Susan believed that the focus of her tutorials were students’ texts. Also, Susan believed that students did not learn anything as writers unless they reflected on their revisions. Because most of the students she tutored were working from electronic drafts, she assumed they did not learn much. Those students made changes to drafts throughout tutorials and, therefore, did not leave with a record of their revisions; they left with an improved draft ready for printing. Likewise, Deanna believed she tutored writing most of the time because most students “want to focus on that paper. You know, want to focus maybe on the grammar, an organization of that paper, not so much how they are as writer.” Amy believed that working with writers or writing varied “from case to case.” For instance, Amy believed she worked with writing more than writers when she assisted ESL students because their sessions tended to focus more on grammar than content. In other words, sessions that consisted primarily of first-order concerns were sessions in which she tutored writers, but sessions that focused on grammar were sessions in which she tutored writing. Though each of these tutors tried to position students as their own authorities, they did not always connect their tutoring strategies to changing writers.

Furthermore, the tutors participating in this study had different perspectives on directive and nondirective tutoring, so even had I tried to identify their tutoring strategies as directive or nondirective, they may not have agreed with my interpretations. What is
more important, given my research questions, are the reasons why students apply, or do not apply, the information/advice tutors offer, particularly because tutors’, tutees’, and my own perceptions of tutors’ tutoring strategies would likely differ. As I show in Chapters 3–5, most of the students participating in this study came to the Center for assistance with first-order concerns, were strategic with their revisions, and wanted to know “how they were doing” as writers. Slightly over half of the students (10 of 19) participating in this study thought of themselves as writers, primarily because of the amount of writing they did for school and online socializing. Just as students’ perceptions of directive and nondirective tutoring approaches may not correspond with tutors’ sense of themselves as tutors, tutors’ perceptions of students as writers may not correspond with students’ sense of themselves as writers. The distinction between tutoring writers and writing varies, as Amy, Deanna, and Susan noted. Still, I think it is important that tutors reflect individually and as a group on the similarities and differences because of their differing interpretations of what it means to tutor writers and/or writing.

**My Role as Researcher**

Because I had worked as both tutor and administrator, I believed that I was in the perfect position to investigate writers coming to the UMass Amherst Writing Center. Neal Lerner describes this researcher role as “insider as outsider,” more commonly known as participant-observer (“Insider as Outsider”). Lerner’s account of collecting and interpreting data for his dissertation while in the participant-observer role helped me think specifically about how I might “account for and mitigate the influence of ... ideological and practical notions of tutoring” and my relationships with UMass Amherst writing tutors (54). Chapter 1 describes an epistemological trajectory for writing center
workers that includes my own. My education as a tutor is not too different from the one that undergraduates receive at UMass, with the exception that I have now read more writing center scholarship than they have. Throughout my dissertation process, it has been critical that I question my own assumptions about tutoring writers and nonhierarchical tutoring strategies, alleviate as much as possible students’ and tutors’ readings of me as an evaluator, and decrease the distance between my representations of study participants and their presentations of themselves.

For instance, I tried “to make the ‘familiar strange,’” especially my understanding of collaboration and negotiation (Moss 169). My research memo dated April 7, 2008 is the best example of this:

All kinds of meaning are negotiated between a student-tutor and a student-writer during a writing center conference. But does a student-writer see a tutorial with a student-tutor as a negotiation, as a dialogue, as “give and take”? The [tutees] I interviewed all believe that they are consulting with tutors as peer authorities who direct them in their writing. From those students’ points of view, the tutors point-out and advise.

This excerpt represents an impression I had at that time rather than a claim I would make now. I never asked students that particular question. But I was trying to complicate my understanding of tutors’ and students’ perceptions of tutoring, particularly student ownership and what it means to negotiate meaning and authority in a collaborative context. If students perceive tutors as authorities, then collaboration does not necessarily come from nonhierarchical tutoring approaches, as many writing scholars have theorized or implied. The collaborative negotiations I noticed during tutorials were not typically an oral dialogue between tutees and tutors in which they equally debated the pros and cons of specific revision choices. Negotiation was largely a tacit process for student writers.
made explicit only when tutors asked them to think about why particular strategies or revisions could work or not, when tutees asked tutors questions about their recommendations, and when I interviewed students about their revision choices, which I describe in more detail in the data analysis section. The collaborations that occurred between tutees and tutors participating in my study occurred during and after tutorials, and they were more related to tutees’ reasons for having made particular revisions than tutors’ nondirective or nonhierarchical tutoring styles (e.g., Chapter 4, “Cassandra”). In sum, research memos helped me to question assumptions.

Interview transcripts with both students and tutors also reveal my efforts to act ethically. For instance, I often reminded them that there were no correct answers to my interview questions, and encouraged them to speak freely. When interviewing Roxanne, I was explicit: “....there are no right or wrong answers here...everybody has got something different to say...” (March 27, 2008 interview, 4). I told Celine I wanted to be certain my interpretations matched her intentions: “I don’t want to put words in your mouth. I want to make sure that I am getting this accurate” (March 12, 2008 interview, 4). During my interview with Tish, I restated what I heard and sought confirmation: ”...so it sounds like in some ways you’re saying that, because I don’t want to put words in your mouth, sounds like you’re saying that there is a difference [between tutors and teachers]” (April 28, 2008 interview, 12). I asked Sofia, “Is that what you mean?” after I had paraphrased her comments (April 29, 2008 interview, 5). Comments and questions like these appeared throughout all the interviews I had with students. When interviewing tutors, I used the same approach. For instance, I explained to Deanna “there’s no right or wrong answer,” encouraging her to say “whatever” came to mind (March 6, 2008 interview, 2). I also sought confirmation, as in this example from Susan’s interview: “Is that what you said?”
(March 6, 2008 interview, 6). And, I encouraged tutors to explain themselves, as in this example with Amy: “Ok...you said earlier that you think are a little too directive sometimes. What kind of too directive do you think you are at those times?” (March 8, 2008 interview, 6). Throughout all of my interviews with students and tutors, I made sure that what I heard was what they meant.

While I was conscious of appearing neutral or supportive of anything tutors and students wanted to say during interviews, I did not actively change my relationships with WC tutors during this study. But I still tried to account for how my presence as an authority figure affected the tutorials I recorded. For example, I checked-in regularly with tutors and asked if audio-recording their tutoring sessions affected their work as tutors. However, check-ins did not necessarily mitigate my authority as the researcher. I discovered towards the end of data collection that my presence made Susan self-conscious during her first two or three recordings and, as a result, relied more on a nondirective tutoring approach than she might have otherwise. But once Susan “got used to things,” she “tutored normally, as if there were no tape” (email communication May 12, 2008). At the same time, Susan believed taping “may have helped me to be a little more reflective on my sessions because I knew that someone else, someone who had a position of authority since you were once my teacher, was listening to the session” (email communication May 12, 2008). Deanna also reported that the recordings motivated her to have better sessions, specifically more “interaction with students” (email communication May 16, 2008). She was less self-conscious than she thought she would be and therefore more directive than if she had been self-conscious. Amy did not think the taping changed the way she tutored: “I felt very comfortable and often forgot that the recorder was there” (email communication May 12, 2008). On the whole, these are the effects I expected when
I chose these three tutors. Although I had been an authority figure at the Writing Center as their teacher and supervisor, I assumed our familiarity provided Susan, Deanna, and Amy with a measure of reassurance, enough to encourage them to tutor as they had for the past three years or better.

**Data Collection**

The goal of my study was to document and analyze students’ revisions choices to see what and if they are learning something as writers. I wanted to use methods that would allow me to provide a portrayal closest to the circumstances and learn as much as possible. Because most students visiting the UMass Amherst Writing Center do not make weekly appointments but come once or twice a semester, I solicited one tutorial per student and collected all the data directly tied to each tutorial. Data came from WConline writer information forms, audio-recorded tutorials, students’ drafts during and after consultations, discourse-based interviews with students, and follow-up interviews with tutors. Table 3 illustrates the types of data I used and their purposes.
Table 3: Data Collected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Data</th>
<th>Purposes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writer Information Forms</td>
<td>Establish the purpose and time of an appointment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Obtain background information on students and their writing center appointments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learn what tutors worked on with students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-recorded Tutorials</td>
<td>Determine what was discussed during consultation, particularly students’ agendas, tutors’ strategies for revision, and students’ responses to or use of those strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcripts of Tutorials</td>
<td>Provide a text-version of tutorials that indicated features of conversations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s Drafts</td>
<td>Compare students’ writing during and after tutorials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look for types of revisions made, or not, to prepare for interviews with students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourse-based Interviews with Students</td>
<td>Confirm my descriptions of students’ revisions (e.g., addition, deletion, rearrangement).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explore students’ reasons for the revisions they made or did not make.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gather additional context about students as writers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up Interviews with Tutors</td>
<td>Discuss tutors’ reflections on their tutoring styles and philosophies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Obtain tutors’ reflections on their participation in this research study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WConline writer information forms, transcripts of audio-recorded tutorials, and students’ drafts provided me with the information I needed to respond to my first two research questions: (1) What kinds of advice do students seek or expect from writing
center tutorials? (2) What kinds of advice are students presented with during Writing Center tutorials? Revised drafts and discourse-based interviews provided me with the data I needed to address to my third, fourth and fifth research questions: (3) What information/advice do students use to revise their papers? (4) Do students’ perceptions of what they learned correspond to their tutorials and/or revisions? (5) What tacit, metacognitive knowledge about writing are students enacting during and after writing center tutorials? Because student evaluations at the University Writing Center are anonymous and not collected until a week or two after students’ tutorials, I did not include them as data. However, a Writing Center summary of tutee learning from 2008-2009 states that students reported learning how to better read course materials, brainstorm writing ideas, determine audience, acquire genre and discipline specific knowledge, focus introductions and conclusions, further develop essays, make logical connections, integrate other voices, locate research, and improve grammar.

Table 4 summarizes data I collected per tutor and in total. As I mentioned in the “Student Writers” section, 25 student writers consented to participation, and I was able to collect data for 19 tutees. Susan, Amy, and Deanna tutored a combined total of 28 hours each week, and I was present for most of their shifts. Data collection began two weeks after the Writing Center opened (February 26, 2008) and continued throughout the semester, for a total of nine weeks.
Table 4: Data Collection Totals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutors</th>
<th>Tutoring Hours per Week</th>
<th>Tutorials Recorded</th>
<th>Discourse-based Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deanna</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writer Information Forms

The WConline “writer information forms” used at the UMass Writing Center are similar to the one form appearing in the *Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring* (Gillespie and Lerner 43). Student registration and appointment forms and tutor post-session evaluation forms provide some context for each tutoring session, which is how I tried to use them. Before a student can work with a tutor, she must register through the Center online database and scheduler. Student registration forms provide the following information: name, email address, phone number, year in school, graduation year, first language, student ID, if new to Center, gender, ethnic identity, disability, and academic school and/or major. The semester I began collecting data, the Center launched a new electronic system for recording writer information. Because WConline was new to students and tutors, not all the kinks had been worked out. One of those kinks included “required fields.” That is, the forms students used did not require them to respond to all the fields or questions asked in order to complete the form. The information I acquired from students’ registration forms was not consistent or thorough. Also tutors did not have access to those forms because of how software developers created the database. Before tutors met with students, they did not always know, for instance, if their clients had
learning differences, if their clients were freshman or seniors, or if their clients spoke languages other than English. I took this into consideration when listening to audio-recordings of tutorials to see if details such as these arose during tutor and tutee conversations.

After students register with the Writing Center through WConline, students can make their own appointments. Appointment forms indicate the day and time of the appointment, the tutor with whom the student will be working, the student’s name and email, the course and instructor pertaining to the student’s writing, and a brief description of what the student wants to work on during the consultation. Sometimes their descriptions are vague or broad. For example, some of the students participating in my study wanted to work on “bibliography,” “drafting,” “flow,” “research paper,” “organization,” or “grammar.” Whereas some students’ descriptions are more focused: “put other people’s quote into my own words,” “see if topic is answered,” or “make more concise.” No matter what students write on their appointment forms, tutors are responsible for clarifying their clients’ concerns and goals: “So, your appointment form says you’d like to work on organization. What’s your assignment about and what would you like to organize?” Therefore, the appointment forms were useful for me only as a means to forecast potential study participants. In order to confirm students’ requests for assistance, I relied on tutorial transcripts and interviews because the information students provided on their appointment forms were not always their only concerns. Most of the time, with the exception of walk-ins, both the tutors and I knew when they had appointments. Before students arrived, I informed Amy, Deanna, and Susan of their upcoming schedules for the day and asked if I had permission to audio-record those sessions. Even though they had already consented to participating in the study, I let them
know throughout the data collection period that they could back out at any time. Amy, Deanna, and Susan never requested I exclude a session, nor did they give me any indication they were uncomfortable or felt pressured to participate because of our familiarity. If anything, I got the sense they were as eager as I was to hear what students had to say.

However, tutors, not just those participating in my study, did not always complete their post-session evaluation forms. These forms asked tutors the following: actual length of appointment, assignment type, if the student had experience with this type of assignment, the student’s stage in the writing process, what the student thinks he is doing well, what the student wants to work on, what the student and the tutored worked on, how the tutor went about working with student, what the student learned, and advice for other tutors should the student return. It would have been especially interesting to compare what tutors thought students learned with students’ perceptions, but I was not able to do so. Though I reminded tutors to complete their post-session evaluation forms, they often forgot because they were still learning how to budget time within the new scheduling system that limited tutorials to one hour. In other words, tutors did not budget 15 minutes between tutorials to complete post-session reports. Of course, this process was revised the following semester; appointments were changed to 45 minutes so that tutors would have the time they needed to reflect. Still, while I collected data, I was not able to gather enough post-session reports to consistently use them for analysis and interviews with students. If they were available, I collected them.

Audio-recorded Tutorials

Because the purpose of my study was to investigate students’ revisions to texts, I
did not observe tutorials but audio-recorded them. Audio-recordings of writing center consultations, including the transcripts, enabled me to analyze tutorials for the types of information/advice students were seeking, the types of information/advice they received from tutors, and students’ responses to or use of tutor’s revision strategies. I used my iPod to record sessions, primarily because of its ease of use (i.e., records quietly and clearly, downloads digital audio files to personal computer). When tutor and student were ready, I turned the recorder on, placed it on their shared desk, and retreated from the space into a closed office in the Center. After each tutorial ended, tutors would let me know that the recording had stopped and students were completing their evaluation forms. This was my cue to return to students, thank them for their participation, and remind them I would be in touch within a few days.

Transcripts of Tutorials

When I wrote my dissertation prospectus, I assumed I would be looking for directive and nondirective tutoring strategies to determine what tutoring approach was used to present information/advice. But during my research into tutoring strategies, I began to think more critically about which details I should capture in transcripts that would help me answer my research questions. I wanted to identify sociolinguistic markers so readers could experience tutor-tutee conversations without having literally heard them. Magdalena Gilewicz and Terese Thonus encourage the use of “close vertical transcription” when analyzing discourse between tutors and tutees. They argue that horizontal or play-script transcription “depicts language as primarily written, not oral” (26). A more accurate representation of oral discourse shows not only who's talking but also when speakers speak (e.g., overlapping speakers) and how speakers speak (e.g.,
through pauses, interruption, backchannel, overlap). Close vertical transcription brings us closer to thicker descriptions of writing tutorials as “speech events,” providing readers with more accurate portrayals of conversations (27, 26). Gilewicz and Thonus recommend that composition researchers analyze writing tutorials using seven close-vertical transcription conventions commonly employed in the linguistic, education, communication, and anthropology scholarship they surveyed: pause, filled pause, overlap, backchannel, minimal response, paralinguistic, and analytic. Though there are other conversation features (e.g., intonations) that can be included in the analysis of writing tutorials, Gilewicz and Thonus “do not intend to advocate for these here” because they are “necessary only for very specialized study” (28). In short, “the tools used should match the [research] questions asked” (28).

Keeping my primary research questions in mind, I compared Gilewicz and Thonus’s transcription system with Richard Dressler and Roger Kreuz’s 5-year survey (2000) of journal articles appearing in Discourse Processes. These authors propose a model system of notation that maps five classes of transcription conventions (intonation, temporal features, dynamics/intensity, breathing, and transcriber’s comments) using seven study-design principles (specificity, universality, consensus, transparency, parsimony, conventionality, and extensibility). Dressler and Kreuz’s model system is considerably more detailed than Gilewicz and Thonus’s model and more detailed than needed to address my research questions. However, further investigation into transcription conventions enabled me to think more critically about why I might account for some details and not others. In the end, I borrowed many of the sub-types (“dimensions”) of conversational conventions that Dressler and Kreuz suggest as part of their model system. I also borrowed all of the close vertical transcription conventions
from Gilewicz and Thonus. Table 5 lists and explains the conventions and classifications that I used to transcribe discourse between writing tutors and tutees because they helped me (and other readers) hear transcripts without repeatedly referring to audio recordings for, for instance, interruptions, overlapping speech, or intensity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transcription Convention</th>
<th>Written Representation</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temporal Features</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent pause</td>
<td>(3s)</td>
<td>The number of seconds placed between parentheses signifies a pause that lasts that long. For example, (3s) indicates a three-second pause. Quiet pauses can indicate that thinking is in progress or that someone is letting go of the floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filled pause</td>
<td>um, hmm, uh</td>
<td>Include brief utterances that indicate ways in which a speaker might indicate hesitation like “I don’t know; give me a second and let me think about it. I’m searching for an appropriate response.” Filled pauses can also indicate a speaker’s attempt to avoid interruption and maintain the floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interruption</td>
<td>text-</td>
<td>A hyphen designates that a speaker has been interrupted, or the speaker does not finish a word/phrase; the speaker’s text ends with-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backchannel communication</td>
<td>{uh-huh}, {mm-hmm}, {uh-uh}, {yeah}, {yes}, {yep}, {okay}, {right}, {sure}, {really}</td>
<td>Braces indicate an utterance from the speaker who is not the primary speaker at that time. Backchannels often function as support, acknowledgment, or agreement from the speaker who does not “have the floor.” Backchannels are positioned vertically, appearing below yet between the primary speaker’s text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlapping speech</td>
<td>[text]</td>
<td>Brackets specify speech in which two speakers are speaking at the same time; the bracketed texts are aligned directly above each other. (There are three kinds of overlapping text: interruption, joint production, and main channel overlap, in which case the person overlapping/interrupting does not get the floor.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal responses</td>
<td>Uh-huh (yes), Uh-uh (no), Yeah, O.K., Right, Sure, Really</td>
<td>Upper-case letters indicate brief utterances of primary speakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dynamics/Intensity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word stress</td>
<td>TEXT</td>
<td>All capital letters specify words that are emphasized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paralinguistic Behaviors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related non-speech</td>
<td>((behavior))</td>
<td>Double parentheses specify audible behaviors such as breathing (gazps, sighs), laughing, humming, coughing, hand striking a surface, finger snapping, slow or rapid speech, loud or quiet speech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transcriber’s Comments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These categories, particularly interruptions and overlapping speech, helped me to also locate instances during tutorials when tutees were negotiating revision choices. For instance, sometimes tutors and tutees completed one another’s sentences, indicating that tutees were inferring or predicting tutors’ rationales for revisions. Some tutees interrupted their tutors in order to crosscheck something previously mentioned during the tutorial. In short, my coding conventions for transcription helped me find and demonstrate tutees’ thought and decision-making processes.

**Students’ Drafts**

I collected the drafts that students brought with them to their tutorials and the revised drafts they produced as a result of their tutorials. The purpose of collecting students’ drafts was to locate types of revisions they had made, so that later during interviews I could ask questions about their specific changes. Before tutoring sessions began, and after I had students sign consent forms, I asked students for a copy of the writing they brought with them. When students did not have electronic copies to email or
print at that time, I photocopied their drafts. A few days after recording tutorials, I emailed participating students (no more than twice) to request electronic copies of their revised texts and to schedule interviews.

**Discourse-based Interviews with Tutees**

Interviews with students enabled me to talk with students about their revisions and their perceived learning outcomes. I confirmed my descriptions of students’ revisions (e.g., addition, deletion, rearrangement) and explored students’ choices for the revisions they made or did not make (Appendix B). Interviews also enabled me to gather additional context about students as writers. Each student interview consisted of three parts. First, interviews began with background confirmation questions. I inquired about, for instance, the number of writing center appointments they had in the past, the reason reported for their current visit to the WC, their due dates, and the writing courses they had taken and/or were taking. I also asked questions that helped me further contextualize their assignments (audience and purpose). Next, I asked what they remembered about revising their essays and if “there was something in the tutorial that [they] would take away and use in the future.”

The second part of the interview consisted of discourse-based interview questions. I compared students’ drafts for changes and prepared corresponding questions intended to elicit writers’ tacit knowledge about their writing choices. Lee Odell, Dixie Goswami, and Anne Herrington created an interview procedure that enables writers of varying ability to “make explicit the knowledge or strategies that previously may have been only implicit” (223). These researchers presented writers with parts of their original texts and alternatives to their texts to determine which revisions students accepted or rejected and
why. (Prior also used discourse-based interviews as part of his case study.) After comparing students’ revised essays with their tutorial transcripts, I was able to locate (a) changes in their written texts that did not come from the tutor’s suggestions, (b) changes that corresponded to the tutor’s suggestions, and (c) no changes although suggested. During the interview, I asked students to review these alternatives with me so that they could explain their choices: (a) “I noticed that making this change was not addressed during your tutorial. What made you decide to make this change?” (b) “This change corresponds to your tutor’s comments. Why did this change seem like the right idea to you?” (c) “Your tutor asked you about changing this part, but I noticed that you decided against it. Why did you make that decision?” A sample of this type of exchange would take several pages to quote, so I have provided a brief example from an interview with Emma about a revision that may or may not have come from her tutor’s recommendations:

M: So there’s three sets of questions about the text itself, so I look at changes in the text that don’t come from the tutor’s suggestions...and I guess we might say then, based on the conversation that we’re having so far that that diagram was a suggestion that came from the tutor..., but then you also took it and made it your own.

E: /I did something completely else/. I mean where she was going with it was just like a shot in the dark but it ended up like really helping me. I hadn’t thought to make a diagram. I mean I did try to do...a causal loop diagram previously to this tutorial. But it didn’t work out because there were too many feedback loops for me to deal with. So...

M: Would you say that most of the changes in your...I mean...it sounds like you’re saying to me that most of the changes that you made to your text did not come from the tutor’s suggestions.

E: No.

M: Okay.

E: I mean yes, in the fact that she gave me some vague...suggestions like you should organize this. I mean....
M: But you didn’t necessarily use any advice or something per se the tutor gave you?

E: Like, how?

M: Let’s see....

E: But I made it very difficult for her because I explained that I didn’t want to organize it.

M: Okay.

E: But it’s not that I didn’t want to organize it, it’s that I didn’t want to accidentally compartmentalize. Compartmentalization is okay; it’s when classification comes in that the hierarchies are entered in to the equation. So...it’s okay to organize, it just has to be very careful...not to be exclusive to certain issues that I may have accidentally overlooked....

From this type of exchange, I learned that Emma used her tutor’s diagram as means to organize her essay, but Emma modified the process and the diagram to meet her particular goals. Students’ responses to my discourse-based interview questions helped me understand why and how students such as Emma used their tutors’ advice or not.

During the last part of interviews, I asked students what they worked on while revising (e.g., answering the assignment, paragraph development, citation styles), which revision was most the most important, if the UMass Amherst WC or their tutor had a role in meeting assignment requirements, if students would make any more changes to their texts, and if they envisioned using anything they learned during their tutoring session for future writing projects. The latter question is similar to the one I asked at the beginning of the interview: if there was something in the tutorial that students would take away and use later. Though I was looking for the same information, I wanted to see if students responded differently. I also included questions about their composing processes, their perceptions of revision and themselves as writers, and the differences working with tutors
Comparing drafts and interviewing students concluded the second stage of my data collection and helped me answer my third, fourth, and fifth research questions: (3) What information/advice do students use to revise their papers? (4) Do students’ perceptions of what they learned correspond to their tutorials and/or revisions? (5) What metacognitive knowledge about writing are students enacting during and after writing center tutorials?

**Follow-up Interviews with Tutors**

After I finished collecting student-related data, I interviewed the participating tutors to learn more about them as writing tutors: what they had learned as writing tutors, what they were most aware of when tutoring, what steps/strategies they most often relied on, what their most successful tutorials looked like, what they excelled at as a tutor, what areas they need to improve, how they defined directive and nondirective tutoring, if they tutored writers and/or writing, how they described their best and worst tutorials, and if their participation in my study affected their tutoring (see Appendix C). Their responses to these questions were critical to my understanding their perspectives, particularly their sense of themselves when tutoring, as I described earlier in this chapter (see “Participants” section). In retrospect, I wish I had interviewed the tutors before and after I collected student data to see if or how their responses to the same questions changed from the beginning to the end of the semester, but tutors are not primary the focus of my study.

**Data Analysis**

When analyzing students’ drafts, tutorials, and interviews, I used qualitative approaches. First, I used research memos to track and reflect on the data I collected. Next,
I reviewed students’ drafts and tutorials for the changes they made, or did not make. During interviews, I verified students’ rhetorical situations and the revisions they made, asked discourse-based interview questions to determine why students made particular revisions, and asked students additional questions about their perceived learning outcomes. Once I had completed interviews, I organized and summarized data in order of my interview questions, which enabled me to create tables for each student and locate trends (e.g., the number of students who did not think they would the use the information/advice they received for future writing projects). Then I reorganized and analyzed data according to my research questions. I compared students’ requests with the information/advice they received, the information/advice they used or did not use, students’ reasons for their revisions, and their perceptions of what they learned. From these categories, additional categories emerged that I used to select focal students and demonstrate ways tutees may have internalized their tutors’ information/advice.

**Research Memos**

I began writing research memos fall semester 2007, while I was sampling transcription methods with test tutorials, figuring out which tutors should participate in my study, and finalizing interview questions. When recordings began spring semester 2008, I used research memos to track my weekly data collection process and reflect on data collected so far (as I mentioned in the section describing my role as researcher). Here is a sample memo I wrote November 5, 2007 while determining which transcription methods to use and why:

In thinking about the transcription guidelines...I reviewed James Gee’s *Discourse Analysis*, read Laurel Johnson Black’s *Between Talk and Teaching: Reconsidering the Writing Conference*, and re-read Peter Mortensen’s “Analyzing Talk about Writing” (in *Methods and Methodology in Composition Research*). Black’s text is
especially useful for her use of “discourse markers,” linguistic terms for stock words that position speakers. Mortensen’s text gave me an overview, from his perspective, of conversation analysis (CA)…. All of these sources led me to other authors, which has been useful for support. Unfortunately, none of them answered my question about which features of conversation I should code when transcribing writing center tutorials. To what degree DO I need to code the transcripts during the transcription process?

This question forced me to think about why I was coding transcripts. At one point I thought I would analyze tutorials for tutoring strategies such as directive and nondirective tutoring, in which case conversation analytic approaches captured through close-vertical transcription would have been particularly helpful in locating discourse markers or speaker positioning. But I ultimately decided to use close-vertical transcription because it helped me (and other readers) hear transcripts without repeatedly referring to audio recordings and helped me locate instances when tutees were negotiating revision choices (i.e., interruptions, overlapping speech).

**Analyzing Student Writing**

In preparation for discourse-based interviews, I compared students’ revised texts with the drafts they brought to their tutorials and with the recordings and transcripts of their tutorials. When first coding students’ revised drafts, I sorted revision changes using categories borrowed from Lester Faigley and Stephen Witte, and Paul Prior. Faigley and Witte’s “taxonomy of revision changes” describes “surface” and “text-based” changes both micro- and macro-structural (403). Whether surface or text-based, most revision changes were categorized as additions, deletions, substitutions, permutations, distributions, and consolidations (the latter two are sentence-level operations). Prior used a similar taxonomy, which I used as entry points for mapping my data: Commentary or text-editing
that effects real changes to a student’s text are additions, deletions, rearrangements, substitutions, and corrections (322). Additions and deletions accounted for text a student adds (what to include) or deletes (what to exclude) from a draft. Rearrangement accounted for reordering of text. Substitutions were instances when a student substituted their own words with other words that may or may not have come from the tutor (e.g., paraphrasing quotes, finding the “right” words to re-say something you’ve already written). Corrections were changes to text such as spelling, citations, grammar, punctuation, and syntax. Commentary or text editing that does not effect changes to a text was also noted, as well as changes students make to a text that were not addressed during a tutorial. During discourse-based interviews, students confirmed my interpretations of their revisions using these categories.

Analyzing Tutoring Approaches

As I mentioned in Chapter 1, tutees are more likely to see all tutors’ commentary as directive, as was the case in Irene Clark’s study (“Perspectives”). Terese Thonus found that tutors’ roles are constantly changing within and across tutorials, suggesting students’ perceptions of success are likely to involve other aspects of writing center consultations. For reasons such as these, I do not compare types of directive and nondirective tutoring strategies with students’ revision decisions. However, the tutors participating in my study interpreted their tutoring approaches through that frame and had beliefs about those terms that affected their perceptions of themselves as tutors. I decided to refer to the terms directive and nondirective for describing tutor and student talk when applicable (e.g., excerpts from tutor interviews, conversations that facilitated students’ metacognition), but this does not happen often. I also borrowed terms from Blau, Strauss,
and Hall to describe aspects of nondirective tutoring strategies: *questions* (what type of question, who asks, and why), *echoing* (of non-content words/phrases, syntactic patterns, and play), and *qualifiers* (posing suggestions as questions and modifying comments) (23, 27, 32, 33). To describe directive strategies, I drew on Shamoon and Burns’s “A Critique of Pure Tutoring,” creating two categories: *specific suggestions* such as instructions or commands to “do X” and altering text such as *rewrites*. Although I did not compare types of directive and nondirective tutoring strategies with students’ revision decisions, I did look for the advice or choices tutors offered and how well that information/advice corresponded to students’ rhetorical situations for writing and revising, and their requests for assistance. Because tutors’ information/advice are usually conveyed through questions, echoing, qualifiers, specific suggestions, and rewrites that facilitate the tutoring of writing strategies, these terms can be useful in those instances and provide a sense of tutoring style.

**Analyzing Tutoring Sessions and Discourse-based Interviews**

The primary purpose of my study is to locate ways in which writers may have changed as writers due to the tutoring process. Therefore, I identified students’ changes to their texts, looked for instances during their tutorials when those revisions were discussed, and analyzed tutorials and interviews for reasons students revised. When analyzing tutorials for students’ revision choices, I looked for how or if students “negotiated” those choices. Negotiation is, in the context of my study, a cognitive monitoring process called metacognition, which means knowledge and control of one’s thinking, or “awareness and judgment about an event gained through experience” (Griffith and Ruan 4). The goal of metacognitive literacy instruction is for students to develop an
awareness of themselves as learners and monitor their progress as writers. The latter involves students self-regulating or self-assessing their progress towards achieving a goal. The literature reports a number of ways that students strategize, or the types of strategies students use to monitor their progress. What they share in common is “simply making judgments about what one knows or does not know to accomplish a task” (Hacker 7) through, for instance: questioning, predicting, clarifying, summarizing (Griffith and Ruan 12); cross checking, self-correcting, rereading, asking for help (Schmitt 110); and checking, planning, selecting, and inferring (Hacker 7). According to the research, metacognitive instruction, such as tutoring, “actively engages students in their understanding of their own learning” (Sitko 100). When learning and applying new strategies, for writing and revision, students need assistance to “imagine the conditions under which they would use the strategy” and to “reflect on how they might evaluate its usefulness and incorporate what works for them” (Sitko 101).

The most obvious example of tutees actively engaged in their learning is the Writing Center appointment itself. By seeking assistance from tutors, student writers were aware of their need for help. Of course, some students might expect tutors to revise or edit for them—a “fix-it shop” expectation that excludes the type of teaching and learning that would lead to changed writers. But none of the students in this study left their Writing Center appointments upset that they were asked to think for themselves. With their tutors, students reread their essays. During the rereading process, students sometimes self-corrected, having recognized for instance, typos, misspellings, or repetitive statements. More importantly, students were engaged in understanding their tutors’ recommendations. Most tutees in this study did not make changes to their essays simply because their tutors said so. As I explained in Chapter 1, and describe in more detail in
Chapters 4 and 5, tutees have ways of making meaning that are internally persuasive to them, or that they have internalized. Tutors present additional ways for students to make meaning, particularly within academic discourses, which are authoritative discourses. When the authoritative discourses tutors endorse converge with students’ internally persuasive discourses, they converge in students’ revision choices. In this study, students usually used their tutor’s information/advice for reasons that were internally persuasive, which was evident through students’ metacognition during tutorials and confirmed during discourse-based interviews. The questions they asked for opinions or clarifications, the predictions or inferences they made, and the ways they checked or summarized tutors’ information/advice during tutorials suggests that most tutees in this study were thinking about their revision processes and making choices based on their tutors’ reasoning, which students then internalized as their own reasoning based on what they understood about their tutor’s information/advice. To follow are two examples of what I mean by students’ metacognition as evidence of convergences of internally persuasive and authoritative discourses during tutorials.

In the first example, the tutee Anika (“A”) infers from her tutor Susan (“S”) what to do with a sentence that seems out of place in her sociology essay about campus crimes. Anika checks her own sense of why the sentence doesn’t “flow” against her tutor’s explanation:

S: … The other thing I’m worried about is this seems to be kind of just hanging out there.

A: Yeah, I [think the flow is like-]

S: [So you know like, you say] that…they sent this email saying that all this bad stuff happened…
A: {yeah}
S: like last month.
A: {yeah}
S: And now you're going back to, “since September we've received 15 emails,” um... (reading to self)
A: Maybe I should put this somewhere else?
S: I feel like it's kind of awkward where it is.
A: Maybe...
S: Well, how about you're explaining what a social problem is...I feel like this might work better in the explanation of a social problem.
A: {okay}
S: Because... “a social problem is a subjective criteria that...groups ...” (8s) Okay, cause you're saying you don't want to walk across campus because of the crime rate
A: {right}
S: and that we've received these emails telling us-
A: So also like there's nothing beneficial of that either.
S: Exactly.
A: {okay}

The beginning of this excerpt shows Susan pointing out a sentence that seems out of place, or “just hanging out.” Anika agrees but is cut off from finishing her statement about the “flow” of the paragraph containing the sentence under discussion. Susan continues to explain why Anika's sentence is problematic or confusing. Anika uses backchannels to communicate her attentiveness (“yeah”) and asks Susan if she should move that sentence somewhere else, which Susan considers. Likewise, Anika begins to think about
possibilities; “maybe…..” she could move it to…. Before Anika comes up with her own solution, Susan offers a recommendation: to move the sentence to a section of Anika’s essay where it seems to fit. Towards the end of this excerpt, Anika interrupts Susan before she can finish; she is predicting why she should move the sentence to her discussion of the social problem (campus crime). Susan confirms Anika’s inference. Anika’s question, prediction, and inference indicate her metacognition and, as a whole, indicate Anika strategizing and potentially internalizing her tutor’s authoritative discourse.

In the next example, the tutor Deanna (“D”) prompts the tutee Mary (“M”) to think about her use of direct address in her first-year composition essay about ethanol production. Mary asks for further explanation from Deanna to understand why her use of direct address is problematic:

D: Um...How do you feel about it in the paper?
M: What do you mean?
D: Like do you like saying, "If YOU have a hundred acres," or "YOUR corn?"
M: It does kind of feel awkward to write that just cause I've never written like a mathematical...example in a paper before, um...I don't even think I would appreciate that if I was reading, so like actually-
D: Yeah, cause if normally something like, when you [read it, your like, oh this is different.]
M: [I’d be like...wait I don’t have corn.] Yeah.
D: Right.
M: Like, what are you talking about? Right, okay.

Towards the end of this excerpt, Deanna and Mary’s speech overlaps, as Mary predicts
where Deanna is going with her leading question. Deanna confirms Mary’s interpretation or summary, and Mary finally understands why readers may be put off by her use of direct address (because not all of her readers grow corn). As I explain in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5, students such as Mary and Anika indicated during tutorials they were thinking strategically about their revisions, which suggests to me that they were developing or changing as writers, particularly when I confirmed their reasons for revisions during discourse-based interviews. The second level of my data analysis indentifies correspondences between the information/advice tutees received, their revisions, and their reasons for those changes. Through an examination of tutorial transcripts and confirmation with discourse-based interviews, I analyzed tutees’ reasons for revisions as potential convergences of internally persuasive and authoritative discourses.

Most of the tutees in this study made choices about their revisions that did not simply echo their tutors’ information/advice. The questions tutees asked, the inferences they made, what they checked, and their plans for revision, for instance, were evidence of ways students made sense of what their tutors said and did, and consequently, if students’ revisions were meaningful to them. What may have began as tutors’ authoritative discourses often became internally persuasive to tutees during their negotiation or metacognitive process. Negotiations between writing center tutors and tutees about revisions were part of an acculturation process in which different discourses, such as internally persuasive and authoritative discourses were considered, adopted, discarded, or reconfigured. In other words, tutees’ revisions were interdiscursive with their tutors’ information/advice. Analyzing students’ metacognition helped me locate instances when students negotiated their choices and, hence, likely developed or changed as writers at that time. In this study, students’ metacognition was evident during tutorials while they
were deciding what to do next and why, and during discourse-based interviews when students articulated their reasons for having made particular revisions.

**Triangulating Tutorials, Texts, and Interviews**

Triangulation provided me with a means to test my interpretations throughout the process of organizing them in order to reach the most valid conclusions I could (Moss 168, 159). After I made initial comparisons of students’ drafts with their tutorials and interviewed tutees, I organized data according to my research questions. Appendices D through F list the information/advice students requested, received, received and not used, received and used, as well as revisions students made that were not discussed/mentioned during tutorials. I then compared students’ requests for assistance with the major and minor focus of their tutorials, which I also compared to the types of revisions students made or not with and without the help of their tutors. Next, I compared Appendix G with Appendix H, which list students’ perceived learning outcomes, specifically what students remembered most about revising, what students perceived to be their most important revision(s), and what they think they learned from their tutorials. Last, I compared all the data in Appendices D through H to see how they informed one another. This type of data triangulation revealed valuable inconsistencies. As I explain in Chapter 3, comparisons of tutorials, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes provide incomplete assessments of students’ possible learning outcomes and writing center success. Most of the tutorials I analyzed were effective in the sense that students revised strategically and believe they learned something useful for future writing tasks, but what students think they learned did not necessarily correspond to the major focus of their tutorials, the revisions they made, their purpose for writing, or their requests for assistance.
CHAPTER 3

A COMPARISON OF TUTORIALS, REVISIONS, AND PERCEIVED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Previous research into writing center outcomes has primarily analyzed tutorials for content, students’ texts for improvements, or students’ perceptions of satisfaction and success. These studies (cited in Chapter 1) pose questions about students’ development as writers that writing center workers cannot answer by only analyzing the content of tutorials, revised texts, or students’ impressions of their learning outcomes. In this chapter, I review the findings for each category and compare data, providing primarily an overall summary of the findings that responds to four of my research questions. Data come from cross-referencing transcripts of tutorials, students’ drafts during and after tutorials, and students’ responses to interview questions about their perceived learning outcomes. First, I describe students’ requests for assistance, their rhetorical situations for revising, and the information/advice they received. These findings help me address two research questions: What kinds of information/advice do students seek or expect from writing center tutorials? What kinds of information/advice are students presented with during writing center tutorials? Second, I compare students’ reasons for coming to the Writing Center with the major and minor focus of their consultations and with students’ revision choices. From this, I am able to address another research question: What information/advice do students use to revise their papers? Third, I describe students’ perspectives on what they remembered and valued most about revising their texts, as well as what students think they learned from their writing center consultations. Last, I compare all the data and respond to my fourth research question: Do students’ perceptions of what they learned correspond to their tutorials and/or revisions? Triangulating tutorials, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes shows what students
think they learned did not necessarily correspond to their requests for assistance, rhetorical situations, the major focus of their tutorials, or the revisions they made. What some students took away from their tutorials may not have been what tutors intended or may not transfer to other writing situations and, in that sense, are not ideal or easily identifiable outcomes. However, tutorials affected most tutees in desirable, though perhaps surprising, ways.

**Tutorials**

The kinds of information/advice students seek or expect from writing center tutorials correspond to their writing tasks and their sense of their drafts: what’s working and what’s not working in a particular piece of writing given its rhetorical situation. Nearly half (9 of 19) of the tutees participating in this study came to the Writing Center with writing assignments related to a first-year (6 of 19) or junior-year (3 of 19) writing course (see Appendix D). Novice students were enrolled in first-year or general education courses (college composition, sociology, comparative literature), and advanced students were enrolled in courses corresponding to their academic majors (business ethics, nursing ethics, junior-year writing). Only one student (Katie) came to the Center with a draft unrelated to a class assignment; she was writing to apply for a self-designed academic degree program. Appendix D also shows that most students sought assistance with first-order concerns such as thesis and organization, which supports an idea of writing center tutorials as more than editing sessions. However, even though most students understood the purpose of their assignments and/or essays, some tutees in this study identified an audience that was not consistent with the function of their texts.
As a group, the students participating in this study sought more assistance with first-order concerns than later-order concerns (or, as Thomas Reigstad and Donald McAndrew coined, "higher-order" and "lower-order" concerns). Chief among students’ first-order concerns were organization or structure, followed by thesis and content. Table 6 lists students’ reasons for their appointments and the number of times those reasons appeared throughout the sample. Though grammar was the most commonly cited later-order concern and second highest request after organization/structure, only three students’ tutorials focused on grammar. Most consultations focused on style as a later-order concern, suggesting many students did not distinguish between grammar and style, believing grammar addressed both. None of the students participating in this study requested assistance with style, per se, but asked for help with style-related matters: word choice, repetition, conciseness, and sentence structure or “flow.” Overall, these writers made valuable distinctions between revising and editing. Nearly all (16 of 19) of the writers participating in this study expected to make changes to their texts that went beyond surface errors. The kinds of information/advice students requested suggest tutees usually used the Writing Center to substantively revise their drafts, which were often early or first drafts.
Table 6: Information/Advice Requested

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information/Advice</th>
<th>Total Cited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis (assertive, corresponding to evidence/data, sticking to topic)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization (6) and Structure (4)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow (&quot;clarity&quot; of ideas)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions (&quot;flow&quot;)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs (length)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content (if focus made sense, if suitable to purpose, adding more, avoiding false</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dichotomies)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing (analyzing quotes)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total First-Order Concerns:</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words (word choice)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition (of words, points)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence structure (&quot;flow&quot; or &quot;length&quot;)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run-ons</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conciseness</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography (citation styles)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Later-Order Concerns:</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More feedback/guidance (than teacher’s)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra credit</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rhetorical Situations

With regards to rhetorical situations for writing, almost all tutees (18 of 19) believed they understood the function of their writing, and in most cases (13 of 19), tutees could identify the most reasonable audience for the task (see Appendix D). Each tutee reported writing for transactional persuasive purposes: writing to persuade an audience beyond oneself (see Melzer and Britton for taxonomy of audience and purpose types). In other words, students in this study were not writing for expressive, exploratory, poetic, or solely informative functions. Instead, these students sought assistance on writing projects that required them to analyze and critique a text or social issue, to argue a point of view or take a stance, to interact with authors and ideologies, or to propose solutions for change and strategies for action. Most tutees (12 of 19) wrote to an outside audience (wider audience informed, novice, or generalized), whereas the remaining tutees (7) wrote to/for their instructors.

For instance, the purpose of Emma’s junior-year writing assignment was “to show how identity functions as a social construct,” and the purpose of her essay was “to show how the TV series ‘Lost’ serves to perpetuate colonialism through rhetoric.” Emma was writing not only to her professor but other faculty who taught in her department or in her field. Sofia was writing to “an academic audience familiar with the text,” which suggests that she was also writing to more academics than her comparative literature professor. Sofia was equally clear in stating the purpose of her comparative literature assignment: “to analyze a fantasy fiction novel from the class through the lens of another book or form of media not used in the class,” which was in her case a comparison of the film and novel Lord of the Rings. Only one student, Lisa, identified an audience (her professor) but
hesitated to describe the purpose of her assignment: “Maybe to assess students’ ethical competence.” However, Lisa could articulate the purpose of her essay: “to explain one’s thoughts about ethics in business based on the readings,” specifically, “the high value American’s place on freedom related to the responsibility of U.S. business owners.”

Overall, the majority of tutees participating in this study could identify their audience and purpose, but some students were better at identifying their purpose than their audience.

Five tutees in this study assumed audiences. They were “not sure” about audience or were “probably” writing to a surmised audience. Two of those students identified an audience that did not appear to suit their purpose. For instance, although Tish understood the purpose of her business report on Wendy's fast-food chain, she was not sure for whom her text was intended and, therefore, wrote her report “as a professional business person to the general public.” It is doubtful that the general public would be interested in her report, but other business professionals in the food industry might. Despite the fact that Anika was writing to apply her sociology lectures to a campus issue, she assumed her audience was “probably her sociology instructor.” Anika made no mention of UMass administration or students as members of her audience, even though the topic of her essay addressed student crimes and campus violence. Shannon was enrolled in the same course as Anika and came to the Center with the same assignment. Shannon speculated that her audience was “probably higher administration, the people in charge,” not necessarily her sociology instructor and other students. Students like Tish and Anika who write for transactional persuasive purposes that extend beyond the classroom may nevertheless see their audiences as limited to their evaluators and their transactions limited to grades.

Without an explicit classroom conversation about audience, students may also
assume an audience that does not suit their purpose, assume different audiences for the same assignment, or assume that they write for anyone but themselves or their peers. None of the tutees reported writing to other students, though many of them were enrolled in writing courses in which students shared drafts with classroom peers. Only one tutee wrote for herself and for her instructor. Without an explicit tutorial conversation about audience, some tutees may have missed opportunities to reflect on how audience, purpose, genre, and discourse communities influenced the kinds of information/advice they received from tutors and the subsequent revisions they made to their drafts. Audience was implied during most Writing Center consultations. Although a lack of congruence between audience and purpose did not appear to be significant for writers achieving their ostensible tutorial goals, I do not have enough data to fully support this claim.

Information/Advice Received

Tutees’ requests for assistance usually corresponded to the information/advice they received. The major focus for 16 of 19 tutorials matched most of the reasons students came to the Writing Center, if not all their reasons (see Appendix E). In other words, students identified an issue or more of concern that their tutors addressed during consultations, some concerns more than others. Tutees’ requests often consisted of both first-order and later-order concerns, but they usually requested more assistance with content and organization than grammar or style. Therefore, the major focus of those sessions usually related to first-order concerns, which were also tutees’ primary concerns.

1 I used the amount of time spent on a topic of concern as a way to identify the major focus of tutorials.
For example, Mona sought help with organization and supporting examples. She did not like her draft because she doubted her supporting examples were relevant to her thesis; therefore, Mona and her tutor decided to start over. They created an outline for a new draft that tackled Mona’s assignment. In this way, the tutor addressed Mona’s reasons for having come to the Center. Tracy requested assistance with “grammar, sentence flow, and making essay longer.” Her tutoring session dealt equally with grammar (correcting verb tense), style (substituting vague pronouns), content (adding text to introduce quotes), organization (rearranging paragraphs), and her essay conclusion (adding text). Tracy got more advice than she asked for, but her session still attended to her primary concerns. Shannon suspected she needed help with paragraph and sentence structure, repetition, and grammar. She also wanted more feedback in general on her draft because she did not think her instructor’s comments were clear. The major focus of Shannon’s session dealt with organization, content, style, punctuation, and spelling. The minor focus of her tutorial consisted of clarifying her instructor’s comments and citation style. All of Shannon’s reasons for coming the Center were covered during her tutorial, as was the case for most students. Most sessions accomplished what came to be the mutual goals of the tutee and tutor.

Only three students’ requests for assistance did not match the major focus of their consultations: Tish, Al, and Karen. Tish came to the Center for extra credit and help with her bibliography. (She is the only student in the sample who reported coming to the Center for extra credit.) Though Tish and her tutor used a web-based citation checker to determine the correct style for in-text citations and bibliographies, they spent the majority of their consultation reviewing the content of Tish’s business report because, as her tutor indicated, they had extra time. Though Al’s tutor addressed his request for assistance with
paraphrasing (also his instructor’s concern), Al’s tutor spent more time understanding Al’s topic than improving his ability to paraphrase. Reading through Al’s text produced several questions about the content of an essay to which he was interpreting and responding. Karen requested assistance with organization and grammar, but Karen’s tutor focused on style (i.e., word choice, brevity) because Karen’s organization was logical and there were no grammar mistakes. In sum, Tish, Al, and Karen were each willing to follow the lead of his/her tutor even if their Writing Center consultations did not focus exclusively or mostly on their requests. As I show later in this chapter, students like Tish, Al, and Karen think they learned something valuable from their tutors.

**Revisions**

A comparison of students’ requests with the content of their tutorials shows that tutees’ got what they came for and sometimes more. However, an analysis of tutorials alone cannot show the effects of tutorials on tutees. What tutees subsequently revised often remains a mystery. Textual analysis rarely informs writing center research but is key to understanding how writers act on the information and/or advice they receive. In this section, I discuss the kinds of revisions students made. When first analyzing students’ texts, I coded their drafts for additions, deletions, substitutions, rearrangements, and corrections (see Chapter 2 and Appendices E and F). I also compared the information/advice students received with three alternatives for revision: changes students made to their texts that were not discussed with tutors, changes they made that were discussed during consultations, and changes they did not make though discussed with tutors. From these three alternatives for revision, five categories emerged from the data: (1) information/advice received and used (most changes came from tutor’s
information/advice), (2) no additional revisions beyond tutor’s information/advice (all changes came from tutorial), (3) information/advice received and not used (changes not made though recommended), (4) revisions that extend from tutorials (students’ own changes), (5) revisions not connected to tutorials (not necessarily students’ own changes). Findings respond to two of my primary research questions: What information/advice are students presented with during writing center tutorials? What information/advice do students use to revise their papers? These questions are important to my study because tutors such as myself, who wonder what happens when students leave their consultations, now have a sense of what tutees revise after tutorials.

**Information/Advice Received and Used**

Comparing students’ requests for assistance (Appendix D) with the information/advice students received and used (Appendix E) shows that each of the 19 student writers participating in this study applied all or nearly all of the information/advice received from tutors. Though some tutees rejected some information/advice (7 of 19), they used most of the information/advice received from tutors (see Appendix F). Many tutees made revisions that were not discussed during their tutorials (11 of 19), but they also used most or all of their tutors’ recommendations (see Appendix F). Revisions ranged from first- to later-order concerns, from large-scale revision strategies to particular usage “rules.” What follows is an example of a tutee who used most of the information/advice she received.

Tish, whom I already mentioned in the previous section, came to the Center requesting assistance with creating a bibliography for a business report on Wendy’s Inc. She wanted to know how to cite her sources using APA style. Tish’s sources all came from
business websites ("dot coms"). Her tutor, Susan, introduced Tish to an online citation checker, which they used to confirm the correct citation styles for website pages. They also discussed the format for bibliographies, such as heading, spacing, and indentation. During their discussion, Susan also explained how to cite sources within the text of Tish’s report. Their conversation about APA style regarding Tish’s sources lasted 12 minutes. Because they had time, Susan recommended she read Tish’s report. The remainder of the tutorial dealt with punctuation and content related issues, even though these were not Tish’s requests for assistance. For instance, Susan pointed out places that required commas (e.g., with coordinating conjunctions) and showed Tish how to use an apostrophe with plural possessive constructions (e.g., the food chain Wendys’ vs. Wendys's vs. Wendy's’). But mostly, Susan asked questions and offered suggestions about content. The following excerpt is an example. Tish finishes reading aloud a section of her draft. Before moving forward to the next section, Susan ("S") wants to make sure she understands what Tish ("T") just read and asks for more information:

T: “It still, however, plans to increase its system-wide restaurant number for the restaurants open or under construction. However this plan may not be carried out quite like they hope.”

S: Okay, Wendy's still plans to increase its system-wide restaurant.

T: Okay

S: And what do you mean by…restaurant number open and under construction? I don’t really understand.

T: Um...

S: What is their plan?

T: Their plan I think is just to um...because I don’t need to go into detail about it, but like [80% of their]

S: [Yeah, I would expand that.]
T: revenue or 80% of the restaurants are franchisees.

S: {okay}

T: And I think they kind of want to...buy the franchisees.

S: So pull back from that?

T: Yeah.

S: Okay...that's fine. [[reading to self, unclear]]

T: [[reading to self, unclear]]

S: Yeah, I think you need to explain that more

T: {okay}

S: because I don't really understand what it means...(6s)

T: Yeah, I just need to word that a little bit better, let's see...go into more detail kind of thing.

S: Yeah...(6s)

T: Okay, just "Wendy's still plans...to...overtake...their franchisees...which make up 80% of their...restaurants...um..."

S: So what is the goal in doing that?

T: Just to um...be in more control I guess.

S: Okay I would say that,"so that they have more direct control over their restaurants."

T: {okay}

S: So that's kind of like to insure that they have a good restaurant going.

T: {yeah}

S: Because if it's a franchise they have less control, right?

T: Exactly...Um 80% of the restaurants...have more direct control...um...over...their restaurants...their restaurants to have more direct control over their brand, I guess.
At the end of this excerpt, Tish is talking while typing her revised sentence. In her first draft, Tish had written: “It [Wendy’s] still, however, plans to increase its system-wide restaurant number for the restaurants open or under construction. However this plan may not be carried out quite like they hope.” In her revised draft, Tish wrote: “Wendy’s still plans to overtake their franchisees which make up 80% of their restaurants to have more direct control over their brand. However this plan may not be carried out quite like they hope.” Though Tish did not ask for assistance with this part of her essay, or any part of her essay related to its content, Tish used nearly all the information/advice she received from Susan.

**Self-assurance, Motivation, Material Constraints, and Comprehension: No Additional Revisions Beyond Tutor’s Information/Advice**

Many students (7 of 19) used all information/advice received and made no changes of their own—changes that did not come from their writing center consultations (see Appendices E and F for comparison). For instance, everything Shannon discussed with her tutor made its way into her draft and all the changes she made to her text were discussed during her tutorial. Shannon’s appointment form indicated that she wanted to work on the structure of her sociology essay, as well as grammar. During her tutorial, Shannon mentioned that she was equally concerned about the length of her paragraphs and sentences, and repetition. In addition, she was interested in getting more feedback in general than her instructor had given her. The major focus of Shannon’s tutorial became organization, content (refined argument), style, punctuation, and spelling. The minor focus on Shannon’s tutorial concerned documentation and clarifying her instructor’s written comments. Appendix E lists the kinds of revisions Shannon made with the help of
her tutor, which I also list here. Specifically, Shannon received and used the following information/advice: She rearranged paragraphs (while finding the main point of each paragraph), rearranged words in sentences, added transitions between paragraphs, deleted repetitive or unnecessary words/statements, corrected typos, corrected spelling, corrected punctuation, and corrected documentation style (italicized name of a newspaper and added quotes for article titles). Shannon’s requests for assistance and the information/advice she received and used show, like several other students, Shannon revised every detail discussed during her tutorial, even revisions not requested (documentation).

