Coming of Age as a WPA: From Personal to Personnel

Jeanne Marie Rose

The storytelling that Stephen North has termed *lore* has become a viable mode of knowledge production for writing program administrators, whose scholarship frequently explores WPA work in light of personal experiences. As Diana George explains, storytelling "is necessary if we are to pass on more than theory and pedagogical or administrative tactics to those who come after us" (xii). Not surprisingly, autobiographical narratives have paid particular attention to the challenges faced by inexperienced WPAs (Goodburn and Leverenz; Leverenz; Mirtz et al.; Pemberton; Rhodes). Considered alongside research and position statements depicting program administration as a tenure liability (Barr-Ebest; Hult et al.; Micciche), such stories point to the very personal consequences awaiting new faculty who take on administrative responsibilities. Even as many of these writers probe the interpersonal relationships surrounding their work, it was easy for me, a new WPA and recent PhD reading their scholarship narratives without benefit of concrete work experience, to interpret them as stories of individual achievement, adversity, or both.

I certainly do not wish to hold these writers responsible for my own shortcomings as a reader; I do, however, believe that new and prospective WPAs—of whom there will be plenty, given market realities[1]—need to begin their positions prepared to address the complex *interpersonal* relationships they will encounter, particularly with teachers in the programs they direct. Because administrators' relationships with writing teachers represent a part of program identity that is inextricable from WPAs' individual experiences, challenges, and successes, I would like to see the subject of faculty relations treated more explicitly in WPA scholarship, particularly if the interpersonal demands of administrative work are as opaque to others as they were to me.

To that end, this article proposes theories of management as a route toward cultivating a programmatic ethos that organizes faculty relationships. I begin by applying Thomas Peters's theories of corporate excellence to writing program administration, even though his business orientation may appear to contradict both the university's characteristic concern for individual accomplishment and composition studies' critiques of corporatization. I then relate selected encounters from my first year as a WPA, assessing these interpersonal exchanges through the lens of Peters's management theory. When WPA stories encompass the personal and the interpersonal, I argue, they pose a valuable site for reflection and professional development. While this awareness is useful to all WPAs, I conclude by suggesting that examining WPA work—and the published and private narratives through which we construct that work—in terms of personnel relations can be particularly valuable to recent PhDs-cum-WPAs, who, while navigating administrative work in the context of an unfamiliar environment populated by new colleagues, may unwittingly fail to pursue the relationship-building that is essential to program development.

Lessons from Management

In light of higher education's decreasing job security and increasing reliance on flexible labor, looking to management theory for ethical guidance in WPA work may seem a curious, if not a spurious, choice. Indeed, the values systems into which composition PhDs have been socialized have a complicated and nuanced relationship to management. On the one hand, management and its association with teamwork and shared production seem antithetical to university reward systems, which typically demand individual achievement in the measurable form of single-authored publication. While composition as a field has long championed collaborative writing, university promotion and tenure guidelines have been slow to validate this work.[2] Perhaps more significantly, the term *management* may feel like a slur or an accusation, associated with the lingering specter of James Sledd's "boss compositionist" (275) and an ideology of capitalist individualism that recent materialist (Bousquet, "Composition"; Horner) and feminist (Schell) critiques of composition indict for sustaining inequitable working conditions.

Despite the apprehension surrounding discussions of management, individualism, and labor in rhetoric and composition, I want to suggest that management theory's emphasis on interpersonal relationships can help to create fresh concepts for WPA practice.[3] I make this recommendation uneasily. Given Marc Bousquet's suggestion that "the managerial subjectivity predominates in composition studies" ("Composition" 494), I question whether I should be apologizing for invoking the potentially responsive, practical,

and creative implications of management theory. I am not encouraging WPAs to relinquish their criticisms of management and corporatization; on the contrary, I believe incorporating critique into our applications of management theory allows us to modify such theories according to our field's values and enhances our capacity for ethical leadership.[4] With that goal in mind, I want to examine managerial trends over the last twenty years as presented in the work of Thomas Peters, whose attention to organizational culture resonates with the challenges WPAs face as they pursue program and faculty development. Because writing programs bear more resemblance to the fairly static institutional structures of the 1980s than to today's rapidly fluctuating corporate arrangements, I turn to Peters's early work with coauthors Robert Waterman and Nancy Austin as a means of considering WPA leadership.[5]

