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ABSTRACT

Noting that universities seldom provide writing instruction at the dissertation level or, as is too often the case, at any level of graduate education, this paper provides a rationale for dissertation training at the graduate level, and explores the dissertation workshop at a west coast university. The first half of the paper discusses six compelling reasons favoring writing instruction at the dissertation level and refuting the false assumption that graduate students are rhetorically equipped to handle the idiosyncracies of dissertation writing. The resulting clearer thinking during dissertation writing, and long-term improvement in advising are also discussed. The second half of the paper describes the noncredit dissertation workshop offered to the graduate community at the University of California at Los Angeles. The nine three-hour sessions, which combine lecture and practical experience in prose analysis and peer editing, are described as follows: (1) overview (identifying the dissertation writing process and assessing support facilities); (2) research and organization; (3) writing and revising the rough draft; (4) workshop activity (students read and comment on each other's purpose statements using a prepared editing tool); (5) style; (6) workshop activities (students read and comment upon each other's revised drafts, then further revise their own manuscripts); (7) documentation, editing, and publishing; (8) workshop activity (students edit each other's proposals); and (9) final proposal tune-up. The paper concludes with mention of the enthusiastic response to the workshops, and a discussion of two benefits of the program as seen by the instructor. (HTH)

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Demystifying the Dissertation

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Demystifying the Dissertation

If academic writing is a problem-solving activity, then the dissertation is the ultimate conundrum. Among writing tasks it is a leviathan whose features are less familiar, and approaches to which are less charted, than are those of any assignment the student will encounter.

Yet seldom do universities provide writing instruction at the dissertation level or, as is too often the case, at any level of graduate education. The reason? Apart from scarce resources, there is a prevailing assumption that graduate students are basically equipped with the writing skills needed to handle any rhetorical situation in their disciplines, that somehow they will emerge from graduate school even better writers, ready now to publish professional prose--this with little formal guidance, except, in the case of the dissertator, for a content-focused adviser. The assumption persists despite often-documented employer complaints about the inability of the graduate students they hire to write technical reports, grant proposals, and the like, despite the deteriorating quality of journal writing across all fields, despite the recent calls in a variety of disciplines for graduate writing courses. Equating such courses with remediation rather than with advanced training, graduate deans resist their implementation.¹

With due regard for the writing needs of graduate students at entry and Masters levels, I would argue that several compelling reasons argue for writing instruction at the dissertation level:

1. Graduate writers are usually unprepared for such professional writing tasks as the dissertation. Often, especially outside the humanities, a student is likely to have had little writing practice--and less training--after Freshman English, a course whose function is not to initiate students into the format and style of a specific discipline. He may not even have had Freshman English, as a significant percentage of dissertators report having tested out.² If he did write after the freshman year, he probably did not get much feedback, and more importantly, seldom before the dissertation did he have to revise in response to the feedback he did get.

2. As noted above, graduate departments neglect training in writing. Individual departments may offer research and methods courses, but these almost always focus on acquiring knowledge, not communicating it. This is not surprising. Schedules are overcrowded and faculty are a scarce resource. Unfortunately, the dissertator assumes that he should already have mastered writing and hence does not ask for advice or assistance. Nor does the faculty adviser usually volunteer it, for he too assumes that the student knows how to organize and write professionally--despite what his own student experience may have been. Lack of adviser/student communication on this issue stalls many dissertations.³

3. The dissertation is a unique task performed in a unique situation. Besides requiring professional writing skills, the dissertation also has idiosyncratic features which writing instruction can address.⁴ It is not just a larger paper, though

size does distinguish it. Factors of independent research, the need to make an original contribution, and the sheer unstructuredness of the long dissertation period combine in a way for which nothing in the student's background will likely have prepared him. Further, in no other academic writing situation is so much at stake. Dissertating breeds special anxieties and neuroses--fears of not finishing, of not being perfect, and in too many cases, of not getting a job despite the vast time investment and personal sacrifice.