Writing center workers might assume students do not change or develop as writers if they do not revise their drafts beyond what was discussed during tutorials. But the reasons those eight students (all first-year students in my sample) did not revise their essays beyond what was discussed during their tutorials were related to their circumstances: additional changes were not perceived as necessary, were not possible because of looming due dates, depended on further instruction, and/or were not understood when recommended. In other words, self-assurance, motivation, material constraints, and comprehension affected tutees’ choices or abilities to further revise. Shannon was “pretty satisfied” with her final draft. She “spent a lot of time on it” and therefore “didn’t want to do any more work on it.” Laura doubted she would have made additional changes to her revised draft because she “got the point across.” Al claimed he did all he could do. Tracy said she probably would have added more analysis and focused on style issues such as vague pronouns, but there was no time because her essay was due that day. Kathleen would have further revised after her teacher read it “to get the better grade.” However, Kathleen did not understand and therefore agree with her teacher’s
suggestions: “[the teacher’s comments] didn’t make sense...about how I argued [my points] in a different way than [the teacher] would argue the reading....” Mona also would have further revised based on her teacher’s comments. Though Melissa received 10 of 10 points on her essay, she would have revised based on her teacher’s comments “to be more assertive with [her] thesis,” but she was “not really sure how to do that.” Each of these students left their tutorials believing their tutors had addressed their concerns at that time, but some of these tutees would have made additional changes if they had more time and motivation, or if further recommendations from teachers were explicit and understood. Whether students in this sample revised after tutorials is not an accurate indicator of their development as writers or the success of their writing center consultations, given such circumstances.

Unnecessary Changes, Personal Preferences, Instructor Preferences, and Misunderstandings: Information/Advice Received and Not Used

Seven of the 19 students received information/advice that they did not use for a variety of reasons: some recommendations were not needed, did not suit students’ rhetorical situations, conflicted with teachers’ recommendations, or were attempted but not adequately addressed. For example, Anne’s tutor suggested she change the personal pronoun “I” to “it” because Anne mentioned she did “not like this part” of her sentence: “After reading four business authors’ points of view on the role of leadership in the workplace, I deduced that the key to positive organizational change we are seeking at Northwestern Mutual is fostering increased leadership in our sales force.” Anne did not

2 Though Kathleen’s tutor pointed out a missing question mark, Kathleen forgot to add it, which is why I still consider her a student who used all of her tutor’s advice and made no changes of her own.
want to say “I deduced” but instead preferred to convey that the recommendation she was offering in her business memo came from the articles she read. The transcript from Anne’s tutorial indicated Anne liked her tutor’s solution to revise the sentence to read, “…it is evident that the key....” However, when I compared her during and after tutorial drafts, Anne stuck with “I deduced.” She told me during our interview that her teacher “hates ‘it;’ like she is like define ‘this’ or define ‘it.’ Like ‘it is evident,’ she hates that stuff...even though I would really like to” have used the pronoun “it.” Because Anne “could not think of something else to say,” she left the sentence in its original form. Also, Anne told me that her teacher wanted students to recommend a course of action for Northwestern Mutual based on their own impressions of the articles they read, so changing “I deduced” to “it is evident” would not have actively conveyed that goal.

Mary’s tutor recommended she italicize book titles and not underline them. Mary later learned from her MLA Handbook that italics are a preference and not a requirement, so she continued to underline because she preferred that style. Roxanne was revising part two of an on-going project for her junior-year writing class. Her purpose in part two concerned solving a public health problem, specifically the prevention of knee injuries. Roxanne’s tutor recommended she add a statistic about the prevalence of knee injuries so the audience (anyone participating in recreational activities) would understand why they should learn more about preventing them. Because Roxanne had already cited statistics in the first part of her project, the literature review, she didn’t think adding a stat in part two suited her current purpose: to solve a problem she had already established as a problem. Tish’s tutor asked her to name the specific organization she alluded to in her business report on Wendy’s fast-food franchise: “…there are many suitors to Wendy’s International and it’s only a matter of time before Wendy’s goes with another organization.” Tish didn’t
know which organization would buy the Wendy’s brand; it was only a rumor that one would, so she refrained from altering her text.

**Revisions as Extension of Tutorials**

Slightly over half of the study participants (11 of 19) made changes to their drafts that were not discussed during tutorials. Most (7 of 11) of these students’ revisions corresponded to their reasons for coming to the Center and the major and/or minor focus of their tutorials. In other words, students’ own revisions were related to their tutorials but not explicitly mentioned during tutorials. More important, students’ own revisions were often applications of information/advice received during tutorials, such as adding analysis and transitions between ideas, rearranging paragraphs and sentences for coherence, deleting repetitive words/phrases, substituting words, and correcting spelling and typos.

The most substantial revisions came from Sofia, Celine, and Emma. For instance, Sofia and her tutor did not have enough time to review Sofia’s entire 12-page comparative literature essay, so Sofia left her tutorial with a lot of work to do on her own. Her revisions were considerable and clearly a product of the advice she received during her tutorial. Sofia continued to apply the paragraph glossing strategy her tutor used for the first three pages of her draft. Specifically, Sofia rearranged paragraphs and sentences to support her thesis and follow a logical progression. Celine came to the Center for help with “grammar, sentence structure, and spelling,” which corresponded to the major focus of her tutorial. Celine and her tutor corrected spelling/typos, corrected noun-verb agreement, added punctuation to correct run-on sentences, deleted unnecessary words, added words for clarity, and substituted words for more appropriate ones. After her
tutorial, Celine continued to correct spelling and punctuation, delete unnecessary repetition, and add text to further explain her thinking. Emma had been working from a diagram her tutor created to help Emma organize her draft. After Emma reconfigured the diagram to match her key points, she added more analysis and examples to support her thesis.

Roxanne, Lisa, Karen, and Anne’s revisions were not substantive but appeared to be extensions of their tutorials and therefore worth noting. Roxanne continued to correct typos, which was the minor focus of her tutorial. Lisa’s tutorial focused on refining her argument and structure. Afterwards, Lisa continued to clarify her argument by adding an important “so what” phrase to conclude a paragraph that had lacked analysis. Karen took steps towards refining her writing after her tutorial for similar reasons as during her tutorial. Specifically, she substituted the word “love” with “delighted”: “I believe maternal nurses are delighted to help students due to their higher job satisfaction.” This style change corresponds to the major focus of Karen’s tutorial, in which she and her tutored addressed other style-related concerns, particularly the associations readers may make with certain words. For instance, Karen’s tutor suggested she change “segregate” to “alienate” due to racial connotations that did not apply to her essay. Anne substituted words to create a more accurate transition. Specifically, Anne replaced “similar to” with “expanded upon”: “Expanding upon the work of Kotter and Northouse, D. J. Barrett (2006), author of ‘What is Leadership Communication?’, examines leadership through the communications skills one must master in order to project a positive ethos.” Though Anne’s revision was not discussed with her tutor, it was related to the major focus of Anne’s tutorial, style and transitions.
Revisions Not Connected to Tutorials

Tutees who make their own revisions could represent writers who were changed by the tutoring process, but this section shows some students made revisions that had nothing to do with their writing consultations. The revisions Cassandra, Tish, and Katie made that were not discussed during their tutorials were clearly not by-products. For instance, Cassandra added citations to her essay, and Tish wrote the remaining sections of her essay. None of these changes or additions was discussed during their tutorials. Katie and her tutor spent most of their time rearranging sentences, adding text for emphasis, and deleting unnecessary statements. After Katie revised her draft, she proofread her essay for style, not organization or content. Though Katie added words for specificity and substituted vague pronouns with specific nouns, there is no correlation between Katie’s tutorial and these changes.

Anika and Anne also made changes to their texts that are not connected to their tutorials, but I would not know this had I not inquired further. For instance, one of the reasons Anika came to the Center related to “words.” She and her tutor rearranged phrases and deleted words to avoid unnecessary repetition. Anika reviewed her draft once again after her session for her use of words. She changed the sentence “A social problem is ‘a combination of...’” to read “A ‘social problem’ can be considered ‘a combination of...’” Specifically, Anika substituted the verb “is” with “can be considered” and placed quotations around “social problem.” When I asked Anika why she had made these changes, she told me that she was quoting her professor, who had said that there was no exact definition of a social problem “but that’s what [her professor] considers [a social problem].” Anika also mentioned that she had met with her “TA” about the content
of her essay, and he may have been the person to point out the difference between “is” and “can be considered.” She couldn’t remember, but she understood the difference: “Because ‘can be considered,’ I wouldn’t be giving an exact definition, and I was giving an exact definition [using ‘is’].” Based on Anika’s comments, I doubt this particular revision was an extension of Anika’s tutorial, which included similar style changes. Likewise, the revisions Anne made to her draft that were not discussed during her tutorial but possibly related to it were not extensions of her tutor’s information/advice but revisions based on her teacher’s recommendations. It would have been easy to assume that some of the revisions Anika and Anne made after their tutorial were extensions of the information/advice they received during their tutorials because they appeared to be related. Without interviewing tutees, I would not have been able to distinguish between the revisions students made “on their own” and the revisions they made as a result of some other reader.

Discussion

A comparison of tutorials with students’ during and after drafts shows the kinds of revisions students made and, to a small degree, whether students adequately applied the information/advice they received and used. Textual analysis also shows each of the tutees in this study used all or nearly all of their tutors’ information/advice to revise their drafts, whether they asked for it or not. What does this tell us about the authority of tutors and tutees? As I explained in Chapter 1, most writing center scholarship encourages a collaborative approach to tutoring that positions students as their own or equal authorities. Even though the tutorials in this study exhibited a shifting asymmetrical relationship between student writers and their tutors, students’ texts show that tutors have tremendous power affecting changes to writing. Student writers set agendas and can
reject advice, but tutors have the power to influence tutees’ revision choices because of their informed opinions and reasoning. Tutors can also give students the impression that there is nothing left to do beyond what was discussed during their tutorials, especially when students’ drafts are reviewed in full. Still, over half (12 of 19) the tutees in this sample reported that they would not have revised their texts more than they already had (after meeting with their tutors) because they did not know what else to do, did not understand their teacher’s comments, or had already spent a lot time revising and did not have more time. Most of the students who would have made additional changes to their drafts would have done so if they had to write another draft beyond the “final” draft they submitted for a grade, especially if their teacher recommended specific revisions. One student, Melissa, would have revised further because she always “finds more things” with more time, and another student, Emma, wanted to publish her essay as a journal article or a book.

Given the variety of reasons tutees may have for revising, comparing tutorials with revisions does not show why writers act on the information/advice they receive, whether requested or not, and implied or direct. Do tutees’ revisions make sense to them, or were they “following orders”? Were tutees using their tutor’s information/advice for internally persuasive reasons or only as authoritative discourses? Did students reject information/advice because they simply disagreed, or did they understand why their tutors recommended particular revisions? Students who extend the information/advice they receive during tutorials to further revisions made after tutorials could mean that these students learned something useful as writers and were most changed by the tutoring process. However, extensions could also mean that students simply applied information/advice without altering their process for internally persuasive reasons.
Furthermore, students’ own changes are not necessarily extensions of their tutorials. The data I have presented so far in this chapter do not show students’ reasons for those revisions and if those reasons point towards improved writers. Even though textual analysis of students’ during and after drafts indicate the kinds of revisions students made or rejected, which informs tutors of what students do with their recommendations, textual analysis alone does not provide an assessment of students’ revision choices. Without an investigation into students’ reasons for their revisions, writing center workers cannot know how the tutoring process affected tutees. In Chapter 4, I demonstrate ways students took up their tutors’ information/advice to see if students’ revisions were meaningful to them.

**Perceived Learning Outcomes**

The previous section shows through textual analysis the kinds of revisions students made to their drafts during and after writing center consultations. In this section, I describe students’ perceptions of their revisions and tutorials, specifically tutees’ most memorable and valuable revisions, as well as the information or strategies tutees think will apply in future writing contexts and if they think their tutors helped them meet their assignment requirements (see Appendices G and H). Interviews with tutees included questions about their perceived learning outcomes so that I could compare their responses with the content of their tutorials and the revisions they made, which I discuss in the next and last section of this chapter, “Comparing the Data.” Such a comparison should lead to a better understanding of ways tutees may have changed as writers. What do students think they learned from their tutorials? Do their perceptions suggest that tutoring affected their writing processes?
Early during interviews, I asked students what they remembered while revising their drafts, and later during interviews, I asked what they believed to be their most important revision (see Appendices B and G). What most students (13 of 19) most remembered about revising included all or nearly all of their most important revisions. For example, Mary remembered reorganizing sections, deleting unnecessary text, and clarifying her purpose. Deleting unnecessary paragraphs and reorganizing the body of her essay to support her thesis were also her most valuable revisions. Laura remembered reorganizing her paragraphs and creating transitional sentences between them, which were her most important revisions. Lisa remembered adding an example to support her thesis, feeling more confidence, and “checking the flow of things.” Her most important revision became the supporting example she added to her essay. Though most tutees participating in this study believed their most memorable and valuable revisions to be the same, others did not. Six of the 19 students’ responses do not correspond (Al, Kathleen, Celine, Emma, Roxanne, and Cassandra). What those students most remember about revising and the revision(s) they most value do not match. For instance, Al remembered correcting grammar and eliminating repetitive statements, but his most important revision concerned paraphrasing. Kathleen remembered revising for sentence and paragraph structure, transitions, and grammar, but her most important revision was following the assignment (“what the teacher wanted”). Emma remembered drawing a diagram of her essay as a way to organize it, but her most valuable revision was the ample amount of time she had set aside to draft her essay. Roxanne remembered proofreading but valued “staying on topic.” The revisions these students remembered did not coincide with their most important revisions. If their most important revisions were not what they most remembered about revising, then what do students think they learned, if anything,
from their tutorials?

Slightly over half of the student writers (10 of 19) believed (a) they took something away from the tutorial, (b) believed that the Writing Center and/or a tutor played a role in helping them meet their requirements, and (c) could see themselves applying information or strategies they think they learned (see Appendix H). In sum, most tutees think they left their tutorials with increased confidence and motivation; a better understanding or deeper appreciation of audience, one’s own beliefs, the process of revision itself (e.g., drafting); and/or strategies for revising (e.g., tutors as readers, reading aloud, paragraph glossing). Only two students, Celine and Lisa, answered “no” or “not really” to the three questions I asked about their perceived learning outcomes. The remaining 8 students responded with a combination of “yes,” “no,” “not really,” “not sure,” or “might” (maybe).

For example, Kathleen answered, “yes” to my three questions. She believed she took away a greater awareness of how paragraphs support thesis statements. Kathleen also thought her tutor boosted her confidence as a writer and helped improve her essay grade. In the future, Kathleen believed she would write outlines before drafting, even when this strategy is not an assignment requirement. Al also responded, “yes” to my questions. Al said he took away information/advice about paraphrasing, and he believed his tutor played a role in helping him meet his assignment requirements because she told him it was fine to disagree with his teacher’s opinions as long as he supported his argument. Al also said he would use the information/advice he received about paraphrasing, paragraph development, and organization for future assignments.

Shannon responded, “yes,” “yes,” and “not sure.” She believed that she took away
an approach or strategy for reading each of her sentences for style. She also believed her
tutor helped her to meet her assignment requirements by comparing Shannon’s
assignment checklist with her essay. Nevertheless, Shannon was not sure if she would use
any of her tutor’s information/advice for future writing projects. Shannon thought that
reading aloud was helpful, but she couldn’t “catch all the things that tutors do.” Tracy
responded “no,” “yes,” and “yes.” Though Tracy said she did not get anything out of her
tutorial, she commented that it was helpful to hear her essay read aloud. Tracy also
believed that her tutor helped meet her essay requirement because she was more
confident when she submitted her final draft to her teacher. In the future, Tracy thinks
she will make sure her paragraphs “end with something strong before moving on” and
support her thesis. Lisa responded “no” to all my questions about her learning outcomes.
Lisa did not think she would take anything away from her tutorial or use any of the
information or strategies she and her tutor discussed. She did not think that her tutor
helped her meet her assignment requirements.

As I explain in the next section, students as such as Al or Kathleen may not have
acquired the information or strategies they think they did, and students such as Lisa may
have taken away something useful from her tutorial though she did not think so at that
time. Because most tutees’ most memorable and valuable revisions corresponded, and
because most tutees thought they would use information or strategies from their tutorials
for future writing projects, tutors could assume that those revisions, information, or
strategies represent students’ learning outcomes and ways students changed as writers.
But have writing center workers changed writers, or do writers think they have changed?

Comparing the Data
A comparison of tutorials, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes (Appendices D through H) shows that most (13 of 19) students' responses to my interview questions do not conclusively relate to one another. Though there are correlations, only 6 of 19 students' reasons for coming to the Center and/or major focus of their tutorials became their most memorable revisions and/or most important revisions, which also corresponded to what they took away from their consultations, to the Writing Center's role in meeting their assignment requirements, and to the information or strategies they would use again in the future. Consistency across these data implies scaffolding of students' learning. If tutors and tutees worked together to accomplish a mutual goal or task that led to tutees' successful completion of the goal or task, it seems likely that tutees comprehended and internalized information/advice for future use, which in turn suggests that tutees may have changed as writers. But even when perceptions correspond to tutorials and revisions, two of those six students did not report learning what writer center workers might expect tutees to take away from their consultations for future writing projects. On one hand, student's perceptions about what they think they learned do not necessarily correspond to a particular strategy or rule, the changes they made to their texts, or the major focus of their tutorials. On the other hand, most students' most important revisions are the changes they remember while revising, and the majority of students think they took away something valuable that they would use again in future writing contexts. Also, most students reported they obtained valuable by-products from their Writing Center consultations, even though perceptions do not clearly correspond to their tutorials and revisions. This section demonstrates that writing center workers cannot fully (or accurately) determine the value of their work based on summative comparisons of tutorials, revisions, and perceptions, especially comparisons in search of
linear correspondences as evidence of scaffolding and, therefore, effective tutorials.

**Expected Tutorial Outcomes**

Only three tutees participating in this study point toward tutorial outcomes that writing centers workers likely expect and intend: Sofia, Mona, and Cassandra. That is, when only looking at overall outcome data, I could tell that their tutorials, revisions and perceived learning outcomes corresponded. For example, Sofia’s most important revisions (paragraph glossing and reverse outlining) correspond to (1) what she remembered most about revising her essay (reorganizing), which also corresponds to (2) one of her reasons for coming to the Center (“flow”), (3) a major focus on her tutorial (organization), (4) some of her own changes (rearranging sentences and paragraphs), (5) what she took away from the tutorial, and (6) the information and/or strategy she would use in the future. Sofia “definitely” thought she took away an approach to organization that she will use: “going through each paragraph and defending why you put it there” and “writing a sentence about what each paragraph is about and doing.” An analysis of Sofia’s data suggests she learned how to gloss paragraphs and create reverse outlines and why they are useful. Furthermore, she continued to organize her draft using these strategies after her tutorial.

Mona’s most important revision (outlining a new draft) relates to (1) some of what she remembers most about revising (outlining new draft, LexisNexis, tutor’s knowledge about campus issues of violence), (2) her reasons for coming to the Center (organization, thesis matching content with supporting examples), (3) the major focus of her consultation (content and organization), (4) what she took away (outlining before drafting, LexisNexis database for research purposes), (5) the role the WC played in
meeting the requirements of her assignment (outlining based on her assignment’s questions), and (6) some of the information/strategies she would use again in the future (outlining, researching with databases). Mona used all of her tutor’s recommendations and made none of her own changes because she was working from a new outline. After her tutorial, she created a new draft from her outline that incorporated research and responded to purpose of her assignment.

What Cassandra remembers (grammar, spelling, organization, structure) and what she valued most (audience) do not necessarily or clearly correspond to one another but both match her reasons for coming to the Center (organization, grammar, thesis, intro, audience, voice) and the major focus on her session (audience, genre, voice, thesis/intro, organization). What she most remembers about revising is what her tutor told her to work on after their session and a change the tutor recommended that Cassandra rejected (both content and organization related). Cassandra’s most important revision (audience) corresponds to what she took away from her tutorial (insight about different audiences), a reason she came to the Center, and a major focus of her session. Cassandra also believed that her tutor “definitely” played a role in helping her meet her requirements because the tutor helped Cassandra identify a thesis and an audience, and helped her use “research” while still writing in her own voice. Overall, Cassandra thinks she will use the information she learned about audience for future writing projects.

Because Sofia, Mona, and Cassandra’s tutorial, revisions, and perceptions are related and appear to build on one another, the outcomes of their tutorials lead to results writing center workers likely expect. In other words, if the content of a tutorial primarily focuses on, for instance, organization, and if the revisions a student makes primarily
concerns organization, and if the student's perceived learning outcomes also concern organization, tutors and administrators might assume that student's tutorial was a success and that the student improved or changed as a writer. But the following two examples challenge this hypothesis.

**Unintended/Unexpected Tutorial Outcomes**

Even when students' perceptions correspond to their tutorials and texts, students may not have learned what their tutors set out to accomplish. For instance, Kathleen is the only student who believed her most important revision was answering the assignment. What she remembered most about revising, the major focus of her tutorial, and why she came to the Center relate to organization/structure. What Kathleen thinks she took away from her session matches the information and/or strategy she thinks she acquired: to make sure the content and organization of her essay support her thesis. She perceived the Writing Center and/or her tutor has playing an important role in helping her meet assignment requirements, which was her most important revision, presumably because her tutorial improved her confidence and her essay grade. (She scored higher on this essay than a previous one.) However, Kathleen did not report that she learned how to structure an essay after drafting; instead, she learned that she better create outlines in the future to avoid having to paragraph gloss for structure (i.e., identifying the main topic[s] of each paragraph). Kathleen did not revise her understanding of organization as a recursive process. I have no reason to expect that Kathleen would have gained this understanding, as revising her understanding of organization was not the focus of her tutorial or what she set out to accomplish. But I was surprised that Kathleen's perceived learning outcome (outlining) was not the revision strategy she used during her tutorial (paragraph
glossing), even though the two strategies are related to organization. It seems Kathleen left her tutorial thinking that pre-draft outlining would have eliminated the need for further organizing, which is not necessarily true and probably not what her tutor intended when introducing glossing as a revision strategy.

Katie's case is similar. Her most important revision (organization) corresponds to what she most remembers about revising her essay, which also matches a major focus of her session (content and organization), some of her own changes (organization, content, grammar), and what she took away from the tutorial (organization by paragraph glossing). Though the information or strategy she would use again (outlining “to create paragraphs that are already focused”) corresponds to organization, outlining as an approach suggests that she didn’t fully grasp the value of glossing. Instead, Katie learned that if she had just outlined in advance she would not have needed to gloss. I think Katie's tutor would have been surprised to discover that what Katie took away from her tutorial about paragraph glossing was how to avoid the need for applying it in the future. She implied that paragraph glossing is the price one pays for not outlining and that outlining precludes revisions related to organization. Still, the changes Katie made to her text that were not discussed during her tutorial suggest that she was continuing some of the work she and her tutor had begun.

**Desirable By-products**

Though the remaining 13 student writers responded to my interview questions with answers that do not all markedly correspond to one another, most of them think they learned something constructive about writing. The by-products of consultations may be as valuable as the outcomes writing center workers likely anticipate. For example, what
Tish remembered and valued, audience awareness, does not correspond to her reasons for coming to the Center, to create a bibliography, but corresponds to what she and her tutor spent most of their time discussing. Tish claims to have learned something useful about APA citation style, but her essay shows that she did not accurately create APA citations. However, Tish’s most important revision, audience awareness, corresponds to what she took away from her tutorial, the information/advice she believes she will use again, and the major focus on her tutorial. Though Tish probably did not learn what she thinks she did—her bibliography is evidence of that—Tish seemed to have discovered (or rediscovered) different audiences have different needs.

Anika’s reason for coming to the Center, to create transitions, corresponds to what she most remembers, her most important revision, and her tutorial’s major focus. Even though she believed her tutor had a role in helping her meet her requirements, Anika doesn’t think she learned how to create transitions. She didn’t take away anything specific from the session related to her particular revisions. Instead of learning how to create transitions, the information or strategy Anika would use again is the tutor: She would use the same tutor in the future. In other words, Anika seems to have discovered the value of asking for help, of having an outside reader; this was her first appointment at the Writing Center.

What Al remembered, syntax and style, and what he valued most, paraphrasing, do not correspond. But what Al most valued corresponds to why he came to the Center, which was to learn how and when to paraphrase. However, paraphrasing was not the major focus of his session. Yet, Al thinks he took away information or strategies about how and when to paraphrase, and thinks he will use the information or strategies in the future.
When I reviewed Al’s tutorial transcript, I did not understand the tutor’s “lesson” about paraphrasing. The most important aspect of Al’s tutorial may relate to his perception of the Writing Center’s role in meeting the requirements of his assignment: His tutor told him that it is not wrong to oppose an author or teacher as long as he supports his beliefs. I doubt Al learned much about paraphrasing, but Al thinks he learned that it is okay to disagree with authority in academic settings.

Shannon’s most important revisions correspond to what she remembers most about revising (style and organization), which correspond to most of her reasons for coming to the Center (structure and style), most of the major focus on her session (organization and style), and most of her own changes (organization and style). Though Shannon believed that she took away something from the tutorial related to style and organization (“going through each sentence one by one to see if they need rewording, combining, etc.”), she was “not sure” if she would use any of the information or strategies from her tutorial for future writing projects. She reported “reading aloud” as a helpful approach, which suggests she might try this strategy again, but Shannon also pointed out that she “can’t catch all the things tutors do.” Perhaps tutors do too much during consultations for students like Shannon to learn how, for instance, to edit sentences for style or how to organize. Still, Shannon believed that her tutor played an important role in helping her meet the requirements of her assignment because she “needed a reading for clarity,” which corresponds to one of her reasons for coming to the Center (to get “more feedback” than her instructor provided). Maybe a strategy that Shannon took away and will use again is an outside reader when her instructors’ comments are not helpful and when her own attempts to read aloud or read each sentence one by one are not enough. Though she did not indicate learning anything specific about organization or style, she
may have learned the value of reading aloud and reinforced her instincts to seek out another reader.

Lisa's most important revision (adding an example to make a point) corresponds to one of the items she remembered most about revising (adding example to support thesis, confidence, checking flow), which also corresponds to most of her reasons for coming to the Center (structure, content supporting thesis, another reader) and the major focus on her tutorial (content making an argument). However, Lisa didn't think she took anything away from her consultation, that the Writing Center or her tutor helped her meet the requirements of her assignment, or that she would use any of the information or strategies from her session for future writing tasks. Still, Lisa mentioned during my interview with her that she had taken away a strategy from a previous consultation; she learned how to improve the structure of her essays by reverse outlining and paragraph glossing. She applied those strategies to her current essay and wanted confirmation if the structure of her draft followed a logical progression. In other words, Lisa wanted to see if her paragraph glossing strategy had worked. Though Lisa responded “no” to each of the three questions I asked about learning outcomes, Lisa may have gained more confidence as a writer when she discovered that her organization strategy was a success—a strategy she didn't get from her current tutorial but a previous one. Lisa may have learned that paragraph glossing and reverse outlining were worth it because the structure of her draft made sense to her and her tutor.

**Conclusion**

This chapter demonstrates most tutees' requests for assistance concerned content-related matters and corresponded to the major focus of their tutorials, all tutees used all
or nearly all of their tutors’ information/advice, and most tutees think they learned something useful. At the same time, this chapter also demonstrates that students’ perceived learning outcomes did not always correspond to their tutorials and revisions. Comparing tutee’s tutorials, revisions, and perceptions challenge assumptions about success with writing center tutorials. For instance, writing center workers might assume that the best indicator of writers who were most likely changed by the tutoring process are the tutees who extended their tutors’ information/advice to further revisions they made on their own after tutorials: Anne, Celine, Emma, Karen, Lisa, Roxanne, and Sofia. Within this group, only one student, Sofia, demonstrated that her tutorial, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes matched. But consistency across perceptions, tutorials, and revisions did not guarantee predictable or even desirable tutorial outcomes; Katie and Kathleen are examples. Though each of them accomplished their tutorial goals of organization, what they learned about post-draft paragraph glossing was how to avoid the use of this strategy in the future by creating pre-draft outlines. Also within this group are the only two students, Lisa and Celine, who believed they took nothing away from their tutorials for future writing projects, and Lisa may have learned more than she recognized. Furthermore, students who did not extend their tutors’ information/advice may not have needed to do so and may have changed as writers for other reasons. In the following chapters, I analyze students’ reasons for their revisions and demonstrate ways specific cases complicate assumptions writing center workers may have about students’ development as writers.

In Chapter 4, I primarily focus on three students—Sofia, Mona, and Al—to show how tutees in general take up tutors’ information/advice and often are internally persuaded to revise for reasons that suggest they changed as writers in valuable ways. An
assessment of students’ reasons for revising will provide writing center workers with a better indication of ways writers change (or not) than what tutorial content, kinds of revisions, or perceived learning outcomes are able to demonstrate individually and as a whole. A comparison of students’ metacognitive statements during tutorials with their responses to my discourse-based interview questions provide a means for identifying students' engagement with their texts and tutors that goes beyond “following orders.” I also focus on Sofia, Mona, and Al to demonstrate that writers who reject and/or extend their tutors’ information/advice (Sofia) do not necessarily represent changed writers more than students who used all of their tutors’ information/advice and made none of their own changes (Mona and Al).

Even when writers are internally persuaded and appear to have changed as writers, further analysis into students’ rhetorical situations, tutorials, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes shows how students can take up their tutors’ information/advice in ways beyond tutors’ control—a point I only touch upon in this chapter in “Unintended/Unexpected Tutorial Outcomes” and “Desirable By-products.” In Chapter 5, I focus on three tutees—Lisa, Cassandra, and Emma—whom I believe are compelling examples of both categories. Lisa did not think she learned anything from her tutorial that she would use again, yet she claimed to have learned something valuable from a previous tutorial. Her example shows how students may recognize some revisions as transferable and others revisions as unique to their specific texts. I also demonstrate how Cassandra seems to have changed as a writer because her tutorial, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes correspond, which I mentioned in “Expected Tutorial Outcomes.” However, analysis of her rhetorical situation, tutorial, revisions, and discourse-based interview responses suggest that what Cassandra thinks she learned may
be limited in scope or incomplete. Emma believed her tutor helped her discover a way to organize her essay, but Emma’s tutorial, responses to my interview questions, and ultimately her revisions led me to conclude that Emma had ideological differences about “the” writing process, which in turn affected her interpretation of her tutor’s recommendations for organizing her text. Ironically, her resistance leads to productive negotiation and revisions. Lisa, Cassandra, and Emma, further represent students whose tutorials, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes are more involved than textual analyses or cursory surveys can reveal. Though they were internally persuaded to revise for reasons that made sense to them and their tutors at that time, Lisa, Cassandra, and Emma show how their potential learning outcomes are difficult to assess without an investigation into their reasons for revising.
CHAPTER 4

HOW AND WHY TUTEES REVISE: FROM METACOGNITION AND NEGOTIATION TO
INTERNALLY PERSUASIVE DISCOURSES

Writing center scholars have tried to assess consultations according to improvements in tutees’ writing, their perceptions of satisfaction, or the nature of tutorials based on tutoring styles. These types of assessments call into question a number of concerns, primarily underlying assumptions about what such data can tell us about the development of writers. Changes in students’ during and after tutorial drafts do not necessarily mean writers change along with their writing. Students’ perceptions of satisfaction might not correspond to the revisions students make and/or to the major focus of their tutorials. Likewise, tutees’ revisions might not relate to tutoring styles or the major focus of their tutorials. As I have already shown in the previous chapter, most of the students participating in this study did not report learning rhetorical concepts or revision strategies that corresponded to their requests for assistance, rhetorical situations, the major focus of their tutorials, and the revisions they made. In other words, a comparison of tutorials, revisions, and perceptions did not yield a clearly identifiable correspondence among those data. The lack of correlations could suggest that tutees were not actively engaged in their process as writers and that tutors were not doing their job of improving writers. However, an investigation into students’ reasons for having made particular choices while revising their texts can alter our initial interpretations of the effects tutorials have on tutees. In this chapter, I argue that the students participating in this study were internally persuaded to revise when the reasons for revision made sense to them, as indicated by their tutorials, drafts, and responses to discourse-based interview
First, I demonstrate how and why students take up tutors’ information/advice as convergences of internally persuasive and authoritative discourses. Specifically, I focus on three students to demonstrate ways tutees negotiate revision and their reasons for revising. These focal students also demonstrate that students who use all of their tutors’ information/advice and make none of their own changes to their texts can develop as writers in ways that are as valuable as the development of writers who extend and reject tutors’ information/advice. Comparing students’ metacognitive process during tutorials with their reasons for revising addresses my final research question: What metacognitive knowledge about writing are students enacting during and shortly after writing center tutorials?

**Convergences of Authoritative and Internally Persuasive Discourses**

To demonstrate that tutees were actively participating in their own development as writers and changed their understanding of their writing and/or themselves as writers, I analyze tutorial transcripts, students’ drafts during and after tutorials, and tutee interviews, particularly their responses to my discourse-based interview questions. I analyze tutorials to identify tutees’ self-regulation strategies. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, students monitor their revisions and think strategically about their choices by, for instance, questioning, predicting, clarifying, summarizing, crosschecking, self-correcting, rereading, asking for help, checking, planning, selecting, and/or inferring. Throughout tutorials, tutors elicit students’ inferred knowledge about their composing processes and the rhetorical moves they make in their texts. Even though tutees grant tutors considerable authority (i.e., they use all or nearly all the information/advice received),
most students examine tutors’ information/advice to see if it makes sense and is worthy of internalizing as generalized concepts to help them meet current and/or future writing goals. Locating instances when students strategize and self-assess their advancement toward a writing goal or task should lead us to a better understanding of how students make sense of what their writing center tutors recommend. That is, I assume tutees’ metacognition evident during tutorials can indicate potentially persuasive discourses. I also assume that discourse-based interviews can tell us whether writers were simply following orders as authoritative discourses or if they were internally persuaded to revise. Discourse-based interview questions are designed to elicit students’ tacit or implicit understanding of the choices they ultimately made when revising their texts. If students understand their revisions and if those revisions are meaningful to them, I assume that, in Bakhtin’s terms, internally persuasive and authoritative discourses converged as tutor-tutee interdiscursivity and that such a convergence can lead to “changed” writers. In the context of this study, changed writers are tutees who alter their understanding of themselves as writers and/or change their thinking about a given paper.

In the following examples, I focus on three students to show how they take up their tutors’ information/advice for internally persuasive reasons. I chose these students based on the categories described in Chapter 3: students who use most of the information/advice they receive and extend it to their own revisions, students who use all the information/advice they receive and make none of their own revisions, and students whose potential learning outcomes point toward useful by-products even though their tutorials, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes do not clearly correspond. Sofia, Mona, and Al represent different kinds of success stories. Sofia’s tutorial/case appears ideal from an assessment perspective. Her tutorial shows her inferring a revision strategy,
her drafts show her applying that strategy to her own revisions, and her discourse-based interview indicates that she understood why the revision strategy was useful and would use it again in other contexts. In contrast, Mona used all the advice she received and made no additional revisions beyond what she and her tutor discussed. It would be easy to assume that Mona did not change as a writer or learned less than Sofia because we do not see Mona applying what she reports learning; she did not extend information/advice to revisions that were not addressed during her tutorial. However, an analysis of her tutorial, her revisions, and her discourse-based interview suggest she may have changed as a writer in ways that are as valuable as Sofia’s potentially improved process. Al also used all of his tutor’s information/advice and made no revisions beyond what was discussed during his tutorial. But unlike Mona and Sofia, Al did not substantively revise his essay, and his perceived learning outcomes do not directly correspond to the major focus of his tutorial. If I had analyzed only his perceptions and during and after drafts, I would have assumed Al did not change or develop as a writer. Yet my analysis of his tutorial and discourse-based interview suggests that substantive changes to his draft were not a critical factor in his development as a writer and that the learning outcomes Al reported are as valuable as the learning outcomes Sofia and Mona reported. If I had only analyzed the data presented in the previous chapter (correspondences among tutorials, perceptions, and revisions), I would have assumed that Sofia was the only student in my entire sample to have altered her thinking about her writing. But triangulating those data with metacognition during tutorials and discourse-based interviews provided compelling counterpoints, such as Al and Mona. Their cases test assumptions writing center workers might have about tutees’ potential learning outcomes.
Sofia: Applying and Extending Can Change Writers

Sofia’s story is especially compelling because she inferred a new revision strategy that she later employed independent of her tutor. Out of six students whose tutorials, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes corresponded, Sofia’s revisions were the most extensive, and she was the only tutee from that group to extend the information/advice she received to further revisions. For these reasons, I believe Sofia will be able to apply what she thinks she learned to future writing projects—as does she. What follows is an analysis of Sofia’s participation as a tutee, the changes she made to her draft, and her reasons for revising.

Sofia had drafted an essay for a comparative literature course, a general education class that fulfilled one of her electives as a first-year student. The final text was due the day following her tutorial. She scheduled an appointment at the Writing Center because, as she told me during our interview, she wanted another person’s perspective on her draft, especially “to see that it made any sense.” Even though “you think you have everything in mind...you can lose sight of things.” Sofia indicated on her appointment form that she specifically wanted to work on “flow” and “audience” but also wanted “feedback” in general. This was her first appointment at the Center.

The purpose of Sofia’s assignment was, as she told me, “to take a book from class and something outside of class and kind of make sense of it, analyze it....” What she told her tutor, Amy, is not much different:

Yeah, so basically my paper is we had to write a final on um...well really anything I guess. Generally they suggested you take like one book from class and then something from outside like a different book or different form of media that related to it and kind of like analyze it, break it down, relate it to the class, explain...
After describing her assignment to Amy, Sofia explained the purpose of her essay: She was comparing the book to the film adaptation, specifically the treatment of the character Tom Bombadil. While Tom Bombadil appeared in the novel, he was not in the film *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Sofia wanted to persuade her audience, academics familiar with the book or film, that Bombadil symbolized nature and was the only character “who wasn’t swayed by the power of the ring at all.” His disappearance from the film adaptation suggested, to Sofia, the battle between good versus evil was reduced to a plot that sold movie tickets and did not do justice to J. R. R. Tolkien’s novel.

Having established her purpose, audience, and reasons for coming to the Center, Sofia began to read her draft aloud, which was 10 double-spaced pages. Midway through the second page and the end of her first paragraph, Sofia paused to mention that she might have run-on sentences. This interruption provided Amy with an opportunity to respond: She did not see run-on sentences, but she saw “a lot of plot summary.” Here is the excerpt from Sofia’s (“S”) tutorial that marks the beginning of what became part of the major focus on her tutorial with Amy (“A”):

A: Well I don’t see any run on sentences here. Um…what I did see was a lot of plot summary. Because

S: {yeah}

A: you see how long this paragraph is?

S: Yeah.

A: Most of that is plot summary in here. So what I would do is approach this with the thought in mind that you’re audience who’s reading it, has read *Lord of the Rings* and has seen the film.
S: Okay, all right. I wasn’t sure, so I should-

A: Yeah, you want to avoid plot summary,

S: {okay}

A: as much as possible...Um-

S: Yeah, cause these lines are really cheesy, but it’s like the...the evil lord wants the ring, and...

A: Yeah, exactly, so you don’t want to simplify this beautiful work.

S: {yeah, yeah}

A: You want to make sure that it’s...um...

S: Okay...

A: You know, just assume that they’ve read the entire text and so they know what it’s all about.

S: Okay.

A: Um...So that...um...yeah...I mean this is very well written so far. Okay, continue (laughing).

S: Alright, wait, did I just end with this paragraph?

A: Yeah.

Sofia continues to read her draft. Halfway through her second paragraph, Amy points out more plot summary:

S: Um “In order to fully comprehend the sheer significance of Tom Bombadil one must understand his place in the structure of Middle Earth. The nature of the hobbit as the only creature the reader observes encountering Tom Bombadil and the foundational theory utilized by J.R.R. Tolkien in order to create the complexity that is the Lord of the Rings. Frodo encounters Bombadil early on in Tolkien’s trilogy in book of The Fellowship of the Ring. With three other hobbits by the names of Sam, Mary, and Tippin, Tolkien fashions hobbits to resemble humans about half the height of man with a hearty appetite and a disdain for leaving the shire, which is the tiny and almost insignificant area of Middle Earth that they
reside in."

A: So do you see that sentence?

S: Yeah...

A: It's pretty much summary.

S: Okay, all right.

A: So, that's something else that you can take out unless you're using that specifically to say something about the meaning of the piece.

S: Well kind of because...well, what's really peculiar about these books is that one of the fantasy literature techniques used is identifications, so I'm sure in other literature too, which character you identify with, and

A: {yeah}

S: I guess there's like this paradox, like, uh, the readers don't identify with the humans, um we see it through the eyes of these hobbits which are essentially like half humans.

A: {yeah}

S: And, kind of like, kind of lame in a sense, just like hearty appetites, they're like really...all they like to do is hang out in the shire which is where they were kids-

A: Yeah and smoke and eat and...

S: Yeah

A: Yeah

S: So...and...if that taints the reader's perception of Tom Bombadil in any way. I was trying to keep that in mind (unclear).

A: {okay}

S: I don't know if I developed that further or if that comes across at all.

A: Okay, so... "They are very (unclear)." Um...

S: I was just trying to build up like...the frame of mind you get before you encounter Tom Bombadil. I don't know-

A: (quietly) Okay.
In this excerpt, Sofia is negotiating her use of plot summary. By negotiate I am referring to Sofia's metacognition. Students monitor their progress and strategize by, for instance, questioning, predicting, clarifying, summarizing, cross checking, self-correcting, rereading, asking for help, checking, planning, selecting, and/or inferring. In this particular example, Sofia is clarifying her decision to include a context for the Shire and asking Amy "if that comes across" in her draft.

Before she can respond to Sofia's query, Amy reads the remainder of the paragraph, which I quote in full below. For the purpose of assessing Amy's information/advice and Sofia's subsequent revisions, I numbered each sentence:

1. In order to fully comprehend the sheer significance of Tom Bombadil, one must understand his place in the structure of Middle-earth, the nature of the hobbit as the only creature the reader observes encountering Tom Bombadil, and the foundation of theory utilized by J. R. R. Tolkien in order to create the complexity that is The Lord of the Rings. (2) Frodo encounters Tom Bombadil early on in Tolkien's trilogy in Book I of The Fellowship of the Ring, with three other hobbits by the names of Sam, Merry, and Pippen. (3) Tolkien fashions hobbits to resemble humans, about half the height of man, with a hearty appetite, Tolkien disdain for leaving the Shire, which is the tiny and almost insignificant area of Middle-earth that they reside in (Fellowship 72). (4) They are very childlike in their ignorance of the greater goings-on of the whole of Middle-earth, yet it is Frodo, a hobbit, that the reader primarily identifies with as a: “psychic attachment to a character or entity perceived as similar to the self” (lecture notes pg. 4). (5) This means that through Frodo's eyes, on the first leg of his journey, in his first time ever leaving the same area he tumbled about during his childhood, we meet Tom Bombadil.

After Amy reads this paragraph, Sofia begins to infer why Amy thinks it contains too much plot summary. Amy further explains herself and asks Sofia for more analysis and less summary:
S: So, is this, cause I can, this...this paragraph doesn’t really um...

A: Yeah, like what’s the point of it?...

S: Um...(laughing) I like [the point I was trying to-]

A: [Okay, see, this is] this is the point of it right here, isn’t it?

S: Yeah

A: Do you mind if I write on this?

S: Oh not at all. You can mark it up and...so I remember what was said actually.

A: This is the point, right?

S: Yeah, I was trying to build up identification.

A: {right} So...that’s lost up here...

S: Oh, okay. This is what, like this first sentence I wanted as the main things needed to understand in order...you need to get in order to fully comprehend Tom Bombadil, this I’m seeing as plot summary, and I want to try to explain who you identify with as one of the things.

A: Okay...

S: Yeah, cause you need to understand...yeah, the nature of the hobbit as the only creature...like that’s one. Identification here...I go into theory later, and then together you kind of get this. (unclear)

A: Why ...

S: I bring up (unclear), um...

A: Why is this here and not in your introduction?

S: Okay, would that be better? I guess that makes more sense. Yeah I guess as a...beginning, a foundation...

A: Yeah.

S: Okay.

Sofia first clarifies and defends the purpose of her second paragraph ("to build up
identification”), particularly her first sentence, though she agrees with Amy that her second sentence is plot summary. After Sofia clarifies the purpose of the first sentence of her second paragraph, Amy asks Sofia why it doesn’t appear in her introduction. Sofia questions the move but quickly decides moving that sentence “makes more sense” than leaving it where it is because the sentence establishes a key point she wants to make as part of the “foundation” of her essay. Sofia indicates she understands which sentence is worth moving (1) and which sentences are plot summary (2 and 3). Amy then shows Sofia the order she recommends for the first two paragraphs so that Sofia can more clearly support her point about identification as psychic attachment:

A: Um...so if you do that and then this is plot summary and you don’t need it,
S: {yeah}
A: so basically what you want to do is develop this.
S: Okay.
A: So how is the reader developing a psychic attachment to character? How is that happening?... It’s through this, right? Kind of...
S: Yeah...
A: So then in that case, you put this AFTER that, and you explain-
S: Explain [how that happens.]
A: [How...how they] play together.
S: {okay}
A: and how he uses, you know, it’s like this kind of man, kind of really...cute and simplistic little childlike person
A: {yeah}
A: um...to make the reader sympathize with him.
S: Okay.
A: So how does that work out?
S: {okay}
A: Um...yeah, does that make sense?
S: Yeah, it definitely does. It’s a really good way to look at it. I never saw that; that’s good.
A: (laughing)
S: Good job (laughing).
A: Okay...okay, so...you knew what you were doing. It was just...
S: Okay...
A: (laughing)
S: Alright, alright...That makes lot more sense...Do you want-
A: Yeah, you can keep going.

Amy points out which sentences Sofia should rearrange in order to more fully develop the point Sofia is trying to make about psychic attachment. In doing so, Sofia sees the progression of her logic from a different perspective and is able to predict Amy’s rationale for revising. Specifically, Sofia interrupts Amy and begins to finish her sentence until their speech overlaps: Sofia recognizes that she can “explain how [psychic attachment] happens” or, in Amy’s words, “how [Sofia’s sentences] play together,” through revision. Sofia agrees with Amy that moving her first sentence to a specific location in her first paragraph, deleting the second and third sentences, and further developing her fourth and fifth sentences “definitely” makes “a lot more sense.” Though Sofia hadn’t previously thought about those revisions (“I never saw that”), her comments suggest she understands why those revisions are necessary. Sofia’s responses to my discourse-based interview questions also suggest she understood why rearranging sentences and deleting plot
summary to develop her ideas “definitely” made sense; she needed to “avoid too much summary” and instead “emphasize more Tolkien’s like or Tom Bombadil’s ideal significance and theoretical significance in the beginning of the text.”

While reading her third paragraph, Sofia self-corrects. She recognizes another example of plot summary, which suggests she can not only identify plot summary on her own but is also persuaded by her tutors’ previous suggestion to eliminate background information that is not necessary:

All right, “The four hobbits, in a decision to leave those employed by the dark lord to follow them, and retrieve the ring, off their trail, opt not to follow the paved road...as the obvious path and instead choose to venture off into the old forest. They quickly find themselves lost,” plot summary “and in danger of the subtle magic of the old forest that symbolically emphasizes the well-known frustration of being lost in unfamiliar territory.”

Sofia’s self-interruption suggests she recognizes the need for more revision (“...they quickly find themselves lost,” plot summary “and in danger of...”). Amy confirms Sofia’s hunch, stating that the latter half of her third paragraph “is good,” but the first part “is not so good” because it is “plot summary again.”

At this point in their conversation, Amy and Sofia begin to talk about the purpose of her third paragraph and the purpose of her essay:

A: Um...(15s) So basically this is saying...that he’s like one with nature. That’s basically what you’re...using...
S: Um...
A: Is that the purpose of this paragraph?
S: The purpose of this one was mostly to build, well I guess he’s in a natural context, mostly to build up his um...All, well how he’s just like this old man that’s
also young at the same time, and how we believe that from Tolkien’s writing.

A: {okay}

S: Cause how he’s like silly and serious at the same time.

A: {um hum} So what’s the point of...of establishing this?

S: The point of establishing it is, well this...almost how he parallels...their silliness, but he has this wisdom

A: {um hum}

S: because he’s old.

A: {okay} So in the context of the paper?

S: What this point is for?

A: Yep...

S: Um...basically how, inherently in his character, he’s this young, wise, helpful man.

A: Okay, so how does that support your thesis?

S: Um...well...as...I think the three things you need to like understand is his place in the structure of Middle-earth,

A: {um hum}

S: so, definitely with fantasy stories you see um...the character goes on a journey and they have help along the way. So this is his help and the form he does it is through this like joyful wisdom, joy coming from nature...wisdom coming from age...

A: Okay...so, what is your thesis statement?

S: Um, the basic, the thing that I really want to...I always get confused about thesis statements cause throughout the paper you’re supposed to come to like the conclusion of a thesis, right?

A: Yeah

S: And like develop it more, kind of deal...Um...cause basically...I...I think this is my thesis, or the interesting thing that I got out of the text and I want to like point out, but in order to do that you have to...under...the reason why this is such a big deal that he was left out, I have to build up why it’s big, like who he is. Like...
different sides of his character.

A: Okay

S: Cause a lot of people write him off like, “oh, silly man.”

A: Yeah

S: He doesn’t like develop the plot.

Amy asks Sofia about the purpose of her third paragraph, and Sofia clarifies her reasoning: to establish that Frodo, Merry, and Pippin receive help from Bombadil, who is young and silly, and old and wise. When asked about her thesis, Sofia clarifies the relationship between the purpose of her third paragraph and the point of her essay. For Sofia to argue that Bombadil’s absence from the film adaptation “is such a big deal,” she must first establish his importance as a character. Though Bombadil doesn’t develop the plot, Sofia believes that Bombadil is a character not to be taken lightly and should have not been eliminated from the film. After all, had it not been for Bombadil, the hobbits would have been destroyed by Old Man Willow, and the journey would have ended as soon as it began. After Sofia clarifies her intentions, Amy understands what Sofia is trying to do in her essay: to establish why Bombadil is important to the book, why he was left out of the film, and what that says about society. Sofia confirms Amy’s interpretation and reads her fourth paragraph.

As with the first three paragraphs, Amy asks questions, Sofia clarifies, they determine the purpose of the paragraph in relation to her thesis, and plan revisions. By the end of their discussion of the fourth paragraph, Sofia begins to recognize this pattern for herself and describes a strategy that models Amy’s suggestions:

S: I think I should basically just like...I think if I go through and...this paragraph
Sofia infers from Amy a revision strategy she can use to revise the remaining six pages of her essay: indentify the purpose of each paragraph, delete plot summary, rearrange sentences if needed, and add more analysis of her key points. This approach will help Sofia clarify and strengthen her argument.

Before concluding their session, Amy reiterates the strategy they've been using (paragraph glossing), reviews Sofia's three main points, writes a checklist for Sofia to take with her, and reminds Sofia that her first paragraph “should be a roadmap” for her essay. In sum, the excerpts I have cited show Sofia negotiating her revisions by asking for help, questioning Amy's information/advice, clarifying her own reasoning, predicting Amy's intentions, inferring a revision strategy, and ultimately planning her next steps. The metacognition evident in her tutorial suggests that Sofia was an active participant as a tutee and that her tutor's recommendations were convincing and useful.

She not only agreed with her tutor's recommendations for revising but also appears to have internalized a new approach for revision. A comparison of her during and after drafts indicates that Sofia applied the information/advice she received during her tutorial by extending it to the remainder of her essay (see Appendix I). A quick glance of both drafts shows the original version of Sofia's essay had thirteen paragraphs and the
revised draft has eighteen. During the tutorial, Sofia and Amy only read through paragraph 4; therefore, paragraph 5 of the original draft marks the beginning of Sofia’s revisions without Amy. The most prominent changes Sofia made include rearranging paragraphs and several sentences within them in order to support her claims and to assemble text by topic. In other words, Sofia applied the paragraph glossing strategy she discussed with Amy, and it appears to have helped her clarify and strengthen her points.

For example, the information presented in paragraph 5 of Sofia’s original draft is moved to paragraph 7, 13, and 14 in her revised draft. Here is how paragraph 5 originally appeared:

Once Frodo and the other hobbits are comfortably situated in Tom Bombadil’s house, and are being entertained by his wife, Goldberry, Frodo proceeds to ask who Tom Bombadil is. The response is simply, “He is” (fellowship 140). Goldberry’s response is similar to an explanation once given by Jesus, the Christian Messiah, as he explains who he is, written in John 14:6, “I am the way”. This further explains the godly and religious effervescence that Tom Bombadil exudes. That consistency of elusive wisdom and grandeur are comforting to the hobbits who are cradled in Bombadil’s domain, so early on in their journey. This cradling effect does not end with the hobbits, but it extends to the reader, as they are eased out of the Shire, and placed in increasingly foreign surroundings filled with elements in contradiction with the reader’s world of experience. This is a writing technique utilized by Tolkien, in order to imbed the familiarity of Middle-earth, further authenticate his world of fantasy, and to establish a mounting suspense.

Sofia deleted the first sentence, presumably because it is plot summary. She moved the next two sentences to another part of her essay that also discusses Bombadil’s religious symbolism and becomes paragraph 7 of the revised draft:

J.R.R. Tolkien provides Tom Bombadil with certain elements to his character that parallel Christianity. This coincides with what Por Binde writes in the essay “Nature in Roman Catholic Tradition”, explaining the background of Tolkien’s
Roman Catholic philosophy on nature incorporated into *The Lord of the Rings*. “No single Roman Catholic view of nature, but several [...] (1) the notion that nature is matter, as distinct from the spiritual; (2) the idea that nature is related to the divine; and (3) the conception of nature as a realm of supernatural forces”13. With the application of these principles to a close reading of Tom Bombadil, he is not literally nature, as his full spirit is distinct from such matter, but he uses the supernatural magic of sung verse through the words of the divine throughout his domain. Even at one point Frodo asks Goldberry, Tom Bombadil’s wife, who Tom Bombadil is. The response is simply, “He is”14. Goldberry’s response is similar to an explanation once given by Jesus, the Christian Messiah, as he too explains who he is, written in John 14:6, “I am the way”15. This further explains the godly and religious effervescence that Tom Bombadil exudes. Tolkien himself wrote in his famous essay “On Fairy-Stories”, “Even fairy-stories as a whole have three faces: the Mystical towards the Supernatural; the Magical towards Nature; and the Mirror of scorn and pity towards Man.”16. The reader is deeply affronted with the scorn and pity towards man, which is seen in the Bible, as man has lost such a carefree ability to connect with nature, and perhaps the ability to completely understand Tom Bombadil as an ethereal being.