Writing in 1982, Peters and Waterman suggest that inattention to workers' knowledge has been a characteristic problem with management theory, which has been dominated by an abstract, "rationalist model" that "seeks detached analytical justification for all decisions" (29). Thought to ensure corporate productivity in both manufacturing and service industries, the rationalist style of management typically involves formal structures that exclude workers or merely pay lip service to their opinions. Managers, in turn, see themselves as responsible for making decisions and giving directions.

Peters's philosophy of leadership, articulated first with Waterman, then with Austin (1985), represents a shift away from the rationalist model. To that end, he and his coauthors offer practical strategies designed to assist managers in overcoming the institutional barriers that constrain their work. To cultivate authentic yet informal exchange, Peters and Waterman urge leaders to adopt Hewlett Packard's philosophy of "management by walking about" or MBWA (122). At one time a radical approach, Hewlett Packard's method requires managers to leave their offices, stroll the shop floors and lunchrooms, participate in casual conversations, and, above all, *listen* to what others have to say. MBWA's intent is not to control or monitor. It strives to create a climate of informal and spontaneous communication, comprised of the "irrational, intuitive, and informal" energies of managers and employees alike (Peters and Waterman 11). The 3M corporation has a similar approach:

> At 3M there are endless meetings, though few are scheduled. Most are characterized by people casually gathering together—from different disciplines—to talk about problems. The campus-like setting at St. Paul helps, as does the shirtsleeves atmosphere, the no-nonsense Midwestern engineering backgrounds,

> the inbred nature of the organization that ensures that people get to know one another over time. It adds up to the right people being in touch with one another very regularly. (Peters and Waterman 218)

As Peters and Waterman explain, the informal MBWA modeled by HP and 3M leads to transparent communication through which co-workers speak openly in the interest of problem solving: "The main reason people need not hide is that they talk all the time. A meeting is not a rare, formal—and thus political—event" (219). Although I'm uncomfortable with the notion that communication can be neutral or apolitical, particularly in environments marked by stark power differentials, Peters and Waterman make an apt point: if communication occurs consistently and informally, colleagues are more likely to exchange ideas without fear of reprisal.

For informal communication networks to thrive, managers must value employees' expertise and emphasize "listening, trust and respect for the dignity *and* the creative potential of each person in the organization" (Peters and Austin 5). Put into practice, this philosophy of leadership manifests itself in town meeting styles of governance, in which leaders regularly ask for employees' suggestions and reliably implement them. Peters and Austin insist that leaders "be meticulous in having meetings in other's offices/spaces rather than [their own]" (32) so as to reinforce their support for others. A less formal way to convey a commitment to listening involves periodic social gatherings or "beer busts" (Peters and Austin 29). Peters also stresses the configuration of workspace in facilitating authentic exchange. He and Austin relate an anecdote about an executive who physically removed the door from his office, only to be outdone by a colleague who placed his desk in the reception area outside of his office (31). In these instances, Peters and his coauthors stress the need to eliminate overt and subtle signs of an us-them relationship. Peters and Austin consequently recommend that leaders regularly assess their "contempt/respect IQ" (208), a suggestion that showcases the extent to which even an unarticulated or unconscious attitude can shape workplace relations.

A skeptical reading of these practices might resemble Bousquet's assessment of "Toyotism" or "soft management" practices, involving "partial worker autonomy and participatory management techniques with the aim of maximizing worker loyalty to the company with whom he or she feels a primary identity of interest, rather than [to the] other workers" ("Discipline" 920). Insofar as MBWA may elicit self-surveillance should employees assume they are being watched by those bearing institutional power, Foucault's panopticon also comes to mind. While Peters and his coauthors do equate employee loyalty with the enhanced performance implicit in Bous-

quet's and Foucault's critiques, Peters, Waterman, and Austin take pains to dissociate themselves from strategies of management designed to garner an advantage over employees, even while they recognize MBWA's potential for this kind of abuse. Invoking the principle of integrity, Peters insists that his recommendations should foster the relationship-building typically omitted from discussions of management, rather than serve as "*tools* anyone can use to gain immediate advantage" (Peters and Austin 34).