4. More attention to writing would result in sharper thinking. Even at the graduate level, the powerful connection between these two activities is often overlooked. Many dissertation students think of the writing done within a discipline simply as the medium for final product, not as a tool of exploration which in the early stages of the writing process can steadily refine ideas and their relationships. F. P. Woodford notes that careless writing in the life sciences commonly produces unintended meanings. Instead of using writing to clarify analysis, graduate students are too content with wooliness, whether in establishing the purpose of research or deriving conclusions and their significance. Woodford points out that such tolerance for shoddy writing can corrupt the student's reading ability as well, a circumstance lamentable in the humanities, dangerous in the sciences ("Sunder Thinking Through Clearer Writing," Science, 12 May 1967, pp. 743-745).

5. Greater focus on dissertation-level writing would have long-term benefits for both student and profession. Few academics

speaking enthusiastically about their graduate writing. In fact, many have had to unlearn writing habits acquired while dissertating, spending a year or more translating their dissertations into publishable form. Forced first to wallow in, and then produce, large quantities of academese, many students find the dissertation period so traumatizing that further writing is indefinitely postponed and contributions are lost. Writing instruction could help relieve this trauma.

Journal writing would also improve. Presently, complaints about journal prose abound in all disciplines, yet little change occurs. One reason for poorly written articles is their having been produced by writers who, without guidance as graduate students, learned to imitate the turgid styles of former generations of dissertators. And a hefty percentage of submissions come from recent PH.D.'s who are carving up their dissertations with as little revision as possible.

Finally, more emphasis on writing at the dissertation level would produce better advising in the future as trained dissertators, now more aware of the components of superior professional writing, themselves become advisers. The combination of informed guidance at the dissertation level and better models in the field could aid in relieving the epidemic of "Official Style" which continues to afflict the professions.

The following describes a dissertation workshop offered to the UCLA graduate community by UCLA Writing Programs. The non-credit course meets for nine three-hour sessions and combines

lecture and practical experience in prose analysis and peer editing. The overall goal: demystifying the dissertation.⁵

Workshop participants are from a wide range of departments: architecture, chemistry, social welfare, English, history, neuroscience, mathematics, nursing, political science, anthropology, education, psychology, and others. Despite the concerns of some graduate advisers that dissertations are too discipline-specific to be treated collectively, we find the opposite true: namely, that there is enormous common ground, from format to style. Moreover, the participants cite as one of the workshop's chief benefits the ability to gain a broad perspective on professional writing through lively exchange with colleagues from other departments.

Session One: Overview

Nearly all students have anxieties and misapprehensions about the dissertation.⁶ Hence we devote our first meeting to: (1) Defining the dissertation--its length, breadth, and distinguishing features.

To orient the beginning dissertator it is useful to elaborate a general context of academic writing--students seldom consider this terra incognita objectively--and juxtapose the dissertation with previous writing the student has done. Undergraduate research paper and Master's thesis provide key contrasts in terms of scope, purpose, audience, and expectation.

We inspect sample dissertations from various disciplines; students are then assigned a survey of recent dissertations written in their departments. In particular they are to look at comprehensive-

ness and length, determining what constitutes an acceptable dissertation project. Despite the difficulty of generalizing about either manuscript length or project time, we discuss statistical averages.⁷

(2) Identifying the dissertation writing process.

Because the dissertation period is so long--generally one and a half to three years of elapsed time--it provides an ideal context for a discussion of writing as process. Nowhere else have I encountered students so determined, given the traumatizing prospect of the whole, to learn how to divide the process into separate, manageable tasks. We discuss a concrete process model consisting of prewriting, writing, rewriting, and post-writing stages. In subsequent sessions we will identify the criteria for successful performance of each stage's several tasks.

Writer's block inevitably occurs during the dissertation process. Hence a consideration of blocking in the light of recent research in cognitive psychology can be a powerful aid, if only by laying bare the inner conflict between creator and critic, a conflict today's dissertator has probably not been trained to recognize. We discuss relevant principles as well as freewriting strategies (e.g. Peter Elbow's "Instant Version") which can unblock the most constipated writer. Students are assigned two freewriting exercises for the next session: (a) a project description, (b) an expression of their subjective attitudes toward the project.

(3) Assessing support facilities.

We discuss the adviser's role and other sources of information about university and departmental expectations. Then we take a larger view of available writing tools, examining a cross-disciplinary graduate writing bibliography divided into the following sections:

- a. Books on research papers, theses, and dissertations
- b. Research guides
- c. Writing guides for specific disciplines
- d. Style guides and handbooks
- e. Good general books on writing⁸

Session Two Research and Organization

(1) Most departments offer graduate courses in research methods. But often students have not had the course for several years; moreover, whether they've had the course or not, students generally acknowledge inadequacies when approaching a research project as large and professional as the dissertation. Thus it is useful to model a dissertation research strategy and point students to discipline-specific research aids.