Sofia also moved the remaining sentences of paragraph 5 (about the “cradling effect”) to support the claim made in the first sentence of paragraph 9 (from the original draft), which argues that the film director’s exclusion of Tom Bombadil from the film “was an indirect blaspheme towards Tolkien’s words.” By moving information from paragraph 5 (original draft) about the “cradling effect” as a writing technique Tolkien used to establish “authentication,” Sofia is able to show her readers why the film director “blasphemes.” In short, she moved the information in paragraph 5 to appear with related information in paragraph 9 and then separated the content in paragraph 9 to become paragraphs 13 and 14 of the revised draft: one that argues against the film director’s decision and one “in defense of the director,” recognizing the need to cut some sections of the novel. These revisions suggest Sofia was able to use paragraph glossing/reverse outlining as an effective revision strategy for selecting and synthesizing related bits of information.
During my interview with Sofia, I pointed out three of the changes she made that were not directly addressed during her tutorial and asked her why she made those revisions: the changes made to paragraphs 9 and 10 of the original draft, as well as the changes made to her concluding paragraph. For my purposes here, I focus on the revisions related to paragraph 9 (which, as discussed above, affected paragraph 5). Sofia's reasons for revising paragraph 9 pertain to her argument, supporting her thesis through one more example that sets up her critique of Jackson's film adaptation. This particular revision contributed to the logic and "flow" of her essay, and the logic of her essay hangs on the content and order of her paragraphs. As I mentioned earlier, paragraph 9 had two purposes, to defend her critique of the film adaptation and to defend the director's decision. Regarding the former, Sofia moved the information from paragraph 5 about the value of authentication as narrative strategy to appear shortly after she introduces the director Peter Jackson, which is the beginning of her critique of the film (see Appendix I, paragraph 9 of the original draft and paragraph 13 of revised draft). Up until this point in her essay, Sofia had established the importance of Tom Bombadil in the novel as a representation of nature, Christianity, and a transcendent class. She separated the two topics in paragraph 9 (from the original draft) to further support her thesis: Not only does Bombadil's exclusion from the film limit viewers' understanding of "the subtle ambiguities of the pristine morals of nature that he characterizes," but his exclusion also eliminates a core strategy that fantasy writers use to authenticate the worlds they create. Sofia explains:

...I wanted to show, I wanted to...emphasize more Tolkien's like or Tom Bombadil's ideal significance and theoretical significance in the beginning of the text that I feel like that's more powerful as to why and when I finally talk about the movie. I wanted to get down to technically, like also, okay like, aside from all the like religion and nature and class-less[ness] and, you know, powers of mental [?],
that you get rid of in the movie, like you’re also getting rid of a technical aspect of Tolkien that’s really effective.

In other words, Sofia moved the relevant text from paragraph 5 (original draft) to support her claim that Peter Jackson indirectly blasphemes Tolkien. The sentences she moved to their new location with the Jackson sentence (from paragraph 9) are “about Tom Bombadil [who] was used technically by Tolkien to like ease the reader into the fantasy world, and thus like one of the methods of like authenticating the world is by making it longer, and he makes [the novel] longer.”

To keep the conversation going, I explained to Sofia what her new paragraph, paragraph 13, which is comprised of information from paragraphs 5 and 9 of the original draft, suggested to me (“M”) when I read it, and she (“S”) confirmed my interpretation:

M: This authentication strategy, it’s a strategy that you’re saying fantasy writers have to use.

S: Yeah.

M: And it’s a, because that’s really what this whole paragraph then

S: [Yeah. That Jackson-]

M: [talks about] like that’s the reason that it’s a problem that Jackson leaves him out of the movie.

S: Uh-huh.

M: He’s actually leaving out a core strategy that fantasy writers are using.

S: Yeah.

M: That’s what this paragraph suggests to me.

S: Yeah. That’s what I was going for...

M: Ok, so it just really follows your point.
S: Yeah.

M: It just makes your point stronger.

S: Yeah. Yeah.

Authentication as narrative device (paragraph 5) is now directly tied to Jackson (paragraph 9) because this information supports her critique of the film director’s decision to cut Tom Bombadil from the movie. In other words, Sofia matched the evidence or support that had appeared in paragraph 5 with a claim she had made in paragraph 9, all of which became paragraph 13. Sofia not only applied and extended paragraph glossing but also recognized and demonstrated its effectiveness.

Sofia also inferred from her tutor another related revision strategy: reverse outlining. She told me that the most important step she took to revise her essay was “probably the whole outlining, seeing which paragraph meant what and where it flows, where it belongs best.” She outlined by “basically writing a sentence for each paragraph.” “I wrote like a list for paragraph one, like introduction, I put one, introduction, then like two, I put like a sentence as what idea that was. So I got three, I put three and then put what idea that was unless I found chunks of ideas, and I was just like, chunk one....” Through this joint process of reverse outlining and paragraph glossing, Sofia reorganized her essay and, at the same, recognized places requiring more analysis. She was “seeing if [she] wanted to add more of the idea” of what a particular paragraph was “doing.” When I asked Sofia if there was something in the tutorial she “took away and would use in the future,” she “definitely” thought so: “It’s really just helpful at the end of each paragraph and be like, what does this mean like, this first sentence in a paragraph, what does [this mean], and you almost have to defend why you put it there, which really keeps you on top
of like why did I put it there.” “Just questioning myself, like making myself defend this, so why am I writing this,” helped Sofia revise her essay beyond her tutorial. The only information/advice Sofia rejected entailed using scissors to literally cut her paper into paragraphs to visualize new arrangements. Sofia “didn’t like the idea” because, as her tutorial and interview responses suggest, she figured out another way to restructure her draft that worked well for her.

My analysis of Sofia’s tutorial and revisions along with her responses to my interview questions suggest that she was trying to clarify and improve the moves she made in her draft and that she was internally persuaded to apply the paragraph glossing/reverse outlining strategy because it helped her re-see those moves and better communicate her interpretations to her readers. In sum, Sofia requested assistance with organization and deduced a valuable revision strategy to help her organize. Her conversation with Amy suggests she understood the value of that strategy and knew how to pick up where they left off. Sofia’s during and after drafts show that Sofia did indeed apply that strategy to the remainder of her essay. Moreover, her reasons for revising suggest Sofia understood the rationale behind her choices. Taken together, Sofia’s tutorial, revisions, perceptions, and reasons for revising suggest she internalized her tutor’s recommendations, which became her own authoritative discourses. She applied strategies for revising that appear to have changed her understanding of her writing. To put it other way, Sofia extended the information/advice discussed during her tutorial to revisions not discussed during her tutorial for reasons that made sense to her and corresponded to the purpose of her essay. In Sofia’s words, “…it was like my idea that answered the assignment, but in order to convey my idea, the Writing Center helped me find clarity, which is like essential. I mean you can’t… no one would be able understand my idea if it
wasn’t understandable by others.” Considering both direct and indirect evidence, Sofia’s story is an excellent example of writing center tutors changing writers.

Mona: Applying But Not Extending Can Change Writers

Mona is a student who used all the information/advice she received and made no additional revisions beyond her tutor’s recommendations. It would be easy to assume Mona, and students like her, learned less or was not internally persuaded to revise because she did not extend what was discussed during her tutorial to her own revisions. But even students who do not apply a revision strategy or some other information/advice to further changes in their texts can revise for internally persuasive reasons and potentially learn something valuable. Like Sofia, Mona came to the Center to work on first-order concerns, but instead of reverse outlining or paragraph glossing an existing draft, Mona started over, writing from a new outline and adding research to support a revised thesis. Of all the other students in the same category (Al, Laura, Kathleen, Melissa, Shannon, and Tracy), Mona’s revisions were the most substantive, using both a revision strategy as well as new research tools. Though an analysis of her tutorial and interview responses does not point toward an arguably ideal scenario in which a tutee successfully emulated a revision strategy, Mona’s case represents instances when tutees revisit and modify their understanding of existing strategies for revising. Mona did not apply what she thinks she learned to further revisions but was internally persuaded to re-see her assignment guidelines and, therefore, gain more control over her writing than she had before her tutorial.

At the time of this study, spring 2008, Mona was enrolled in a college composition course as a freshman and had already taken a basic writing course her first semester. Like
many of the students in the sample, Mona heard about the Center from a composition instructor who recommended it. This was her second writing center consultation since entering college. She told me during our interview that her previous experience at the Center had been positive: “the last time I came here, they really did a good job, and I felt comfortable....” Hence, Mona figured she should come to the Center again. Also, she “was already at the library” and “needed help.” Her essay was “all over the place” and due the next day. Mona was writing a 5- to 8-page essay for a sociology course, in which she needed to “take a social problem at UMass and relate it back to [her sociology] class.” Mona chose to focus on campus violence as the topic of her essay. Although audience was not mentioned during her tutorial—but may have been stated in her assignment—Mona told me during our interview that her audience was her teacher. According to her appointment form, Mona sought assistance with “organization, supporting examples” and “to see if topic/thesis answered.”

While setting an agenda with her tutor, Mona lamented her draft was “so disorganized” and did not “sound smart.” She showed Amy, her tutor, the assignment guidelines, Amy suggested they begin by reading aloud. Below is the first paragraph, as Mona read it:

The human psyche operates in many ways with two of the most common ways are we follow or we lead. For the most part we follow orders and mimic the actions of others. Even from childhood we are bombarded with rules on how to act, what is wrong, and what is right. We are exposed to the bad and good characters of life through the media. But what happens when we sympathize with the wrong characters as a child? We live in a world of hypocrisy. The world teaches the new generations that violence is wrong and should be avoided at all costs. Um, as this paper continues your view of violence, why it occurs will be challenged and the social problem will jump....
Before completing the last sentence, Mona admits that she does not like her thesis statement: “I feel like that's a really bad thesis statement.” Amy uses this opportunity to recommend some revisions, namely to identify UMass as the specific site of violent social problems and, therefore, avoid generalizing.

What follows is an excerpt of this conversation, which I quote at length to show Amy’s ("A") recommendations and Mona’s ("M") ensuing confusion about conventions for writing introductions and thesis statements:

A: Um...so...two things that jump out at me right away. One is that you didn’t say UMass anywhere in there, and you’re addressing the problems at UMass, right? The second one is that you use generalizations...

M: {yeah}

A: which you want to stay away from...So a way to avoid that is to mention UMass right away and give examples of violence on campus. (3s)

M: Even in the opening?

A: Um hum...You don’t have to go into detail about them,

M: {um hum}

A: but if you just allude to them...

M: {right}

A: and then talk about...you know, how they are...Let’s see...Um...So go back to the questions and say...Alright, so who defines it as problematic? So, okay...there’s violence at UMass...it is a problem...obviously, period (laughing).

M: {yeah}

A: Um...people who find it problematic are students, administration, parents, whomever.

M: {yeah}

A: Um...and then you know...[Is it legitimate?]
M: [Say all that in the opening?]

A: Yeah... just say it: boom, boom, boom, boom. And then... as you go through the paper, then you expand upon that. Does that make sense?

M: Yeah.

A: Um... (4s) okay.

M: Can I write that?

A: Yeah, absolutely, here um...

M: I'm gonna be doing this paper all night. (laughing)

A: (laughing) (5s)

M: And then, just um... state the guidelines?

A: Yeah, just answer the questions briefly.

M: So how do you, so like starting it, you shouldn't start it with generalization at all?

A: Generally no. In a paper that's only five to eight pages I would stick with, you know, more precise and defined details.

M: Okay, so basically rewriting this entire thing.

A: Yeah (laughing).

M: I'm gonna die. Okay.

Towards the beginning of his excerpt, Mona questions Amy's advice. She is surprised to hear that “even in the opening” she should give examples of campus violence at UMass. Amy further explains how Mona should rewrite the introduction by referring to the assignment guidelines, which asks students to address specific questions in their essays, such as what is the purported social problem, who defines it as problematic, and whether the problem is legitimate. At this point, their speech overlaps. While Amy describes what, to her, is a straightforward process, Mona questions Amy: “Say all that in
the opening?” Even though Amy restates her advice (“just say it: boom, boom, boom, boom” and “expand upon that”), and even though Mona tells Amy she made sense (“Yeah”) and takes notes, Mona needs more clarification and checks again, perhaps to make sure she has heard Amy correctly: “…you shouldn't start it with generalization at all?” At the end of this excerpt, Mona appears to have accepted Amy’s advice, but it is not clear if Mona fully understands how and why she should rewrite her introductory paragraph, “this entire thing.”

Before Mona continues to read her draft, she forewarns Amy that the remainder of her essay is not “gonna get better and better.” By the end of the second paragraph, Mona predicts Amy’s opinion of it:

A: Okay...[So...]
M: [It's very general]
A: Yeah, it is. Um...there are things that you can extract from this though that you can apply directly to UMass. Um...so here "when people think of violence they usually think of physical contact, but it can be much more than just physical aggression" you can take that and then if you have examples from what has happened on campus...you can say...for example there are people who are aggressive and /trying to get each other here/ and...this was an incident, case in point. Something like that...Um...(7s) Does it ask you what the source of these problems are?
M: Later on.
A: {okay} Oh, there's...okay, "What is the cause...?" Um...okay so "how does it reflect on the social problems in larger society?" Okay...
M: I think that's later [on] also.
A: [Your-] yeah. It seems like you're going backwards, like...here you're saying, "larger society..." and then...and then [you're thinking UMass], right.
M: [ending with that
Amy tries to show that Mona’s assignment is asking her to move from particular details (“the source of these problems”) to general principles (“social problems in larger society”), a shift from deductive to inductive reasoning. Mona seems to understand why “that makes sense” and takes more notes.

For the next five minutes, Mona continues to read her essay. Periodically, Amy halts the reading process to point out places Mona could expand and explicitly relate to the assignment guidelines/questions, such as the types of interventions used to address the problem and if the problem can be solved. However, Mona suspects the text she has written and read so far does not have “anything to do with the paper.” As Amy continues to point out the need for specific examples, the less satisfied Mona is with her draft. She doubts her draft is salvageable and is frustrated with herself: “I think it’s the worst paper I’ve ever like seen in my life.” Though she wrote “two other essays in the past couple days and they [were] good,” Mona admits she’s experiencing writer’s block because she has no motivation. She tells Amy, “I don’t want to write it.” For what it’s worth, Mona finishes reading the last paragraph of her draft but concludes even that paragraph “really has nothing to do with the paper.”

Given Mona’s discontent, Amy asks her if she would prefer to create a new draft from an outline they create together. Mona is apprehensive about this idea but goes along
with it:

A: Okay, do you feel like...you’re not getting anything out of reading it again? Do you feel like you just want to scrap it and start over again?

M: Yeah, cause I know I’m taking like examples and making it into a different paper.

A: {yeah}

M: And like I know I am and I know I’m doing it as I’m writing it.

A: {um hum}

M: But I don’t know how to bring it back to...what it’s supposed to be.

A: Okay, well the best way to do that is to write an outline, a very detailed outline and stick to it...um...So-

M: But it’s like due tomorrow. Oh, I don’t know if I’m gonna get this done.

A: You can do it. Alright we’re gonna write an outline right now.

M: {okay}

A: Here’s what you do...um...I don’t know if you want to do it on the computer or if you want to do it on a note pad.

M: What do you think is better?

A: Um...I do better when I write them on the computer cause you can just like move things around. So...

M: I’m down.

A: Okay. Let’s do it.

M: Open a new one?

A: Yeah. Okay, so...here’s what you do...Here is your guidelines, so copy...and paste, woops, this one. Alright, now...is this organized in a way that you’re gonna find easy to work with, or...?

M: Um...sure.

A: (laughing) Okay.
M: I guess I’m pretty easy going.
A: Alright, well...we’ll see where it takes you.
M: Yeah.

Although Mona knows her draft does not correspond to the assignment guidelines, she is apprehensive about writing a new draft that is “due tomorrow.” She doubts her ability to “get this done” and seems to feel unsure of herself, perhaps to the point she does not know if handwriting notes or creating a new electronic file would be best. But she is “pretty easy going,” enough to start over and see, as Amy mentioned, where a new outline will take her. Of course, Mona could also be willing to do anything Amy says just to finish this essay.

Throughout the remainder of the tutorial, Amy uses the assignment guidelines as prompts and directs Mona to places in her current draft that apply to her new draft. She also shows Mona how to use the Lexis-Nexis research database, UMass Facebook pages, and UMass Wiki pages in order to locate supporting examples for her claim that violence is a social problem at UMass. For example:

A: Alright, so clearly define the problem you have chosen. So, where are you...like what is the scene for this?
M: I thought it was violence.
A: Well, UMass.
M: Oh, got it, okay.
A: And the problem is...
M: UMASS violence.
A: By whom?
M: By students.
A: Yep.
M: okay...((typing))
A: Okay, so who defines this as problematic?
M: Um...I would say that students, teachers...administration, parents...
A: {um hum} Okay.
M: I don’t, I don’t know if I have to find something to back that up, cause that’s like an obvious...
A: Okay stick with what you know from sources.
M: Right.
A: So do you have sources that show that students are concerned about it?
M: Well I have like things from um...
A: {yeah}
M: Like *The Daily Collegian*
A: Yeah, then that’s perfect. What about um...administration?
M: I don’t have...except for like something from *News Day* I have, but um...otherwise I’d have to search for it, but I wouldn’t know where to...
A: Okay, well what about...are they taking actions? Do you know if they’re taking actions against it? Against violence?
M: /No idea./
A: Okay...[What about groups] that are cropping up on campus?
M: [(unclear)]
A: Like the Justice for Jason, that’s a group. What about um...there’s a civil rights group that just started...That’s another one.
M: I know there’s something for Darfur, but...
A: Yeah, [the civil rights one] is actually for like UMass problems.
M: [(unclear)]
A: Um...

M: (unclear)

A: You can actually look it up on Facebook I think. That’s another good source because that shows who is concerned about what.

M: Oh, okay, hold on. For groups...um...((typing))...Jason...

Mona begins to type her outline, following Amy’s lead. The conversation continues for another five minutes in the same manner. Amy continues to ask questions corresponding to Mona’s assignment guidelines and helps Mona locate supporting evidence from LexisNexis, the campus newspaper, and campus Facebook pages. The questions Amy asks become items in the new outline.

Midway through this process, Mona asks for clarification. From her point of view, her outline appears redundant:

A: Um...and then also say...um...I’m guessing that’s like how did it come up as problematic and what is being done about it. That’s just like a guess as to what a life cycle is,

M: {um hum}

A: but um...if you look at the questions that’s kind of what it’s leading you to answer, to say. So um...how did people find out about it? What are they doing about it? That sort of thing.

M: But isn’t that the same as like...who defines it? Because I’m saying what they’re doing about it up here? Like it’s repetitive.

A: Not really...see this is saying, “who defines it” so you have groups of people...and then this one’s saying...um...

M: What are they doing? (3s)

A: Hum...

M: So should I just [state that]
A: [I think, I think-]

M: here and then for this one go into more detail? Because I could just bring that detail into that, so technically I’d be focusing on the same thing.

A: Yeah, and really they do feed off of one another so...

M: {yeah}

Mona is checking her understanding of the outline she’s written so far. If she’s already explained in the introduction “what they’re doing about it,” then why should she repeat that information in the body of her essay? Amy admits that the two “feed off one another,” but as Mona herself inferred, the body of her essay will “go into more detail” than her introduction.

They continue to draft an outline until Mona expresses similar concerns. She still thinks her outline unnecessarily repeats points and, therefore, doesn’t understand the organization of those points:

M: See I feel like I can like patch so much of it together, like

A: {um hum}

M: That’s my only problem with this outline.

A: {um hum}

M: Because I feel like they override each other so much and that when I’m writing this part, I would have felt like I would have touched into that or this paragraph might be really short

A: {um hum}

M: so I’d have to move it.

A: {okay} So we can look at ways to combine what you’re trying to say, combine these so they’re not all over the place. Um...alright so what are manifestations of the history of the problem at UMass? So...um...so let’s see...so basically, okay, so here: what does it look like at UMass when violence occurs? So you say you have
the riots, so then, why does it happen at UMass, so look at the structure, and living environment. So you put those two things together, then what’s analogous in the real world? Workplace violence, Columbine, Virginia Tech.

M: I like that.

A: You know what I mean?

M: Um hum. Okay.

A: It’s a more logical progression.

M: Yeah. (5s) I like that better. Alright, I can remember that from that.

At the beginning of this excerpt, Mona summarizes and clarifies her impression of the outline Amy is helping her create. The outline appears problematic because some subsections “override each other so much” that they appear to render other subsections ineffective or “really short.” Through the act of questioning, Mona begins to take control and perceive an organization on her own that is more specific to UMass. In response to Mona’s concern, Amy explains how Mona could solve this dilemma. If Mona offers examples of UMass riots within their local context, she will combine but address two assignment questions, what violence looks like and why it happens. Then Mona can contextualize her UMass examples within a larger context, “the real world,” such as the shootings at Columbine and Virginia Tech. Mona “likes that better” because she can “remember” the progression. In other words, things are beginning to make sense. Both her questions and comments suggest Mona is becoming internally persuaded to revise the body of her essay. She resumes planning her outline, without further questions.

Overall, Mona’s tutorial reveals a weary writer who suspects her draft does not follow her assignment guidelines and senses her writing is “all over the place.” She comes to the Writing Center because she doesn’t know how, or doesn’t have the motivation, to
revise a draft she perceives as the “worst paper” ever. Comments such as these suggest Mona was checking to see if her impressions were accurate. Early in the tutorial, Amy confirmed Mona’s assessment of her first paragraph and Mona’s hunch that the body of her essay did not support her thesis and adhere to the assignment guidelines. At first reluctant to rewrite her entire essay, Mona eventually consented to creating an outline for a new draft. Considering her lack of motivation, she could have easily let Amy take control, and to a large degree, Amy was direct in her approach. But the questions Mona asked suggest she negotiated the content of her introductory paragraph and the organization of her essay. When she needed clarification, she seemed to ask for it. Mona questioned her assignment guidelines and tried to understand the difference between repetition and expansion of her points. All in all, Mona predicted the lack of correspondence between her draft and her assignment, asked her tutor for help with revising her draft, planned an outline for a new draft, and questioned its organization—all indicators of Mona’s attempt to take control over her writing. These instances of metacognition suggest Mona was not simply adhering to Amy’s recommendations but thinking about whether they made sense.

Before interviewing Mona, I compared the transcript of the tutorial with her drafts (Appendix J). She began with a few brief examples of UMass campus violence and an explicit statement of what she perceived as her thesis: “In this essay, I will be discussing how violence relates to everyday activity on campus.” Though this thesis statement is not entirely accurate—it does not specifically describe the content of her essay—the body of Mona’s paper corresponds to the outline she and Amy discussed. Mona first establishes who perceives campus violence as a social problem: specific UMass student groups that Amy mentioned during their tutorial (e.g., Justice for Jason, Take Back Southwest, Reclaim
Civil Rights) as well as other students who have posted flyers in buildings across campus. After Mona establishes the problem and who sees it as such, she situates the local within a larger context of state- and nation-wide campus violence and simultaneously legitimizes the severity of this social problem. Mona refers to an ABC news broadcast that labeled UMass Amherst one of the most violent campuses in the United States. In addition, Mona quotes from a Boston Globe article that claimed UMass Amherst riots are "contagious," having spread to other state schools. Her works cited page shows that Mona retrieved this Globe article from LexisNexis, a research database Amy recommended. Mona then moves from campus riots to bomb threats, citing another Globe article from LexisNexis. From there, Mona broadens the scope of the problem, moving from local riots and bomb threats to the possibility of campus shootings, such as Virginia Tech. Having established campus violence as, first, a local problem and, second, a national problem, Mona follows Amy's recommendation to progress from the particular to the general and in turn establish campus violence as a problem, who sees it as such, and why. Next, Mona cites an article from the campus newspaper that speculates the causes of UMass campus riots. She then describes types of interventions made at UMass and other schools, also an item from her outline. Finally, Mona describes additional ways to frame the violence through different sociological perspectives and offers some of her own solutions. The outline she created with Amy appears to have helped her write a new draft that I assume addressed her assignment guidelines.

Considering Mona’s frustration with her original draft and the limited amount of time she had to write a new one, Mona could have relied on Amy’s recommendations without fully understanding them, and this seems to be case with at least one her revisions. Part of my interview included a list from which students selected items that
described what they worked on while revising (see Appendix B). In addition to “organization,” “answering the assignment,” “outlining,” and “staying on topic,” Mona selected “introduction or conclusion.” Mona chose that item because, as she told me, high school teachers taught her “to be very general with the introduction and that’s something [instructors] don’t want here, so that’s like something that’s been hard.” Unfortunately, I did not ask Mona whether Amy’s recommendation to revise the introduction made sense to her. Because Amy had only implied that shorter essays “generally” do not use generalizations, I doubt Mona understood why. In that case, Mona was not internally persuaded to revise but used Amy’s advice at face value, an instance of authoritative discourse that was applied but not internalized.

However, Mona indicated during our interview that “starting over” with an outline made sense to her. When asked why, Mona emphasized the importance of meeting her goals: “…my problem with this paper, at first, was I felt disorganized; I felt I didn’t have a grasp on the knowledge I was supposed to have, so having an outline would help me focus my thoughts on one thing, and just play that out and write that out.” In other words, an outline enabled Mona “to go by [it] like specifically” and “keep [her] organized.” She believed outlining was the most important step she took while revising because “outlining is everything else. Outlining is like the main topic…” from which everything else follows. In this sense, outlining seems to have also helped Mona with invention, giving more substance to her initial ideas. Her responses echo two points Amy had made during the tutorial: to “focus” on “one thing” (UMass violence) and “see where it takes you.” By focusing on one thing with the help of an outline, Mona’s new draft seems to have played out.
Though outlining was not a new concept for Mona, she did not understand the outline presented in her assignment. Mona told me her instructor provided a bulleted list of questions; however, as she indicated during her tutorial, Mona perceived those questions as “repetitive themselves” and hence confusing. During our interview, she continued to explain:

Well, [the teacher] had given me an outline...to write this, the first paper. But that one [the teacher] gave me overlapped so much, I felt like by doing it bullet by bullet, I was just re-saying what I had said before, and that’s why I was so confused cause [the teacher’s] outline was just like two paragraphs later, I am saying the same exact thing [the assignment is] asking me up here. So when I was with the tutor, I was like, but isn’t this the same thing? And she like explained things, or she said like, it’s a little different or they’re same, and like so just combine it; so it helped me like just reassure myself if I was supposed to be saying the same thing or not.

In other words, Mona’s tutor reassured her that she was not crazy. Sometimes the guidelines asked similar questions, and sometimes they did not. Amy’s recommendation to combine bulleted items that asked “the same thing” restored Mona’s confidence. Her own questions about that list were valid. At the same time, Mona began to recognize her teacher’s assignment as “more like guidelines” than a prescriptive outline she needed to follow precisely. Mona was internally persuaded to use the outline she and Amy created because it clarified her assignment and helped her focus and organize her essay. Though she did not further revise the outline, she was able to use it to re-write her essay. I doubt Mona would have been able to write a new draft from her outline if she did not understand its sequence and required content. But is Mona persuaded to use outlining as a strategy that goes beyond this particular essay? She thinks she will, but it’s impossible to tell if her perceived learning outcomes are situation/genre specific. She may have only
changed as a writer within the context of her assignment. That is, Mona did not change her thinking about her original essay (she already knew it was "the worst draft ever"), but she seems to have altered her understanding of the assignment guidelines, which in turn helped her understand the outline Amy suggested and write a new draft.

Mona’s second most important step was “researching.” Though this was not an item on the list I provided during our interview, Mona told me she would use research databases in the future. She realized during her tutorial that she could not, in her words, “BS” her way through this essay as she claimed she had in high school during standardized texts and her Regents exam. Mona explained that she was a freshman from New York who had only heard about violence at UMass, so she could not speak from experience. Her decision to use LexisNexis, as Amy had recommended, suggests Mona was not only trying to meet her assignment requirements but also beginning to recognize the importance of supporting her claims beyond her own BS with documented sources—a potential change in her as a writer. The day after her tutorial, Mona crosschecked the value of using LexisNexis. Her sociology instructor introduced this research database to the class, which reinforced what Mona had already discovered at the Writing Center. Though “research” was not the major focus of Mona’s tutorial, it may have been her most valuable lesson. She acquired knowledge about research databases, practiced a skill by using a research database, and attached value to the usage.

Mona’s tutorial and ensuing revisions—structuring her ideas before writing, staying on topic, answering the assignment, outlining, and researching her topic—likely contributed to her development as a writer, as she was internally persuaded to create a new outline, write a new draft, and add outside sources. But not all of her revisions were
internally persuasive (i.e., her introduction), and more analysis is needed to see if her
tutorial affected her understanding of writing beyond her specific paper. Will she in fact
use LexisNexis again for reasons that go beyond BS? Will she use outlines in the future as
a means to stay on track and/or interpret assignment guidelines? Even if Mona only
changed her understanding of a particular situation, she changed her understanding of
something, and that may be the best we can expect of some students, given their
individual circumstances. In retrospect, Mona believed she would have made additional
changes to her revised essay after her teacher had read it and provided comments, but she
did not know how else to improve her new draft until another reader critiqued her text.
Still, I think recognizing one’s own BS and using LexisNexis to reconcile the matter is at
least as worthy as, for instance, having glossed one’s paragraphs to reconceptualize an
essay.

**AI: Even Minimal Revisions Can Change Writers**

AI, like Mona, is another student in the sample who used all the
information/advice he received, made no additional revisions beyond what was discussed
during his tutorial, and sought assistance with a first-order concern. However, in contrast
to Mona and Sofia (as well as most of the tutees in this study), AI’s tutorial did not focus on
his reason for having come to the Writing Center: paraphrasing. His composition
instructor recommended he paraphrase most of his direct quotes. Because AI was not sure
which quotes to paraphrase, he sought the assistance of a tutor. Though he and his tutor
addressed paraphrasing throughout his tutorial, they spent most of their time discussing
AI’s critique of an essay he analyzed for his first-year composition writing assignment.
The purpose of this assignment was to “interact with a text,” in which AI would agree
and/or disagree with one of his assigned readings, “The Numbing of the American Mind: Culture as Anesthetic” by Thomas de Zengotita. Al primarily disagreed with de Zengotita. From Al’s perspective, de Zengotita argued that Americans “get over hardship too quickly,” to which Al agreed, but at the same time Al also believed that Americans “need to get back on our feet and move on.” Nine sentence-length quotes appear in Al’s five-page draft, all de Zengotita’s words, yet Al only paraphrased three quotes. More importantly, Al did not accurately apply what he thinks he learned about paraphrasing; he did not successfully transfer that skill to other quotes appearing in his draft. The most valuable outcome from Al’s tutorial may have been an unexpected by-product. Because Al’s tutor endorsed his argument and therefore validated his interpretation of the essay he critiqued in his draft, Al was internally persuaded that he was doing the right thing: arguing his stance even if it conflicted with his classmates’ interpretations and possibly his teacher’s. Audience was not explicitly discussed during his tutorial, but Al seemed to have learned that interacting with a text meant expressing an opinion and defending it whether or not his audience agrees. Al’s case suggests that tutorials can be significant in their effects on writers even if they do not lead to substantive, or even accurate, revisions and do not focus mostly on students’ reasons for having come to the Writing Center.

Like the other focal students appearing in this chapter, Al began his tutorial by setting an agenda and reading his draft to his tutor, Susan. There are several excerpts from their tutorial that demonstrate Susan and Al’s conversation about argument or paraphrasing. The passages I cite in this section illustrate what Al most likely internalized and did not internalize. I begin with the fourth paragraph of his essay, where Susan (“S”) and Al (“A”) first talk about his argument and then his use of quotes:

A: {yeah} Okay, “He suggests, ‘there is no important difference between fabrication
and reality,’ although he thinks there should be. I feel this is a very strong statement that must be taken seriously. He only touches upon this subject, and I think he needed to expand his idea and could have /had a very/ …”

S: Okay ... “must be taken seriously.” So this is how he didn’t explain it enough?

A: Yeah.

S: Okay ... “interesting and well presented argument since it’s practically the basis of his entire essay. He constantly conveys to the reader his thoughts and feelings about real events such as September 11th. He also ... continuously explains to his audience the fabrication of these events, which is somewhat contradictive. How can he blatantly express his thoughts that reality and fabrications are two completely different subjects and rarely intertwined. Then he explains throughout the entire essay that they do indeed link in many numerous everyday occasions.” Um...I think this might be better after you explain the argument.

A: {okay}

S: Okay, so he brings up this really interesting theory. The theory that reality and fabrication are the same thing, right?

A: {right}

S: Here’s how he explains it with like...he explains it with September 11th or whatever, that’s your example. Um...so here’s how you explain what he did, and then say like, why would he do that. That doesn’t make any sense, and then say like, “he only touches upon this subject and I think he needed to expand it and could have had a very interesting...” you know “this is practically the basis of his entire essay.” That’s your analysis of what he did.

A: {yeah}

S: So I think presenting what he did before you analyze it would make it clearer. So you come in and say here’s his idea that they’re the same, here’s how he used examples to back that up, here’s why I don’t think that makes sense, and here’s what he should have done better, and he should have expanded.

A: Yeah, okay that makes sense. Just cause...yeah I kind of like, I don't even present the argument then I just go into it.

S: {right} So I think just, cause this is a good analysis of his, what he did or didn’t do,

A: {yeah}
S: and then I think putting it after you explain what his theory is would be clearer.

Susan points out that Al’s paragraph would make more sense if he moved sentences from the end of the paragraph to the beginning, where he first mentions that de Zengotita has “a really interesting theory.” Before critiquing how de Zengotita applies his theory, Al needs to explain it.

This revision “makes sense” because, as Al says, “I just go into” the argument without presenting it first, which implies that Al selected one of two options: to keep the paragraph as is or rearrange the order of his sentences as his tutor recommended. Al’s revised essay confirms the choice he made (Appendix K). What had been sentence 4 becomes sentence 8:

(1) Zengotita also brings about an especially interesting theory. (2) He suggests, “There is no important difference between fabrication and reality” although he thinks there should be. (3) I feel this is a very strong statement that must be taken seriously. (4) He constantly conveys to the reader his thoughts and feelings about real events, such as September 11th (344). (5) He also continuously explains to his audience the fabrication of these events, which is somewhat contradictive. (6) How can he blatantly express his thought that reality and fabrication are two completely different subjects and rarely intertwine? (7) Then he explains throughout the entire essay that they do indeed link together on numerous everyday occasions. (8) He only touches upon this subject and I think he needed to expand his idea and could have had a very interesting and well presented argument, since this is practically the basis of his entire essay.

This revision follows Susan advice to first specify and explain De Zengotita’s theory, then critique De Zengotita for not having further explained what Al thinks is a contradiction.

During my interview with Al, I asked why rearranging sentences made sense to him. His response indicates that he understood why this particular revision was
...cause now I explained what he did, what his thoughts were through his quotes. And then I was able to comment on them and then explain and then explain how—like I explain how he feels and then after that, I explain how I feel. So that makes more sense than, I don’t know, how-. Right here [in my earlier draft], I go right into how I feel, and then like I say his quote, and then I say how I feel, and then I guess I start saying about how he feels and then criticizing some of his writing.

In other words, the new organization made sense because Al did not switch back and forth between de Zengotita’s points and Al’s. The revised version first presented de Zengotita’s argument and then presented Al’s response to it.

Immediately after Al and Susan discuss sentence rearrangement, Al asks her how to paraphrase de Zengotita without quoting “there is no important difference between fabrication and reality”:

A: Okay, how can I put this in like my own words without using quotes? Cause that’s like what she wants, like I don’t know.

S: I don’t know if I would do it for a quote like this because anybody, like I could say that to you right now, you know what I mean? Let’s see...Like this one is so perfect that I wouldn’t change it, it’s so... “the moment”... “swam into focus,” that’s a very like-

A: (laughing) Yeah I can’t say anything about that.

S: Right, it would be worse...you know like you couldn’t make it better.

A: Yeah, definitely.

Al expresses his concern about his assignment requirements; his teacher wants him to paraphrase more and quote less. But Susan does not think it is necessary to paraphrase “there is no important difference between fabrication and reality” because it could be
easily taken for anyone’s words, including hers or his. By this, I assume Susan meant that this particular quote is straightforward but belongs to a particular speaker making a big claim; therefore, it would be best to stick with the quote. Susan also thinks Al should keep another quote that appears on the first page of Al’s essay because the wording is already “perfect”: “But these iconic moments swam into focus only momentarily, soon to be swept away in a deluge of references.” Al agrees with Susan’s recommendations because he “can’t say anything about that” quote that would improve upon it.

A few paragraphs later, Susan points out two quotes Al should paraphrase. They appear in the same paragraph, sentences 4 and 5:

(1) In the next portion of his essay, Zengotita attempts to further describe the idea of fabrication. (2) He breaks this one broad idea into many sub-categories, and briefly touches on them. (3) The reason for breaking down fabrication into so many categories is to prove to the reader that it is possible. (4) He raises the question, “This issue isn’t can we do it; it’s do we do it?” (5) He is quick to answer the question himself and writes, “The answer is, of course not.” (6) Again, how can he make this assumption? (7) Is he speaking on his own behalf? (8) Zengotita proceeds to write that “our minds are the product of total immersion in a daily experience saturated with fabrications to a degree unprecedented in human history.” (9) This statement is bold, but also very true. (10) Today’s lifestyle is filled with fabrication and lies. (11) We see it each and every day: in the newspapers and tabloids, on the television, on the internet, on the movie screen, on the radio, in elections, practically everywhere.

Sentence 8 is also a direct quote, but Susan does not think Al should paraphrase it:

S: “He raises the question: the issue isn’t can we do it, it’s do we do it? He is quick answer the question himself and writes the answer, “of course not.” See you might not even have to directly quote that.

A: {okay}

S: “He raises the question of whether...whether we...” you know like just write it out
A: {okay}

S: instead like, “he poses the question of whether we fabricate.” Is that, is that even /a/ question?

A: Oh I know, um...

S: This is like, intense...

A: I know, [the other-]

S: [You should have done] (laughing) “The Science of Shopping” or whatever. (laughing)

A: (laughing)

S: Isn't that one of them?

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

S: One of these essays?

A: That was so boring though, like it just like, okay...

S: He raises the question...

A: [Fabrication...]

S: [Okay, so the reason for] bringing up fabrication...Okay, he raises the question of whether we fabricate or not and...is quick to answer...that we don’t, or whatever. (3s) Or you could even like...you don’t even have to rephrase the question, you could just say, “he makes the statement that we don’t do this,” you know what I mean? Like you could

A: {yeah, yeah, yeah}

S: even just scrap the whole question, like [here’s the question, here’s his answer]

A: [here’s the question, here’s his answer]

S: You could just say like, “he makes a statement that this,” you know what I mean? And that gets rid of the whole quote issue. (3s)

A: Would I say that up here too? I would say this: he raises the question, and then I would say he makes the statement that we don’t.

S: Okay, hold on. So “The reason for breaking down fabrication into so many categories is to prove to the reader that it is possible...” Wait, so is it fabrication...
Is the... “do it,” is that “do fabrication”? Is do we fabricate? What is his question?

A: Actually I didn’t even bring the book. I thought it was fabricate though. That’s [what I was writing about.]

S: [Okay, that makes sense. So...] So, he asks if we fabricate...He makes the statement that we do not fabricate, whether we can or not.

A: Okay.

T: So you could just put something in like that, a statement rather than a question. Like, pose his question and answer into just an answer, you know?

A: Yeah (3s)

S: Okay, “Again how can he make this assumption? Is he speaking on his own behalf? As Zengotita proceeds to write that our minds in the pro-” Yeah cause then you could do...like this quote you don't need to bother quoting.

A: {okay}

S: you know what I mean? Cause you could just write that. Um... “our minds are the product of total emersion in daily experience saturated with fabrications to a degree unprecedented in human history.” Okay, that's a good quote. That's worth putting in there.

A: {okay}

S: You know?

A: Yeah

Though Susan does not say why Al should paraphrase the second quote (sentence 4), Al anticipates how he should paraphrase it, as indicated by his repeated backchannel (“yeah, yeah, yeah”) and his overlapping speech (“here’s the question; here’s the answer”). Next, he checks if he should also paraphrase the first quote (sentence 3) but quickly provides his own answer: “Would I say that up here too? I would say this: he raises the question, and then I would say he makes the statement that we don’t.” Though she does not explicitly agree with Al, Susan offers a similar solution: “So you could just put
something in like that, a statement rather than a question. Like, pose his question and answer into just an answer, you know?” The last quote (sentence 8) is a “good” quote, so it does not need to be paraphrased. Susan implies that “good” quotes are worth keeping but does not define what she means by a good quote. Susan previously described another quote as “good” because it was “perfect”: “But these iconic moments swam into focus only momentarily, soon to be swept away in a deluge of references.” From that example, Al may have inferred what Susan implied in this case: Text containing unusual or unique phrasing that especially indicate an author’s voice should remain quoted.

During our interview, Al told me why it made sense to him to include quotes or put them in his own words. He explained that statements of fact or “little things” that “anybody would know or say” could be paraphrased:

Well, like see like for this one, I quoted this from him. It goes “the answer is of course not.” Like there is no need of like quoting that like so it’s just basically like, I mean it is his belief, but I could put it into my own words still giving him credit for his belief.

The quote Al refers to comes from sentence 5: “He is quick to answer the question himself and writes, 'The answer is, of course not.'” In his revised draft, Al paraphrased the quotes in both sentences 4 and 5 to read: “He makes a statement that we do not fabricate whether we [can] do it or not.” Al’s revision and his response to my interview question echoed Susan’s advice and suggest that he was internally persuaded to paraphrase specific quotes because anyone could have said them. The quotes Al kept in his draft were, in Susan and Al’s opinion, worth keeping because only De Zengotita could have said them.

But two other quotes appearing in Al’s essay suggest he may not have understood
why or how to paraphrase. Al quotes De Zengotita twice without indicating it. In the first instance, Al writes, “And he also claims that we can no longer distinguish between selling and making, governing and campaigning, and expressing and existing (346).” Everything after “distinguish” is a direct quote from De Zengotita’s essay, which I read after I interviewed Al. If the draft Al brought to his tutorial had not included comments from a peer reviewer from his composition class, I would not have known to check the sentence in question. The peer reviewer had written on Al’s draft “citation, it’s almost a direct quote.” Though Susan did not comment on this sentence, Al added a page number, as if to indicate paraphrasing in the revised draft, yet Al did not even cite the correct page number. This could have been a typo, and it is possible Al forgot to add the necessary quotation marks. But because a similar problem occurred, I doubt Al learned what he claims to have learned about paraphrasing (or he learned it and did not bother to do it).

Another direct quote appears in Al’s first draft and includes quotation marks: “De Zengotita raises the questions for me, include the following: ‘How can we just go about our business when things like this are happening? How can we just read the article, feel sorry about them and shake our heads, and turn the page?’” He eliminates the quotation marks in his revised draft: “De Zengotita raises many questions for me. These include: How can we just go about our business when things like this are happening? How can we just read the article, feel sorry about them and shake our heads, and turn the page?” The transcript from his tutorial suggests that neither Al nor Susan fully understood what each was saying about this particular quote:

S: Okay...so... (reading to self) / “questions including...How can we just go...
A: Like see this is my question, like I did, should that not be in quotes like from me?
S: Oh, okay. No...
A: {okay}

S: Maybe you should say, “reading Zego...whatever...[laughing] has...raised many questions for me” you know what I mean? Something that makes it so that you know that you’re...reading his piece made you question these things.

A: Okay. So can I just say these...Can I say like this...so...

S: Yeah, yeah you can just end it like that.

A: Okay

S: And then these include “How can we just go about our business when things like this are happening? How can we just read the article, feel sorry about them, and shake our heads and turn the page?” Um...okay, yeah because if you say “I completely agree with what he is saying in the questions he poses” that makes us think that you mean you, you know what I mean?

A: {oh, yeah}

S: Um, “I completely agree with what...Zegoti-Zengotita is saying about something,” like you need to explain what you agree with.

A: Like, well see like these are the questions like he posed in my mind when I was reading it,

S: {um hum}

A: so does that make sense? Like to say like...cause it’s not really...it’s not like he did these, like these are the questions that...he makes [me think about.]

S: [Right, but what do] you agree with? You agree with something he’s saying about...about getting over hardship too quickly.

A: Yeah.

S: Okay, (reading quickly to self, unclear) Um....I agree with...with what he says...like you have to like put the thing that you agree with in there. So like, you agree with the fact that Americans get over things too quickly?

A: Yeah

S: And then you don’t even need to say, “the questions he poses.”

A: {okay}

S: So I agree with what he says about Americans getting over things too quickly
because many people have lost loved ones because of these incidents.”

A: Okay

S: Cause like if he didn’t actually pose these questions, I wouldn’t say that, cause like you get confused and I lose the fact that these are the questions that it raised for you.

A: Okay.

Susan probably thinks that the questions de Zengotita raised are Al’s questions because Al tells her, “these are the questions like he posed in my mind when I was reading it.” He continues to clarify himself, but his comments are somewhat misleading: “so does that make sense? Like to say like ...cause it’s not really...it’s not like he did these, like these are the questions that...he makes me think about.” In response, Susan advises Al delete “the questions he poses” if de Zengotita “didn’t actually pose these questions.” Although Al agrees (“okay”), and although I did not specifically ask Al about this particular part of his draft, I at first doubted that he was internally persuaded. But now am I no longer convinced one way or the other. Both this example and the previous one suggest that Al did not learn what he thinks he learned, that he learned only a fraction of what he could have learned about paraphrasing, and/or that he was inconsistent in his application of what he learned. Though Al thinks he walked away from his tutorial knowing “how to like better incorporate quotes into my own words” and understanding why he paraphrased some quotes and not others, Al did not appear ot critically examine all the information and advice he received from Susan. Because he was willing to let me tape his tutorial and interview him, Al probably did not intentionally plagiarize. Instead, I suspect Al may not have questioned his tutor’s authority and/or interpreted her comments differently than Susan intended. Al, like Mona, may have taken some of his tutor’s advice at face value for
reasons that were not internally persuasive to him, or he may have been internally persuaded, thought he learned about paraphrasing, and “spaced” in places in his revised draft.

There are other instances during his tutorial, however, that suggest Al was internally persuaded to revise, particularly the example I gave earlier in which Al rearranged sentences to improve the clarity of his argument. My next example comes at the end of Al’s tutorial and pertains to what he also thinks he learned from Susan: “that it’s not wrong to oppose anything as long as you have your factual information or you represent examples why you feel how you feel.” Al thinks that de Zengotita contradicts himself throughout his essay; Al does not agree with most of his opinions. de Zengotita argues, in Al’s words, that Americans no longer are able to distinguish between media fabrications and reality. If we recognized the difference, we would not “get over hardship too quickly,” hardships such as September 11th. Al thinks Americans do not get over hardship too quickly, even though they need to move on:

As American people, Zengotita claims we can no longer comprehend the difference of a chemical of a pill and the one our own body produces. He claims we can no longer understand the difference of role playing as a spouse and actually playing your role as a spouse. And he also claims that we can no longer distinguish between selling and making, governing and campaigning, and expressing and existing. These accusations I feel are unnecessary. I’m aware that Zengotita has the right to express his opinion, but in no way do I feel that these comments are appropriate. First of all, Zengotita never mentions another country besides our own. What if they react in the same manner as we do? This could then just become proof that our reactions, and those of the world, are just changing with the times. Zengotita also never mentions any evidence of what he is saying to be true. How does he know how the people around the country behave and what these people are thinking? Evidence of sorrow from September 11th was in the news for weeks and months. As a result airport security was strictly tightened and more serious than ever. Negative stereotypes have been created. Being Muslim, I have experienced these stereotypes. Here at this university I’ve heard individuals blatantly scream out stereotypical remarks about people of my ethnicity about
September 11th. It puts me in a position where I feel very uncomfortable. Who is de Zengotita to say that the entire population of the country is under his so-called spell?

In this paragraph, Al conveys his frustration with de Zengotita’s claim that Americans forgot about September 11th shortly after it occurred. Al’s experiences suggest otherwise. The event was in the media for “months,” airport security was “strictly tightened and more serious than ever,” and “negative stereotypes” were created toward Muslims such as himself, which “puts [him] in a position” to “feel very uncomfortable.” During his tutorial, Al asks Susan if he should “say that” last part:

S: ...Okay, “Being Muslim I have experienced these stereotypes.”
Okay...so...September 11th happens...people forget about it, but people haven't forgotten about the stereotypes.

A: So I shouldn't [say that? I shouldn't get into that?]

S: [I don’t know, I don’t know.] I mean, it’s a good argument, because you’re saying that it is a reality. Nobody is pretending that these stereotypes...you know what I mean cause you could pretend that there aren’t these stereotypes, but the reality that you know is [that there are]

A: [That there are], yeah.

S: This is intense. I feel like I should read this (laughing).

A: (laughing)

S: Okay ...“As a result...evidence of...” Okay how does he know...what these people are thinking? Evidence of sorrow of September 11th was in the news for weeks and months. As a result, airport security was tightened and more serious than every. Negative stereotypes have been created. Being Muslim I have experienced these stereotypes. Here at this university I have heard individuals blatantly scream out stereotypical remarks about people of my ethnicity about September 11th. It puts me in a position where I feel very uncomfortable. Who is he to say...is under his so-called spell?” What do you mean by “under his so-called spell?”

A: Like where you can just control and say whatever you want so everyone like believes like in a trance like everyone just does what he says.
S: Is that what he thinks? Is that [the argument that]
A: [Well that’s what I-]
S: he’s making?
A: Um...Well I think yeah, I think like he thinks like he knows everything.
S: {okay}
A: That’s how he writes, but like obviously he’s a writer, so he knows like what he’s doing.
S: {right...right}
A: but like I don’t know...
S: Um...{(tapping on desk)}
A: /To get, I.../
S: I feel like you shouldn’t take this out, but I feel like you need to think about the last sentence. Cause I feel like it’s a little vague, saying “under his so-called spell.” Who is, this is Zengotita, right?
A: Yep
S: “Who is Zengotita to say that the entire population of the country is under his so-called spell?” Maybe even not even like under his spell, but like...um...acts, it’s like do [they act the way that he...]
A: [Acts /for/...yeah]
S: He imagines them to act.
A: Okay
S: You know- is that what- I don’t know?
A: Yeah, it’s basically the same thing like, he... [He feels like this is the-]
S: [If there’s no difference-]
A: Yeah, yeah, that’s, that’s basically it. That’s /what I/...I didn’t know how to say it really; that’s why I just said that. I don’t know...um...I could say like...Cause I can get rid of...this and then say...(reading under his breath) (5s). Is to act the way he...imagines it, or...?
S: Yeah.

A: I'll say, “acts...”

S: Cause what you’re getting at is that...how, how does he know that people are doing the things he presumes they are doing, right?

A: Let’s see...I’ll go over it again too.

S: Cause I think, I think you’re...you’re getting at it, but just saying this, doesn’t...[say exactly-]

A: [It’s too broad.]

S: Right, cause I think you have a good argument going. Like...it’s really interesting to think about. (laughing)

A: (laughing)

At first Susan is not sure (“I don’t know”) if Al should claim “people haven’t forgotten about stereotypes.” But the reality that Al knows is “that there are” negative stereotypes still affecting him, and Al and Susan’s overlapping speech (“that there are”) suggests they see eye to eye: you can’t argue with personal experience. Susan ultimately recommends Al “shouldn’t take [that] out” because Al’s “intense” reality supports his claim. The only clarification she needs is what Al meant by “so-called spell.” Another instance of overlapping speech (“say exactly” and “it’s too broad”) also indicates that Susan and Al understand one another, and they agree Al should revise “so-called spell” to, as Al states, “act the way he....imagines it.” Though he briefly questions himself (“or...?”), Susan’s confirmation (“Yeah”) reassures Al’s choice to say “acts....”

I mention this particular excerpt because it marks the beginning of Susan’s agreement with Al’s argument: Susan tells Al he has “a good argument going.” Later in the tutorial, she applauds Al’s support of his claim that American’s recognize the difference
between fabrication and reality. Al uses the example of a tabloid newspaper: “Even though it is not true, we still read it, not because we truly believe it, but because it is interesting and intrigues people. This goes against everything Zengotita has written.” Susan thinks Al’s counter-example “is perfect” because a lot of people do not believe fabrications, people like Susan. She reads “Star all the time, just cause it’s fun.” Al’s example “definitely” counters de Zengotita’s claim, and Susan “think[s] that’s great.” At the end of the tutorial, Susan agrees with Al’s overall stance towards de Zengotita’s essay. Al did not agree with de Zengotita’s claim that American’s “get over hardship too quickly,” but Al agreed with de Zengotita’s conclusion that “we have to move on.” Al explains: “...in the beginning I was reading [de Zengotita’s essay], it’s like, it’s saying all this stuff like, I don’t agree with him; I don’t agree with him...and then at like the last paragraph, like legit, like the last page, like it just starts, like his concluding paragraph states that” we have to move on. de Zengotita’s abrupt shift in perspective is, to Susan, “so weird,” but Al agrees with de Zengotita and, therefore, Susan thinks Al’s shift in his own stance “makes sense.” Because de Zengotita’s “perspective seems to change,” Al’s does, too. This change captivates Susan: “That’s crazy. That’s really interesting.” In closing, Susan tells Al his essay is “really good.”

During my interview with Al (“A”), I (“M”) asked specific questions about a particular instance of paraphrasing and rearrangement, which I described earlier in this section. I also asked Al if he thought the Writing Center played an important role in helping him meet his assignment requirements. His reply points towards his understanding why Susan approved his essay:

M: Ok. Do you think you met most or some of the requirements of your assignment?
A: Yes, definitely.

M: Ok. How so?

A: Cause I repre- cause I uhm... how do I say this? I took points that the author stated and I expressed my belief on how I either opposed or believed in his ideas, but most of it, I opposed.

M: Ok.

A: But I gave reasons why and I gave examples.

M: Ok. Ok. Ok. So you took points the author stated and expressed your belief on how or why he opposed or believed those points.

A: yeah.

M: And gave your reasons and examples. Ok. And you think that the Writing Center or your tutor had a role in your meeting the requirements of your assignment.

A: Yes.

M: And that would be because

A: Uhm. Well when I was with the-

M: the tutor?

A: The tutor, yes. She told me basically that it's not wrong or it's not wrong to oppose anything as long as you have your factual information or you represent examples why you feel how you feel.

M: Ok. Cause the tutor told you that it's not-

A: It's not like wrong to-

M: It is not like wrong to

A: oppose what the author even though if he's of higher intellect or whatever.

M: to oppose anybody.

A: Exactly. Like everybody has their own belief and as long as you express how you feel then you'll do fine.

M: Ok. So anyone can oppose and can express their feelings as long as what-

A: they support what they believe.
M: Ok. All right. As long as they support what they believe. Ok, or how they believe or why they believe.

A: Yeah.

Susan did not explicitly say to Al, “it’s not wrong to oppose anything as long as you have your factual information or you represent examples why you feel how you feel.” However, many of her comments, as cited earlier, implied this. Part of what Al took away from his tutorial is to say what he believes and support his beliefs with specific examples. Al’s insight is especially powerful given his ethnicity. His perception is also significant given his assumptions about his teacher and classmate’s reading of de Zengotita’s essay:

M: Ok. And that’s something that you weren’t fully cognizant of?

A: I wasn’t sure if I should start agreeing with something like just pick- trying to pick out things that I agreed on.

M: Sure.

A: I mean things are-

M: You felt like you didn’t agree so why not-

A: Exactly.

M: just be honest about it. And you weren’t sure at first because you’re what- you’re given a piece of writing by your teacher and it’s kind of presented maybe to you that this is good stuff?

A: Yeah.

M: Is that kind of?

A: The whole class, basically everyone’s like, “oh, it’s pretty good, well he brings some good points” and I was just like, “not really,” like you know?

M: Other people agreed with the guy or whatever?

A: Yup....