Nothing in Peters's theory of management is particularly radical; Peters, describing his previous body of work, refers to it as "the technology of the obvious" (Peters and Austin 8), and experienced WPAs likely employ similar techniques on a regular basis. As much as Peters's suggestions resonate with WPA responsibilities, however, adjusting his advice into best practices for novice administrators poses substantive challenges, not least of which is WPAs' inability to offer the profit-sharing incentives through which corporate managers motivate employees. Even more frustrating is the extent to which writing programs staffed by contingent faculty and directed by a tenure-track WPA are founded upon the us-them hierarchy that Peters cautions against. As composition has defined itself as a scholarly discipline and PhD-certified researchers have taken positions as program administrators, new WPAs commonly find themselves supervising contingent teachers who have considerably more years of experience yet are "effectively disenfranchised as knowledge-makers" (North 23). Hiring practices, as WPAs have long acknowledged, further exacerbate these tensions. Like the chief operating officer who insists, much to Peters's and Austin's dismay, "You don't have to be all that bright to run a store" (203–04), upper administrators convey a similar philosophy, suggesting that "anyone can teach first-year composition" when they permit writing courses to be staffed at the last minute. Such inequality goes well beyond assumptions about contingent faculty members' intellectual credibility, as a comparison of WPAs and contingent workers' salaries, benefits, relative job security, office space, and other resources makes clear.

Though many WPAs recognize and accept their inability to effect comprehensive institutional change, even small-scale cultural change—developing informal communication networks, for example—can seem beyond our reach, especially if we are new to administrative work. Full-time and contingent faculty are more likely to have disparate professional goals than the managers and employees Peters discusses. Academic scheduling precludes shared time and space because faculty teach in different classrooms, at different times, on different days. Many writing instructors teach at second and even third institutions. Their offices—if they exist—are often inhospitable. When WPAs and individual faculty can meet in person, larger program-

wide communication networks seem nearly impossible to create, much less sustain, as are the informal social gatherings that Peters considers essential to excellence. While e-mail mitigates this challenge, it cannot substitute for face-to-face interactions.

In addition to—perhaps as a result of—these pressing logistical problems, mutual distrust and suspicion can be characteristic of WPA-faculty exchange. WPAs frequently hold contradictory roles as mentor and evaluator, advocate and boss. These inconsistencies manifest themselves in various ways. Writing faculty, for example, may hesitate to express their concerns or offer candid feedback to WPAs who could influence their future teaching appointments. In some cases, such as in rural areas with stiff competition for adjuncts, WPAs might act disingenuously, withholding constructive criticism or falsely flattering adjuncts as a functional strategy to staff classes. Institutional realities have a distinctly emotional character as well. Often younger and less experienced than the writing faculty with whom they work, program administrators may elicit complicated responses, possibly envy, from contingent faculty facing thwarted careers in a job market with a depressing labor surplus. WPAs, meanwhile, might harbor prejudices against teaching strategies that are inconsistent with the most recent theories, feeling powerless to change these methods yet resentful toward faculty who champion them.

As much as I would like to claim that management theory enabled me to negotiate labor inequity, cultivate an atmosphere of reciprocal trust, and promote excellence in teaching, I, like many others, will no doubt struggle with these challenges indefinitely. If Peters's work did not provide clear solutions, however, it did help me to reflect upon the mistakes I made as a new WPA, making me aware of what I might have done differently. In particular, Peters's theories of management helped me to view my interactions with contingent faculty in terms of ethical interpersonal relations rather than through the narrow parameters of my own subjectivity. Therefore, I now turn to my first year as a WPA, to examine my experiences through the lens of management theory. Through this critique, I aim to raise awareness of WPAs' need for practical guidance when negotiating relationships with contingent faculty. I hope that my discussion will pose strategies through which new and experienced WPAs might ameliorate the working relationships in their own writing programs.