Of primary concern are the criteria governing a good research topic, and most importantly, manageability. Many dissertators begin with topics that are too broad. We stress rigorously narrowing the focus (advisers cannot always be counted on to correct student misconceptions about size) and evaluate sample topics on this basis.

Students must design individual research approaches; nevertheless there are features common to dissertation research which justify general discussion. After an overview of the research

process and discussion of the dissertation research features which may be new to the student--its comprehensiveness and ongoing nature, for example--we consider the following:

- a. Sources of discipline-specific research information
- b. Computer searches
- c. Indexes and abstracts
- d. Note-taking and bibliographic reference
- e. Record-keeping⁹

(2) Just as nearly all dissertations use variants of the same research process, an archetypal structural pattern can also be identified, making discussion of organization fruitful, particularly since this area causes the greatest student uneasiness.

The basic pattern is as follows:

- a. Introduction
- b. Literature review
- c. Methodology and conceptual format
- d. Data analysis
- e. Summary and conclusion

This classic research paradigm is the same structure that students will employ again and again throughout their professional careers. It is useful to discuss it with them as such, anticipating professional writing tasks from the organizational standpoint, chiefly because students seldom think about structure in the abstract. Hence we cover looser and tighter forms of the paradigm, contrasting, for example, the standard form for theoretical papers with the highly stylized scientific paper, with its "Introduction," "Materials,"

and Methods," "Results," and "Discussion" sections.

After inspecting examples of the paradigm via proposals and abstracts (to illustrate how emphases often change during the dissertation process), we discuss ways of keeping the project's purpose, significance, and logical structure clearly before the reader. Then, shifting from global organization to that of individual chapters and sections, we review the typical "I-form" of analytic writing, stressing the importance of the kind of explicit meta-discourse embodied in transitional markers.¹⁰

Students are then asked to freewrite toward a purpose statement and to construct an outline, however tentative, for their dissertation, employing the relevant version of the research paradigm.

Session Three Writing and Revising the Rough Draft

As with the dissertation in general our chief goal here is to overview the rough draft process, seeing it objectively as a stage with its own foci and requirements. Given their self-imposed emphasis on product, dissertators characteristically look past the rough draft stage, missing its importance, ignoring the opportunity it gives them to discover subtle relationships between ideas and more importantly, to stimulate the creative unconscious. Only when the dissertator sees this stage as a place to experiment even to play, that he can exercise the freedom that will eventually result in a superior product.¹¹

We then shift to a full consideration of revision, and for many students this is the most valuable part of the workshop. For contrary to most of their previous academic writing, the dissertation requires enormous ongoing revision. Individual chapters must be

constantly revised, and later, the entire manuscript both before and after the defense. Lacking substantial experience, dissertators need revision strategies; these provide our chief focus in the remaining sessions.

We begin by analyzing revision's integral role in professional writing and the similarly newsworthy (to many) distinction between writer-based and reader-based prose. We discuss our own experiences as readers of scholarly articles and books, noting our anger and frustration when an author has not exercised empathy, has not abided by Wittgenstein's dictum that "Everything that can be thought can be thought clearly; everything that can be said can be said clearly."¹²

After emphasizing the social implications of the professional writing process and the irony that there appears to be a universal acceptance of the dissertation's unreadability--this despite the dissertation's being the student's chief preparation for discourse with scholars in the real world--we examine the dissertation areas in which reader-consciousness can be expressed: Interesting and artistic introductions. Thoughtful chapter development. Graceful, emphatic conclusions. Engaging style, suffused with voice. The very areas which we presumably stress in our undergraduate courses, but also the ones which professional editors target as the weakest in the scholarly manuscripts they receive. In each case we raise general consciousness of the issues involved, then discuss specific strategies for improvement.

To deal with the variety of other, dissertation-specific revision concerns, I distribute and review a revision checklist

involving such areas as title, table of contents, chapter types, and bibliography. Students are then asked to compose and revise a three-page purpose statement for the following session.