M: ...All right, so you were worried maybe that if everybody else is agreeing with
this guy, maybe you should, too?
A: Yeah. Maybe I should just include some...some points where I agree or-
M: Otherwise you might loose your audience or something?
A: Yup. Well, I didn't want her to be just like, I mean my teacher to even just be like, oh, well, maybe how she felt would have reflect like grading my paper.
M: Ok.
A: So-
M: Oh, she...you weren't sure how she read this article.
A: Exactly.
M: Ok.
A: Cause if she..I mean, I mean obviously she’s a teacher, she’s not really going to take that much of a biased approach, but I don’t know, you know there’s always some chance, but...
M: So you’re saying that the teacher had an opinion about-
A: the text, like how she felt about the text.
M: Right. About the text that might...okay-
A: Sway like-
M: how you might present your own?
A: Yup.

Even if Al’s stance affected his grade or other students’ opinion of him, Al believed he supported his claims with valid examples, examples that Susan liked and approved. Al also believed he fulfilled the purpose of his assignment because he interacted with de Zengotita's text. From Al's perspective, there was nothing left to revise after his tutorial with Susan: “I feel I was able to express all points that I opposed and why I opposed them and like basically analyzed like all of [the] text. I think I did everything I could have done.”
Even though Al did not accurately paraphrase quotes, he seems to have taken away a useful message. Al appears to have been internally persuaded that his essay was, as Susan said, “great” because he explained his reasons for disagreeing with de Zengotita through his use of effective examples. In other words, Al seems to have changed his understanding of argumentative essays. Of course, what Al reports learning about opposing popular opinion and “higher intellect” is not more important than paraphrasing and avoiding charges of plagiarism. However, the by-product of Al’s tutorial is worth noting and is at least as a valuable as what Sofia or Mona think they learned from their Writing Center tutors. Tutees who do not extend their tutor’s information/advice to revisions not discussed during tutorials, or tutees who do not substantively or even accurately revise, may very well have changed as writers.

**Conclusion**

Sofia, Mona, and Al illustrate how tutees interpret and use their tutors’ information/advice and why the revisions students make can become internally persuasive. The questions students ask, the clarifications or confirmations they seek, their attempts at checking and cross-referencing, and the plans they make, for instance, indicate several ways students negotiate their revisions. Like most of the students participating in this study, Sofia, Mona, and Al could reflect on their writing center experiences and revisions and explain what they did, why they did it, if their choices were good ones, and if something in their tutorials would help them in the future. These three focal students also show how tutees who apply and/or extend their tutor’s advice are not necessarily more likely to become changed writers than students who use most or all their tutor’s advice. Whether students participating in this study extended advice, substantively revised, or
made minimal changes to their drafts, they found parts or all of their tutorials internally persuasive and left their tutorials with a different understanding of their writing and/or themselves as writers.

In the following chapter, three additional focal students test other assumptions we could make about the relationship between writing center tutorials and writers. Lisa’s case illustrates how one tutorial can have a tremendous impact and transfer to future writing tasks while another tutorial can only affect a particular essay. Cassandra’s case shows how the lessons students learn can be limited and may not or may translate well to other writing tasks. Emma’s case demonstrates how some students do and do not internalize their tutor’s information/advice for ideological reasons beyond the tutors’ control.
CHAPTER 5

WRITERS/Writing: THE AFFECTS OF EXPERIMENTATION, REFLECTION, AND NEGOTIATION

In this dissertation study, particularly Chapter 4, I have tried to show how collaboration during and after tutorials transformed tutees’ thoughts about their writing tasks/goals into written actions: convergences of authoritative and internally persuasive discourses that, according to tutees, led to meaningful revisions. While there is evidence to support the claim that some writers improve their process and/or add to their writerly knowledge based on just one tutorial, data also show that even when tutees adopt their tutors’ information/advice for internally persuasive reasons, tutees may not have changed as writers in ways writing center workers might anticipate or presume. In this chapter, I present three additional students’ consultations, revisions, and perceptions. Lisa, Cassandra, and Emma’s stories demonstrate how tutees’ development as writers and their potential learning outcomes are circumstantial and at times unpredictable. What made sense to some students during and shortly after their tutorials may not translate well to other writing situations. Tutees do not always internalize information or advice in ways their tutors intended. Some tutees also come with beliefs about writing that may not cohere with their tutors’ information/advice. Most important, some students do not appear to have changed as writers (though they may have), and we shouldn’t always expect them to. These findings suggest that tutors cannot guarantee they change writers and tutors should not gauge their success based on this Northian goal. Although tutors can and often do change writers in valuable ways, tutors cannot control the changes students may make.
**Lisa: Situation-Specific Outcomes**

Lisa is one of two student writers in my study sample to answer “no” to each of the three questions I asked about her perceived learning outcomes: if she took something away from her consultation, if the Writing Center and/or her tutor helped her meet the requirements of her assignment, and if she would use any information and/or strategies from her consultation for future writing. Lisa’s negative responses to these questions might suggest that something about her tutorial did not meet a standard level of quality or excellence, that the tutorial didn’t meet her goals, or that she didn’t get anything useful from the experience. If had come across Lisa’s responses on a tutor evaluation form, I would at least pause and wonder. However, Lisa also reported an increase in her confidence as a writer and thought that her paper improved as a result of her Writing Center consultation. Her story demonstrates that some writing center sessions may only meet situation-specific needs. Depending on the circumstances, a student may only require assistance with an aspect of her writing that is unique to her assignment and not perceived as transferable to another writing situation—yet such sessions are productive nonetheless.

Lisa was a second-semester junior majoring in recreation management. During her sophomore year, she had completed a college composition course and, at the time of this study, was enrolled in a junior-year writing course. She scheduled an appointment at the Center to review the structure of a 3- to 5-page essay she was writing for a  

---

3 I chose to focus on Lisa for practical reasons. I was able to discern without doubt the revisions she made to her draft during and after her tutorial, but I was not able to guarantee the same accuracy with the other student in this category because several grammar and punctuation corrections were made, and I was not always certain who made the change (the tutor or the writer).
professional ethics class. Prior to this appointment, Lisa had only visited the Center once, the same semester but for a different project. She arrived with a 5-page, 5-paragraph draft about balancing power and authority in the workplace and did not bring a copy of her assignment. Her final draft was due the day after her tutorial.

While establishing the agenda for her tutorial, Lisa explains her assignment to her tutor Deanna:

L: I have to basically just say...like it's for an ethics class, I have to basically just create like a thesis for why U.S. business owners, executives, and managers should be, like aware of the value that the U.S. places on freedom, and like

D: {okay}

L: the value that the authority that they demonstrate to their employees and how that affects like the value of freedom.

D: {okay}

L: So I just, I wanted to say that there's like a fine line between like the amount of authority they exude, how it should be enough so that the employees feel like they...like their ethical values haven't changed, but not so much that they don't feel like their in control and that they can make competent decisions. I don't know how you want to do this, I just don't know if I'm getting my point across.

Lisa talks about the purpose of her essay and her purpose in coming to the Writing Center: to self-assess her progress (“I just don’t know if I’m getting my point across”). As a writing tutor, Deanna represents an opportunity for Lisa to reread and rethink her writing from someone else’s point of view.

But Deanna is not yet sure what she and Lisa will focus on:

D: {okay} So, um, cause in here you said you wanted to work on structure.

L: Yeah, like the structure of like I don’t know if I’m getting my point across.
D: {okay} So you said your [point that you wanted to get across]

L: [I just don’t know if I have enough structure]

D: was...

L: Um, like the fine line between business owners and their responsibility to make sure that their employees feel autonomous enough to make their own decisions...but not, not like show too much authority so that they, their like employees can’t feel like they can make their own decisions. Cause they should, they’re like assumed to have a certain amount of like competence when making their own decisions so that they don’t need like constant supervision and constant oversight, but...like a key factor since I had to relate it to like studies, a key factor was that they need to feel responsible for their actions-

D: The employees?

L: Yeah, need to feel responsible for their actions. And the other study was that the boss, like the manager, doesn’t take their position too seriously so that they go at like above and beyond what’s necessary.

D: {okay}

L: I don’t know if that even makes sense. I’m just like babbling (laughing).

D: Okay, so, like this is the main thing you’re

L: {right}

D: trying to prove is the fine line between business owners and their responsibilities towards employees and their decisions?

L: Uh huh.

D: Okay. I just wanted to get that down [so I wouldn’t forget it]

L: [Right, it’s confusing too,] it’s not like a simple...

D: Right [and it seems-]

L: [It’s really abstract]

D: Yeah, okay so-

L: And like it only has to be three to five pages; I could have gone for like ten pages.

D: {okay}
L: So it’s like, it was hard to like narrow it and make it make sense.

D: Okay, so you basically want to make sure you’re just sticking to this topic,

L: {right}

D: right?

L: Right.

Lisa questions whether or not her description of her point or purpose “even makes sense.” From her perspective, the structure of getting her point across just now sounded like “babbling.” Perhaps her essay did, too. Deanna narrows the scope of Lisa’s words to what sounded thesis-like to her. She asks Lisa if she is correct in her interpretation of the purpose of her essay and their tutorial: to see if Lisa is sticking to an argument about “the fine line between business owners and their responsibilities towards employees and their decisions.”

Though Lisa and Deanna agree on their understanding of one another, Deanna still considers how to proceed. Because she checked the WConline database before her appointment with Lisa, she knows that Lisa has already been to the Writing Center once that semester. She asks Lisa how the previous tutorial helped her:

D: Okay. Um, and you said you came here before and it helped. Did like he do anything specific, that like helped you?

L: Um...I remember he like made me read the topic sentences of each paragraph to make sure that there was like an actual structure.

D: {um hum}

L: And I think I tried to do that as I was going along so that if you asked me to do that it would make sense.

D: Cause like the topic sentence, just by reading it I should know what the
paragraph’s gonna be about

L: {right}

D: and should be able to like see how it goes-

L: Right and I want to see if it correlates with that.

D: {okay}

L: Cause like, I tried to take myself out of it and do it, but I couldn't really like completely...

D: {okay}

L: take like a step back and just read it for what it is and not for my own paper.

D: Okay, so how do you want to go through it?

L: Um...we could start with the topic sentence thing. I don't know. Do you want to like,

D: {okay}

L: me to read each paragraph and then...

D: Um, well the last time you came here did anyone read it out loud, or did you just [go through the sentences]?

L: [No, I read it] and then I like did grammar and I like

D: {um hum}

L: tried to revise it like that. And there were a lot of revisions and now I think it's okay, but now I just want to make sure and double check.

D: Okay, so it's not so much just the grammar or anything-

L: Right.

D: It's like content?

L: Um hum.

D: Okay. So...I mean are there, first are there any places where you think you might be getting off topic?
About a week before her present appointment, Lisa had a tutorial with another Writing Center tutor, who introduced her to a specific revision strategy, paragraph glossing. Lisa tried to apply that strategy when drafting her current essay and thinks she must have done something right because she “tried to revise it like that” more than once. Although she thinks “it’s okay,” she would like to compare her opinion with Deanna’s to “double check.” When Deanna asks Lisa how she wants “to go through it,” Lisa suggests paragraph glossing, “the topic sentence thing.” Instead of agreeing with Lisa to read each paragraph for topic sentences, Deanna decides to focus on a section of the essay that Lisa suspects needs more structure. Because Lisa had already used paragraph glossing when revising her current essay, perhaps Deanna didn’t think it was useful to repeat a process that Lisa had already gone through with another tutor and then on her own. For whatever reasons, Deanna decides to focus on the part of Lisa’s essay that Lisa is least confident about.

Lisa mentions her third and fourth paragraphs, both of which describe one of the “studies” she referred to at the beginning of her tutorial. These paragraphs describe, as written in her draft, “Zimbardo’s prison experiment: ‘Quiet Rage.’” Lisa uses this experiment as an example of “the fine line that business owners, managers, and executives must walk to ensure that their employees understand their subordinate status, while retaining the high value that the United States places on freedom....” Lisa doubts if she “split it up right.” She is concerned that this section of her essay “doesn’t make any sense.” After reading those two paragraphs to herself, Deanna assures Lisa that what she’s got is “a good description of the experiment.” But something else is missing. Deanna asks Lisa if she could relate the experiment to real work situations in which managers walk the fine
line contrary to ways the participants in Zimbardo’s study crossed it:

D: ...Now like is there anything more in depth you can go about like relating ...like business practices to this? I mean, I don’t know how much, if you have to do outside research- obviously you did research (laughing)

L: {right}

D: But like, anything where something like that might have or might not have occurred, you could actively compare it to?

L: Like a specific company?

D: Yeah, I mean if there is one, or um instead of just like sort of theorizing saying, “Well, you can’t let this happen.” Saying, you know, “you can’t let this happen, but in the case of this company, this is what they did correctly, this is what they did that they shouldn’t have.”

L: {um hum}

D: You know, something like that, or...

L: {right}

D: Cause it might make it easier to...

L: Instead of just saying hypothetically.

D: Right.

In this excerpt, Lisa acknowledges Deanna’s concern. “Instead of just saying hypothetically” that business managers walk a fine line between the right amount and too much authority, she could provide an example of how this works in a real business setting. Her current draft cites two well-known social psychology experiments, “Milgram’s work on the obedience to authority” and “Zimbardo’s prison experiment, ‘Quiet Rage.’” These two studies only indirectly support Lisa’s claim about walking the line. Rather than moving forward with this idea or discussing it further, Lisa returns to her concern about
paragraphs three and four, about her description of the Zimbardo experiment.

Although Deanna already told Lisa that those two paragraphs are “a good description,” Lisa asks Deanna if her portrayal of one of the participants in Zimbardo’s study “sufficiently” shows his transformation from “guide” to “dictator”:

L: ...I feel like I’m not really proving that um... I feel like I should focus more on his transformation from becoming- did I do that sufficiently? Like his transformation from becoming being merely like a figure to guide and mold the action of the subjects...into a dictator-like role that was overwhelmed by his own feelings of autonomy and tendency /for himself to internalize/-

D: I mean are there specific actions he did? You could say like-

L: Yeah, yeah there was.

D: Even just one or two to give [that more like-]

L: [Yeah there was] one like when, there was one instance that like one of the prisoners was- tried to escape and he was like, “No, we can’t let this happen,” and like that was part of the experiment,

D: {um hum}

L: was like if a person tried to escape and the escape like, that would have been, like an experiment’s, just like, let what happens happen

D: {um hum}

L: And I could just write that, I could do like when...

D: Because then if you have something like that, and then if you’re still doing like hypothetically in the business world, I think you could get into like, “what happens if this happens?” you know. A manager and employee shouldn’t do this or should.

L: {right}

D: You know, and give a more specific reason of the fine line.

L: Okay. And then... Am I like being repetitive, like do I say the same thing, or am I just wording it differently /and it just/-?

D: Um...(4s) I don’t think you’re being repetitive... (10s) Like this- the phrase right there I think is very important. It’s like what stood out to me as I was reading this
and um...

L: Right.

D: Like and it’s something also, I don’t know if you do this like in the beginning or after this in the paper.

L: {uh huh}

D: Like, again, like a specific example, or um...your reasoning...

L: Right.

D: Because was this supposed to be like a hypothetical paper, like saying this is what you know?

Deanna does not think that Lisa is “being repetitive.” In fact, the sentence or phrase in question “is very important” and summons “like, again, like a specific example” from a business. Not yet having read the entire draft or the assignment, Deanna questions the purpose of Lisa’s essay: “was this supposed to be like a hypothetical paper...?” Is Lisa supposed to assume for the sake of argument that the two social-psych studies relate to business practices and talk about how they are related in theory? Or is she supposed to show how they are related in theory and practice?

Lisa explains that her professor gave students a thesis about social roles; therefore, Lisa uses the two experiments discussed in class to support that thesis:

L: I just think that like the orientation of rules is the key factor in determining...how both parties will act.

D: {um hum}

L: In like a company and in these experiments like how they were orientated to act...

D: {um hum}

L: Like how he orientated the guards to act just like saying...he didn't really say, I
could get the quote what he says...

D: So are you saying that there are like these set roles almost, that they have immediately, a manager and like as an employee going into that job?

L: Yeah, but it’s like, that’s how it’s orientated

D: {okay}

L: like how the manager orientates the employee

D: {okay}

L: It’s like a one-way street. Like the superior orientates the inferior, or like the...in the experiment’s case like the subjects and the psychologist.

D: {okay}

L: So that would be like the deciding factor on how people act because /she/ was trying to just say that, this was like an example

D: {um hum}

L: of like a thesis of a paper that she gave people, “People tend to behave according to the role they are in, given what they understand the role to entail, how much responsibility is involved, and how much authority is imposed on them.”

D: {um hum}

L: So that was like the key, that was like the main...I don’t know if it should be at the end or more in the beginning, but that was like a key sentence that I...kind of wanted to prove.

D: Okay (3s)

L: So that explains-

D: And I think that that ex- sorry for interrupting, [but that]

L: [Yeah, (unclear)]

D: experiment definitely covers [this]

L: [It does]

D: because it’s showing, like it’s an experiment about how people behave like

L: {right}
Deanna reassures Lisa that her description of the Zimbardo experiment “definitely covers” her thesis about “how people behave like in situations like that.” Lisa’s overlapping speech suggests she agrees; the Zimbardo experiment “is pretty self-explanatory.” Nevertheless, Lisa double checks to see if and why specific examples would make her essay even “more clear.”

In response, Deanna’s explains a point she made earlier that a business example could “enhance” Lisa’s thesis:

D: Like even if it’s something like you go in a company and see if they have like…not a mission statement, but you know [like what they mean-]

L: [But /Google/ does have] a mission, cause she gave us Google, it’s like Google’s mission statement is don’t be evil.

D: {um hum}

L: That’s like what they say to their [employees.]

D: [Right] like certain things they say, “this is what you should be like working for this job.”

L: {right}

D: You know, and different levels, like, of any job have [subs-]

L: [I feel] like if I started doing that I wouldn’t be able to give enough information, like I would just, it would be like ten pages long.

D: {um hum}
L: That’s why I didn’t want to go the route of like using...cause I started to do that

D: {um hum}

L: with like the Google, and I wrote this whole thing. I’m like, “don’t be evil” and how that facilitates like personal choice and like it reciprocates for their own company because then they...they like reciprocate the respect that the company gives them.

D: {um hum}

L: They do it right back. But then I just went into this whole thing. I guess I could just add it again, like even if it was a small [piece-]

D: [Right] even a small piece of it, I think, would help get that point across.

L: {right}

D: I mean you don’t need to add five different examples, like about the one, like Google I think would be fine,

L: {right}

D: and it would help enhance that idea.

L: {right} ...Okay...(3s), okay...so...then do you want to go to the other experiment to just see if that /proves/- cause that was kind of the piece that like how much authority’s imposed on them, that was like that piece of it, and how much responsibility is involved is like the other study, it was....

In a previous draft, Lisa added the Google example that her teacher provided, but Lisa deleted it because she couldn’t write about it without getting “into this whole thing.”

Deanna thinks that “even a small piece of it...would help” support Lisa’s thesis. Other than backchannels (“right”), Lisa does not indicate whether she likes that idea. She only asks Deanna is she “want[s] to go to the other experiment,” Milgram’s experiment. Deanna returns the question:

D: So I mean, did you feel like the same way about this part, that you did about this
one?

S: I felt more, more um...like strong, like confident with that part-

D: Yeah, this one is definitely...

L: Concise

D: Right, and it gets more like, “this was the experiment, this was how like it relates to the business practices.”

L: {right}

D: Like it’s more coherent.

L: {right}

D: It gets right to the point.

L: Do you think I should still add an exam- well that was like the example was like in the experiment I like used the /like/

D: {right}

L: I could add like a quote, what he says when they’re like, “I won’t be responsible for this,” and they were like, “no I /will hold all/ responsibility for...

D: {um hum} (3s) Because it’s like a complete- well obviously they’re two completely different things, but like...

L: {right}

D: Um...where was it?

L: I wish I could find something that was more related to /the job/, but like there was so many aspects that it was just...

D: Right...I mean, do you think you need to add anything more in there? Into this one?

L: No, I just wanted to see if I needed an example, but I think it’s fine.

D: Yeah, I mean I would honestly only tell you to add an example if you feel like it really needs one. I think it’s fine as it is. It’s definitely a lot stronger.

L: {right}

D: Um...)
L: It's just more like, this is what hap- I know what you mean.

D: {yeah}

L: It just makes more sense. I was like on a roll and it just, it like fit better.

D: Right, and it seems like you had an easier time just saying, you know, this is what happened in the experiment and this is how it like correlates to business.

L: {right}

D: You know, it's all very clear.

L: {okay} (unclear)

D: Hum?

L: I'm just [thinking about the Google statement.]

D: [Oh.] (4s) I mean do you feel like you answer it overall, this question by the-

L: [I tried.]

D: [end of the paper]?

L: Yeah.

D: Okay.

Lisa feels that her discussion of the Zimbardo experiment is stronger than her presentation of the Milgram experiment. Like Deanna says, it “gets right to the point” explaining the implications for business. They agree that “it’s fine as it is” and “definitely a lot stronger” than the Milgram experiment. But neither of them addresses Lisa’s discussion of the Milgram experiment. Instead, Lisa is “thinking about the Google statement.” Should she add Google as an example or not? If Lisa feels like she accomplished her goal with this paper, then, as Deanna implies, this paper is “okay.”

Their session ends with Deanna redirecting the conversation to Lisa's sense of
things and with Lisa still doubting and believing in herself. Lisa thinks she “tried to use
the experiments to like prove” her thesis, but now she wants Deanna to check her
conclusion. Does it repeat her introduction?

D: I think it’s a good conclusion. I mean you wrap everything up nicely, so...

L: Okay. I feel better about it now than /did with the.../ (laughing)

D: {okay} And I mean as for, you said before the topic sentences helped you, so if
you like go back and read each sentence and like, that is what you want to say in
the paragraph,

L: {right}

D: you’re obviously on the right track.

L: Right, it’s fine. Okay, cool so I guess I didn’t need as much help as I thought
(laughing).

D: Do you have any other questions about it?

L: No, it’s actually cool, I feel better now.

D: That’s good.

L: (laughing)

D: (laughing)

L: I’m just gonna add to this. (3s) Okay, cool.

D: Yeah, I think just that, even if you write just a couple sentences for that example
it will definitely help that part a lot.

L: And I could probably just get rid of like some /like I say/ this is, like I say
(reading very quickly), “in the beginning of orientation to the experiments /in
order to give/ clear /official instructions regards act in official manner over the
prisoners/.” I feel like I can move that. I’ll just figure it out, copy and paste. Cool.

D: {okay}

L: I feel better, thank you.

D: You’re welcome.
Deanna likes Lisa’s conclusion, but if Lisa is still concerned about her paper she could reapply the paragraph glossing strategy (“the topic sentences”) that she learned in a previous tutorial to see if she’s “on the right track.” Considering that Deanna likes everything Lisa has written so far, Lisa concludes that she must be on the right track and “feel[s] better now” that she has met with a Writing Center tutor. She is relieved to hear that she “didn’t need as much help as [she] thought.” All she needs to do is add “a couple of sentences for” the Google example and “copy and paste” another sentence elsewhere in the paper.

Lisa made four changes to her final draft (see Appendix L). In paragraph 3, she corrected a typo, rearranged one of her sentences in the first Zimbardo paragraph, and added a phrase at the end of that paragraph. The Google example is paragraph 5, which is the only change Deanna recommended. The other two changes, excluding the corrected typo, pertain to the Zimbardo experiment and were not discussed during the tutorial, though they may have been on Lisa’s mind at the time. Early in her tutorial, Lisa explained that she had come to the Writing Center because she was concerned about the structure of getting her point across. The sentence she moved and the phrase she added to paragraph 3 are related, in my opinion, to Lisa getting her point across. In her during-tutorial draft, Lisa introduced a point after she provided an example of that point. She switched these sentences in her final draft so that readers are first introduced to Zimbardo’s role as a “superior authority” at the beginning of his experiment and then given an example of how he achieved “super authority.” The phrase she added at the end of her paragraph is an analysis of the results of Zimbardo’s experiment. Without it, she wouldn’t have gotten her point across. Adding the Google example also contributed to getting the point across. It is
an example of one company’s mission to shape the power of authority in the workplace.
All of the changes Lisa made to her essay were related to her reason for coming to the Center.

Even so, Lisa was “not sure” adding the Google example was the right move. In a previous draft, Lisa had added the Google example and then deleted it. She was not, at that time, confident about adding the Google example because, as she told me, it disrupted the “flow”: “sometimes that happens to me when like I go try to do a final draft and I have to add more things. It doesn't really flow the way it would have with my original mindset.” But Lisa added the Google example anyway and stated that it was her most important revision.

Although Lisa could explain why Deanna thought her draft needed “real life business examples, maybe even with specific companies,” it is not clear if Lisa believed this. Lisa claimed that she added the Google example because she “trust[s] the writing center”:

M: ...going back to the Google paragraph. You made the change. I’m assuming that you made it because it made sense to you or it seemed like the right idea, but did it?
L: No, I did it anyway. I’m not sure.
M: You’re not sure it was the right idea?
L: Yeah, well I used her advice because it was another person’s point-of-view and if she said that it would have made it more clear than...I mean, it’s easier to take her advice than to not, I guess...cause I can’t really step out of myself when you’re writing a paper...like you can’t...unless I did it...write it a week after I did it, not wait until the night before it would’ve been different, I would’ve seen it in a different view, but the fact that I just wrote it and then I had to revise it right after I wrote it kind of makes me jaded, so I took her advice maybe because I was in a rush...
M: OK, so it seemed like the right idea because you...

L: I trust the writing center.

M: Okay, because you trust the center, but also you said something about...it was another ear and it seems like if someone else is having this then "maybe I should do something."

L: And maybe if I had another person read it also and propose, like, do you think I should have an example there, maybe if they had said something that would have helped also, but I think that just the fact that it was another person's point of view was all I needed to believe it.

Lisa’s comments in this excerpt intimate that she took her tutor’s advice at face value; she trusted Deanna because of the power invested in her by the Writing Center. If that’s true, then Deanna’s recommendation remains an authoritative discourse. When I asked Lisa why adding the Google example was her most important revision, she channeled Deanna: “I felt like it developed more, cause it was proof, and made it more real, like real world, like real, like realistic I guess, instead of being so hypothetical, it made it more concrete.”

Lisa felt that adding a paragraph about Google further developed her paper because it was a concrete business example of her thesis. So was she internally persuaded or not? Just because she can explain her reasons for revising doesn’t mean Lisa is convinced that this particular revision was necessary.

Lisa also told me during our interview that she didn’t take away any information/advice or strategy that she would use in the future, not like she had from a previous tutorial. Lisa implied that she was internally persuaded to apply and extend a revision strategy she picked up from another tutor. She had learned how to gloss paragraphs for topic sentences and applied that strategy to her current paper: “Last time he [the tutor] had me just read the topic sentence of every paragraph and that helped me a
lot to focus on the structure of my paper...so I actually ended up doing that to myself before I came, because I already knew that would be like a big help.” In the context of a previous WC tutorial, she connected learning to a revision strategy (i.e., paragraph glossing), but a particular revision strategy was not applied, had no name, or was not identified as such during her current tutorial. It is possible that if Lisa, or any student, cannot see how a particular tutorial applies to other writing situations, that tutorial was useful only for a particular essay. And this seems to have been okay. Though Lisa did not think she learned anything specific from her tutorial, she still saw the experience as helpful, confirming. She told Deanna that she felt “much better” by the end of her tutorial, and she told me that she thought her final draft was “pretty solid.” Deanna’s assessment of her paper implied that the paragraph glossing strategy Lisa applied worked well. Lisa’s tutorial left her with a sense of herself as a better writer than she thought when she first arrived for her appointment. Her tutorial with Deanna most likely validated what Lisa thought she learned and applied from a previous tutorial. I could argue that Lisa changed as a writer because she became more confident about her paper—and probably her technique, too (paragraph glossing). However, even though Lisa discovered that she “didn’t need as much help as [she] thought” and that her original hunch to add the Google example was consistent with her tutor’s suggestion, she did not think she took something specific away from this tutorial: “Not this specific time. This was pretty specific to this paper, what we did.” According to Lisa, her tutorial with Deanna was useful and reaffirming but not transportable to another writing situation. In this way, only Lisa’s writing changed.

If we think of the work of writing centers as situated learning experiences, Lisa’s story is not about failure to acquire new and transferable knowledge or strategies but
about necessary experimentation with knowledge and strategies that furthered her enculturation as a writer. Neal Lerner takes up “the idea of situated learning” as an approach to laboratory methods of teaching and learning writing that include “cognitive apprenticeships” through which “scaffolding and reflective thinking are essential to the learning process” (The Idea of a Writing Laboratory 163, 157, 161; see also “Situated Learning”). As situated learning experiences, writing center tutorials aid learning, discovery, and problem solving through investigation, exploration, and trial-and-error methods. A heuristic approach to writing instruction enables writers such as Lisa to experiment with what works, how it works, when, and for whom. Lisa came to the Center having already experimented with her writing; she tried paragraph glossing as a way to re-see and organize her draft, which she believed helped her create the draft under discussion. The feedback she received from Deanna encouraged further experimentation—to re-add the Google example. Lisa trusted her tutor and tried this idea, seemed to like it at first, and later changed her mind. In short, Lisa adopted what worked and rejected what didn’t work. So, did she change as a writer? Yes and no. Yes, Lisa changed her understanding of her draft. No, Lisa did not think she acquired a tangible skill she could apply to future writing projects and she was not internally persuaded to revise. But when viewed as a situated learning experience, Lisa’s tutorial was a catalyst for further experimentation, and therefore, productive.

**Cassandra: Complicating Contexts**

Cassandra is a student whose revisions were interdiscursive with her tutors’ advice in ways that, I think, affected real changes to her writing and altered her understanding of a particular essay and rhetorical concept. By interdiscursive, I mean that
Cassandra echoed her tutor's approach to revision, drawing on the discourse conventions and strategic knowledge made available to her during her tutorial. My understanding of interdiscursivity comes from Roz Ivanic, who draws on Bakhtin, Fairclough, and Wertsch: “the echo in the new text is not another specific text, but of a recognizable, abstract text type, or set of conventions: a pattern of language use, rather than a sample of it” (48). In the context of my study, a tutor represents patterns of language use that include the knowledge of how and why to use such conventions. Cassandra’s revisions, like most of the students participating in this study, reflect language choices that are interdiscursive or, in Bakhtin’s words, “ventriloquist” and “double-voiced” with her tutor’s discourse choices (see Ivanic 49-51). Before tutees internalize other discourses as internally persuasive, they must negotiate them, as I have shown in Chapter 4.

Cassandra’s case demonstrates how both tutors and tutees can have different interests/beliefs that influence language use and must be negotiated during writing center consultations. While tutees can internalize valuable information/advice during tutorials, the lessons they think they learn can be limited to their tutor’s beliefs and interests as well as their own. Cassandra’s case also demonstrates that many tutees’ potential learning outcomes can be limited because of the scope of a rhetorical concept and its varied applications in other contexts than the immediate context of a tutorial and one writing assignment.

Cassandra had been assigned to write an essay for her freshman composition class. The purpose of the assignment was, in Cassandra’s words, “contributing your voice to an ongoing conversation” by researching “something we really cared about and something that either bothered us or were interested in, so that we could make the paper more
interesting to the audience.” Cassandra had already researched and written drafts for two different topics that her freshman composition teacher did not approve of. By the time she came to the Writing Center, she was running out of time; her final draft was due the next morning. She made two appointments, one early afternoon for planning and the other later that evening for revising.

Cassandra came to her evening appointment with her third draft (of her third essay topic) and met with a tutor, Deanna. According to the transcript of their tutorial, Cassandra’s most recent essay topic was “about like...um...should the NCAA allow alcohol advertisements...in college sports...” Another tutor had encouraged Cassandra to begin her essay with an anecdote that would entice the audience to read further and participate in the conversation about alcohol advertisements and college sports. Her first paragraph, therefore, began by asking the audience to recall “the time during March back when” the UMass Amherst men’s basketball team had made it to “the final four of March Madness 1996,” and “had its winningest season since the program first started.” However, Cassandra wanted Deanna’s opinion because, as she explained to Deanna, she “had a completely different introduction” in her previous draft. Though Cassandra liked the idea of “catching the audience” with this particular story, she needed to “know if it sounds good.” She also suggested she and Deanna focus on “having [the essay] make sense and flow.”

Deanna had not heard about March Madness 1996 and did not care about basketball. She (“D”) explains her perspective to Cassandra (“C”) as follows:

D: Like it could be like to me, if I read that, I’d be like, “What are you talking about? I don’t care personally about this.”
C: {yeah}

T: Someone who…likes basketball or might be like, “okay, awesome.”

S: {yeah}...

T: And that’s, cause alumni is everyone.

S: Okay...

D: And I think that’s…I think the problem I have with that introduction is...right there it’s focused to a very certain group. I would read that, and because of my interests

C: {yeah}

D: and who I am, I’d be like oh I'm not a true UMass student because I don’t remember this basketball game? And I would be like, okay I'm not reading this.

C: {okay}

D: So I think if you’re gonna focus towards alumni, maybe that should be narrowed down...sports alumni, or athletic...

C: Okay, yeah

D: Or...anyone involved in, like, athletics in the past, present-

Cassandra spoke casually to her readers, UMass alumni, as if they were friends, remembered this event, and were as interested as she was in recalling it. For this reason, Deanna recommends that Cassandra narrow the scope of her audience to only the alumni most likely to care and act, such as “sports alumni.”

This assessment generates questions for Cassandra; she is not sure how to “go about doing that” or why she should:

C: Narrow it down?

D: At least your audience, you want to make it very clear...that it's just towards this group of people, cause like I’ve said, alumni spans so many different people.
C: {yeah, yeah}
D: Not everyone likes basketball.
C: {okay}
D: So...okay...so is it, now since we have that, if you're gonna direct it towards that specific
C: {yeah}
D: audience, um... (5s)

At the end of this brief excerpt, Deanna pauses to read, but Cassandra has another concern. She shifts their focus to her thesis:

C: And the problem is, my like, what I'm trying to get across, like my argument doesn't actually come out until the...top of the first page, I mean top of the second page.
D: Okay
C: And...
D: And you want to...that's the problem with starting out with like a story narrative...
C: {yeah}
D: in the paper...because you get so into trying to engage your audience that you
C: {yeah}
D: forget...to include your thesis. You know what I mean?
C: Yeah, I just feel like, I don't know, if...if I'm writing to that specific alumni that that works. I don't...
D: Um hum, right, but like reading this first thing, I would.... If you just gave me the first paragraph, if I was reading that as [like if these-]
C: [You wouldn’t read it anymore?]
D: Well, it’s not even that because of my interests. I'd be like, okay so this is gonna
be about basketball.

C: Yeah

D: Is it about basketball? Is it about this event? It’s about...advertisement, right?

Cassandra may not have predicted Deanna’s response to the basketball anecdote, but she predicts a problem with the location of her thesis. Her questions about how to narrow the scope of her audience (and why) generate concerns about the purpose of her essay:

C: It’s about like...the, how, I don’t know if you’ve heard about how the NCAA allowed for advertisement over like...advertisement over the amount...um...Hold on...It’s like, they allowed more advertisement than they made a law for. Like, um I don’t know how to say it. Okay, the NCAA only allows 120 seconds of alcohol advertisement per game...

D: {right}

C: in the March Madness, but in the final four of this year’s March Madness they went over that. And what I’m arguing to say is, “Is this okay?” Is...

D: So is it okay that they went OVER the 120...was it seconds?

C: Seconds, or...and...then I saw a show on like is it okay if...there’s even advertisements in college sports at all.

D: {okay}

C: And I don’t think that there should be...um...advertisements for beer or anything else, like any alcohol-related issues because I feel like we already have enough problems with the use of alcohol at...at like college.

D: So you’re just saying for college sports, not for like-

C: Yeah, no, not for...yeah not for anything...[[unclear]]

D: Okay] cause college sports are generally watched by college students?

C: Yeah, yeah

D: Okay...Yeah cause I’d say like good that you narrowed it on that because like I
know when
C: {yeah}
D: I watch the
C: {yeah}
D: Sox games-
C: Yeah...and I...that’s what I’m arguing and then I made the point that the NCAA allows this advertisement but they also drug test for alcohol.
D: Okay
C: And just...I don’t know. I’m trying to use the alumni as a way to ask for money so that we don’t have to go to these like...like we don’t have to go to beer companies to get money to fund...like the programs, you know what I mean?
D: Right, yeah...
C: So that’s what I’m kind of writing to the alumni, to say, “hey, like, donate money so that we don’t have to...you know, use alcohol advertisements.”
D: Okay, so...when you’re...so this would essentially be a letter to them?
C: Kind of, yeah...
D: So...okay so I haven’t read the rest of the paper.
C: Okay
D: Writing a letter to alumni...saying I don’t think alcohol advertisement should be allowed for college sports... Now...you obviously need other advertisement. What would be the alternative? Like what else do you address in the paper? You say this isn’t good...
C: {um hum}
D: You list reasons why you think it should be banned, right?
C: Um hum.
D: What else do you say besides the reasons it should be banned? (5s) I mean is it basically just a research paper about WHY alcohol advertisement should be banned?
C: Yeah.
D: Okay...so...basically your thesis, your focus is...it should be banned, these are the reasons why.

C: Um hum.

D: Okay.

While Cassandra explains her stance and goal, Deanna tries to nail down Cassandra’s thesis and, in doing so, indirectly presents the idea that Cassandra’s message might best reach her audience if presented in the form of letter.

Their conversation continues for 10 minutes, however, about the multiple ways in which advertisers target college students, the deaths related to alcohol abuse, and the location of Cassandra’s thesis, which is, according to Cassandra, “Drinking and college students do not exactly mix.” Cassandra wants “to find a way to put it kind of in the beginning.” This discussion leads them back Cassandra’s audience, which she and Deanna agree “to narrow [it] down” to student athlete alumni. Having settled on this decision, Deanna returns to reading Cassandra’s essay but is interrupted:

C: ...Can I just interrupt you for one second?

D: Sure.

C: Now I’m thinking should I just make this a letter? Like, should I make it...you know...

D: Um...can you do that? Like...does your professor have a problem with that format?

C: Um, she lets us do whatever style we want like if it suits...

D: {yeah} A letter would...

C: Absolutely work.

D: It would work I think much better because you can be more personal. I mean you still, obviously it’s a research paper. You have to include sources
C: {yeah}
D: or something, right?
C: Yeah
D: I mean...you're gonna have to include that but it also allows you to be more informal with your language
C: {yeah}
D: and more personal with....
C: Yeah
D: Yeah. I like that idea. I think a letter would work. And also it establishes your audience right [at the beginning].
C: [Right away.]
D: So then you're not wondering for a while going, okay so is this directed to this group or this group or both of them?
C: Cause it would be like...Dear um...like student [athlete alumni.]
D: [Athlete alumni] yeah
C: Yeah
D: Yeah...

Cassandra interrupts Deanna to talk about changing her essay to a letter because she suspects such a change would suit her purpose. As she thinks through this idea, she reconsiders her teacher's assignment requirements and decides, with the support of her tutor, that a letter is “absolutely” a good idea. She decides that a letter works well with her already personal approach and casual tone, and a letter identifies her audience “right away.” This segment concludes the first half of Cassandra’s tutorial. Each of the excerpts above suggests Cassandra monitored her choices. Cassandra cross checked one tutor’s recommendations against another’s and tested her latest approach to writing this
particular essay. She questioned her assumptions about ways to make her point and, with Deanna’s help, established an audience and genre that corresponded to her thesis and voice.

The remainder of their tutorial focuses on the content and order of Cassandra’s paragraphs. Her essay switches awkwardly from narrative (enticement) to research (supporting evidence). Cassandra doesn't, in Deanna’s words, “really go into detail about the NCAA until like the fourth page.” Although “all this great information” leads to Cassandra’s opinion, “everything before is…basically talking to the audience.” Deanna’s comments imply that Cassandra needs to delete and rearrange parts of her text:

D: Let's see...So...You have all of this up here, getting into it
C: {uh huh}
D: saying, you know, remember when this happened? Remember when you were a student?
C: {um hum}
D: And... (5s) Okay, so... (35s) Do you have a specific place where you feel you may be saying too much?
C: Um...(laughing) I don't even know...
D: Um...because basically...what I think...
C: And I kind of have to have my, let my voice be known
D: {um hum}
C: Instead of like just dumping research into...
D: {yeah} And I think...this requires just organization...
C: Yeah, that's my problem.
D: Because like-
C: My paper is all over the place, you know?
D: It’s...you know this huge like, you know...three or four pages of narrative, and BAM.

C: [All of this research.]

D: [All of this information] and you need to intertwine them.

C: {yeah}

D: So like, I mean basically right after you have your thesis.

C: {yeah}

D: I think it would be good if you go into some detail, some information about you know...the NCAA...give some of your research...

C: Should I-

D: And then connect it back with going...

C: Take it from...

D: Did this affect...you know...being like...because you don’t want to just have like I'm connecting with you as a young audience, here's all my research at the end.

C: {yeah}

D: Because you sort of like, it's going...two different extremes.

C: {yeah}

D: So you just want to...and I'm not saying put like...research...connecting research you know like that.

C: But almost, like...

D: Almost, yeah, you do want to have them combined.

C: {yeah}

D: Because like everything reading it, it's all good but it's like too much at once.

C: {yeah}

D: You need [a BIG break] at some point.

C: [It’s just like-] It was like alright, and then BAM

D: {yeah}
C: Like...okay, so can I take...can I like copy and put it somewhere and try to...?

D: Yeah, and then go through and I mean you can copy and paste and work on like transitions into it and...

C: {yeah}...I can kind of put that right after my thesis, right?

D: Yeah, like I think that would go great after your thesis.

C: {yeah}

D: Cause you're saying, you know, here's this problem...here's the marketing problem... Instead of going here's this problem, when you were a student here,

C: {yeah}

D: you did this.

Cassandra seems to understand that “instead of just like dumping research,” she needs to combine her research with her narrative. Her backchannels (“yeah”) suggest she is following along, and her overlapping speech (“All of this research”) implies she is predicting Deanna’s comment about intertwining. She also echoes Deanna’s concern (“BAM”) and tries to visualize and confirm a new order (“I can kind of put that right after my thesis, right?”). They spend their last twenty minutes focusing on arrangement, including transitions. Their conversation continues to follow a similar pattern as the excerpt above: Deanna or Cassandra points to a specific issue, Cassandra checks or predicts Deanna’s assessment of the situation, Deanna responds with questions and explicit suggestions, and Cassandra acknowledges and/or clarifies what she has heard.

In preparation for my discourse-based interview with Cassandra, I compared her during-tutorial draft with her after-tutorial draft and the transcript of her consultation with Deanna (see Appendix M). Cassandra’s drafts show that she used most of her tutor’s advice. She transformed the genre of her text from an essay to a letter; she narrowed the
Cassandra explained to me that she needed to limit her audience from student alumni to student athlete alumni because her tutor “made me aware of the fact that ... you have to look who’s reading the paper; you have to realize not everyone is interested in a certain subject; so maybe if someone that didn’t like sports read the first paragraph of my paper, they’re not going to read any more of it....” Cassandra’s tutor was not a sports fan and reminded her that not all alumni are necessarily sports fans. It seemed like a good idea to Cassandra to further limit her audience because:

it was so important how we wrote, whether we wrote formal [or not].... I think that was like the main idea.... We had to research [our topics], but [the teacher] didn’t want [the students] to be like, ok, I did this; this is how I’m going to show all my research; let’s dump it into the paper. [The teacher] wanted us to have like a voice to an audience, ... like to the people who are interested in what we’re talking about.

Cassandra wanted to influence people who cared about her topic and meet an assigned requirement for the course unit, so she modified her audience to address them personally, less formally.

Cassandra also changed the genre of her text from essay to letter because, as her
tutor, Deanna, pointed out, she asked her audience for a donation, and academic essays don’t usually ask their readers for money. However, the only indication that Cassandra’s text is a letter is the salutation “Dear Student-Athlete Alumni.” Still, this change in genre corresponded with Cassandra’s use of voice, which corresponded to her audience. Cassandra had been addressing her alumni audience as a “you” that knows and cares. Deanna argued that because Cassandra was a student athlete, her frequent use of the personal pronoun “you” made sense when addressing student alumni who had played sports for UMass. Cassandra “stuck to the student athlete thing cause...it was coming from me, as a student athlete.... It’s a more personal connection, too. And I feel like in a letter you need to be more personal.” Cassandra’s personal experience as an athlete gave her an insider’s perspective that she believed she shared in common with former student athletes, and a letter suited her desire to address them directly.

Cassandra also reported that Deanna helped her meet the requirements of her assignment by clarifying her thesis, explaining how to use research with her own voice, and providing insight into different audiences: “We kind of together came up with the thesis. Again the audience thing was such a big deal and how to get my voice out there without seeming like, without dumping research.” She believed that most important revision had to do with “audience” because:

it changed from the first draft to the second draft to the third draft who I was talking to, and it kind of gave me a purpose for writing cause before it was just an article and then it turned into a letter, and before it was just alumni, then it turned to student alumni.... And then as I went along and understood why, when I found that specific audience, I was excited about it, and I was like, ‘yes,’ I understand why I need it.

Cassandra’s tutorial with Deanna helped her understand audience in more complex ways
than I anticipated when first reading her tutorial transcript and listening to the recording. Cassandra’s first tutor’s style and ideas were different from Deanna’s approach and perspective, according to Cassandra. From her point of view, she was “just looking for some help,” and Deanna “was strong letting me know that she didn’t like basketball.” Cassandra “felt tension” because she and Deanna “kind of had different views on [sports], different personalities, I think.” Even though Deanna had come on strong, Cassandra “thought that it was good that [Deanna] made me realize that with the audience...how some people don’t care.... It was necessary almost to let me know.” She said that Deanna “made me aware of the fact that, alright, you can start [the paper] off how you want to, but you have to look at who’s reading the paper.” Cassandra also said that before she writes another paper for another class, “I’m going to think twice about who I’m talking to because not everyone cares about what I’m saying...you know, you can’t generalize everything.” The metacognition evident in this comment points to Cassandra’s latest strategy for writing to different audiences. The information Cassandra claimed she would use again in the future is thinking twice about her assumptions or generalizations about audience—a complex rhetorical concept that she recognizes is fundamentally connected to purpose, genre, and voice. Cassandra’s negotiations with her tutor and her responses to my interview questions indicate a perceptive and changed writer.

A direct reader response turns out to be productive for Cassandra. The collaborative aspects of Cassandra’s tutorial were more evident in the ways she constructed knowledge than in how Deanna tutored. This finding complicates measures of tutoring success that have long been identified as nondirective and directive collaborative response strategies. In Chapter 1, I delineated a trajectory of the writing center scholarship that has theorized and/or tested the nature of successful tutorials.
Clark’s study, in particular, found that tutors and tutees did not recognize the same tutoring styles. Some of the tutees in her study thought they were too directive, but their tutees perceived directive tutoring as nondirective. Cassandra’s case is similar in the sense that she appears to have experienced her writing center session from her own perspectives and needs.

This session also raises questions about the limitations of what Cassandra thinks she learned from her tutorial. Cassandra thought twice about audience and will do so in the future because “not everyone will care” about the conversations she deems valuable. Though that is likely true, Cassandra entered a particular conversation about a specific social issue that affected more people than her revision may have led her to communicate. How could Cassandra have added to the conversation about alcohol advertisements at student athletic games without sacrificing the size of audience and possibly donations? In Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford’s terms, Cassandra’s options were limited to an addressed audience without the possibility of invoking an audience and thus expanding the action Cassandra’s paper could take. That is, Cassandra may have internalized an understanding of audience choice limited to who will care. Although this seemed the best solution for Cassandra’s paper at that time, it does offer Cassandra a concept of audience that may be more limited than either she knows or Deanna may have intended. Cassandra’s case demonstrates that the breadth and depth of a rhetorical concept such as audience must be explored in other contexts than the immediate context of one tutorial and one writing assignment.

Despite such potential limitations, Cassandra claims to have learned more about the importance of audience from her tutor than her teacher: “Yeah, I felt like I really
understood because in class [the teacher] would talk about audience, and I’d be like alright, I don’t really care, who cares, doesn’t really matter to my paper.” With Deanna’s help, Cassandra increased her awareness of audience-related matters that matched the rhetorical, process, and writing goals for that assignment. The rhetorical goals for her unit 3 assignment, as described in the UMass Writing Program's instructor guides, include: “targeting an audience that fits situation,” “adapting writing to address that audience,” and “using writing to communicate with [a] public audience.” Process goals include “revision activities focused on audience” and “reflective writing on choices made.” Writing goals include “audience analysis” and “organization and style appropriate to audience.” Though Cassandra was struggling to meet these goals, Deanna appears to have helped Cassandra understand why they mattered and how to achieve them. Cassandra’s case provides tutors, teachers, and administrators with insights into ways students engage with feedback outside of the classroom to accomplish course goals, and how students interpret meeting those goals.

**Emma: Writing with Power**

Emma’s story is, to me, one of most interesting because she is the only student in this study to consciously resist conventions of academic writing that she believed conflicted with the content of her essay and her self-described “anti-essentialist perspective.” She resisted her tutor’s recommendation to create an outline for organizing her draft because outlines are, in Emma’s words, products of “capitalist compartmentalization.” Emma’s tutor tried to accommodate her and presented a couple of options: to provide readers with disclaimers regarding the anti-structure of her essay and to try a different strategy for organization, a diagram, both of which Emma reported
using with modifications. However, there is little evidence during Emma’s tutorial that she was internally persuaded to revise based on her tutor’s recommendations, and textual analysis of her during and after drafts does not visibly show Emma using or extending her tutor’s advice. Although Emma reported using her tutor’s recommendations and thought she would apply at least one of them in the future, on her terms, Emma’s responses to my discourse-based interview questions also did not noticeably correspond to her revisions. Emma’s story demonstrates the impact of her ideological differences on her writing process and, therefore, how tutorials can appear to be limited in their capacity to change writers and how their effects are not always evident in students’ writing.

At the time of this study, Emma was a second-semester senior completing her bachelor’s degree in “social thought and political economy.” Emma came to the Center with three separate but related drafts (freewrites, as she called them) of an essay assignment from her junior-year writing course, “Writing for Critical Consciousness.” Each undergraduate attending the University of Massachusetts Amherst must enroll in a junior-year writing course in one’s academic major. The purpose of these courses is to teach students how to write in their respective disciplines. Emma waited to take this course until her senior year, but I am not sure why; I did not ask her. I suspect it’s because she hated writing until writing her essay for this course. Throughout Emma’s four years as a student at UMass, she remembered attending six Writing Center appointments, three of them within the same semester as this study. Based on previous experiences, Emma believed the Writing Center was a useful tool in her development as a writer because of its pedagogy:

Oh, I think that it’s...that the...pedagogy of the writing center is helpful because they...ask first what I want them to help me with and what I want them to look at, and I think that’s really helpful because I know I can come and say, “No, I don’t
want to work on grammar, I don’t want to work on punctuation, I want to work on structure, or I want to work on this,” and…it focuses it to my needs immediately….Um…so I’ve come-…. Well, mostly what I need help with is just having a second opinion, having someone look at [my writing] that hasn’t been looking at it for however many days I have been working on it, you know?

Emma came to the Center with her “writing for critical consciousness” assignment because she wanted “a second opinion” and believed the Center would focus on her needs, especially first-order concerns. Emma indicated on her appointment form that she wanted to work specifically on “organization and structure” and told Amy, her tutor, she was “having trouble putting [her ideas] in an order that is logical.” The purpose of Emma’s assignment was two-fold: “to resist colonial rhetoric” and to show the “reification of hierarchies through modern media.” Her critical analysis essay focused on the television series *Lost*, specifically ways the show “perpetuate[d] colonialism through rhetoric” and mimicked “contemporary social dynamics.” Though Emma’s primary audience was her junior-year writing professor, she was also writing to other scholars in her discipline. She told me during our interview that she might use this essay for some of her other courses and possibly graduate school applications, and she was also considering expanding her essay into a journal article or book.

From the moment she arrived, Emma took charge of her tutorial with Amy. First, Emma ("E") resisted explaining her assignment because, as she said to Amy ("A"), “that’s almost irrelevant.” Emma preferred to “get into” her essay, which at this point consisted of three single-spaced three-page freewrites.

E: This is what I’m going off of.
A: Okay
E: But…I don’t even think you need to read that. I know that we have like a limited
amount of time.

A: {uh huh}

E: So I’m trying, I’m like kind of stressed about even...I wouldn’t even be able to read the whole thing to you at once.

A: {okay} Um...Alright, so let’s start with what is the assignment?

E: Um...I want to even say that that’s almost irrelevant and I just want to get into what I’m doing.

A: Okay

E: Is that crazy?

A: Well I just want to know um what your goal might be and-

E: Okay, I’m writing an essay in order to resist colonial rhetoric.

A: Okay, okay, great. Um...

E: What the essay is on is a combination of things. It's like...reification of hierarchies through...modern media,

A: {um hum}

E: and...like contemporary social dynamics that are mimicked in the show Lost, and how Lost and how Lost serves to perpetuate colonialism through rhetoric.

A: Okay, sure um...

E: {okay}

A: And so how long is it gonna be?

E: Undetermined.

A: Okay, and is it like a term paper at

E: {yeah}

A: the final? Okay, so how long do you think it’s gonna be?

E: I have no idea [I, roughly...]

A: [You said you did like 20] rewrites, so...

E: Yeah, but I cut it way, way down.
A: Okay

E: It's like...I don't even know, I have no idea.

A: (laughing) Okay ((papers shuffling, stacking)) So what do you want to get out of our...discussion today?

E: I want to be able to put what I have...into an order, like I have a lot...I have a lot of writing and a lot of ideas

A: {um hum}

E: and they all connect together; however, I'm having trouble putting them in an order that is logical.

In this excerpt, Emma obliges Amy and summarizes her personal goal: to write “an essay in order to resist colonial rhetoric.” However, she has “no idea” how long her essay will be and doesn’t seem to know or care about a prescribed page length. Rather than worry about assignment guidelines or page length, Emma prefers she and Amy focus on the “order” her ideas.

Amy begins reading Emma’s draft (three separate freewrites) and asks which freewrite provides an introduction. Emma has not yet written it: “That’s the thing. There’s no introduction, it’s all just like, this is the core [the freewrites], and I’m searching for the introduction.” Emma implies that she first needs to organize her thinking before she can write an introduction. Because Emma does not yet have a specific thesis, Amy asks Emma “what lens [Emma] is coming from.” This sparks another discussion about Emma’s goals for her essay and her tutorial:

A: Okay, so...uh one question to start off with is what course is this for? Just-

E: Writing for critical consciousness.

A: Okay, so is that like a history, or like...
E: No.

A: What department is it?

E: STPEC

A: STPEC, okay. I just want to know like what lens you're coming from. Um-

E: Every, every lens...

A: (laughing) Okay.

E: Yeah, it's gonna be...I'm coming at it...legally,

A: um hum

E: Um...like culturally...anthropologically...like, through...social analysis, through using media...as like empirical evidence, and...through my understanding of race as a social construct as well as gender, ethnicity, and nationalism...

A: /Okay, so.../ you said gender, ethnicity, and nationalism?

E: Yeah, I mean to name a few, also ethnicity...whatever, however you want to identify groups, and again I want to stress IDENTITY as like a social construct that is functioning in these certain ways, that I'm discussing in this paper.

A: Okay...okay...This...that's taking on a lot!

E: I know.

A: Um, I mean this could end up being...20-30 pages, like a thesis

E: I'm...aware...