My Life as a Secret Shopper

After earning my PhD in summer 2001, I began an assistant professorship at Penn State Berks–Lehigh Valley College, a two-campus institution within the Penn State University system. I assumed the role of composition

coordinator one year later, in fall 2002. While Penn State University's Composition Program, housed at University Park, determines course descriptions, placement, and program policy for all locations, individual instructors may choose from among a list of approved texts and assignments, which they may supplement, and in some cases substitute, with other materials.[6] My position consequently involves working with the ten to fifteen adjuncts, six full-time lecturers, and three to five tenure-line faculty who teach writing at Penn State Berks–Lehigh Valley in any given semester. The writing program typically offers fifty sections of first-year composition each fall, a third of which are developmental courses that carry no graduation credit. In addition to coordinating staffing, recruiting and interviewing prospective faculty, planning professional development events and monthly staff meetings, and overseeing the first-year writing award, my primary responsibility has been to provide mentoring and formative feedback to part-time writing instructors. These include current and retired high-school teachers, graduate students at a neighboring institution, former journalists, freelance writers, and parents raising young children.

Despite its hierarchical flavor, this emphasis on mentoring part-time instructors makes a certain amount of sense when examined in light of the college's institutional dynamics. All full-time English faculty are members of the Division of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS), our college's alternative to departments. As such, full-time faculty who teach writing report to the HASS division head, who evaluates them annually. Because part-time faculty members do not participate in any formal review process, I was asked, upon becoming composition coordinator, to "work with them on their teaching." That is a request that assumes their teaching needed work (an assumption I did not question at the time). As I understood them, my responsibilities involved visiting classes once a semester for continuing adjuncts and twice a semester for new teachers; visits were always announced, after which I would draft an informal feedback letter to the instructor. These letters were to be formative, and none were shared with the division head, who is ultimately responsible for offering and renewing part-time teaching assignments. I routinely invited faculty to meet with me for pre- or postvisit conversations, ideally both. Given our mutual scheduling constraints, however, most of these exchanges took place briefly or electronically.

By this time, I had read the cautionary tales of untenured professors taking on administrative work. I knew the workload would be daunting, if comparatively modest measured against that of larger schools, despite released time that adjusted my teaching load from three-and-three to two-and-two. Yet, like many other recent PhDs, I was willing to take on the role of WPA when I was a second-year tenure candidate. Conversations with col-

leagues lead me to believe that many new PhDs see WPA work as an opportunity to develop a scholarly identity beyond the narrow purview of the traditional research model. Many of us are drawn to program administration because of its invigorating mix of teaching, research, and administrative service, a synthesis consistent with Ernest Boyer's now familiar assertion that service, when "tied directly to one's special field of knowledge," produces new knowledge and should be viewed as scholarship (22). Interestingly, this new generation of WPAs, the same constituency the Portland Resolution discourages from becoming WPAs until they are tenured (Hult et al.), may participate in the "intellectual work of writing administration" early in their professional lives and may eventually contribute to a revision of the ways in which departments recognize and reward that work (Council of Writing Program Administrators).

I don't want to minimize the risks that program administration can pose for assistant professors' tenure and promotion or to dismiss the reality that untenured WPAs committed to improving the institution's writing curriculum may lack the authority to bring about change. Laura Micciche's and Kim Van Alkemade's discussions go far in explaining why junior faculty are so often assigned WPA responsibilities and why the practice continues despite widespread objection among compositionists. As Van Alkemade explains, such practices serve the interests of university administrators seeking "specialists" to improve writing instruction while simultaneously allowing tenured English faculty, who are not expected to answer to junior colleagues, to maintain their established methods of teaching writing (qtd. in Mirtz et al. 92). Similarly, Micciche points out that