Session Four Workshop Activity

Students read and comment on each other's purpose statements using a prepared editing tool.

Session Five Style

Students invariably indicate a chief reason for taking the workshop is style. Most have not studied style formally. Those who have, did so in an undergraduate course long ago where they learned a style which ill-equipped them for the papers they were subsequently expected to write in their disciplines.¹³ Now at the end of their apprenticeships, students are about to embark on careers in which they will not only be invariably writing, but in which they may be judged on their ability to transcend the Official Style, to return to and refine a style they may have once learned but since jettisoned.¹⁴

Hence we begin with an overview of style and its importance. Our main purpose is to identify the traits of a superior scholarly style cited in editorial statements and style books aimed at professionals, then to review revising strategies which can help the student to incorporate them.

For most dissertators, the key, most obvious style issue is jargon, so we begin here. Nowhere else is the schizophrenia inherent in the dissertator's rhetorical situation more evident. On the one hand, of course, is "good" jargon (i.e. a profession's specialized or technical language), which is integral. But then there is also "bad" jargon, closer to the word's root sense in Middle

English's gargouin ("meaningless chatter"). The latter runs counter to what the student learned early, and certainly varies from what a professional audience expects from post-dissertation writing. Yet a widely accepted assumption has it that type 2 jargon is the required language of the dissertation.¹⁴

Our revision strategies are adapted from style texts aimed at the professional writer and particularly from John Trimble, whose three-part "tightening," "sharpening," and "brightening" procedure is an extremely valuable heuristic at any level of writing instruction.¹⁵ "Tightening" zeroes in on wordiness, probably the most characteristic feature of dissertationese. Via the overhead projector and hands-on experience we explore ways of compressing sentence openers and word clusters and eliminating over-reliance on academese's static fixtures: the prepositional phrase string, for example. "Sharpening" foci include the precise and concrete reporting of data as well as the use of lively verbs. "Brightening" surveys the magic zone of writing--the realm of metaphor and simile, wit, human voice, even the visual appeal of the printed page. The latter features, of course, are far from dissertationese, but for any good reason? It is ludicrous that at the high--and final--point of the student's career, we should fail to orient him or her to, and actually discourage, the traits we identify with the highest caliber of academic writing.

For the next session, students are assigned to run these style operations on their purpose statements.

Session Six Workshop Activity

Students read and comment upon each other's revised drafts, then further revise their own manuscript.

Session Seven Documentation, Editing, Publishing

(1) The specific forms of professional documentation vary widely across the disciplines. Even within fields one can expect great diversity, as reported by an observer who inspected fifty-two scientific journals and found thirty-three styles for listing references. Nevertheless, the philosophy of documentation is a shared one, and certain issues all dissertators should consider. We concentrate on the following:

- a. What to document, especially when writing for learned specialists. Insecurity, reflected in excessive footnoting, characterizes dissertationese and is another trait the student must eliminate before writing professionally.
- b. Whether to put the material in the text. Most students have not thought objectively of the relationship between the fast-moving and focused text zone and the slower-moving, blue-collar note zone. Nor are they comfortable with artistic, other-than-bibliographic functions: elaboration, cross-referencing, and modification, for example.
- c. Such characteristics of effective scholarly notes as accuracy, brevity, consistency, and empathy.¹⁷

(2) In no other academic writing situation will the student find the editing standards so high. Nor is there one, given the size of the task, in which he is less inclined to proofread. The focus of our brief discussion is the ideal of scholarly accuracy, yet one more characteristic distinguishing the professional from the

apprentice. We inspect various style sheets and discuss options for editing assistance.

Also, because no graduate student completely avoids discomfort with grammar, we discuss that discomfort in the context of both dissertation and professional writing.¹⁸ This is not remediation. Rather, we are attempting to finally rescue grammar from Miss Thistlebottom's hobgoblins, to redefine it as a source of artistry in meta-discourse and even as play. Particularly valuable in expanding awareness is material adapted from Joseph Williams' Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace ([Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1981], pp. 165-178) illustrating distinctions between rules, non-rules, and "bête noires."¹⁹

(3) After discussing the dissertator's last task, the abstract, we consider the mechanics of scholarly publication. Even though not technically within the workshop's domain, the subject is especially pertinent to the dissertator (and is one of the workshop's best hooks).