A: Okay, so you're good with that?

E: (laughing) Yeah.

A: Okay...okay, um...What year are you?

E: I'm a senior.

A: Okay, is this gonna be your thesis, or is this-

E: No, this is just [for one class].

A: [It's a final]. Okay, great. Okay...okay...um...

E: Maybe I can hand it in twice because it's so broad.
A: Yeah

E: And I will, maybe I will hand it in for my like race legal theory course as well.

A: Okay, cool.

E: And my senior seminar, hopefully (laughing).

A: Okay, so...what I'm seeing...just based on what you just said to me.

E: um hum...

A: Is that you've got...okay so you've got these identity groups...so...gender, race, ethnicity....

E: I know.

A: Yeah. And then you've got these ways in which you're looking at them.

E: {um hum}

A: So, you know, legally, culturally, anthropologically-

E: Yeah, but you can't break them down and compartmentalize them into segments like this, that's what I want to come away from. Because this is like-

A: So you want to join them all together?

E: Exactly. I don't even want to make, I don't want to do this, right here, where we're like writing it out and putting a, b, c.

A: {um hum}

E: That's not gonna work, and like the way that I'm structuring my paper is to come away from this like...capitalist compartmentalization.

A: {okay}

E: And have my paper resist to that by not being so structurally formatted as an academic essay.

A: So have it be representative of what you're trying to talk about.

E: Yeah,

A: {okay}

E: what I want to do is like for you and me to read this and then for you, as not being me, to like explain to me if this is making sense...and if it's logically oriented
A: {okay}
E: as it is and then maybe to help me adjust the paragraphs a bit.
A: Okay...okay.
E: Okay?
A: Sure, yep.

Although Emma wants to present her ideas in a logical order, she does not want to “compartmentalize” them (“a, b, c”). “That’s not gonna work” because most academic essays, as Emma perceives them, are products of “capitalist compartmentalization.”

Earlier in her tutorial, Emma mentioned that she was writing to resist colonial rhetoric. The excerpt quoted above implies a link between colonial rhetoric and capitalism: capitalism has colonized academic essays, prescribing a structure that divides and separates. Considering the purpose of her essay and her political stance, Emma wants the form of her essay to mirror its content, or, as Amy surmised, “have it be representative of what [Emma’s] trying to talk about.” In a sense, Emma is warning Amy to not colonize Emma and her essay, so the help she asks for comes with a caveat: Amy can help Emma “adjust the paragraphs a bit.”

Now that Emma and Amy seem to have an understanding of one another, Emma spends the next 15 minutes reading one of her freewrites. Several themes appear: “the myth of the lottery,” “legal consciousness,” marketing, racial stereotypes, and social norms for nationalism, citizenship, post-colonialism, masculinity, and femininity. Emma is, in Amy’s words, “taking on a lot.” With so much going on in Emma’s freewrites, Amy needs an anchor, specifically a thesis or primary focus. The ensuing conversation demonstrates Amy’s attempt to orient readers and Emma’s desire to ensure herself that Amy
understands her terminology:

A: Okay, so...basically...what, what are you trying to achieve with this paper? Like what are you trying to demonstrate?

E: Oh, that *Lost* is an appropriate venue of like colonial /criti-.../

A: Criticism

E: Criticism...and...uh a valuable, although hyperbolic, like...mimicry of

A: {um hum}

E: contemporary society.

A: Okay.

E: And that can be used to analyze...people because not only does it reflect contemporary society, but it also...instills it and like legitimizes it...

A: Okay...um and are you talking...just about the United States, contemporary [United States, or are you talking about-]

E: [No I'm talking about like] Western, like capitalist hegemony.

A: Okay.

E: Do you understand?

A: Yep.

E: Okay.

A: Um...okay...(5s) So, in terms of opening this...you might want to...say that. What you just said.

E: Okay.

A: I think that would be...i- i- is your focus...

E: {yeah} I wrote that in somewhere. Maybe I just need to make that the beginning.

A: The beginning. Yeah. Is your focus...*Lost* itself?

E: Yes.

A: Yeah, then I would definitely do that because right now the way it opens is you're saying you know we're looking at these three things, and... *Lost* isn't in
there at all.

E: Um hum....

A: So I think opening it with *Lost*

E: {right}

A: would make...the reader want to keep reading because they know, they have a pop culture reference to it and they're like, “oh, okay.” And then...after that I think that's where those three paragraphs can come in. So...um...the way I'm seeing this...is that...you've got...um...I mean the way in which you want to weave them together.

E: Okay.

Emma reiterates Amy's recommendation to “say that” in her introduction. “Somewhere” in her freewrites, Emma already mentions that the show *Lost* reflects contemporary society (Western capitalist hegemony) and legitimizes it; “maybe [she] just need[s] to make that the beginning,” like Amy said. Also, Emma checks if Amy understands what Emma means by Western capitalist hegemony. Though Emma doesn’t say much else, her closing response, “okay,” suggests that she at least hears where Amy is coming from: As a reader who is not Emma, Amy needs to know the focus of Emma’s essay before reading specific themes (“these three things”). Before “weaving them together,” Amy needs Emma to explain what she is weaving and why.

Even though Emma seems to agree (or partially agrees) with Amy about what needs to appear in her introductory paragraph (“maybe” she’ll make “that the beginning”), Emma resists Amy’s identification with an “overarching theme.” Even though Emma previously stressed identity formation as critical to her analysis of *Lost*, she does not want to establish hierarchies:

A: So, races, ethnicity and race, and then formation of identity...I would almost put
this one...I would, I would discuss *Lost* within...the context of identity formation, um...for your opening because that seems to be your overarching theme, right? ...

[Am I-]

E: [um hum]

A: okay

E: I mean...no...the thing is I don’t want to focus on one theme...

A: {yeah}

E: as being the overarching theme because I want to...really make it clear that they’re all like...equally important

A: {um hum}

E: and equally.../effective/ and affecting each other, you know?

A: {yeah} um hum, um hum

E: So, it's like a web,

A: {right}

E: and I want to put it forth almost as...like maybe a diagram of how they're all related, I’m not [really sure because I can't name them all.]

A: [Would it help you...] okay

E: It's not helpful to name...the issues because it can box them in.

A: {right}.... Would it be helpful if you...I mean if you drew a diagram, but then again you’d have to label all the points and you don’t want to do that, right?

E: Um, that might be helpful, and I’m working on like doing like /causal loops/ and then I have this whole other thing where I’m talking about causal loops and....

A: Okay.

E: I don’t know where to stop.

A: (laughing) Yeah, see that's the thing...is that there is so much and by not wanting to label all of these different specifics...it’s- [it’s-]

E: [It's (unclear)] averse to labeling them. It’s just...it can be dangerous (laughing).]

A: It can be, but I think because you have that consciousness...you yourself can
avoid that danger…and you can even give a caveat to your reader within the text and say...I use these terms only for lack of a better way to express it. Something like that, you know, so you can, you can expressly say, explicitly say to your reader...

E: {um hum}

A: what you’re doing and why you’re doing it.

E: Right.

A: And that might help you to better formulate your ideas because you’ll have a word to put on it...

E: {okay}

A: even if it’s not ideal to what you want to do.

E: {yeah}

A: Does that help?

E: Yeah. No, I think that would be good...to like speak to the reader and tell them my own like identification of the flaws in my own...

A: {um hum, yeah, absolutely}

E: theory.

The issue of using labels seems to be resolved, but the identification of an overarching theme remains unsettled. So far, Emma’s negotiations with Amy take the form of summarizing, questioning, and checking. She doesn’t ask Amy a lot of questions, but by summarizing her political stance, Emma questions Amy’s recommendations and checks Amy’s understanding of Emma’s writing goals. Emma appears to be negotiating with Amy more than with herself. But the process of negotiating forces Emma to explain and defend her stance about why she’s neither willing to write a standard academic essay nor engage in a writing process that contributes to “capitalist compartmentalization.”
After Emma reads another freewrite, Amy recommends they “go back to the idea of drawing out a diagram.” Though she debates with Amy what the diagram should look like (“How do you know it’s an octagon?”), the concept motivates her. They spend the next 20 minutes creating a diagram that portrays, in Emma’s words, a “web of inequalities.” At the center of an octagon is “normative culture.” Stemming from its points are various markers of identity (e.g., race, religion, class, professionalization, ethnicity, and gender) connected by “grays of all varieties” (e.g., femininity and masculinity). To follow is an excerpt from their conversation that best describes this diagram—which I did not see—and also demonstrates Emma’s engagement with the process:

E: Real people are on the outside

A: {um hum}

E: and then the ideas of them are on the inside, they’re like unattainable, normative culture.

A: Okay, so all [of this is normative culture.]

E: [And then the people who live on] the outside, and this is all imagined...

A: okay, then, yep (laughing)...yeah, but just doesn’t have a point.

E: okay

A: Cause it’s all of that, right?

E: Yeah, and this is like the imagined, colloquial /traits/ ...

A: Oops...

E: And then the real people live here, and they view this on TV...I like this...okay, and they’re like looking in, this is like a glass dome.

A: um hum... (5s) (laughing)

E: (laughing)...(5s)...Okay.

A: And really all of these things are actually on the line themselves, right,
because...it relates to the real world, but it's portrayed differently within
the...octagon?

E: Yes...

A: Okay...so then...what you’re doing, what it seems to me you're doing, is that
you're taking all of these different points and you're relating them back to one
another, right?

E: Um hum...

A: Um...so in that case...that's why- and so that's the reason why you're not talking
about them...and-

E: Yeah, and they're all like dichotomized and polarized in accordance with each
other

A: {um hum}

E: and this would be like the web of inequalities, and perceptions of race and
inequality, criminalization and all of that

A: {um hum}

E: comes out of this tangle...of identity, and like hierarchy of those different
identities. Cause everyone carries around, like, I don’t know a hundred identities.

A: um hum, yeah, sure...Um...yeah...like a picture is worth a thousand words, a
person is worth a thousand identities (laughing).

E: Yeah...

A: Truly.

E: Every second a new...a new one can like arise or be called upon.

A: um hum...Okay, so now you've got all of these, now you've got like this visual
representation...um...of what you're discussing, so now the task is taking what
you've drawn and what you've...imagined...conceptualized...and putting it into
words...logically...but without a definite structure, so to reflect what this is.

E: Right...

A: Yet, what we see is that there is a structure...There is a structure, right? (3s)

E: Um...no...yes and no, like we just made a structure.

A: Yes, okay.
E: But is this all that there is? Absolutely not...is this like...[the end]

A: [So-so-]

E: all be all? No, and it's hard to talk about it as a structure when I know that it's an incomplete diagram.

A: Okay, so that's something else you're gonna want to talk about...

E: Right, I wouldn't want to give this diagram any legitimacy by like...[(unclear)]

A: [By saying this is the world-]

E: Right, yeah because it's just this random thing that we just came up with.

A: um hum, okay so then-

E: Although it makes sense to us and it helps us visualize the issue,

A: {okay}

E: it's nothing that I didn't already state.

The diagram does not show anything new, anything that Emma “didn’t already state” in her free-writes. Furthermore, the diagram is incomplete because, as Emma later explains, identities are multiple and always multiplying. Though the diagram adequately represents Emma’s ideas, Emma doesn’t see how it is going to help her organize her essay because she wants to intentionally avoid a structure that suggests a finite social process. She is struggling to find a way to organize her essay without perpetuating colonialist rhetoric. She seems to want to create an anti-structure structure in order to show the infinite possibilities for identity formation, which is not a simple process. How does one write to reflect a “tangle” of interconnected forces that show both historical and future development (diachronic) and a point in time (synchronous)? The form of her essay may never match its content because forces in the social real are dynamic and always already
changing.

Perhaps it is no surprise that Emma is “still like at a loss” for organizing her essay, though she knows that “to have like a full esthetic impact” she needs “to give it form.” Emma hopes that her essay will “come full circle” as she continues to weave together her freewrites, but she also explains to Amy how her topic resists a linear reading. Through their conversation, she appears to reach an impasse, an insight that is important for her to note:

E: and like every time another thing is discussed it's kind of like...um particle physics where like every time you look at it, it changes by nature of you like trying to study it.

A: {yeah, um hum}

E: Uh...so this octagon would like increasingly...add sides and stuff like every time we look at it it's gonna have another...

A: Another facet.

E: Facet

A: And well- [so it's almost as if it]

E: [(unclear) expanding-]

A: were 3-D, all of these would be another facet...

E: {um hum} like exponentially and like infinitely expanding.

A: Right...right because it would be like taking this, adding this to the side and then drawing all the lines to it.

E: Right. I want to write that.

A: Sure... (20s)

E: Okay.

A: um hum...so...so for your next course of action what do you think you're gonna do? (3s)
E: I don’t know.

A: Hash this out so you can think through it, or do you want to just keep writing and then make this afterwards, or... (3s)

E: I don’t know (laughing).

A: I mean I feel, I feel like...I don’t want you to leave here without having some sense of what you want to do afterwards, do you know what I mean? Like

E: {yeah}

A: that’s the reason why you came, and I want you to leave with that...with a goal.

E: Yeah. It’s hard, that’s hard, because like my method is free writing

A: {um hum}

E: um and like the release of the goal in that is how I’m...motivated...

A: {um hum}

E: and like...makes it possible for me to do this. So at the same time coming back/around again, alright I need a goal.../ It kind of like shuts me down.

A: (laughing) Yeah, certainly, so, okay, so...in terms of....

E: But I know that I need one, it’s just...I’m like...at a loss...also for time.

[I wish I had more time]

A: [Yeah, I was gonna ask you, when] is your-

E: It’s due tomorrow.

Even though Emma “wants to write that” her essay references an “exponentially and like infinitely expanding” universe, she doesn’t know how to proceed with her essay. And although she came to the Center with an agenda or goal, she doesn’t want to leave with one.

At the close of their conversation, Amy suggests that Emma tell her readers that her essay “very intentionally” resists organization and labeling because she wants to avoid
perpetuating colonial rhetoric:

A: Yeah...um...You could say...instead of having that discussion with your professor, like talking to him, you could have it as part of your discussion in the paper and say this is only a part of a greater project, you know, this is only a subset of the issues that should be dealt with, that should be looked at in a very holistic...manner. You know, something like that.

E: Okay, yes....

A: So like the way you open it is critical because you're gonna...you've got...um, the other thing that like, talk about your identity...um...and how you're viewing this and talk about how this is only a part of what you're going to discuss and talk about the organization of it, say there...very intentionally isn't an organization...of this paper, to this paper because we want to keep that idea of how everything is really one big...

E: {yeah}

A: problem and how we don't want to label it because that perpetuates...you know but, [yeah...]

E: [(unclear)]

A: but we actually have to, whatever.

E: Um hum.

A: So that's- I mean that's a whole part of what you're talking about here.

E: Okay...okay....

A: (laughing) Does that help?

E: Yeah it does.

A: Okay, good.

E: Woo!

A: This is a really interesting project though it's really...like...unlike anything I've...I've seen here in the center because...because of its magnitude and because of its...insight...it's very um...I mean you're just like digging...and it's really great.

E: I feel like it's very like scattered and all over the place, but at the same time, like that, like my pulling of references, like all over the place, that's how this functions.
E: So...I want to make use of that.
A: Yeah, certainly.
E: And I'll, I guess I'll write that in my like disclaimer.
A: um hum...okay...
A: (laughing)
E: Thanks.

Emma seems to appreciate the idea of writing another disclaimer (“I guess I'll write that...”) to explain why her essay is intentionally written to reflect the “holistic manner” of her topic. But throughout this tutorial, Emma struggles “to make use of” a topic that is “all over the place” by its very nature. Emma also struggles as a writer operating from multiple lenses and an “anti-essentialist perspective” that resists a linear, prefab, or “capitalist” essay structure. By the end of her tutorial, Emma leaves with and without a plan for revision. She leaves with Amy’s recommendation to introduce the show *Lost* in her first paragraph, Amy’s idea about adding two disclaimers (one concerning her use of labels and one concerning the organization of her essay), and a collaboratively constructed diagram of her essay (a self-imposed construction of the social real), but Emma resists setting a goal for herself because, as she says during her tutorial, goals shut her down; her method is, as she told me during our interview, “the Peter Elbow freewriting method.”

Most of the text appearing in Emma’s final draft came from her freewrites. I cross-referenced the content and order of her three freewrites with her final draft and was able
as the focus of her post-colonial analysis. She claims that Lost “may be functioning as a master narrative for contemporary western society” and that several of the show’s characters portray tropes of colonial empire, which can “provide insight into what ideas of normative culture are pervasive at this time.” As resistant as she was to labeling or categorizing, Emma still relied on “sub-narratives,” to use Emma’s term, as evidence of the “master narrative,” which she does not define until paragraph 15. This master narrative is, I think: “a system of using American/western cultural references to serve as signifiers to help distinguish the value of each character and the level of trust aka membership that they have gained,” and this system, rendered apparent in Emma’s interpretation of tropes of empire, legitimizes and perpetuates normative culture, particularly formations and perceptions of the Lost characters’ identities (i.e., gender, race, class, ethnicity). In short, I assume the master narrative to which Emma refers is the social construction of an American identity or the “Americanization” of the show’s characters. This is a term Emma uses at the end of her third freewrite but does not include in her final draft. This Americanization (“the formations of knowledge and power between characters”) is achieved, according to the last two lines of her introduction and the title of her essay, through the “Rhetoric of the Lost Empire,” and that rhetoric can be located in the sub-narratives or tropes mentioned in paragraphs 2-17.

By numbering and glossing the paragraphs (17 total) in her final draft, I identified what those tropes or themes might be: the concept of “the other” (paragraph 2); the “eroticization” and “reproductive value of women” (paragraph 3); Christianity and morality (paragraph 4); myths of ethnicity and race (paragraph 5); motifs of western
philosophy (paragraph 6); motifs of torture, war propaganda, and terrorism (paragraphs 7-10); legality (paragraphs 11 and 14); formation of identity (paragraphs 15 and 16); and leadership/credibility (paragraph 17). The order of her ideas (paragraphs 1-17) is clear in the sense that one is able to gloss paragraphs, as I have, for probable main topics. But the main thread of her argument takes several turns without clear transitions. The reader must infer the relationship between those ideas and the thesis of the essay. And that seems to be what Emma was going for: an essay structure that mirrored an elusive web of hierarchies and social relations that contribute to identity formation and legitimize normative culture. At the same time, Emma also wanted to organize her essay in an order that was logical.

Emma did not provide her readers with disclaimers about the structure of her essay or her use of labels because, as Emma told me during our interview, “I was able to overcome some of the things that I had found that were flaws in my own…logic and style.” She overcame her flaws by freewriting about “how I was limited and like what I felt about my writing” and sharing that freewrite, and the others, with her boyfriend and another close friend. This process, freewriting and peer review, enabled Emma to reflect on her conversation with Amy about labeling and limiting some of her essay sub-topics as a way to take control of her draft. During her tutorial, Emma agreed with Amy to explain to her readers in writing her rationale for what would be an unconventional approach to organizing an academic essay. After her tutorial, Emma changed her mind because she was able to revise her “flaws” in a way that made sense to her. Emma ultimately organized her final draft using interconnected “sub-narratives” that she believed illustrated a complicated but logical system of identity formation in the television series Lost.
In a sense, Emma did and did not use disclaimers. Disclaimers did not appear in her final draft, but they became an important part of Emma’s revision process. She used disclaimers to explain to herself her resistance and rationale. The “flaws” in her logic were related to her ethics, which she explained during our interview:

It’s not that I didn’t want to organize it; it’s that I didn’t want to accidentally compartmentalize. Compartmentalization is okay; it’s when classification comes in that hierarchies are entered into the equation. So, it’s okay to organize; it just has to be very careful not to be exclusive to certain issues that I may have accidentally overlooked.

Emma’s resistance came from her commitment to justice and truth. She (“E”) further explained to me (“M”) why she did not want to rely on labels as a way to organize her essay, nor limit her use of multiple categories to a select few:

E: My reaction to that was actually quite strong. I was immediately like no absolutely not, no. And that is exactly what I was trying to come away from. I don’t want to box the issue into race and gender because that simply perpetuates those issues. In not looking at the tiny ways that a turn of phrase can stigmatize or give a status or this or that, and it’s all, so many grays and that’s what I really wanted to come through with. I wanted to come through with the grays, and I wanted to come through with all these crazy things that all are integrally interrelated. However, I definitely did not want to…again, I don’t want to use the phrase again, but box it in…close it off to race and gender because how do you explain those things without a simple gesture or like explaining why a white woman wouldn’t look at a black man in the eye when she walks down the street... It’s a tiny, tiny, teeny little gesture, but how do you explain that?

M: Right, right.

E: You don’t say, “Oh well, that’s just racist.” No, you have to explain it through fear; you have to explain it through...experience and personal significance and the way that other people talk in their lives... What they see on TV, blah blah blah. There’s a gazillion other factors...and I think it’s the factors that I wanted to focus on, not the outcome cause it’s changing every second.

M: Okay...((typing))
E: But if I were writing a standard academic essay, yes that would have been good advice....

Although Emma initially saw the value in providing her readers with disclaimers about using labels, and did so in a post-tutorial freewrite, she ultimately rejected the idea for her final draft because it was no longer perceived as necessary. Emma’s final draft is, in the end, organized by the sub-narratives of the master narrative; it is linear, but it consciously attempts to avoid essentializing social identities. However, Emma does not limit herself to a few social categories. She doesn’t write a post-colonial analysis of Lost that is limited to one issue, such as race or gender or ethnicity or class. There are, as Emma said, “a gazillion other factors” affecting identity construction. From Emma’s perspective, you can’t talk about one without talking about the others, particularly when trying to show readers how multiple forces create a master narrative (the formation of an “American” identity) that minimizes the gray areas and therefore essentializes identities by boxing them in as singular. She did not want to be one of those forces, and she did not want to write a standard academic essay, which presumably would, by its nature, reach a pat conclusion that disregards “the grays.”

Emma also did and did not use the diagram she and Amy had created to organize her final draft. Diagramming as organizing is what Emma believed she took away from the tutorial and would use again in the future, but she qualified the difference between Amy’s intentions and her own. What seemed at first “a waste of time” and “a shot in the dark” for Emma turned out to be very productive and a tool for invention as much as structure:

Okay, [my tutor] drew at random, I thought, seemingly at first, and it was an octagon. And, in her having me explain like how this arbitrary shape would function in my idea it helped me to really visualize, or reconceptualize my own thoughts in putting it into a shape. And it was helpful later on. I didn’t exactly
understand where it could have gone at the time, but after such and such amount of time I looked at it again and I was like, wow, you know I could use this diagram and blah blah blah and I ended up coming up with this theory of like quantum physics and that it was infinitely expanding, this bubble with every identity and some category that people like identify collectively with, and that it expands and that is like the imagined normative culture. And it’s reflected through television in such and such a way and like the real people were on the outside, and I wish I had the diagram to show you...cause I did go back and like draw all over it later on.

Emma’s description of the diagram sounds a lot like the conversation she had with Amy, so much so that I am not sure what is different between the diagram Amy and Emma drew together and Emma’s revised version. (I do not have a copy of the diagram and, therefore, can only recreate it from the transcript.) Emma claimed that she “did something completely else” with that diagram, to the degree that Emma believed most of the changes she made to her essay did not come from her tutor. This is true in the sense that she and Amy did not discuss which paragraphs from Emma’s freewrites would appear in her final draft, except the introduction. At the same time, Emma confirmed during our interview that her final draft evolved from the diagram she and Amy created and that Amy played an important role in helping Emma meet the requirements of her assignment. Emma also believed that she would use diagramming as a revision strategy for future writing projects but not in the way “[Amy] had intended.” Emma perceived Amy’s octagon as lines of cause and effect, and Emma “took it” and created “this whole quantum physics thing of exponential expansion.”

Emma’s case demonstrates that the information/advice that some students use is not always readily apparent in their tutorials and drafts. Emma didn’t appear to be internally persuaded during her tutorial; her comments did not include phrases such as “I will definitely do that” or “that’s exactly what I was thinking.” Emma only said, “I guess
I’ll…” In fact, Emma purposefully and consciously resisted authoritative discourses. Emma admitted that she “made it very difficult for [Amy].” However, her responses to my discourse-based interview questions suggest Emma was internally persuaded to use the diagram in a way that made sense to her, not the way she perceived Amy’s intentions.

Emma was also internally persuaded to write disclaimers as part of her revision process, but they do not appear in her final draft. If I had only relied on Emma’s tutorial transcript and her during and after drafts, I would not have thought Emma got much from her tutorial with Amy. The interview I had with her was a critical factor in understanding Emma’s potential learning outcomes: “Although it took me about a day and a half to realize what I had learned from the writing center, it did help me put things into-... it made more sense. It didn’t, you know, put it in order for me, but it did help me to frame the issue again... The diagram was exceptionally useful later on.” In other words, Emma’s Writing Center tutorial helped her rethink her own intentions.

For Emma, a second-semester senior, this essay was an experiment, her “first experiment in writing ever.” The most important step she took when revising was the freedom she gave herself to revise:

I gave it an appropriate amount of time. I let it breathe and then I came back. I let myself read it over. I did put a significant amount of time into it.... And I guess the most important step was giving myself that kind of freedom and allowing myself to have this kind of authority because I never felt powerful enough before to assert myself.

Prior to writing the *Lost* essay, Emma’s essays were “horrendous, ...written in the standard, what I’m calling the standard academic essay. This structured thing where there’s like a flashy opening and then the thesis is at the bottom of the first paragraph, you
know this and that.” With this essay, “...I finally have a voice. I have a voice, and I never
found that before.” It was through the act of revision as experimentation that Emma
believes she found her voice: “Each time you revise you have a better idea of what you
said and what you want to say.” With the help of her Writing Center tutor, Emma reached
“an understanding of [her] own perspective more fully” and in doing so, reached a goal she
didn’t think she could reach or realize she had reached until after her tutorial. Emma may
have come to the Center with the goal of resisting what she perceived as capitalist
compartmentalization, but she did not begin with the goal of finding her voice. Her
writing experiment was a political and personal act, and the Writing Center was an
important factor in Emma’s social activism and development as a writer.

The Writing Center can claim a hand in this because Amy, educated in the ways of
peer tutoring writing, helped Emma negotiate her revisions and, as part of that process,
re-see some of her arguments. Emma was “facing,” as Harry Denny would say, a moral
dilemma. She wanted to resist “a performative logic of assimilation” and bend (or break)
the “rules of conduct—linguistic, rhetorical, or even behavioral” (Denny 48). Emma
arrived already aware of “the practice of domination (assimilating to the mainstream
currents),” but Amy introduced Emma to some of “the possibilities for opposition and
resistance” (Denny 72). Together, they “problem-posed” the “social contract” of academic
writing and “corporatist academic interests” (Denny 48, 153). Having recognized some of
the “flaws” in her logic, Emma believed she had found a way to accommodate academic
readers’ expectations for form without compromising her principles. At the same time,
Emma was willing and ready to do the work. The “success” of Emma’s tutorial depended
on both tutor and writer. You can’t change a writer who isn’t willing to negotiate her
options. If Emma changed as a writer, the change is not readily apparent in her writing
but located in her willingness to consider alternative ways of being a writer. Her resistance as a writer became a catalyst for negotiating her writing and, ultimately, negotiating with herself as a writer.

Emma’s case dovetails the roles of writers in relation to the “rules” of writing. I have never come across a student like Emma, a student so invested in writing against the grain (against hegemonic structures of writing enforced by “the academy”) yet with and for the grain (with tutors and for professors and other cultural studies scholars). Her case reminds me of what Shannon Carter calls “the writing center paradox,” a circular conundrum in which “[writing center workers] represent the student, not the teacher. We represent the system, not the student. We represent neither, and we represent both” (W136). Writing center consultations are both student-centered and institution-centered. Their value is both pedagogical and political. According to Carter’s rhetorical analysis of the scholarship that tries to reconcile this paradox, process pedagogies and new literacies studies need to embrace a model of writing centers as both clearinghouse for hegemonic practices and headquarters for change agents. In my experience, tutors generally help tutees meet accepted and expected standards. They are not working the frontlines of difference, unless—as in Emma’s case—it is “possible (and profitable)” for the writer (Carter W150). The challenge for writing center workers is their ability to “effect change in a system so profoundly dependent on maintaining the status quo” (Carter W137). I think that Emma’s story is an example of this paradox and the ability of both tutor and tutee to negotiate power relations without “selling out.” Emma’s tutorial seems to have broadened and deepened her understanding of what her choices meant in a given context. To my way of thinking, her experiment was a success.
Conclusion

The case examples appearing in this chapter further complicate assumptions we might make about writing center tutorials: 1) Some writing center sessions may only meet situation-specific needs—aspects of writing unique to particular writing assignments. Also, students like Lisa may not perceive the information/advice they receive as transferrable to other writing situations. 2) Even when writers are internally persuaded to revise at a given point in time, another revision choice may become equally or more appealing at another time. Writers change their minds. Cassandra took her first tutor’s advice, but she was also internally persuaded to revise according to Deanna’s conflicting advice. However, what Cassandra thinks she learned about audience may be limited and therefore not translate fully to future writing situations. 3) Not all writers will change in ways we can control or even recognize. The ideologies Emma invoked as a writer and burgeoning critical theorist and her political commitments interacted with Amy’s writing center pedagogy to create a text and possible learning outcomes neither Emma nor I could have predicted. Given these results, tutors should not measure their success, as North stated, “in terms of changes in the writer” (“Idea” 439).

The question writing center workers should ask is not if we change or create better writers but if we provide experiences that foster writerly behaviors, processes, and knowledge. The Council of Writing Program Administrators, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Writing Project have collaboratively written and endorsed a “framework for success in post-secondary writing” that identifies “habits of mind” educators should cultivate in students:

- Curiosity – the desire to know more about the world.
• Openness – the willingness to consider new ways of being and thinking in the world.

• Engagement – a sense of investment and involvement in learning.

• Creativity – the ability to use novel approaches for generating, investigating, and representing ideas.

• Persistence – the ability to sustain interest in and attention to short-and long-term projects.

• Responsibility – the ability to take ownership of one’s actions and understand the consequences of those actions for oneself and others.

• Flexibility – the ability to adapt to situations, expectations, or demands.

• Metacognition – the ability to reflect on one’s own thinking as well as on the individual and cultural processes used to structure knowledge. ([http://wpacouncil.org/framework](http://wpacouncil.org/framework))

These habits of mind are fostered through “writing, reading, and critical analysis experiences” that “aim to develop students’

• Rhetorical knowledge – the ability to analyze and act on understandings of audiences, purposes, and contexts in creating and comprehending texts;

• Critical thinking – the ability to analyze a situation or text and make thoughtful decisions based on that analysis, through writing, reading, and research;

• Writing processes – multiple strategies to approach and undertake writing and research;

• Knowledge of conventions – the formal and informal guidelines that define what is considered to be correct and appropriate, or incorrect and inappropriate, in a piece of writing; and

• Ability to compose in multiple environments – from traditional pen and paper to electronic technologies. ([http://wpacouncil.org/framework](http://wpacouncil.org/framework))

Writing center tutorials are experiences in writing, reading, and critical analysis that
encourage such habits of mind. The backdrop of all tutorials is to increase the complexity of writers and clarity of writing that goes beyond purely rules-based approaches to teaching and learning. We cannot measure the effects of tutoring through a prescriptive lens when our practices are descriptive, generative, and local. I hope this dissertation has shown, among other things, that tutees might learn something about writing (discourse conventions, grammar, rhetorical concepts, revision strategies), themselves (as writers, students, thinkers, people), other people, (such as their teachers, tutors, peers, discourse communities), and/or their subject matter (philosophy, history, business, science, etc.). Lisa, Cassandra, and Emma experienced negotiation, experimentation, and reflection—not error reduction.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: THE VALUE OF WRITING CENTER WORK

My dissertation research has helped me investigate a core value that writing center workers have long held about tutoring writing: that we change writers. Though this study is not an assessment or measure of tutees’ learning outcomes, it is a study born of my curiosity about the impact tutors have on writers. My dissertation tries to identify the reasons for what students do and/or do not do to their writing during and after a tutorial as indicators of what students potentially learn. This study has also enriched my understanding of what we think of as success with students as writers, namely as a type of improvement that is relative to what students own in their writing. Applying sociocognitive and Bakhtinian lenses to these questions, I was able to complicate theory-practice connections in writing center work, particularly assumptions about efficacy in tutorials. To follow is a summary of my findings and a discussion of how I redefine success theoretically, measure success differently, and reconceptualize tutoring practices. I close with suggestions for future research.

Testing Assumptions

As I explained in Chapter 1, there is little empirical research into writing center outcomes. For twenty-five years, writing center research has primarily focused on the tutorial (i.e., tutoring styles) as the central site for evaluating and assessing writing center effectiveness. The role students and their texts play in defining writing center success has seldom been a benchmark. Only three studies since 2000 (and only one before that) have analyzed students’ writing as a measure of tutorial success, and none of those studies
compared students’ writing to their tutorials for correspondences. Research into the efficacy of writing center tutorials calls into question underlying assumptions about what such data can tell us about the development of writers. Changes to students’ drafts do not necessarily mean writers change along with their writing. Students’ perceived learning outcomes might not correspond to the revisions they make, the major focus of their tutorials, or tutoring styles (such as directive or nondirective tutoring). As it stands, writing center workers do not know if they have met their Northian goal to change writers—“whether writers themselves have been changed by the tutoring process” (Boquet and Lerner 184). This disconnection between theory and practice in writing center studies led to my graduate research.

The theoretical lens and methods I used to test the values driving writing center work are critical tools of analysis that have not, until now, been employed for studying the efficacy of tutorials. My methods of investigation, described in Chapter 2, involved qualitative analyses of transcripts, drafts, and discourse-based interviews. Instead of only studying tutorials, perceptions, or revisions, I compared these data with students’ reasons for revising so that I could investigate what tutees potentially learn from their tutors, how, and why. Students’ negotiations were evident during tutorials via metacognitive cues (e.g., questioning, predicting, inferring, selecting, planning) and during discourse-based interviews, when students articulated their reasons for having made particular revisions. These data indicated if tutors’ information/advice became, in Bakhtin’s terms, internally persuasive to tutees. The Bakhtinian theoretical lens I used assumes that students have ways of making meaning that are internally persuasive to them, or that they have internalized, and that tutors present additional ways for students to make meaning, particularly within academic discourses, which are, according to Bakhtin, authoritative
discourses. When the authoritative discourses tutors represent or endorse converge with students’ internally persuasive discourses, they converge in students’ revision choices as tutor-tutee interdiscursivity. I proposed that such a convergence can lead to “changed” writers, writers who alter their understanding of themselves as writers and/or modify their thinking about a given paper, concept, or process.

In Chapter 3, I provided an overall summary of the findings that addressed four of my five research questions: What kinds of information/advice do students seek or expect from writing center tutorials? What kinds of information/advice are students presented with during writing center tutorials? What information/advice do students use to revise their papers? Do students’ perceptions of what they learned correspond to their tutorials and/or revisions? I found that most tutees’ requests for assistance involved first-order concerns as much as or more than later-order concerns, that their requests for assistance usually corresponded to the major focus of their tutorials, that all tutees used all or nearly all of their tutors’ information/advice, and that most tutees think they learned something useful. However, I also found that triangulating tutorials, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes showed that what students think they learned did not necessarily correspond to their requests for assistance, rhetorical situations, the major focus of their tutorials, or the revisions they made. This finding underscores the limitations of what such data can tell us about changed writers and the success of writing center tutorials. This finding also set the stage for questioning additional assumptions in Chapters 4 and 5 and addressing my fifth and final research question: What metacognitive knowledge about writing are students enacting during and after writing center tutorials?

The focal students Sofia, Mona, and Al illustrated in Chapter 4 show how tutees
interpret and use their tutors’ information/advice and why the revisions students make can become internally persuasive. I argued that these three focal students also showed how tutees who extend the information/advice they receive during tutorials to revisions not discussed during tutorials are no more likely to have changed as writers than students who do not. Whether students participating in this study extended advice, substantively revised, or made minimal changes to their drafts, they found parts or all of their tutorials internally persuasive and left their tutorials with a different understanding of their writing (such as a revision strategy), writing in general (such as rhetorical concept), and/or themselves as writers (self-awareness).

But even when tutees were internally persuaded and appeared to have changed as writers, further analyses into their tutorials, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes showed that some students took up their tutors’ information/advice in ways beyond their tutor’s control. In Chapter 5, the focal students Lisa, Cassandra, and Emma show that what some students internalized can be situation-specific and not necessarily translate to other writing projects, can be significant yet limited understandings of rhetorical concepts, and may not appear in their revised drafts. Students can also be resistant to rhetorical concepts and revision strategies, especially those they perceived as antithetical to their ideological views about process, content, or structure.

**Redefining Success Theoretically**

When comparing tutorials, revisions, and perceived learning outcomes along with students’ negotiations during tutorials and their reasons for revising, I found that most of the students participating in my study revised for reasons that were internally persuasive to them. Even though students granted their tutors considerable authority, most tutees
examined their tutors’ comments to see if they made sense and were worthy of internalizing as generalized concepts to help them meet current writing goals. In short, tutors do indeed change writers, as I have defined change in the context of this study. Work with specific papers can impact students in terms of their larger process and development as writers; tutors’ strategies/concepts can become writers’ strategies/concepts to be applied again in new contexts. But given the variety of reasons students revise, the multiple contexts and influences affecting tutorials, and the ensuing challenges inherent in assessing tutorials, I recommend that tutors do not measure their success based on the Northian idea of a writing center. There is no one-size-fits-all model for changing or acculturating writers. The success of tutorials is, as I have shown in this study, relative to other factors such as: ideological differences, material constraints, comprehension, resistance, circumstance, situation-specific writing tasks, self-assurance, motivation, personal preferences, and instructor preferences.

My findings correspond to what many other studies in composition have also found: The development of writers is a complicated process that can take unexpected turns in many directions. For example, Sternglass’s longitudinal study of students from diverse cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and educational backgrounds demonstrated that “changes over this 6-year time space occurred neither neatly nor linearly” (xiv). The case studies in Poe, Lerner, and Craig’s study of undergraduate science and engineering students show “a range of learning outcomes with which students leave our classes. Not only do some students make rapid strides while others make only small steps along their way, but students bring varied experiences, expectations, and attitudes to the task of writing in college” (185). They confer, as do other researchers of writing in the disciplines, that “learning to communicate in the science and engineering classes does not
occur as a linear process or at a consistent pace” (185). Beaufort’s longitudinal study demonstrates why “graduates of freshman writing [do not] produce acceptable written documents in other contexts” (158). Each new writing situation “requires specialized or ‘local’ know-how” (158). Writers need explicit instruction throughout college about “how the different aspects of writing are related and fit together” (17). Roz Ivanic writes in her study of “the discoursal construction of identity in writing” among graduate students: “…it is important not to think simplistically about ‘the acquisition of academic discourse’. There is no such single-tracked process: it’s not a smooth progression towards possession” (52). Denny, LeCourt, and Herrington and Curtis have investigated additional critical contexts that affect the development of writers, such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, and linguistic differences. Composition research into writing development has stressed and continues to stress the multiple variables at play in any writing situation.

Social cognitive researchers reach similar conclusions (e.g., Zito et al., Hayes, Myhill and Jones, Schunk, Schunk and Zimmerman, Smith, VanDeWeghe, VanLehn et al.) and support models for learning akin to writing center pedagogies. While those models promise to improve students’ learning capacities, their potential depends on a recursive approach to writing development. Metacognitive instructional tools—such as observation, imitation, self-control, and self-regulation—made explicit and scaffolded “must be maintained over time and generalized to other tasks” (Zito et al. 92). Though students may successfully apply new strategies for revision, they will need to revisit those strategies in new contexts. Writers need multiple opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in order to first generalize and then transfer them to new situations—a movement from the local, the general, and back to another local scenario, such as a new
genre. Even then, some students’ approaches to learning and writing may not correspond
to writing center pedagogies—as “student-generated” as they are (Halasek 181). The time
it takes to develop as writers is contingent upon students’ levels of development,
subsequent opportunities to practice their knowledge and skills, and their frames of
reference for learning—their social constructions of knowledge production. Learning
outcomes for student writers will also vary by type and degree depending on their writing
projects and agendas. Any assessment of writing center tutorials and their “success” as
well as the idea of “better writers” needs to take seriously the array of social, material,
ethical, political, and personal factors affecting each and every tutorial, as well as types of
data collected and methods of analysis.

The success of tutorials is related to so many variables that writing center workers
need to reconsider what we mean by “changed” writers when assessing learning
outcomes. I assume that North did not account for these multiple contexts when writing
“The Idea” because the purpose of that essay was to clarify for English faculty that writing
centers are not simply places for “difficult students” with “special problems in
composition” (“Idea” 435, 434). The point of that essay was to dispel with the idea of a
writing center as “some sort of skills center, a fix-it shop” for which tutors bear the
responsibility of remediation (“Idea” 435). While “The Idea” essay may have been and
perhaps still is, in North’s words, “reasonably effective for its [English faculty] audience,”
the idea of changing writers is still a risky business, “a romantic idealization” of writing
center work (“Revisiting” 9). Though we do change writers, as I have shown in this
dissertation, I recommend writing center workers think about successful tutorials in more
complex ways than our Northian goal might imply. I concur with Muriel Harris that one of
the reasons

why we can’t easily characterize what we do in writing center[s] is at the very heart of our theoretical/pedagogical bases. Every tutorial is shaped by each student’s concerns and the writing assignment he or she is engaged in responding to. And we have to factor in some awareness of the students’ motivation, learning style, cultural background, possible second language interference, lack of knowledge of English as another language, potential learning disability or physical disability, literacy history, local context, and so on. And even when the same student comes back, it’s a whole new interaction. There is no such thing as a syllabus for a tutorial. Given the differences that can and must enter the interaction between a tutor and a writer, we cannot encapsulate in any easy way what a tutorial accomplishes without rising to such a level of generality that it becomes almost meaningless—or worse yet, useless. Instead, we fall back on our favorite mantras that we improve writers, not writing; that we work with each student individually; that we collaborate as peers with students but do not do the work for them; that we turn passive students into active writers, and so an. But these generalities don’t explore the specifics of what we do or why we do it. They seem more like promises than descriptions.... (“Writing Ourselves” 77-78).

Harris implies that changing writers in predetermined, consistent, and therefore measurable ways is not a goal every writing center or every tutorial can or should achieve. So what is success in writing center tutorials? What might it mean to define success differently than changed writers?

My study offers writing center workers a theory of how negotiation translates to better or changed writers, broadly defined. We can think of and apply metacognitive writing instruction as a researched approach to teaching students to become more critical problem solvers by making them more aware of their thinking while revising. The students in my sample displayed behaviors, beliefs, and reasoning skills that suggested they were engaged with the tutorial process and in turn their revision process. Though interdiscursive with their tutors’ information/advice, the choices they made were their
own decisions, made through reflective inquiry. In collaboration with their tutors, tutees tried to make sense of their texts and contexts. That is success. A “changed” writer is a writer more aware (of any number of things) than they were before a writing center consultation. A successful tutorial begets students thinking about their thinking. They become their own readers, spectators of their writing and themselves as writers. Having said this, however, I am now guilty of simplifying, in Harris’s words, “a rich density of layers of interaction and a complex diversity of learning outcomes” (Harris “Writing Ourselves” 83). But I hope, in the context of my study, what I say here clarifies and not just simplifies.

At the risk of sounding prescriptive, I recommend we think of writing center learning outcomes, as I mentioned at the close of Chapter 5, as any or all of the “habits of mind” that classroom and tutoring experiences can provide: curiosity, openness, engagement, persistence, responsibility, flexibility, and/or metacognition (http://wpacouncil.org/framework). Of course, I have emphasized negotiation as metacognition in this study because tutorials are largely metacognitive experiences that encourage students to negotiate or cultivate additional habits of mind. In Chapter 4, I demonstrated ways tutees’ monitor their revisions and think strategically about their choices by, for instance, questioning, predicting, clarifying, summarizing, crosschecking, self-correcting, rereading, asking for help, checking, planning, selecting, and/or inferring. These metacognitive cues along with students’ reasons for revising are closely connected to students’ engagement with the process and their responsibility as writers, their curiosity and openness to explore other options, and their flexibility and persistence when revising. The “framework for success” recently put forth by the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and
the National Writing Project (NWP) provides a context or underlying set of ideas for assessing learning outcomes in writing center tutorials.

**Measuring Success Differently**

A direct cause and effect relationship does not exist in writing center tutorials, but the Northian goal to change writers implies otherwise. How then do we measure success? Instead of trying to prove that tutors change writers or that writing center success is tied to changed writers, writing center administrators should demonstrate how tutorials foster several habits of mind that college students need to cultivate to become successful writers. I hope my study persuades numerical data-driven readers that, as one writing center list-serve post requested, “the cold, hard facts and statistics that offer measurable evidence” are not possible, especially when many tutees may only visit a writing center once or twice a semester (Writing Center Mailing List, April 11, 2011). The quest for “hard data” is not a goal worth pursuing unless we are able to follow the same students over time. Even then, as Harris pointed out, there will be no such thing as consistently positive results. Other strategies and variables than direct and explicit metacognitive instruction, other variables we cannot control, affect the ability to achieve absolute consistency with every student. The concept and reality of a better writer, in the context of a writing center tutorial, is not an empirical reality but a social construction. Writers are always becoming better writers.

What I offer is an empirical approach for qualitatively understanding the relationships among thinking, writing, writers, and readers, which in turn can alter our understandings of the grand narratives of writing center success and changing writers. As I reported in Chapter 1, efficacy in writing center tutorials has mostly been linked with tutoring styles (directive and nondirective) and students' perceptions of satisfaction. But
if we go back to Harris’s discussion of exploratory talk and student ownership (see Chapter 1), success is more related to our ability to encourage students’ curiosity, openness, engagement, persistence, responsibility, flexibility, and/or metacognition than our ability to change writers in the linear sense of acquisition of writerly skills and knowledge. I therefore recommend writing center workers assess student uptake similar to how I have in this study. My methodology offers a way to analyze multiple sources of data in specific contexts and therefore provides a type of formative approach to assessment that is likely to be more accurate and useful than generalized, summative approaches. In sum, the proof of our effectiveness is best shown through case studies that compare the content of tutorials, students’ drafts, and their perceived learning outcomes with their metacognitive cues during tutorials and their reasons for revising during discourse-based interviews. Analyzing tutor-tutee negotiations can demonstrate the complex interactions and diverse learning experiences that tutorials provide.

Reconceptualizing Tutoring Practices

I also hope that tutors will read this study to fill a possible gap in their education as tutors: insight into the other half of their tutoring stories. A detailed analysis of students’ reasons for revising can help tutors evaluate their successes beyond their current assumptions. In Chapter 2, I pointed out that the tutors participating in this study shared general approaches to tutoring that positioned tutees as writers, but those tutors did not necessarily see themselves as working with writers. In an interview with me, Deanna stated that her most successful tutorials are those that meet both the student's agenda for grammar or editing and her agenda for higher order concerns, such as content or structure. She believed she tutored writing and not writers. Susan believed her most
successful tutorials focused on higher order concerns because students left with action plans or notes and therefore, as she said, “have choices” for revision. Having only worked with most tutees on a one-time, once-in-a-while basis, Susan believed she tutored writing and not writers. Amy thought her tutorials were successful when students indicated they “got something out of it,” namely a sense of what they need to do and how to do it. She believed she tutored writers and writing, but this varied depending on whether a session focused on higher order (writers) or lower-order concerns (writing). Tutors like Deanna, Susan, or Amy might be surprised to learn that most of the tutees in this study reported seeing themselves as writers regardless of their professed agendas. What tutees get out of their tutorials can be much more or different than what some tutors might guess. The “sigh of relief” tutees in general often breathe at the end of their sessions, along with words of gratitude, could have as much to do with understanding why they should revise as determining what and how to revise. The greatest rewards in writing centers are likely to come from well-educated writing tutors immersed in an on-going self-reflective practice that offers, as Emma noted, “readings” that both tutors and tutees negotiate on multiple levels.  

The lore of tutoring has encouraged tutors to think of their practices as directive or nondirective, but the tutorials transcripts I cited throughout Chapters 4 and 5 reveal a more complicated view of tutor-tutee conversations. Directive tutoring styles did not necessarily equate authoritative discourses, as was the case with Cassandra and Deanna,  

---

4 By well-educated, I am referring to an education in tutoring writing (not simply tutor training). The tutors participating in this study, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, completed a two-semester honors curriculum before they were invited to work at the Center as paid tutors. As paid tutors, they were expected to participate in on-going education workshops and observations.
and some instances of nondirective tutoring were not internally persuasive, as was shown with Lisa and Deanna. I hope my study helps tutors evaluate their success beyond simplified applications of tutoring strategies and see how their success hinges on several factors, many of which are out of their control. What is most in their control, however, is their ability to act as interested readers who strive to cultivate writerly behaviors, processes, and knowledge. As I mentioned at the close of Chapter 5, tutors should conceptualize success as the habits of mind they encourage in others and themselves, such as curiosity, engagement, creativity, persistence, responsibility, flexibility, and metacognition (http://wpacouncil.org/framework). Instead of charging tutors with the mission to change writers, I suggest tutors gauge their success based on their efforts to cultivate writers’ rhetorical knowledge, critical thinking, knowledge of conventions, and writing processes. In other words, tutors’ successes are not dependent on changes to writers but on their ability to collaboratively negotiate with writers. Instead of asking, “did I change this writer?” a tutor might ask, “did I negotiate (collaborate) with this writer about issues, interests, strategies, and/or options to help him/her make meaningful decisions?”

Limitations and Future Research

I recognize that my conclusions are limited to a specific site, participants, and researcher. The conclusions I reach are not necessarily indicative of tutor-tutee interactions occurring at other colleges and universities. An accumulation of data from more than one institution is needed, as only one sample or study produces hypotheses about behavior and learning trends rather than conclusions. Nevertheless, the data presented and analyzed in this dissertation provide insights that I hope will help writing
center workers question theory-practice connections and revise our and others’ understandings of the value of writing center work and ways to assess it. This study sets a stage for future research into writing center efficacy, particularly qualitative research, but this research also has the potential to affect writing center and classroom connections.

Future research into tutor-tutee negotiations could, for instance, contribute to faculty’s understandings of feedback on student writing. According to a recent study by Stern and Solomon, faculty written feedback on student writing is overly focused on later-order concerns (i.e., spelling, grammar, punctuation). Chapter 3 demonstrates that the students participating in this study did not come to the Center for assistance solely or mostly with later-order concerns. Though other studies have been conducted (see Conners and Lunsford) and offer best practices for commenting on students’ writing, some faculty still do not engage in those practices. Additional writing center research might look to the ways in which tutors respond to students’ writing and interpret teachers’ comments for tutees, like Amy did for Mona. Recent research into types of teacher feedback shows that an “inquiring stance” is desirable for motivating deep revision with English language learners (McGarrell and Verbeem). Inquiry-based comments are more formative than summative or evaluative assessments of student writing and are at the heart writing center pedagogies for all writers. Another recent, small study suggests that students prefer interactive (face-to-face) feedback more than non-interactive (written) feedback (Krych-Appelbaum and Musial). The authors speculate the advantages of interactive feedback: interactive feedback is preferable probably because of the in-the-moment, point-of-need opportunity to ensure mutual understanding and to interact with an audience member. Writing center tutors work on this assumption, as well. Because writing center tutorials usually offer such an approach to revision, additional writing
center research might ask whether and how tutors encourage deep revision more or differently than classroom instructors. Should teachers become more like tutors?

Tutees’ sense of themselves as writers could also be further explored, especially ways in which writing center tutorials might contribute to students’ understandings of the work or labor of the classroom—that the writing they do matters and affects readers. The students participating in my study already came to their tutorials seeing themselves as writers, but I wonder to what effect or for what purpose beyond the value of grades. How much of an impact do tutors have on students’ perceptions of the use and exchange values of their work/writing? A materially situated view of writing center tutorials could shed light on both processes and products of student writing, college composition classrooms, and writing intensive courses. Additional case studies of tutor-tutee negotiations could become critical resources for WAC/WID programs, especially for raising faculty awareness of students’ acculturation as writers and citizens beyond their classrooms.

Generally speaking, further research into tutor-tutee negotiations can help writing center workers and composition scholars think differently about pedagogy and the role of writing centers. The focal students participating in this study negotiated a range of writerly concerns as they negotiated internally persuasive and authoritative discourses. Sofia negotiated a strategy for revising. Mona negotiated her interpretation of her assignment, whether and how to rewrite her draft, and why and how to use outside sources. Al negotiated his understanding of argumentation in academic essays. Lisa negotiated the success of a revision strategy already used; Cassandra, genre and audience; and Emma, her composing process and identity as a writer and critical theorist. These students were not “objects of passive transmission” but worked as “active agents”—terms
I borrow from Harvey Kail and John Trimbur.

Kail and Trimbur have argued that writing center-based peer tutoring “does a different kind of work” than curriculum-based programs (classrooms):

Curriculum-based programs, on our view, suppress the crisis of authority precipitated when students work together, domesticate it, and channel the social forces released by collaboration into the established structures of teaching and learning. Peer tutoring based on collaborative learning, by contrast, provides students with a form of social organization to negotiate the crisis successfully and reenter the official structures of authority as active agents rather than as objects of passive transmission. (11-12)

Similarly, Dave Healy, building on Kail and Trimbur, has argued that tutors provide a means of interrogating academic hierarchy. They provide an audience whose relationship to a student’s writing is not governed by the same kind of “oughtness” as is the instructor’s. They constitute a different kind of authority, one which is less “given” and more negotiated. (20)

By demonstrating how tutors and tutees negotiate and why tutees revisions are meaningful to them, my dissertation research supports such claims. Tutees “interrogate” discourses in the sense that they monitor their revisions and think strategically about their choices. By questioning, predicting, clarifying, summarizing, crosschecking, etc., tutees work as active agents. Tutors help students see what is possible, what they may not be able to see by themselves; they offer possibilities for revision.

Kay Halasek describes a “pedagogy of possibility” for classrooms that this dissertation illustrates in writing center settings:

To this final end, a pedagogy of possibility is a student-generated (not simply student-centered) pedagogy in which students are given and expected to bear
responsibility for the construction of the classroom and its goals. That is, a pedagogy of possibility depends on students engaging discourse and pedagogy in a responsive manner as they strive to construct internally persuasive discourse. (181)

The responsive manner in which students construct internally persuasive discourses is part of what this dissertation tries to demonstrate through tutor-tutee negotiations. Perhaps tutees negotiate with their tutors not only because of their mutual student identities but also because their tutors negotiate with them, offering pedagogies of possibility. Additional research into tutor-tutee negotiations may help compositionists and faculty from other disciplines to broaden their understandings of how and why students, as active agents, choose among competing discourses when interrogating academic hierarchies as well as other social hierarchies and hegemonic practices. Future writing center research could examine whether a writing center pedagogy of possibility engenders critical literacy in ways that classroom interactions might not. How might particular readers and readings foster social change that extends beyond writers and their writing? How are writing centers not simply sights of service but potential change agents? Grimm and Denny have begun valuable work in this area, and I hope that more writing center workers will continue with this line of research.