> [t]he typical assistant professor in such a position has little power, yet he or she is expected to be a quasi-departmental business manager and to offer some degree of guidance about writing instruction—though not *too* much—to experienced faculty and other teachers in English and across the disciplines. (434)

And so, suitably forewarned about the challenges I would likely face, the story of my life as a WPA began. As the following scenes—imagined as a whimsical film montage to disguise identifying characteristics—indicate, my experiences were not particularly distinctive:

> Pan students, most wearing baseball caps and sweatshirts, talking noisily. Enter twenty-something female WPA, wearing tailored slacks and button-down blouse. Capped and sweatshirted male turns to her and asks, "Are you new? Do you want to look at my syllabus? The class kinda blows but he's supposed to be easy."

> Cut to department hallway. Female writing teacher in late fifties talks with senior male administrator of roughly the same age. "I do not have to take orders from that kid!" she spouts. "I have been teaching at this college since before she was born! What can she possibly know about teaching that I don't?"
>
> Pan another classroom, students arranged in peer-review groups of four. Zoom in on our protagonist sitting with group of two men and two women. "So are you, like, a student teacher?" asks one of the men. "Are you here to, like, learn how to teach?"
>
> Cut to close shot of graying instructor. "Class, today we'll be observed by Dr. Rose," he announces, gesturing in WPA's direction as the students follow his gaze. His mouth curling in a snicker, he announces, "Yep, this is the big boss. She's here to make sure I'm doing my job." Students twitter their amusement. (Rose)

As these scenes suggest, I felt that my gender and relative youth prompted writing instructors to perceive me as a mock administrator with questionable authority. My physical appearance as a woman generally closer in age to students than to colleagues seemed to drive writing instructors' assessments of my competence. I believed that my colleagues' interpretation of my appearance negated my training in rhetoric and composition and seven years of experience teaching college-level writing, rendering me a "kid" to someone teaching writing since before I was born and "the big boss" to someone clearly amused by the prospect. Students' impressions seemed to follow suit because they typically saw me as a peer or prospective teacher-in-training.

Powerless to change my age, gender, or the responses these elicited, I attempted to make youth work to my advantage. Playing on instructors' assumptions about me - that I probably didn't know much and could therefore be dismissed - I began to construct myself as student-like, fashioning myself as a "secret shopper." As the following excerpt from a 2003 conference paper illustrates, my response to my professional context was blighted by a certain insularity:

> I've started to play with the espionage-like character of my job. I fancy myself the ideal "secret shopper," an emissary of the larger corporation able to blend into the crowd by posing as a customer, or, in my case, as an undercover student assessing how well the university is delivering its product. I sometimes imagine donning a new disguise each time I visit a class, the restaurant critic of peer review. Hair tucked up in a baseball cap, face

> barely visible, and I'd become another anonymous face in an 8:00 a.m. class. Last Halloween's Elvira wig and some pancake make-up could transform me into an undergraduate Goth. I began to have fun, fantasies of spy games and covert operations giving me a rush. Then I remembered that this appearance, an embodied contradiction of people's assumptions about authority and knowledge, is already sufficient for the task. (Rose)

Unfortunately, this tale reveals a naïveté about administrative work that I want to assess through the lens of Peters's management theory. As is painfully apparent, I failed to regard my work in terms of the authentic interpersonal relationships Peters deems necessary for organizational success. In light of Peters and Waterman's insistence that inattention to workers' knowledge is a characteristic problem with managerial philosophy (29), a similar inattention to teachers' expertise could be considered a core problem with my early administrative approach. I always announced my visits, typically asking teachers to choose which class I should attend, to moderate these observations' supervisory flavor. But imagining my visits as an opportunity to play dress-up or indulge in spy fantasies prevented me from interacting with teachers as peers. While I encountered resistance from writing faculty, I amplified the situation by exploiting the us-and-them dynamic that Peters asks principled managers to reduce or eliminate. By trying to blend in with the students, visually and factitiously, I created a palpable distance from the writing teachers, a separation that manifested itself in other aspects of my early administrative work: in language resonating with surveillance (i.e., "secret shopper"); in a meticulous schedule of observations that gave off an aura of formality, even if teachers themselves chose the dates of my visits; in allowing a few comments to color my relationships with a considerably larger group. Had I performed a "contempt/respect IQ," as Peters and Austin recommend (208), I may have realized that even if I truly viewed my visits as formative rather than evaluative, my actions gave teachers ample cause to distrust my motives. By ignoring our shared investment in teaching writing, I was unable to enact "listening, trust and respect for the dignity *and* the creative potential of each person in the organization" (Peters and Austin 5), much less foster a programmatic culture.