Because of its greater immediacy, we focus on journal writing; also, some of the students have had practical experience and thus brim with ideas and pungent anecdotes. We cover two principal areas:

- a. What the publishing opportunities are and how to make use of them. Sample topics include getting preliminary feedback, choosing a journal, query letters, collaboration, alternatives to article writing (e.g. book reviews), reviewer's criteria, what to expect, general suggestions that editors make.

- b. Similarities and differences between dissertations and journal articles. Covering issues of scope, formality, style, and format provides a useful opportunity to conclude the workshop's pedagogical component comprehensively, to demonstrate once more that the dissertation is kin to the professional tasks that follow, that its lessons vis-à-vis research, scholarly style, and the writing process in general should apply throughout the writer's career.

Students are requested to expand their purpose statements into tentative proposals for the next session.

Session Eight Workshop Activity

Students edit each other's proposals.

Session Nine Workshop Activity

Final proposal tune-up.

The response to the workshops, measured by a final questionnaire, is uniformly enthusiastic. The students cite many positive benefits; among these, information about dissertation management and the sense of participating in a community of scholars. The chief benefit, according to the majority, is a "new view" of writing, an objective outlook on the process and ultimate goals of scholarly writing.

For me, the workshop's value has been twofold. First, I have become more convinced of the value of graduate-level writing instruction, especially for dissertators. The fact is that the dissertation is not just more writing, but a different kind of writing; it should reflect a transition from student practices to those of the profession-

al. Why should there not be a guide to such reorientation during the dissertation, particularly when we can assume that for most dissertators there has been no formal training in writing since the paleolithic times of their undergraduate education--certainly no hands-on orientation to the style of superior scholarly writing within their disciplines? Such a guide is certainly a sane alternative to the traumatizing first response from a journal editor. Other gains to both student and profession, particularly regarding the quality of thinking and writing in both dissertation and the publications that follow, also argue for such a program.

The second personal benefit involves perspective on undergraduate instruction, my full-time trade. In a period when increased national attention is being paid to sequencing, I now have a more accurate idea of the specific writing tasks lying ahead for my freshmen; they profit from class discussions which place their academic writing on a continuum. Further, I think that I and my colleagues have much to learn from the dissertation-writing situation. (and from other graduate writing tasks as well) about motivation. Like my freshman classes, my dissertation workshop consists of a bright, capable group; what chiefly distinguishes them is their voracious appetite for information about writing, for strategies that roast the pig without burning down the house. Discovering more about the foundations of their motivation may help us to stimulate greater motivation at all levels of student academic writing.

Notes

- ¹ Even while articles with such titles as "Wanted: More Writing Courses for Graduate Students" appear in national journals, the number of offerings remains relatively small. In "A Survey of Graduate Writing Courses Offered at American Universities" (UCIA, 1984), Alan Golding and John Mascaro found that of 144 universities responding to a questionnaire (out of a target population of 212 universities included in the National Research Commission on Human Resources' 1982 assessment of research and doctoral programs in the United States), only 50 reported that they offered graduate writing courses of any kind, most of the 73 total courses being aimed at beginning graduate students.
- ² In my dissertation workshop, an all-too-common response to the survey question "Briefly evaluate your training in writing" is that of Pamela, a Slavic languages student: "Little beyond high school. No college English or composition courses."
- ³ A major reason why my own dissertation took three years to write was my adviser's frustration with my writing, a frustration which led him to threaten to quit working with me after two and a half years and also to pepper my chapter margins with such comments as "You'd have to have your head up your _____ to write a sentence like that!"

The fact is that graduate students want more information about writing; this is the motive most often cited for partici-

pation in my graduate writing workshops. Students may not have had a writing class for ten years or more; much research has occurred in that time which would directly benefit their dissertations: research on the writing process, on writer's block. A forum should be available for this information.

4 Hence such books as Gordon Davis and Clyde Parker, Writing the Doctoral Dissertation (Woodbury, New York: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1979) and David Sternberg, How to Complete and Survive a Doctoral Dissertation (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981).

5 Five of the sessions are pedagogical; I describe them in detail below. The remaining four, occurring in weeks 3, 5, 7, and 9 are pure workshop; we begin each with a brief discussion of issues raised in the previous session, then shift to a combination of individual tasks, peer editing, and private consultation.