In this dissertation, I have tried to view tutees’ experiences from their perspectives so that writing center workers such as myself can further our understandings of what tutees take away from their tutorials. The changes we have seen in the writers participating in this study were substantial. The value of writing center consultations is in many ways immeasurable. Where else on a college campus do students from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines converge with other writers to negotiate, reflect on, and
experiment with their ideas as conveyed through their writing?
CONSENT AND LANGUAGE FORMS

Student Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study

Researchers: Michelle Deal, PhD Student, English Department

Proposed Title of the Research Study: A Qualitative Assessment of Writing Center Tutorials: From Talk to Text

I am inviting you to participate in a research study because of your visit to the UMass Writing Center. The opportunities available to you at the Writing Center will not be affected if you decline to participate in this study. By signing yes on this consent form, you, __________________________, indicate that you willingly agree to participate in the following project:

The purpose of this study is to locate types of changes students make to their academic writing after having participated in a UMass Writing Center tutorial. I hope to publish the results of this study so that writer center administrators and staff can learn more about how to evaluate tutorials based on how students use them. (For example, what types of advice do students seek at the writing center? What types of advice are students given during tutorials? What kinds of advice do students use to revise their texts and for what purposes?)

During the study, I would like to audio-record your tutorial and photocopy the writing sample/draft you brought to the Writing Center. Also, I would like to email/phone you to ask for an electronic/paper copy of your revised draft and to schedule an interview with you. The interview should last no longer than 45 minutes. For your time, I can pay you $10.00. During the interview, I would like for you to complete a brief written questionnaire and to ask you questions about some of the changes you made to your revised draft.
**I will make every effort to protect your privacy.** I will not use your name in any of the information I get from this study or in any of my research reports, academic conference presentations, and/or articles written for scholarly journals and books. Any information I get in the study that lets me know who you are will be recorded with a code number. During the study the key that tells me which code number goes with your information will be kept secure in my personal office.

**Risks and discomforts:** I do not know of any personal risk or discomfort from being in this study. I do not know of any way you will personally benefit from participating in this study. However, by talking about your writing with me, you may become more aware of your writing choices and thereby achieve a better sense of who you are as a college writer.

**Your rights:** Your decision to participate in this study is not a requirement of your visit to the Writing Center, and you may withdraw from this study at any time. If you decide you would like to withdraw from this study, you may notify me, and I will remove from this study all information related to you. Also, **if at any time you have questions** about this research study or any other matter related to your participation in this study, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached by telephone at the UMass Writing Program Office (413-545-0610), by email at <mdeal@english.umass.edu>, or by regular mail: Michelle Deal, Writing Program, University of Massachusetts, 130 Hicks Way, 305 Bartlett Hall, Amherst, MA, 01003.

**Review Board approval:** The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at University of Massachusetts Amherst has approved this study. If you have any concerns about your rights as a participant in this study you may contact the Human Research Protection Office via email (humansubjects@ora.umass.edu); telephone (413-545-3428); or mail (Office of Research Affairs, 108 Research Administration Building, University of Massachusetts, 70 Butterfield Terrace, Amherst, MA 01003-9242).

**********************************************************************************

**PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT AND SIGN BELOW IF YOU AGREE**

When signing "yes" on this consent form, I am agreeing to voluntarily enter this study. I understand that, by signing this document, I do not waive any of my legal rights. I have
had the chance to read this consent form, and it was explained to me in a language that I understand. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and received satisfactory answers. A copy of this consent form has been given to me; Michelle Deal has the original copy.

Yes, I agree to participate in this study:

Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________

Printed name: ________________________

Email address: ________________________

Local phone number: __________________

THANK YOU!!!
Student Participant Language Form:

Are you an undergraduate student at UMass-Amherst? (Please mark one answer.)

___Yes

___No

How would you describe your language skills? (Please mark one answer.)

___English is my primary or one of my primary languages.

___English is not my primary language, but I am comfortable/fluent writing in English.

___English is not my primary language, and I am not comfortable/fluent writing in English.
Tutor Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study

**Researcher:** Michelle Deal, PhD Student, English Department

**Proposed Title of the Research Study:** A Qualitative Assessment of Writing Center Tutorials: From Talk to Text

I am inviting you to participate in a research study because of your visit to the UMass Writing Center. The opportunities available to you at the Writing Center will not be affected if you decline to participate in this study. By signing yes on this consent form, you, ____________________________, indicate that you willingly agree to participate in the following project:

**The purpose of this study is to** locate types of changes students make to their academic writing after having participated in a UMass Writing Center tutorial. I hope to publish the results of this study so that writer center administrators and staff can learn more about how to evaluate tutorials based on how students use them. (For example, what types of advice do students seek at the writing center? What types of advice are students given during tutorials? What kinds of advice do students use to revise their texts and for what purposes?)

**During the study I would to** audio-record three to six of your tutorials at the Writing Center. I might record a few more, depending on how many students participate in the full study: The first part of the study involves audio-recording tutorials and asking students if I may photocopy the writing sample brought to the tutorial; the second part of the study involves asking students for electronic/paper copies of revised drafts and asking if they will meet with me for an interview to discuss the changes they made to their writing.

**I will make every effort to protect your privacy.** I will not use your name in any of the information I get from this study or in any of my research reports, academic conference presentations, and/or articles written for scholarly journals and books. Any information I get in the study that lets me know who you are will be recorded with a code number. During the study the key that tells me which code number goes with your information will be kept secure in my personal office.
**Risks and discomforts:** I do not know of any personal risk or discomfort from being in this study. I do not know of any way you will personally benefit from participating in this study. However, by permitting me to audiotape some of your tutorials, you may become more aware of your tutoring strategies and thereby achieve a better sense of who you are as a writing tutor.

**Your rights:** Your decision to participate in this study is not a requirement of your job at the Writing Center, and you may withdraw from this study at any time. If you decide you would like to withdraw from this study, you may notify me, and I will remove from this study all information related to you. Also, if at any time you have questions about this research study or any other matter related to your participation in this study, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached by telephone at the UMass Writing Program Office (413-545-0610), by email at <mdeal@english.UMass.edu>, or by regular mail: Michelle Deal, Writing Program, University of Massachusetts, 130 Hicks Way, 305 Bartlett Hall, Amherst, MA, 01003.

**Review Board approval:** The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at University of Massachusetts Amherst has approved this study. If you have any concerns about your rights as a participant in this study you may contact the Human Research Protection Office via email (humansubjects@ora.UMass.edu); telephone (413-545-3428); or mail (Office of Research Affairs, 108 Research Administration Building, University of Massachusetts, 70 Butterfield Terrace, Amherst, MA 01003-9242).

**************************************************

**PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT AND SIGN BELOW IF YOU AGREE**

When signing "yes" on this consent form, I am agreeing to voluntarily enter this study. I understand that, by signing this document, I do not waive any of my legal rights. I have had the chance to read this consent form, and it was explained to me in a language that I understand. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and received satisfactory answers. A copy of this consent form has been given to me; Michelle Deal has the original copy.
Yes, I agree to participate in this study:

Signature:________________________________________ Date:____________

Printed name:____________________________________

Email address:_____________________________________

Local phone number:______________________________

THANK YOU!!!
APPENDIX B

TUTEE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Background Confirmation:

1. Subject Name and Date:

2. Language(s):

3. Year in school: Fr/So/Jr/Sr

4. Academic Major/Minor:

5. Number of writing center appointments this semester?
   Since you've been at UMass??

6. How did you learn about the Writing Center?
   What made you come to the Writing Center with this specific assignment?

7. Reason reported for writing center appointment for this paper:

8. When is/was this final paper/document due?

9. Did you take English 112 (freshman comp)?
   A junior-year writing class?
Any special training in writing outside of high school/college English/writing class(es) (e.g., workshops)?

10. How much writing, on average, do you do for school? Hrs/day? Hrs/wk?
Learning Outcomes Questions:

Subject Name and Date:

Taping OK? Y/N

Audience for written document:

Purpose of written document:

1. What do you remember about revising your paper?

2. Do you think there was something in the tutorial that you took away and will use in the future?

Discourse-Based Interview Questions:

I’m curious what the following changes mean:

3. Changes in the student’s text that did not come from the tutor’s suggestions: (“I noticed that making this change was not addressed during your tutorial. What made you decide to make this change?”)
4. Changes in the student’s text that correspond to the tutor’s suggestions: (“This change corresponds to your tutor’s comments. Why did this change seem like the right idea to you?”)

5. No changes although suggested: (“Your tutor asked you about changing this part, but I noticed that you decided against it. Why did you make that decision?”)
Additional Learning Outcomes Questions:

1. What did you work on as you finished this piece of writing? Check all that apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adding more analysis</th>
<th>answering the assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>audience awareness</td>
<td>avoiding plagiarism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoiding too much summary</td>
<td>brainstorming topic ideas/prewriting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citation styles (MLA, APA, CBE)</td>
<td>developing a thesis or focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>introduction or conclusion</td>
<td>grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organization</td>
<td>outlining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paragraph development</td>
<td>paraphrasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proofreading</td>
<td>staying on topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structuring your ideas before writing</td>
<td>summarizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word choice (style, syntax)</td>
<td>transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wordiness or repetition</td>
<td>understanding the assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>using examples to make your points</td>
<td>using direct quotations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. If you checked more than one box above (from question 1), which was the most important step you took? How did it change your draft?

3. Do you think you met most or some the requirements of your assignment? How so? If not, why not?
4. Did the Writing Center (your tutor) have a role in that?

5. Would you change your essay in any way more than you already have? If so, what specifically would you change and why? If not, why are you satisfied?

6. Will you use any of the information (e.g., writing strategies) you and your tutor discussed for future writing assignments? If so, please explain how you envision applying this information? If not, why?

*Questions 1 and 3 were adapted from a 2007 questionnaire by Abels, Epes, and Behrens designed for use at the Writing Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I came across their questionnaire during a poster presentation at the 2005 International Writing Center's Association Conference.
Other Questions:

1. How do you define “revision”?

2. When you are assigned a writing task, what do you usually do? Describe the steps you usually take to writing, your approach to writing (e.g., prewriting/brainstorming with self or others, drafting, proofreading). Is this approach you used to write your sample document?

3. How much collaborative work (sharing of ideas and writing) do you do while preparing a writing assignment (e.g., talking to other students, tutors, and/or teachers about the assignment and/or your writing)?

4. What do you think makes “a writer”? That is, how do you define “writer”?

5. Do you see yourself as a writer?

6. How’s it different working with a tutor than a teacher?
APPENDIX C

TUTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Date:
Tutor:
Major(s):
Minor:
Career Goals:
Age:
Ethnicity:
Social Class Background:
Social Class Self-Perception:
Phone/contact info:

1. What have you learned the most (about anything) while being a writing tutor?

2. What are you most aware of during a tutorial, if anything in particular?

3. What's your approach to tutoring? Describe steps you take during a tutorial and/or strategies you use.

4. Do you think your tutorials are often successful? Why or why not? What do you think students are learning, for instance?

5. Do you think there are aspects of your tutoring that you do particularly well? If so, provide an example (or more) and explain. If not, why not?

6. Do you think there are aspects of your tutoring that need improvement? If so, provide an example and explain. If not, why not?

7. In your opinion, what constitutes nondirective and directive tutoring? How do you define them?

8. Do you believe you tutor writing and/or writers? Please explain.

9. Do you evaluate the quality of students’ writing and/or the writers (e.g., “You’re a great
writer.” “This paragraph needs works.”)? If not, why not? If so, what are some of the statements you might make that would directly or indirectly evaluate?

10. Please describe the best tutorial (or one of the best) you have experienced as a writing tutor; explain how/why that session especially qualifies:

11. Please describe the worst tutorial (or one of the worst) you have experienced as a writing tutor; explain how/why that session especially qualifies.

12. What was most useful from your tutoring class? Now that you’ve tutored for 4 semesters, are there tutoring approaches/philosophies or strategies that you no longer find useful?

13. Do you think tutoring has made you a better writer/has improved your writing? If not, why not? If so, in what ways?

14. Have you come to the WC for a tutorial(s)? Please explain.

15. Have you tutored another tutor at the UMass WC? If so, how did that go? Do you think you treated the session differently than another? Please explain.

16. Have you heard students in your classes (or elsewhere on campus) talk about their experience(s) at the UMass WC? If so, what do they say, and how do you feel about what they say?

17. Would you like to be referred to as yourself in my dissertation study? If not, what name would you prefer to be called?

18. Did my taping your tutorials change the way you tutored? For instance, did the taping make you nervous or self-conscious in ways that you think affected the way you conducted your sessions? (Please try to write at least three sentences in response to this question.)
## APPENDIX D

### TUTEES’ RHETORICAL SITUATIONS FOR REVISING

#### Perceived Essay/Assignment Purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student (Year)</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al (freshman)</td>
<td>To agree or disagree with de Zengotita’s essay; for Unit 2 essay “Interacting with a Text”</td>
<td>College Composition (1st-year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anika (freshman)</td>
<td>To apply lectures/readings to campus issue</td>
<td>Sociology (gen-ed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne (junior)</td>
<td>To summarize and link readings in order to propose actions for a business organization</td>
<td>Junior-Year Writing (Marketing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra (freshman)</td>
<td>To contribute one’s voice to an ongoing conversation that you care about; to show how NCAA contradicts itself and cares more about money; for Unit 3 “Interacting with a Text”</td>
<td>College Composition (1st-year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celine (senior)</td>
<td>To analyze Disney films from a different cultural perspective by interviewing a foreigner</td>
<td>German (gen-ed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma (senior)</td>
<td>To show how the TV series “Lost” perpetuates colonialism through rhetoric; to resist the colonial rhetoric of academic essays; to show how identity functions as a social construct</td>
<td>Junior-Year Writing (Social Thought and Political Economy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen (junior)</td>
<td>To express her feelings about an ethical issue in maternity nursing by writing an NPR-like “This I Believe” essay</td>
<td>Nursing Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen (freshman)</td>
<td>To interact with text; to respond to text's meaning (Susan Bordo's &quot;Hunger is Ideology&quot;), for Unit 2 essay “Interacting with a Text”</td>
<td>College Composition (1st-year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie (sophomore)</td>
<td>To apply to BDIC (bachelor’s degree with individual concentration); not a class assignment</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura (freshman)</td>
<td>To research with an audience in mind and to add a new level of argument to an existing one; for Unit 3 essay “Adding to the Conversation”</td>
<td>College Composition (1st-year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>(year)</td>
<td>Task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>junior</td>
<td>Maybe to assess students’ ethical competence; to explain her thoughts about business ethics based on the readings, specifically the relationship between freedom and responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>To ask audience for patience with rising food costs; for Unit 3 “Interacting with a Text”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>To write a critical essay on a book read in class; to prove the thesis through support; to convince the reader that a particular play is a commentary on socio-economic class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mona</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>To take a social problem at UMass and relate it back to the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxanne</td>
<td>junior</td>
<td>To find strategies to solve a problem within public health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>To analyze a social problem at UMass and try to resolve it; to make a case for lower tuition fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>To analyze a fantasy fiction novel from class through the lens of another book or form of media not used in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tish</td>
<td>sophomore</td>
<td>To write business report/analysis on Wendy's fast-food chain restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>To analyze an essay from class (Eli Claire’s “The Mountain”); for Unit 2 essay “Interacting with a Text”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>General public</td>
<td>Wider audience generalized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anika</td>
<td>Doesn’t know: probably her sociology instructor</td>
<td>Student to instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>A superior in the business organization that has not read her sources</td>
<td>Wider audience novice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra</td>
<td>UMass student athlete alumni</td>
<td>Wider audience informed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celine</td>
<td>Audience assumed to be the teacher (associates writing to a specific audience as writing to cater to that audience—that writing to a particular audience is like writing to the teacher—they will be critical)</td>
<td>Student to instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Initially thought audience was only her professor but also sees her audience as some of her other STPEC major professors</td>
<td>Student to instructor and wider audience informed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>Not sure: probably for nurses, recent nursing graduates, or students in the nursing program</td>
<td>Wider audience informed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen</td>
<td>Folks in academics (students, teachers, administrators)</td>
<td>Wider audience informed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie</td>
<td>Admissions committee</td>
<td>Wider audience novice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Vogue magazine readers</td>
<td>Wider audience novice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Student to instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>A “stop and shop” audience, an average consumer</td>
<td>Wider audience novice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa</td>
<td>Graduate student teaching associate (teacher)</td>
<td>Student to instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mona</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Student to instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxanne</td>
<td>Anyone who participates in recreational activities</td>
<td>Wider audience novice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon</td>
<td>Probably higher administration, the people in charge</td>
<td>Wider audience informed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>An academic audience familiar with the text</td>
<td>Wider audience informed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tish</td>
<td>Not sure: wrote it as professional business person to the general public</td>
<td>Wider audience generalized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>Self and teacher</td>
<td>Student to instructor and self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Requests for Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Advice/Information Requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>Paraphrasing direct quotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anika</td>
<td>Help with transitions (&quot;flow&quot;), grammar, &quot;words&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>Revising to be more concise, transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra</td>
<td>Organization, grammar, thesis, introduction, audience, voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celine</td>
<td>Grammar, sentence structure, spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Organization/structure (that avoids false dichotomies and capitalist compartmentalization)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>Organization of ideas, grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen</td>
<td>Structure and grammar (run-on sentences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie</td>
<td>Content and grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Organization (&quot;flow&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Structure, content (if focus made sense), if thesis supported, another's eyes/ears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Flow (clarity), thesis and supporting data (sticking to topic), audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa</td>
<td>Drafting, more guidance, analyze quotes (paraphrasing), assertive thesis, grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mona</td>
<td>Organization, supporting examples, to see if topic/thesis answered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxanne</td>
<td>Organization, grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon</td>
<td>Structure of paragraphs and sentences, repetition, grammar, more feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>Flow, audience, run-ons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tish</td>
<td>Extra credit, help with bibliography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>Grammar, sentence structure, making essay longer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX E

**INFORMATION/ADVICE TUTEES RECEIVED AND USED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Advice/Information Requested</th>
<th>Advice/Information Received &amp; Used</th>
<th>Major Focus of Tutorial</th>
<th>Minor Focus of Tutorial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>Paraphrasing direct quotes</td>
<td>Substituted quoted text with his own words (paraphrasing), deleted text to avoid contradicting himself, rearranged sentences (explanations) to better support points; added text for clarity, corrected punctuation (comma, semicolon)</td>
<td>Content (refined argument)</td>
<td>Quotes and paraphrasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anika</td>
<td>Help with transitions (“flow”), grammar, “words”</td>
<td>Added transitional sentences between paragraphs, rearranged (combined) paragraphs, added explanations to examples, added source, deleted repetitive words</td>
<td>Transitions, organization, content (refined argument), and style</td>
<td>Documentation (added source, use of block quotes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>Revising to be more concise, transitions</td>
<td>Corrected punctuation (added and deleted commas, added semicolon), substituted word choice (“fellow employee” vs. “followers”), rearranged sentences (to create a transition), deleted and added sentences/phrases (sometimes for the purpose of creating a better transition and sometimes for brevity/clarity)</td>
<td>Style and transitions</td>
<td>Addressing instructor’s comments, punctuation, citation style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Advice/Information Requested</td>
<td>Advice/Information Received &amp; Used</td>
<td>Major Focus of Tutorial</td>
<td>Minor Focus of Tutorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra</td>
<td>Organization, grammar, thesis, introduction, audience, voice</td>
<td>Substituted audience for narrower one, substituted genres (essay changed to letter, related to voice), rearranged paragraphs, deleted text</td>
<td>Audience, genre, voice, thesis/introduction, and organization</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celine</td>
<td>Grammar, sentence structure, spelling</td>
<td>Corrected spelling/typos, corrected noun-verb agreement, added punctuation (run-ons), deleted unnecessary words, added words for clarity, substituted words (for more appropriate ones), added conclusion</td>
<td>Grammar, style, and spelling</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Organization/structure that avoids false dichotomies and capitalist compartmentalization of academic essay components</td>
<td>Rearranged parts of free-writes using a diagram to visualize the structure of her essay, added explanations for key words (labels)</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Content (defined terms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>Organization of ideas, grammar</td>
<td>Substituted words, added words for clarity, added comma, added supporting reference/source</td>
<td>Style and content (refining argument)</td>
<td>Documentation (cited reference)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen</td>
<td>Structure and grammar (run-on sentences)</td>
<td>Added words to sentences for clarity, added punctuation to sentences (long sentence becomes two), substituted words (style), added sentences to explain quotes (analysis), rearranged sentences, rearranged paragraphs (split into two), corrected typos (added missing words), deleted unnecessary sentences/words</td>
<td>Style, structure/organization, and content (refined argument)</td>
<td>NA*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie</td>
<td>Content and grammar</td>
<td>Rearranged two sentences to better make a pt, deleted unnecessary sentence rearranged (separated) a paragraph into two main ideas, added sentences for emphasis/clarity</td>
<td>Content and organization</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Organization (“flow”)</td>
<td>Added thesis sentence, rearranged paragraphs, added transitional phrase</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Structure, content (if focus made sense), if thesis supported, another's eyes/ears</td>
<td>Added an example (like Google) but not sure if that's what tutor intended though student trusts WC</td>
<td>Content (confirmed argument)</td>
<td>Thesis, conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*When nearly the same amount of time was devoted to each revision concern, no minor focus existed.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Advice/Information Requested</th>
<th>Advice/Information Received &amp; Used</th>
<th>Major Focus of Tutorial</th>
<th>Minor Focus of Tutorial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Flow (clarity), thesis and supporting data (sticking to topic), audience</td>
<td>Deleted text not related to thesis, deleted direct address, rearranged paragraphs and long sentences</td>
<td>Thesis, voice, audience, and organization</td>
<td>Style, documentation, conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa</td>
<td>Drafting, more guidance, analyze quotes (paraphrasing), assertive thesis, grammar</td>
<td>Added more analysis and support, rearranged sentences, corrected punctuation (comma), deleted excess words/phrases</td>
<td>Content (refined argument) and clarified instructor’s comments</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mona</td>
<td>Organization, supporting examples, to see if topic/thesis answered</td>
<td>Substituted old draft for a new one: added new text that corresponded to a new outline that corresponded to specific assignment questions</td>
<td>Content (outline) and organization</td>
<td>Supporting examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxanne</td>
<td>Organization, grammar</td>
<td>Substituted words for more specific or more accurate word choices, corrected use of dashes, deleted redundancy, corrected citation style, corrected punctuation and spelling, added words to sentences for clarity, added example to support point, deleted repetitive statements</td>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Proofreading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Advice/Information Requested</td>
<td>Advice/Information Received &amp; Used</td>
<td>Major Focus of Tutorial</td>
<td>Minor Focus of Tutorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon</td>
<td>Structure of paragraphs and sentences, repetition, grammar, more feedback</td>
<td>Rearranged paragraphs (while finding the main point of each paragraph), rearranged words in sentences, added transitions between paragraphs, deleted repetitive or unnecessary words/statements, corrected typos, corrected spelling, corrected punctuation, corrected documentation style (italicized name of newspaper, quotes for article titles)</td>
<td>Organization, content (refined argument), style, punctuation, and spelling</td>
<td>Clarified instructor’s written comments, documentation (citations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>Flow, audience, run-ons</td>
<td>Deleted plot summary (considering audience), rearranged sentences (organization as related to thesis/intro), added punctuation (comma), added explanations for her points</td>
<td>Content (refined argument) and organization</td>
<td>Style, introduction (thesis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tish</td>
<td>Extra credit, help with bibliography</td>
<td>Added APA style, substituted word choice (e.g., “woes” becomes “problems”), corrected punctuation (commas, colon, apostrophe with plural possessives), added phrases/sentences for clarity/audience</td>
<td>Punctuation and content (refined report related to clarity/audience)</td>
<td>Documentation (APA citation style)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Advice/Information Requested</td>
<td>Advice/Information Received &amp; Used</td>
<td>Major Focus of Tutorial</td>
<td>Minor Focus of Tutorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>Grammar, sentence structure, making essay longer</td>
<td>Rearranged (combined/separated) paragraphs, substituted words for clarity (vague pronouns), added text to introduce quotes, added punctuation, corrected typos and verb tense, added sentences to conclusion</td>
<td>Grammar, style, content (refined argument), organization, and conclusion</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX F

## INFORMATION/ADVICE RECEIVED AND NOT USED, AND REVISIONS NOT DISCUSSED DURING TUTORIALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Advice/Information Received &amp; Not Used</th>
<th>Revisions Not Discussed During Tutorials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>Substituting pronouns “I” and “it”: her teacher asked her to not use “it” or “they,” and her word choice fit the quote she used</td>
<td>Added “positive ethos” as teacher directed, added closing paragraph, substituted words to transition between paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra</td>
<td>Deleting “extraneous” information: student didn’t want to delete information about binge drinking and instead moved it higher in her essay to clarify connections being made</td>
<td>Added secondary sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Substituting her process with prescribed one: student didn’t want to use labels or a linear thesis-driven approach</td>
<td>Added more text to free writes, deleted parts of free writes, and rearranged sections to generate a draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxanne</td>
<td>Adding a sentence with a statistic: student did think this critical because she already cited stats in her literature review</td>
<td>Corrected typos (while reading aloud)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>Rearranging paragraphs by using scissors to cut her paper into sections: student didn’t think this particular approach to rearranging her points was necessary to revise her draft</td>
<td>Added examples/explanations to further refine argument, and rearranged sentences and paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tish</td>
<td>Substituting &quot;another organization&quot; for a specific one: student avoided fact because the information she had was rumor</td>
<td>Added remaining sections after tutorial (menu, people, news, thoughts, biblio)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anika</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>Substituted &quot;is&quot; for &quot;can be considered,” added instructor as a source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celine</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>Corrected spelling and punctuation, deleted unnecessary repetition, added sentences for further explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>Added a phrase for clarity, rearranged a sentence, corrected typo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>Substituted “love” with “delighted”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>Substituted words (vague pronoun, syntax)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>All changes discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>All changes discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations: student forgot to correct a question mark but would have if remembered</td>
<td>All changes discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>All changes discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mona</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>All changes discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>All changes discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>Used all of the tutor's recommendations</td>
<td>All changes discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Substituting underline style with italics when citing book titles: student confirmed with style guide that underlining is as a preference</td>
<td>All changes discussed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX G

## TUTEES’ PERSPECTIVES ON THEIR REVISIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Remember Most About Revising</th>
<th>Most Important Revision(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anika</strong></td>
<td>Crafted transitional sentences, formalized thoughts into words while talking to tutor</td>
<td>Transitional sentences between paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anne</strong></td>
<td>Revised based on what teacher said (positive ethos) and what tutor said about transitions/word choice</td>
<td>Transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Karen</strong></td>
<td>Read aloud for grammar, meaning, and order of sentences</td>
<td>Proofreading (changes things each time she re-read her essay): first examined paragraphs then whole essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Katie</strong></td>
<td>Organized thoughts/points for clarity, become more articulate, minor corrections</td>
<td>Organization (for clarity/better articulation of content)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laura</strong></td>
<td>Reordered her points, added transitional sentences/phrases</td>
<td>Organization (to better prove her points and make comparison/contrast stronger)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lisa</strong></td>
<td>Added example to support thesis, felt more confident, checked flow of things</td>
<td>Adding/using example to make point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mary</strong></td>
<td>Reworded explanations/purpose, reorganized sections, deleted unnecessary text</td>
<td>Deleting unnecessary paragraphs, reorganizing body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Melissa</strong></td>
<td>Made essay more concise, reorganized text, added supporting details</td>
<td>Organization (adding analysis is close second)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mona</strong></td>
<td>Discarded old draft, created new draft from an outline, introduced to LexisNexis database, tutor’s knowledge of campus</td>
<td>Outlining new draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shannon</strong></td>
<td>Sentence structure, eliminating repetition, organization</td>
<td>Avoiding too much summary, transitions, wordiness and repetition, organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sofia</strong></td>
<td>Reorganizing, reducing plot synopsis</td>
<td>Reverse outlining (paragraph glossing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>Wrote strong conclusion without repeating thesis, combined paragraphs for smoother transitions</td>
<td>Introduction and conclusion, clarifying thesis, consistency in argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Responses Do Not Match**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Al</th>
<th>Improved grammar; eliminated repetitive statements and phrases</th>
<th>Paraphrasing direct quotes (made his text “clearer,” was able to write “more concisely”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra</td>
<td>Grammar, spelling, organization, sentence structure</td>
<td>Audience (because it added to her purpose)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celine</td>
<td>Content: stunned by the racism in Disney movies as described from her interviewee’s point of view</td>
<td>Grammar and spelling (to help present ideas accurately, more understandable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Drew a diagram of different sections of her essay as a means to organize it</td>
<td>Giving herself enough time for the revision process and asserting herself (her voice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen</td>
<td>Structured sentences and paragraphs, added transitions between paragraphs, grammar</td>
<td>Answering the assignment (what teacher wanted and how Kathleen’s ideas correspond)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tish</td>
<td>Researched company profile/history, added more details, made it flow (meaning word choices/sentences, transitions, overall organization)</td>
<td>Audience awareness (using/explaining terms or business discourse for a public audience such as the tutor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxanne</td>
<td>Recognized her mistakes; proofread</td>
<td>Staying on topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX H

#### TUTEES’ PERSPECTIVES ON WHAT THEY LEARNED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Take Away</th>
<th>WC/Tutor’s Role</th>
<th>Use Info/Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Yes; learned how to better incorporate quotes, how and when to paraphrase</td>
<td>Yes; tutor told him that it's not wrong to oppose author/teacher as long as you support your beliefs</td>
<td>Yes; learned about paraphrasing, and paragraph structure (order of sentences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>Yes; the more times she comes, the better she gets at writing her first drafts; helps overall</td>
<td>Yes; providing extra eyes through reading it again with someone else</td>
<td>Yes; tutor helped her to see extra words (another session introduced her to thesaurus in Word)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Yes; tutor drew diagram of draft, and student used it to reconceptualize her ideas &amp; create a frame</td>
<td>Yes, sure; could have done it own her own, but not as quickly; tutor gave &quot;reading&quot; not linear tutorial</td>
<td>Yes, the diagram, but not in the &quot;essentialist way&quot; tutor intended; used diagram as &quot;exponential growth&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra</td>
<td>Yes; liked first tutor’s style and ideas; participating tutor’s perspective provided insight about different audiences</td>
<td>Yes, definitely; helped created thesis, talked about audience and how to use research with her voice</td>
<td>Yes; audience, can't generalize; going to think twice about who she's talking to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen</td>
<td>Yes; making sure paragraph supports the thesis statement</td>
<td>Yes; improved writer's confidence; grade showed improvement from first-unit essay</td>
<td>Yes; would write an outline more often before drafting, even when it's not assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie</td>
<td>Yes, definitely; organizing thoughts by concentrating on graph at a time (glossing)</td>
<td>Yes, very helpful; tutor offered different outlook that's honest; tutors is trained to help</td>
<td>Yes; would try to outline more, to create paragraphs that are already focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Yes; developed greater awareness and more appreciation for a structure that readers look for</td>
<td>Yes; the tutor helped clarify her writing (from a reader’s perspective)</td>
<td>Yes; will be conscious of structure, flow, readers’ needs; tutor acts as a reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa</td>
<td>Yes, probably; using less summary and more analysis; also will write drafts--change in process</td>
<td>Yes; paper wouldn't be as organized as it is</td>
<td>Yes; useful to have tutor reinforce, critique, affirm; gives student confidence and another perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mona</td>
<td>Yes; learned about LexisNexis and other research databases; learned to create an outline before drafting</td>
<td>Yes, suggesting an outline</td>
<td>Yes; outlining, research databases, not generalizing, conclusion shows growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>Yes, definitely; “going through each paragraph and defending why you put it there” helps with flow, logic</td>
<td>Yes; student's ideas needed to be conveyed with the help of a tutor; needed a reading for clarity</td>
<td>Yes, the reverse outline process (determining what each paragraph is about and doing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tish</td>
<td>Yes; learned to explain her terms more than she had, especially because she was writing to the general public</td>
<td>Yes; but WC helped more with writing than with analysis (like SOM writing center)</td>
<td>Yes, definitely: knows how to use APA, considers audience more (used to writing to self/colleagues)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Take Away</td>
<td>WC/Tutor’s Role</td>
<td>Use Info/Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No &amp; yes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anika</td>
<td>No, but would come back again</td>
<td>Yes; tutor helped with &quot;everything;&quot; most changes come from tutor's suggestions</td>
<td>Yes; didn't get tips how to create transitional sentences but would use same tutor; liked the help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>No, but the tutor “made me feel like a better writer [than I thought].”</td>
<td>Yes; the tutor helped with grammar, gave her ideas for word choices and adding things</td>
<td>No, but tutor, perceived as an experienced writer, provided student with compliments, thus confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>No, but tutor was “helping me kind of clarify my thoughts”</td>
<td>Yes; tutor helped contrast women in U.S. and Congo, helped create a thesis, and helped expand pts</td>
<td>Might use the tutor's graph glossing—to describe main point/purpose of graphs (reverse outline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roxanne</td>
<td>No, not really; used to the same procedure; still needs to know if she backed up her ideas &amp; makes sense</td>
<td>Yes; they always do; tutors listen to what she says and ask questions; recommends it</td>
<td>Yes; you discover new things (e.g., use of dashes); likes listening and learning; checking herself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon</td>
<td>Yes; going through each sentence one-by-one to see if needs rewording, combining, etc.</td>
<td>Yes; tutor especially helped with one of the five check-list items (who sees the problem and why)</td>
<td>Not sure; can't catch all the things that tutors do; reading aloud was helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>No; session helpful overall but did not take away a skill or technique; helped to hear paper aloud</td>
<td>Yes; was more confident handing in her essay</td>
<td>Yes; making sure graphs end w/something strong before moving on and that content matches thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Celine</td>
<td>Not really, but WC helped before when she wasn't clear w/an assignment and to determine topic</td>
<td>Not really; some tutors explain reasons for changes; tutors have helped her write in different genres and longer papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No; over time, the WC really helps; the more you come, the better you get; you remember mistakes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>No, not really; another tutorial had helped her, read topic sentences of every paragraph to focus structure</td>
<td>No; the WC didn't help her formulate her thinking for the assignment</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX I

SOFIA’S DRAFTS DURING AND AFTER TUTORIAL

Sofia’s Draft During Tutorial

Tom Bombadil: the Enigma of J.R.R. Tolkien’s Ideal, Excluded from Film

[PARAGRAPH 1]

Many authors have significantly contributed to the expansion of the realm of fantasy literature, and one such fantasy author of the utmost importance was J.R.R. Tolkien, for his astounding addition of the neo-traditional fantasy; *The Lord of the Rings*. The proper definition of neo-traditional fantasy being, “fantasy literature in which the counterfactual elements are rooted in or authenticated by our cultural heritage including language, ancient beliefs no longer accepted in the literary tradition” (lecture notes pg. 6).

[Sofia deletes next two sentences in the final draft because they are plot summary, as the tutor pointed out.] The story line takes the form of a trilogy. It is comprised of many complex characters, based around the concept that in the world of Middle-earth, an antecedent world to our time exists a powerful and magical Ring sought after by the dark lord who needs the Ring in order to fulfill his every evil desire to rule the land. The story centers around the journey of the hobbit Frodo on his quest to destroy this Ring, the “One Ring”, so that it will never fall into the hands of those able to exploit its power (Fellowship pg. 68). Of all the characters created by Tolkien, and encountered by Frodo, in such an

---

5 I added brackets and italics to indicate and describe Sofia’s revisions. I added brackets and all-caps to label paragraphs.
epic tale, Tom Bombadil resonates most deeply with any reader who wishes to understand his complete being. Throughout the plethora of theories that surround the allure of Tom Bombadil, *The Fellowship of the Ring* portrays him so closely associated with nature that he seems to be some kind of spirit of the world of nature. He is also the only character throughout all of Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* who is completely unaffected by the colossal power of the ring that has an incredible strength over all of the strongest, wisest, and most pure of heart. It is well known that Tolkien went to many lengths in order to create each character, and throughout his construction of *The Lord of the Rings*, every character was fabricated in order to bring a very precise meaning to the remarkable journey of Frodo. Yet when the decision was made to turn these books into a major motion picture in December of 2001, the complete part of the storyline concerning Tom Bombadil was left out. His character was deemed unnecessary by the director, Peter Jackson: “Tom’s meeting with the travelling hobbits did not progress the story, but rather held it up.” (imdb). In this modern era, as cinema embodies the foremost method of communicating ideas to the masses, the exclusion of Tom Bombadil signifies a materialistic society, continually abandoning the awe of nature.

[PARAGRAPH 2]

*The tutor suggests moving the first sentence of paragraph 2 to paragraph 1, and Sofia agrees.* In order to fully comprehend the sheer significance of Tom Bombadil, one must understand his place in the structure of Middle-earth, the nature of the hobbit as the only creatures the reader observes encountering Tom Bombadil, and the foundation of theory utilized by J.R.R. Tolkien in order to create the complexity that is *The Lord of the*
Rings. [Tutor suggests deleting the following plot summary, and Sofia agrees.] Frodo encounters Tom Bombadil early on in Tolkien's trilogy in Book 1 of The Fellowship of the Ring, with three other hobbits by the names of Sam, Merry, and Pippen. Tolkien fashions hobbits to resemble humans, about half the height of man, with a hearty appetite, and a disdain for leaving the Shire, which is the tiny and almost insignificant area of Middle-earth that they reside in (Fellowship 72). [The tutor suggests moving the following information, and Sofia moves it to what becomes her second paragraph.] They are very childlike in their ignorance of the greater goings-on of the whole of Middle-earth, yet it is Frodo, a hobbit, that the reader primarily identifies with as a: “psychic attachment to a character or entity perceived as similar to the self” (lecture notes pg. 4). [The tutor suggests moving the next sentence. Sofia uses it as the first sentence for the second paragraph of her revised draft.] This means that through Frodo's eyes, on the first leg of his journey, in his first time ever leaving the same area he tumbled about during his childhood, we meet Tom Bombadil.

[PARAGRAPH 3]

[Sofia deletes plot summary: the next three sentences.] The four hobbits, in a decision to lead those employed by the dark lord to follow them, and retrieve the Ring, off their trail, opt not to follow the paved road as the obvious path, and instead choose to venture off into the old forest. They quickly find themselves lost, and in danger of the subtle magic of the old forest that symbolically emphasizes the well-known frustration of being lost in unfamiliar territory (Invention of myth 51). Frodo was being held underwater by the root of a willow tree, Merry half-swallowed, and Pippen fully engulfed by the willow tree (Fellowship 133). [The following willow tree detail is summarized and
This is quite a silly scene, fully stressing the helplessness of the hobbits, and one must infer that this tree cannot be the hardest obstacle for the hobbits to overcome. The help they receive is from Tom Bombadil:

‘What?’ shouted Tom Bombadil, leaping up in the air. ‘Old Man Willow? Naught worse than that, eh? That can soon be mended. I know the tune for him. Old grey Willow-man! I’ll freeze his marrow cold, if he don’t behave himself. I’ll sing his roots off. I’ll sing a wind up and blow leaf and branch away’ (Fellowship 135).

He appears, in a blue coat with a matching long feather in his hat, yellow boots, a long brown beard, a face coated in wrinkles of laughter, and pertaining to a certain wisdom that is associated with his old age. Although old, he acts full of youth towards the distressed hobbits, addressing their concerns for the childishness they are in a most warm-hearted way. At the same time that he embodies the ancient wisdom of nature, Bombadil is dually associated with anthropomorphism, giving human attributes or characteristics to things (nature) that are not human. This is a common practice of children, and the crux of his dichotomy pertaining to his characterization as a young wise old man. Nevertheless, he is at ease, as he wields the power of sung verse to free the hobbits from Old Man Willow, and he further invites them to his house. [Sofia deletes the last clause of the previous sentence and replaces it with a new sentence that clarifies why this scene is important.]

[PARAGRAPH 4]

Through reading the supplemental text, The Adventures of Tom Bombadil, provided by Tolkien as a technique of projection, “the means by which the author provides
information about the fantasy world” (lecture notes pg3), the reader learns that Bombadil has previously encountered Old Man Willow, and escaped him long before encountering Frodo (Adventures Tom pg.3). This implies that experience is the creator of wisdom, which only comes with the constant progression of time. 

Most of the following information in this paragraph is moved to paragraph 9 in Sofia’s revised draft. New text is added here. Also, Sofia adds a new paragraph, which is paragraph 5 in the revised draft. The new text in both cases further establishes the importance of Bombadil as a character.] Here is where logic leads Bombadil into a juncture with nature, which according to Christian beliefs that Tolkien was firmly rooted in, came before the existence of creatures, and Bombadil to exist before all other creatures. Further on in the Fellowship of the Ring, at the Council of Elrond, the issue concerning what is to be done with the ring is decided upon, and Tom Bombadil is mentioned. Bombadil is brought up because he was able to handle the Ring with such ease, and leaving it with him would seem to keep out of the dark lord’s grasp, “‘It seems that he has power even over the Ring.’ ‘No, I should not put it so,’ said Gandalf. ‘Say rather that the Ring has no power over him.’” (Fellowship pg. 298). This passage depicts Bombadil as a concretization (the embodiment of abstraction), of nature. Tom Bombadil, as nature’s spirit, makes sense of the fact that as Gandalf explains if Tom was in possession of the Ring he would, “soon forget it.” (fellowship 298). This is one possible explanation as to why Tom Bombadil would feel no obligation towards the need to destroy the Ring. He is a spirit of the much greater force of nature, which is unconcerned with the Ring, regardless of the fate of Middle-earth.

[PARAGRAPH 5]

[Sofia deletes the next sentence, presumably because it is unnecessary plot summary.]
Once Frodo and the other hobbits are comfortably situated in Tom Bombadil’s house, and are being entertained by his wife, Goldberry, Frodo proceeds to ask who Tom Bombadil is. [Sofia moves the next two sentences to paragraph 7 of the revised draft, presumably so that most of the information pertaining to Bombadil and Christianity are in one place.] The response is simply, “He is” (fellowship 140). Goldberry’s response is similar to an explanation once given by Jesus, the Christian Messiah, as he explains who he is, written in John 14:6, “I am the way”. This further explains the godly and religious effervesescence that Tom Bombadil exudes. [Sofia moves the following information from this paragraph to paragraph 13 of the revised draft, which is where she discusses the film adaptation.] That consistency of elusive wisdom and grandeur are comforting to the hobbits who are cradled in Bombadil’s domain, so early on in their journey. This cradling effect does not end with the hobbits, but it extends to the reader, as they are eased out of the Shire, and placed in increasingly foreign surroundings filled with elements in contradiction with the reader’s world of experience. This is a writing technique utilized by Tolkien, in order to imbed the familiarity of Middle-earth, further authenticate his world of fantasy, and to establish a mounting suspense.

[PARAGRAPH 6: As mentioned earlier, a new paragraph is added and becomes paragraph 5 in the revised draft.]

Another term, in which other characters of The Lord of the Rings refer to Tom Bombadil, is “master”. Goldberry says that Tom Bombadil is, “the Master of wood, water, and hill” (fellowship 140). At the Council of Elrond, he is called “his own Master” (fellowship 298) by Gandalf. Tom Bombadil is essentially the only true individual in all of Middle-Earth, with nature as both part of him and his only company. [Sofia moves the next
Even his wife Goldberry, when viewed symbolically, emphasizes the beautiful, and almost magical parts of nature that are encountered daily in the reader’s world of experience if they only take the time to appreciate it. Marjorie Burns provides a commentary on the individualistic spirit that Tom Bombadil embodies in her essay, “J.R.R. Tolkien: The British and the Norse in Tension”:

The most striking of Tolkien’s individuals, however, are his innate, one-of-a-kind loners, the honorable isolationists, who dwell in secluded domains and who are presented as being distinctive, free, self-reliant but respectable of other lives and hostile only to those deserving hostility […] Tom Bombadil, childlike, blite, and innocent of a large or consistent, world-view (Burns pg. 51).

Yes, Bombadil is an individual, of an almost unfathomable strength, and is approached with the same wonder that one comes to appreciate nature with, but his individualistic existence is childlike. [Sofia rewords the next sentence and moves it to appear after its following sentence “He is only Master….”] What feels incomplete to the reader about his ability to be called Master makes him whole. He is only Master in his domain just like a child is king of the play-room. Some critics of The Lord of the Rings focus upon this ostensibly limited power of Tom Bombadil, but what is so enticing about the construction of his character is that his power is limited by any means. [Sofia changes “by any means” to “by his conscious choice” in the revised draft. Also, the next four sentences, and the block quote, become paragraph 8 in the revised draft.] He is the only character who comes into contact with the Ring and is completely unaffected. He even laughs at it:

It seemed to grow larger as it lay for a moment on his big brown-skinned hand. Then suddenly he put it to his eye and laughed. For a second the hobbits had a vision, both comical and alarming, of his bright blue eye gleaming through a circle of gold. Then Tom put the Ring round the end of his little finger […] There was no
sign of Tom disappearing! (fellowship 150).

Bombadil has no solemn feelings towards the Ring, and this creates a shining moment throughout the entirety of The Lord of the Rings. The “One Ring”, once placed in the hands of nature is reduced to nothing but a mere worry of mankind. It is this moment that such a great power is channeled in nature, and specifically why Tom Bombadil’s character lingers in the mind of the reader as a reminder of how power is a mental construct created by not only mankind, but by Tolkien’s other creatures, all of which are unable to overcome its supremacy. [The next three sentences, including the block quote, become paragraph 9 in Sofia’s revised draft.] It is for this same reason that the Ring it cannot be entrusted to Tom Bombadil, as Gandalf says,

to send the Ring to him would only postpone the day of evil [...] the Lord of the Rings would learn of its hiding place and would bend all his power towards it. Could that power be defied by Bombadil alone? I think not. I think that in the end, if all else is conquered, Bombadil will fall, Last as he was First (fellowship 298).

Gandalf’s speculation concerning the ever-pervasive “what if” is the most according assumption, as Tom Bombadil is the embodiment of nature, which can be destroyed, but will linger beyond the experience of life because it is the medium of existence in the world. Nothing can exist in a vacuum. [Sofia deletes the following block quote.]

The conceptualization of Tom Bombadil as an ambiguous entity of nature is the only perception into his existence that the reader is given through the experience of the hobbits. He does not symbolically translate into a complete allegory as Tolkien abruptly states in the foreword to The Fellowship of the Ring, “It [The Fellowship of the Ring] is neither allegorical nor topical.” (fellowship x)
This coincides with what Por Binde writes in the essay “Nature in Roman Catholic Tradition”, explaining the background of Tolkien’s Roman Catholic philosophy on nature incorporated into *The Lord of the Rings*, “No single Roman Catholic view of nature, but several [...] (1) the notion that nature is matter, as distinct from the spiritual; (2) the idea that nature is related to the divine; and (3) the conception of nature as a realm of supernatural forces”. With the application of these principles to a close reading of Tom Bombadil, he is not literally nature, as his full spirit is distinct from such matter, but he uses the supernatural magic of sung verse through the words of the divine throughout his domain. Tolkien himself wrote in his famous essay “On Fairy-Stories”, “Even fairy-stories as a whole have three faces: the Mystical towards the Supernatural; the Magical towards Nature; and the Mirror of scorn and pity towards Man.” (Fairy-Stories pg. 53) The reader is deeply affronted with the scorn and pity towards man, which is seen in the Bible, as man has lost such a carefree ability to connect with nature like Tom Bombadil.

Bombadil is similar to the subsistence of a fairy in Middle-earth as Tolkien’s enigma, a mystery, similar to the mystifying ways of nature, which seems to be unrelated to the rest of *The Lord of the Rings*, but truly isn’t. J.R.R. Tolkien himself once wrote in a letter about Tom Bombadil, “even in a mythological Age there must be some enigmas, as there always are. Tom Bombadil is one (intentionally)” (Tolkien letter). This is one purpose of Tom Bombadil’s character; he adds to the unknown element incorporated with
authentic myths, which Tolkien is attempting to create.

[PARAGRAPH 8]

Tom Bombadil is ambiguously the embodiment of the moral code that Tolkien praised. He is the materialization of the ideal. He exists in Middle-earth without the slightest concern for power that pulls such a heavy lever on the morals of others through their reliance on material possessions. Marjorie Burns commented that for J.R.R. Tolkien,

And yet the greatest evil in Tolkien’s view is ‘possessiveness,’ a sin which includes simple materialism as well as domination, enslavement, and arbitrary control; and these, of course, are qualities which may be manifest in those who inherit power as in those who acquire it by force, stealth deception (British and Norse in Tension pg. 50)

Tom Bombadil’s character was created, partially, so that the reader can distance themselves from the inescapable material evils of everyday life, and loose themselves in the pure childlike wisdom portrayed by Bombadil. [The remaining text in this paragraph is slightly altered and becomes its own paragraph in the revised draft, paragraph 12.] Even Tolkien believed in fantasy as a means of literature to provide wish fulfillment, but its greatest importance remaining in,

Recovery (which includes return and renewal of health) is a re-gaining-regaining of a clear view. I do not say ‘seeing things as they are’ and involve myself with the philosophers, though I might venture to say ‘seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them’-as things apart from ourselves. (Fairy-Stories pg. 77)

The section of The Fellowship of the Ring, busy with telling of Frodo, and the other hobbit’s encounters with Tom Bombadil, slowly, but completely consumes the reader in Middle-earth, and when one puts the book down, and “recovers” from Bombadil’s domain,
his comforting and refreshing behavior is emulated. The vividly descriptive language of the beauty of nature, re-establishes the inherent awe mankind has for nature, if one only takes the time to notice it. Most importantly, hope lies in the fact that evil is not innate in all beings, as Tom Bombadil is on a completely uncommunicative wavelength with the evils of materialistic possession.

[PARAGRAPH 9]

[In the revised draft (see paragraph 13), Sofia uses the next sentence as the opening of a paragraph she creates by pasting text from paragraph 5 of the original draft.] For Peter Jackson, the director of the huge Hollywood production of The Lord of the Rings, to exclude Tom Bombadil, and all of the subtle ambiguities of the pristine morals of nature that he characterizes was an indirect blaspheme towards Tolkien’s words. [This remainder of this paragraph becomes its own paragraph in the revised draft, paragraph 14.] In defense of the director, money does not flow freely, and it is not possible for movies to be as long as books. When a movie breaches several hours the audience becomes quite restless, and the meaning is lost as their attention span cannot expand to unrealistic proportions. The final length of The Fellowship of the Ring that was presented in theaters was 178 minutes, and a special extended version, released later, was approximately 208 minutes (imdb). The movie scenes are carefully edited to show the hobbits quickly fleeing the Shire right into their fateful night in Bree. The plot swiftly progresses in the movie with Tom Bombadil deemed unnecessary.

[PARAGRAPH 10: Sofia adds text to this paragraph, including an additional source, to support a claim. This paragraph becomes paragraph 15 in the revised version.]

Is the story line the only essential element in film? This perfectly fits in with the
fast pace of modern society, only capable of grasping the “big picture”, and unconcerned with detail. Many would argue that this is not true, for just like literature; film is just another medium of art, only more heavily tainted by a vast consumers market.

PARAGRAPH 11

Lisa A. Barnett and Michael Patrick Allen, film and pop-culture analysts, bring up the point that one of the primary concerns of film is that, “familiarity with 'high' culture, contributes to the maintenance of boundaries between the members of different social classes” (Social Class pg. 146). If one adopts this philosophy, then it becomes clear why the executive decision was made to exclude Tom Bombadil from the movie. Tolkien's character, as a spirit of nature is completely independent of society, and thus completely without a social class. Bombadil is unable to speak to the familiar hierarchy of lower, middle, and upper class that Tolkien's various other characters fall under. The boundaries of class are similar to the concept of power, both undeniably strong forces, but ineffective on Bombadil. He is a deviant from all preconceived notions deeply rooted in a materialist existence.

PARAGRAPH 12

Once versions of Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings are re-written, re-formatted, and re-edited, the concept of “refraction” is at play. This is the idea that we know our classics from other representations than the actual book. Peter Jackson's production of The Lord of the Rings is a refraction of Tolkien's original text. Thus, Tom Bombadil was left out due to the context of current society. As it was established by Tolkien in The Lord of the Rings, “Tolkien yearned to create a ‘mythology for England’ that would [...] create a religious
pantheon of the gods attached to the creational act of genesis that functioned as an expression of national origin and identity." (invention of myth pg1) [Sofia edits the remaining sentences for conciseness. See paragraph 17 of the revised draft.] If in fact Tolkien did write these books as a mythology, then in progression to the current age of man, that supernatural bewilderment to nature is fading. Society is undaunted with nature, and thus including Tom Bombadil as a developing character to theme of nature, would be lost on the audience. Nature does not interest them. Tom Bombadil, Tolkien's ideal, becomes impossible, and this is confirmed as he is severed from the refraction of The Lord of the Rings.  

[PARAGRAPH 13: In the revised draft (paragraph 18), Sofia substitutes words, adds text, and alters phrasing throughout this paragraph. The final sentence is deleted and a new one is added that relates to her thesis.]  

The elusive mystery of Tom Bombadil dances upon the awe inspiring grand image of nature that translates directly from Middle-earth and into the world of the reader. Bombadil does not fit into one direct understanding of symbolism, but instead coincides with the multi-faceted ideal of Tolkien’s existence; one rejecting the hold of power caused by material possession. Tom Bombadil is a godlike figure of supreme morals, willingly cut off from the rest of the world. He recovers the reader into their world of experience providing eternal hope of spring. His exclusion from the now famous film adaptation of The Fellowship of the Ring confirms a modern society only concerned with the throws of power. Once can only hope that the audience can see nature’s marriage to the mystical in the breathtaking scenes of the world of nature as the actor’s travel across New Zealand.
Many authors have significantly contributed to the expansion of the realm of fantasy literature, and one such fantasy author of the utmost importance was J.R.R. Tolkien, for his astounding addition of the neo-traditional fantasy; *The Lord of the Rings*. The proper definition of neo-traditional fantasy being, “fantasy literature in which the counterfactual elements are rooted in or authenticated by our cultural heritage including language, ancient beliefs no longer accepted in the literary tradition”. [Deleted plot summary] Of all the characters created by Tolkien, and encountered by Frodo, in such an epic tale, Tom Bombadil resonates most deeply with any reader who wishes to understand his complete being. Throughout the plethora of theories that surround the allure of Tom Bombadil, *The Fellowship of the Ring* portrays him so closely associated with nature that he seems to be a concretization (the embodiment of abstraction), of the spirit of nature. He is also the only character throughout all of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* who is completely unaffected by the colossal power of the ring that has an incredible strength over all of the strongest, wisest, and most pure of heart. It is well known that Tolkien went to many lengths in order to create each character, and throughout his construction of *The Lord of the Rings*, every character was fabricated in order to bring a very precise meaning to the remarkable journey of Frodo. *In order to fully comprehend the sheer significance of Tom Bombadil, one must understand his place in the structure of Middle-earth, the nature of*
the hobbit as the only creatures the reader observes encountering Tom Bombadil, and the foundation of theory utilized by J.R.R. Tolkien in order to create the complexity that is The Lord of the Rings. Yet when the decision was made to turn these books into a major motion picture in December of 2001, the complete part of the storyline concerning Tom Bombadil was left out. His character was deemed unnecessary by the director, Peter Jackson: “Tom’s meeting with the travelling hobbits did not progress the story, but rather held it up.”. In this modern era, as cinema embodies the foremost method of communicating ideas to the masses, the exclusion of Tom Bombadil signifies a materialistic society, continually abandoning the awe of nature.