Although I learned about the writing program during my stint as a secret shopper, my information-gathering was no more than secret shopping. Because students thought of me as a peer, not as an authority figure, they readily shared opinions and impromptu course evaluations, as indicated above. I also could join students' peer review groups fairly easily. From this vantage point, I was positioned to read students' work, often drafts that gave me a sense of the instructors' feedback. These small group sessions permit-

ted me to glimpse how particular faculty members were describing the writing process, to determine whether I considered those comments appropriate, and to investigate students' responses - all information otherwise difficult to obtain. However, there was little context for discussing these visits with writing teachers other than to suggest that I questioned students as if I were conducting a consumer-satisfaction survey or that I read instructors' comments over students' shoulders. Hence, there was no mechanism for engaging teachers in authentic conversations involving mutual exchange. I may have felt moderately informed, but I could not put that "intelligence," in the sense of fictively-constructed spy work, to productive use. Consequently, my visits created, then reinforced, my distance from writing faculty, demonstrating a lack of regard for teachers' knowledge and reifying the us-them dynamic.

Had I been aware of Peters's or others' theories of management, I would have been better situated to build relationships with part-time faculty. Informal observations, for example, could have approximated MBWA, which may be passé in business currently but holds tremendous potential for writing administration. Had I cast these visits and follow-up conversations as an opportunity to validate and appreciate the good work that teachers were doing, to listen to their concerns, and to exchange ideas, I may not have felt a need to adopt the guise of surveillance. By incorporating casual interactions into these visits by arriving early and chatting with instructors, inviting faculty to have lunch or coffee, or arranging to walk to class together, my early administration years would have had more positive outcomes. My positive interactions with experienced faculty, many of whom have held part-time positions for years, in some cases decades, might then have been the norm rather than the exception. In spite of (or perhaps because of) positioning myself as student-like, some generous veteran faculty members treated me as an apprentice, through which I learned about the history of the writing program and the college, heard a range of perspectives concerning the school's undergraduates, collected teaching tips and similar suggestions. While these teachers perhaps understood that self-doubt prompted my role-playing, I infer now that, had I understood the integrity Peters attributes to MBWA, I would have adopted a collaborative approach from the start. My secret shopper method, with its minimal interaction, looked like spying and wrought more distrust than MBWA's high contact behaviors would have.

Fortunately, even without benefit of Peters's ideas, my administrative philosophy has now moved beyond secret shopping. I've stopped worrying so much about how I am perceived, visually and intellectually. As I begin my third year as a WPA, I hope I have developed working relationships with program colleagues that are more authentic, and I have taken steps toward building mutual trust and respect. While such abstractions can be over-

simplifying, I continually struggle to negotiate my program administration efforts, especially to foster a shared culture among a writing faculty that has a range of training and goals and consequently experiences the institutional dispersal of power in disparate ways. In addition to allowing my own diagnosis of a flawed administrative philosophy, management theory has prompted me to consider future steps for cultivating exchange among writing faculty as the program matures. One involves lobbying for a specifically-designated composition office, my own version of removing my office door (Peters and Austin 31); it opened on a temporary basis in fall 2004 and will hopefully become permanent. I'm admittedly apprehensive; rather than having one office-mate in a standard-sized two-person office, I would have twelve. We would participate in MBWA on a minute-to-minute basis, hopefully to a positive end. The vestiges of the us-them hierarchy would nevertheless remain visible through the allocation of desk space: one desk for me, which writing faculty is welcomed to use, and one desk for all twelve of them (an improvement over previous faculty-to-desk ratios for adjuncts at our college). This shared space is intended to serve as a venue for informal conversation among instructors, contributing to a richer sense of community through which informal communication networks can develop. Ideally, as a formerly personal space becomes a shared space for all writing personnel, inclusive of part-time faculty and WPA, this office will represent a broader programmatic and administrative shift rooted in a philosophy of management as collaborative interaction.