We have offered a similar course, "Orientation to Graduate and Professional Writing" to entry-level graduate students and Master's candidates and provide various discipline-specific writing courses at the graduate level on a regular basis.

6 E.g. "I'd like to get over the feeling it has to be perfect." (Brenda)

7 Davis and Parker, for example, identify 225 pages as the median dissertation length in the social sciences and the humanities; the median for actual work months--as opposed to actual elapsed time--from start of topic search to completed dissertation draft is 14.

8 For a copy of this bibliography, contact me c/o UCLA Writing Programs, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

- 9 The need for review of these elements may not be obvious. Yet I am constantly surprised at how inefficient--in some cases downright primitive--the research strategies of the typical graduate student can be, at how many students, like the protagonist of the famous Charles Lamb "Dissertation," burn down the house to roast the pig. Though most were trained early in the use of note cards, for example, the practice of writing consecutive notes on loose-leaf paper is not unfamiliar. Nor is the tendency to take far too many notes. I get extremely positive feedback from reacquainting students with practices which they long ago discarded as part of the drudgery of undergraduate term papers.
- 10 Based on my experience working with graduate writers, I would identify the number one overall problem as lack of cohesion. Possibly because of their rhetorical situation, dissertators tend to ignore audience. This is a dangerous omission and, as editors report, not one that is necessarily corrected after graduate school.
- 11 Even the dissertator's famous tendency to pack in everything from his notes is legitimate here, even encouraged. For not only does subtracted material sometimes get lost, but worse, it cannot trigger the creative syntheses which are one of this stage's main objectives.
- 12 Only one of the demoralizing obstacles confronting the dissertator is the "Am I stupid?" syndrome, familiar to any academic who reads six or more scholarly articles on a given topic.

- 13 Richard Lanham calls the style promoted by Freshman English classes and the majority of their rhetorics "C-B-S" (i.e. clarity-brevity-sincerity) prose. He objects to this style's stylelessness, its opposition to self-conscious pleasure in words (Analyzing Prose [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983], pp. 2-12). A related, but more immediate objection for the university student might be that C-B-S prose can actually block one's cognitive development by preventing the formation of a more complex language with which to express complex ideas and rhetorical relationships (cf. Ian Pringle, "Why Teach Style? A Review-Essay," College Composition and Communication, [1983], 91-8).
- 14 An internationally famed social scientist, chairman of a department with whose graduate students I was working, confided to me that although he believes others in his field are brighter than he is, he has risen to the top because of his style, one which is not merely a good academic style, but a truly superior style, combining elements of C-B-S prose with personal voice, self-conscious use of rhetorical devices, and similar features of "literary" prose.
- For a useful, even if dated distinction between "good" and "superior" scholarly styles, see "Tips to Writers" in Journal of Educational Research, 44 (1950), 241-268. The article analyzes the results of a survey of seventy-five journal editors.
- 15 Hence the term "dissertationese." Could a reason for the argot's acceptance be the adviser's reluctance to deal with style? If so, this argues for the kind of resource which the dissertation workshop represents.

- 16 These operations are written up in a syllabus for Trimble's Advanced Writing course at the University of Texas.
- 17 Here again, it is surprising how we assume that graduate students know and use these criteria as working principles. Because most have not received specific training in the writing of their disciplines, they presumably internalize such information through osmosis. The irony, of course, is that the models are often bad. At the least we should offer the student informed guidance so he can distinguish between bad and good. Left to his own devices, the dissertator has neither time nor inclination to make such investigations.
- 18 Such discomfort is not surprising given the high premium placed on grammar by old-guard graduate faculty. As the official line on grammar loosens, the gap between student and adviser widens. I recently had a bad experience with a graduate faculty member who reacted in belittling fashion to the grammar of an informal note I sent him requesting information on student writing problems. Not only did he "correct" the note, but he sent a copy to the chairman. At issue were a discretionary comma and a pair of contractions. He totally ignored the note's content.
- 19 John Trimble provides equally interesting discussion of traditional "superstitions" in Writing with Style: Conversations on the Art of Writing (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1975) pp. 83-94).

To illustrate punctuation as play, I use "Notes on Punctuation" from Lewis Thomas, The Medusa and the Snail (New York: Viking Press, 1979), pp. 125-129.