[PARAGRAPH 2]

Through Frodo’s eyes, on the first leg of his journey, in his first time ever leaving the Shire, the area he tumbled about during his childhood, we meet Tom Bombadil. The conceptualization of Tom Bombadil as an ambiguous entity of nature is the only perception into his existence that the reader is given through the experience of the hobbits. Frodo is a typical hobbit, very childlike, and filled with ignorance of the greater goings-on of the whole of Middle-earth, yet it is Frodo that the reader primarily identifies with as a, “psychic attachment to a character or entity perceived as similar to the self”. The reader is in the same position as Frodo, situated in the new and wildly unknown depths of Middle-earth. We are able to sympathize with his confusion and naivety, as we consistently find it within ourselves. It is with the establishment of a humble heart that we are affronted with the wonder of Tom Bombadil.

[PARAGRAPH 3]

The hobbits, in their journey to destroy the “One Ring” venture off into the Old Forest.
They quickly find themselves lost, and in danger of the subtle magic of the old forest that symbolically emphasizes the well-known frustration of being lost in unfamiliar territory. Quite a silly scene is established; fully stressing the helplessness of the hobbits as a Willow tree slowly begins to devour them as they sleep. One must infer that this tree cannot be the hardest obstacle for the hobbits to overcome as they have only just embarked upon their quest. The help they receive is from Tom Bombadil:

’What?’ shouted Tom Bombadil, leaping up in the air. ’Old Man Willow? Naught worse than that, eh? That can soon be mended. I know the tune for him. Old grey Willow-man! I’ll freeze his marrow cold, if he don’t behave himself. I’ll sing his roots off. I’ll sing a wind up and blow leaf and branch away’.

He appears, in a blue coat with a matching long feather in his hat, yellow boots, a long brown beard, a face coated in wrinkles of laughter, and pertaining to a certain wisdom that is associated with his old age. Although Tom Bombadil is old, this passage demonstrates how he acts full of youth towards the distressed hobbits, addressing their concerns for the childish worries that they are, in a most warm-hearted way. At the same time that he embodies the ancient wisdom of nature, Bombadil is dually associated with anthropomorphism, giving human attributes or characteristics to things, in his case nature, that are not human. This is a common practice of children, and the crux of his dichotomy pertaining to his characterization as a young wise old man. Nevertheless, he is at ease, as he wields the power of sung verse to free the hobbits from Old Man Willow.

Through this encounter, Tom Bombadil is established as an aiding character on the journey of the hobbits, and Tolkien begins to show the convergence of youth and old wisdom in his singular existence.
Through reading the supplemental text, *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*, provided by Tolkien as a technique of projection, “the means by which the author provides information about the fantasy world”, the reader learns that Bombadil has previously encountered Old Man Willow, and escaped him long before encountering Frodo. This implies that experience is the creator of wisdom, which only comes with the constant progression of time. In one regard, this is where logic leads Bombadil into a juncture with nature. *He is the same age as nature, even older. Tom Bombadil was the first life existing before the creation of all other creatures. Even his wife Goldberry, when viewed symbolically, emphasizes the beautiful, and almost magical parts of nature that are encountered daily in the reader’s world of experience if they only take the time to appreciate it.*

When Frodo asks Tom Bombadil who he is, the reply Bombadil gives is,

‘*But you are young and I am old. Eldest, that’s what I am. Mark my words, my friends: Tom was here before the river and the trees; Tom remembers the first raindrop and the first acorn. He made paths before the Big People, and saw the little People arriving […] He knew the dark under the stars when it was fearless- before the Dark Lord came from Outside.*’

Tom Bombadil existed in Middle-earth before evil was present in this world, specifically not before evil was created, but before its manifestation in life on Middle-earth. It is inspiring to see a character witness such extravagant occurrences, both the good and the darkest of evil, and still maintain light-heartedness in which his wisdom flourishes.
One term, in which other characters of *The Lord of the Rings* use to refer to Tom Bombadil, is “master”. Goldberry says that Tom Bombadil is, “the Master of wood, water, and hill”9. At the Council of Elrond, he is called “his own Master” by Gandalf10. Tom Bombadil is essentially the only true individual in all of Middle-Earth, with nature as both part of him and his only company. Marjorie Burns provides a commentary on the individualistic spirit that Tom Bombadil embodies in her essay, “J.R.R. Tolkien: The British and the Norse in Tension”:

The most striking of Tolkien’s individuals, however, are his innate, one-of-a-kind loners, the honorable isolationists, who dwell in secluded domains and who are presented as being distinctive, free, self-reliant but respectable of other lives and hostile only to those deserving hostility [...] Tom Bombadil, childlike, blite, and innocent of a large or consistent, world-view11.

Yes, Bombadil is an individual, of an almost unfathomable strength, and is approached with the same wonder that one comes to appreciate nature with, but his individualistic existence is childlike. He is only Master in his domain just like a child is king of the play-room. *There is an incomplete feeling in the reader concerning his title of “Master”, similar to the title of king for a child, due to the fact that Bombadil is not master of all Middle-earth.* Some critics of *The Lord of the Rings* focus upon this ostensibly limited power of Tom Bombadil, but what is so enticing about the construction of his character is that his power is limited by his conscious choice. This is mentioned further on in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, “And now he is withdrawn into a little land, within bounds that he has set, though none can see them, waiting perhaps for a change of days, and he will not step beyond them.”12. If he had declared himself master of Middle-earth, he would be no
better than the power consumed dark lord himself. Tom Bombadil personifies the virtues that are inherent in the denouncement of greed.

[PARAGRAPH 7]

J.R.R. Tolkien provides Tom Bombadil with certain elements to his character that parallel Christianity. This coincides with what Por Binde writes in the essay “Nature in Roman Catholic Tradition”, explaining the background of Tolkien’s Roman Catholic philosophy on nature incorporated into The Lord of the Rings. “No single Roman Catholic view of nature, but several [...] (1) the notion that nature is matter, as distinct from the spiritual; (2) the idea that nature is related to the divine; and (3) the conception of nature as a realm of supernatural forces”. With the application of these principles to a close reading of Tom Bombadil, he is not literally nature, as his full spirit is distinct from such matter, but he uses the supernatural magic of sung verse through the words of the divine throughout his domain. Even at one point Frodo asks Goldberry, Tom Bombadil’s wife, who Tom Bombadil is. The response is simply, “He is”. Goldberry’s response is similar to an explanation once given by Jesus, the Christian Messiah, as he too explains who he is, written in John 14:6, “I am the way”. This further explains the godly and religious effervescence that Tom Bombadil exudes. Tolkien himself wrote in his famous essay “On Fairy-Stories”, “Even fairy-stories as a whole have three faces: the Mystical towards the Supernatural; the Magical towards Nature; and the Mirror of scorn and pity towards Man.”. The reader is deeply affronted with the scorn and pity towards man, which is seen in the Bible, as man has lost such a carefree ability to connect with nature, and perhaps the ability to completely understand Tom Bombadil as an ethereal being.

[PARAGRAPH 8]
Tom Bombadil is the only character who comes into contact with the Ring and is completely unaffected. He even laughs at it:

*It seemed to grow larger as it lay for a moment on his big brown-skinned hand. Then suddenly he put it to his eye and laughed. For a second the hobbits had a vision, both comical and alarming, of his bright blue eye gleaming through a circle of gold. Then Tom put the Ring round the end of his little finger [...] There was no sign of Tom disappearing!*\(^17\).

Bombadil has no solemn feelings towards the Ring, and this creates a shining moment throughout the entirety of *The Lord of the Rings*. The “One Ring”, once placed in the hands of nature is reduced to nothing but a mere worry of mankind. It is this moment that such a great power is channeled in nature, and specifically why Tom Bombadil’s character lingers in the mind of the reader as a reminder of how power is a mental construct created by not only mankind, but by Tolkien’s other creatures, all of which are unable to overcome its supremacy.

*[PARAGRAPH 9]*

Bombadil is able to toss about the Ring with such ease, and leaving it with him would appear to keep out of the dark lord’s grasp, “‘It seems that he has a power even over the Ring.’ ‘No, I should not put it so,’ said Gandalf. ‘Say rather that the Ring has no power over him.’”\(^18\). He is a spirit of the much greater force of nature, which is unconcerned with the Ring, regardless of the fate of Middle-earth, or he is even more understanding of what will become of Middle-earth. It is because Tom Bombadil is unconcerned with the Ring it cannot be entrusted to him, as Gandalf says,

*to send the Ring to him would only postpone the day of evil [...] the Lord of the Rings would learn of its hiding place and would bend all his power towards it. Could that power be defied by Bombadil alone? I think not. I think that in the end,*
if all else is conquered, Bombadil will fall, Last as he was First\textsuperscript{19}.

Gandalf’s speculation concerning the ever-pervasive “what if” is the most according assumption, as Tom Bombadil is the embodiment of nature, which can be destroyed, but will linger beyond the experience of life because it is the medium of existence in the world. Nothing can exist in a vacuum.

[PARAGRAPH 10]

Bombadil is similar to the subsistence of a fairy in Middle-earth as Tolkien’s enigma, a mystery, similar to the mystifying ways of nature. \textit{He does not symbolically translate into a complete allegory as Tolkien abruptly states in the foreword to The Fellowship of the Ring, “It [The Fellowship of the Ring] is neither allegorical nor topical.”}\textsuperscript{20} Tom Bombadil seems to be unrelated to the rest of The Lord of the Rings, but truly isn’t. J.R.R. Tolkien himself once wrote in a letter about Tom Bombadil, “even in a mythological Age there must be some enigmas, as there always are. Tom Bombadil is one (intentionally)”\textsuperscript{21}. This is one purpose of Tom Bombadil’s character; he adds to the unknown element incorporated with authentic myths, which Tolkien attempted to create with The Lord of the Rings.

[PARAGRAPH 11]

Tom Bombadil is ambiguously the embodiment of the moral code that Tolkien praised. He is the materialization of the ideal. He exists in Middle-earth without the slightest concern for power that pulls such a heavy lever on the morals of others through their reliance on material possessions. Marjorie Burns commented that for J.R.R. Tolkien, And yet the greatest evil in Tolkien’s view is ‘possessiveness,’ a sin which includes
simple materialism as well as domination, enslavement, and arbitrary control; and these, of course, are qualities which may be manifest in those who inherit power as in those who acquire it by force, stealth deception.

Tom Bombadil’s character was created, partially, so that the reader can distance themselves from the inescapable material evils of everyday life, and loose themselves in the pure childlike wisdom portrayed by Bombadil. Even Tolkien believed in fantasy as a means of literature to provide wish fulfillment.

[PARAGRAPH 12]

One of the most important reasons for Tom Bombadil’s character is that he provides a sense of recovery for the reader. In Tolkien’s essay “On Fairy-Stories” he writes,

Recovery (which includes return and renewal of health) is a re-gaining of a clear view. I do not say ‘seeing things as they are’ and involve myself with the philosophers, though I might venture to say ‘seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them’ as things apart from ourselves.

The section of The Fellowship of the Ring, busy with telling of Frodo, and the other hobbit’s encounters with Tom Bombadil, slowly, but completely consumes the reader in Middle-earth, and when one puts the book down, and “recovers” from Bombadil’s domain, his comforting and refreshing behavior is emulated. The vividly descriptive language of the beauty of nature, re-establishes the inherent awe mankind has for nature, if one only takes the time to notice it. Most importantly, hope lies in the fact that evil is not innate in all beings, as Tom Bombadil is on a completely uncommunicative wavelength with the evils of materialistic possession.
For Peter Jackson, the director of the huge Hollywood production of *The Lord of the Rings*, to exclude Tom Bombadil, and all of the subtle ambiguities of the pristine morals of nature that he characterizes was an indirect blaspheme towards Tolkien's words. *The consistency of elusive wisdom and grandeur, seen in Tom Bombadil is comforting to the hobbits who are cradled in Bombadil's domain, so early on in their journey.* This cradling effect does not end with the hobbits, but it extends to the reader, as they are eased out of the Shire, and placed in increasingly foreign surroundings filled with elements in contradiction with the reader's world of experience. *This is a writing technique utilized by Tolkien, in order to imbed the familiarity of Middle-earth, further authenticate his world of fantasy, and to establish a mounting suspense.* Since Bombadil is left out of the movie production, this form of authentication is lost.

In defense of the director, money does not flow freely, and it is not possible for movies to be as long as books. When a movie breaches several hours the audience becomes quite restless, and the meaning is lost as their attention span cannot expand to unrealistic proportions. The final length of *The Fellowship of the Ring* that was presented in theaters was 178 minutes, and a special extended version, released later, was approximately 208 minutes. The movie scenes are carefully edited to show the hobbits quickly fleeing the Shire right into their fateful night in Bree, as the plot swiftly progresses in the movie with Tom Bombadil left out.
Is the story line the only essential element in film? This perfectly fits in with the fast pace of modern society, only capable of grasping the “big picture”, and unconcerned with detail. Many would argue that this is not true, for just like literature; film is just another medium of art, only more heavily tainted by a vast consumers market. This is why an enticing action-packed plot has priority over the subtle application of meaning seen with the hobbits encounter of Tom Bombadil. Society is undaunted by nature, and thus including Tom Bombadil as a developing character to theme of nature, would be lost on the audience. Nature does not interest them. All that the crowd in the theater is concerned with is the development of a plot. This idea is supported by Jens Bjørneboe, who wrote,

\[
\text{the nature of the drama; it has, so to speak, a technical basis. Along with the epic side of the drama—the telling of a story—there’s also something which is specific for dramatic writing: that the story which is told is the story of a fight, of a struggle between two opposed interest groups. And since drama likewise always has a moral-philosophical content, the one side must represent interests which the spectators can sympathize with—to say it simply: some must be "bad" and some must be "good," one must "side with" one of the parties.}^{25}
\]

The adaptation of The Lord of the Rings to film, capitalizes on this concept. The audience, is enthralled with watching a struggle unwind over the course of a plot, and there is no struggle to the character of Tom Bombadil.

[PARAGRAPH 16]

Film and pop-culture analysts, Lisa A. Barnett and Michael Patrick Allen bring up the point that one of the primary concerns of film is that, “familiarity with 'high' culture, contributes to the maintenance of boundaries between the members of different social classes”\(^{26}\). If one adopts this philosophy, then it becomes clear why the executive decision was made to exclude Tom Bombadil from the movie. Tolkien’s character, as a spirit of
nature is completely independent of society, and thus completely without a social class. Bombadil is unable to speak to the familiar hierarchy of lower, middle, and upper class that Tolkien's various other characters fall under. The boundaries of class are similar to the concept of power, both undeniably strong forces, but ineffective on Bombadil. He is a deviant from all preconceived notions deeply rooted in a materialist existence.

[PARAGRAPH 17]

Once versions of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* are re-written, re-formatted, and re-edited, the concept of “refraction” is at play. This is the idea that we know our classics from other representations than the actual book. Peter Jackson's production of *The Lord of the Rings* is a refraction of Tolkien's original text. Thus, Tom Bombadil was left out due to the context of current society. As it was established by Tolkien in *The Lord of the Rings*, “Tolkien yearned to create a ‘mythology for England’ that would [...] create a religious pantheon of the gods attached to the creational act of genesis that functioned as an expression of national origin and identity.” 27. If in fact Tolkien did write these books as a mythology, then the origin and identity of man was with nature, as seen in Tom Bombadil. *Now with a constant progression to the current age of man, that supernatural bewilderment to nature is truly fading.*

[PARAGRAPH 18]

The elusive mystery of Tom Bombadil dances upon the awe inspiring grand image of nature that translates directly from Middle-earth and into the world of experience. Bombadil, Tolkien's quintessential ambiguous character, does not fit into one direct understanding of symbolism, but instead coincides with the multi-faceted exemplification of Tolkien's ideal. *He rejects the clutch of power directly caused by material possession and*
desire. Tom Bombadil is a godlike figure of supreme morals, willingly cut off from the rest of Middle-earth. His presence is as comforting as the hope of spring. The exclusion of Tom Bombadil from the now famous film adaptation of The Fellowship of the Ring confirms a modern society only concerned with the polar development of a good versus evil struggle along a quickly progressive plot line. Without Tom Bombadil in the movie of The Lord of the Rings, this outlet of mass consumption exemplifies society’s materialistic consumption through the utter disregard for the significance of nature.
APPENDIX J

MONA’S DRAFTS DURING AND AFTER TUTORIAL

Mona’s Draft During Tutorial

[PARAGRAPH 1]

The human psyche operates in many ways with two of the most common ways are we follow or we lead. For the most part we follow orders and mimic the actions of others. Even from childhood we are bombarded with rules on how to act, what is wrong, and what is right. We are exposed to the bad and good characters of life through the media. But what happens when we sympathize with the wrong characters as a child? We live in a world of hypocrisy. The world teaches the new generations that violence is wrong and should be avoided at all costs.” Um, “As this paper continues your view of violence, why it occurs will be challenged and the social problem will jump to the top of the list.

[PARAGRAPH 2]

7 The draft Mona brought with her to her tutorial was difficult to reproduce in full because the copy Mona gave me was incomplete; the text along the right margin had printed off the page. By the time I noticed the printing error, Mona had already deleted the electronic copy, so I recreated the first three paragraphs from the tutorial transcript. The remainder of her essay contains gaps, which I indicate with ellipses. Nevertheless, I was also able to identify from Mona’s tutorial transcript key components from her outline: to specify what violence looks like at UMass, to establish the problem as a problem (who defines it as such) and situate the local within a larger context of campus violence (and therefore legitimize the problem), to report on the cause of the problem, and to identify possible interventions or solutions. Mona’s new essay follows this progression. I labeled her paragraphs, using brackets and all-caps.
As we teach in schools not to commit acts of violence and hate we encourage it through the media. The most popular movies and videogames are very violent and very life-like. We also instruct impressionable children that hurting others is impressionable, yet we do it ourselves all the time. What about wars? What about the killing of innocent people? In that aspect of murder we kill thousands of people within a blink of time and have no problem with a good night’s rest. The Lord have mercy when an American child takes the life of another American child. When people think of violence they usually think of physical contact, but it can be much more than physical aggression. Violence can be defined as…which opens the door into other acts of aggression such as threats. As time goes on students seem more and more threats being made on campus and the rise of violent behavior.

[PARAGRAPH 3]

Within just four years University of Massachusetts Amherst has had over twelve stabbings. Within this year alone we have had over four bomb threats paired with endless emails warning us of dangers on campus. Students, faculty, newspapers are deeming violence as a rising problem in the school system. According to the New York Times schools are spending thousands of dollars on emergency alarm systems to alarm students of possible dangers. For example: “Officials at Colorado said...the university spent $25,000 on the text-messaging...system. It also received a bid of $27,000 for an electronic remote lockdown...plans to install one. Univeristy football games will now start with an emergency...([http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/30/education/30alert.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/30/education/30alert.html)) ...For universities to put that much money on extra alarms than what they already have proves that this is a problem that people do not feel will go away anytime soon. Also, because the
schools are now forced to spend that money on new alarms systems they cannot put it back into the school. For instance, schools will start to choose between new facilities and buildings for students; new and better teachers...equipped teachers, or alarm systems.

[PARAGRAPH 4]

A current issue of violence is seeing the demonstration of “Justice for Jason.” Justice for Jason is about a black boy at UMASS who was attacked by a group of white kids from another school. Just as all social problems there are two sides. The media is citing a student of UMASS’s side. People are saying that it was a hate crime of race because the boy was of color. According to the Daily Collegian’s article written by Shawn Robinson, “It is essential to emphasize that Jason was in his bedroom tending to his own...at a bar, or roaming the streets of Amherst looking for a confrontation—he....

(http://media.www.dailycollegian.com/media/storage/paper874/news/2008/02/22/EditorialOpinion/Answers.For.The.Violence-3227619.shtml) They are clearly making Jason seem in the vulnerable state, which has the school following their lead in support of Jason. The only other opinion is those of who knew the other boys from home. People from his hometown are convinced that it happened another way. They said that these boys would never start anything because the media..., and the media is brainwashing the student body. But that is what the media does, they tell stories for us to fall into.

[PARAGRAPH 5]

One could say that this cycle of violence began with the horrific shooting at Columbine High School in 1999. The shooters only hoped that they would start a chain reaction of violence throughout the world and to our discredit that is exactly what happened. Only eight days after Columbine and...“in the first fatal high school shooting in
Canada in 20 years...happened...” The first...shooting in Canada, sorry, um... "Over 25
more school shootings...came the infamous Virginia Tech where 33 people died, marking
the most deadly shooting rampage in U.S. history. The vicious cycle has only just begun in
a world that's puzzled on how to stop it. The problem is that the shooters are getting
exactly what they wanted: the attention and in their minds the glory. Although you have
to be very depressed...them the push, the dream, become famous. If we didn't throw the
horrors...aroused and possibility a lot of these deaths could have been prevented.
But...demands the worst of the world to be the main reports? The solution to the...more
alarms systems. But that is not the way to solve this type of issue. To solve...distress. You
need to kill the problem before it arises. The media ness to.... Violence occurs because
someone if hurt and they will take an opportunity....

[PARAGRAPH 6]

When placing violence under a lens of a sociologist the theory of...behavior of
individuals in. But somewhat more attention was given to the.... One could take the
individuals and look at them as individuals in the...Hitler placing the blame on the
influence of Hitler's hatred. The other acts of...broadcast of the events and the word of
mouth cycle of everyone in the...exploiting these acts of behavior, and giving criminals the
satisfaction of...called Social Functionalism, which focuses on the problem as a part of
the...have to play their role in order for society to keep moving forward. They
would...essential part of society.

[PARAGRAPH 7]

The future generations of Americans will look back on this time in our...that so
many acts of violence occur at once and how we let it take us down....
Violence in the Herst

[PARAGRAPH 1: What the problem is and what violence looks like at UMass Amherst]

Violence can be defined as the aggression of behavior taken out on yourself or to other people. This is something that the students at University of Massachusetts are becoming accustomed to seeing and hearing about: violence on their campus. It is becoming normal to receive e-mails warning us of a possible reoccurrence of some violent act from the day before. For example, a bomb threat or a rape victim. The objective social issue deals with how we are going to stop these violent acts while the subjective problem focuses on the damage the violence has already caused. In this essay I will be discussing how violence relates to everyday activity on campus.

[PARAGRAPH 2: Who defines the problem]

Many people look toward violence as the new and upcoming problem. Some of the leading campaigners are students who are involved in groups such a Justice or Jason, a group trying to fight against violent hate crimes; Reclaim Civil Rights, another group who are trying to get back our rights on campus and lastly a movement called Take Back Southwest, lead by the leaders of southwest. Along with the students are their parents,

---

8 For Mona’s revised draft, I used brackets and all-caps to label Mona’s paragraphs, and I also described the purpose of each paragraph.
faculty administration. Students have chosen to pick this as their main cause this semester and have been sending out event notices and groups on facebook. Another way they have been trying to reach out to the rest of UMASS is the same way I found out, by putting flyers throughout all of the buildings and holding events. Violence is becoming more and more common and we are trying to correct it after the incident has already occurred.

[PARAGRAPH 3: Sets up a larger context for the problem]

When we look back into history, we think how crazy those people were to have had the social problems they faced. For example slavery, we think how crazy it is for people to think they own someone. Well, history does like to repeat itself. The future generations are going to read about us and think, how did they let it get this far. How did they let it go to a time where many innocent people end up getting so hurt? They are going cringe at the thought of young people killing up to as many as 33 people in one sitting.

[PARAGRAPH 4: Evidence that violence occurs at UMass Amherst and elsewhere]

UMASS became tagged as one of "Most violent campus" by ABC news in 2002 right after the beginning of the first riots held on campus. It was continued to be targeted up until 2004, then once again in 2006: “The itch to set fires, hurl bottles, and destroy property after every Red Sox victory is starting to appear contagious on several local college campuses”(Boston Globe, B1). Each year signifies a riot in a Massachusetts victory
celebration of a particular sports team. Now in 2008 we are no longer dealing with so much as the riots but more toward bomb threats and the concern of one of the 30,000+ students following the lead of Columbine high school and Virginia Tech, the two most marked travesties in the education history. Although the students have and hopefully will never experience the extent of a gunman, the threats made about a bomb are very realistic:

Bridgewater State officials have added police patrols after finding a series of notes. Two, including one threatening the life of the college president, Dana Mohler-Faria, were found yesterday. A day earlier, four messages containing the words murder and death were found. (http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T337365965&format=GNBFI&sort=BOOLEAN&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T3373655968&cisbn=22_T3373655967&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=8110&docNo=2) This is the emotion of one or more students trying to stir up the lives of over 30,000 students in hopes of mass chaos. Because of these threats more police have been active the campus thus making students feel like their rights have been violated.

[PARAGRAPH 5: Cause of the social problem including evidence]

The cause of the violence on campus can be linked to the structure of the school and alcohol. For example, in southwest the structure of a city like atmosphere creates a court yard perfect for demonstration, and "with enough people in one place certain things
start to happen in large numbers” (Eli Gottlieb). The party atmosphere of Southwest attracts party people, and once you being together a group of people who are over the top, the only outcome is chaos. Therefore Southwest has the space and the clientele for such things as the riots. The theory of alcohol causing the riots was observed by The Daily Collegian write Eli Gottlieb, and he states that he has “observed that alcohol seems to lead to violence... People: if you are an angry drunk, don’t drink”. This goes hand in hand with the party atmosphere of Southwest and the timing of the riots. Many people drink during sporting events and the riots occur after the sporting events. So now, UMASS has made a place for the sporting drunks of the school to congregate and celebrate their drunken victories.

[PARAGRAPH 6: Solutions/interventions at UMass Amherst]

Some of the solutions tried by college campuses have been an increase in the police on campus and also installing new alarm systems. For example at the University of Colorado they spent “$25,000 on the text messaging alert system...anticipates spending $150,000 more for a siren warning...$2.7 million for an electronic remote lockdown system” ([http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/30/education/30alert.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/30/education/30alert.html)). There have been rumors of UMASS thinking about installing similar types of machines around the campus but nothing has been set in stone. This creates a problem because instead of the schools putting money into programs and teachers they need, they are spending extra money on reapplying safety measures, to replace the old ones. Another solution the
campus is testing is making southwest all freshman, or mostly freshman. This yields out southwest being 100% party and more of a mixture of people.

[PARAGRAPH 7: Sociological lens applied]

Violence on campus can be seen through various theoretical sociological perspectives. One perspective is called the social disorganization theory, which means that you are “focused on the deviant behavior of individuals. But somewhat more attention was given to the influence of the social environment in explaining deviance” (Neubeck, 4). For example, with the riots a sociologist might say it was the environments the people live in that made them have the riot. They might use the type of people creating the atmosphere and the availability of the space as the scapegoat. Another perspective one could use is called the social functionalism. This theory focuses on the problem as a part of a whole of society. They believe that everyone has a place in society and they have to play their role in order to keep the society moving forward. Therefore they would look at the riots as just another event in society to keep people interested. They believe the people that do actively participate in the riots are just playing their role to differentiate from the people who would not participate. I think that the social disorganization theory is predominately the most realistic theory. I do believe that having a lot of people who think the same way can escalate situations. Also I think that because of the brand name that Southwest is given as the “party place” can also cause people to act
a bit crazier because they are trying to fit the norm of the area.

[PARAGRAPH 8: Personal recommendations]

I am not exactly sure that UMASS will ever be able to say they are violence free, but I do believe they will be able to turn it down a notch. I think the way the school has been handling it has helped for the short term but has also made a lot of the student body angry. None of the students are in favor of more police, more bills and being kicked out of their favorite living area because the school wants to give it to freshman who haven’t even spent a semester in the school. I think that the school should start to look for other options, and work with the students more. I think they should look out for the kids that single out as loners. I understand that it is a large school and you cannot keep track of the entire student body, but with all that is going on in the world today, I think the effort needs to be made. Another suggestion I would have is by having smaller classes like the RAP program. This way some teachers would get one on one time with the kids and would have the opportunity to meet them. Therefore if there was something a bit off the school can keep an eye out.

[REFERENCES: Two sources come from LexisNexis]


APPENDIX K

AL’S DRAFTS DURING AND AFTER TUTORIAL

Al’s Draft During Tutorial

The Numbing of the Author’s Mind: Culture as Anesthetic

In the essay, “The Numbing of the American Mind,” Thomas de Zengotita introduces a number of ideas to the reader in his essay. He is concise and direct while he details numerous topics in the essay. According to de Zengotita, the American culture is becoming more and more “numb.” He suggests that reality, in today’s society, is more fragmented than ever. Reality can range from a wedding to a television show. Zengotita expresses his belief that with all the realities in the world today including a “real real,” “observed real,” “staged real,” the American culture seems to become oblivious to the subtle differences of all these realities (340).

[Al corrects the spelling of the author’s last name.] Zengotita feels we get over hardship too quickly is through dreadful experiences (341). [The next two sentences are rearranged.] He writes, “But these iconic moments swam into focus only momentarily, soon to be swept away in a deluge of references.” American people are almost unaffected by tragedies in today’s society. At the time of the tragedy, we weep and cry for those that were victims, but we eventually move on. These misfortunes include September 11th and Hurricane Katrina. These disasters seem to be old news in today’s society. These unexpected tragedies in our society, in our very country in which we live, although seem

9 I used brackets and italics to identify and describe Al’s revisions.
great attention at the time of the incident; hardly affect our country as a whole. *[Al substitutes the word “seem.”]*

*[Al corrects the spelling of the author’s last name and edits this paragraph; he adds, deletes, substituted, and rearranges words throughout.*] Zengotita raises the questions for me. These include: How can we just go about our business when things like this are happening? How can we just read the article, feel sorry about them and shake our heads, and turn the page? I completely agree with what he is saying and the questions he poses because many people have lost loved ones in because of these incidents. However, at the same time I understand the other side. We as individuals cannot weep in sorrow forever over unfortunate occurrences. We need to get back on our feet and move on. Therefore in the future we will be better prepared and know how to handle different situations. We see violence everyday: in movies, in video games, in television, and on the internet. We see more and more violence on the street each day. that is does not affect us the same way. Each time we see it, we feel guilty for a split second, then forget about it.

*[Al corrects the spelling of the author’s last name and corrects and adds text to the following sentence.*] Zengotita also brings about an especially interesting theory. He suggests, “There is no important difference between fabrication and reality” although he thinks there should be. I feel this is a very strong statement that must be taken seriously.

*[Al moves the next sentence.*] He only touches upon this subject and I think he needed to expand his idea and could have had a very interesting and well presented argument, since this is practically the basis of his entire essay. He constantly conveys to the reader his thoughts and feelings about real events, such as September 11th (344). He also continuously explains to his audience the fabrication of these events, which is somewhat
contradictive. How can he blatantly express his thought that reality and fabrication are
two completely different subjects and rarely intertwine? Then he explains throughout the
total essay that they do indeed link together on numerous everyday occasions.

[Al corrects author’s last name.] As American people, Zengotita claims we can no
longer comprehend the difference of a chemical of a pill and the one our own body
produces. He claims we can no longer understand the difference of role playing as a
spouse and actually playing your role as a spouse. And he also claims that we can no
longer distinguish between selling and making, governing and campaigning, and
expressing and existing. [Al adds page number for citation.] These accusations I feel are
unnecessary. [Al corrects author’s last name.] I’m aware that Zengotita has the right to
express his opinion, but in no way do I feel that these comments are appropriate. [Al
corrects author’s last name.] First of all, Zengotita never mentions another country besides
our own. What if they react in the same manner as we do? This could then just become
proof that our reactions, and those of the world, are just changing with the times.
Zengotita also never mentions any evidence of what he is saying to be true. How does he
know how the people around the country behave and what these people are thinking?
Evidence of sorrow from September 11\textsuperscript{th} was in the news for weeks and months. As a
result airport security was strictly tightened and more serious than ever. [Al adds text
here.] Negative stereotypes have been created. Being Muslim, I have experienced these
stereotypes. Here at this university I’ve heard individuals blatantly scream out
stereotypical remarks about people of my ethnicity about September 11\textsuperscript{th}. It puts me in a
position where I feel very uncomfortable. Who is de Zengotita to say that the entire
population of the country is under his so-called spell? [Al substitutes words at the end of
In the next portion of his essay, Zengotita attempts to further describe the idea of fabrication. He breaks this one broad idea into many sub-categories, and briefly touches on them. The reason for breaking down fabrication into so many categories is to prove to the reader that it is possible. He raises the question, “This issue isn’t can we do it; it’s do we do it?” He is quick to answer the question himself and writes, “The answer is, of course not.” Again, how can he make this assumption? Is he speaking on his own behalf? Zengotita proceeds to write that “our minds are the product of total immersion in a daily experience saturated with fabrications to a degree unprecedented in human history.” This statement is bold, but also very true. Today’s lifestyle is filled with fabrication and lies. We see it each and every day: in the newspapers and tabloids, on the television, on the internet, on the movie screen, on the radio, in elections, practically everywhere.

On almost every corner there are tabloids advertising nonsense. For example, celebrities and plastic surgery are common examples of fabrication found in newspapers and magazines such as US Weekly. It also appears on television channels such as VH1, airing shows like Dr. 90210. A headline can read “Jennifer Lopez Comes Clean and Admits to Plastic Surgery” when in fact it is all lies and anyone could have said this. Even though it is not true, we still read it, not because we truly believe it, but because it is interesting and intrigues people. This goes against everything Zengotita has written (343). If people read it because it is interesting and humorous, then it does not mean our minds give in to
these fabrications, but we are interested in the material and don’t consider it to be true. Whether we know it or not, fabrication is all around us and it is vital to understand that every individual has the opportunity to believe.

[Al corrects author’s last name.] In the later passages, Zengotita begins to describe the differences of a supermarket today with that of the past. He continues with makes of cars, types of sunglasses, and sneaker choices. [Al deletes the quote in the next sentences.] He does this to introduce his readers to the idea of choices and continues to say, “It’s all about options” (344). I feel I can relate to this quote entirely. For my next car I could purchase a sedan or SUV, Toyota, Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, or Hyundai. I could buy Nike, Adidas, or Converse for shoes. The choices are endless. [Al corrects author’s last name.] Zengotita then goes on to call us uncaring. He writes how we become “fundamentally indifferent” when exposed to so many tragic phenomena. This includes “hearing statistics about AIDS in Africa or seeing your 974th picture of a weeping fireman” (344). [Al deletes extra pronouns in the following sentence.] Zengotita says we become so unsympathetic because “you [we] are exposed to things like that all the time, just as you [we] are to the rest of your [our] options” (344). [Al substitutes a few words in the next sentence.] Although a bit confusing at first, my interpretation suggests that when it comes to events/tragedies in America, we have such as number of them occurring nowadays, that it’s all about options when it comes to deciding which one to grieve or morn over. [Al corrects author’s last name.] Zengotita includes some examples which makes his writing stronger and more convincing. He even includes where we become exposed: over breakfast, in the waiting room, driving to work, and at the checkout counter.

[Al corrects author’s last name.] Zengotita ends his essay by writing about living
life for the future. When something happens, affecting our country, what can you possibly do? You've got to move on. Should it not be told on the news or in the paper because there is no cure? [Al substitutes and deletes words in the following sentence.] No, it will be told to us and we will move on with our lives, remembering those lost and those who have been hurt but we still must move on. [Al corrects author's last name.] Zengotita finishes this essay by tying everything together. He again touches upon how there's nothing you can do about the past, only the future. So we must pick our heads up and carry on for the future, where we learn from the past. "What else could we do" (351)? [Al deletes the next sentence.] It's time to move on.

Works Cited

The Numbing of the Author’s Mind: Culture as Anesthetic

In the essay, “The Numbing of the American Mind,” Thomas de Zengotita introduces a number of ideas to the reader in his essay. He is concise and direct while he details numerous topics in the essay. According to de Zengotita, the American culture is becoming more and more “numb.” He suggests that reality, in today’s society, is more fragmented than ever. Reality can range from a wedding to a television show. Zengotita expresses his belief that with all the realities in the world today including a “real real,” “observed real,” “staged real,” the American culture seems to become oblivious to the subtle differences of all these realities (340).

One of the ways de Zengotita feels we get over hardship too quickly is through dreadful experiences (341). At the time of the tragedy, we weep and cry for those that were victims, but we eventually move on. He writes, “But these iconic moments swam into focus only momentarily, soon to be swept away in a deluge of references.” American people are almost unaffected by tragedies in today's society. These misfortunes include September 11th and Hurricane Katrina. These disasters seem to be old news in today's society. These unexpected tragedies in our society, in our very country in which we live, although receive great attention at the time of the incident; hardly affect our country as a whole.

*De Zengotita raises many questions for me. These include:* How can we just go about our business when things like this are happening? How can we just read the article,

---

10 I added italics to identify Al’s revisions.
feel sorry about them and shake our heads, and turn the page? I completely agree with what he is saying about the temporary of hardship because many people have lost loved ones because of these incidents. However, at the same time I understand the other side. As individuals we cannot weep in sorrow forever over unfortunate occurrences. We need to get back on our feet and move on. Therefore in the future we will be better prepared and know how to handle different situations. We see violence everyday: in movies, in video games, in television, and on the internet. Being accustomed to violence so much, it has become second nature to us and it does not affect us the same way. Each time we see it, we feel guilty for a split second, then forget about it.

De Zengotita also brings about an especially interesting theory about fabrication and reality. He suggests, “There is no important difference between fabrication and reality” although he thinks there should be. I feel this is a very strong statement that must be taken seriously. He constantly conveys to the reader his thoughts and feelings about real events, such as September 11th (344). He also continuously explains to his audience the fabrication of these events, which is somewhat contradictive. How can he blatantly express his thought that reality and fabrication are two completely different subjects and rarely intertwine? Then he explains throughout the entire essay that they do indeed link together on numerous everyday occasions. He only touches upon this subject and I think he needed to expand his idea and could have had a very interesting and well presented argument, since this is practically the basis of his entire essay.

As American people, de Zengotita claims we can no longer comprehend the difference of a chemical of a pill and the one our own body produces. He claims we can no longer understand the difference of role playing as a spouse and actually playing your role
as a spouse. And he also claims that we can no longer distinguish between selling and making, governing and campaigning, and expressing and existing (346). These accusations I feel are unnecessary. I'm aware that de Zengotita has the right to express his opinion, but in no way do I feel that these comments are appropriate. First of all, de Zengotita never mentions another country besides our own. What if they react in the same manner as we do? This could then just become proof that our reactions, and those of the world, are just changing with the times. De Zengotita also never mentions any evidence of what he is saying to be true. How does he know how the people around the country behave and what these people are thinking? Evidence of sorrow from September 11th was in the news for weeks and months. As a result airport security was strictly tightened and more serious than ever. Where is it now? Things haven't happened? Negative stereotypes have been created. Being Muslim, I have experienced these stereotypes. Here at this university I've heard individuals blatantly scream out stereotypical remarks about people of my ethnicity about September 11th. It puts me in a position where I feel very uncomfortable. Who is de Zengotita to say that the entire population of the country to act the way he imagines.

In the next portion of his essay, de Zengotita attempts to further describe the idea of fabrication. He breaks this one broad idea into many sub-categories, and briefly touches on them. The reason for breaking down fabrication into so many categories is to prove to the reader that it is possible. He raises the question of whether we fabricate or not. He makes a statement that we do not fabricate whether we do it or not. Again, how can he make this assumption? Is he speaking on his own behalf? De Zengotita proceeds to write that “our minds are the product of total immersion in a daily experience saturated with fabrications to a degree unprecedented in human history” (343). This statement is bold, but also very true. Today's lifestyle is filled with fabrication and lies. We see it each and
every day: in the newspapers and tabloids, on the television, on the internet, on the movie
screen, on the radio, in elections, practically everywhere.

On almost every corner there are tabloids advertising nonsense. For example,
celebrities and plastic surgery are common examples of fabrication found in newspapers
and magazines such as *US Weekly*. It also appears on television channels such as VH1,
airing shows like Dr. 90210. A headline can read “Jennifer Lopez Comes Clean and Admits
to Plastic Surgery” when in fact it is all lies and anyone could have said this. Even though it
is not true, we still read it, not because we truly believe it, but because it is interesting and
intrigues people. This goes against everything de Zengotita has written (343). If people
read it because it is interesting and humorous, then it does not mean our minds give in to
these fabrications, but we are interested in the material and don’t consider it to be true.
Whether we know it or not, fabrication is all around us and it is vital to understand that
every individual has the opportunity to believe.

In the later passages, de Zengotita begins to describe the differences of a
supermarket today with that of the past. He continues with makes of cars, types of
sunglasses, and sneaker choices. He does this to introduce his readers to the idea of
choices and continues to say it’s all about options. I feel I can relate to this quote entirely.
For my next car I could purchase a sedan or SUV, Toyota, Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, or
Hyundai. I could buy Nike, Adidas, or Converse for shoes. The choices are endless.
Zengotita then goes on to call us uncaring. He writes how we become “fundamentally
indifferent” when exposed to so many tragic phenomena. This includes “hearing statistics
about AIDS in Africa or seeing your 974th picture of a weeping fireman” (344). Zengotita
says we become so unsympathetic because “we are exposed to things like that all the time,
just as we are to the rest of our options” (344). Although a bit confusing at first, my interpretation suggests that when it comes to events/ tragedies in America, we have so many of them occurring nowadays, that it's all about options when it comes to deciding which one to grieve or mourn over. *De Zengotita* includes some examples which makes his writing stronger and more convincing. He even includes where we become exposed: over breakfast, in the waiting room, driving to work, and at the checkout counter.

*De Zengotita* ends his essay by writing about living life for the future. When something happens, affecting our country, what can you possibly do? You've got to move on. Should it not be told on the news or in the paper because there is no cure? No, it will be told to us and we will live our lives, remembering those lost and those who have been hurt. *De Zengotita* finishes this essay by tying everything together. He again touches upon how there's nothing you can do about the past, only the future. So we must pick our heads up and carry on for the future, where we learn from the past. “What else could we do” (351)?

**Works Cited**

APPENDIX L

LISA’S DRAFTS DURING AND AFTER TUTORIAL

Lisa’s Draft During Tutorial

[PARAGRAPH 1]

U.S. business owners, executives, and managers expect their employees to operate with a certain amount of autonomy and be competent enough to make decisions without extensive hierarchical oversight. Although employees expect these certain independent capabilities, they also expect to have a certain degree of control over employee decision making particularly when placed in ethical dilemma and problems. This can be accomplished by imposing a business atmosphere that demonstrates positive morals, values, and responsibility. The way we orientate people to act affects the ethical climate in which we work, live, and play. People tend to behave according to the role they are in, given what they understand that role to entail, how much responsibility is involved, and how much authority is imposed on them. Business owners must walk a fine line between using their authority to gain respect and control over their subordinates, while retaining enough autonomy for them to feel that they can exercise their own social goodwill. Milgram and Zimbardo’s work on the role of authority and the power of the situation relates to this idea that people behave according to the environment they are in, demonstrated mainly in the resulting behavior of superiors, as well as subordinates attitudes during each experiment.

11 I used brackets and all-caps to label Lisa’s paragraphs. I italicized the text she altered.
In Milgram's work on the obedience to authority, a major concern of the men asking the questions and performing the “shocking” was that he would not be responsible for his actions. After the authority figure in the white lab coat assured them that they could not be accountable for their actions, they proceeded to “shock” the man despite the fact that he was pleading and yelling about the unbelievable pain and his heart aches. The amount of authority projected on to these subjects was not excessive, yet the power of anonymity was great enough to unleash violent behavior that would not normally be performed. During their orientation, they were simply given direct instructions and regulations for the experiment, and the only indication of authority was the man in the official looking lab coat. The atmosphere imposed on the subjects had an air of professionalism. Business owners, executives, and managers also naturally demonstrate professionalism and superiority through the eyes of their subordinates. Based on Milgram's study, as long as employees are aware that they will be accountable for their actions, it is assumed that they will make the “right decisions” without supervision because they will be more careful and accounted for. If business owners exude a consistent demonstration of authority over their employees, they will be more aware their own ethics in relation to the company's ethics. It is more likely that they will be more conscious of their ethical competence compared to what is beneficial for the organization as a whole. Along with this enhanced business ethics awareness, employees will also gain a feeling of autonomy when they are orientated to feel like they are responsible for their own actions and hold an important role in the company. Since they will be held liable for their actions, they are less likely to act in ways that are unfavorable for themselves, and the company. With this orientation to feel autonomous, the boss has to balance their role.
with the employee’s role given that people act as they are told, despite the high value placed on freedom in the United States.

[PARAGRAPH 3]

The fine line that business owners, managers, and executives must walk to ensure that their employees understand their subordinate status, while retaining the high value that the United States places on freedom can also be related to Zimbardo’s prison experiment, “Quite Rage.” The amount of power Zimbardo exuded as the superintendent of the Stanford Prison is similar to the position of authority in the everyday business world because of his original attempted to exhibit just the right amount of power over the “guards” and “prisoners.” At first Zimbardo acted as a superior authority to facilitate personal choice and the appearance that the “guards” were responsible for making their own decisions and act in ways that they individually saw fit. As the experiment got out of hand, Zimbardo’s original role to exhibit a superior figure merely to guide and mold the actions of the subjects transformed into a dictator-like role that was overwhelmed by his own feelings of autonomy and the tendency for himself to internalize and demonstrate the power he gave himself. In the beginning orientation to the experiment Zimbardo gave clear, official and strict instructions for the guards to act in a manner over the prisoners. As the experiment continued, not only did the “guards” fall right into their roles without any extra guidance from Zimbardo, but they went above and beyond the required amount of control over prisoners.

[PARAGRAPH 4]

In relation to the responsibility of business owners to act with a certain degree of authority over their employees is similar to the responsibility Zimbardo had in the
beginning of the experiment. The willingness of the “guards” to obey authority figures, even when doing so violates their personal beliefs is a key indicator that the power Zimbardo had and the power of managers and executives can sometimes be in greater excess than meets the eye. It is important to demonstrate who is the boss and who is powerless in Zimbardo’s study in both this experiment and the real world. But where could we draw the line in the business world, to avoid the superior’s feelings of inevitably liberty and power over subordinates? Bosses in the business world need to orientate their employees in a fashion that facilitates retaining their own personal ethics, while keeping in mind the morals and values of the company. The orientation process is also key in preserving a position of power over their employees so that the employer can hypothetically impose their views on the employee if necessary, and the employee is aware that if they make an error in their judgment, they will be held accountable, and.

[PARAGRAPH 5]

The goal for business owners is to "walk the line" between exuding too much authority over their employees, versus demonstrating just the right amount of power to impose the company’s ethical values over them if necessary. Too much power over subordinates eventually causes them to feel incapable of making rational decisions, and feelings of helplessness with too much supervision and not enough trust. Employers still need to retain a certain level of authority because it is important for a company to be able to guide decision making and facilitate personal growth and competence. The way employees are orientated and trained in a company will be the factor in developing this level of authority. Milgram’s study proves to professionals that it is important to ensure employees feelings of personal responsibility for their actions. This responsibility is
assumed in everyday life because of the political and economic systems of the United States and the high value placed on freedom and personal choice. Zimbardo's prison study is a representation for business owners, managers, and executives to be careful when displaying their authority over their employees, for themselves and for their subordinates. They must be careful not to take their hierarchical role too seriously so as to not get out of control, while being aware of their position through the eyes of their subordinate. They want to preserve a position of power while retaining the values that the humanity places on freedom to assure that their employees don’t succumb to the power of the situation. The orientation process and presentation of employee’s role in the company decide the amount of autonomy felt since people act in ways that they are told to, as demonstrated in Milgram and Zimbardo’s studies.
The Power of Authority in the Workplace

[PARAGRAPH 1]

U.S. business owners, executives, and managers expect their employees to operate with a certain amount of autonomy and be competent enough to make decisions without extensive hierarchical oversight. Although employees expect these certain independent capabilities, they also expect to have a certain degree of control over employee decision making particularly when placed in ethical dilemma and problems. This can be accomplished by imposing a business atmosphere that demonstrates positive morals, values, and responsibility. The way we orientate people to act affects the ethical climate in which we work, live, and play. People tend to behave according to the role they are in, given what they understand that role to entail, how much responsibility is involved, and how much authority is imposed on them. Business owners must walk a fine line between using their authority to gain respect and control over their subordinates, while retaining enough autonomy for them to feel that they can exercise their own social goodwill. Milgram and Zimbardo’s work on the role of authority and the power of the situation relates to this idea that people behave according to the environment they are in, demonstrated mainly in the resulting behavior of superiors, as well as subordinates attitudes during each experiment.

[PARAGRAPH 2]

12 I used brackets and all-caps to label Lisa’s paragraphs. I italicized the text she altered/added.
In Milgram’s work on the obedience to authority, a major concern of the men asking the questions and performing the “shocking” was that he would not be responsible for his actions. After the authority figure in the white lab coat assured them that they could not be accountable for their actions, they proceeded to “shock” the man despite the fact that he was pleading and yelling about the unbelievable pain and his heart aches. The amount of authority projected on to these subjects was not excessive, yet the power of anonymity was great enough to unleash violent behavior that would not normally be performed. During their orientation, they were simply given direct instructions and regulations for the experiment, and the only indication of authority was the man in the official looking lab coat. The atmosphere imposed on the subjects had an air of professionalism. Business owners, executives, and managers also naturally demonstrate professionalism and superiority through the eyes of their subordinates. Based on Milgram’s study, as long as employees are aware that they will be accountable for their actions, it is assumed that they will make the “right decisions” without supervision because they will be more careful and accounted for. If business owners exude a consistent demonstration of authority over their employees, they will be more aware their own ethics in relation to the company’s ethics. It is more likely that they will be more conscious of their ethical competence compared to what is beneficial for the organization as a whole. Along with this enhanced business ethics awareness, employees will also gain a feeling of autonomy when they are orientated to feel like they are responsible for their own actions and hold an important role in the company. Since they will be held liable for their actions, they are less likely to act in ways that are unfavorable for themselves, and the company. With this orientation to feel autonomous, the boss has to balance their role with the employee’s role given that people act as they are told, despite the high value
placed on freedom in the United States.

[PARAGRAPH 3]

The fine line that business owners, managers, and executives must walk to ensure that their employees understand their subordinate status, while retaining the high value that the United States places on freedom can also be related to Zimbardo’s prison experiment, “Quite Rage.” The amount of power Zimbardo exuded as the superintendent of the Stanford Prison is similar to the position of authority in the everyday business world because of his original attempt to exhibit just the right amount of power over the “guards” and “prisoners.” At first Zimbardo acted as a superior authority to facilitate personal choice and the appearance that the “guards” were responsible for making their own decisions and act in ways that they individually saw fit. In the beginning orientation to the experiment Zimbardo gave clear, official and strict instructions for the guards to act in a manner over the prisoners. As the experiment got out of hand, Zimbardo’s original role to exhibit a superior figure merely to guide and mold the actions of the subjects transformed into a dictator-like role that was overwhelmed by his own feelings of autonomy and the tendency for himself to internalize and demonstrate the power he gave himself. As the experiment continued, not only did the “guards” fall right into their roles without any extra guidance from Zimbardo, but they went above and beyond the required amount of control over prisoners, demonstrating that even a small dose of authority can go a long way and get out of control.

[PARAGRAPH 4]

In relation to the responsibility of business owners to act with a certain degree of authority over their employees is similar to the responsibility Zimbardo had in the
beginning of the experiment. The willingness of the “guards” to obey authority figures, even when doing so violates their personal beliefs is a key indicator that the power Zimbardo had and the power of managers and executives can sometimes be in greater excess than meets the eye. It is important to demonstrate who is the boss and who is powerless in Zimbardo’s study in both this experiment and the real world. But where could we draw the line in the business world, to avoid the superior’s feelings of inevitably liberty and power over subordinates? Bosses in the business world need to orientate their employees in a fashion that facilitates retaining their own personal ethics, while keeping in mind the morals and values of the company. The orientation process is also key in preserving a position of power over their employees so that the employer can hypothetically impose their views on the employee if necessary, and the employee is aware that if they make an error in their judgment, they will be held accountable, and.

[PARAGRAPH 5]

Google’s mission statement, “don’t be evil,” is key example of the corporate world’s attempt to build economic trust while maintaining social goodwill and a foundation of loyalty. The slogan facilitates team spirit along with the company allegiance and independence. “Don’t be evil,” is Google’s way of orientating their employees to act ethically competent, which is beneficial to employee sovereignty with a hint of superior oversight. This mission statement displays a clear example of a company’s orientation that assumes employee responsibility, and creates a balance for owners, managers, and executives to enforce their ethical values and morals while advising employees to use their own judgment in decision making. This slogan also enables employees to keep their bosses from gaining too much authority and control over their own moral codes.
The goal for business owners is to “walk the line” between exuding too much authority over their employees, versus demonstrating just the right amount of power to impose the company’s ethical values over them if necessary. Too much power over subordinates eventually causes them to feel incapable of making rational decisions, and feelings of helplessness with too much supervision and not enough trust. Employers still need to retain a certain level of authority because it is important for a company to be able to guide decision making and facilitate personal growth and competence. The way employees are orientated and trained in a company will be the factor in developing this level of authority. Milgram’s study proves to professionals that it is important to ensure employees feelings of personal responsibility for their actions. This responsibility is assumed in everyday life because of the political and economic systems of the United States and the high value placed on freedom and personal choice. Zimbardo’s prison study is a representation for business owners, managers, and executives to be careful when displaying their authority over their employees, for themselves and for their subordinates. They must be careful not to take their hierarchical role too seriously so as to not get out of control, while being aware of their position through the eyes of their subordinate. They want to preserve a position of power while retaining the values that the humanity places on freedom to assure that their employees don’t succumb to the power of the situation. The orientation process and presentation of employee’s role in the company decide the amount of autonomy felt since people act in ways that they are told to, as demonstrated in Milgram and Zimbardo’s studies.
Should alcohol advertisement be banned from college sports?

[Cassandra adds a salutation.]

[PARAGRAPH 1]

Do you remember the time during March back when you [Cassandra adds text] were here at the University of Massachusetts Amherst? Better yet, do you recall March 30th, 1996 or the time you spent cheering [Cassandra substitutes words in the following phrase] on the good old’ minutemen basketball team? [Cassandra substitutes words in the following two sentences.] I mean come on now who doesn’t remember the days when Calipari was head coach and UMass basketball had its winniest season since the program first started. Whether you were a student at this time or an alumni, any true UMass student remembers UMass’s appearance in the final four of March Madness in 1996. [Cassandra adds citation.]

[PARAGRAPH 2]

As you can [Cassandra substitutes the next word] recall many students enjoy spending time cheering on their school’s team. And if they are not cheering on their own

---

13 I added brackets and italics to indicate and describe Cassandra’s revisions. I added brackets and all-caps to label paragraphs.
team, many students enjoy watching other college teams play, as it is a very big hobby around the campus. One of the biggest college tournaments that viewers enjoy watching is March Madness. During March you will often find many college students working on their brackets to try and guess what teams will go through, who will get knocked out and what team will ultimately win it all. To a college student [*Cassandra adds text here*], as you already know, [*Cassandra substitutes the next word*] stuff like this is really something they look forward to. It is an important part of some student’s [*Cassandra corrects*] “experiences” experiences and there seems to be a large interest within the campus community. [*Cassandra substitutes the next sentence for a new one.*] It is something in which it is encouraged that students get involved in. This goes to show you that many people are involved in college sports today. [*Cassandra adds citation.*]

[PARAGRAPH 3]

[*Cassandra deletes the next two sentences.*] As a student athlete at the University of Massachusetts I can only imagine the hype that went on around campus, considering UMass was in the final four. Many students watched the semi-final game between UMass and Kentucky, as it was the largest television audience ever for a college basketball game. [*Cassandra rearranges the following three sentences.*] Drinking and college students do not exactly mix and I truly believe that it is not wise to let beer companies advertise during any kind of college sporting events. It is just promoting something that is harmful when not used appropriately. This double standard sends mixed messages to students.