Conclusions

As helpful as Peters's theories have been in reflecting upon my administrative work thus far and considering its future directions, I discovered his work only when a reviewer for an earlier version of this article recommended that I explore business methodology as an alternative to secret shopping. Despite a tendency among some theorists to resist anything that resembles corporate methodology, management theory poses a rich and to-date undertheorized area for future research in program administration. Granted, many of the principles Peters discusses will be familiar to experienced administrators; nevertheless, lessons from management need to be presented to a broader audience of new and prospective WPAs, who may not grasp the extent to which interpersonal exchanges shape any program's culture.

In addition to helping WPAs foster writing programs that are attentive to teachers' knowledge, experience, and contributions, management theory reminds us that when we tell WPA stories, we are relating both the stories of individuals and those of programs, teachers, and students. As writing program administrators, especially as new faculty navigating the tenure-track,

we often feel powerless to enact major structural or organizational change. Management theory, however, invites us to listen to our stories—whether in our scholarship or those shared over happy hour conversation—through perspectives inclusive of colleagues' experiences. And, while reflecting upon our WPA narratives and weighing the values implicit in them may appear a subtle change, this practice, when adopted as a regular feature of administration, has the potential to promote ethical exchange and enhance workplace relations.

Notes

[1] A September 2004 search of the Modern Language Association's "Job Information List" found that, of the 147 rhetoric and composition positions advertised at the assistant professor rank, 28 positions specified responsibilities in WPA work and 2 others required participation in WAC programs. Taken together, these figures suggest that roughly 30% of the advertised positions in the field include administrative responsibilities. These ads, however, may mask departmental plans to place new colleagues in WPA roles, as indicated by broad statements calling for candidates with "good potential as a colleague for taking part in the life and work of the department" or prospective hires who possess "willingness eventually to take on some administrative responsibilities in the rhetoric program."

[2] Goodburn and Leverenz's experience as graduate student WPAs speaks to these simultaneous yet competing strains of academic culture. Dissatisfied with academia's preoccupation with individual achievement, they participated in a collaborative revision of their university's writing program, only to find that they were unable to escape the constraints of a system that expects and rewards individual accomplishment.

[3] Marcia Dickson references this ameliorative potential of managerial theory, noting the similarity between feminist administrative structures and successful business practices (152).

[4] Richard Miller makes a similar point about the salutary potential of managerial training when he proposes that PhD candidates in rhetoric and composition pursue an interdisciplinary program of study designed to prepare them for the administrative work they will be required to do upon entering the workforce. Such training, he hopes, will "arm ourselves and our students with the skills necessary to participate meaningfully in the construction of a university for the next millennium" (105).

[5] Though Peters's more recent work offers the same core philosophy of employee relations (see *Circle*; *Thriving*), the rapid changes wrought by

globalization prompt him to focus on large-scale issues of production and competition rather than on internal personnel issues.

[6] See the Composition Program Web site for more information.

Works Cited

Barr-Ebest, Sally. "Gender Differences in Writing Program Administration." *WPA: Writing Program Administration* 18.3 (1995): 53–73.

Bousquet, Marc. "Composition as Management Science: Toward a University without a WPA." *JAC: A Journal of Composition Theory* 22.3 (2002): 493–526.

—. "A Discipline Where Only Management Gets Tenure?" *JAC: A Journal of Composition Theory* 22.4 (2002): 917–25.

Boyer, Ernest L. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate.* Princeton, NJ: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990.

Composition Program. Department of English. Penn State U. 29 July 2004 <http://english.la.psu.edu/area.asp?id=95&>.

Council of Writing Program Administrators. "Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Administration." 1998. 9 Aug. 2004 <http://www.wpacouncil.org/positions/intellectualwork.html>.

Dickson, Marcia. "Directing without Power: Adventures in Constructing a Model of Feminist Writing Programs Administration." *Writing Ourselves into the Story: Unheard Voices from Composition Studies.* Ed. Sheryl I. Fontaine and Susan Hunter. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1993. 140–53.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* 1977. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage, 1979.

George, Diana. Introduction. *Kitchen Cooks, Plate Twirlers and Troubadours: Writing Program Administrators Tell Their Stories.* Ed. Diana George. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1999. xi–xiv.

Goodburn, Amy, and Carrie Shively Leverenz. "Feminist Writing Program Administration: Resisting the Bureaucrat Within.' *Feminism and Composition Studies: In Other Words.* Ed. Susan C. Jarratt and Lynn Worsham. New York: MLA, 1998. 276–90.

Horner, Bruce. *Terms of Work for Composition: A Materialist Critique.* Albany: SUNY P, 2000.

Hult, Christine, et al. "'The Portland Resolution': Guidelines for Writing Program Administrator Positions." *WPA: Writing Program Administration* 16.1/2 (1992): 88–94. Council of Writing Program Administrators. 9 Aug. 2004 <http://www.wpacouncil.org/positions/portlandres.html>.

Leverenz, Carrie Shively. "Tenure and Promotion in Rhetoric and Composition." *College Composition and Communication* 52.1 (2000): 143–47.

Micciche, Laura R. "More than a Feeling: Disappointment and WPA Work." *College English* 64.4 (2002): 432–58.

Miller, Richard E. "'Let's Do the Numbers': Comp Droids and the Prophets of Doom." *Profession 1999*. New York: MLA, 1999: 96–105.

Mirtz, Ruth, et al. ' The Power of 'De-positioning': Narrative Strategies in Stories of Stopping." *WPA: Writing Program Administration* 25.3 (2002): 79–96.

Modern Language Association. "Job Information List." 26 Sept. 2004 <http://www.mla.org/jil>.

North, Stephen M. *The Making of Knowledge in Composition: Portrait of an Emerging Field*. Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook, 1987.

Pemberton, Michael A. "Tales Too Terrible to Tell: Unstated Truths and Underpreparation in Graduate Composition Programs." *Writing Ourselves into the Story: Unheard Voices from Composition Studies*. Ed. Sheryl I. Fontaine and Susan Hunter. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1993. 154–73.

Peters, Thomas J. *The Circle of Innovation: You Can't Shrink Your Way to Greatness*. New York: Knopf, 1997.

—. *Thriving on Chaos: Handbook for a Management Revolution*. New York: Knopf, 1987.

Peters, Thomas J., and Nancy Austin. *A Passion for Excellence: The Leadership Difference*. New York: Random, 1985.

Peters, Thomas J., and Robert Waterman. *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies*. New York: Harper and Row, 1982.

Rhodes, Keith. "Mothers, Tell Your Children Not to Do As I Have Done: The Sin and Misery of Entering the Profession as a Composition Coordinator." *Kitchen Cooks, Plate Twirlers and Troubadours: Writing Program Administrators Tell Their Stories*. Ed. Diana George. Portsmouth, NH: Boyton/Cook, 1999. 86–94.

Rose, Jeanne Marie. "My Life as a Secret Shopper: Evaluating Adjunct Faculty." Council of Writing Program Administrators Annual Conference. Amway Grand, Grand Rapids. 11 July 2003.

Schell, Eileen E. *Gypsy Academics and Mother-Teachers: Gender, Contingent Labor, and Writing Instruction*. Portsmouth: Boyton/Cook, 1998.

Sledd, James. "Why the Wyoming Resolution Had to Be Emasculated: A History and a Quixotism." *JAC: A Journal of Composition Theory* 11.2 (1991): 269–81.