[PARAGRAPH 4]

[*Cassandra rearranges this paragraph to become two paragraphs.*] Student’s life is a critical part of college. The University of Massachusetts Amherst is trying to make it a
selling point to incoming students and their parents is safe an environment with a lot of fun things to do. As a university, we want parents to feel comfortable letting their children live at school. UMass is trying to set policies about drinking to get away from the party school image in order to promote the nationally ranked higher education that this school has to offer! The university boasts about the latest survey conducted by the University of Massachusetts Amherst where nine out of ten college students claim that they know how to have fun without alcohol. Although this is true, this statistic does not go on to explain whether college students would rather use the substance of alcohol to have fun or not. You’ve experienced the college life and have heard the stories from others reminiscing about their college days. I think it’s safe to say that most of us would agree that it was the best four years of their lives. From the freshman fifteen, fraternity parties, spending all night at the library, weekends, sporting events and way too many pictures, we’ve all had our fun at one time or another, at the University of Massachusetts.

[PARAGRAPH 5]

[Cassandra deletes this paragraph.] In order to promote the higher education our school offers and better the lives of our students by not supporting alcohol, we are asking you to put funds into college sports in order to offset costs so that the school does not have to look to other sponsors to fill the needs of college sports. We as a university do not want to rely on alcohol advertisements in order to fund our programs, as the NCAA allowed during the final four of March Madness. We feel as though using beer companies to fund our sports so that they can be televised is an embarrassment to the university as it may also suggest that the university may not have high standards. Good thing UMass has such high standards! But we need to keep our university continuing this high standard. And
we need your help!

[PARAGRAPH 6]

[Cassandra rearranges the order of her paragraphs; this paragraph moves to a different location.] College should be a place where learning and growing takes place. As an alumni of this university, you probably have noticed that some of the most intellectual and brilliant people you have ever been in the presence of were among the minutemen (and women) at UMass. Many college students often forget that they are at college to go to school and get caught up with the party scene. I think that it is important to have fun at college, but I also believe that sometimes having fun to some individuals is taking it too far. But we need to ask ourselves is it entirely their fault? As a student I make my own choices, but my choices are influenced by so much.

[PARAGRAPH 7]

(Talk about how advertisement influences people) Many students, while watching the games, throw back a couple of beers. [Cassandra adds text.]

[PARAGRAPH 8]

[Cassandra deletes this paragraph.] As I stated before, many students enjoy spending time cheering on their school’s team. And if they are not cheering on their own team, many students enjoy watching other college teams play, as it is a very big hobby around the campus. One of the biggest college tournaments that viewers enjoy watching is March Madness. During March you will often find many college students working on their brackets to try and guess what teams will go through, who will get knocked out and what team will ultimately win it all. To a college student stuff like this is really something
they look forward to. It is an important part of some students experiences and there seems to be a large interest within the campus community. It is something in which it is encouraged that students get involved in. As in the dorms during this month you can find on the bulletin board the March madness bracket and each day the bracket would be updated according to the outcome of the games. This goes to show you that many people are involved in college sports today.

[PARAGRAPH 9]

[Cassandra rearranges the order of her paragraphs; this one moves to a new location.] With this being said, marketing and advertisement is key for large corporations to target college students because there is such hype about the games and so many college students watch March Madness. During the semifinal and final game of March Madness there were more than sixty seconds of alcohol advertisement per hour during these games. In 2005 the national collegiate athletic association set a limit in 2005 that only sixty seconds of alcohol advertisement is allowed per hour and one hundred and twenty second during the whole showing of the game, but now the NCAA is taking it to the next level by breaking these limits in which they set. Not only was there a problem with advertisement but also [Cassandra substitutes “many” for another word] many noticed that there was also a miller light banner during the semi-final and championship basketball game. [Cassandra adds citation.]

[PARAGRAPH 10]

[Cassandra rearranges the order of her paragraphs; this one moves to different location.] I really believe that is it ridiculous that the NCAA is allowing this to happen. This is because alcohol is already a problem for college students. As many college
students do not just have one or two drinks for a social and causal time, they drink to get drunk. Binge drinking is extremely popular for college students and causes so many trips to the hospital and sometimes even death. [Cassandra adds citation.]

[PARAGRAPH 11]

I do realize that both the NCAA and the television receive a lot of money from these sponsors. This benefits both groups in many ways. Without the sponsorship of the beer companies, there would be no way in which the game would be televised, it would just be too expensive. The NCAA also uses these sponsorships are well to go back to benefit the student-athletes around the country. But is this a good enough excuse to allow this kind of advertisement because young people are so influenced?

[PARAGRAPH 12]

Over one hundred colleges and university president are furious about the beer commercials during college sporting events. They want to put a stop to all alcohol advertisements during college sporting events.

[PARAGRAPH 13]

[Cassandra rearranges the next two sentences; they appear in a new location.] Not to even mention the fact that the advertisements are promoting underage drinking for those college students who are under twenty-one years old. Many universes and colleges are trying to put an end to this drinking and have even gone to extremes to put an end to it. As a freshman coming into college I had to read articles and take a test about alcohol and other substances in order for me to enroll and begin the school year. Schools are now trying to promote substance free living, as residential life are offering special wellness
housing for students who prefer to live in substance free dorms. This university has been trying to get away from being known as the party school for quite some time now. [Cassandra substitutes the next two words] and because most of the schools that make the tournament are known as being a party school.

PARAGRAPH 14

[Cassandra adds text throughout this paragraph.] It puzzles me to hear that the NCAA is breaking their own rules. And as a student-athlete it makes me very upset because the NCAA is extremely hypocritical. This is because the NCAA has such rigorous, strict and intense rules and policies. My coaches have to give my team a day off every week, and we can only practice a certain amount of hours or you are breaking rules. The NCAA also only allows the school to spend a certain amount of money on clothes and equipment. The NCAA also has a rule that if you have a 2.0 or lowering you are not allowed to play. Also, you must complete at least 40% of your major by a certain year you are not eligible to play. The lists goes on and on of rules that the NCAA has set. In my eyes the NCAA is a pain to deal with. I just cannot believe the have the nerve to break their own rules when and if a student athlete breaks a rule they either become ineligible and lose a year of eligibility or are suspended for a certain amount of games, which is very harsh since you only have four years to play.

PARAGRAPH 15

[Cassandra adds text.] The biggest thing that gets me is the fact that NCAA does drug testing. At UMass at least one person from each team and eighteen players from the football team because the have such a big roster are chosen at the beginning of the month to be drug tested. [Cassandra corrects and substitutes words in the following sentence.]
And believe it or not alcohol is a drug that is a substance that is not allowed. [Cassandra adds text.] If student athletes are not allowed to drink alcohol than why is it that the NCAA is promoting it by letting there be extensive advertisement for the beer companies? I find this to be very funny because the NCAA allows alcohol advertisement in which per sway students and student’s athletes to want to drink, when these student athletes can lose their eglibligty if the alcohol comes up on the drug test. [Cassandra adds citation.]

[PARAGRAPH 16]

I am strongly against alcohol advertisements during and in college sports. It promotes college drinking. [Cassandra adds text to her concluding paragraph.]

Finish the conclusion
Cassandra’s Draft After Tutorial

Should alcohol advertisement be banned from college sports?

Dear Student-Athlete Alumni,

[PARAGRAPH 1]

Do you remember the time during March back when you, a former student-athlete, were here at the University of Massachusetts Amherst? Better yet, do you recall March 30th, 1996 or the time you spent cheering on the nationally ranked Minutemen basketball team? Athletes, fans and alumni alike can all recall this great period in Massachusetts Sports history, with Coach Calipari guiding the Minutemen Basketball team to one of the best seasons in recent memory? All members of the Massachusetts community can recall this historic appearance in the final four of March Madness in 1996. (“UMass Plays”, 1)

[PARAGRAPH 2]

As you can clearly remember, many students enjoy spending time cheering on their school’s team. And if they are not cheering on their own team, many students enjoy watching other college teams play, as it is a very big hobby around the campus. One of the biggest college tournaments that viewers enjoy watching is March Madness. During March you will often find many college students working on their brackets to try and guess what teams will go through, who will get knocked out and what team will ultimately win it all. To a college student-athlete, as you already know, things like this are really

---

14 I added italics to mark the text that Cassandra altered, and I used italics to describe the former location of paragraphs she rearranged. I used brackets and all-caps to label paragraphs.
something they look forward to. It is an important part of some student’s experience and there seems to be a large interest within the campus community. Many students are known to go to bars to watch these games or are often found hanging out with friends, casually enjoying a few drinks. Drinking and college students do not exactly mix and I truly believe that it is not wise to let beer companies advertise during any kind of college sporting events. It is just promoting something that is harmful when not used appropriately. This double standard sends mixed messages to students.

With this being said, marketing and advertisement is key for large corporations to target college students because there is such hype about the games and so many watch March Madness. During the semifinal and final game of March Madness there were more than 60 seconds of alcohol advertisement per hour during these games. In 2005 the National Collegiate Athletic Association set a limit that only 60 seconds of alcohol advertisement is allowed per hour and only 120 seconds during the whole showing of the game, but now the NCAA is taking it to the next level by breaking these limits in which they previously set. Not only was there a problem with advertisement but I also noticed that there was also a miller light banner during the semi-final and championship basketball game, a true sign that alcohol advertisements have a pronounced impact on the NCAA. (“Men’s Basketball”, 44) Yet, in the NCAA Men’s basketball Championship states “NCAA advertising policies are designed to prohibit those advertisements that do not appear to be in the best interest of higher education.” Clearly alcohol is not in the best interest of students enrolled in higher education. (“Men’s Basketball”, 44)
I really believe that is it ridiculous that the NCAA is allowing this to happen. Alcohol is already a problem for college students. As many college students do not just have one or two drinks for a social and casual time: they drink to get drunk. Binge drinking is extremely popular for college students and causes so many trips to the hospital, and occasionally even death. (Brogan, 3)

[PARAGRAPH 5]

Student’s life is a critical part of college. The University of Massachusetts Amherst is trying to make it a selling point to incoming students and their parents that it is safe a environment with a lot of fun things to do. The university wants parents to feel comfortable letting their children live at school. UMass is trying to set policies about drinking to get away from the party school image in order to promote the nationally ranked higher education that this school has to offer!

[PARAGRAPH 6]

The university boasts about the latest survey conducted by the University of Massachusetts Amherst where nine out of ten college students claim that they know how to have fun without alcohol. Although this is true, this statistic does not go on to explain whether college students would rather use the substance of alcohol to have fun or not. You’ve experienced the college life and have heard the stories from others, reminiscing about their college days. I think it’s safe to say that most of us would agree that it was the best four years of our lives. From the freshman fifteen, fraternity parties, spending all night at the library, weekends, sporting events and way too many pictures, we’ve all had our fun at one time or another, at the University of Massachusetts.
In order to promote the higher education our school offers and better the lives of our students by not supporting alcohol, we are asking you to put funds into college sports in order to offset costs so that the university does not have to look to other sponsors to fill the needs of college sports. The university does not want to rely on alcohol advertisements in order to fund its programs, as the NCAA allowed during the final four of March Madness. I feel as though using beer companies to fund our sports so that they can be televised is an embarrassment to the university as it may also suggest that the university may not have high standards. Good thing UMass has such high standards! But we need to keep our university continuing this high standard. And we need your help!

College should be a place where learning and growing takes place. As an alumni of this university, you probably have noticed that some of the most intellectual and brilliant people you have ever been in the presence of were among the minutemen (and women of course) at UMass. Many college students often forget that they are at college to go to school and get caught up with the party scene. I think that it is important to have fun at college, but I also believe that sometimes having fun to some individuals is taking it too far. But we need to ask ourselves is it entirely their fault? As a student-athlete I make my own choices, but my choices are influenced by so much.

Perhaps no demographic is influenced more by the mass media than the demographic comprised of college-aged students. Advertisements in television,
magazines, radio and Internet web sites impact many of the choices made by college students. Alcohol advertisements are often funny, creative, and appealing to viewers and have an even stronger impact on young adults due to their popularity appeal. This creates a major dilemma, as college students feel both pressured and intrigued about alcohol. (Brogan, 1)

[PARAGRAPH 10: from paragraph 11 in during-tutorial draft]

I do realize that both the NCAA and the television station receive a lot of money from these sponsors. This benefits both groups in many ways. Without the sponsorship of the beer companies, there would be no way in which the game would be televised; it would just be too expensive. The NCAA also uses these sponsorships to benefit the student-athletes around the country. But is this a good enough excuse to allow this kind of advertisement because young people are so influenced?

[PARAGRAPH 11: from paragraph 12 in during-tutorial draft]

Over a hundred colleges and university presidents are furious about the beer commercials during college sporting events. They want to put a stop to all alcohol advertisements during college sporting events. Not to even mention the fact that the advertisements are promoting underage drinking for those college students who are under 21 years old. Many universities and colleges are trying to put an end to this drinking and have even gone to extremes to put an end to it. (Brogan, 4)

[PARAGRAPH 12]

As a freshman coming into college I had to read articles and take a test about alcohol and other substances in order for me to enroll and begin the school year. Schools
are now trying to promote substance free living, as residential life is offering special wellness housing for students who prefer to live in substance free dorms. This university has been trying to get away from being known as the party school for quite some time. *It just so happens that* most of the schools that make the tournament are known as being “party” schools.

[PARAGRAPH 13]

It puzzles me to hear that the NCAA is breaking their own rules. And as a student-athlete it makes me very upset because the NCAA is extremely hypocritical. This is because the NCAA has such rigorous, strict and intense rules and policies. My coaches have to give my team a day off every week, and we can only practice a certain amount of hours or the team is breaking the rules. ("NCAA Law", 220) The NCAA only allows the school to spend a certain amount of money on clothes and equipment. The NCAA also has a rule that if you have a 2.0 or lowering grade point average, as a student-athlete you are not allowed to play. Also as a student athlete, you must complete at least 40 percent of your major by a certain year *in order to be* eligible to play. ("NCAA Laws" 168) I found that this put a lot of pressure of me to decide what I wanted to do in life, a whole lot earlier than other students. The list goes on and on of rules that the NCAA has set. In my eyes the NCAA is a pain to deal with. I just cannot believe the NCAA has the nerve to break their own rules when and if a student athlete breaks a rule they either become ineligible and lose a year of eligibility or are suspended for a certain amount of games, which is very harsh since you only have four years to play. ("NCAA Laws" 418)

[PARAGRAPH 14]

You’ve all experienced drug testing, as a student athlete here at UMass. The biggest
thing that gets me is the fact that NCAA does drug testing. At UMass at least one person from each team and eighteen players from the football team because the team has such a big roster are chosen at the beginning of the month to be drug tested. And believe it or not, alcohol is a substance that in cannot be used by any student athlete. It is funny how alcohol can turn a student-athlete’s drug test positive, yet it is advertised during college sporting events. The logic here does not make sense to me. If student athletes are not allowed to drink alcohol than why is it that the NCAA is promoting it by letting there be extensive advertisement for the beer companies? I find this to be very funny because the NCAA allows alcohol advertisement in which influences students and student athletes to want to drink, when these student athletes can lose their eligibility if the alcohol comes up on the drug test. ("NCAA Laws", 170)

[PARAGRAPH 15]

I am strongly against alcohol advertisements during and in college sports. It promotes college drinking and dangerous decisions. I am asking you to donate to the UMass athletic association so that our university does not have to rely on beer companies advertisements to fund its sports. However, I ask you to think of your donation as more than a monetary gain for this University, but for a donation to the lives of many student athletes who play on the same courts, fields and gyms where you first shaped your lives. And remember you are, you were, UMass!

Go, Go U, Go U-Mass, Go UMass!

Sincerely,
Freewrite 1: “Deportation Beginning”

[PARAGRAPH 1]

The development of races is different from the development of racial perceptions. The development of races or “generally distinct subpopulations of a given species”(Cornell) is now a complex history of political, economic and cultural formation. The perception of race is created in the sharing of information cross culturally. Specific reporting may unintentionally provide superiority to one race over another. This can be seen clearly in many instances of imperial administration in the form of contractual juridical racialism. These rhetorical styles serve to debase cultures through negation, appropriate what is valuable and all the while justify itself by affirming the actions.

[PARAGRAPH 2]

Perceptions of ethnicity and race are significantly altered from historically based groupings to those of color/physical appearances tied to myth and stereotyped characterization. This is due to the slipping of the concept of ethnicity into an

---

15 I labeled Emma’s paragraphs using brackets and all-caps. I also numbered the titles she created for her freewrites.
“enormously diverse mosaic of self conscious collectives sharing various degrees of history and culture.” (18, Cornell) This however does not seem to change the value or importance each person places on ethnicity, but is based more on myths and theatrical presentations of ethnicity. This may in fact may be used to dis-empower and divide groups in order to prevent or disrupt organization against the consolidation of wealth and power. This group who benefits from consolidation subsequently derives their wealth from an exploitation of labor from the ethnically categorized and marginalized majority.

[PARAGRAPH 3]

The formation of identity is a part of what makes humans human. This formation of identity involves an understanding of the self, but in a social context as well as on a personal basis. Cultural norms affect and become imbedded into identity. The history of organization can be viewed economically, racial distinctions come with the stigma of the labor fields the groups have been relegated to. These norms are constantly in flux because over time different groups are at the bottom of the barrel (labor food chain).

[PARAGRAPH 4]

The show lost may be functioning as a master narrative for contemporary western society with integrated sub-narratives that can be seen as a microcosm for contemporary American society. Identifying these narratives and their relationship to contemporary political events and their rhetorical justification though mainstream television and its influence on master cultural narrative. There is a characterization of issues taken on by real characters. For example the one I am working on at the moment is about the character Sayid Jarrah. He is the only middle eastern character and his role in the group of survivors is the "torturer". This role and his placement as someone who has been tortured
and went on to serially torture others, in flashbacks as well as on the island. Some say that his character is likely inspired by Edward Said. In his relationships to the other characters as well as they way the flashbacks define his integrity and personal history is racialized. There is inclusive exclusion all across the show in building him up as a possible model immigrant with his cooperation with American government, English speaking skills and CIA cooperation. On the flip side however he is broken down through attacks from other survivors accusing him of being a terrorist and even accusations from the other survivors that he was responsible for the plane crash. Many of the characters that seem to be direct metaphors to culturally significant or consistently serving as racial stereotypes. The significance of Sayid serves to remind people of current issues regarding torture and human rights issues in Guantanamo Bay and reflecting post 9/11 racial profiling, however they are reframed in this particular show in a way that puts the personal accountability (for these issues) on Sayid's shoulders. The implication for this show is in the idea that immigrants are to be held accountable for all kinds of actions citizens are not expected to carry the weight of. Sayid is not a full citizen of the island because of his nationality. This reflects current values and normative ideas of what you need to be to gain membership into a new community. This normative cultural perception of race is solidly based in legal text in defining the crimes of aliens and permanent residents as crimes of moral turpitude. Turpis literally translates in Latin to ugly. The word Turpe means filthy, foul, vile, and repugnant. Using this word in association with a certain ethnic and racial groups on the basis of citizenship status gives a stigma of debasement just in the term that is used alone. Themes of debasement assign qualities like savage, uncivilized, filth, indolence, lack of discipline, dishonesty and sexual promiscuity. "The belligerence of Arab nations, we are told, can be traced to the violence and fanaticism of the Arab character. Here synecdoche
and metaphor combine, marking he individual as both cause and emblem of more general degradation." (Spurr, 76) We can clearly see how this happens both on the show lost in the case of Sayid and how it is a reflection of popular understanding of race and ethnicity in American culture. This cultural normative perception is so pervasive it is even legitimized and solidified in Immigration policy and Immigration Law. The consequence of disobeying this Law is complete exile from the country and by proxy a persons entire life.

[PARAGRAPH 5]

In the case of Sayid Jerrah and his otherness within the survivor community based on his portrayal as a terrorist a torturer and the direct link of those items to his ethnicity. This character never gains citizenship or membership in any of his communities and is outcast as a refugee with no formal rights in any of the many circles his identity exclusively includes him in. (exclusive inclusion being a legal theory of raced naturalization by Devon Carbado)

[PARAGRAPH 6]

Legality is a common part of how people construct their relationships with each other. The location of law is in common place social interactions, ranging from Family, to Communities, and all the way up to International Relations. When for example a woman does not assert her right to protection from abuse and is aware she has this right, and then chooses not to assert this right. She does this because of a conflict with informal law or social law between her and her partner. Like conflicts along the lines of gender binaries, race and class conflicts also affect legal consciousness (although, they are along hierarchies and webs of influence not just binary) and whether or not people assert their formal legal rights. I would claim that lost can and should be used in empirical research of
daily life and legality as it is a mimicry, although its hyperbolized and dramatized with discordant music used to amplify impact of certain scenes and embellish heartfelt moments, of contemporary life. In the case of lost it is social legality that in my opinion is an excellently focused through the dramatic nature of interpersonal relationships. Especially in the case of a plane crash, it sets the scene for a variety of different people to be reacting and interacting to and with each other in a surreal landscape that embodies themes of purgatory and chaos theory. All of the myths and legends that are used to crash like a wave over people in a . It captures people with a crash of emotions and fervent demonstration of conflict through myth, faith, fate, good and evil, life and death, nature and nurture in order to flood people emotion, thus; leaving them incredibly impassioned. However, this passion is not directed toward any of the motifs used to insight those feelings but in fact are directed back into passion for the show itself and, created a fan mob. This was no doubt created through careful marketing techniques in conjunction with the delivery of the material within the show itself. There are networks of fan groups on the internet where people can get together to share their passion and communicate their reaction to each other. This comes in the way of banners with photographs of the fan pasted into photos with their favorite actor and alternative reality games in which people engaged in playing out roles and guessing what will happen next on the show. What are the implications of the viewers reactions. How is it possible that the working class can relate to a set of characters in such an unbelievably unrealistic situation.

[PARAGRAPH 7]

The characters in lost assert themselves in different ways in particular situations due to the weight of their "legal consciousness" I hesitate to give the characters legal
consciousness directly but it is the in fact the consciousness written into the character and interpreted according to each viewer.

[PARAGRAPH 8]

None of the characters on the show are of the working class. They are all helped characterize by their professional status. The only character that comes to mind as having any experience with a minimum wage job was Hurley aka Hugo, and part of his deal is that he won the lottery. This is an example of making mythic each aspect of each character. I suppose it is the shows own aesthetic form is this constant and relentless use of incredible imagery, myth, conflict, gore, subtle sexuality and in the language of colonial rhetoric. Perhaps this show is beyond rhetoric and it’s a new form of hyper-rhetoric using modern technologies to amplify itself as more pretentious ominous and grandiose than ever before. Back to the myth of the lottery, This is a commonplace activity wherein seemingly everyone puts in small funds into a “pot” regularly in order to rescue at random one or two people a month from the drab, unworthy reality of working class caste by throwing them extraordinary wealth, and this is consensually agreed on by the masses. One can even say that this type of organization and participation was an effect of collective consciousness and helps to create a collective identity. However, why must it be a beneficial system to so few, how did this method evolve and become a mainstream activity. It all has to do with the psychology of man and this is out of my hands I can’t explain that. However, I can explain how this myth is played upon by the writers of lost to give a connection to everyone who plays the lottery and buys into that idea a relationship with Hurley. However, the writers are careful to not make any character too similar to the viewer, only relatable through cultural references. This is how the normative culture can
be so vastly unachievable for the masses. This includes normative ideas of weight and size of women, masculinity, femininity, racial perceptions and other social norms that don’t reflect what is normal, average or natural in existence.
Freewrite 2: “Draft: The Rhetoric of the Lost Empire”

[PARAGRAPH 1]

The development of races is different from the development of racial perceptions. The development of races or “generally distinct subpopulations of a given species” is now a complex history of political, economic and cultural formation. The perception of race is created in the act of sharing of information cross culturally. Reporting information in a certain way, may intentionally provide superiority to one race over another. This can be seen clearly in many instances of travel writing, imperial administration and journalism. These rhetorical styles serve to debase cultures through negation, appropriate what is valuable and all the while justify itself by affirming the actions. This is not only a pervasive issue in journalism but also in entertainment in general, which has evolved to include journalism-entertainment, commonly referred to as the evening news.

[PARAGRAPH 2]

In America at present many interesting forms of this same narrative described in David Spurr’s book have been revealed to me in the last week or so. I find people using small turns of phrases and conjuring up images that support or reference the tropes. The most fascinating and scary place I found them was in watching television; the simultaneously macro & micro-chasm for contemporary society. The show I found most interesting, although the sitcoms present much to discuss, was Lost. This hit adventure thriller on the American Broadcasting Company is an uncanny symbol of colonial processes. The premise of this show is as follows; a variety of passengers on a transatlantic flight from Sydney to Los Angeles find themselves deserted on an island in an unknown place after their plane has crashed. Strangers in paradise is one of many
rotating themes. Stuck on a beautiful tropical island these people must interact and rely on each other to build a camp in order to survive. This survival and the rhetoric around it all primarily involve the survivors choosing who to trust; the formations of knowledge and power come through a discourse founded in colonial rhetoric. Much of the trust allotted however is not based in action but in words. Words that are not actually trustworthy, this is evident in the many lies schemed up by certain survivors. Most notably a character named Sawyer, which is actually an alias, lies habitually by using turns of phrases and half-truths. He also makes up things in entirety in order to con people on the island into giving him worldly goods so he can buy himself power. He is a particularly interesting character because of the manner in which he speaks constantly calling up myth and imagery from popular and historical American culture that grants him "trust" despite his consistently negative and harmful actions against the group. The use of this imagery is subtle but ever-present. As a white man, he is placed at the top of the survivor hierarchy. The people who are at the top and therefore in charge include: three white males, an Iraqi torturer, and on occasion an agile but physically slight woman Kate, is allowed into the scene. This woman is used often to test the waters in dangerous situations and used primarily as a pawn.

[PARAGRAPH 3]

In this show there are two distinct communities, the flight survivors and those who they call "the others". The use of the term "the others" serves to signify the other group negatively as an unknown and uncivilized. This is negation, debasement, classification and possibly surveillance. Even after realizing that the others have technology and infrastructure superior to their own, they continue to debase them though other means. This is especially exhibited in the character named, rather ironically, John
Locke. Locke is constantly debasing the others to promote his own personal agenda, using the debasement to rally other survivors to give him their allegiance through using politics of fear. This is legitimized in many ways by the show, for example scripting into the plot that the other characters do not question his actions and allowed this man to repeatedly kill other characters within their community as well as the “others’ community”.

[PARAGRAPH 4]

There is intense and dramatized eroticization omnipresent since the pilot showing. In each episode more and more value is placed on the reproductive value of women by developing a special plot about the island’s magical and mysterious fertility and infertility. The “Others” have fertility problems and the survivors of the flight are being used as test subjects for the fertility drugs to be used within the Others’ community. Another note is that there have been scenes in which multiple pregnant women in flashbacks or “live” as one of the plane survivors convulses and writhes while being filmed with certain aesthetics that invoke notions of provocation. Not to mention that the only woman who was not smaller than a size 4 was a middle aged black woman. As these rhetorical themes play out through stereotypes it goes un-noticed by not only the characters of the show, but also in Popular America. On Thursday of this month the proud viewers of this show, those who claim to be fans, take the story to heart as something they sympathize with.

[PARAGRAPH 5]

Lost, touches on many themes of religion and morality issues that imply Christians are the viewers. This would make sense because that is who the shows’ audience mainly is, as Popular America is Christian. Not to say the show is unpleasant or disinteresting to non-Christians, but it is marketed to shed light on certain moral issues being advocated by
the church at present. It is important to know the audience when you are making any persuasive argument, through story or a TV show. In modern media persuasion is the most profitable lens to take. *Lost* uses colonial rhetoric and tropes to tug at emotional chords that are extraordinarily relatable, employing Affirmation as they profit in sales of Primetime Commercial TV time to sell more products along with oppressive colonial ideology.
Freewrite 3: “Lost Collection”

[PARAGRAPH 1]

The purpose of lost and the conception of lost are tied closely together because when the TV show was imagined it was designed to be a super-popular program. The ways it was designed include a lost “bible” in which the mythologies that will be used in the first 6 seasons where carefully thought out before the pilot aired. The motive for using those particular mythologies is profit within a capitalist economy. The objective is to build a plot and characters that will be exciting and extraordinarily relatable to the American and Canadian public. I have come to distinguish those particular Nationalities because those are the two countries in which this show airs. The myths that the show has planned out are in this top secret “bible” in American Broadcasting Company’s possession. It is hard to put your finger on what exactly these myths are but I have a feeling that they are Karma, Purgatory, fate, conflict between science and faith, legitimization of authority. Dualism, rebellion, motifs of philosophy and the confrontation of philosophers with eachother as the characters are named after famous thinkers: “John Locke (after the philosopher), Danielle Rousseau (after philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau), Desmond Hume (after philosopher David Hume), Juliet Burke (after philosopher Edmund Burke), Mikhail Bakunin (after the anarchist philosopher), Daniel Faraday (after physicist Michael Faraday), George Minkowski (after mathematician Hermann Minkowski), Richard Alpert (after the spiritual teacher), Henry Gale (after the astrophysicist and author), Kate Austen (after author Jane Austen), and Charlotte Staples Lewis (after author CS Lewis). John Locke (after the philosopher), Danielle Rousseau (after philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau), Desmond Hume (after philosopher David Hume), Juliet Burke (after...
philosopher Edmund Burke), Mikhail Bakunin (after the anarchist philosopher), Daniel Faraday (after physicist Michael Faraday), George Minkowski (after mathematician Hermann Minkowski), Richard Alpert (after the spiritual teacher), Henry Gale (after the astrophysicist and author), Kate Austen (after author Jane Austen), and Charlotte Staples Lewis (after author CS Lewis).” (wiki) On the fan site called lostpedia there is an article on leadership and what makes each of the main leading characters a good and a bad leader. The de facto leader jack is said to have favorable qualities for example he is the possibly the only character with a post graduate degree because he was a surgeon. This position as a doctor is mimicked in a slew of popular television shows ranging from comedies to drama with ER, Scrubs, House, Greys Anatomy, and Doogie Hauser. The characters that have been understood as valiant and loveable professionals helps to keep the profession of M.D. in good public standing and serves to give the profession even more credibility not only are they the authority on medical and health issues of the body but they are community leaders and given authority in society at large even when matters extend outside of medicine. Also, I have found that in my personal experience it is the profession most parents encourage as being the end all be all of family pride is to have a doctor in the family. It is a signifier of education, wealth and determination and expertise. Many immigrants often push their children into medicine because of the money as well as the social status M.D. implies. P.H.D's are also valued similarly but since those degrees come with at least a pinch of resistance to capitalist hegemony this was left out of the show.

[PARAGRAPH 2]

People on lostpedia post pictures of themselves juxtaposed with the characters
that I see as the most sinister advocates of white supremacy. Locke, Ben and Jack. These characters are again "de facto" leaders because they are the white males that assert themselves. This perpetuates a social causal loop that gives positive feedback to the authoritarian characters. If a person is given r

[PARAGRAPH 3]

The way that Locke in the episode "the greater good" gets away with killing Boone is to explain how he is responsible but not guilty in the same way that Schilingo does in the book Lexicon of Terror.

[PARAGRAPH 4]

The way certain characters take on aliases also reminds me of the motifs of torture in Argentina. Sawyer, Julian the Turk, Michael becomes that other character in the 4th season when he's working with the others, even Hugo takes on Hurley. What is the distinction between a nickname and an alias. The answer I presume is when the difference is whether anyone knows your real name or not, if the "real" identity is withheld.

[PARAGRAPH 5]

In the episode for the greater good, I will examine why only the white males have the power and authority to kill and how this is proven when the girl Shannon wants to avenge her step brother/lover's death she is stopped and discredited as irrational. Her vengeance is illegitimate compared to that of the men in the episode who also killed people.

[PARAGRAPH 6]
Collective identities structure the economic hierarchies in identifying as groups and sub groups it makes it easy to target and subject certain groups and relegate them to specific tasks. This can happen very subtly, though popular media and mythology that frames the current situation in polarized ways. Nationality was primarily defined in opposition to another group. The plane survivors essentially start to build a new nation of survivors or a particular identity group to be juxtaposed with the potentially evil others. This is done through difference and separation as well as debasement because they didn’t know anything about them so they used the other as a scape goat and as a way to foster fear within their own community to get what they wanted. At a certain point in the second or third season Sawyer the con artist by staging a fake kidnapping of the small beautiful and “helpless” Sun and framing it as if the others had done it in order to get the guns and hide them from the rest of the members of his fellow survivors. He takes this action in direct opposition to the rest of the group in fact posing a real threat to them in making such a hostile move.

[PARAGRAPH 7]

Deportation is a heated issue in America today. Issues of migrant labor have come up prominently in the last 5 years. There have been particularly interesting raids in new Bedford that represent a serious and forceful present of a normative ideas of citizenship and belonging and made clear through the flip side of the coin wherein people who don’t fit the norm are forcefully excreted by the nation. This usually occurs on the basis of excess labor. As long as there are exploitatively low paying jobs as day laborers, agricultural migrant workers, landscapers, maids and factory workers these people who don’t fit the idealized norm are allowed to stay. If not, they may be at risk of a change of
heart in rhetoric and in turn legal standing. Having distinctions such as citizenship and
legal permanent resident is particularly helpful in reclassifying people on the basis of race
and making them newly eligible for expulsion.

[PARAGRAPH 8]

Starting with the character Sayid there can be an extraordinary analysis of the hit
tv show lost and how it plays out issues of race and membership. Sayid is an interesting
character because he is the only middle eastern character. He also speaks English with a
slight and subtile british accent and in the show there are a series of flash backs that
indicate that before he landed on this island he had a long history filled with war, torture
and cooperation with the American government. The presence of Sayid and his articulate
English skills he tells a specific story in a voice that an anglo-american can understand and
relate to. He does not speak with an Iraqi accent from anything I can personally discern
and this leads me to believe that he is representing hegemonic paradigm and racializing
people that look like him, (iraqi’s specifically and middle easterners in general) The role
that Identity plays in this show is integral. This is how the plots are built and this is how
the characters are imagined. There is a system of using American /western cultural
references to serve as signifiers to help distinguish the value of each character and the
level of trust aka membership that they have gained. In deportation this trust is translated
into right to have rights or the concept of citizenship. Illegal Aliens much like Sayid on lost
start out with no rights because they are not considered a valued part of the group not due
to their potential value or their skill set but based on the labor they have preformed in
sayid’s case it was torture that signified him specifically as a bad and dangerous
remorseless man who can’t be saved from the rapture. Immigrants are judged based on
the labor that they have been cornered into by the demands of the market and push pull factors that bring in immigrants to begin with. Refugees, migrant laborers etc. These people all do jobs that are stigmatized as bad which in fact justifies and grounds the racial stereotypes of the people pigeonholed into those positions. This is one of those negative feedback loops that seems to perpetuate and continue to affirm each other until something drastic happens and the bubble bursts. For slavery it was the civil war, for segregation and Jim Crow it was the civil liberties movement. Certain positions historically have been signifiers for what group is at the bottom of the racial hierarchy because this hierarchy is based in money and money is rooted for the proletariat in labor and body politics. The jobs that signify being at the bottom of the barrel include most prominently field labor. Slavery, migrant work and convicts all were subjected to picking crops, thinning seedlings and other physical labor requiring back breaking work. In Mae Ngai’s book the historical reference to the backbreaking labor in connection with slavery was most noticeable in the thinning of the sugar beets. During the Bracero program this was done solely by the migrants because it was so difficult and they were paid unfairly and poorly and used tools that were particularly unpleasant.

[PARAGRAPH 9]

I think I would like to write my paper on the popular television show Lost. A critical look at this American epic reveals an interesting case study for the media portrait of American society. Many characters in the show are not American but in fact play a significant role in the “Americanization” of the show. These ethnically different characters include: A Korean couple, British guy, Australian woman, Iraqi man, black American man, African American woman, Latino of unknown nationality but extraordinarily
Americanized through obesity and slang signifiers like "dude". Not to mention A humungous Black man from Nigeria who of course is connected with incredible violence and drugs.

[PARAGRAPH 10]

These characters and there interactions with each other as well as the many white main characters that signify the norm are all made to be kinder, more sympathizable and in control of everyone else though justification of their “knowledge”.
Rhetoric of the *Lost* Empire

[PARAGRAPH 1: from Freewrite 2, paragraph 2]

The show *Lost* may be functioning as a master narrative for contemporary western society with integrated sub-narratives that can be seen as a microcosm for contemporary society. Identifying these narratives and their relationship to contemporary political events, their rhetorical justification though mainstream television and its influence on master cultural narrative may provide insight into what ideas of normative culture are pervasive at this time. There is a distinct portrayal of issues taken on by characters in the show. In American society at present many interesting forms of the tropes described in David Spurr’s book have been revealed to me. I find people using small turns of phrases and conjuring up images that support or reference the tropes. The most fascinating place I found them was in watching television; the simultaneously macro & micro-chasm for contemporary society. *Lost*, a hit adventure thriller on the American Broadcasting Company is an uncanny symbol of colonial processes. The premise of this show is as follows; a variety of passengers on a transatlantic flight from Sydney to Los Angeles find themselves deserted on an island in an unknown place after their plane has crashed. Strangers in paradise, (Idealization) is one of many rotating themes. Stuck on a beautiful tropical island these people must interact and rely on each other to build a camp in order to survive. This survival and the rhetoric around it all primarily involve the survivors

---

16 For Emma’s revised draft, I used brackets and all-caps to label paragraphs, and I used italics to indicate the former location of her text and to describe the changes she made. Emma italicized the television show *Lost*, which I left as is.
choosing who to trust; the formations of knowledge and power between characters come 
through a discourse founded in colonial rhetoric. Much of the trust allotted however is not 
based in action but in language.

[PARAGRAPH 2: from Freewrite 2, paragraph 3]

In this show there are two distinct communities, the flight survivors and those 
who they call “the others”. The use of the term “the others” serves to signify the other 
group negatively as an unknown and uncivilized. This is negation, debasement and 
classification. Even after realizing that the others have technology and infrastructure 
superior to their own, they continue to debase them though other means. This is 
especially exhibited in the character named, rather ironically, John Locke. Locke is 
constantly debasing the others to promote his own personal agenda, using the 
debasement to rally other survivors to give him their allegiance through politics of fear. 
This is legitimized in many ways by the show, for example scripting into the plot that the 
other characters do not question his actions and allow this man to repeatedly kill and 
endanger other characters within their community as well as the “others’ community”.

[PARAGRAPH 3: from Freewrite 2, paragraph 4]

There is intense and dramatized eroticization omnipresent since the pilot showing. 
In each episode more and more value is placed on the reproductive value of women by 
developing a special sub-plot about the island’s magical and mysterious fertility and 
infertility. The “Others” have fertility problems and the survivors of the flight are being 
used as test subjects for the fertility drugs to be used within the Others’ community. 
Another note is that there have been scenes in which multiple pregnant women in 
flashbacks or on the island convulse and writhe with pain while being filmed with certain
aesthetics that invoke notions of provocation. These scenes were framed in a way that expose reproductive value and eroticization in combination. Claire’s pain during pregnancy was delivered by the show in a way that was reminiscent of the new style of horror movie that both terrorizes and sexualizes woman at once. Not to mention that the only woman who was not smaller than a size 4 was a middle-aged black woman. This physical sample of women and value system present a basis for viewers to interpret normative values. As these rhetorical themes play out through stereotypes it goes unnoticed by not only the characters of the show, but also in Popular America. On Thursday of this month the proud viewers of this show, those who claim to be fans, take the story to heart as something they sympathize with.

[PARAGRAPH 4: from Freewrite 3, paragraph 5]

Lost, touches on many themes of religion and morality issues that imply Christians are the viewers. This would make sense because that is predominantly who the shows’ audience mainly is, as Popular America is Christian. Not to say the show is unpleasant or disinteresting to non-Christians, but it is marketed to shed light on certain moral issues being advocated by the church at present. It is important to know the audience when you are making any persuasive argument, through story or a TV show. In modern media persuasion is the most profitable lens to take. Lost uses colonial rhetoric and tropes to tug at emotional chords that are extraordinarily relatable, employing Affirmation as they profit in sales of Primetime Commercial TV time to sell products along with oppressive colonial ideology.

[PARAGRAPH 5: from Freewrite 1, paragraph 2]

Perceptions of ethnicity and race are significantly altered from historically based
groupings to those of color/physical appearances tied to myth and stereotyped characterization. This is due to the slipping of the concept of ethnicity into an “enormously diverse mosaic of self conscious collectives sharing various degrees of history and culture.” (18, Cornell) This however does not seem to change the value or importance each person places on ethnicity, but is based more on myths and theatrical presentations of ethnicity. This may in fact be used to dis-empower and divide groups in order to prevent or disrupt organization against the consolidation of wealth and power. The group who benefits from consolidation subsequently derives their wealth from an exploitation of labor from the ethnically categorized and marginalized majority.

[PARAGRAPH 6: from Freewrite 3, paragraph 1]

The purpose of lost, and the conception of lost are tied closely together because when the TV show was imagined it was designed to be a super-popular program. The ways it was designed include a lost “bible” in which the mythologies that will be used in the first 6 seasons where carefully thought out before the pilot aired. The motive for using those particular mythologies is profit within a capitalist economy. The objective is to build a plot and characters that will be exciting and extraordinarily relatable to the American and Canadian public. I have come to distinguish those particular Nationalities because those are the two countries in which this show predominantly airs. The myths that the show has planned out are in this top secret “bible” in American Broadcasting Company's possession. It is hard to put your finger on what exactly these myths are but I have a feeling that they are Karma, Purgatory, Fate, Conflict between Science and Faith, Family Dysfunction, Dualism, and Rebellion. These motifs of philosophy and the confrontation of philosophers with each other as the characters are named after famous thinkers: “John
Locke (after the philosopher), Danielle Rousseau (after philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau), Desmond Hume (after philosopher David Hume), Juliet Burke (after philosopher Edmund Burke), Mikhail Bakunin (after the anarchist philosopher), Daniel Faraday (after physicist Michael Faraday), George Minkowski (after mathematician Hermann Minkowski), Richard Alpert (after the spiritual teacher), Henry Gale (after the astrophysicist and author), Kate Austen (after author Jane Austen), and Charlotte Staples Lewis (after author CS Lewis). John Locke (after the philosopher), Danielle Rousseau (after philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau), Desmond Hume (after philosopher David Hume), Juliet Burke (after philosopher Edmund Burke), Mikhail Bakunin (after the anarchist philosopher), Daniel Faraday (after physicist Michael Faraday), George Minkowski (after mathematician Hermann Minkowski), Richard Alpert (after the spiritual teacher), Henry Gale (after the astrophysicist and author), Kate Austen (after author Jane Austen), and Charlotte Staples Lewis (after author CS Lewis).” (Wikipedia) [Emma added the remaining text in this paragraph.] These references to social scientists, writers and academics helps to give those characters a two fold signifier, one of their character and the other calls upon the history and practice of the theories that have been widely accepted or studied. Which in turn I would argue gives those characters extra authority in the minds of the viewer because it is subconsciously or consciously related to a famous “thinker”.

[PARAGRAPH 7: from Freewrite 3, paragraph 4]

The way certain characters take on aliases also reminds me of the motifs of torture in Argentina. [Emma added the following two sentences.] Sawyer is an alias, so was Julian the Turk. Do their aliases help to hide their real identity? Even Hugo takes on the name Hurley. What is the distinction between a nickname and an alias? The answer I presume
is when the difference is whether anyone knows your real name or not, if the “real” identity is withheld. [Emma added the remaining text in this paragraph.] If it is common knowledge that you are both the name and the nickname then it is not dangerous. It is only when people are allowed to take on multiple personalities or characters in hiding one identity and taking on another. This helps to diffuse the blame for harmful mischievous actions because they can find safety in the other name or identity. As well as turn on the other identity and negate or debase it through patterns of speech. In Argentina these aliases helped the torturers relieve themselves of responsibility to themselves as well as to others.

[PARAGRAPH 8: a new, additional paragraph]

I found a few other connections to the legacies of Argentinean torture as well. There are themes of kidnapping specifically of children in both Lost and in the Dirty War. The kidnapping served as a surprise attack that often threw the worlds of the people who knew the person who had been kidnapped into a blur of chaos and confusion. (Confusion is a prominent theme of the show used to keep viewers engaged) In situations where the problem is a negative space or in this case specifically a missing person, either a desaparecidos or one who is Lost it functions the same way. Having a “nothing” as a problem is a difficult one to begin to deal with. First there must be recognition of the issue and exactly what it is in order to take action. In the law, in order for someone to assert their rights they must first name the problem and then blame someone in order to file a suit. This goes for everyday occurrences as well because legality extends to our interpersonal relationships and the way we conceptualize and frame them.

[PARAGRAPH 9: a new, additional paragraph]
As an aside, I would like to note that there is a mysterious hatch on the island named “the pearl”. The survivors realize that it is a surveillance station that has been used to close circuit view them and people were taking notes on their actions and sending it to an undisclosed location. Although I don’t think the writers had intended on giving that hatch the same name as an Argentinean concentration camp, they did.

[PARAGRAPH 10: beginning comes from Freewrite 3, paragraph 3]

The way that John Locke in the episode “the greater good” gets away with killing Boone is to explain how he is responsible but not guilty in the same way that Schilingo does in the book lexicon of terror. [Emma added the remaining text in this paragraph.]

Many of those who worked during the Dirty War were unable to recall what had happened because perhaps they themselves are confused, but it is likely that they have been able to drive out their own responsibility through the rhetoric of propaganda they were exposed to as well as the diffusion of responsibility onto characters imagined for the time. This may be one of the reasons people kept referencing the country and the history as schizophrenic. Ibanez tells Sara Steimberg that he knows her son was thrown into the sea from a plane, but does not feel like a murderer because the flight was to “vindicate the innocent” (Feitlowitz, 208) The way he addresses the mission of the flight or the title of the flight sets it apart from reality by substantiating the deliverer of revenge for the innocent, as a hero. How could be a murderer in his own mind if he is still titling the flight as such? Naming and labeling as seen in characterization of subversives as well as in lost characters, is a way of creating new ideas of race and class and gender. Although they may reference commonly understood concepts of these ideas they are created anew with each cycle of people and events, including programs that are mock or artificial and aired
publicly. This is the role of propaganda during wartime and functions similarly to the subtle representations and reflections of colonial rhetoric in public broadcasting.

[PARAGRAPH 11: from Freewrite 1, paragraph 6]

Legality is a common part of how people construct their relationships with each other. The location of law is in common place social interactions, ranging from Family, to Communities, and all the way up to International Relations. When for example a woman does not assert her right to protection from abuse and is aware she has this right, and then chooses not to assert this right. She does this because of a conflict with informal law or social law between her and her partner. Like conflicts along the lines of gender binaries, race and class conflicts also affect legal consciousness (although, they are along hierarchies and webs of influence not just binary) and whether or not people assert their formal legal rights. I would claim that lost can and should be used in research of daily life and legality as it is a mimicry, (although its hyperbolized and dramatized with discordant music used to amplify impact of certain scenes and embellish heartfelt moments,) of contemporary life. In the case of lost it is social legality that in my opinion is an excellently focused through the dramatic nature of interpersonal relationships. Especially in the case of a plane crash, it sets the scene for a variety of different people to be reacting and interacting to and with each other in a surreal landscape that embodies themes of purgatory and chaos theory. All of the myths and legends that are used to crash like a wave over people in a /. It captures people with a crash of emotions and fervent demonstration of conflict through myth, faith, fate, good and evil, life and death, nature and nurture in order to flood people emotion, thus; leaving them incredibly impassioned. However, this passion is not directed toward any of the motifs used to incite those feelings
but in fact are directed back into passion for the show itself and, created a mob-like pop culture following. As 13.62 million people viewed the show this week according to the Nielsen Rating. This was no doubt created through careful marketing techniques in conjunction with the delivery of the material within the show itself. There are networks of fan groups on the Internet where people can get together to share their passion and communicate their reaction to each other. This is shown in many forms, banners with photographs of the fan pasted into photos with their favorite actor and alternative reality games in which people engaged in playing out roles and guessing what will happen next on the show. What are the implications of the viewers’ reactions? How is it possible that the working class can relate to a set of characters in such an unbelievably unrealistic situation?

[PARAGRAPH 12: from Freewrite 1, paragraph 7]

The characters in lost assert themselves in different ways in particular situations due to the weight of their “legal consciousness” I hesitate to give the characters legal consciousness directly but it is the in fact the consciousness written into the character and interpreted according to each viewer.

[PARAGRAPH 13: from Freewrite 1, paragraph 5]

In the case of Sayid Jerrah and his “otherness” within the survivor community based on his portrayal as a terrorist/torturer and the direct link of those items to his ethnicity. This character never gains citizenship or membership in any of his communities and is outcast as a refugee with no formal rights in any of the many circles of community he enters. His identity exclusively includes him in order to have him do certain types of work. This is directly linked the ideas of Racial Naturalization and Exclusive Inclusion by
Devon Carbado.

[PARAGRAPH 14: comes from Freewrite 1, paragraph 4]

Sayid Jarrah is the only middle eastern character and his role in the group of survivors is the "torturer". This role and his placement as someone who has been tortured and went on to serially torture others, in flashbacks as well as on the island. Some say that his character is likely inspired by Edward Said. Edward Said is famed for describing the "subtle and persistent Eurocentric prejudice against Arabo-Islamic peoples and their culture." (Windschuttle) The connection that I see between this modern scholar and the character is that they both experience similar prejudices and resist them by asserting themselves as much as they can. In Sayid’s relationships to the other characters as well as they way the flashbacks define his integrity and personal history is racialized. There is inclusive exclusion across the show in building him up as a possible model immigrant with his cooperation with American government, English speaking skills (refer to footnote on accent) and CIA cooperation. On the flip side however, he is broken down through attacks from other survivors accusing him of being a terrorist and even accusations from the other survivors that he was responsible for the plane crash. Many of the characters that seem to be direct metaphors to culturally significant events or consistently serve as racial stereotypes. The significance of Sayid serves to remind people of current issues regarding torture and human rights issues in Guantanamo Bay and reflecting post 9/11 racial profiling, however they are reframed in this particular show in a way that puts the personal accountability (for these issues) on Sayid’s shoulders. The implication for this show is in the idea that immigrants are to be held accountable for all kinds of actions citizens are not expected to carry the weight of. Sayid is not a full citizen of the island
because of his nationality. This reflects current values and normative ideas of what you need to gain membership into a new community. This normative cultural perception of race is solidly based in legal text in defining the crimes of aliens and permanent residents as crimes of moral turpitude. Turpis literally translates in Latin to ugly. The word Turpe means filthy, foul, vile, and repugnant. Using this word in association with a certain ethnic and racial groups on the basis of citizenship (under the context of criminalization) status gives a stigma of debasement just in the term that is used alone. Themes of debasement assign qualities like savage, uncivilized, filth, indolence, lack of discipline, dishonesty and sexual promiscuity. “The belligerence of Arab nations, we are told, can be traced to the violence and fanaticism of the Arab character. Here synecdoche and metaphor combine, marking he individual as both cause and emblem of more general degradation.”(Spurr, 76)

We can clearly see how this happens both on the show lost in the case of Sayid and how it is a reflection of popular understanding of race and ethnicity in American/Western culture. This cultural normative perception is so pervasive it is even legitimized and solidified in Immigration policy and Immigration Law. The consequence of disobeying this Law is complete exile from the country and by proxy a person’s entire life is taken away.

[PARAGRAPH 15: from Freewrite 3, paragraph 8]

Sayid is also interesting because he speaks English with a slight and subtle British accent and in the show there are a series of flash backs that indicate that before he landed on this island he had a long history filled with war, torture and cooperation with the American government. The presence of Sayid and his articulate English skills he tells a specific story in a voice that an Anglo-American can understand and relate to. He does not speak with an Iraqi accent from anything I can personally discern and this leads me to
believe that he is representing hegemonic paradigm and racially identifying people that look like him, (Iraqi’s specifically and the whole Middle East in general) The role that Identity plays in this show is integral. This is how the plots are built and this is how the characters are imagined. There is a system of using American /western cultural references to serve as signifiers to help distinguish the value of each character and the level of trust aka membership that they have gained. In deportation this trust is translated into right to have rights or the concept of citizenship. Illegal Aliens much like Sayid on Lost start out with no rights because they are not considered a valued part of the group not due to their potential value or their skill set but based on the labor they have preformed in Sayid’s case it was torture that signified him specifically as a bad and dangerous remorseless man who will not be saved from the Rapture. Immigrants are judged based on the labor that they have been cornered into by the demands of the market and push pull factors that bring in immigrants to begin with. These people include Refugees and Migrant laborers. These people all do jobs that are stigmatized as “bad” and undesirable (often due to wage) which in fact justifies and grounds the racial stereotypes of the people pigeonholed into those positions. This is one negative feedback loop that seems to perpetuate and continue to affirm itself until something drastic happens and the bubble bursts. [Emma added the following sentence.] Perhaps Lost in future episodes will provide enough action and drama to turn racial perceptions upside down?

[PARAGRAPH 16: from Freewrite 1, paragraph 3 and from Freewrite 3, paragraph 8]

The formation of identity is a part of what makes humans human. This formation of identity involves an understanding of the self, but in a social context as well as on a
personal basis. Cultural norms affect and become imbedded into identity. The history of organization can be viewed economically. Thus, Racial distinctions come with the stigma of the labor fields the groups have been relegated to. These norms are constantly in flux because over time different groups are at the bottom of different hierarchies and polarizations. The jobs that signify being at the bottom of the barrel include most prominently field labor. During Slavery as well as Migrant Labor at present (and historically convict labor) all were subjected to picking crops, thinning seedlings, building infrastructure and other physical labor requiring back breaking work.

[PARAGRAPH 17: from Freewrite 3, paragraph 1]

On the fan site called “Lostpedia” there is an article on leadership and what makes each of the main leading characters a good and a bad leader. The de facto leader jack is said to have these particular favorable qualities; for example, he is the only character with a post graduate degree because he was a surgeon. The infallibility of this position as a doctor is mimicked in a slew of popular television shows ranging from comedies to drama with ER, Scrubs, House, Greys Anatomy, and Doogie Hauser. The characters that have been understood as valiant and loveable professionals helps to keep the profession of M.D. in good public standing and serves to give the profession even more credibility not only are they the authority on medical and health issues of the body but they are community leaders and given authority in society at large even when matters extend outside of medicine. Also, I have found that in my personal experience it is the profession most parents encourage as being the end all be all of family pride is to have a doctor in the family. It is a signifier of education, wealth and determination and expertise. Many immigrants often push their children into medicine because of the money as well as the
social status M.D. implies. This reflects assimilation to the hegemony by having a sub-cultural acknowledgement of the position as one of true and legitimate authority. *Lost* like many other shows creates cultural norms and reflects them simultaneously.

[Emma added works cited.] Citations:


Nielsen Ratings posted on:


Wikipedia Article on Lost:


