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Merging Professional Academic Literacies and Identities: Four Case Studies of New PhDs Working in Composition

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MERGING PROFESSIONAL ACADEMIC LITERACIES AND IDENTITIES:
FOUR CASE STUDIES OF NEW PHDS WORKING IN COMPOSITION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania

December 2016

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This dissertation is a literacy-and-identity study (Moje & Luke, 2009) of four women who have recently earned PhDs in English with doctoral training in composition, are working in higher education as composition teachers, and are writing for academic publication. Situated theoretically within the social-practice perspective of academic literacies (Lillis & Scott, 2007) and of writer identity as a discoursal construct (Ivanič, 1998), this dissertation uses a case study design (Stake, 1995, 2006) to learn about the identities and literacies of these new PhDs as they work on professional academic writing from diverse institutional contexts in the United States. Data were collected through interviews covering the new PhDs' literacy histories, personal and professional histories, and present contexts; manuscript discussions about a professional academic text in progress; the new PhDs' CVs; and a participant check in which each new PhD reflected and commented on her case report.

The study contributes to literature on professional academic literacies, professional academic identities, early career academics, and professional issues in composition. The results of the study illustrate how professional academic literacies and identities shape and are shaped by each other. In keeping with case study methodology's priority on understanding a bounded case in its context, chapters four through seven present each participant's individual case report, rendering her unique situation of writing from her institutional context(s) and positioning in composition. Results developed by looking across the cases are presented in chapter eight. These

cross-case results indicate how the new PhDs' positionings within higher education are differently valued relative to a dominant discourse of being an academic; that processes of (dis)identification with academia strengthen or weaken the new PhDs' connection to professional academic writing; that family roles and responsibilities shape their career goals and thus their publishing purposes; that publishing is a way of accumulating capital which may be exchanged for future job opportunities in different contexts; and that two of the new PhDs have developed strategies for accumulating this capital quickly. These results inspire reconsideration of early career faculty development and writing support, as well as aspects of professional practice in the composition community.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a literacy-and-identity study (Moje & Luke, 2009) of four women who have recently earned PhDs in English with doctoral training in composition, are working in higher education as composition teachers, and are writing for academic publication. Situated theoretically within the social-practice perspective of academic literacies (Lillis & Scott, 2007) and of writer identity as a discursal construct (Ivanič, 1998), this dissertation uses a case study design (Stake, 1995, 2006) to learn about the identities and literacies of these new PhDs as they work on professional academic writing from diverse institutional contexts. The study contributes to literature on professional academic literacies, professional academic identities, early career academics, and professional issues in composition.

Over the past thirty years, literacy research has benefitted from a sociocultural, social-practice perspective initiated primarily by the work of Street (1984) and Gee (1990). The social-practice perspective focuses on what people do with texts in specific contexts. Viewing literacy as a social practice transformed literacy research. Shifting the research focus from literacy as a cognitive skill to literacies as ways people accomplish goals brought to light a mediating relationship between literacies and identities—that is, the idea that literacies shape identities and identities are enacted through literacies. Bringing this insight to higher education settings, Lea and Street (1998) argued that student writing needed to be understood as a matter of epistemology and identity, in other words, a matter of knowing and of being. Since then researchers have expanded the scope of academic literacies research to include professional academic writers, and their work has offered insight into how professional academics navigate

the English-dominant global publishing arena (Lillis & Curry, 2010), balance competing demands on their time and the need to produce publications (Nygaard, 2015), and (re)construct identities through everyday workplace writing (Lea & Stierer, 2009, 2011). Building on this literature and bringing the academic literacies approach to a new context of new PhDs in US composition, this dissertation is also part of a larger conversation about “how literacy matters to identity and how identity matters to literacy” (Moje & Luke, 2009, p. 416). In this chapter, I first describe my interest in this topic within the particular contexts of the study. Next, I sketch out the theoretical, conceptual, and methodological frameworks for the study, which are described in more detail in later chapters. I then set out the purposes and significance of the research, state the research questions, and provide an overview of the research design. I conclude with a preview of the chapters to come.

Context of the Researcher, Context of the Research

My interest in professional academic identities and writing comes from my work coordinating a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program and writing center at a public university in the United States from 2009 to 2014. In that role, I worked with faculty both one-on-one in the writing center and by leading faculty writing groups, facilitating their writing processes and offering feedback on their drafts. Most of the time, the faculty I supported were working on texts for academic publication. Even though it was my job to support these faculty writers, I was (and still am) a newcomer to academic publishing, and I was learning a lot about professional academic writing from them. The first glimmer of this dissertation appeared in a course paper I wrote in 2011, in which I used an activity theory (Engeström, 1987; K. E. Johnson, 2009) analysis to reflect on my writing center interactions with a particular faculty

member. What struck me in writing that analysis was how different the task of the writing center session looked when I changed the perspective from mine to the faculty writer's. Granted, I was only imagining that writer's perspective. Yet suddenly seeing the writer's purpose from a different point of view, in the contexts of academic publishing and of being an academic, inspired me to learn more about what writing, publishing, and academic work mean to different faculty writers.

As I dove into the literature on professional academic writers, I noticed early on that many first-hand accounts of academic publishing came from established, well-known scholars. For example, Monroe (2002), Casanave and Vandrick (2003), and Carnell, MacDonald, McCallum, and Scott (2008) all gathered perspectives on publishing specifically from senior academics. In light of that observation, I decided to focus my study on junior academics. As I describe in more detail in chapter two, the early career stage, with the turning point of doctoral qualification at its heart, is a time of identity and literacy transformation. Doctoral students develop researcher identities (Guerin, 2013; Hall & Burns, 2009), and dissertation writing can be a transformative experience, both professionally and personally (e.g., Carter-Tod, 2002; Urion, 2002). Although new PhDs have been trained as researchers, they find themselves in a variety of jobs, both on and off the tenure-track, which may or may not expect them to do research (Bok, 2013); in English Studies, the broader field of which composition is a part, less than half of new PhDs get tenure-track jobs (Colander & Zhuo, 2015). On the job, new faculty have voiced several common challenges, especially navigating tenure expectations (for those who are in positions that have them), finding work-life balance, and finding community (Austin, Sorcinelli, & McDaniels, 2007; Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin, 2000). How academics navigate their graduate

training, job searches, and new positions is bound up with the circumstances of their personal lives (McAlpine, Amundsen, & Turner, 2014). This dissertation focuses on the period immediately after doctoral qualification, and it looks at how identities and literacies shape each other in the lives of four new PhDs. The four new PhDs who participated in this study are all within just a few years of receiving their degrees. They have successfully overcome the many challenges involved in completing a doctoral program, especially the dissertation. They hold different types of jobs (two are tenure-track, two are non-tenure-track) at different institutions (two-year and four-year colleges, master's universities). The research expectations for their positions vary from non-existent to required publications for tenure. They have unique personal and professional trajectories.

These four new PhDs are also members of my own academic discipline: most broadly, this discipline is English Studies. English Studies in the United States includes several sub-disciplines (McComiskey, 2006), and my participants identify with composition, creative writing, and TESOL. All of them are first-year writing teachers. This shared disciplinary context has implications for the job opportunities available to them and the publishing expectations of their jobs. Overall, English departments in the United States rely heavily on part-time and non-tenure-track positions (ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing, 2008). This is widely seen as the result of a split between research and teaching functions—English departments need more teaching staff for first-year writing courses, with far fewer positions requiring research (ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing, 2008; Bartholomae, 2011). Teaching off the tenure-track, sometimes in multiple part-time positions, often means a heavy workload and few institutional resources, yet contingent faculty may engage in research and publishing anyway (Doe et al.,

2011). Then again, there are full-time, tenure-track opportunities for compositionists to manage first-year writing programs (Bousquet, Scott, & Parascondola, 2004; Mendenhall, 2014), yet there are also ongoing questions about how research—or “intellectual work”—fits into these administrative workloads and into a tenure and promotion file (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 1998; Donahue, 2013; Janangelo, 2013). The four participants in this study take up a variety of these roles within English Studies and composition and within and their institutions. One works multiple part-time positions while seeking a tenure-track opportunity, while another is content with her non-tenure-track positions for the flexibility they give her. Another is tenure-track and free (for now) of administration duties but still has a heavy teaching load. Another is about to begin a tenure-track, writing program administrator role. They all connect research and publishing to their roles in different ways.

My role within composition as a non-tenure-track writing program administrator and my early career status as a doctoral student placed me in the particular environments that sparked this inquiry. Since then, my positions within the field and the academy have changed. I became a mother, I left my full-time WPA position, and I became a part-time, temporary instructor. These *re-locations*, or “shifts in role, place, state or time, whether chosen or unexpected, that influenced present and future experiences” (McAlpine et al., 2014, p. 961), reflect my ongoing attempts at balancing work and life demands. My own experiences led me to question how I would be an academic and engage in academic literacy practices. What has opened my eyes to different possibilities for such engagement has been interacting with the four women who took part in this study. Each of these new PhDs work toward their personal and professional goals in different ways, bringing different meanings and processes to their writing and publishing.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks: Sociocultural Perspectives

This dissertation takes a sociocultural perspective on both literacy and identity. Sociocultural perspectives stem from the work of theorists like Vygotsky (1962, 1978), who proposed that language, thought, and activity should be understood as situated in social and cultural interaction (rather than as products of individual minds or behaviors). Scholars of literacy and identity have developed a variety of approaches under a broad sociocultural umbrella. The particular conceptual frameworks used in this dissertation grow out of New Literacy Studies (Gee, 1990; Street, 1984), a body of research which reconceptualized literacy from an autonomous skill to socially situated uses of reading and writing. Taking that reconceptualization to higher education settings is the academic literacies approach (Lillis & Scott, 2007). Academic literacies is “a critical and social practice perspective on writing and reading in the academy” (Lillis, Harrington, Lea, & Mitchell, 2015, p. 6), which emphasizes practice over texts, is rooted in participants’ perspectives on their texts and practices, and views options for meaning-making as contested. Academic literacies research also places identity at the center of understanding reading and writing in higher education. To conceptualize identity, Ivanič (1998) developed a multifaceted framework for the discoursal construction of writer identity. Further developed by A. Burgess and Ivanič (2010), the framework defines this multifaceted identity as:

constructed in the interaction between a person, others, and their sociocultural context. It includes the “self” that a person brings to the act of writing, the “self” she constructs through the act of writing, and the way in which the writer is perceived by the reader(s) of the writing. (p. 232)

Using Ivanič's approach, a researcher can focus in on any of the multiple facets of writer identity and consider how the elements interact. These conceptual frameworks have shaped this study's research questions and the methods used to answer the questions.

By asking how my participants' identities mediate their professional academic literacy practices, I am contributing to one of the larger questions explored by academic literacies research: "how are identity and identification bound up with rhetorical and communicative practices in the academy?" (Lillis & Scott, 2007, p. 9). Ivanič's (1998) concept of the *autobiographical self*, "the identity which people bring with them to any act of writing" (p. 24), is reflected in a research question about what identities each participant brings with her to the writing of a particular professional academic text. The frameworks have also shaped how I went about answering these questions. Academic literacies research "pay[s] particular attention to emic perspectives" (Lillis et al., 2015, p. 7). As this study was originally inspired by my work to understand a particular faculty writer's perspective on his professional academic writing, throughout the research process I have been most interested in how my participants understand their identities and literacy practices. Additionally, Ivanič's concept of the autobiographical self helped me focus on each participant's "interests, values, beliefs, and social positionings" (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010, p. 238). To answer my research questions, I needed to create opportunities for my participants to share their perspectives on who they are and what they are writing.

Researching Professional Academic Literacies and Identities

Throughout this dissertation I use the term *professional academic* to signal that I am talking about people who work in higher education—not students. I also apply the term to

writing, again signaling that this is academic writing done for reasons other than fulfilling a course or program requirement, usually academic writing for publication. I have taken up the *professional academic* term from academic literacies researchers who also study these writers and their writing (e.g., Lillis & Curry, 2010).

Of course, in reality the boundaries around *professional academic* writing and writers can be fuzzy. Graduate students routinely engage in academic writing for publication, and higher education staff write a huge variety of texts in the course of their work, much of which is not intended for publication. It is also not uncommon for someone to be both a student and a worker in higher education at the same time (I am as I write these words). But this study hinges on the ideas that professional academic writers have different goals and purposes for their writing than do student writers, and that professional academic literacy practices are worth exploring.

Practice-oriented (rather than text-oriented) studies of professional academic writing and writers are becoming more common in a few research circles. Specifically, researchers with backgrounds in literacy, education, and applied linguistics have adopted practice approaches to studying professional academics and writing for publication (e.g., Carnell et al., 2008; Jalongo, 2013; R. Murray, 2013; Nygaard, 2015; Wisker, 2013) and publishing practices of multilingual scholars (e.g., Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014b; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Mur Duenas, 2012; Olsson & Sheridan, 2012; Schluer, 2014). While all are focused on participants' practices and their perspectives on those practices, they use a variety of interview, survey, and observation strategies to collect their data.

This dissertation is organized as a multicase study (Stake, 2006). Situated case studies are common across many strands of socioculturally-oriented literacy research (Perry, 2012). Case

study methodology is useful for studies of reading and writing in social contexts because “qualitative case study was developed to study the experience of real cases operating in real situations” (Stake, 2006, p. 3). Some of the other characteristics of case study research that were particularly helpful for this study were the ability to offer “detail, richness, completeness, and variance” (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 301) and the ability to explore “developmental factors,” or events happening over time (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 301). Each case report simultaneously draws the reader into the participants’ life history, current interests and goals, and her decisions and processes for writing one specific academic text. Thus the case reports merge each writer’s identities and literacy practices, illustrating how literacies and identities mediate each other.

Purpose and Significance of the Research

The need to study professional academics’ literacy practices has been addressed by several scholars using the academic literacies approach. Lillis and Scott (2007) argue that because most professional academic writers are also teachers, inquiry into their literacy practices can “make visible the values and ideologies underlying dominant practices governing student writing” (p. 18). Furthermore, study of academic publishing practices “illuminates the politics of academic knowledge production in global and local contexts” (Lillis & Scott, 2007, p. 18). Nygaard (2015) demonstrates that professional academic literacies matter for research productivity—defined as “how much peer-reviewed academic output is published by faculty” (p. 1)—which carries material consequences for academics as they are evaluated and rewarded (or not) for the number of publications on their CVs. Finally, Lea and Stierer (2009) insist that studying academics’ literacy practices is essential for building an “understanding of professional practice in the university as workplace” (p. 418). The literacy practices of people who work in

higher education matter both for teaching and learning and for knowledge production. Adding to this line of inquiry is one of the purposes of this dissertation.

From the academic literacies perspective, any inquiry into literacy practices is, by default, also an inquiry into identities. Lea and Street (1998) established this identity perspective when they defined the academic literacies approach and said it “views student writing and learning as issues at the level of epistemology and identities rather than skill or socialization” (“Academic Literacies,” para. 5). This view extends to other groups of writers, such as professional academics, whose practices are explored using the academic literacies approach. Thus another purpose of this dissertation is to address the identities of professional academic writers, particularly as those identities shape and are shaped by their literacy practices. Studying identities in relation to professional academic writing also has significance for understanding research as a phenomenon. Brew and Åkerlind (2009) argue for more studies addressing how academics experience research, and specifically point out that “the issue of identity remains particularly elusive and demands greater in-depth analysis” (p. 212). Additionally, studying academic identities can provide insight into the effects of higher education structures. For example, Henkel (2000) demonstrated how changes in UK higher education changed what it meant to be an academic in the UK, and Krause (2009) reviews higher education literature showing how both global and local factors shape academic roles and identities. Professional academic identities, like professional academic literacies, have important consequences for both knowledge production and education.

Another purpose of this dissertation is to help fill a gap about early career academics’ literacy practices and identities. In the literature review in chapter two, I propose that while an

academic's junior or senior status is highlighted as a relevant identity category for writing practice, few studies have looked in-depth at the literacy practices or academic identities of junior academics. This dissertation adds the perspectives and experiences of four new PhDs to address that gap. Early career academics' experience with academic writing and publishing is important for understanding how research works, and Brew and Åkerlind (2009) point out that early career academics are largely missing from this conversation: "we do not yet know with any clarity how the experiences of these academics relate to, are different from, or grow into experiences as senior academics" (p. 214). The early career experience also matters for the study of higher education more generally. Taking a broad look at early career academics across all of their roles, McAlpine et al. (2014) demonstrate that studying the experiences of junior academics builds knowledge about how people learn to do academic work and how people engage (or not) with academic work.

This dissertation also contributes to a gap regarding the literacies and identities of professional academics in composition. While the word *identity* appears in recent essays about professional issues in English departments (Bilia, Dean, Hebb, Jacobe, & Sweet, 2011), I found just a few recent empirical studies touching on literacies or identities of professional academics in English Studies, all of them dissertation studies. Toth, Griffiths, and Thirolf (2013) have studied professional identities of two-year college English faculty; Cavazos's (2012) dissertation on Latina/os in rhetoric and composition connects experience of language difference with academic identity; and McIntosh's (2014) dissertation documents scholarly publishing practices of ELT professionals in China. None of these studies were specifically about early career academics. English Studies professionals have an interest in how new PhDs in the field navigate

writing for publication from the various disciplinary and institutional positions they occupy, since the work of these early career academics will shape the collective knowledge of the discipline in the future. Furthermore, as I relate in chapter two, literature on professional issues in English departments expresses concern over the divide between the tenure-track minority and the non-tenure-track majority. The four case studies presented in this dissertation, situated both on and off the tenure-track, speak to that divide and the role of writing for publication within it.

As a result, this dissertation adds to the literature on professional academic literacy practices, professional academic identities, early career academics, and professional issues in composition. Located at its unique juncture, the study also contributes to the broader inquiry into literacy-and-identity studies (Moje & Luke, 2009). Moje and Luke (2009) offer several arguments for the significance of literacy-and-identity research, including the ways research findings can help educators avoid making assumptions about students, to broaden literacy curricula, and to offer insights into the practice of academic writing. Referencing Street (2009), Moje and Luke observe that “strong academic writing, from the academic literacies perspective, depends on knowledge of self and on awareness of one’s identity enactments” (Moje & Luke, 2009, p. 434). While Moje and Luke are thinking about student writers in that quote, the same arguments can be applied to professional academic writers. This dissertation challenges assumptions about professional academic writers, particularly new PhDs in composition, inspires ways to rethink early career faculty development, faculty writing support, and practice in the composition community, and, most importantly, offers insight into the practice of professional academic writing, recognizing that “writing is an act of identity” (Ivanič, 1998, p. 32) and illustrating how literacy and identity “breathe life into each other” (Moje & Luke, 2009, p. 416).

Research Questions

As is expected in case study research, where coming to understand the case is the researcher's first concern (Stake, 1995, 2006), the research questions evolved during the course of the study. Ultimately, this study has provided insight into the following research questions:

1. What identities does each of these new PhDs working in composition bring to the writing of a particular professional academic text?
2. How do those identities mediate their professional academic literacy practices?

Research Design

After receiving IRB approval for the study in March 2014 (see Appendix A), I recruited participants in April-May 2014. Prior to collecting data, I met with each participant by phone or video chat to talk about the study and the informed consent letter (see Appendix C). Data collection began in May 2014. With each participant, I first conducted a semi-structured interview (see Appendix D) of approximately one hour to discuss her background (language and literacy history, personal and professional history) and her current contexts (both personal and professional). Next, each participant and I engaged in a manuscript discussion (see Appendix E), which ranged from thirty minutes for one participant to about one hour for the others. During the manuscript discussion, we talked about a specific professional academic text the participant was actively working on at the time. For three of the participants, the background and context interview and the manuscript discussion took place about a week apart, all completed in May 2014. Another participant, who chose the pseudonym Elle, needed to schedule her interview and manuscript discussion around other commitments, so her interview took place in August 2014 and her manuscript discussion in October 2014.

Preliminary analysis began as soon as data collection was underway. I recorded data collection events and my initial impressions in my researcher journal. I also began transcribing the interviews and discussions while data collection was ongoing. Immersed in these data sources, I drafted a case report for each participant, ultimately merging two of the organization options offered by Stake (1995): a biographical development of the case and my view of coming to know the case. The writing process for each case report was a major analytical step for me, developing my understanding of each new PhD working on writing in her own contexts. After completing the draft case reports, I sent them to the participants for feedback. I sent two reports in November 2014 and the other two in February 2015. All of the participants shared thoughtful responses to their draft reports, which I received in November 2014, January 2015, and February 2015. I revised the reports in light of their feedback, and incorporated comments from the participant check as additional illustrations.

After finalizing the case reports, I began cross-case analysis, following the procedure described by Stake (2006). I re-read the case reports, considering the research questions of the study and the unique situation of each case. I rated the importance of each case for understanding the research questions, and I identified the most important findings of each case. Then I considered the findings individually and rated their usefulness for understanding the research questions. Through a process of repeatedly grouping and reviewing findings ranked highly for each question, I developed tentative assertions—the findings of the multicase study. Then, by ranking, ordering, combining, and editing the assertions, all while considering the evidence and counter-evidence in the case reports, I developed the final assertions as they appear in chapter eight.

Chapter Organization

The literature review in chapter two defines the key terms of the study's theoretical frameworks, develops the need for the study through discussion of recent literature on professional academic literacies and identities, and provides background information on early career academics and composition. Chapter three describes the research design in detail, including the strategies drawn from the academic literacies approach and case study methodology. Chapter three also introduces the participants and documents the research process as it occurred. In chapters four through seven, I present the case reports for each participant. These reports are structured to merge a rendering of each participant's biography with the experience of working on a particular academic text, thus presenting an integrated view of her literacies and identities. Chapter eight presents the cross-case analysis, describing what the cases as a group suggest about professional academic literacy-and-identity, as well as discussing inspirations of the study, reflections on the research process, and final conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This dissertation, a multicase study of four new PhDs working in composition and writing for academic publication, is situated in and contributes to the following areas of inquiry: professional academic literacies, professional academic identities, early career academics, and professional issues in composition. At its unique juncture, the study contributes to the broader conversation about literacy-and-identity (Moje & Luke, 2009). This chapter reviews recent and foundational literature in these areas to develop the rationale for the study and to contextualize the case studies. Each section of the literature review also defines and elaborates key terms of the study's research questions:

1. What identities does each of these new PhDs working in composition bring to the writing of a particular professional academic text?
2. How do those identities mediate their professional academic literacy practices?

In the first section, I discuss the overarching sociocultural perspective and the particular conceptual frameworks I use to define *literacy*, *identity*, and *mediate*. Next, I review the approaches and findings of recent empirical literature on *professional academic* literacies and identities. Finally, I offer an overview of literature on early career academics and composition to provide background on the professional context for *new PhDs working in composition*.

Literacies and Identities

Moje and Luke (2009) define *literacy-and-identity studies* as “the move to study identity's relationship to literacy and literacy's relationship to identity” (p. 416). According to Moje and Luke, this move has been motivated by interests in 1) the actor's role in literate and

social practices, 2) the ways identity labels privilege and marginalize readers and writers, and 3) how people demonstrate agency and power when engaging with texts. In reviewing the literature on this topic, Moje and Luke found three shared assumptions about identity: all viewed identity as a social rather than individual construction; all envisioned multiple, fluid identities over a single, stable identity; and all assumed that an identity is recognized by others. These shared assumptions reflect a broad sociocultural orientation; however, “the meanings of identity and related constructs are often taken for granted, resulting in a fair amount of slippage in how terms and constructs are used” (Moje & Luke, 2009, p. 417). To avoid that pitfall, in this section I discuss key theoretical literature to clarify the terms and concepts shaping this dissertation.

Sociocultural Perspectives

This dissertation’s theoretical and conceptual frameworks are *sociocultural*, but what exactly does that mean? “The word sociocultural has taken on both great prominence, and, we would assert, some lack of clarity in application” (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007, p. 1). One way to understand what *sociocultural* means is to consider what it does not. As Gee (2000b) observed, in the later twentieth century, several academic disciplines saw

a massive ‘social turn’ away from a focus on individual behaviour (e.g. the behaviourism of the first half of the twentieth century) and individual minds (e.g. the cognitivism of the middle part of the century) toward a focus on social and cultural interaction. (p. 180)

Theoretical frameworks and methodologies aimed at understanding people’s interactions, activities, or practices within social and cultural contexts may be considered *sociocultural* in this sense.

One of the theorists whose work shifted focus to social and cultural interaction was Vygotsky (1962, 1978). Vygotsky wanted to understand the relationship between thought and language and how humans develop linguistic and intellectual abilities different from those of other animals. He developed many of his ideas through observations of children because he believed that the best way to understand the human mind was to understand how it develops. From this research, Vygotsky concluded that language and thinking develop through social interaction and that social interaction is the beginning of an internalization process through which cultural resources become part of how people think and act. He also emphasized that human interaction is indirect; he stressed the observation that humans use symbols to manage and change their relationships. This observation idea leads to one of Vygotsky's important concepts, *mediation*.

This dissertation asks a question about how identities and literacies *mediate* each other. *Mediate* is a term frequently encountered in sociocultural theory and research, often as part of a phrase like *mediate and be mediated by*. One of two meanings—or a combination of the two—may be signaled by this term. First is the sense of being in between two things, which implies that the relationship between those two things is indirect. Second is the sense of shaping, changing, or influencing something. Both of these meanings can be located in Vygotsky's work. Vygotsky's (1962) investigations into thought and language led him to conclude that the relationship between thought and language was indirect, with meaning in between the two: "Direct communication between minds is impossible, not only physically but psychologically. Communication can be achieved only in a roundabout way. Thought must pass first through meanings and then through words" (p. 150). In other work, Vygotsky (1978) observed children

engaged in problem-solving and noticed that the children actively used tools and signs (including language) to work toward goals, talking themselves through tasks. He observed that, by drawing on these resources, the children reshaped the task at hand: “as soon as speech and the use of signs are incorporated into any action, the action becomes transformed and organized along entirely new lines” (p. 24). So, in Vygotsky’s view, semiotic resources are in between the actor and goal, and these in-between resources shape, change, or influence the task. This idea that semiotic resources *mediate* human behavior is a key contribution of Vygotsky’s work and is foundational in many sociocultural perspectives.

Some sociocultural research on literacy and/or identity draws directly on Vygotsky’s work, while other sociocultural research finds its foundations in the work of theorists like Mead, Bakhtin, or Bourdieu, among others. Across various sociocultural frameworks, literacies may be understood as uses of language that are in between an actor and a goal, a way to achieve some purpose. Doing a particular identity might be the goal, or an identity may be constructed in the process of working toward a goal. Put another way, engaging with certain texts can be a way to construct an identity, and bringing a particular identity to a text will shape or influence how you read or write that text. This is how I interpret statements such as Moje and Luke’s (2009) point that “people’s identities mediate and are mediated by the texts they read, write, and talk about” (p. 416). Thus *mediation* is an important idea in sociocultural perspectives on literacy and identity, and Vygotsky’s work helps to explain what it means.¹ In this dissertation, the verb

¹ However, literacy as social practice scholars rejected Vygotsky’s claim that literacy leads to higher-order thinking (Gee, 1990; Street, 1984).

mediate in the second research question signals a mutually constitutive, reciprocal relationship between identities and literacies, in the sense of the phrase *shaped and shaped by*, which I also use to talk about this relationship.

Literacy as a Social Practice

One way to begin to understand literacy as a social practice is to consider how foundational work from the perspective has defined *literacy*. Street (1984) called *literacy* “a shorthand for the social practices and conceptions of reading and writing” (p. 1). Barton and Hamilton (1998) said that “Literacy is primarily something people do; it is an activity, located in the space between thought and text” (p. 3). Baynham (1995) defined literacy as “the uses of reading and writing to achieve social purposes in contexts of use” (p. 2). Taken together these definitions indicate that literacy is something people do and what they think of what they do. It is social, it is purpose-driven, and it happens in specific contexts.

New Literacy Studies. Another way to understand literacy as social practice is to juxtapose the perspective with an alternative view. Street (1984) distinguished between the *autonomous* and *ideological* models of literacy, two different stances he observed in research on literacy. Researchers subscribing to the *autonomous* model viewed literacy as a neutral, technical skill. Literacy was something people had or didn’t have. But, as Street pointed out, the “literacy” people supposedly had or didn’t have was actually just one particular way of using reading and writing (usually a dominant, Western, school-based way). In contrast, researchers subscribing to the *ideological* model “attempted to understand literacy in terms of concrete social practices and to theorise it in terms of the ideologies in which different literacies are embedded” (p. 95). Literacy wasn’t something people had, it was something people did. It became apparent that

there are many different ways of doing reading and writing—many different literacies—and that different literacies are valued differently depending on the values of the social contexts in which they occur. The ideological model was such a striking break from the autonomous model that the social practice approach came to be known as the New Literacy Studies (NLS).

Researchers working from the social practice perspective have used ethnographic methods, and the concepts of *literacy events* and *literacy practices* have been central to their work. Heath (1982) defined *literacy events* as “occasions in which written language is integral to the nature of participants’ interactions and their interpretive processes and strategies” (p. 50). Literacy events are observable. They can show a researcher something about what people do with texts, but they don’t tell the whole story. Building on *literacy events*, Street (1988) developed the idea of *literacy practices* as

a broader concept, pitched at a higher level of abstraction and referring to both behaviour and conceptualisations related to the use of reading and/or writing. Literacy practices incorporate not only ‘literacy events’, as empirical occasions to which literacy is integral, but also ‘folk models’ of those events and the ideological preconceptions that underpin them. (p. 61)

With this definition of *literacy practices* Street emphasized the importance of people’s meanings for what they do with reading and writing—the attitudes and beliefs inside people’s heads.

The conceptual frameworks of literacy events and literacy practices shift attention to how people are using texts, thus diverting attention from the texts themselves. This is another way to understand what it means to view literacy as a social practice. To some extent, practices are

emphasized over texts. Discussing the relationships between texts and practices, Tusting, Ivanič, and Wilson (2000) observed:

Several types of literacy practices can be identified: two important ones are, first, the social practices which give written language its purposes, in which the production and use of written texts is embedded; and second, the technological, interpersonal, cognitive and textual practices which are associated with the production of written texts. Practices therefore involve many processes; viewed this way, texts become quite a small element of an account of practices. (p. 213)

In this dissertation, the term *literacy practices* in the second research question encompasses both of these meanings: both the purposes for writing and the processes of text production.

An implication of the emphasis on practices over texts is that interviews and observation have been key data collection strategies, and texts may or may not be collected or analyzed. However, Tusting et al. (2000) also noted that researchers were interested in theorizing texts and practices in an integrated way. Examples of how literacy-as-social-practice scholarship does this include Ivanič's (1998) use of discourse analysis of a text alongside interviews with the writer of the text and Lillis and Curry's (2010) strategy of tracking changes to a text as it is drafted and revised over time, also in conjunction with ethnographic interviews.

To understand literacy as social practice is to understand literacy as *situated* in specific contexts. As Barton, Hamilton, and Ivanič (2000) put it, "Literacies are situated. All uses of written language can be seen as located in particular times and places. Equally, all literate activity is indicative of broader social practices" (p. 1). Furthermore, "literacies are positioned in relation to the social institutions and power relations which sustain them" (p. 1). Because of

these assumptions, literacy-as-social-practice researchers need to account for how they connect observable literacy events to the unobservable aspects of literacy practices, and how the events and practices are situated in broader social contexts and relationships of power. Purcell-Gates, Perry, and Briseno (2011) offer a theoretical model of a literacy practice to illustrate the layers of meaning surrounding any literacy event. At the heart of the model are the communicative function of the text and the text itself; these central two layers represent the observable literacy event. From there, the model expands through layers of social purpose (the social goal accomplished by the literacy practice), social activity domain (the focused area of human action, such as work, school, or civic action) and contexts (including personal beliefs, histories, and values as well as larger power relationships and social institutions). The theoretical model may be used as a heuristic for exploring a literacy practice.

Academic literacies. A particular strand of the literacy-as-social-practice perspective offers especially useful framing for this study of identities and professional academic writing. Denoting a body of research and an approach, the term *academic literacies* is used “to signal a critical and social practice perspective on writing and reading in the academy” (Lillis et al., 2015, p. 6). Developed mainly in the UK, in a context of expanded access to higher education, the approach challenged a widespread deficit view of student writing (Lillis et al., 2015; Lillis & Scott, 2007).

As a research framework, academic literacies gathered momentum with the publication of Lea and Street’s (1998) article, which distinguished academic literacies from two other models: study skills and academic socialization. The study skills model assumes that “literacy is a set of atomised skills which students have to learn and which are then transferable to other contexts”

(Lea & Street, 1998, “Academic Literacies,” para. 3). The academic socialization model assumes that “the task of the tutor/adviser is to induct students into a new ‘culture’, that of the academy” (Lea & Street, 1998, “Academic Literacies,” para. 4). The third model is the academic literacies approach:

This approach sees literacies as social practices, in the way we have suggested. It views student writing and learning as issues at the level of epistemology and identities rather than skill or socialisation. An academic literacies approach views the institutions in which academic practices take place as constituted in, and as sites of, discourse and power. It sees the literacy demands of the curriculum as involving a variety of communicative practices, including genres, fields and disciplines. (Lea & Street, 1998, “Academic Literacies,” para. 5)

The academic literacies model encompasses the study skills and socialization models but pushes beyond these by considering academic institutions as sites of contested meanings rather than as stable, coherent communities into which novices are initiated. Doing academic literacies involves practicing particular ways of knowing and enacting particular identities.

Further developing the academic literacies approach, Lillis and Scott (2007) defined its epistemology and ideology. The epistemology of academic literacies research is a “critical ethnographic gaze” (Lillis & Scott, 2007, p. 10). Following Street’s (1984) ideological model of literacy, academic literacies researchers use ethnographic methods “involving both observation of the practices surrounding the production of texts – rather than focusing solely on written texts – as well as participants’ perspectives on the texts and practices” (Lillis & Scott, 2007, p. 10). The ideology of academic literacies is “*transformative* rather than *normative*” (Lillis & Scott,

2007, p. 12). Rather than seeking to identify dominant practices and teach them to students, academic literacies also considers, for example, how alternative ways of meaning-making might be legitimized. Lillis et al. (2015) offer several possibilities for what *transformation* may mean, ranging from the design of policy and pedagogy to a continuous questioning of research findings to a focus on the transformation of identities through academic literacy. Academic literacies' interest in institutional practices has led some researchers to expand the focus beyond student writers to include teachers and researchers as professional academic writers (Lea & Stierer, 2009, 2011; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Nygaard, 2015).

Identity as a Discoursal Construct

The social practice perspective on literacy highlights what people do with reading and writing. As Moje and Luke (2009) pointed out, this emphasis on the actor in literate practice is a reason for the widespread interest in literacy-and-identity. One of the things people can do with reading and writing is to be a particular kind of person. Gee's (1990, 2000a, 2004, 2006, 2015) work links New Literacy Studies and identity, particularly identities in education.

Discourse as an identity kit. Gee's (1990, 2015) definition of literacy is a good example of this link. It includes the idea of doing something in a social context and further emphasizes the idea of being someone in that social context. Gee's definition of *literacy* relies on his concept of *Discourse*, which is

a socially accepted association among ways of using language and other symbolic expressions, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting, as well as using various tools, technologies, or props that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network', to signal (that one is playing) a socially

meaningful ‘role’, or to signal that one is filling a social niche in a distinctively recognisable fashion (Gee, 2015, Chapter 13, "Discourses again," para. 1)

Understood this way, a Discourse is an “identity kit” (Gee, 1990, p. 142), and all of the many components of the kit have to be right for recognition to occur. According to Gee, everyone has a primary Discourse, “to which people are apprenticed early in life during their primary socialisation as members of particular families within their sociocultural settings” (Gee, 2015, Chapter 14, "Acquisition and learning," para. 1) and multiple secondary Discourses, “to which people are apprenticed as part of their socialisations within various local, state and national groups and institutions outside early home and peer-group socialization” (Gee, 2015, Chapter 14, "Acquisition and learning," para. 2). For Gee, literacy is “Mastery of a secondary Discourse” (Gee, 2015, Chapter 14, "Literacy and Discourse," para. 12). By defining literacy as mastery of an identity kit, Gee highlights a major insight of the literacy as social practice perspective.

The discorsal construction of writer identity. Bringing together theoretical frameworks of literacy, discourse, and social interaction, Ivanič (1998) developed a multi-faceted approach to writer identity. Ivanič defined three aspects of the identity of an actual writer writing a particular text: *autobiographical self*, *discorsal self*, and *self as author*. The *autobiographical self* is “the identity which people bring with them to any act of writing, shaped as it is by their prior social and discorsal history” (p. 24). The *discorsal self* is “the impression—often multiple, sometimes contradictory—which they consciously or unconsciously conveys [*sic*] of themselves in a particular written text” (p. 25). The *self as author* is “a relative concept: writers see themselves to a greater or lesser extent as authors, and present themselves to a greater or lesser extent as authors” (p. 26). These three aspects of writer identity are distinct from but

constrained by *possibilities for self-hood*, which are “abstract, prototypical identities available in the sociocultural context of writing” (p. 23). Within any context, some possibilities for self-hood are privileged while others are afforded lower status. The three aspects of the identity of an actual writer change from text to text, while possibilities for self-hood in any given context change slowly over time.

Ivanič’s (1998) study of mature students writing academic essays primarily focused on the discorsal self, so she analyzed the students’ texts using discourse analysis strategies. Additionally, she interviewed the students about their texts and about their life histories (to explore links between the autobiographical self and the discorsal self) and interviewed the instructors who assessed the writing (to explore the reader’s role in constructing the writer’s identity). Ivanič found that the discorsal self is constructed from resources brought to the act of writing along with the autobiographical self; that writers own or disown aspects of the discorsal self in their writing; that how writers portray themselves is shaped by the actual writer-reader social relationship; and that the discorsal self is constructed by the possibilities for self-hood the writer can access. Furthermore, the study contributed to the view that there are multiple possibilities for self-hood in the academic community and that academic writers participate in the expansion of these possibilities as they present unique discorsal selves in each piece of writing.

A. Burgess and Ivanič (2010) further develop Ivanič’s (1998) framework. They define a fourth aspect of writer identity, *the perceived writer* as “the impression of the writer that the reader creates in the act of reading a text” (p. 241), and draw into the model the autobiographical self of the reader. They also map how the socially available possibilities of selfhood and all four

aspects of writer identity (autobiographical self, discoursal self, authorial self, and perceived writer) exist, persist, develop, change, and are constructed through processes that operate on different timescales (Lemke, 2000, 2002). For example, the autobiographical self exists within the lifespan of each individual, develops and changes over weeks, months, or years, and exists empirically in particular acts of writing and reading, acts which happen in seconds, minutes, or hours. The implication is that multiple timescales “come into play during the production of a single text” (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010, p. 233). Furthermore, the addition of timescales to the model foregrounds *processes* of identification—rather than static categories—in conceptualizing identity. A. Burgess and Ivanič “do not view identity construction as taking place in discrete, isolatable ‘moments’ but rather as a continuous process in which any given ‘moment’ is temporally extended by its integration with other processes to include the past and the future” (p. 234).

The framework of writer identity developed by Ivanič (1998) and A. Burgess and Ivanič (2010) is advantageous in its comprehensiveness; at the same time, it can be difficult for a single study to address all of the aspects of writer identity and all of the processes of identity construction covered by the framework. A. Burgess and Ivanič (2010) state that “no one of these [elements] is a better definition of ‘writer identity’ than any other and what is of most interest for teachers and researchers is how the elements interrelate” (p. 242). Given this dissertation’s research questions about the identities brought to an act of writing and about how those identities mediate literacy practices, I restrict my attention to two of A. Burgess and Ivanič’s aspects of writer identity and how they relate to each other and to practices: To define *identities* in my research questions, I am using the concepts of *possibilities for selfhood* and the *autobiographical*

self. Socially available possibilities for selfhood play a role in shaping the autobiographical self. This shaping process “represents the way in which the writer will have been exposed to certain ways of doing things, including communicative practices, certain ways of being, and to certain conventions as to who is allowed to do what” (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010, p. 244). All of these exposures to possibilities for selfhood form the writer’s autobiographical self, “the unique consequences for selfhood of all her experiences of life up to that moment with their associated interests, values, beliefs, and social positionings” (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010, p. 238). In turn, the autobiographical self “will be sustained by and sustain a range of writing practices” (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010, p. 239), including purposes for writing and processes for text production.

This dissertation is about who professional academic writers are and how their writing practices shape and are shaped by who they are. In the literacy as social practice framework (Gee, 1990, 2015; Street, 1984), literacies are understood as what people do with texts. The research focus is on writers’ goals, purposes, and meanings within specific times and places. The framework usually calls for ethnographic-style methods, privileging practices over texts. The academic literacies approach (Lea & Street, 1998; Lillis & Scott, 2007) looks critically at writing in higher education and takes identity as a given part of doing literacy. Ivanič’s (1998) conceptualization of the discoursal construction of writer identity, with its account of processes of identification in the act of writing something (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010), provide this study’s definition of identity. This dissertation specifically focuses on the autobiographical self and socially available possibilities for selfhood, connecting these aspects of writer identity to the writers’ professional academic literacy practices.

Professional Academic Literacies and Identities

The academic literacies approach (Lillis & Scott, 2007) evolved in response to deficit views of student writing, but a few researchers have expanded the focus to include teachers and researchers as professional academic writers (Lea & Stierer, 2009, 2011; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Nygaard, 2015). This dissertation uses the term *professional academic* to describe writing and writers in higher education as a workplace. Searching for common definitions for the study of writing in universities, Russell and Cortes (2012) acknowledge that *academic* means different things in different contexts, but they settle on the meaning of “having to do with higher education” (p. 3). They also distinguish between the writing of students and professionals, though they use the term *scientific* for the writing of professionals, as it is used in continental Europe to refer to all disciplines; since my study is situated in the American higher education context, where the humanities would be excluded from the term *scientific* (Russell & Cortes, 2012, p. 3), I stick with *professional*.

This section reviews recent empirical literature on professional academic literacies and identities. Search terms such as “scholarly publishing,” “academic writing,” and “academic identity” of course resulted in large numbers of hits, both in the general academic databases and more targeted databases I searched (for example, ERIC and Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts). To keep the focus on *professional* academic literacies and identities, I excluded studies that were about students, although a few studies include both professionals and graduate students as participants (e.g., Essén & Värlander, 2013; Lillis & Curry, 2010; R. Murray, 2013; Robinson-Pant & Street, 2012).

Professional Academic Literacies

What do we know about what professional academics do with texts and what those texts mean to them? To answer this question, I reviewed recent studies of professional academic writing that clearly privilege practice over text²—that is, studies that focus on the people who produce the texts, their reasons for writing, their processes, and what the writing means to them. Studies that take this focus on writing practice may describe their methodological approaches as ethnographic (Lillis & Curry, 2010; Mur Duenas, 2012; Nygaard, 2015; Wickman, 2010) or autoethnographic (Essén & Värlander, 2013). Common data collection strategies are interviews (Carnell et al., 2008; Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014b; Jalongo, 2013; Li, 2014; Robinson-Pant & Street, 2012; Schluer, 2014; Wisker, 2013) and surveys (S. Burgess, Gea-Valor, Moreno, & Rey-Rocha, 2014; Ferguson, Perez-Llantada, & Plo, 2011; Martin, Rey-Rocha, Burgess, & Moreno, 2014; R. Murray, 2013; Olsson & Sheridan, 2012; Perez-Llantada, Plo, & Ferguson, 2011). The existing literature speaks to the who, what, where, when, why, and how of professional academic writing, and some studies connect writing and identity.

Who are professional academic writers? The professional academics represented in the recent literature are likely to be multilingual and are at various points on their career paths. Many studies explore the writing practices of multilingual scholars, especially those writing from outside English-speaking contexts (S. Burgess et al., 2014; Ferguson et al., 2011; Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014b; Li, 2014; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Martin et al., 2014; Olsson & Sheridan, 2012;

² By focusing on writing practice, I am leaving out the substantial body of literature that describes the textual features of professional academic writing, especially the research article.

Perez-Llantada et al., 2011; Schluer, 2014). These studies ask how scholars cope with the challenges of publishing in English as an additional language and how they use their other languages in academic publishing.

While the experiences of academics who use English as an additional language are an essential part of the literature, Swales (2004) has argued that the distinction between “NSs and NNSs of English” is less important than that between “senior” and “junior” scholars (p. 56). Some collections of academic writers’ first-person accounts deliberately sought the perspectives of highly experienced, well-known senior scholars (D. D. Belcher & Connor, 2001; Casanave & Vandrick, 2003; Monroe, 2002). These collections aimed to explore professional academic writing practices from the “inside” or to demystify the practices for newcomers. A few recent studies similarly focus on academics with senior rank and/or significant experience with publishing (Carnell et al., 2008; Perez-Llantada et al., 2011; Wisker, 2013). For example, in designing their study, Carnell et al. (2008) “were interested in what experienced, prominent writers would have to tell about their development as writers, their engagement with writing and their understanding of the process.” (p. 3). However, most recent studies represent a mix of academic ranks and levels of experience (S. Burgess et al., 2014; Essén & Värlander, 2013; Ferguson et al., 2011; Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014b; Jalongo, 2013; Li, 2014; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Martin et al., 2014; McIntosh, 2014; Mur Duenas, 2012; R. Murray, 2013; Nygaard, 2015;

Olsson & Sheridan, 2012). None of the studies reviewed were specifically about the writing practices of junior academics.³

What do professional academics write? Since literacy practices encompass literacy events around actual texts (Purcell-Gates et al., 2011; Street, 1988), what texts are involved in professional academic writing practices? The majority of studies reviewed focus on academic writing⁴ for publication (S. Burgess et al., 2014; Carnell et al., 2008; Ferguson et al., 2011; Jalongo, 2013; Li, 2014; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Martin et al., 2014; McIntosh, 2014; Mur Duenas, 2012; Olsson & Sheridan, 2012; Perez-Llantada et al., 2011; Schluer, 2014; Wisker, 2013), and they ask participants to talk about the journal articles, book chapters, and books that they submit (or review) for publication by an academic journal or press. However, a few exceptions stretch the idea of what *professional academic writing* entails. Robinson-Pant and Street (2012) consider the supervision meeting notes written by doctoral advisors and their students. Wickman's (2010) study explores the role of the notebook in the practice of lab science. Nygaard's (2015) participants produce genres such as policy briefs, reports, and opinion pieces, in addition to articles and books. Finally, Lea and Stierer (2009, 2011) broaden the view of what counts as professional academic writing by exploring "the nature of routine, everyday writing, as opposed

³ While Wickman (2010) describes the practices of a postdoctoral fellow in a chemical physics lab, the research focus is not on the participant's academic status.

⁴ Most of the studies emphasize writing, although reading is certainly involved, and some of the studies investigate practices of reviewing and editing (Jalongo, 2013; Wisker, 2013) in addition to authoring.

to more prestigious or scholarly writing, as an integral constituent of academic practice” (Lea & Stierer, 2009, p. 417). They asked their participants to select everyday documents to be the focus of their interviews.

Where is professional academic writing situated? While professional academic writing is productively viewed as workplace writing (Lea & Stierer, 2009), Nygaard (2015) demonstrates that the institution of employment is but one relevant context in professional academic writing. There are many different “spheres of institutional influence” (Nygaard, 2015, p. 12) in which academic writing is practiced, each with their own ideologies and hierarchies. The spheres that tend to be highlighted in the literature are national higher education systems (with these often positioned in a globalized research and publishing sphere) and disciplines. At the same time, writing practice involves navigating multiple relationships, and these may also reflect different contexts and relationships of power.

For example, studies of multilingual academics’ publishing practices are situated in the globalized spheres of research and publishing, with studies in specific national contexts such as China (Li, 2014; McIntosh, 2014), Sweden (Olsson & Sheridan, 2012), Germany (Gnutzmann & Rabe, 2014a, 2014b; Schluer, 2014), Spain (S. Burgess et al., 2014; Ferguson et al., 2011; Martin et al., 2014; Mur Duenas, 2012; Perez-Llantada et al., 2011) and Lillis and Curry’s (2010) study of scholars from Portugal, Spain, Hungary, and Slovakia. Language hierarchies are reflected in reward systems that place a premium on publications in English (Li, 2014; Martin et al., 2014; Perez-Llantada et al., 2011) and in “the linking of the ‘good researcher’ with ability in English” (Olsson & Sheridan, 2012, p. 48). These studies demonstrate how languages are valued differently in different international, national, and even disciplinary contexts.

Other studies orient to the discipline as the context for writing. Studies targeting specific disciplines or research topics represent education (Carnell et al., 2008; Jalongo, 2013; Wisker, 2013), finance (Mur Duenas, 2012), management (Li, 2014), medicine (Martin et al., 2014), English Language Teaching (McIntosh, 2014), linguistics (Schluer, 2014), and the interdisciplinary fields of chemical physics (Wickman, 2010) and peace studies (Nygaard, 2015). When a specific discipline is the focus of the study, findings may link disciplinary values and writing practice. For instance, Jalongo's (2013) participants in early childhood education shared a drive to advocate for children; they saw authoring, reviewing, and editing as their "obligations to fellow professionals and the field" (p. 77). Some studies view the discipline as a community of practice, as Wisker (2013) does. Her participants describe publishing as a way newcomers are initiated into the community. An example of a material, spatial context for academic writing is a laboratory, such as the chemical physics lab documented by Wickman (2010). These studies describe ways academics enter into, participate in, and sustain a discipline through professional academic writing.

When do professional academics find time to write? The challenge of finding time to write is a common refrain in the literature. In Carnell et al.'s (2008) study, "the issue of time was raised in all the interviews. They [*sic*] writers talk about how writing involved spending long hours alone as well as how those hours needed to be protected" (p. 52). Academics often feel a tension between institutional expectations for publication and other aspects of their work that limit time for writing. Essén and Värlander (2013) found that while academics recognize the need for a "a personal writing rhythm and daily routine that works [...] the institutional context does not encourage this" (pp. 413-414), both in terms of competing demands on time and

restrictions on creating a conducive space for writing. Another important point is that the time spent on editing and reviewing is not accounted for in most academics' workloads, making this time essentially "a gift reviewers make to the academic community, a peripheral activity, though one which is essential in the field" (Wisker, 2013, p. 352). Given the ubiquity of the time problem, R. Murray (2013) investigated how academics disengage with other tasks in order to engage with writing. Her respondents described physical, social, and cognitive disengagement as necessary for engaging with writing. R. Murray observes that making the move from disengagement to engagement is not easy because the academic work environment is not designed for writing. Her model for engaging with writing stresses "creating dedicated time and space for writing, writing with peers and legitimising writing" (R. Murray, 2013, p. 88).

Why do professional academics write? Purposes for professional academic writing depend on context, yet there are some common themes across the literature. One common purpose is to contribute to knowledge construction according to disciplinary values. This theme is illustrated by educationists writing to promote social justice (Carnell et al., 2008), early childhood educators writing to advocate for children by linking research to practice (Jalongo, 2013), and scholars of medicine writing to communicate research results with the scientific community (Martin et al., 2014). Academics also write to establish their credibility as academics. Some view the publishing and review process as "a rite of passage, a threshold for acceptance into the academic role" (Wisker, 2013, p. 350). In many academic contexts, publication is necessary to obtain a job. For example, Archer's (2008) participant "recounted how a previous head of department had explicitly calculated and quantified the value and viability of job applicants through the number of publications on their CVs" (p. 390). Also, higher education

systems and individual institutions have their own unique reward systems linking publications to salary, promotion, tenure, grants, or bonuses (Li, 2014; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Martin et al., 2014; McIntosh, 2014). Both Li (2014) and McIntosh (2014) describe their participants, academics in Chinese institutions, receiving cash rewards for publications. While purposes for writing may vary greatly from one academic to another (and for an academic over time), the literature connects purposes to the social contexts of writing.

How do professional academics experience the writing process? The process of producing a text is an experience which the literature describes in contradictory terms. It is both solitary and social, and it seems to involve the entire range of human emotion. While academics often describe the writing process as “spending long hours alone” (Carnell et al., 2008, p. 52), they also discuss the social interactions involved in text production. These interactions involve collaborators or other members of academic research networks as well as *literacy brokers*, individuals involved in shaping a text, whether to assist the writer or in a gatekeeping role (Lillis & Curry, 2010). Both the solitary and social aspects of the process can bring up strong emotions. Carnell et al. (2008) capture both the range of emotion and physicality of the experience:

The anticipation of starting a draft causes butterflies for one writer, while others have grown to feel comfortable with ideas swirling around in their minds. Others talk about losing sleep and how hard and lonely writing can be. Some also mention the unpredictability of the quantity and quality of text produced at different sittings.

Sometimes ideas flow and expressing them comes easily and then there are times when the writers become stuck and spend a great deal of time constructing very little text.

Mental anguish and self-inflicted torture is conveyed in many of the accounts. (p. 53)

This passage highlights that the experience of text production not only varies from one academic to another, but also for one academic over time. The physical sensation of “butterflies” and the physical experience of losing sleep point to the role of the body in writing. Attending to the embodied and material nature of the writing process is one way to make sense of the variations writers describe. Essén and Värlander (2013) argue that it is the embodied, emotional, and sensuous nature of writing which connects the solitary and social aspects, facilitating the creativity necessary for academic writing. Their autoethnographic study depicts the research writing process “as a physical, hands-on engagement, which involves the whole body” (Essén & Värlander, 2013, p. 414). The authors and their co-researchers discuss how engagement with writing tools in particular environments, for example, brings about new ideas. As they put it, “there is a continuous movement between the social and material, between the individual and cultural, a dialectic which occurs in the flesh [...] and materializes in academic texts, through the body” (Essén & Värlander, 2013, p. 415). Because they focus on professional academic writing as hands-on labor, Essén & Värlander see one implication of their work as challenging perceptions of professional academic identity, particularly in terms of the perceived class distinction between blue-collar and white-collar labor.

Identities and professional academic writing. In some of the studies, identity is an interpretive theme or a key part of the study’s findings. In her study of peer reviewing and editing practice, Wisker (2013) found that “academic identities and communities of practice were mentioned in terms of the respect gained by staff members achieving publication, and the reviewers saw themselves as coaches, equals engaging in a quality control and developmental experience in a community” (p. 350). Carnell et al. (2008) focus on “writing and a personal

sense of identity” (p. 9) as a key interpretive theme. Some participants viewed writing as central to who they are, while others viewed writing as one task among many. In their conclusion, Carnell et al. (2008) describe identities both as “social categories” (p. 57) and as “momentary speaking positions” (p. 57) and acknowledge that they “ascribed the identity ‘much published academic’ to the participants” (p. 57). Carnell et al.’s study points to identity as a significant issue in academic writing practice, yet it leaves open how identity and academic writing practice mediate each other.

In her academic literacies study of how researchers negotiate between conflicting demands, Nygaard (2015) develops a theoretical model of research productivity as an interaction of identity and environment. She argues that “productivity will depend greatly on the researcher’s subjective understanding of their own identity (including abilities, desires, and fears); their subjective interpretation of their institutional environments (including expectations and values); and their own (perceptions of) agency within these constraints” (Nygaard, 2015, p. 10). In Nygaard’s model, identities incorporate experiences of practice and their impact on beliefs about the self: “the experience of publishing (or not publishing), and whether this output is valued (or not valued), will feed back into the researcher’s beliefs about themselves (e.g. competent or incompetent)” (Nygaard, 2015, p. 11). The reciprocal relationship continues as researchers weigh institutional demands and their own goals and “the concrete practices that result depend on what kind of ideas they have about themselves” (p. 12). Nygaard’s model captures the mediating relationship of literacies and identities in her participants’ context.

Professional Academic Identities

I now turn to recent literature on professional academic identities and consider the purposes, methods, identity frameworks, and findings, in particular those about professional academic writing. In selecting the literature to review in this section, I looked for recent studies that were about higher education professionals (not about students) and that included *academic identity/ies* in the research question, purpose, or problem of the study.

Research aims and contexts. Many recent studies of professional academic identity have been launched in response to changes in higher education systems, especially in the UK (L. Archer, 2008; Clegg, 2008; Fanghanel, 2012; Findlow, 2012; Gale, 2011; Smith, 2012; Watson, 2011), as well as in Australia (Winter & O'Donohue, 2012), Finland (Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013), Mexico (Montero Hernandez, 2010), and New Zealand (Billot, 2010). In the 1990s, the UK eliminated a binary system of research-focused universities and teaching-focused polytechnics, while adopting new quality assurance and quality enhancement activities (Barnett & Di Napoli, 2008). Similar changes echoing the massification, accountability, and marketization experienced in UK higher education have occurred in Europe and other countries world-wide. As a result of these contextual changes, academic identities have been brought into question (Barnett & Di Napoli, 2008), with many studies seeking to describe what being an academic means today.

Other studies, situated in the USA and other countries, focus on specific academic activities or particular disciplinary, cultural, or institutional settings. These studies' research questions connect professional academic identities to collaborative research (Leibowitz, Ndebele, & Winberg, 2014), career stages of teacher educators (Griffiths, Thompson, & Hryniewicz, 2014), experiences of Latina/o academics (Cavazos, 2012), and experiences of

English faculty at two-year colleges (Toth et al., 2013). Another distinct group of studies investigates academic identity construction in the naturally occurring talk of lectures (McInnes, 2013) and discussion sessions after conference presentations (Konzett, 2012).

Methods. Interviews are commonly used to explore professional academic identities (L. Archer, 2008; Cavazos, 2012; Clegg, 2008; Fanghanel, 2012; Griffiths et al., 2014; Montero Hernandez, 2010; Smith, 2012; Toth et al., 2013; Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013). Some studies take a narrative approach to data collection and/or analysis (Billot, 2010; Griffiths et al., 2014; Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013). Autoethnographic approaches also appear, as in Leibowitz et al.'s (2014) study of academic identities within collaborative research and Watson's (2011) examination of dominant university discourses and academic identities. Findlow (2012) takes a critical ethnographic approach to study academic and professional identities of nurse lecturers. One survey study (Winter & O'Donohue, 2012) explores the relationship between values and academic identity. In the studies focused on identity construction in naturally occurring talk, McInnes (2013) applies discourse analytic tools to recordings of one academic's course lectures and Konzett (2012) takes a conversation analytic/ethnomethodological approach to recordings of discussion sessions following conference presentations.

Theoretical and conceptual frameworks. While not all studies define identity or acknowledge a specific theoretical framework, several studies draw on both an overarching approach to identity and a specific framework for academic or professional identity. The various frameworks used in the studies theorize identity as constructed and negotiated in everyday social interaction (e.g., Harré, 1984; Mead, 1956), as a fluid, ongoing process (Davies, 1997, 2004) or project (Giddens, 1991), as encompassing multiple roles, actions, and meanings (Stryker &

Burke, 2000), as a powerful sense of self constructed through an “inner conversation” (M. S. Archer, 2000), and as constructed and negotiated through a recursive relationship between the individual and context, in which each alters the other (e.g., Giddens, 1984; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Against their broad identity backdrops, the studies also frame professional or academic identity in a variety of ways. While the frameworks do not always use the term *identity*, they attempt to explain what it means to be or to become an academic or a professional. The studies reviewed draw professional identity frameworks from organization studies (Alvesson, Lee Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008), organizational socialization (Trowler & Knight, 1999), and a sociological view of professionalism (Larson, 1977). The conceptualizations of academic identity range from identities as disrupted processes (Colley, James, & Diment, 2007) to identities as displayed through value statements (Ashforth, 2001) to identities as reflective of both contextual understanding and sense of self, which links past, present, and future (Henkel, 2000). Notions of authenticity and legitimacy (Bourdieu, 1988) and autonomy are considered especially important in constructions of academic identity.

Multiple identities in institutional contexts. The research findings emphasize the contextual nature of professional academic identities. Within distinct contexts, academics perform multiple professional academic identities (Clegg, 2008; Konzett, 2012). In Clegg’s (2008) study, these multiple professional identities went beyond teaching, research and management roles, as her participants developed “hybrid” identities based on their disciplinary, professional, institutional, and practice-based concerns. One way to think about this hybridity comes from Konzett (2012), who observed conference participants repeatedly displaying their membership in multiple professional groups. The practice was sometimes “constructed as

problematic, as in the dilemma between academic and practitioner identity, but often the multitude of facets of their professional selves was itself made relevant as a category and used effectively as a resource for self-presentation and argumentation” (p. 385). Professional academic identities also merge or intersect with other identities, such as age, race, class, and gender (L. Archer, 2008; Cavazos, 2012; Clegg, 2008). Cavazos (2012) found that “Resilient qualities helped Latina/o academics in the current study develop a merged identity where their Latina/o and academic identity co-exist productively” (p. 136). Yet intersecting identities may also be experienced as incompatible with particular notions of academic identity. For example, L. Archer (2008) found that “the ‘authentic’ and ‘successful’ academic is a desired yet refused identity for many younger academics, and is especially amplified through matrices of ‘race’/ethnicity, social class, gender and age” (p. 401). Additionally, for Clegg’s (2008) participants, “Gender continues to have deep resonance, and the normative masculinity of the academy was problematised in a number of interviews” (p. 341). Academics’ multiple identities—both professional and personal—may be viewed as resources in their academic practice or as sources of conflict or tension.

Across the studies, tensions between institutional and individual goals are part of negotiating academic identity. In everyday academic practice, responsibilities for both teaching and research can cause tension or role conflict, especially in contexts of increased workloads (Billot, 2010). Tension is likely when academics perceive a lack of time and institutional support to do both responsibilities well (Billot, 2010; Griffiths et al., 2014). For example, Billot’s (2010) participants expressed “frustration at being ‘stretched’ to manage multiple tasks, causing ‘pressure on the staff at the expense of quality’” (p. 716). Similarly, Griffiths et al. (2014)

observed a “demotivating effect that can result from an over-full teaching load and lack of opportunities to study or develop research” (p. 88). Other institutional factors shaping academic identities are status (L. Archer, 2008; Clegg, 2008) and autonomy (L. Archer, 2008; Toth et al., 2013). Archer’s (2008) contract researchers experienced a sense of illegitimacy as their employment status failed to provide job security, while some of Clegg’s (2008) participants incorporated their institution’s perceived less-prestigious status into their identities. Speaking to how institutional contexts shape academics’ autonomy, the three studies of English faculty at two-year colleges conducted by Toth et al. (2013) suggest that “professional autonomy is a complex construction derived not only from professional expertise, but also from the shared recognition of that expertise by departmental colleagues, administrators, and policymakers” (p. 112). If autonomy is part of professional identity, then the extent to which the institution grants or restricts autonomy impacts an academic’s opportunities for enacting that identity.

Academics’ positioning in relation to the institution is also impacted by their values (Winter & O'Donohue, 2012) or ideologies (Fanghanel, 2012). Winter and O'Donohue’s (2012) survey respondents consistently expressed values in opposition to the “market ethos” in higher education, pointing to “identity tensions” between professional academic values and the economic/managerial values of the institution. Fanghanel (2012) viewed academic identity through three different ideologies of education—education as production (producing workers), reproduction (education for its own sake), or transformation (critique and emancipation)—which categorized the responses of her interviewees and infused their descriptions of various aspects of their academic practice. Different ideological positionings may also be reflected in academic identity types (Smith, 2012) or in academic identity narratives (Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013). Smith

(2012) identified two different “aspirational identities” among her participants: “academics seeking to work collaboratively with policy makers (‘policy facilitators’) and academics seeking to challenge dominant discourses (‘Shakespearean fools’)” (p. 155). Smith’s “Shakespearean fools” would sometimes take on a “flexian” identity, adapting their academic communication to different audiences. In an eloquent depiction of positions academics take toward changes at their institutions, Ylijoki and Ursin (2013) describe three narratives which emerged from their study of Finnish academics:

Narratives of resistance, loss, administrative work overload and job insecurity are embedded in a regressive storyline, describing deterioration of academic work and one’s standing. In a sharp contrast, narratives of success, mobility and change agency rely on a progressive storyline which sees the current changes in a positive light. Between these opposites, narratives of work–life balance and bystander follow stable storylines, involving a neutral stance toward university transformations. (p. 1135)

These studies demonstrate a range of approaches to identity and as a result highlight different aspects of being a particular kind of academic in a particular place and time. As a group the studies tend to stress institutional contexts as constructing academic identities.

Identities and writing. Academic writing practice is observed as a component of academic identity construction in many of the studies. Publications are seen as “outputs” (L. Archer, 2008; Billot, 2010) that can be easily counted and used as a measure of an academic’s worth, illustrated by the “obsession with publication” observed by one of Billot’s (2010, p. 716) participants and what Watson (2011) calls “obsessive citation counting disorder (OCCD)” (p. 963): looking up the number of times her own and her colleagues’ publications are cited. Beyond

tallying up numbers, the practice of doing research and publishing may be experienced as harrowing, gratifying, or both. For the teacher educators in Griffiths et al. (2014) study, “gaining a doctorate, presenting a first conference paper or gaining one’s first publication [...] represented significant milestones in themselves. However, these were often represented as negative duties, terrifying ordeals or significant hurdles” (p. 83). On the other hand, Watson (2011) maintains that, for her, “peer-reviewed publication is one of the most exciting forms of play in the game of academia” (p. 963). For two of Clegg’s (2008) participants, academic literacies were at the heart of how they understood their academic identities: “the activities of reading and writing, and the intellectual aspects of the academic were core” (p. 334). These studies reiterate that writing is a way to enact various academic identities, that professional academic writing can be terrifying and exciting, and that having a certain number of publications is a way to be recognized as a particular kind of academic.

Studies of Professional Academic Literacies-and-Identities

Several recent studies of professional academic writers and writing include both *identity* and *literacy* (or *writing*) in their research questions, problems, or purposes. This smaller segment of the literature presents a spectrum of approaches to literacy-and-identity, with one end of the spectrum focused on writing as text and the other end focused on writing as practice.

On the text-focused end of the spectrum are studies using corpus linguistics methods to explore identity construction in academic texts (Gotti, 2012; Hyland, 2012). These studies are underpinned by the idea that identities are performed and recognized through textual features, so texts are the site of identity construction and the data. Hyland’s (2012) corpus consists of 1,400 texts from genres such as academics’ homepages, research article bios, research articles, and

books, and he supplements textual analysis with interview and focus group data. The corpus used by Gotti's (2012) contributors includes over 2,700 texts: research articles, abstracts, book reviews, editorials, research letters, and academic posters drawn from applied linguistics, economics, law, and medicine. Both works demonstrate various ways identities are linguistically constructed in academic texts. Hyland (2012) concludes that discipline is the key influence on academic writing, arguing that "Disciplines provide conceptual frames for organising experiences and carrying out actions, both rhetorical and epistemological, and so steer the actor to choices which construct a representation of self to others" (p. 200). The studies collected by Gotti (2012), alternatively, look across "socioculturally-oriented identity-related factors" (p. 9) of discipline, language, expert/novice status, and gender, finding that such factors "interact, producing transversal identities that are independent of local traits, with a tendency to merge and hybridise in an intercultural sense" (p. 22). These corpus-based studies highlight the significance of text as a site of academic identity construction, in many genres of academic life.

In the middle of the spectrum, balancing focus on text and practice, is Englander's (2009) study of the impact of the revision process on three Spanish-speaking Mexican scientists' identities. Englander used frameworks of communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), discourse community (Swales, 1990), socially situated identity (Gee, 2005) and the autobiographical self (Ivanič, 1998) for her collective case study (Stake, 1995). Her data included reviewers' comments, original and accepted manuscripts, and interviews. The scientists found the review process instructive in terms of expectations for English scientific writing, they deployed various strategies for managing the revisions, and they coped with a lack of resources, such as lack of access to publications reviewers wanted them to cite. They ultimately described a

new confidence to take with them to the next English article submission. From the scientists' experiences, Englander developed a model of changes to the autobiographical self through the revision process. As Englander concludes, for her participants, "Identity was transformed as they experienced specific events and represented those events to themselves to construct new identities: a changing autobiographical self" (p. 51). While academics produce many texts, the revision of even a single text can be a significant moment of practice in an academic's journey.

On the practice-focused end of the spectrum are studies of altogether different genres from the research article: everyday workplace documents and blogs. Kirkup (2010) asks why some academics produce blogs and how blogging contributes to their academic practice and academic identity. Kirkup connects blogging to notions of identity as narratives about the self (Giddens, 1991) performed and presented through a variety of media. To explore blogging as a site of identity construction and of academic practice, Kirkup interviewed six academic staff from two institutions in the UK, representing different disciplines. Participants described blogging as a new medium to articulate ideas, blogging as one medium in a multiphonic environment (that is, an environment in which identities are performed through a variety of media), the role of an audience for academic blogs, and the costs of blogging. Kirkup concludes that blogging is an emerging academic practice and a new genre of scholarly writing, "a genre through which academics perform their scholarly identity, engage in knowledge production, and become public intellectuals, at least on the internet" (p. 83). Kirkup's study expands the idea of what kinds of texts are included in professional academic writing, paying attention to additional avenues (beyond traditional academic publication) for professional academic identity construction through writing.

Lea and Stierer (2009, 2011) explore academic identities through interviews about everyday workplace documents. Taking an academic literacies (Lillis & Scott, 2007) approach and viewing writing as central to the discursal construction of identity (Ivanič, 1998), Lea and Stierer also use Blommaert (2005) to understand identities as “primarily concerned with how people practically identify themselves and how they do so with whatever means they have available” (Lea & Stierer, 2011, p. 607). They asked their participants, 30 academics from three different UK universities, to select “three documents they had recently written, contributed to or worked on” (Lea & Stierer, 2009, p. 422), which would be the focus of an interview. The aim was to understand academic practice—and from there identity—through discussion of everyday documents. “In order to gain an understanding of writing as professional practice, we needed to examine the texts in detail ‘close up’ with their authors – not just because the texts carry the meaning along, but because they instantiate practice” (Lea & Stierer, 2009, p. 422). Lea and Stierer found that “considerable ‘identity work’ is involved in producing and working with everyday documents” (Lea & Stierer, 2009, p. 426). Their participants used writing “to maintain power and authority and assert their own identities in the changing context of higher education” (Lea & Stierer, 2011, p. 612). Additionally, their analysis challenges the primacy of disciplinary writing in academic identity construction: “academic identity also involves becoming adept at engaging in a range of written genres which are often far removed from such traditional academic writing” (Lea & Stierer, 2011, p. 615). Lea and Stierer’s work presents professional academic writing as workplace writing while highlighting academic workers as empowered individuals.

Much of the theoretical and empirical literature I have reviewed above comes from a UK context. The mix of a practice approach to literacy and interest in academic identities has offered a rich picture of writing and being as a professional academic in the UK and the other settings where similar projects have been taken up. Few empirical studies have explored professional academic identities of teachers or scholars (rather than students) in the disciplinary context of US composition. Additionally, none of the literacy studies and only one of the identity studies (L. Archer, 2008) explore the experiences of early career professional academics in depth.

Background: New PhDs in Composition

Each participant in this study brings unique identities to her writing, and those identities shape and are shaped by unique literacy practices. However, the participants have some contextual factors and broad social categories in common. All of the participants work in higher education in the United States, all received doctoral training in composition, and all work as composition teachers. All are early career academics, within a few years of earning their PhDs. All are women. Within this shared set of circumstances, there is still wide variety of experience. In this section, I focus primarily on the career stage and disciplinary background of the participants, briefly discussing gender as it is brought up within those two areas.

Early Career Academics

Within the larger category of professional academic writers, this dissertation spotlights *early career academics*. Rice et al. (2000) included both new faculty and aspiring faculty (graduate students) in their study of early career faculty in the United States. Similarly, from an Australian context, McAlpine et al. (2014) include doctoral students, post-PhD researchers, and new lecturers in their longitudinal study of early career academics. Taking this inclusive starting

point, the early career stage may be understood as a period leading up to the award of the doctorate and a period following the award of the doctorate. However, when students are not included, studies tend to take appointment to a faculty position as the starting point (rather than award of the doctorate). For studies situated in the United States, this second period is typically understood to end at the award of tenure, so many studies of early career faculty use the five-seven year time period prior to tenure as part of their inclusion criteria (Austin et al., 2007; Ponjuan, Conley, & Trower, 2011; Trower & Gallagher, 2008). Several studies define new faculty as those at the institution three years or less: Eddy and Gaston-Gayles (2008) explain that the first three years is the period before the mid-tenure review, while J. P. Murray (2008) and Stupnisky, Weaver-Hightower, and Kartoshkina (2015) cite Boice's (1992) finding that after three years faculty object to being called "new." Regardless, as Austin et al. (2007) acknowledged, studying only tenure-track faculty leaves out a lot of academic workers. Today it leaves out the majority of them (Laurence, 2013).

This dissertation instead takes doctoral qualification as the turning point in the early career stage, and focuses on the period following the PhD. As Mason, Wolfinger, and Goulden (2013) point out, studying PhD recipients rather than faculty members means learning something about PhDs who do not become tenure-track faculty members. Additionally, since this dissertation is about professional academic writing, especially writing for publication, researcher identities are important. In a study aimed at defining *early career researcher*, Bazeley (2003) found that "completion of the PhD (or equivalent) is an essential basis for launching a successful academic research career. It is a career achievement which begins to separate research novices from those who may go on as researchers" (p. 271). While there are certainly professional

academic writers and higher education workers without doctorates, this dissertation examines the connection between professional academic literacies and identities for new PhDs—people who have recently accomplished a major literacy-and-identity reconstruction project.

Teichler, Arimoto, and Cummings (2013) offer a representation of the “typical” academic career path in the United States:

The typical academic career in USA starts with doctoral study whereby some graduate students might serve auxiliary functions as research assistants and teaching assistants.

Upon the doctoral award, some will be postdoctoral fellows for a while and others lecturers, while an assistant professorship for 6 years is the most desirable next step after the doctoral award. The typical career steps for senior academics are those of an associate and a full professor. Assistant professors, as a rule, are not permanently employed, and the same might be true for the early years of associate professors, but risks are kept in bound by ‘tenure-track’ models which envisage permanent employment and career progression within the same institution for the successful ones. (p. 46)

This idealized vision is challenged by the early career literature. In fact, Rice et al. (2000) found that “a troubling gap exists between the vision and the reality of the academic career” (p. 6).

Looking across the literature covering the early career trajectory—from doctoral education through taking up a new faculty appointment to earning tenure (or not)—the literature emphasizes challenges at every step of the journey. However, there are also counterpoints of persistence and success.

Bok (2013) notes three pressing issues in American graduate education: the long time to degree, a high drop-out rate, and a failure to prepare students as teachers and faculty members.

Data across disciplines suggests a 10-year doctoral completion rate of 57% (Council of Graduate Schools, 2008), putting attrition somewhere around 43%. What this means for the participants in this dissertation study is that they have successfully navigated a challenging process to complete their PhDs. Rockinson-Szapkiw, Spaulding, and Bade (2014) identified factors supporting persistence and completion for education doctoral students: relationships with family, faculty and peers; determination, organization skills, and time management; program flexibility and course relevance; career advancement and financial reward; and clear doctoral program expectations.

For those who persist, doctoral education is a process of developing a researcher identity through engagement in literacy practices, especially the dissertation. Hall and Burns (2009) use sociocultural identity frameworks (e.g., Gee, 2000a, 2006; Holland, Lachicotte Jr., Skinner, & Cain, 1998) to describe how doctoral students develop researcher identities through their experiences of being mentored by their advisors: “becoming a professional researcher requires students to negotiate new identities and reconceptualize themselves both as people and professionals in addition to learning specific skills” (p. 49). Looking at how doctoral students construct researcher identities through interaction with their peers, Guerin (2013) describes how participating in writing groups highlighted four activities through which the students enact their developing identities: networking for information, thinking critically, communicating with a broader audience, and connecting to broader learning. Guerin concludes that these are the researcher activities needed in today’s networked research cultures, and that participating in a multidisciplinary writing group is an excellent way for students to develop such identities.

Guerin’s (2013) view of the writing group as a site of identity construction is one way to link literacy and identity in doctoral education. Casanave and Li (2008) made this connection

using concepts of academic enculturation, communities of practice, genre, and identity to frame their collection of narratives about learning the literacy practices of graduate school. Adams-Budde, Howard, Jolliff, and Myers (2014) go even further to link literacy and identity in doctoral education by proposing the term *literacy identity* and asking “how doctoral students’ literacy identities shape their experiences in the program” (p. 110). Following Gee (2006) and Holland et al. (1998), Adams-Budde et al. (2014) define *literacy identity* as “a co-constructed and socially situated sense of self which shapes the individual’s perceptions of their world over time. This definition implies one’s literacy history—past experiences with literacy—as critical in shaping one’s literacy identity” (p. 110). Based on their data from doctoral students in an education doctoral program, Adams-Budde et al. (2014) conclude that “while early literacy experiences were found to be important [...] early home literacy experiences do not necessarily dictate future success” (p. 122) and that support is essential: “as students are supported in their doctoral programs they become better equipped and more confident in their abilities to be a critical consumer of scholarship and create new knowledge that contributes to their field” (p. 122).

The dissertation is a focal point of the doctoral journey. Introducing their collection of essays about dissertation writing in composition, Welch, Latterell, Moore, and Carter-Tod (2002) describe the dissertation as “the penultimate writing assignment marking the transition from student to professional” (p. vii). Contributors describe identity transformations concurrent with dissertation writing. For example, Union (2002) describes the dissertation as an initiation ritual “with a pattern of enclosure, metamorphosis, and emergence” (p. 11) and describes how the women dissertation writers she studied experienced it:

the initiate does not leave the community but is taken deep into it (as many of the women in my study were drawn into personal issues by their dissertations). Neither does the initiate go through a transitional liminality but something more akin to metamorphosis.

Again, the women in my study spoke of the dissertation as ‘transforming.’ (p. 11)

The personal issues observed by Union Vogle are illustrated by Carter-Tod’s (2002) contribution, which describes how conflicts related to identity and voice arose during her experience of dissertation writing—specifically, she felt a conflict between ways of knowing valued in her African American culture and ways of knowing valued by her dissertation committee. But for Carter-Tod these conflicts were not resolved until well after her defense. She says “decisions that I made in order to complete my dissertation led me further from instead of closer to a resolution” (p. 139). It was subsequent career experiences that allowed Carter-Tod to find a sense of resolution to the issues that had been raised for her by writing her dissertation:

If my dissertation writing and defense challenged my very sense of identity and voice, my journey since has been about the various career decisions that I’ve made in an attempt to regain that identity and fit my goals for scholarship into a larger academic perspective. (Carter-Tod, 2002, pp. 144-145)

These examples suggest that not only the dissertation stage but also the period following doctoral qualification are a time when literacy and identity are undergoing major transformation; thus it is an interesting time to explore the relationship between the two.

For many, gaining a new credential also coincides with looking for a new job.

Historically, the academic job market in the US is affected by what Thelin (2004) calls “the peculiar dynamics of faculty careers” (p. 331), in which the tenure model typically keeps a

position filled for 20-30 years. Around 1970, Thelin explains, most tenurable positions were filling up, but expanded PhD programs continued to produce many new graduates. At the same time, reliance on non-tenure-track faculty grew. Between 1976 and 2011, tenure-track jobs grew by 23.4%, while contingent jobs grew by a staggering 221.7% (Curtis, 2014, p. 3). The ongoing reality is that only a minority of doctoral recipients get tenure-track jobs in research universities:

only one-quarter of new PhDs who take an academic position obtain a job in a research university of any kind. The rest either accept offers from colleges that are primarily devoted to teaching or find themselves in term-limited positions where research is not expected. (Bok, 2013, p. 240)

The 2014 Survey of Earned Doctorates gives a sense of the overall academic job market at the time the participants in this dissertation study earned their PhDs: for doctorate recipients in the humanities, only 55% had definite commitments for employment or postdoc study (National Science Foundation, 2015). The share of doctorate recipients with definite commitments reached 20-year low points in each of the non-science and engineering fields, and science and engineering fields reached 15-year low points on this measure (National Science Foundation, 2015). Clearly, the academic job market is competitive, and most job seekers will consider jobs and settings beyond the tenure-track, research university position.

Of course there are those who seek and obtain tenure-track jobs, and because much of the early career faculty literature focuses on these individuals, we know something about their experiences. New faculty studies point to several common challenges, especially navigating tenure expectations, work-life balance, and a search for community. Earning tenure is hard work and may be accompanied by anxiety when expectations aren't clear: "new faculty fret about

vague and unclear expectations for performance” (Austin et al., 2007, p. 58). Additional factors making tenure a source of stress, as reported by Austin et al. (2007), include lack of feedback prior to review, lack of transparency regarding the review process, and the timeline for tenure, which can coincide with heavy family responsibilities like caring for young children or aging parents. Many new faculty feel overworked and worry about having enough time for their personal lives. For Eddy and Gaston-Gayles’ (2008) participants, “in most cases their work life trumped their personal lives” (p. 96) and they “expressed a sense of guilt associated with trying to find balance between multiple demands” (p. 97). Trower and Gallagher (2008) found that while “faculty members accept that academic work is challenging and in many respects without boundaries, they strive to find a healthy balance between the demands at work and those at home” (p. 20). Finding community is another challenge for early career faculty, including finding supportive colleagues and mentors. Without these, “many early career faculty report experiencing isolation, separation, fragmentation, loneliness, and competition” (Austin et al., 2007, p. 61). Sense of community may link back to tenure expectations, as Ponjuan et al.’s (2011) findings suggest “a relationship between a faculty member’s clarity of tenure guidelines and satisfaction with faculty collegial relationships” (p. 338).

Rice et al. (2000) observed that while the three core concerns are challenging for all early-career faculty, they are especially difficult for women, faculty of color and part-time faculty. Austin et al. (2007) also noted that early career women faculty report “unusual difficulty in finding advisors or mentors among those more senior, and they described environments where subtle discrimination causes them to struggle with being taken seriously and as equals of their male colleagues” (p. 68). For faculty of color, “Isolation especially stands out as a core issue [...]

as they attempt to handle the day-to-day stress when one is a member of a minority group in a department or institution” (Austin et al., 2007, p. 68). Eddy and Gaston-Gayles (2008) also discuss particular ways the common challenges are experienced by women and faculty of color “as they attempted to intersect various facets of their lives into one, while honoring the complexity of their lives” (p. 104). Part-time faculty in Rice et al.’s (2000) study experienced low pay, job insecurity, inadequate office space and exclusion from professional development opportunities and other department activities, all of which “block part-timers from feelings of connectedness or collegiality” (p. 21). And since part-timers are often non-tenure-track, a possible challenge of tenure for them is their lack of access to it.

Stupnisky et al. (2015) looked for patterns in how new faculty overcome challenges to achieve success. Their participants identified familiar themes: expectations, collegiality, and balance (both professional and personal), as well as an additional one, location, which the authors say stems from the study context of a remote Midwestern university. Interestingly, and in keeping with the tale of academics’ disillusionment over time, Stupnisky et al.’s new faculty participants with more years of service had lower job satisfaction and perceived departmental support. Speaking to gender, they found that women reported less personal balance, self-reported health, and general life satisfaction. But in terms of success, Stupnisky et al. found “professional balance had the greatest predictive effect on faculty members’ self-perception of success at work” (p. 1) and that “expectations, collegiality, and location had greater effects on indirect success indicators such as job satisfaction, general life satisfaction, health, and stress” (p. 1). Stupnisky et al.’s work suggests how professional and personal factors interact for early career faculty, creating variability in individual experience.

McAlpine et al. (2014) go much further to merge the professional and the personal in understanding the experience of early career academics. Their longitudinal research on experiences of doctoral students, post-PhD researchers, and new lecturers led them to conclude that “the influence of individual agency and personal lives is central to decisions related to investment in academic work and careers” (p. 953). They offer the concept of *identity-trajectory* to understand how early career academics navigate their journeys. *Identity-trajectory* is illustrated through short narratives based on participant data, which capture “individual intention, change through time and across roles, and academic work within personal-past-future circumstances” (p. 952). By emphasizing individual agency, their results depart from the dominant theme of institutional factors shaping early career experience, and McAlpine et al. find that “the picture that emerges of individual experience is more optimistic than that resulting from a more structural view” (p. 965). Their framework bridges the personal and the academic, allowing them to “situate academic work within the fullness of people’s lives” (p. 954).

Composition

This dissertation’s participants work in a shared context of *composition*, which is a sub-discipline of English Studies. McComiskey (2006) described English Studies as a collection of six sub-disciplines: linguistics and discourse analysis, rhetoric and composition, creative writing, literature and literary criticism, critical theory and cultural studies, and English education. McComiskey argued that these sub-disciplines all contribute to the shared pursuit of “analysis, critique, and production of discourse in social context” (p. 43). His categories make up one map of English Studies, but the terrain changes over time, and individuals move through it on their own unique trajectories. Ascribing a particular shared disciplinary affiliation to all of my

participants was a challenge throughout the design, implementation, and writing of this dissertation. All of the participants earned PhDs in English, all had received some doctoral training in composition, and all identified as writing teachers. However, as researchers (and to a certain extent as teachers), they described various degrees of disciplinary identification with composition, creating writing, and TESOL. Before discussing professional issues in composition, let me briefly address creative writing and TESOL, disciplines which are particularly salient to two of the participants. Bizzaro (2004) argued that creative writing was emerging as a discipline within English by developing its own research methods and pedagogy. Previously, “creative writing was treated in most English departments as a component of or an approach to literary study” (Bizzaro, 2004, p. 296). Unlike creative writing, TESOL is not included in McComiskey’s (2006) list of sub-disciplines. Matsuda (1999) described how composition and TESOL divided their labor while both fields professionalized, and ESL students were shifted out of composition classrooms. Since then, studies of second language writing have sought to bridge that divide, but Matsuda’s (2014) recent observation of both the popularity and misunderstanding of the term *translingual writing* suggests that TESOL and composition are still somewhat mysterious to each other. As a sub-discipline, creative writing has been positioned subordinate to literature, and TESOL has been positioned completely outside of English Studies.

Composition, the sub-discipline of English Studies which touches all four participants’ professional lives, is a field of study concerned with “reading and writing instruction at all levels” as well as “the practice and uses of writing both inside and outside the academy” (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1987). Similar to the historical positioning of creative writing mentioned above, composition has been historically subordinated

to literary studies within English departments. Histories of composition either directly challenged literature-composition relations (Crowley, 1998; Miller, 1991) or distanced composition from literature by claiming a heritage in Rhetoric (Berlin, 1987; Connors, 1997). North (1987) predicted that composition might split off from English departments to escape the dominance of literature. Despite the early, entrenched perception of composition as subordinate to literature, composition is also seen as privileged. For example, first-year composition (FYC) requirements and the student credit hours they generate mean that composition is a significant economic force. Where composition and literature are housed together, “English has long relied on composition’s use value to sustain advanced study in literature and criticism” (Carr, 2014, p. 440). Also tied to the ubiquity of the FYC requirement is the perception that job prospects for PhD graduates in composition are much better than those for PhD graduates in literature (Bousquet, 2004; Mendenhall, 2014). These themes of marginalization and privilege echo through discussions of the roles of compositionists and the employment status of writing teachers.

Most faculty in English departments are part-time and non-tenure track (ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing, 2008). In fall 2006, English departments surveyed indicated that 36.2% of the faculty were full-time tenured and tenure-track, 12.6% were full-time non-tenure-track, 23.9% were part-time and 27.3% were graduate student TAs (ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing, 2008, p. 30). While this faculty labor distribution reflects US higher education as a whole—in 2011, over 70% of faculty in US higher education were off the tenure track (Laurence, 2013)—it is a much-discussed issue in English Studies and in composition specifically. At doctoral/research universities in fall 2006, 98% of all first-year writing courses

were taught by faculty off the tenure track; at master's institutions, 87% were (ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing, 2008, p. 51)

So most writing teachers, and most faculty in English departments, are *contingent* faculty, “those who teach without the job protections and material and economic privileges of tenure” (Schell, 2013, p. 172). Full- and part-time non-tenure track faculty members are “often invisible to the public and policy makers, as well as to colleagues and administrators in the institutions where they are employed” (Laurence, 2013, p. 6). English Studies’ professional organizations, greatly concerned by the marginalization of contingent faculty since at least the 1980s, have responded to the situation with an “evolving discourse,” as Doe and Palmquist (2013) relate: the initial response was to argue for the importance of tenure (unfortunately, disparaging contingent faculty along the way), then to promote ethical treatment for contingent faculty, and, most recently, to advocate for some kind of tenure or job security for part-timers. Doe and Palmquist (2013) propose that a new kind of tenure would focus on just teaching or just research. This split would reproduce what the ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing (2008) points to as the source of the two-tiered system: a separation of the functions of research and teaching. As Bartholomae (2011) elaborates, “the use of a multitiered faculty is part of the history of English instruction in the United States [...] it is hard to see an end to a differential investment in teaching and research” (p. 26). These arguments make it seem that the haves and have-nots in English Studies are simply divided by teaching or research functions. But even if institutions separate teaching and research roles, these activities aren’t necessarily separated in practice. Through an activity system analysis of work-logs, Doe et al. (2011) found that contingent faculty participants took part in all of the same activities (research, service, outreach) that tenure-line

faculty pursue, even when their annual evaluations did not reward them for such work. And Poe (2015) argues that “the erosion of tenure has not merely meant that more faculty work off the tenure track but also that those non-tenure-track faculty are increasingly expected to produce research—an expectation rarely stated officially in writing” (p. 508).

Administration is an additional responsibility that plays into the positioning of compositionists. On the one hand, administrative duties have been perceived as marginalizing for compositionists. For example, administration may be a challenge for tenure-track faculty because running a writing program takes time that might otherwise be used for producing the publications that count for tenure: “articles in ‘high impact’ journals or those journals that appear on ‘assessment indicators lists’ [and] the single-authored monograph published by the university press” (Poe, 2015, p. 509). Day, Delagrange, Palmquist, Pemberton, and Walker (2013) argue that tenure and promotion guidelines need to be revised, and they include administration and leadership among the areas of scholarship that need more recognition. On the other hand, being an administrator is also seen as a position of privilege. Compositionists and writing instructors have been respectively portrayed as “tenured bosses and disposable teachers” (Bousquet et al., 2004). Scott (2004) wrote that management models for administering writing programs “mark a significant shift in our disciplinary identity” (p. 163) by distracting compositionists from pedagogy and students, but Strickland (2011) maintains that “the managerial has been an integral part of the development of the field” (p. 4) and urges compositionists to use the role productively. Further complicating a compositionist’s institutional positioning, a “tenured boss” also has a boss. In a survey of directors of first year writing (DFYWs) and English department chairs, Rose, Mastrangelo, and L’Eplattenier (2013) found that “work is often divided between

an English department chair and a DFYW, creating questions about who gets to do what, and how these roles either develop the DFYW's authority or deprive her or him of it" (p. 56). All of these points indicate a variety of positions for compositionists within institutional hierarchies.

Composition's relationship to literature, the large cohort of contingent writing instructors managed by a smaller number of compositionists, and the implications of these contextual factors for disciplinary identities are brought together in Mendenhall's (2014) concept of the compositionist as a "flexible expert." Inquiring into the simultaneous growth of tenure-track (TT) positions in composition and reliance on non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty, Mendenhall analyzes job ads for composition specialists from about 1960 to 1990. She argues that "the simultaneous growth of TT faculty in composition and the increasing reliance on contingent and NTT faculty occurred at least in part because expertise in composition is an ambiguous and highly flexible construct" (Mendenhall, 2014, p. 12). An early understanding of composition expertise as simply an interest one had in addition to a background in literature was part of how both tenure-track and non-tenure-track jobs were filled—an interest in composition was qualification enough to run a writing program or to teach writing. Later, the kind of flexibility required changed when "the ability to move between composition and literature, was supplanted by a new flexibility—the ability to 'generalize' in a range of rhetoric and composition subfields" (Mendenhall, 2014, p. 26). Mendenhall offers her findings "as a heuristic for understanding composition labor historically, programmatically, and personally" (p. 27). For the participants in this dissertation study, all of whom are writing teachers, employment options are connected to the training and experience they have obtained and the flexibility they can construct.

The participants in this dissertation study are all women, and, judging by the most recent data available, women hold the majority of positions in English Studies. The ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing (2008), using data from 2004, reported that women held 53.5% of the tenured and tenure-track faculty positions in English departments, 62.7% of the full-time non-tenure-track positions, and 66.7% of the part-time positions (p. 26). Composition specifically has been described as a “feminized discipline” (Holbrook, 1991), meaning that for historical reasons it became associated with feminine attributes and populated by the female gender. Recently, feminist English Studies scholars Gubar (2013) and Gilbert (2013) reflected on the historical and current positioning of women in English Studies, with Gubar lamenting that just as women joined the faculty ranks, the faculty ranks started to shrink, and Gilbert similarly wondering “where will we ambitious, supposedly problem-free women be if the world we struggled to enter gradually ceases to exist?” (Gilbert, 2013, p. 33).

An alternative view is that the English department is not disappearing, but rather, that English—and higher education generally—is simply changing. Gilbert’s (2013) and Gubar’s (2013) reflections sound like the deterioration narratives told by some of Yljoki and Ursin’s (2013) participants and what Taylor (2008) describes as grief for a lost golden age. Yet this is not the only way to tell the story. Women and early career faculty, in and outside of English, certainly face challenges as they navigate through the higher education workplace. But given that the reality of the professional academic context is so much more varied than the idealized vision, it is worthwhile to take a fresh look at how new PhDs working in this professional context view their challenges, opportunities, and trajectories.

Chapter Summary

I began this chapter with an introduction to the literacy and identity frameworks shaping this dissertation, clarifying the key terms of the research questions and highlighting conceptual and methodological implications of these frameworks. I then reviewed studies of professional academic literacies, identities, and literacies-and-identities to describe how these concepts have been explored and what the studies have found. The last section provided an overview of literature on early career academics and composition to familiarize readers with the professional context for this study's participants. While the academic literacies (Lea & Street, 1998; Lillis & Scott, 2007) and writer identity (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010; Ivanič, 1998) frameworks have been used to study the practices of professional academic writers in UK and European contexts, they have not been used to study early career academics in depth, and they have not been applied to the disciplinary context of this dissertation, US composition. By bringing an established literacy-and-identity framework to a new context, this dissertation contributes to research on how literacy and identity mediate one another, while also furthering conversations about how new PhDs working in composition navigate their journeys.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This dissertation adds to the literature on professional academic literacy practices, professional academic identities, early career academics, and professional issues in composition. These areas of inquiry have significance for understanding academic knowledge construction and teaching and learning in higher education. Furthermore, the study contributes to the broader inquiry into literacy-and-identity studies (Moje & Luke, 2009), which has significance for understanding writing practice, designing writing instruction and support, and avoiding assumptions about writers. With these aims in mind, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What identities does each of these new PhDs working in composition bring to the writing of a particular professional academic text?
2. How do those identities mediate their professional academic literacy practices?

This chapter details how I explored those questions.

The chapter begins by presenting the overall methodological approach for the study: case study methodology as described by Stake (1995, 2006). Next I explain the steps I took to strengthen the trustworthiness of the study, focusing on ethics and credibility. I then describe the contexts of the study and introduce the participants. Detailed descriptions of the data collection procedures and analytical processes follow. Finally, I introduce the presentation and organization of the case studies.

Methodology: Case Study Research

My study is aligned with the academic literacies approach (Lillis & Scott, 2007), which is informed by an ethnographic research tradition going back to the work of Street (1984). While not all academic literacies studies are ethnographies, academic literacies research takes from the tradition “a commitment to staying rooted in people’s lived experiences and an attempt to explore what may be at stake for them in specific contexts” (Lillis & Scott, 2007, p.13). Like other academic literacies researchers, specifically Ivanič (1998) and Lea and Stierer (2009), I found it helpful to approach my identity-focused, academic literacies research as a set of case studies.

At its core, case study research is about understanding the complexity of a case in its context (Stake, 1995). This methodology, particularly as articulated by Stake (1995, 2006), allowed me to focus first on each participant working on writing in her own unique situation, and later to look across the cases for further insight into the identity-and-literacy relationship.

While resisting a single definition, Flyvbjerg (2011) offers four characteristics of case study research. First, “the decisive factor in defining a study as a case study is the choice of the individual unit of study and the setting of its boundaries” (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 301). Stake (1995) stresses that “not everything is a case” (p. 2). A case must be a bounded, integrated system, such as a person or program; it is “a specific, a complex, functioning thing” (Stake, 1995, p. 2). To use case study to understand something else, some phenomenon or function that lacks the boundedness of a case—such as how identities mediate literacy practices—is to engage in *instrumental case study* (Stake, 1995, p. 3), and to study several cases in that pursuit is *collective case study* (Stake, 1995, p. 3) or *multicase study* (Stake, 2006, p. 4). Stake (2006) refers to the

phenomenon linking the cases in a multicase study as the *quintain*: “an object or phenomenon or condition to be studied—a target, but not a bull’s eye” (p. 6). In this dissertation, the quintain is professional academic literacy-and-identity, and the cases are four new PhDs working in composition. In a multicase study, the researcher first works to understand each case “almost as if it is the only one” (Stake, 2006, p. 1) and later looks across the case findings to understand the quintain better.

The second characteristic of case study research is that “case studies are ‘intensive.’” Thus, case studies comprise more detail, richness, completeness, and variance—that is, depth—for the unit of study than does cross-unit analysis” (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 301). I found this intensity of focus necessary to understand how each participants’ multiple identities mediated her literacy practices. Writing each case report allowed me “to generate a picture of the case and then produce a portrayal of the case for others to see” (Stake, 2006, p. 3). Within each report I was able to present multiple identities and multiple practices through the lens of my interactions with the participant. This kind of reporting offered an in-depth look at each participant, providing not only my own interpretations but also a rich picture for readers to consider for themselves. Watts (2007) points out these strengths of Stake’s case study approach, particularly the way Stake makes the researcher presence visible and the way non-evaluative reporting allows readers to arrive at their own conclusions: “there are answers in the plural—not just the one” (p. 212). Case study’s ability to open up possibilities for interpretation strikes me as particularly compatible with the transformative ideology of the academic literacies approach (Lillis & Scott, 2007).

A related benefit of case study methodology is the opportunity to tell a story of change over time, tracing a case's trajectory through its context. This is the third characteristic offered by Flyvbjerg (2011): "case studies stress 'developmental factors,' meaning that a case typically evolves in time, often as a string of concrete and interrelated events that occur 'at such a time, in such a place' and that constitute the case when seen as a whole" (p. 301). This does not mean that all case studies are longitudinal. As Stake puts it, the case "has stages of life—only one of which may be observed, but the sense of history and future are part of the picture" (Stake, 2006, p. 3). Incorporating this sense of past-present-future was particularly important for my study because it allowed me to represent the autobiographical self (Ivanič, 1998) of each writer and to illustrate how multiple timescales are brought to any act of writing (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010). Within each case report, I was able to merge the participant's literacy history, personal and professional trajectory, contextual factors, and decisions and processes involved in writing a particular text.

Finally, Flyvbjerg's (2011) fourth defining characteristic of case study is that "case studies focus on 'relation to environment,' that is, context" (p. 301). This characteristic is critical for a study taking a sociocultural perspective on literacy and identity. Stake (2006) emphasizes the importance of the contexts of the cases in multicase study:

Each case to be studied is a complex entity located in its own situation. It has its special contexts or backgrounds. Historical context is almost always of interest, but so are the social, economic, political, ethical, and aesthetic contexts. The program or phenomenon operates in many different situations. One purpose of a multicase study is to illuminate some of these many contexts, especially the problematic ones. (p. 12)

The case study approach allowed me to pick up on aspects of all of the kinds of contexts Stake mentions here, sometimes in ways I did not anticipate. My participants' institutional, geographical, and sub-disciplinary contexts turned out to be relevant to them as writers and professionals. If contexts were seen as problematic, it is because they were considered problematic by the participants.

Another benefit of the case study approach was that working on each case report moved me toward *contextualization*. Drawing on Gumperz's (1982) notion of contextualization, Lillis (2008) says that "whereas context from a researcher's point of view could be potentially infinite, contextualization comprises participants' activities and understandings that make relevant any specific aspect of context, in this case, to specific acts and practices of academic writing" (p. 361). Lillis maintains that contextualization is a goal for academic literacies research. Taking a case study approach and working "to find out how the case gets things done" (Stake, 2006, p. 2), I was able to better understand which contextual factors were relevant to each participant.

Trusting Literacy-and-Identity Case Study Research: Ethics and Credibility

With a focus on participants' experiences and perspectives, and a case study methodology, which is an intensive look at how a case—in this case, a person—works within particular contexts, this dissertation gets up-close and personal with the participants. Doing so raises ethical considerations about privacy and anonymity. Additionally, the qualitative, interpretative case study approach requires some special considerations for establishing credibility, while acknowledging that the participants' experiences have multiple meanings and that this dissertation's representation of those experiences is filtered through me, the researcher.

Ethics

The primary ethical concern I faced in conducting this study involved protecting participants' privacy and anonymity. Case studies can represent "deep intimacy" (Stake, 2010, p. 204) and thus present a dilemma because "at some point, getting closer is intrusive" (p. 204). Stake (2010) advises researchers to be conscientious of participants' unique and changing *zones of privacy* and to respect these boundaries. I found that my interactions with different participants fell along a spectrum of intimacy, and I followed each participant's lead to keep the level of closeness at the level they set. In terms of protecting anonymity, asking professional academic writers to take part in research on their identities and literacies raises special considerations. Lillis and Curry (2010) observed that ensuring anonymity for participants in their study of scholarly publishing practices was a challenge because extracts of published texts and descriptions of a participant's research could make them identifiable, especially if they worked in a small academic subfield. In response to this challenge, they used a variety of strategies to balance their two aims, "to secure anonymity and at the same time to provide a rich picture of scholars' activities, perspectives and practices" (Lillis & Curry, 2010, p. 29). In the same spirit, I used pseudonyms of my participants' choosing, and I omitted or changed details in their case reports to avoid identifying them. During the participant check stage, I asked the participants to comment on how well the case report protected their privacy and anonymity, specifically asking them to imagine people who knew them reading the report. I asked participants to note any details they wanted deleted or modified, and I followed through on their feedback in revising the reports.

Credibility

In addition to addressing ethical considerations, it was crucial that I consider the credibility of my results as I designed and implemented this study. Qualitative case study research calls for particular credibility strategies; as Stake (2006) puts it:

Researchers in social situations deal a lot with impressions—their own, as well as those of others. Impressions can be good data, but good researchers want assurance of what they are seeing and hearing. They want assurance that they are not oversimplifying the situation. They worry that they are perhaps reading too much into what they see. They want assurance that most of the meaning gained by a reader from their interpretations is the meaning they intended to convey. (p. 33)

These were questions I was constantly asking myself as I worked on the case reports, looking for assurances that my evolving impressions were supported by the data. Stake (2006) calls the process of gaining these assurances *triangulation*, explaining that “each important finding needs to have at least three (often more) confirmations and assurances that key meanings are not being overlooked” (p. 33). Not necessarily dwelling on three as a magic number, Stake (2006) equates his notion of triangulation with *crystallization* as described by Richardson and St. Pierre (2005). Stake (2006) stresses that researchers must seek out multiple confirmations and alternative perspectives for their assertions. Stake (2006) also notes that triangulation/crystallization occurs both within single cases and across cases, supporting the overall *credibility* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the multicase study (Stake, 2006, p. 38).

While drafting the case reports, I relied on the writing process as a way of gaining assurances. For me, writing was a way to think through the research process; as Knight (2002)

describes, writing was a way of sensemaking and claimsmaking. My writing process also had characteristics in common with what Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) describe as *writing as a method of inquiry*. Specifically, writing initial impressions in my researcher journal was a method of data collection, and drafting the case reports was a key part of my data analysis. Drafting the reports forced me to triangulate/crystallize along the way. I worked to craft a report that provided the evidence for my assertions before I stated those assertions—to “repeat key assertions in several ways” (Stake, 2006, p. 35), so that I would “leave some of the work for the readers to do, but [...] give them the makings of understanding” (Stake, 2006, p. 35). Doing so, I found myself continually going back to the data to find the illustrations that would allow me to repeat the key assertions. This process provided multiple confirmations of my impressions, and when it did not, revision took the report in a different direction.

In addition to repeated engagement with the data, Stake (2006) also stresses the importance of seeking out other perspectives on the data to challenge explanations. Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) note the benefit of multiple perspectives in collaboration as crystallization practice. As a doctoral student, I am the sole researcher in this study, but I did find ways to check my developing understandings through discussion with others. I did so through discussions with my advisor, my dissertation writing group, and by presenting some of my data and preliminary analysis at an international conference (Vacek, 2015). The feedback I received in these conversations sometimes confirmed my impressions and sometimes offered alternatives, both of which helped me better understand what assertions my data could support.

While it was important for me to gain assurance of my impressions by continually consulting the data and checking my ideas with others, I also have a responsibility to provide the

reader with information about where my impressions come from. Qualitative researchers practice self-disclosure in their writing: “No longer is it acceptable to be the omniscient, distanced qualitative writer” (Creswell, 2007). Stake (2006) asserts “it is an ethical responsibility for us as case researchers to identify affiliations and ideological commitments that might influence our interpretations” (p. 87). In addition to owning that my unique position influenced my interpretations of the data, I also recognize that my participation and my positioning in the study shaped the perspectives that my participants shared with me (Gubrium & Holstein, 2012; Lillis, 2008). To provide the reader with some way to judge how these processes unfolded, I have described my positionality throughout this dissertation and made myself visible within each case report.

Finally, a critical assurance-gaining step was the participant check. Stake (2006) calls this *member checking* and agrees that it is “a vital technique for field researchers” (p. 37) because it can “provide new data for the study, as well as contribute to the revision and improved interpretation of the reporting” (p. 37). I built the participant check into my research design as a data source. I provided my participants with their draft case reports and asked them to read for accuracy and possible misrepresentation, as well as to reflect on the report as a reconstruction of their stories. While giving me assurance that the reports were accurate, this step gave me additional assurance that my interpretations resonated with the participants—even when the reports highlighted aspects of their experience in ways they did not expect. Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) argue that “there is no such thing as ‘getting it right,’ only ‘getting it’ differently contoured and nuanced” (p. 962). Acknowledging that my unique perspective and writing

process brought particular contours and nuance to the reports, it was still important to me that the participants ultimately recognized themselves in the case findings.

Contexts of the Study: Where and Who

The four participants work in different higher education institutions in the United States, and all work in composition. While other studies of professional academic literacies have been situated in a single institutional context (Nygaard, 2015) or involve participants across multiple institutions and disciplines (Lea & Stierer, 2009, 2011; Lillis & Curry, 2010), in this dissertation, the discipline is a shared context for the participants, while their institutional contexts are diverse. This configuration worked for a multicase study because “an important reason for doing the multicase study is to examine how the program or phenomenon performs in different environments” (Stake, 2006, p. 23). The ways participants operate in their different institutional settings highlight different perspectives on professional academic literacies and identities.

The participants are also all new PhDs, having received their degrees in 2012, 2013, and 2014. Because I use Ivanič’s (1998) discursal construction of writer identity as a conceptual framework, I see value in focusing on a “turning-point,” as she did in her study of mature students returning to higher education:

Returning to study represents a turning-point in their lives, when other adult commitments and experiences—other social worlds—are juxtaposed with the academic world. In such circumstances they are caught up in conflicting social pressures when writing. Whatever aspect of writing we are interested in is therefore likely to be thrown into sharp focus by studying these writers. (Ivanič, 1998, pp. 5-6)

The kinds of commitments, experiences, and pressures mentioned here by Ivanič are also relevant to my participants—I only need to replace “returning to study” with “earning a PhD” for her statement to fit my study. As I related in chapter two, literature on early-career academics supports the idea that doctoral qualification is an important turning-point in the development of academic identities and literacies (Bazeley, 2003; Hall & Burns, 2009; Urion, 2002).

Thus considerations of discipline, institutional context, and early-career status were foregrounded as I thought about who could help me better understand professional academic literacies-and-identities. Stake (2006) offers three main criteria for selecting cases:

- Is the case relevant to the quintain?
- Do the cases provide diversity across contexts?
- Do the cases provide good opportunities to learn about complexity and contexts? (p. 23)

To be relevant to the quintain, I needed participants who would be involved in higher education and professional academic writing during the study. I decided to highlight institutional diversity by keeping recruitment open to people in any institutional context. To provide good opportunities to learn about complexity and contexts, I focused on a turning-point in the early career experience, doctoral qualification. To keep participants within the early-career stage as widely understood in the literature, I determined that they should be within five years of earning the PhD: if a participant had started a tenure-track job immediately after graduating, they would still be pre-tenure within that time frame. My recruitment criteria were: 1) completed a PhD in English Studies within the past five years, 2) currently working in higher education, and 3) would be actively working on a text for publication during the data collection period.

Working within English Studies as a disciplinary context meant working within my own discipline, and that meant I was able to find participants among friends and colleagues. Working with participants already known to the researchers and in settings known to the researchers has precedent in academic literacies research: for example, both Lea and Stierer (2009) and Nygaard (2015) acknowledge their roles working within the institutions where their studies take place, and they emphasize the benefits of prior knowledge of their contexts. In my study, I was unfamiliar with my participants' various institutional contexts, having never worked in any of them. However, I had knowledge of the disciplinary context, since it was the same as my own, and while my career trajectory through the discipline is unique (as is each participant's), we also had many shared experiences as professionals in English Studies. Most importantly, I had prior knowledge of the participants—I'd known all of them for at least four years when data collection began. Our relationships were as friends and professional peers or near-peers.

Recruiting participants from my own network meant that I had a foundation for the "mutual sense of cooperative self-disclosure and trust" (J. M. Johnson & Rowlands, 2012, p. 104) needed for in-depth interviewing. Toma (2000) argues that close relationships between researchers and participants make for more productive data-gathering interactions: "In dealing with complex notions, such as why certain things are important to organizations and people, it seems natural that several minds are better than one. Personal involvement between researchers and subjects is what allows that to happen" (p. 181). I believe that my prior relationships of friendship and shared disciplinary context with my participants set the stage for the type of engagement during the interviews and manuscript discussions that enhanced the data. Thus my

choice aligns with Stake's (2006) advice to select "cases that seem to offer the opportunity to learn a lot" (p. 25).

My position within English Studies also influenced how I interacted with participants and how I understood their situations. I became involved with the English Studies discipline when I decided to pursue a master's degree in English in 2004, and since then I have held various professional roles affiliated with the discipline (writing consultant, English language teacher, writing instructor, writing program administrator, language teacher educator). In that sense, I have been in the field for over a decade. At the same time, I am a doctoral student, not a new PhD, and my academic publishing experience is far less than that of most of my participants.

My researcher positionality shaped the study in various ways throughout the research process. J. M. Johnson and Rowlands (2012) argue that researchers must understand how their positions influence the interview process. Roulston (2012) further details this view by asserting that one of the essential tasks for an interview researcher is "to understand the social locations they occupy as researchers—such as race, ethnicity, status, age, nationality, education, gender, language proficiency, and so forth—and how these may both limit and benefit the generation of interview data with research participants" (p. 71). While keeping my positionality in mind throughout the data collection and analysis processes, I also worked to give the reader a sense of how my presence shaped the interactions by writing myself into the case reports.

The human subjects protocol for the study was approved by IUP's IRB in March, 2014 (see Appendix A). In April 2014, I generated a list of personal contacts who I believed would meet the recruitment criteria and would be comfortable discussing their lives and writing processes with me. The list included people I knew either through my doctoral program or my

writing center/writing across the curriculum work. In April 2014 I sent seven email invitations to potential participants (see Appendix B) and received five replies of interest.

I asked for an initial meeting with each prospective participant to discuss the project in more detail and to answer their questions. One potential participant who worked outside the United States realized that scheduling this meeting would be difficult due to our time zone difference, and she decided not to participate in the study for that reason. For the others, we discussed their current work situations and writing projects, my data collection plan and timeline, and the informed consent letter (see Appendix C), which I had sent in advance of the meeting. I also used this meeting to gauge participants' comfort level talking with me and to ask about which video chat application they preferred to use, since our interactions would take place at a distance. After the initial meeting, four participants completed the informed consent process. Four participants is within the range of 4-10 cases Stake (2006) says is ideal for multicase research; similarly, Duff (2014) says 4-6 cases can be ideal for doctoral research.

In summary, all four participants completed their PhDs within two years of the data collection period. They identified with different sub-disciplines of English Studies. They had obtained different types of academic appointments at different types of higher education institutions. All four participants had completed their PhDs in the Northeast, but during the data collection period they were all working at different institutions and living in different regions of the USA. An overview of the participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Overview

Pseudonym	Year PhD Awarded	Primary Sub-Disciplinary Identification(s)	Primary Employment During Data Collection	Primary Employing Institution Type(s)	Geographic Region of Primary Employing Institution(s)
Isabel Wells	2012	composition	Full-time tenure track	Master's university	South
Nicole Hunter	2013	composition	Moving into full-time tenure track	Master's university	West
Chris Gregory	2014	creative writing	Multiple part-time appointments	Associate's college	Northeast
Elle Stewart	2014	TESOL, composition	Multiple part-time appointments	Master's university, four-year college	South

Participant 1: Dr. Isabel Wells

Isabel earned her PhD in 2012 and, that same year, obtained a tenure-track position at a small HBCU in a southern state. In addition to her tenure-track position, Isabel adjuncts online for a two-year college and works as a dissertation advisor for an online graduate university. When I met with Isabel for data collection, she had already published a single-authored book, two journal articles, and twelve book chapters, and she had several projects underway. The particular text she chose to discuss with me was a draft of online supplementary material to accompany a book chapter she had in press.

Participant 2: Dr. Nicole Hunter

Nicole earned her PhD in 2013 and took a temporary faculty position at her doctoral institution while she was on the job market. When we met for data collection in spring 2014,

Nicole had accepted a tenure-track position at a master's university in another state, and she was getting ready to move and begin her new job over the summer. Nicole had already published articles and chapters and had several ongoing projects. The text she worked on with me was a draft of her own contribution to a proposed collection she would be co-editing.

Participant 3: Dr. Chris Gregory

Chris defended her dissertation in fall 2013 and graduated in 2014, just before we met for data collection. She had been teaching a combination of face-to-face and online courses at two different two-year colleges, and she looked forward to beginning a full-time, fully online temporary position at one of those schools in the fall. She also planned to continue some face-to-face teaching at the other. Chris had published numerous academic book chapters as well as fiction and journalism. The project she chose to discuss with me was a book chapter.

Participant 4: Dr. Elle Stewart

After earning her PhD in 2014, Elle moved across the country to be closer to family and to find a lower cost of living. While on the job market, she took on a combination of online and face-to-face teaching at three different institutions. She desired a tenure-track faculty position but was open to non-tenure track opportunities. Elle had published one peer-reviewed journal article at the time we met for data collection. The text she initially planned to discuss with me was the outline of an accepted conference presentation, which she planned to later turn into a journal article. However, by the time we met to discuss the text, she had shelved that project and was planning a new article on a different topic.

Data Collection Procedures

Consistent with the academic literacies approach (Lillis & Scott, 2007), data collection created opportunities for participants to discuss their perspectives on their identities and literacy practices. The primary data sources were 1) a one-hour semi-structured interview about the participant's background and current contexts and 2) a one-hour discussion of an in-progress text of her choice. I also collected 3) each participant's CV to prepare for her interview and to reference while drafting the case reports. After drafting each case report, I sent it to the participant for 4) a participant check. Additionally, I maintained 5) a researcher journal throughout the research process.

Data Source 1: Background and Context Interviews

I first conducted a semi-structured interview with each participant to discuss her language and literacy history and present work and personal contexts. I had prepared possible questions on these topics in advance (see Appendix D). At the same time, I expected the interviews to also take "unexpected turns or digressions that follow the informant's interests or knowledge" (J. M. Johnson & Rowlands, 2012, p. 107). I took my cues from the participants in terms of how long we stayed with a particular topic before moving on. As a result, some of the interviews took more time with particular topics than others. These interviews took about one hour.

The importance of the literacy history interview for understanding participants' views on their texts is stressed in literacy as social practice and academic literacies research (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Lillis, 2008), and such a historical view was essential for exploring each participant's autobiographical self (Ivanič, 1998). I combined the literacy history interview with discussion of present work and personal contexts. With four participants in dispersed geographic

locations, I needed the participants to share their own observations of their settings, rather than observing those settings myself. Hockey and Forsey (2012) argue that ethnographic interviews can provide the same kind of insight as first-hand observation. They see the interview as “a moment of engagement, a site of participation in the life of the person we meet and talk with” (Hockey & Forsey, 2012, p. 75). Within this setting of engagement, “the interview allows us to tap into the knowledge that the particular social actors we engage with as social researchers have about what they are up to and its consequences” (Hockey & Forsey, 2012, p. 75). I found that the participants were able to provide insightful pictures of their unique institutional settings, and that relying on their first-hand observations pointed out which elements of context were relevant to their professional practice. By asking them to also talk about life outside of work, I used the interview as an opportunity to follow the “social and personal trajectories that [my participants] trace through multiple worlds” (Prior & Bilbro, 2012, p. 27), which is important for understanding how academic literacies fit within the fullness of people’s lives. Although I knew all of my participants before interviewing them, this extended discussion deepened my knowledge of their life histories and present circumstances and interests.

Because my participants were located in different geographic locations, I used video chat technology to conduct the interviews. This technology worked with the semi-structured interview I planned: “the free-flowing, conversational characteristic of videoconferencing most closely compares with face-to-face dialogue, so it can be used with semi-structured or unstructured styles” (Salmons, 2012, p. 21). We used either Skype or Google hangouts, depending on the participant’s preference. These meeting spaces, available only to invited participants, were private online spaces (Salmons, 2012). While with any kind of computer-mediated

communication, “the possibility for problems with connectivity, access, and software are present” (Salmons, 2012, p. 27), we had no technology problems we couldn’t trouble-shoot ourselves. Not only did the technology work smoothly, there were also some unexpected benefits. Using video chat meant that the participants were free to choose where they would be when they met with me. This brought me virtually into all four participants’ homes, Nicole’s on-campus office, and Elle’s temporary home with her brother’s family. Participants commented on their surroundings during our conversations and explained how objects in these settings reflected their identities. These comments enhanced the data and several serve as illustrations in the case reports.

All interviews and manuscript discussions were recorded using SnagIt, a screen capture tool that recorded everything happening on my computer screen as well as the audio. I chose this tool because it was a way to ensure good-quality audio recording of a video-chat conversation. Recording the video also proved to be useful because it allowed me to review salient visual information, such as the participants’ surroundings noted above. This unexpected benefit is consistent with Lillis’s (2008) observation of the “potential value of photographs as a record of a physical location, but also—along with the rest of such multiple data sources—of helping the researcher sustain strong engagement in multiple research sites and with many participants” (p. 371).

Data Source 2: Manuscript Discussions

After the background and context interview I met with each participant a second time to discuss a work-in-progress of her choice. I had asked them to bring something they were writing for academic publication that wasn’t yet finished. I told them it could be at any stage of the

writing process, even if there was no draft yet. An overview of the texts the participants brought to these discussions and their stages in the writing process is provided in Table 2.

Table 2

Overview of Manuscript Discussion Texts and Writing Process Stages

Participant Pseudonym	Text in progress at time of manuscript discussion	Stage of the writing process at time of manuscript discussion
Isabel Wells	Supplemental online material for her book chapter in press	Had drafted instructions for an assignment and sent this draft to the editors
Nicole Hunter	Book chapter	Had a complete draft of the book chapter and had started revising
Chris Gregory	Book chapter	Had collected most of her data and had done some reading for the literature review
Elle Stewart	Journal article	Had made an outline

Nicole and Chris chose to discuss book chapters they were working on. Nicole had a draft, but Chris did not. Isabel chose to discuss a short description of an assignment she had designed, which she planned to submit to her editors as online supplemental material for a book chapter she had in press. For Nicole, Chris, and Isabel, the interview and the manuscript discussion were clearly separate events—we didn’t talk about the manuscripts during the interview, and the manuscript discussions stayed, for the most part, focused on the manuscript. Elle’s two meetings proceeded somewhat differently. She spoke much more about her manuscript during the interview, and much more about her present work situation during the manuscript discussion. She also changed her project from one meeting to the next. For both projects, she had an outline.

The manuscript discussion is an example of *talk around texts*, a method developed by Ivanič, which “has made a fundamental contribution to the field of writing research, namely by bringing writers’ voices to the centre of any attempt to explore what’s involved and at stake in academic writing” (Lillis, 2009, p. 169). At its core, talk around texts is “talk between the

researcher and the writer-participant about a text that the writer is writing or has written” (Lillis, 2009, p. 171). In Ivanič’s (1998) study, a retrospective discussion with each participant about their discourse choices in a finished essay showed “just how insightful people can be once prompted to reflect on their writing” (p. 115). To gain a sense of how my participants’ identities shaped their day-to-day literacy practices, it was essential to focus on a real text that they were actively working on.

I asked participants to discuss a text in progress, rather than something finished, so that I could approach the manuscript discussion as a facilitated work session. I was prepared to ask questions and engage in activities (see Appendix E) to spark conversation about how each writer viewed her text, her task, her audience, her stage of the writing process, what the project needed and what she would do next. My rationale for structuring the manuscript discussion protocol this way came from my experience working with faculty writers in a writing center. In US higher education, writing centers have traditionally been places where students can have one-to-one tutorials on writing with tutors who act as coaches and collaborators rather than as teachers (Harris, 2016/1988). In the writing center where I worked, faculty were also welcome to meet with writing consultants (our term for the tutors) to discuss their own writing projects in this collaborative, coaching-style interaction. Many faculty writers regularly took advantage of this opportunity to discuss their writing projects, usually journal articles for publication. Rafoth (2010), speaking to student writers about why they should visit their campus writing center, stresses that “conversation is the key idea behind writing centers” (p. 146) and that tutors create “idea-rich conversations” (p. 154). In my previous work with faculty writers, I had seen how these conversations about work in progress helped me learn important details about the writer,

the writing situation, and the writer's decision-making processes. For these reasons, I felt that including elements of writing center practice in the manuscript discussions would help me gather data that would answer my research questions.

Thus, during the manuscript discussion, I planned to play the role of *writing consultant*, or what is also described in writing center literature as *writing tutor*. From a writing center perspective, the role of a writing tutor/consultant is to “collaborate with writers in ways that facilitate the process of writers finding their own answers” (Harris, 2016/1988, “Tutors are coaches,” para. 1). Writing consultant is a role I am comfortable in, and thus I hoped it would also help me make the participants feel comfortable. I found that this approach allowed me to create a productive environment for the talk around text method. As Lillis (2009) observes

Creating spaces where writers can talk about their texts is difficult given that (1) no talking space is ever neutral and, (2) of specific relevance to writing research, talking spaces are shaped by powerful institutional constraints in both teaching and research contexts. There is an unequal power relationship, with the teacher or researcher conventionally controlling the talking space. (p. 175)

Addressing this concern, the facilitated work session was driven by the participants' needs as they identified them. Again, I saw this as a benefit of my decision to incorporate writing center practice into the manuscript discussion; in writing center practice writing tutors/consultants “try to focus on things that are important to the writer” (Rafoth, 2010, p. 148). This strategy kept the conversation rooted in the participants' concerns and perspectives. I did not read the texts in advance of the meetings, so I did not bring any interpretations of those texts to the discussion. By sticking to a writing consultant role, I was able to facilitate discussion rather than questioning

participants about their texts. In this way, my particular approach to talk around texts worked to disrupt researcher-researched positioning (Lillis, 2009) in the manuscript discussion.

For the most part, I was able to stay in the writing consultant role throughout the manuscript discussions. Nicole's discussion proceeded as I envisioned, and I noted in my journal immediately after that I felt the discussion "externalized" her writing process (researcher journal 5/30/2014). I was concerned that Isabel's text was very short, and since she didn't know what her editors expected, we didn't have much to do in a work session—so with Isabel, I fell back into an interviewer role towards the end of the conversation, and her discussion was just about 30 minutes rather than the hour we had planned. Chris actually worked on analyzing her interview responses for her book chapter while I waited and watched, something that might have felt awkward, but Chris seemed unfazed. She immediately shared her insights with me. Elle's discussion, as noted above, resulted in more conversation about her work situation than I had expected. While all four manuscript discussions proceeded somewhat differently, all allowed me to experience something of the participants' writing processes and gave me insights into how they viewed their texts and the role of the texts in their professional lives.

Like the background and context interviews, the manuscript discussions utilized video chat technology, and the manuscript discussions also proceeded smoothly and allowed me to observe aspects of my participants' physical surroundings, as noted above. Additionally, for the manuscript discussions where a draft existed, we were each able to view the draft together and easily focus on specific portions of it.

Data Source 3: CVs

Before the background and context interview I collected each participant's CV. I used these to prepare for the interviews; for example, while my prepared questions (Appendix D) asked about a single current workplace, I made sure to ask my participants who held multiple appointments about each of them. I also used the CVs as reference documents when I was writing the case reports, making sure I had chronologies and dates right as well as the details of workplaces, service activities, and publications.

Data Source 4: Participant Check

After drafting the case reports, I sent them to the participants for their feedback. I sent them a prompt (see Appendix F) to guide their response. I asked them to answer any specific questions I had about details of their backgrounds and contexts, but mainly I asked them to reflect on how well the case report described their experience and how well the case report protected their privacy and anonymity. I also asked them to comment on any details they wanted to add, delete, or modify. All four participants completed the participant check and gave me thoughtful responses that enhanced my understanding. In revising the case reports according to their feedback, I incorporated some of their comments into the reports.

In the draft case reports I sent, I included quotes taken verbatim from the transcripts. Three of the participants reacted to this choice—they didn't like the way it made them sound, and they felt it made the case reports difficult to read. In response to their feedback I modified the transcription for the quotes, inserting punctuation and removing some pronunciation details (especially repeated words) that the participants felt distracted from readability.

All four participants indicated that the report did a good job of representing who they are and the decisions they make about their writing. They also expressed confidence in the report's ability to protect their privacy and anonymity. While they acknowledged that people who know them well would be able to recognize their stories, they all said they were comfortable with this possibility in the context of my dissertation.

Data Source 5: Researcher Journal

Throughout the research process I kept a journal to record my immediate impressions and evolving interpretations. I also used the journal to track data collection steps and decisions I made about my analytical processes, including transcription, annotating the transcripts, drafting, and revising the case reports. Stake (2010) advises all researchers to keep a journal for record keeping and to capture “ongoing speculations, puzzlements, and ponderings” (p. 101). The research journal's dual functions of record keeping and reflective writing proved useful to me through the various stages of the project. Borg's (2001) discussion of the benefits of a researcher journal particularly resonate with my experience. Borg identified both *process* and *product* benefits for researchers. The process of journal writing can help researchers define conceptual frameworks, resolve fieldwork anxiety, deal with negative feedback, and write up the study. I experienced all of these benefits as I used my journal to work through questions, fears, and choices that arose throughout the research process. Borg also describes several benefits of the research journal as a product. One of these benefits was that the journal “supplied an account of events and procedures which allowed a more detailed write up of the study” (Borg, 2001, p. 171). Similarly, I found myself regularly referring to my journal as I worked on my case reports and methodology chapter and appreciating that I had an accurate record of what had transpired.

Another product benefit for Borg was that the journal helped “to recall and reproduce the thinking behind key decisions” (Borg, 2001, p. 171). I also experienced this benefit as my journal helped me describe decisions I made about aspects of the study such as participant recruitment, transcription, analytical procedures, and presentation of findings.

My research journal also documented my changing positionality during the research process. Significant experiences I had during this time shaped how I understand professional academic writing, higher education as a workplace, and my own identities in and out of academia. Since I began this dissertation, I witnessed my husband endure a tortuous tenure and promotion process, I became a mother, I left my full-time writing program administrator position, and I became a part-time, temporary instructor. The impact of these events on my thinking and lived experience appears in my journal, and served as a useful reminder as I included statements of self-disclosure throughout this dissertation. In this way the journal facilitated “wider use of the researcher’s voice in the reporting of the study” (Borg, 2001, p. 172) and also provided a space for “critical reflexivity about the writing self in different contexts as a valuable creative analytical practice” (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 965). Such writing helped me better understand my own experiences and perspectives, making me more conscious of how my views interacted with those of my participants.

Research Timeline

Data collection began in early summer as participants were finished (or nearly finished) with their spring semester teaching duties and had more time to focus on their writing. For Isabel, Chris, and Nicole, the background and context interview was conducted about a week prior to the manuscript discussion. Elle’s move and heavy teaching load necessitated that her

interview and manuscript discussion be spread further apart, with the interview later in the summer and the manuscript discussion in the middle of the fall semester. The data collection schedule as it ultimately occurred appears in Table 3.

Table 3

Data Collection Schedule

Month	Data Collection Tasks
April-May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruited participants and obtained informed consent
May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted background and context interviews with Isabel, Chris, Nicole Conducted manuscript discussions with Chris, Nicole, and Isabel Kept researcher journal and conducted preliminary analysis
June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kept researcher journal and conducted preliminary analysis
August 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted background and context interview with Elle Kept researcher journal and conducted preliminary analysis
September 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kept researcher journal and conducted preliminary analysis
October 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted manuscript discussion with Elle Kept researcher journal and conducted preliminary analysis
November 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sent draft case reports to Nicole and Chris for participant check Received participant check response from Nicole Kept researcher journal and conducted preliminary analysis
January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received participant check response from Chris Kept researcher journal and conducted preliminary analysis
February 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sent draft case reports to Elle and Isabel for participant check Received participant check responses from Elle and Isabel Kept researcher journal and conducted preliminary analysis

Analytical Processes

Analysis began as soon as I began data collection, so the two proceeded concurrently.

Immediately after each interview and manuscript discussion, I recorded my initial impressions in

my researcher journal, which served as preliminary analysis. The remaining analytical steps on the way to each final case report included transcribing the recordings, annotating the transcripts, drafting the case report, and incorporating participant feedback into the revised case report. Cross-case analysis was based on the completed case reports, and entailed steps of reading the reports with the research questions in mind, rating the importance of the cases and each case's findings for understanding the research questions, and developing assertions for the multicase study. Each of the steps in single case analysis and cross-case analysis are detailed in the next two sections.

Single Case Analysis

Transcribing the recordings was a time of immersion in the data as well as an opportunity to reflect on how the transcripts could support the study's purpose and fit with its frameworks. I heeded Bucholtz's (2007) argument that "although reflection about the transcription process cannot overcome the difficulties inherent in this methodology, it can allow scholars to be more attentive to their own transcription choices and their limitations and to make these explicit in their writing" (p. 784). Transcription always creates a partial representation of the recorded event (Duranti, 2006; Ochs, 1979), and researchers have to make decisions about *what* to transcribe and *how* to transcribe (Bucholtz, 2000). Because transcripts are produced for different purposes by different researchers, transcripts vary (Bucholtz, 2007), and no single transcription method can be suitable for all transcription acts. For my study, the research questions, conceptual frameworks, and my evolving sense of what was most important in my data shaped my decisions about what and how I transcribed. Because I initially intended to use a conceptual framework of identity and interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005), I formatted the transcripts to illustrate elements

of interaction, using conventions developed by Jefferson and summarized in Schegloff (2007) to represent overlapping speech, cut-offs or self-interruption, pauses, and laughter. I transcribed some pronunciation details (repetition, uses of “gonna,” “wanna,” etc.) that represented the conversational style of the interaction. Several of these choices are visible in the transcript excerpt included in the opening of Elle’s case report. However, most of the excerpts are reformatted in the case reports. Transcripts change over time (Bucholtz, 2007; Duranti, 2006), and I found a need to change the way I presented the data as I moved excerpts from the transcript to the case report and as I revised case reports based on participants’ feedback. My analytical process and subsequent reframing of the study with an academic literacies approach (Lillis & Scott, 2007) and discursal construct of writer identity (Ivanič, 1998) led me to background linguistic analysis of interaction and foreground participants’ perspectives and meanings. Quotes from participants were revised for readability, losing some of the pronunciation details that participants felt made them hard to read. I quoted exchanges between the participants and me in the case reports, but, with the exception of Elle’s transcript excerpt mentioned above, these interactions were reformatted in the style of literary dialog, as exemplified in Stake (1995).

Once a transcript was complete, my next step was to annotate the transcript. I worked with the transcripts in Microsoft Word. Using different colored highlighting, I first delineated chunks of talk about distinct topics. This was the part of the process where “analysis essentially means taking something apart” (Stake, 1995, p. 71). Next, using the comments function in Word, I noted the topic of each chunk. I then re-read the annotated transcripts, looking for topics that repeated and for individual topics that stood out as important to the research questions. Here I was using analytical strategies Stake (1995) calls *categorical aggregation* and *direct*

interpretation. As I looked for patterns in the topics, I was “sequenc[ing] the action, categoriz[ing] properties, and mak[ing] tallies in some intuitive aggregation” (Stake, 1995, p. 74). Also in aggregation mode, I looked for correspondence between topics and impressions I had recorded in my journal. When I noted particular topical chunks in the annotated transcript that stood out as important but weren’t part of a category, I was recognizing that “some important features appear only once” (Stake, 1995, p. 74), and I used direct interpretation to analyze these topics by asking myself “what did that mean?” (Stake, 1995, p. 78). As I reviewed the annotated transcripts, I thought about the topics at face value, but also had in mind my research questions about identities and literacy practices, as well as the interactional nature of the interviews and manuscript discussions. These three ways of thinking about each chunk of conversation turned out to resonate with Lillis’s (2008) argument that academic literacies researchers should view talk around texts in three ways: 1) transparent/referential: “insider accounts/perspective on texts (part of a text), [and] practices” (p. 366); 2) discourse/indexical: “indexing-specific discourses about self, writing, academia, etc.” (p. 366); and 3) performative/relational: “researcher and researched performing research, identity, power, specific practices at specific moment/place in time” (p. 366). As I focused in on the topics that would be included in the case report, I considered all three of these ways of viewing talk and represented them in the case report by including quotes, interpretations of quotes, and vignettes of my interactions with the participants.

The process of drafting the case report was itself an analytical process that helped me come to better understand each case. My task was to relate what I had learned about each participant to a reader who had not been part of the interview and manuscript discussion

interactions. I particularly focused on creating the opportunity for the reader to arrive at *naturalistic generalizations*: “conclusions arrived at through personal engagement in life’s affairs or by vicarious experience so well constructed that the person feels as if it happened to themselves” (Stake, 1995, p. 85). Stake (1995) offers the following advice for assisting the reader in making naturalistic generalizations:

Our accounts need to be personal, describing the things of our sensory experiences, not failing to attend to the matters that personal curiosity dictates. A narrative account, a story, a chronological representation, personalistic description, emphasis on time and place provide rich ingredients for vicarious experience. Emphasizing time, place, and person are the first major steps. (pp. 86-87)

For these reasons, I first drafted each case report following a biographical organization scheme, with sections roughly divided by the participant’s past, present, and future—a decision which ultimately helped me connect the participant’s autobiographical self (Ivanič, 1998) to her literacy practices. Within each section I brought together those topics that seemed most important because of either their repeated appearance or their special relevance to the research questions. I used my annotations to find relevant illustrations within the transcripts to build each section. As I mentioned above in my discussion of trustworthiness, this process of continually returning to the data for illustrations while drafting the report also served as a triangulation/crystallization strategy. Additionally, I incorporated scenes from my interactions with the participant, thereby also presenting the “researcher’s view of coming to know the case” (Stake, 1995, p. 127), another of Stake’s options for presenting the case. I further followed Stake’s (1995) advice to include an opening vignette to help readers “immediately to start developing a vicarious

experience” (p. 123). Selecting and drafting the opening vignette also helped me clarify my key assertions for each case. Finally, again following Stake (1995), I drafted an interpretive section discussing each participant’s identities and literacy practices, which again helped me clarify and articulate my key assertions.

The entire process of transforming the transcript data into the case reports was the major interpretive act of single-case analysis. Such an interpretive rendering is a hallmark of qualitative research. Stake (1995) discusses qualitative research as a search for understanding, rather than for explanation, and says that “To sharpen the search for understanding, qualitative researchers perceive what is happening in key episodes or testimonies, represent happenings with their own direct interpretation and stories (i.e., narratives)” (p. 40). Because the case reports clearly have narrative qualities, it is worth considering how transcript data is turned into a narrative and what that transformation means. Although coming from a different methodological approach than case study, Clandinin and Connelly’s (2000) discussion of how narrative inquirers transform *field texts* to *research texts* is helpful in further considering my process of transforming transcripts into case reports and the implications of that transformation. The transcripts of the interviews and manuscript discussions could not stand alone as case reports. As I selected particular chunks of the transcripts to include and left out others, as I then re-ordered those chunks into a chronological organization scheme, and as I chose when to quote participants’ own words and when to retell a chunk in my own words, I was creating new meanings out of the transcript data. This is also what narrative inquirers do, which is “to discover and construct meanings in [field] texts. Field texts need to be reconstructed as research texts” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 130). Also, this act of reconstruction was unique to me as a researcher:

the search for patterns, narrative threads, tensions and themes that shape field texts into research texts is created by the writers' experiences as they read and reread field texts and lay them alongside one another in different ways, as they bring stories of their past experiences forward and lay them alongside field texts, and as they read the field texts in the context of other research and theoretical works. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 133)

No other researcher would have arrived at quite the same reconstructed texts; the meanings I created out of the transcript data came from my unique reading of that data. Stake (1995) similarly stresses the researcher's unique perspective in creating meanings in case studies when he says "the way the case and the researcher interact is presumed unique and not necessarily reproducible for other cases and researchers" (p. 135). Given my critical role in reshaping the transcripts into the case reports, I was eager to know what the participants thought of the meanings I created as I reconstructed our conversations into case reports.

After completing the draft case reports, I sent them to the participants for feedback. I have described the participant check step above in my discussions of trustworthiness and data collection, but it also warrants mentioning here as part of the analysis process. My participants' responses provided additional opportunities for categorical aggregation and direct interpretation. After receiving their responses, I revised the reports accordingly and incorporated comments from the participant checks into the reports.

Cross-Case Analysis

After finalizing the case reports, I began cross-case analysis. I used the cross-case analysis procedure detailed in Stake (2006), which aims to develop multicase *assertions* for the final report. *Assertions* are "the researchers' Findings about the Quintain" (Stake, 2006, p. 41).

While in reality I used the process recursively, sometimes going back and repeating a step as I gained a better understanding of both the procedure and my case reports, here I recount the distinct steps of the process in the order Stake presents them.

As the first step, I revisited the study's research questions, which Stake (2006) often calls the "Themes." Because my study has just two overarching research questions, which are heavily conceptually loaded, I developed six guiding questions drawn from my study's conceptual frameworks, which served as my "Themes" throughout the cross-case procedure:

- What are the relevant possibilities of selfhood (circulating discourses) in this writer's context(s)? Which ones is she taking up and which ones is she rejecting?
- What aspects of the writer's *autobiographical self* are relevant to this act of writing? What are her current interests, views of the world, values and beliefs, social positionings, and sense of authoritativeness and agency? What identities does she aspire to?
- What are the writer's purposes/goals for writing for publication? How do these goals/purposes relate to her identities?
- What is at stake for this writer in writing for publication in her context(s)?
- What writing processes/strategies does she use to write for publication? How do these processes/strategies connect to her identities?
- What meanings does the writer bring to professional academic writing? How are those meanings connected to her identities?

But before comparing the reports, the next step was to re-read each report, considering the themes and the unique findings of the case. According to Stake (2006), "the main activity of cross-case analysis is reading the case reports and applying their Findings of situated experience

to the research questions of the Quintain” (p. 47). Using Stake’s guidance, this step involved writing a synopsis of the case and a brief assessment of the uniqueness of the case situation, generating a list of findings from each case report, noting the relevance of the case for each of the cross-case themes, organizing notes from the case reports by theme, and writing a brief commentary connecting the main ideas of the findings. To generate the list of findings for each case, while re-reading the case report I looked for statements of claims (something arguable supported by evidence in the report) that struck me as relevant to the themes or as particularly important for understanding the case. These findings were often pulled verbatim from the case report, but in some cases, I condensed the wording or combined sentences from the report to make a claim statement that would work as a finding. Next, still looking at each case individually, I rated how prominent (or absent) each theme was in each case.

At this point in the cross-case procedure, Stake (2006) offers three tracks for analysis, with each taking a slightly different approach to serve different research goals. Track I, “Emphasizing Case Findings” is what Stake (2006) considers the “preferred track, because it best maintains the Case Findings and situationality” (p. 46). Track II, “Merging Case Findings” maintains a little situationality, and Track III, “Providing Factors for Analysis” is a quantitatively-oriented approach. As I considered these options for my study, I selected Track I because maintaining situationality fit with my conceptual frameworks’ emphasis on social contexts, and because it required me to spend more time going back and forth between case findings and themes. My comparatively small number of cases made the extra attention feasible.

I made findings strips (Stake, 2006, p. 53), which are printed paper strips with a finding and a place to rank the finding’s relevance for each theme. These findings strips allowed me to

rate the relevance of each finding for each theme, asking “How important is this Finding (derived from its case) for understanding the Quintain (with regard to this Theme)?” (Stake, 2006, p. 52). Later, having each finding on a physical piece of paper meant that I could move them around and sort the findings into various groupings. Using both my ratings of importance of each case for understanding each theme, and my ratings of the importance of each finding for each theme, I could then pull out the highly rated findings and begin looking at them in groups to think about what a particular combination of findings could tell me about a theme. Here is where I began drafting tentative multicase assertions. As I drafted these assertions, I kept in mind that they “should have a single or common focus, a contribution toward understanding the Quintain, and evidence from more than one Case to support it” (Stake, 2006, p. 56). I continuously reviewed the themes, findings, and my notes on the case reports to complete my list of tentative assertions.

The final step in cross-case analysis was to work on the list of tentative assertions, developing the final assertions of the multicase study. This work involved scrutinizing the list and the individual assertions, asking questions such as “Could the Assertions be seen as a hatchet job, or conversely, as a whitewash?” (Stake, 2006, p. 74) and “What Assertions should have been on this list?” (Stake, 2006, p. 77). The work also involved “reordering, combining, and editing the Assertions” (Stake, 2006, p. 74), looking for evidence and counter-evidence in the case reports, and seeking additional challenges by discussing the assertions with others—in my case, with my advisor, a member of my writing group, and my husband. Writing the cross-case analysis section of chapter eight was also part of this analytical process, as I worked to present each assertion along with the most persuasive evidence from the cases and discussion from relevant literature.

At times, Stake's (2006) cross-case analysis process felt a bit tedious and redundant; however, I found the process beneficial because it forced me to keep looking at my research questions and my findings in slightly different ways by asking slightly different questions of them. Through this process, I came to new insights about the cases and about the quintain, professional academic literacy-and-identity.

Chapter Summary

I began this chapter with an overview of case study methodology. I then discussed some of the trustworthiness concerns that come up in case study and academic literacy-and-identity research, describing how I handled those issues. Next I described the contexts of the study, relating how I recruited my participants and reflecting on my relationships with them, as well as introducing the participants. I then discussed each data source in terms of what it contributed to the study and what transpired during the data collection process. I followed this with a description of the analytical processes I used to make meaning of that data. Finally, I summarized the changes that I made to the study since I proposed it and why they were needed.

Introducing the Case Studies

Chapters four through seven present the case studies of four new PhDs working in composition. I have chosen to present each case in its own chapter to maintain the boundedness of each case (Stake, 1995). I then discuss the four cases as a multicase study in chapter eight. While this is a departure from the typical dissertation format of a single results chapter followed immediately by a discussion chapter, it is a conscious choice based on case study methodology. As Stake (1995) puts it, "the traditional research report of statement of the problem, review of literature, design, data gathering, analysis and conclusion, is particularly ill-fitting for a case

study report. The case is not a problem or a hypothesis” (p. 128). Each participant’s identities and literacy practices mediate each other within her own unique set of contexts. Before moving to cross-case analysis, it was essential to “display the unique vitality of each case, noting its particular situation and how the context influences the experience of the program or phenomenon” (Stake, 2006, p. 39).

After deciding to present each case in its own chapter, I also had to determine how to arrange the material within each of those chapters. As I discussed above in my section on analytical processes, I used several organization strategies offered by Stake (1995) while drafting the case reports. These included an opening vignette, a biographical development of the case with details of my coming to know the case, and a final interpretive section. The biographical organization scheme was key for developing this study’s conceptual focus on the interplay of the autobiographical self (Ivanič, 1998) and professional academic literacy practices (Lillis & Scott, 2007).

Finally, I considered how the order of the chapters could aid the reader’s understanding of the multicase study and the questions it explores. I considered many different configurations and which case characteristics I could attempt to highlight through them: e.g., contextual factors like institution type, experiential factors like number of publications, or my experience of coming to know each case based on the data collection schedule. Ultimately, because I highlight early career experience and take doctoral qualification as an important turning point in the early career stage, I ordered the chapters based on the date of PhD conferral. Isabel received her PhD first, so her case report appears first. Elle and Chris both received their degrees in 2014, but Chris defended her dissertation earlier, so I put her chapter before Elle’s. The result is that

readers are invited to consider how the turning point of doctoral qualification and the trajectory immediately following this turning point are contexts for identities and literacy practices.

CHAPTER FOUR

DR. ISABEL WELLS

Dr. Isabel Wells and I meet via Skype for her interview in mid-May, as her hectic spring semester is finally wrapping up. She's getting ready to go on a vacation. For our conversation, she has ensconced herself with her laptop in a special place in her home. When I ask her if she feels literacy has played a role in shaping her identity, she points out how the space she is in reflects her love of words, aiming her webcam around the room so I can see it:

I'll show you, wait—can you see? I'm sitting in my little nook that I just did, and up there I have, like, a word with a definition in a frame. And, I mean, I have a note on that wall. So I have some pictures, but mostly a lot of words, written things. It's just what I like. And I have too many books on that side of the room. This is my reading nook. I just redid my office. This used to be a giant desk, and I was like, this desk is too depressing. I need a reading nook. (interview 5/19/2014)

Isabel's choice to replace her desk with a nook says something about her lifestyle: she reads a lot, and most of that reading is for work. Yet Isabel is content spending most of her time reading (and writing) because it's what she loves to do. A world of words is a comfortable place.

A Lifelong Love of Words

Isabel has always been fascinated by the written word. As a girl, she loved words so much she copied books by hand. She thinks the idea to do this may have come to her from a punishment: "You know when you were bad at Catholic grade school you had to copy stuff down. I had in-school suspension and I had to copy the dictionary" (interview 5/19/2014). Isabel, however, turned it into a hobby. She specifically remembers copying *Robin Hood* when she was

eight: “I liked the language. I liked the vocabulary. I thought that the vocabulary was really interesting—a lot of words that I had never heard before, I had never seen before,” (interview 5/19/2014). Isabel relished these new words, even though she knew she’d never use them. After all, she didn’t have much need for terminology related to bows and arrows.

Isabel also wrote her own stories, filling up spiral notebooks with stories just for herself. She especially liked writing romances. Isabel considered her stories private, and when her mother found and read one, she was mortified:

It was a summer romance, that’s what it was. And the the two main characters had sex. I was like twelve, eleven maybe, I don’t know. So whatever. I wrote about it. I didn’t know anything. And I remember my mother told me that I should write about things that I know or things that I had experienced, or something like that. And I was truly devastated, and I think that’s when I threw that one away. (interview 5/19/2014)

For young Isabel, this moment was a breach of privacy as serious as if her mother had read her diary. The only response to such pain was to destroy the writing.

Not all of Isabel’s writing was just for herself. From a very young age, Isabel also wrote letters to her friends. She has letters from when she was only six. The written word was a preferred form of communication, even if distance didn’t require it: “one of my best friends, who was my neighbor, she lived directly behind my house. It was like an alleyway. She lived right there. We would still send letters to one another” (interview 5/19/2014). Writing to her peers continued through middle and high school, when Isabel and her friends wrote “an ungodly amount of notes” (interview 5/19/2014). From the time Isabel learned how to write, there was never a time when she wasn’t engaged in a great deal of out-of-school writing.

In school, Isabel was considered a good writer and got good grades. She remembers enjoying her school writing, too. A particular memory, from middle school, centers on a series of class projects in which students learned about different cultures, either through picture-based or writing-based projects. Isabel says, “I remember always loving the writing ones and hating when I had to do the picture one. It was like, why would you have this with pictures when you could just write it? Just write it all out,” (interview 5/19/2014). Although she laughs about this specific memory now, she “was happy to write a diary entry of a farmer from Ghana or something. That was really exciting,” (interview 5/19/2014). It’s an example of how Isabel always preferred to engage with the world through text.

When Isabel went off to college, she started her studies as a travel and tourism major, but the business emphasis didn’t appeal to her. Words were still the realm where she felt most comfortable: “My default choice of what I liked was English, and, in particular, creative writing, so that became my undergrad major” (participant check 2/9/2015). After completing her bachelor’s degree, she immediately began grad school. It was a decision rooted in her desire to learn:

It didn’t really make sense to me that you would get an undergraduate degree and not pursue graduate work to become more of a “master” at it, so I just had this drive to continue to graduate school, though no one in my family had done it, and certainly none of my friends. I just really loved the field, and wanted to learn more. (participant check 2/9/2015)

Isabel studied English literature for her master's degree, and then focused on composition for her PhD, which she completed in 2012. That same year, she was hired as a tenure track assistant professor at a regional university in the southern United States.

“I’m an English teacher and I work a lot”

Isabel still loves the written word, of course, which is why she likes to work in a reading nook with framed words on the walls. She has filled her life with reading and writing by creating a very active work life. She says, “I’m an English teacher, and I work a lot” (interview 5/19/2014). The evidence of all that work is a dense collection of words: Isabel’s CV boasts staggering lists of publications, presentations, service involvement, and teaching experience for an early career academic.

She has a full time, tenure track job, something that keeps most new PhDs plenty busy. She is an assistant professor at Southern Regional University, a historically Black university (HBCU). When I ask about her job duties, she says

I teach at an HBCU, so the majority of the focus is on teaching, although we’re required to do research and service. I would say really teaching is the first, and then service, and then any research stuff. But I try to do a tremendous amount of all of those things. (interview 5/19/2014).

Isabel indeed does a “tremendous amount” of teaching, service, and research, both within her institution and beyond.

Isabel teaches first-year composition, as she puts it: “the required English class that nobody wants to take, but everybody has to take—that’s me” (interview 5/19/2014). The teaching load is heavy. Contractually, Isabel is expected to teach four courses each semester, but

due to colleagues' leaves, she has taught five to six courses each semester since she started. Furthermore, while the sections are supposed to be capped at twenty, Isabel, in fact, has up to thirty-five students in each. The teaching overload doesn't stop Isabel from putting additional effort toward teaching, however. While much of the curriculum is standardized due to accreditation requirements, Isabel modifies where she can. For example, when many of her composition students told her that they had never read a book before, she added two novels to the reading list. Additionally, Isabel advocates within the department for curriculum improvements: "The design of the course that we currently do, I don't particularly care for, for a number of reasons. I bring that up at every meeting that we have" (interview 5/19/2014). She works to improve her own classes and is willing to speak out to her colleagues.

While she works hard teaching at Southern Regional, Isabel also extends her teaching beyond its walls: she continues to adjunct online for a community college where she taught while a doctoral student. She tells me she does this for the experience and extra pay. She also recently took on an additional part-time job as a dissertation chair for a fully online university. She applied for this position because she wanted to work with grad students, an opportunity her full-time job doesn't offer. The position was created to assist a particular group of doctoral students who'd gotten caught in between policy changes and who'd had a slew of different dissertation chairs. Isabel's job is to start them fresh and guide them through the entire process in a strict timeframe. When I interviewed her in May 2014, Isabel had already directed 18 doctoral dissertations.

On top of that "tremendous amount" of teaching, Isabel adds service, which she also performs beyond the expectations of her primary job. At Southern Regional, Isabel is currently a

member of three committees, department assessment coordinator, English internship program coordinator, faculty advisor for a student organization, and was just voted in as faculty senate secretary. But those commitments are really just the tip of the iceberg: “I’ve taken on a number of service things on my own, whether it’s in the institution, outside, in the community, a lot of virtual stuff” (interview 5/19/2014). She is faculty advisor to the academic success center at the fully online university where she is a part-time dissertation chair. She is active in the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), playing a number of different roles within the organization. She reviews for eight journals and is guest editing upcoming issues for at least two others. Somehow she even finds time to be a volunteer wedding coordinator at her church.

For the most part, Isabel finds she has the freedom to choose which service activities to take on. With that freedom, she’s likely to choose short-term projects over long-term commitments, a strategy that allows her to sample a variety of experiences: “I can try it, and if I like it, then I’ll do it more,” (interview 5/19/2014). Isabel talks about how much she enjoys working on journals, either as guest editor or reviewer, and she contrasts that service with her upcoming term as faculty senate secretary, which she says:

is gonna be terrible. It’s gonna be really, really awful. I’m kind of looking forward to it just so I can tell everybody to shut up. I’m ready for our first meeting so I can be, like, listen, here’s the deal. (interview 5/19/2014)

Opportunity to wield power aside, Isabel would rather spend the time she’ll have to put into faculty senate on a service project of her own choosing.

Service is a higher priority than research for faculty at Southern Regional, but Isabel, true to form, does a great deal of research anyway. In her first two years on the tenure track, Isabel

published a single-authored book, two journal articles, and twelve book chapters. She currently has several edited collections underway. And she presents at conferences about once a month. Isabel manages to accomplish this pace of research and publication by using a strategy similar to her strategy for service activities: she looks for short-term projects. She describes her main considerations for choosing research projects this way:

Whether I'm interested in it, what type of project it is, or how long it would take me to do. So, like, is this a study that would require IRB and be, you know, a six-month study? Or is it short term, whatever that may be? And then just do I think that it's worthwhile for publication? So I mean, if I do it, is it pretty much guaranteed to be published somewhere? Or do I think I'm gonna have to sit on it for a while? I'm not real good at sitting on stuff. (interview 5/19/2014)

Given these considerations, Isabel looks for journals that publish frequently and have a quick turnaround. She also publishes a lot of book chapters, either by invitation or in response to calls for proposals.

It's a project related to a book chapter that Isabel chooses to share with me for her manuscript discussion. The "manuscript" is actually the text of an assignment, but it will be published on a website designed to supplement the book in which Isabel's chapter appears. Isabel has already sent it to the editors, but because they gave her no guidelines for what the supplementary web material is supposed to be like, she expects she'll need to revise it when she hears back from them. In fact, she figured that sending them something—anything—would help her figure out what they want, while staying in their good graces. She explains: "I just wanted to get something to them because the way that they phrased it was like, you know, how are your

supplemental documents going? Or, you know, how's the process going?" (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014). At which point Isabel looks up at the ceiling and says, as if to the editors, "Good," and then looks at me through the webcam, whispering while shaking her head back and forth, "I didn't do it" (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014). I laugh, and Isabel continues, "because we hadn't been given any guidelines. I mean, I think that it's okay, and I'm hoping that they will send some feedback" (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014).

Even though she's waiting for guidance from the editors, Isabel expresses a desire to improve the draft. I offer to read the text out loud to her so she can think about what else it might need, and also so I can offer my response. After listening to me read, Isabel has some ideas of things to add, based on her experience of sharing this kind of document before. For example, she says "some people get really, in my experience of doing this, really hung up on how to grade stuff" (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014), so she thinks she could add grading criteria to the assignment. But there's not much else for us to talk about. The assignment, to me as a reader, is crystal clear, and until Isabel gets more information about what the end product is supposed to look like, she really can't move forward.

When I ask Isabel how this supplementary web material and the book chapter are part of her larger vision of her publishing activity, she says:

Well, it fits into all the social media research that I do, which is one of my areas. But then I'm pretty sure it's this one, this edited collection I believe is being published by Bedford, so, I mean, that's just a good publisher. Good publisher to have experience with and have on my CV. (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014)

Isabel sees publishing as not only about creating knowledge in specific areas of expertise, but also about networking, demonstrating that she is tied into the publishing community at a high level of prestige. The CV is not just a numbers game, but also about perceived quality of the publication venues.

Isabel works to maintain her high publication rate even though she feels her institution ignores her efforts: “I would say that there’s definitely very little interest and no reward” (interview 5/19/2014). Isabel tells me that while she submits information about her publications and external service activities to Southern Regional’s media relations office, none of it is ever picked up. When she asked why, media relations told Isabel her work wasn’t relevant to audiences either inside or outside the university. Isabel says, “that’s bullshit” (interview 5/19/2014). She says she’s not sure what media relations is trying to do, but her experience of being dismissed reinforces her feeling that no one at Southern Regional really cares about how much she’s publishing.

So why does Isabel do this “tremendous amount” of teaching, service, and research? If the expectation isn’t coming from her institution, where is it coming from? Isabel says it comes partly from her doctoral training, and partly from within herself. As a PhD student, Isabel felt she was “constantly pushed in those three directions, so that you’d see the importance of it and start to develop your opportunities,” (interview 5/19/2014). But more personally she says, “I think a lot of it is just me and my workaholic tendencies” (interview 5/19/2014). Isabel’s thinking about publishing includes both a personal drive and an element of preparing for the future:

I want to do it, and I want to do it because I’m interested in stuff. And then I want to do it because, again, I’m supposed to. So if I—I really have no plans to leave my current

institution—but if I were to leave my current institution, I can’t just not have any publications. (interview 5/19/2014)

Isabel sees the higher education arena as one in which scholars are supposed to pile up the publications, the service activities, the teaching experiences. So she will do this, even if her current institution has lower expectations for her than she has for herself.

Still, Isabel is content where she is. She and her husband have just bought a house in a location they love, near the beach. As she puts it “on the off chance I’m not working” (interview 5/19/2014), she can enjoy time on the water, kayaking or just relaxing. Although her family is scattered in other states, she has friends and family close enough for regular visits. During the school year, Isabel and her husband regularly make trips to visit his daughter, who comes to stay with them during the summer. So Isabel has a very full work life, and she also has people she loves and a place she loves. And she’s got her reading nook.

“It’ll only be more”

Isabel doesn’t have plans to change institutions or locations. In the immediate future, she expects a bit lighter teaching load. She thinks all of her colleagues have “had their babies and had their medical issues, so hopefully they’ll be back to teach” (interview 5/19/2014), which means next term Isabel should teach just her contractual load for Southern Regional. She also thinks she’ll decline the community college course she’s just been offered, something that’s hard for her to do: “I hate saying no. I’m very bad at saying no,” (interview 5/19/2014). She plans to turn down adjuncting this time, not necessarily to lighten her load, but because the course offered her is tied to accreditation, and, in Isabel’s view, the consistency needed makes it a course better handled by the college’s full-time instructors. The dissertation chair job is also winding down, as

the cohort of students she was hired to direct are defending and moving on. In terms of service, Isabel has upcoming guest editorships she's looking forward to, as well as the possibility of a bigger national role for NCTE. For research, she has several edited collections in progress, and she's developing the supplementary online material for that book chapter.

No future personal plans come up in our conversation. While Isabel mentions a baby boom among her friends and family, she says she has no plans for a baby: "everybody that I know has kids, has small babies and are continuing to have small babies. So I'm out of the baby loop, and I'm okay with that" (interview 5/19/2014). She says she's content to buy baby stuff and ship it around the country to all those new parents.

When I come back to a term she used earlier in the interview, "workaholic," Isabel expresses some mixed feelings about the label: "It's not really negative. I don't think it's positive either. It just kind of is what it is" (interview 5/19/2014). Isabel does a lot, but she enjoys her work. She enjoys time away from work, too—she's looking forward to her vacation—but she doesn't choose to take much time away from work:

I have a lot of stuff going on all the time, and that seems to work better for me. And I don't know what that is. I don't know if that's issues—I mean, cause I definitely like my quiet and my peaceful and my vacation time and all of that, but mostly I'm working. I mean, I took my laptop on our honeymoon, and I worked. I got up early every morning, and I responded to emails, and I had, like, conference calls and stuff from the Dominican Republic. I'm not gonna do that on this vacation. (interview 5/19/2014)

So while there is a glimmer of change for Isabel in terms of choosing a little more separation from work while she is on vacation, she doesn't view her workload as a problem. As she puts it,

“I like what I do. There are very few things that I work on that I don’t enjoy” (interview 5/19/2014).

Isabel sees a future in which she continues to move forward career-wise. When I ask her how she thinks her professional considerations may change in the future, she says “it’ll only be more” (interview 5/19/2014). She sees herself taking on more responsibility at the institutional and national levels:

I like teaching, but I would eventually want to do administrative stuff. Now I’m getting tapped for bigger things. I was nominated for the executive committee of NCTE. So just more involved in different capacities. (interview 5/19/2014)

Her interest in administration is what might eventually lead her to look for a new institution. Presently, she’s content with her job because of the location and the courses she’s assigned to teach. But an administrative path at Southern Regional seems unlikely because of the institutional culture: “It becomes increasingly complicated moving up towards administration, which I would like to do at some point, but, quite frankly, being White at *this particular* HBCU is not going to get me into an admin position” (participant check 2/9/2015). In terms of publication, Isabel says she is “constantly looking for new opportunities” (interview 5/19/2014), a statement which applies to her teaching and service as well. As a new PhD, Isabel is doing everything she can to continue adding to her CV. She continues to build a life filled with reading and writing.

Identities and Literacies

Isabel accepts that she has “workaholic tendencies” (interview 5/19/2014). She sees herself as a scholar, and for her that means doing a “tremendous amount” (interview 5/19/2014)

of teaching, research, and service. She goes well beyond what is expected by her institution. She doesn't bring up tenure in our discussion, so I get the sense it's not something she's concerned about. She later confirms this, saying, "it would be hard to look at my CV at my institution in comparison to other people's and not give me tenure. And I don't really think that the tenure system is important in and of itself" (participant check 2/9/2015). In fact, her willingness to speak out within her department about curriculum problems, her boldness about using her clout in the faculty senate secretary role, and even her gumption to get into "an argument with the media relations lady" (interview 5/19/2014) sound a bit more like the actions of a tenured faculty member than an assistant professor. Perhaps this confidence arises because Isabel's professional academic identity is not bound to her institution. She sees herself as a scholar working in a much broader community, one which is connected through publishing and professional service and largely takes place online. Isabel's full work life comes to the foreground while personal identities are in the background. She is a spouse, a sister, a friend. She is a reader and a writer.

As she works on professional academic writing, Isabel positions herself as an expert. She is an expert writer and reader, and an established insider in the publication game. She knows who the good publishers are. She knows how to look for venues that will deliver a quick turnaround. She's an experienced writer and is becoming an experienced editor. In the context of our discussion about her supplementary web material draft, Isabel knows she can accomplish the task of revising this document on her own once she gets feedback from the editors. Still, she wants to do good work, and she is willing to workshop the piece with me both to help me in my research and because she sincerely wants it to be useful to readers. As she works, she is thoughtful about what she might do to improve it. But she doesn't mess around, doesn't waste any time. Having a

short piece for our discussion meant that we wrapped up in half the time I'd scheduled. It's a choice that echoes Isabel's strategy of doing short-term projects so she can do more. And it positions her as a savvy, efficient scholar.

CHAPTER FIVE

DR. NICOLE HUNTER

Dr. Nicole Hunter sits at her desk in a sunny room in her apartment. The white wall behind her is nearly filled by a large canvas covered with swatches of bright, primary colors, and open boxes are stacked on the floor around her, partially filled with books and other belongings. She adjusts her glasses and sits up straight as we begin our conversation, focusing on me as I focus on her, through our webcams.

I'm talking to Nicole today to learn more about who she is: as an academic, as a woman, as a writer. I know she is a newly-minted PhD, about to embark on a tenure-track job on the other side of the country—hence the moving boxes. I learn that the vivid painting behind her is her father's work. It comes to represent both Nicole's creative drive and her love for her family.

Nicole describes herself first as a writing teacher. She understands her professional path as a series of “happy coincidence[s]” (interview 5/21/2014) leading her to teach writing and to administer a university writing program. She completed her PhD in English in 2013, specializing in composition pedagogy and writing program administration. But let's back up a bit. Her story begins long before she defended her dissertation.

A Girl Writes

Nicole grew up in the Midwest, watched over by her mom and dad and in the company of her younger sister. As a young child, she spent time with her dad, learning her letters and practicing vocabulary with flashcards. Armed with this literacy skill-set, she went off to a Catholic grade school. Young Nicole wrote stories, some set in her neighborhood with the kids she played with as characters. Her parents encouraged her to share her stories with other

members of the family. She chose creative writing as a special school activity and wrote more stories and poems. When Nicole transitioned to a public high school, she felt lonely at first. But she soon found friends, and they wrote volumes of notes to each other, sometimes using code to secretly write about the boys they had crushes on.

It was also in high school when Nicole began to understand herself as a girl with talent in language arts but shut out of math and science. As one of only three girls in her ninth grade geometry class, Nicole heard the boys in the class say the girls wouldn't be able to keep up—something that had never occurred to her. But it was a response from the teacher that transformed Nicole's relationship with math:

The teacher was explaining a theorem on the board and he was explaining that, you know, this happens because time is moving forward. And I raised my hand and very seriously said, well, what would happen if time was moving backward? And he said, well, you know, time doesn't move backward. It doesn't matter. But I was like, well, okay, okay, but what if it were? And I think I just had that mindset of, okay, like, I get it, but let's be creative, and he just shut it down. And he was, like, well, time does not move backwards, we're moving on. And I still remember that as a turning point because it was almost like once I realized I can't be creative in this space, it was almost like I shut down to it. (interview 5/21/2014)

Even as a high school student Nicole was sensing that creativity was a key part of who she was, and this experience layered a perception that creativity is unwelcome in math onto a sense that girls are unwelcome in math. It wasn't until Nicole was a few years into college that she regained her confidence in learning across all disciplines, and she believes it was the ability to be creative

in English classes that led her back. Nicole completed college as a successful student. She understands herself as someone who flourished in and was encouraged in an intellectual space where she could be creative, and that space was the intense reading and writing in English studies.

After college, Nicole decided to pursue a master's degree in English literature. She funded her studies with a teaching assistantship, which gave her the opportunity to teach writing for the first time. Within a month of graduation, she got married and moved to a new city, where her husband was in the middle of his own graduate studies. Nicole quickly found part-time teaching jobs at two different universities. With a need for more income—"you know how adjunct pay is" (interview 5/21/2014)—she took on more work as a writing center tutor. After just a short time, she applied for and was offered a position as an interim writing center director. For Nicole, the experiences of working with students in the writing classroom, tutoring in and leading a writing center, and being part of campus-wide conversations about writing were stimulating and fulfilling. She dropped her original plan to pursue a PhD in literature, choosing to focus on composition instead.

Nicole was set to begin a rhetoric-composition doctoral program when she and her husband divorced. The divorce put her doctoral studies on hold for a year, during which time she realized she'd chosen the program that was "a better choice location-wise for both of us" (interview 5/21/2014). Once it was just Nicole, she elected a different program, where she ultimately obtained her PhD.

Moving into Leadership

Now, after a year working as a temporary instructor while on the tenure-track job market, Nicole is about to begin a position as assistant professor of English and writing program administrator. She is moving across the country for this job, farther away from her family. As we talk, it's clear how important Nicole's family is to her. She tells me she uses English sprinkled with French when she's with her dad. Nicole's use of French seems to be as much about her dad as it is about a link to her French heritage. She chose her doctoral program in part because the location kept her reasonably close to her parents and her sister, allowing her to be connected with her family through regular visits. She also connects with her dad and sister through a shared interest in art. Her dad painted the bright canvas on her wall. Her sister also paints. When Nicole becomes interested in a new art or craft medium, her dad and sister share materials with her. As we talk about it, Nicole realizes how arts and crafts connect to her larger creative drive.

Nicole is a creative writer, a creator of arts and crafts, and a creative teacher. But she feels like creative writing and art are to be kept separate from her scholarly writing and, to an extent, from her classroom practice. She has published two creative pieces, but she did not include these publications on her CV, and she was surprised when someone at her new institution indicated that they could be on her CV. Nicole says:

Even though I do a lot of creative writing, and then I do these other creative arts, they somehow don't feel like—well, that's not my real work, even though, gee, the creative writing is quite close to my profession, which is writing. (interview 5/21/2014)

Nicole's creativity is an important part of who she is, yet at the same time it is something to be kept separate from or contained within her professional identity as an academic.

Professional academic writing demands creative problem solving, something Nicole is well-suited for. A problem Nicole expresses in both her interview and in her manuscript discussion is the ethics of using the same data for multiple projects, as well as how reusing data might shape her academic identity. She doesn't want to be an academic writer who just keeps saying the same thing, so she is very concerned about making her different manuscripts different enough from each other to meet the ethical expectations she has set for herself. Within this frame, she also considers how reviewers and readers will understand her work, and she struggles with how to present small pieces of a bigger project in different publications while not obscuring the methods of the study. Nicole thinks a lot about the other writing teachers who may read her work, and what will be interesting and useful to them.

One of Nicole's current writing projects is a book chapter. She's preparing it to send to a publisher as part of a proposal for an edited collection, with Nicole as one of the editors. She's been told by her new department chair that book chapters and collaborative work will be valued for tenure, so this project may ultimately bolster her tenure file. Nicole has never edited a book before. As we talk about the project, I remind her a couple of times that she is the editor. The first time, she asks me what I think about a couple of different choices for organizing the chapter. She's feeling constrained by the APA-style organization she's used in her first draft, and she wonders if she can break out of that organization. When I tell her that she has the freedom to break the rules because it's a book chapter and she's the editor, we both laugh. Later, we talk about what she wants her chapter and the entire book to do: to shine a light on students' perspectives of their literacies. Nicole says, laughing, "Well, that's what we're going for" (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014). I remind her again: "You can make it happen because you're

the editor. So you're in charge" (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014). "Let's hope," she says (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014).

Taking a leadership role in the publishing process is still new to Nicole. I ask, as a reader of her draft, for more depth about each participant. Nicole's mental reaction is, "Oh no, I'm going to be found out to be a fraud!" (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014). She reveals this to me as she talks about the limitations of her dissertation data; she worries the data is limited because she was an inexperienced, nervous PhD student when she collected it. Those feelings may be lingering, but Nicole is no longer a PhD student. She is Dr. Hunter, and she also constructs her expertise as a publishing academic. When I talk about a manuscript I have languishing "under review," she gives me advice: "hang on to it," she says, "you might be able to get it published" (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014). At this stage of her career, as a new PhD, Nicole is establishing her sense of authoritativeness in her career, and she repositions herself as an authority during our conversation.

Nicole's fear of illegitimacy surfaces not only in talk about her writing, but also about her new role as an administrator. She is uncertain about how her new supervisees will respond to her as an authority figure, especially because course reductions mean she won't be teaching any of the first year writing courses for a while:

One of my big, ongoing concerns is establishing myself as, you know, professional, as someone in authority in that position, especially when I'm working with quite experienced colleagues. And so I kind of question how they might view that, you know, here's this new person coming in, and she's directing us, but she hardly ever teaches. And she doesn't teach any of our classes. (interview 5/21/2014)

Nicole is an experienced teacher and has previous administrative experience, but right now she is focused on being new, and uncertain about the reception she will receive.

Connected to her move and to her new leadership roles is Nicole's concern about work-life balance as a single woman without children. Nicole believes that she has a tendency to let work fill up the time that might otherwise be claimed by a partner or child. She wants to establish some balance for herself in her new community. She is moving to a part of the city that has a "small town feel" (interview 5/21/2014), so she can get to know neighbors and have a life separate from the university and her work colleagues. She also wants to maintain her relationship with her parents and sister. As she prepares for her move, she senses a possible tension between her desire to stay connected to her family and her colleagues' perception of her professionalism:

Even though I'm committed to it and I'm moving out there, one of the things I've been thinking a lot about and that I'm sort of wary about is that because I'll be far away from my family, and because my parents are older, and because I'll want to get to see them, I could see it very easily becoming this situation where, oh Nicole's always jetting back and forth to home, and so she's not really here in the downtimes. So I'm kind of curious what that'll be like. (interview 5/21/2014)

Nicole wants to carve out time and space to be a daughter, sister, neighbor, and friend, but she wonders if doing so may endanger the administrator and colleague identities she is also trying to enact. She perceives that constructing those professional identities may require her presence at her new institution even in the "downtimes" at her job.

Tenure and a Professional Identity

As Nicole begins her new job, scholarly publishing takes on a new meaning. She has several publications on her CV already, pieces she published before and during her doctoral program. Up until now, publishing was about getting a tenure track job. Nicole knew she needed publications on her CV to meet this goal, but she couldn't know how many publications she would need, which caused her some anxiety, and perhaps even made her question her self-worth: "I felt like I had just spent the last four years in graduate school scrambling to publish and feeling like I'm never gonna be good enough, it's never gonna be enough" (interview 5/21/2014). The words she uses here are telling. Publishing is intimately tied to Nicole's sense of herself.

What matters now is what comes next. Now it is about tenure. Nicole hasn't been given a specific number of publications required for tenure, but she has been told that if she keeps up the publication pace she accomplished as a grad student, she will be "fine" (interview 5/21/2014). She has also been told that her department values publications that in other departments might not be valued for tenure, such as book chapters and collaborative projects. Nicole has decided to submit two manuscripts per year with the hope that one will ultimately be published per year. Still, she wonders if even that will be enough, with so many unknowns in the publishing process. A couple of recent rejections are making her question her strategy, making her wonder if she has to send out four pieces to get one published.

Beyond the numbers, Nicole is making decisions about what the content of these manuscripts will be. When I ask her about that, she says, "this is what scares me the most about the whole process is that I'm not really sure" (interview 5/21/2014). She has dissertation data she

is trying to publish, and she is deciding how much more she can do with her dissertation data before moving on to something new. Partly she wants to get her pieces from her dissertation out “just because so much went into it” (interview 5/21/2014), and so that she can go into her new position with a “backlog” (interview 5/21/2014) of work before having to collect new data. But Nicole has a lot of ideas for new projects, and in particular she wants to use a different methodology—longitudinal case study—to learn more about college students’ literacies.

While research ideas arise from Nicole’s curiosity about what she has observed in the college writing classroom, she also thinks about how her publications will shape who she is within the composition community. At this point in her career she feels uncertain about what she wants that identity to be:

As a professional and as a compositionist I would love to be known for something. I’d love to, you know, twenty years down the road have a professional identity that people can say, oh, Nicole does this. That would be really neat. But I don’t know what that thing is yet. And so I think that’s something that’s very much on my mind as I get ready to go into the new job, and as I keep developing my professional identity. How do I sort of shape my work towards some goal when I don’t really know what that goal is yet?
(interview 5/21/2014)

The career trajectories of well-known academics may be easy to trace retrospectively, but for a new PhD looking forward, there is no crystal ball. However, for Nicole, the writing process itself may offer a glimpse of the future.

During our discussion of her book chapter manuscript, Nicole actively works on the draft to make it more publishable. She also steps back and thinks about how this piece fits with her

other research and publications. She begins to notice something about her professional work. She observes that there is a theme of reflection running throughout her research and teaching:

“reflection is something that I always circle around to. It always pops up as something important for me as a scholar and as a teacher,” (manuscript discussion 5/30/2014). During our discussion of her draft Nicole decides that she needs to make reflection a central theme of the conclusion.

Identities and Literacies

The upcoming move and the new job have led Nicole to reflect on her emerging identity as a composition scholar and how her identity as a single woman without children privileges her professional identity. These reflections come with mixed feelings and a sense of uncertainty; she says “sometimes I’m still not really sure what my research focus is” (interview 5/21/2014) and “I feel like I’m being successful so far as a professional but perhaps at the expense of a healthy work life balance” (interview 5/21/2014). She navigates new roles as an authority figure both in her department and in her publishing community. She is up for the challenge, and at the same time she wonders how these new roles can co-exist with a life outside of work. Creativity and reflection are important to Nicole—perhaps even the strengths that will sustain her as she finds her new identities as both Nicole and Dr. Hunter.

In her manuscript discussion, Nicole positions herself as more and less authoritative, both confident and uncertain. She is a very experienced writer and has already gained academic publishing experience, but she still has some questions about the rules of the game. She is open to my facilitation of her writing process, willing to think out loud, and willing to seek help from me. Still she maintains ownership of her work, problem solves it, and makes concrete decisions about what she will do with the piece as she revises. She also gives me advice, owning an expert

position in our interaction. She wants her work to be excellent, and she wants to make a sound contribution to her field. She is willing to put a lot of time into the writing process to make this happen.

CHAPTER SIX

DR. CHRIS GREGORY

When I meet with Dr. Chris Gregory to talk about the book chapter she is writing, it is the 27th of May. She apologizes that she doesn't have a draft yet for us to look at. I assure her that we can still discuss her project, and I ask her when her manuscript is due.

"June first," she says.

Chris laughs and admits that this draft isn't the only piece of writing she has to produce within the next few days. Writing to deadlines is the way she works on academic publishing. Before becoming Dr. Gregory, she worked as a journalist, so she brings that approach to drafting manuscripts. Writing fast serves Chris well because her days are very full with teaching at two community colleges and caring for her young family.

As we talk about her draft, Chris reveals another reason she's been putting off working on it: she's not sure she'll be able to access the academic journals she needs to write the literature review. Now that she has graduated from her PhD program, she can't access her doctoral institution's library. And she doubts the libraries at the community colleges where she teaches will have these resources. She plans to see what she can get through open-access sources like Google scholar, and if that fails, she will buy a library card for the library at the large research university near where she lives. Chris will find a way to navigate the challenges of academic publishing as a new PhD and a community college instructor. Defying expectations is what she does.

An Unlikely Reader Becomes a Writer

When Chris was a little girl, she just wanted to play outside. It may have been a beautiful day, but there was one problem: Chris's older sister, her primary playmate, wouldn't come outside to play. Her sister was inside, reading. Eventually, young "Chrissy" took the *if you can't beat 'em, join 'em* approach. She taught herself to read so she could join her sister inside. And that is how Chris became a reader.

Chris isn't sure why she gained a reader role model in her sister. She can't remember seeing either of her parents reading. The low-income neighborhood the family lived in was not a place of books. One year, her dad asked Chris what she wanted for Christmas. She shocked him and the rest of the family by asking for a book:

It was just mind boggling to everyone in my family that I would—rather than clothes or a toy or something—I would ask for a book. And I actually still have that book. Yeah, so I was always very, very different. (interview 5/20/2014)

Families in Chris's neighborhood didn't focus much on literacy, partly because they had other, more immediate needs to consider, like food. The community still struggles today, with about 85% of students at one of the district's elementary schools receiving free or reduced-price lunch. It was a tough environment, and Chris saw other kids get into trouble. Chris's mom, however, countered this risk by staying at home with her children:

My mom was a single mother. She had four kids. She didn't work. She stayed home with us, which I think was kind of a huge gift because we were able to do some of the things that we needed to do and to have the supervision that we needed, especially in the

environment where we lived. I saw a bunch of my other friends that were in very different situations. (interview 5/20/2014)

With the security of her mom's attention at home, Chris went to school and had mixed experiences with literacy and academics. She remembers being rewarded early on for writing when her teacher displayed her writing on the classroom bulletin board, but now Chris looks back and cringes because what she was being rewarded for was her neat handwriting, not the content or the language of what she wrote. Also in elementary school, Chris began to earn high grades, making for a memorable parent-teacher conference:

For the teacher conference I had a gold star on my report card because I had gotten high honor roll, and that was like, you know, before that I had no context for that, and I had no understanding of that. And I remember how proud and excited my mom was, and I remember her like, "oh my gosh, my daughter's smart," because, again, the environment we came from, that was kind of a surprise. (interview 5/20/2014)

Despite the high grades and being an avid reader at home, Chris remembers her "reading comprehension scores as a kid were always awful, you know, always, always awful. So there were things that weren't quite connecting" (interview 5/20/2014). Still, the moments of encouragement did counter the expectation that Chris would not be successful in school because of her socioeconomic background.

Spoken language was also part of Chris's mixed experience with schooling, as well as part of her experience of growing up and interacting with wider and wider circles of people. Chris uses English "pretty much for everything" (interview 5/20/2014), and she is keenly aware

of the different varieties of English she uses because the language of her childhood neighborhood was so different from what she encountered as she progressed through her education:

The language that I come from, I mean, you know, in academics we talk about it as Black English vernacular and things like that. But that's kind of—that's the language that I grew up with in terms of how my friends spoke. (interview 5/20/2014)

Chris noticed that some people reacted oddly to her as a White girl speaking what sounded like Black English. As an adult, Chris would further reflect on the language expectations tied to race and class, through her friendship with another woman whose language use also defied those expectations:

[my friend] and I used to always joke about it because she was a Black girl who grew up in, like, the CEO neighborhood, and I was a White girl who grew up in, like, the poor neighborhood. And everyone always had different expectations for us based on the color of our skin when our backgrounds were really, you know, my background was what people would expect of her and vice versa. (interview 5/20/2014)

The perceived disconnect between Chris's race and class spurred her sense of the distinct communities she was part of, as well as feelings that those communities did not mix or work together. That didn't prevent her from participating in all of them, though. In high school, Chris felt she could belong with the smart kids, the jocks, and the popular kids—she just couldn't be with people from those distinct groups at the same time. Something similar happened when Chris entered different class environments as her education progressed.

Chris's time spent reading declined as she became more interested in friends and sports through middle and high school. She didn't like what she was assigned to read in school, and she

was too busy to do much independent reading. She always felt she enjoyed writing, though, and she went off to college and studied English and humanities, with a minor in writing.

College was, of course, a time of transformation for Chris. Even her name changed: “Growing up my family and friends all called me Chrissy, and they still do, so anyone that calls me Chris is someone that I met in college” (interview 5/20/2014). This name change symbolizes a linguistic transformation as well. As Chris adopted more and more of what she terms *academic* language into her speech, she knew people at home would not react well to it because “you know, it’s snobbish. It’s stuck up. It’s not friendly or anything” (interview 5/20/2014). So she adapted, and she continues to adapt, using her name as a cue:

So if it’s somebody that I would refer to myself as Chrissy to, it’s very likely that [not-academic language is] the kind of language that I would use. Or if it’s Chris, then I tend to be using sort of a more sophisticated discourse. (interview 5/20/2014)

As a result of these experiences, Chris came to use different language with family, friends from home, friends from college or graduate school, and with the community college students she now teaches.

Chris wrote throughout her college days, and her fiction writing became a major focus when she won a scholarship to pursue a master’s degree program abroad. She wrote a young adult novel for her master’s degree, earning distinction. Her passion for writing fiction led her to read more, and reading and writing were now fully central to Chris’s life. She returned to her hometown, where her long-time boyfriend had been waiting for her. There she worked as a journalist for a year, and then began teaching writing and literature at a community college. Chris and her boyfriend got married, and they settled in a neighborhood near where she grew up.

While continuing to work as an adjunct, she started her PhD program. About her decision to pursue a doctorate, she says

It was a family decision. [My husband] worked for his family business out of college, so it was important for us to have some backup plan since the communications business is ever changing as technology adapts. We felt it was key for me to obtain my PhD, so that if necessary I could support the family. Good thing, too, as he has been working to develop iOS applications for the last year or so while I have been working more.

(participant check 1/9/2015)

Chris's responsibilities to her family are very important to her, and these responsibilities are on her mind as she envisions and pursues her professional goals. While Chris was working towards her PhD, she and her husband decided to expand their family. By the time she graduated and became Dr. Chris Gregory, she was also Dr. Mom, with two young children at home.

Family, Flexibility, Focus

Chris chooses to teach primarily online for the flexibility; it allows her to work from home so she can be with her children and to arrange her work schedule to fit around family moments. When her daughter's first birthday happened to be on the first day of the semester, Chris was able to make the birthday the focus of the day:

It was my first day of classes yesterday, but I somehow, I sorta took the day off. I had everything prepared and ready to go, and I checked email for like fifteen minutes, and then spent the day with [my daughter]. (interview 5/20/2014)

When she's not working, Chris is likely to be taking a long walk or visiting the zoo with the kids. Family time and work time sometimes blend together, "cause you never really leave work when

you work from home” (interview 5/20/2014). Chris and her husband share child care responsibility:

My husband’s home, and he has the kids a lot during the day. So when I work, I’ll really—we have sort of like a schedule, that this is my time, this is your time, this is family time. (interview 5/20/2014)

Chris has not had to rely on paid childcare because of her flexible schedule, support from her husband, and support from other family members. Work also gets done during nap time or after the kids go to bed.

Chris is willing to work more than full time, which seems to be her choice rather than an economic necessity. She has been combining part-time teaching at two different community colleges, teaching both online and face-to-face, and now she is beginning a full-time, temporary, fully online position at one of those schools. But she doesn’t want to give up the face-to-face teaching at the other school because she wants to keep current as a face-to-face teacher, too. She is willing to work more than full time to gain more teaching experience, even if the one full-time position provides sufficient income. Also, Chris and her husband share responsibility for generating income for the family, and they work together with flexibility as their careers change. Chris’s new full-time position is part of that equation as her husband is changing careers and working part-time from home. As Chris puts it: “It’s good, since he’s in a career change, that I’m doing what I need to do. It might actually be since I’m in a position to do this, he’s able to make a career change” (interview 5/20/2014). The needs of her partner and their family are part of Chris’s decision-making as she seeks and accepts work, alongside her professional development considerations.

Perhaps another reason Chris is willing to work more than full time is because she is also a fiction writer. Creative writing is something she is driven to do, so she will do it on top of work that draws a regular paycheck. In fact, Chris is committed to fiction writing *and* scholarly writing *and* service, even though none of these activities are required for her teaching jobs.

For Chris, writing happens quickly in a focused, strategic way. She describes one part of her strategy as working in “batches” (interview 5/20/2014). She will spend a few months focused on fiction, and then a few months focused on academic writing, perhaps sending out drafts to readers for feedback while she is working on the other type of writing. Her approach to academic writing is to get it done and published as quickly as possible. She chooses to respond to calls for papers and write once her abstract has been accepted, rather than submitting manuscripts to journals (in contrast to her fiction submission process):

I’m so busy with a lot of things that I don’t want to write something—I don’t want to develop it and write it and then just send it out and sort of hope for the best, and hope that it fits and everything like that. I feel like that’s what I do with my fiction all the time, so I kind of want something a little bit more solid and reliable for my academic writing. So the calls seem to work better for me in that regard. (interview 5/20/2014)

Once an abstract for an academic piece is accepted, Chris writes to deadlines. Her previous work as a journalist taught her how to draft, revise, and edit quickly.

Chris doesn’t see academic writing—or fiction writing—as something that has to be perfect, so she doesn’t agonize over making it perfect. This attitude developed not only in her previous work as a journalist, but also as a result of her first academic publishing experience. During her doctoral program, Chris submitted her first academic abstract in response to a call for

papers for an edited collection. The abstract was based on a course paper, which, once her abstract was accepted, she adapted for the book. At that point, Chris was surprised that her academic writing was taken seriously: “my first inclination was, oh my gosh, somebody’s actually interested in something I have to say” (interview 5/20/2014). She spent a lot of time trying to make the manuscript perfect: “it was like, I have to make this count, like these people were depending on me to say something super important” (interview 5/20/2014). After that, however, Chris noticed something about academic publishing that changed her attitude and approach:

I would see, you know, a call would come out and then the deadline would be extended, and I’d think to myself, well, the only reason the deadline is extended is if you don’t have enough abstracts. And so I started to realize sometimes it’s not necessarily that you have anything to say that’s worthwhile, but they need to fill a book. (interview 5/20/2014)

Knowing this, Chris continued submitting abstracts in response to calls, and she made her goal with her academic writing simply to move scholarship forward. She says, “that’s really what’s important. It’s not that every single thing in this chapter has to be sound in terms of research, in terms of thinking. It’s just that it has to continue to move the the discussion forward” (interview 5/20/2014). Chris wants to get the scholarship finished, published, and onto her CV. It’s about contributing to the scholarly conversation and about preparing for the future.

The project Chris chooses to discuss with me is a book chapter she proposed in response to a call for papers. It’s a chapter about fiction writers, so Chris has created a project that allows her to use her academic writing to engage with fellow fiction writers. When we meet, the

manuscript is due to the editors in just a few days, but Chris doesn't yet have a draft. She's not worried, though:

I'm not too concerned about it just because I tend to write from a journalist's perspective.

So, you know, I'll just sit down, and I'll sort of binge write and just get it all out. And it'll just be kind of messy, and there'll be lots of holes in it, but there'll be sort of these big chunks that I'm piecing together. And then I'll let it sit for maybe a day or so and then go back and smooth out all the little pieces. (manuscript discussion 5/27/2014)

For this project, Chris conducted email interviews with a few different fiction writers, and she's already received most of the responses. She decides that the next thing she needs to do is re-read those responses. We agree that she'll take a few minutes to do that while I wait. We leave our webcams on so she can tell me as soon as she's finished. After about fifteen to twenty minutes, Chris is ready to talk again. She's found a lot of interesting comments from her interviewees, and as she tells me about them the organization of the manuscript and some tentative conclusions start to form in her mind.

Now that she has reviewed her data, Chris is confident that the book chapter will meet her goal for it, which is to add something interesting to the scholarly discussion about her topic. As for finishing up the work she wants to do on it, Chris sketches out her plan for doing some additional reading, drafting, and revising the manuscript over the next few days. She suspects she may have some trouble getting sources because she no longer has access to her doctoral institution's library. She doubts the libraries of the community colleges where she teaches will have what she needs, and even if they do, she often has trouble accessing the library databases from her computer at home. She takes this situation in stride, though, saying, "I think that's

definitely an issue in terms of resources, but, you know, I'll find ways to deal with it" (manuscript discussion 5/27/2014).

Chris is curious about what she has found in her data and has many ideas for how she might frame her data in terms of other scholarship. Still, she's realistic about what she can accomplish in the time she has and with the resources she has. She says, "I'll just make it as complete as I can for the deadline" (manuscript discussion 5/27/2014). Because Chris has been through the book chapter publication process many times before, she knows that submitting the draft manuscript isn't the end of the process. She says she will have a sense of the piece's strengths and weaknesses when she sends it out, and she'll continue thinking about possible improvements while she waits for the feedback from reviewers and editors.

"Covering all bases"

Chris is content with the way her life is currently structured. She doesn't talk about wanting to make a change—the only thing she expresses a desire to do that she hasn't done yet is to teach creative writing in the traditional college setting. Still, she works hard, going beyond what is required by her job description, because she is "covering all bases" (interview 5/20/2014), preparing for whatever the future may hold. For example, Chris has been active on committees at both of the community colleges where she teaches, even though service is not required for a part-time adjunct. Research is not required either, but Chris continues to publish. Her decision to publish is about being competitive for different opportunities. She says it's important that

if I make the decision that I want to work outside my house and get a full time, traditional teaching position with a college or university, that I would have the things on my CV that would be helpful in that regard. (interview 5/20/2014)

Chris is committed to continuing to build her academic CV should the opportunity or need for a traditional tenure-track job come up, or if these publications and service involvements are ever required even for a non-tenure track position. She continues to cultivate relationships that may lead to other teaching jobs.

For Chris, a tenure-track faculty position is not the goal—it's a "backup plan" (interview 5/20/2014). Her heart belongs to fiction. But she has decided to develop herself as a professional academic as well. Gaining varied teaching, research, and service experience, in addition to writing, means that Chris can adapt to new circumstances or take advantage of opportunities that may come up. She says, "I don't like to be stuck in one particular path" (interview 5/20/2014). Chris accepts an intense workload in order to keep many possibilities open.

Identities and Literacies

Chris understands herself as a writer and as a mother. These two identities are entwined with how she views her experience of literacy. She says, "People look at their mortality a certain way and it influences the way they live their lives. And I think that writing is a part of that for me" (interview 5/20/2014). She elaborates, explaining her need to leave something behind, both as a writer and as a mother:

The love that I feel for my children is something that has been going on for a really long time, I mean thousands and thousands of years, right? So I think that's interesting, that gave me a different perspective about how you leave something behind. Like you leave

something behind genetically, and a piece of you is left in your children, but you know before that—and even after that, separate from that—I feel like writing is leaving a piece of yourself—is giving a piece of yourself to somebody else. And then also it’s immortalizing something about yourself as well. (interview 5/20/2014)

Both the children and the fiction are, to Chris, something she leaves behind, a way of achieving immortality. Although she sees academic writing as somewhat like that, it doesn’t evoke the same kind of passion for her as do fiction and family: “[leaving something behind] is something that I definitely connect to my writing identity and not so much with academics” (interview 5/20/2014). Even so, Chris has found that an academic career offers income and flexibility for supporting her fiction writing and her family.

Because of her commitment to her fiction writing and her family, Chris is also committed to the teaching, research, and service that construct an academic career. Yet Chris perceives that the particular kind of academic career she has built is marginalized in higher education. She reflects:

I have made choices regarding how I teach, research and write based on my personal desire to stay close to my young children (by working from home). I’m grateful opportunities exist so that such a decision can be made, but I’m also aware of the workplace disadvantages due to perceptions of online teaching and working from home, which is likely one of the primary reasons building my CV with academic publishing credits is paramount to me despite so many other responsibilities. (participant check 1/9/2015)

At the same time, the academic world is only one of Chris's worlds, and she doesn't waste any of the time she spends there.

As Chris works on her book chapter, she both connects to and distances herself from academia. In her choice of topic, Chris bridges her creative writing interests and her academic interests to write a scholarly book chapter about fiction writers. She uses the terminology of academic research—"participants," "data," "literature review," "themes" (Chris manuscript discussion 5/27/2014)—but also talks about using her journalism experience to get the work done. The research and writing process proceeds quickly. She has collected data through email, which saves time because she doesn't have to transcribe anything. She is able to focus and complete a round of analysis while I wait, the two of us connected through our webcams. She is comfortable with a limited amount of time for drafting, knowing she'll be able to revise—also quickly—and send the manuscript to the editor. She doesn't have easy access to library resources, but that doesn't stop her. As she works, Chris positions herself as a confident, experienced, resourceful academic writer. She knows how to play the game. She even knows how to play and win with the decks stacked against her.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DR. ELLE STEWART

Dr. Elle Stewart and I meet to talk about a writing project she's starting, a reflective essay on her recent experiences as a writing teacher. During our talk, there are many times when we find ourselves laughing. Sometimes laughter is the best response to pain. In this transcript, *hhh* means laughter (the more *h*'s the more laughter) and *(.)* signals a pause.

889 Elle I'm like right now I'm gonna finish up the semester hopefully
890 work on a couple of things sort of plan for my future but I
891 mean I'm not young and *(.)* mmm mmm
892 Kathleen well you now that you've got this going you can put it on your
893 cv as manuscript in progress hh
894 Elle in progress yeah that's true that's true *(.)* yeah especially
895 to replace the things where I'm like forthcoming presentation
896 scratch that hhh
897 Kathleen you've got something else you know yeah it's not a loss
898 Elle accepted but declined cause I am too busy can't put that on
899 the cv hhh
900 Kathleen no one has to know hhh
901 Elle yeah proposal accepted I didn't actually do it but it was
902 accepted hhh it's so fake hhhh yeah

I open with this transcript excerpt because it highlights Elle's uncertainty about her future, her job search, her desire for authenticity, and her *not* writing. Elle is now Dr. Stewart, but teaching consumes her time while research sits on the shelf—like the bound copy of her dissertation she points out on her shelf when we meet to talk, it's something she loves, something she wants, but something out of reach.

Growing into a Tutor, Teacher, and Scholar

Elle's family moved around a bit as she was growing up, but reading and writing were a constant part of her life wherever she was. As a child, Elle saw her mother as an avid reader. In school, Elle was rewarded for reading and writing, whether it be winning a spelling bee, being made a peer tutor in elementary school, or earning prizes for reading a certain number of books.

She recalls going to the public library as the main activity during summers spent with her grandparents. In high school, Elle participated in a creative writing program, where she was given two hours a day to sit in a room with other writers and just write.

Elle studied literature in college. After graduation, she bounced around geographically, moving back and forth across the country as she tried to sustain both a relationship and a livelihood. She eventually settled on the west coast, got married, and took on a job coordinating a community college tutoring center. This job shaped her career trajectory. On her first day of work, her supervisor told her to hurry up and get her master's degree. Elle complied. She also dove into her work in the tutoring center, both managing the center and tutoring. Working closely with a small group of students, Elle felt she was able to develop relationships with them that she valued as part of her tutoring practice and, later, her teaching:

Really being able to develop those very individual personal relationships with, I don't know, fifteen or twenty people per semester, just based on the schedule and seeing kinda what they struggled with, has helped me when I go into the classroom. I'm like okay, so I know that even though this seems really easy for me, some of you, you know that being acclimated to the college setting is not that easy. (interview 8/4/2014)

The tutoring center was also where she started becoming an ESL teacher, since she worked with many multilingual students one-on-one.

After completing her master's degree, Elle continued managing the tutoring center and began taking on college teaching jobs as well—which meant working more than full time. As she began seeing her career path as a teacher, she wondered if she should leave the tutoring center, but the full time job had a particular economic hold on her:

I started teaching part time in addition to that, and I definitely went through some periods where I was like what am I doing? I need to be in the classroom. I need the teaching experience. I should quit this full time gig so that I could take more teaching jobs and get more connections and meet more people and have more chances of being the person for the full time teaching job. But I never gave that job up until now because of the benefits.
(interview 8/4/2014)

The need for benefits, particularly health insurance, is an ongoing issue for Elle, which plays a role in her decisions about work.

Elle pursued her PhD while continuing to work full time at the tutoring center and teaching part time. She chose a doctoral program that allowed her to take her coursework only in the summers, when she wasn't teaching or tutoring. During her PhD program, she fell in love with research, feeling suited to the work. She says, "I'm interested, and I'm good at reading stuff and synthesizing stuff and organizing stuff, and I think that's why research appeals to me" (interview 8/4/2014). Elle feels she thrived in her PhD program because the structure of the program—summers only when she was not teaching—allowed her to focus just on being a scholar. This undivided attention to research was powerfully appealing for her:

When I'm teaching I'm a hundred percent teaching. When I have time, like when it was [doctoral institution] and school, it's like, no. I could totally do this all the time. I'm totally into this. I could totally do this forever. I don't have to choose. (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014)

While in her PhD program, Elle submitted her first manuscript to a peer reviewed journal, a manuscript she had written for a doctoral program requirement. Knowing that she was prone to

doubting herself, she decided to shortcut her fear about submitting a manuscript for the first time. She recalls thinking, “I’m gonna send this out immediately before I talk myself out of it” (interview 8/4/2014). She received an acceptance letter from the journal: “It wasn’t even revise and resubmit. It was like we accept this when you add this” (interview 8/4/2014). To receive such a positive response to her first scholarly manuscript was thrilling. Looking back, she says the first publication experience was “so easy, and I was shocked. And I don’t expect it ever to repeat itself” (interview 8/4/2014). Even with an immediate acceptance, Elle feels she took more than an acceptable amount of time to turn the manuscript around because, by then, she was back to teaching for the academic year.

Elle completed her PhD in 2014, passing her dissertation defense with distinction. Her early success with reading and writing has continued through her adult life, as evidenced by not mere acceptance but singular approval of her work by a professional journal and her dissertation committee. Still, Elle doubts herself. When I interview her, she has recently moved from the west coast to a southern state in search of a lower cost of living and a chance to be nearer family. The ensuing job hunt tests her sense of self-worth. At such times she tries to remember that she has valuable talents when it comes to literacy. As we wrap up our talk about her childhood literacy experience—one full of gold stars—she says,

I don’t know. I think sometimes I feel—especially when I’m not getting a job, a full time job that I want—it’s like I have a hard time finding things that I’m good at. So it’s like, okay, I’m good at that. I’m good at that. Yay! Let me remember that I’m good at that! So I don’t suck at everything. (interview 8/4/2014)

The as-yet-unsuccessful job search is looming large for Elle at the moment.

No Shortage of Work

Elle has a job. In fact, she has three jobs. “I have no shortage of work here,” she says (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). But she doesn’t have *the* job—the one, full-time job with benefits. For now, full-time and benefits would be good enough, though she’d really like to add “tenure-track” and “research requirements” to that list of attributes.

Elle has submitted plenty of applications and had plenty of interviews for full-time jobs; she’s even been a finalist several times. Despite coming so close, she hasn’t landed a full-time job, so she has taken multiple part-time teaching jobs. She teaches a combination of face-to-face and online courses at three different institutions. That means several different preps, since the different composition programs don’t take the same pedagogical approach, don’t use the same textbooks, and therefore don’t use the same assignments. Elle is putting a lot of time into designing assignments, time over and above the already intensive work of responding to and grading students’ papers.

It’s especially time-consuming work for Elle because she’s still new to teaching composition. Her previous teaching experience was in ESL and developmental reading, so while she is an experienced teacher, she can’t necessarily fall back on her old toolkit. Elle feels her doctoral program gave her the expertise she needs to be a successful writing teacher—“I’ve got the skills, I have the information, I’ve got the ideas, I’ve got the books” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014)—yet the work still takes time. She might have saved some time by using someone else’s syllabus, but that is not the kind of teacher Elle is:

I had a couple of syllabuses for them, and it's like, no, I don't want to do that. I don't want to have that. I don't want to do this. And it's like, you know, I have to create it.

(manuscript discussion 10/12/2014)

Elle is conscientious about putting her own mark on her courses, so she chooses to put in more time to do so. That choice doesn't come without sacrifice.

When I interview Elle in August, the fall semester hasn't yet begun, and she is teaching just two online sections of a comp course. For Elle, this is a light teaching load. She has also just moved across the country, and she and her husband are living with her brother until they can find their own place. She wants to help out and have a closer connection to her brother and his family, so she is conducting "Camp Stewart" for her young nephews, coloring, making shrinky-dinks, and watching movies: "they're five and nine and, you know, I don't have any kids, so this is all kind of new to me" (interview 8/4/2014). Additionally, Elle remarks that, for the first time since starting her dissertation, she feels she has a little time for some pleasure reading, and she's reading a young adult fiction series. She also has a chance to help out her husband, an artist, at a music festival, where he is selling some of his work. Even these activities may be circumscribed when the demands of teaching ramp up: "last week we didn't do much because I had so much to grade" (interview 8/4/2014). And by the time the fall semester is in full swing, Elle has taken on jobs at two additional schools, and work feels all-consuming. When we meet for the manuscript discussion in October, Elle and her husband have rented a house, and now she talks about wanting to see her brother "at least once a month" (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014), and I'm not sure that's happening. Elle doesn't tell me about family or personal activities this time. She's in her home office when we meet, and after describing her teaching load she says, "so I spend a

lot of time in this room with perfume bottles in it” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014)—she hasn’t even had time to unpack.

The receding of family and free time into the background is not the only change from August to October. In August, Elle tells me about her current writing project, a project which has already been accepted for a national conference presentation and which Elle plans to turn into a journal article as well. The call for proposals for the conference caught Elle’s attention because it engaged directly with the research methodology she used for her dissertation. The process of writing a proposal in response to the call helped Elle clarify some observations and questions she had about her relationship with her dissertation research participants. Her abstract was accepted for the November conference. When we talk in August, she has done some outlining. She has thought a little bit about where she might submit the manuscript, naming a few different methodology-focused journals. As we talk, she identifies her next step as clarifying the research questions. After doing that, she can outline the conference presentation, and then use that outline to draft an article manuscript. I ask her when we might meet again to talk about the project, once she has had a chance to do some more work on it. Because the fall semester and more teaching will begin soon, Elle decides she can’t work on it again until October.

When we meet in October, however, Elle tells me that she has canceled her conference presentation. She is now working on a different piece, a reflective essay about her experience transforming from an ESL teacher to a writing teacher. On one level, she creates this new project for me—because we have a meeting to discuss a work in progress, and she has stopped progress on the other project we were going to talk about. She says, “I wouldn’t be writing about it if I didn’t know that I needed to produce something for you” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014),

but also “I want to have something to say, not just for you, but for me, too” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). For this new project, she has started an outline. We talk about where it might go. When I offer some suggestions of journals that might be appropriate, Elle responds with doubts. She’s not sure there is an audience for the piece, saying “I don’t want to bother if it’s not that interesting” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). She also feels “kind of removed from what’s going on journal wise” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). When I press her to identify a time when she can read through some journals to select one as a venue for her new piece, she says it will have to be when the semester is over:

I have hopes that I’ll be able to do some work besides teaching and planning in December and in the summer. I just—I can’t imagine it happening before then or outside of those times. Like I just—there’s no way. (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014)

Elle is deferring the work of writing. She just can’t find time to do it alongside the demands of her teaching load. At the same time, she is limiting the content of what she might write.

In August, Elle wanted to write something stemming from her dissertation. Her conference proposal was about her dissertation research methodology. But in October, the dissertation data is off-limits. For Elle, there are two main reasons she doesn’t want to work with her dissertation data at this point. First, she feels it is unfair for her to gain from the data now that she has moved away from her participants and can’t continue helping them as she once did: “I can’t be there for them anymore other than providing some kind of emotional support, so I don’t know if I—but it feels a little bit weird to me to be using them to make research publications” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). Secondly, the distance has also lead Elle to feel uncomfortable speaking for her participants: “I think maybe because I’m far away physically and

emotionally, I felt like I didn't want to—I was no longer able to be the mouthpiece” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). Elle's sense of research ethics is grounded in reciprocity, as well as in authenticity. She is unwilling to be inauthentic, and for her, this means she can't pretend to be anything she's not. She can't pretend to be still involved in the lives of research participants who are now on the other side of the country. She also can't bring herself to write just for the sake of getting published. She says, “Sometimes I worry about being a fraud. I worry about just being a fake” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). These two core values—reciprocity and authenticity—come together when she further explains her resistance to writing anything from her dissertation “It feels a little weird to kind of then be like, well, I'm gonna use what we did just so I can have something to say” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). With the combination of time pressure from teaching and discomfort about writing from her existing work, Elle is not writing and not publishing.

And why should she be? None of her three jobs requires her to publish—but then, she is looking ahead. She is trying to position herself to be competitive for a full time job. Right now, though, she's feeling discouraged. She thinks she lost one of the full-time jobs she interviewed for when she brought up research as something she could add to the position. Elle thought that would make her a stronger candidate for a tutoring center administrator position, but she tells me, “I think what it really came off as is: Are you sure you want this job? Because it doesn't require research” (interview 8/4/2014). She also feels she is getting mixed signals about what's required for the full-time teaching jobs she wants to apply for, for example, for one advertised position at a teaching-focused institution, “there's not a requirement to produce research. But then in the frickin' job ad it said have an active research agenda! I'm like, what do you want

from me?” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). Elle is frustrated with the job search. She wants to do research, but she says, “Even with a PhD and thirteen years of experience, they’re not really putting me in a research position right now” (interview 8/4/2014). She is wondering if she should just give up on research altogether and give up the idea of ever working one full-time job.

“It’s not as rosy as I would like it to be”

Elle is looking at the future with uncertainty and fear. She wants a full-time job, preferably one that’s tenure-track with a research requirement. She also wants to be in a specific community with family and a reasonable cost of living, so she is willing to compromise and take a different kind of full-time job—say, something that’s more administrative or strictly teaching, which wouldn’t have a research component—in her new geographical area. However, after suffering through a round of interviews and rejections, Elle fears that even her compromise position is out of reach. That leaves her uncertain about how to proceed.

Should she continue trying for any kind of full-time academic job in the region? Should she expand her search to other areas, possibly moving again? Should she settle for what she’s doing—a collection of part-time teaching jobs? These are the questions she tries to sort out, thinking about who she is and who she wants to be. On the one hand, she thinks acceptance of a multi-institution, adjunct life might help her feel better about herself and to be comfortable just living life. She says, “I don’t have any shortage of work, and I’m kind of like—I’m at this point where I want it to be good enough” (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). She doesn’t want to feel like she is perpetually waiting for a full-time job. On the other hand, the adjunct life is not easy. While she believes it is economically feasible as long as she can get work at multiple schools, it means a very heavy teaching load: “I don’t think I want to teach six classes a semester part time”

(manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). Yet that seems to be what it would take to earn the income she wants to contribute to her family and be able to buy health insurance. Elle's husband recently asked her if he needed to work more so she could work less—for now, she said no. She's willing to work hard at several part-time jobs, hopeful that it may be a temporary situation. Elle is critical of the system that privileges tenure-track jobs over adjuncts, but still:

No matter what my stance is on the problems in administration and issues with the tenure system, it would be very silly for me to not try to get a job where I could just have one job instead of four. That is dumb. That is not healthy radicalism, you know? Why would I hurt myself more? (manuscript discussion 10/12/2014)

Part of Elle is resolved to keep trying for the full time job, and so she is trying to prepare emotionally for another round of applications. Given the mixed signals she felt she got about research in her first round, she is unsure how research and publishing fits in with any of these three choices. Even in August, when she was a bit more optimistic, she felt shut out of research and unsure of a way back in:

I want to get back into it. When I'm into it, I'm really into it. It's just hard to do it without it being a requirement because I feel like I'm trying so hard to do what everybody else wants me to do. I need a job. I am not independently wealthy. So right now none of these things require research. I'm hoping that even a part time position that I have will give me some travel funding or be interested in it, in some way, to maybe lead into a full time thing. But I think I'm a little bit—I'm not disillusioned, I'm not hopeless about it, but it's kind of like—it's not as rosy as I would like it to be. (interview 8/4/2014)

Elle is hoping for a future in which her professional identity allows her to be in a place she wants to live and to contribute income to her family without feeling like she is scrambling. And she longs for dedicated research time. Because, as she says, “When I’m in research mode, I feel so like I know what I’m doing. Like this is my thing. This is my jam” (interview 8/4/2014).

Identities and Literacies

Elle presents her professional identity first as a teacher. She feels she is transforming from an ESL teacher to a writing teacher, and even though she sees this as a result of economic forces rather than a choice, she is happy with the work. She’s just not as happy about how time consuming it is. The time spent teaching is a major factor that prevents her from working on research, so she feels disconnected from her researcher identity, even though that identity is important to her. She is also a wife, sister, and aunt. These relationships have been a factor in her choices about where to live, as have economic considerations. She feels a responsibility to earn an income and health insurance benefits. Elle sees herself as a radical, but she believes she still needs to play the game—to get that full-time, permanent job with benefits. She says she’s “not young,” an identity that plays into her feelings about her future. Elle is very caring—once a relationship is established she wants to do everything she can to help the friend or student or research participant. She wants to feel useful. She feels bad about herself a lot, like she’s not good enough. The job search is taking its toll on her confidence.

Elle is deferring the work of writing. She believes it is impossible to work on her writing while she is teaching. In our initial interview, she had a plan for a specific project, but she didn’t follow through. She wants a time set aside when she has no other responsibility but to do research. In addition to deferring the work because of time constraints, she is also distancing

herself from her dissertation data. She feels uncomfortable attempting to publish anything from her dissertation data because she is far away from her participants and can no longer help them on a day to day basis; she feels this interruption of the reciprocity she established with them means she can't use their data to further her career through publishing. This feeling, as well as the decision not to do the conference presentation she'd had accepted, led Elle to create a different project for our second meeting. The new project is focused on her own experience of transformation from an ESL teacher to a writing teacher. While she has found the experience of developing the manuscript outline useful for her own understanding of her professional identity and teaching practice, Elle expresses doubt about whether anyone will find her work useful or interesting. A major concern for Elle in research and scholarly publishing is authenticity. She does not want to publish something just to publish something, even though she thinks she needs to do that to position herself for the full-time, tenure-track job she desires. Her resistance to doing this—and her perception of mixed signals regarding whether or not she even *should* be doing it to get hired—leads her to question her full time job hunt and to wonder if she should resign herself to part-time status forever.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Qualitative case study is highly personal research. Persons studied are studied in depth. Researchers are encouraged to include their own personal perspectives in the interpretation. The way the case and the researcher interact is presumed unique and not necessarily reproducible for other cases and researchers. The quality and utility of the research is not based on its reproducibility but on whether or not the meanings generated, by the researcher or the reader, are valued. Thus a personal valuing of the work is expected. (Stake, 1995, p. 135)

As I transition from the case studies to this final chapter, I hope that the case studies have generated valuable meanings for the reader. They have certainly generated valuable meanings for me. As I was struggling through my dissertation process, reading the case studies helped me reconnect to it. And still, when I reread them, I am reminded of the interactions I had with Isabel, Nicole, Chris, and Elle, and of my gratitude to them for sharing intimate details of their lives with me. When I read the case reports, I see the merging of identities and literacies; of the personal and the professional; of past, present, and future; of an ongoing life history and a particular text being written (or not written). Ivanič (1998) argued that “issues of identity are not an ‘optional extra’ for literacy theorists, but are central to a social view of writing” (p. 345). It is the intertwining of literacy and identity that I see in the case studies, illustrated in a way that a more distanced analytical discussion doesn’t seem to capture. Still, the analytical discussion is also important, and that is what I turn to next. In this chapter, I first revisit the research questions,

present the cross-case analysis, and then discuss inspirations of the study, including directions for future research. I then reflect on the research process before offering my final conclusions.

Revisiting the Research Questions

I began this research process with a desire to learn more about the perspectives of professional academic writers. Intrigued by my interactions with faculty writers in a writing center and faculty writing groups, I was especially interested in the various ways these writers understood and engaged with academic writing for publication, and how their perspectives and practices connected to who they understood themselves to be. I ultimately designed and implemented a study focused on the identities and literacies of early career academics working in composition, guided by two research questions:

1. What identities does each of these new PhDs working in composition bring to the writing of a particular professional academic text?
2. How do those identities mediate their professional academic literacy practices?

The case studies presented in chapters four through seven addressed the research questions by portraying the unique situation of each new PhD working on writing in her own context. The analysis presented in this chapter further answers the research questions by looking across the cases.

Cross-Case Analysis: Learning About Professional Academic Literacy-and-Identity

The goal of this section is to present what the cases as a collection teach us about professional academic literacy-and-identity, the larger phenomenon of which each case is an example. This larger phenomenon is what Stake (2006) calls the *quintain*. Stake's cross-case analysis procedure is built around a *case-quintain dialectic*: "a rhetorical, adversarial procedure,

wherein attention to the local situations and attention to the program or phenomenon as a whole contend with each other for emphasis” (p. 46). Therefore, the analysis procedure was not simply a matter of looking for common themes across the case studies. Rather, the goal was to develop several multicase assertions to communicate what I have learned about the quintain by studying all of the cases, preserving both commonalities and divergence across cases. Here I present those assertions, along with the evidence for them from the case reports, while also relating the assertions to other theoretical and empirical literature.

The Discourse of Being an Academic

For these new PhDs working in composition, the dominant discourse (in Gee’s [1990, 2015] sense of Discourse with a big D) of being a professional academic involves doing a lot of teaching, research, service, and (eventually) administration. The dominant discourse is prevalent in Isabel’s case report. Isabel takes up the discourse by doing a “tremendous amount” (Isabel interview 5/19/2014) of teaching, research, and service and by expressing her desire to eventually move into administration. She does these things because she is “supposed to” (Isabel interview 5/19/2014). Isabel’s sense of what it means to be an academic was shaped during her doctoral program, and the set of expectations she brings with her to her institution differs from the expectations of the institutional culture. Her level of output exceeds her primary institution’s expectations. Because Isabel is inhabiting the discourse of being an academic, she seeks additional opportunities outside of her institution to fully enact the discourse. Isabel most clearly articulates this particular element of the discourse—the high workload in all three (or four) areas—but all of the participants reference the discourse in their case studies, with Nicole

concerned about balancing the heavy workload with a personal life, Chris voluntarily doing research and service, and Elle aspiring to do more than just teach.

Inscribed within the discourse of being an academic are various possibilities for selfhood (Ivanič, 1998), with some privileged over others. One way to view the positioning of these possibilities is by looking for the privileging of tenure-track positions over non-tenure-track positions. Viewed this way, Isabel and Nicole would be on the privileged side of the divide, while Elle and Chris hold lower-status positions. But the ways the participants orient to these differences in status is not that simple. Isabel questions the privilege of tenure. She says “I don’t really think that the tenure system is important in and of itself” (Isabel participant check 2/9/2015). Elle also sees “problems in administration and issues with the tenure system” (Elle manuscript discussion 10/12/2014), and what’s more important to her than a tenure-track job is a full-time job with sufficient compensation so she can “have one job instead of four” (Elle manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). Chris is transparent about not aspiring to a tenure-track job but keeping the possibility open as a “backup plan” (Chris interview 5/20/2014).

Rather than focusing on the non-tenure-track status of her position, Chris sees online teaching as what is marginalized. She observes “workplace disadvantages due to perceptions of online teaching and working from home,” (Chris participant check 1/9/2015). While she is happy to have landed a full-time, temporary, online teaching position that will provide sufficient income for her family, she is considering teaching face-to-face on top of that. Chris further emphasizes the higher status of face-to-face teaching when she equates “a traditional teaching position” (Chris interview 5/20/2014) with “work[ing] outside my house” (Chris interview 5/20/2014). According to the 2013-2014 HERI survey, teaching online is still something most

faculty in the United States do not do (Eagan et al., 2014), at least for full-time teachers, which is the group still mainly represented by the HERI. Peach and Bieber (2015) propose that online teaching is a way faculty can resist institutional power (for example, by gaining control over when and where they do their teaching work), but that this gain in power can be outflanked by the institution, in the form of institutional practices that devalue online teaching. While Isabel also teaches online, she does not express concern about the value of her online teaching experiences. However, since Isabel's online teaching is something she takes on in addition to her role at her primary, brick-and-mortar institution, she has security from the status of her face-to-face position. Elle also teaches online as one piece of her adjuncting puzzle. For Elle, it is the part-time status of the work that frustrates her; it is the opposite of the full-time position she desires.

Elle's case study further illuminates the status of some of the possibilities for selfhood in the higher education workplace. Her ideal position is tenure-track with time allotted for research, but she is also interested in an administrative or teaching-only job as long as it is full-time, permanent, and benefitted. While applying for non-tenure-track jobs, she gets mixed signals about the value of research for these positions. She fears that expressing her interest in research hurt her in an interview for a tutoring center director job—that by presenting herself as a professional academic with a research agenda, she presented an overreaching combination of interests for a staff position. At the same time, she questions why an advertisement for a teaching position that does not require research states that candidates should have an active research agenda. This is a concrete example of Poe's (2015) concern about unwritten expectations for non-tenure-track faculty to produce research. Elle's frustration with the situation comes out in

the question she can't ask the hiring departments directly: "what do you want from me?" (Elle manuscript discussion 10/12/2014).

All of the other cross-case findings come back in some way to the discourse of being an academic and the possibilities for selfhood inscribed in it. These are the starting points from which we can continue to explore the writers' identities and begin to understand how their literacy practices flow from their particular social positionings. While the discourse of being an academic is not monolithic but contested, the case studies illustrate how the new PhDs participate in this discourse and are positioned among possibilities for selfhood in the higher education workplace. From a social practice perspective, "the literacy practices in which people engage cannot be separated from the processes whereby they identify with or resist particular social positionings" (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010, p. 232).

Processes of (Dis)Identification

The new PhDs identify or disidentify with being an academic in complex, sometimes contradictory ways, and these processes of (dis)identification shape their sense of (dis)connection to professional academic writing. Two distinct processes of (dis)identification are operating in the case studies. First, particular aspects of the writers' autobiographical selves (Ivanič, 1998) make them feel either connected or disconnected to professional academic writing. In Isabel's case study, a strong sense of connection comes across in how she talks about her purposes for writing. She is driven to do more and more projects both because of her belief that academics do a tremendous amount and because of her "workaholic tendencies" (Isabel interview 5/19/2014). She combines an uptake of the discourse of being an academic with the discourse of being a workaholic. Additionally, Isabel wants to write and publish because she's

“interested in stuff” (Isabel interview 5/19/2014). In other words, professional academic writing is a way for her to pursue her own varied interests, which come from all of her previous experiences and values. Isabel’s extensive publishing record also reinforces her connection to professional academic writing. It has become part of her routine.

Whereas Isabel’s connection to academia and professional academic writing is fairly straightforward, Chris’s case study is characterized by a sense of hybridity. Chris’s language and literacy history is a story of entering the middle/upper-class space of academia from a working-class background, and she switches between senses of connection and disconnection with academia. She views the language she grew up with as quite different from academic language, and she is conscious of how she moves between varieties in her daily life. She can see academic language both as “stuck up” (Chris interview 5/20/2014) and as a “sophisticated discourse” (Chris interview 5/20/2014). This movement between discourses in her spoken language is echoed in her work on her book chapter, where she both connects to and disconnects from academia. By doing research and writing for publication she is involving herself in the discourse. She uses language of academic research—“participants,” “data,” “literature review,” “themes” (Chris manuscript discussion 5/27/2014)—but also talks about using her journalism experience to get the work done quickly. Chris merges practices from the distinct discourses of being an academic and being a journalist. Chris disconnects from academic writing when she positions herself first as a creative writer, but she participates in both discourses by writing her academic book chapter about fiction writers. She has found a way to connect to academic writing and get an academic publication while also connecting to creative writing.

Now that Elle has completed her PhD, and her teaching positions do not require her to produce research, she feels disconnected from research, which blocks her from writing. Her disconnection is all the more striking because research is so important to her and she has had success doing it. For example, Elle has a strong intrinsic desire to do research and has experienced herself as a competent researcher: “When I’m in research mode, I feel so like I know what I’m doing. Like this is my thing. This is my jam” (Elle interview 8/4/2014). But even with that strong previous connection, she hasn’t found a way to carve out time for writing amidst her teaching duties and job search: “It’s just hard to do it without it being a requirement because I feel like I’m trying so hard to do what everybody else wants me to do” (Elle interview 8/4/2014). In fact, the job search has been such a negative experience that it has taken a toll on Elle’s sense of self-worth: “I have a hard time finding things that I’m good at” (Elle interview 8/4/2014). One way to understand why Elle does not write comes from A. Burgess and Ivanič’s (2010) discussion of how the autobiographical self shapes the discursal self and the authorial self:

If the socially available possibilities for selfhood a writer has experienced are ones in which she is treated as inferior and does not have an authoritative role, she is likely to incorporate a sense of inferiority, and possibly feelings of indignation at having been treated in this way, into her autobiographical self. Her sense of inferiority is likely to have a strong influence on the kind of authorial self she constructs and may lead her to be hesitant about engaging in writing at all, as writing is by its nature an agentive social act (p. 246).

Feeling stuck in contingent positions has disrupted Elle's sense of what is possible for her as a writer.

The second process of (dis)identification at work in the case studies centers on what professional academic writing means to each writer. The meanings the women ascribe to professional academic writing come from their autobiographical selves, and these meanings shape their current engagement or disengagement with the work. Isabel brings her lifelong love of words to her work, and that sense of personal meaning is carried throughout her activities: "I like what I do. There are very few things that I work on that I don't enjoy" (Isabel interview 5/19/2014). With this positive meaning attached to academic work, Isabel is highly engaged. Chris sees her children and her fiction as something she leaves behind, a way of achieving immortality, which is a powerful meaning for her. But she remarks that academic writing is not meaningful in the same way: "[leaving something behind] is something that I definitely connect to my writing identity and not so much with academics" (Chris interview 5/20/2014). Chris's academic writing is more important to her in terms of the doors it may open later. Since it is not as personally meaningful to her as fiction writing and her family, she engages with academic writing in ways that protect time for her other passions.

Elle disengages from academic writing, and while she primarily emphasizes her teaching load as the reason why, she also discusses it in terms of particular meanings she ascribes to research and academic writing. Elle's dissertation research was deeply meaningful to her, and when I first interviewed her, she was planning a project related to her dissertation methodology. But by our second meeting two months later, she had dropped that project and decided not to write anything from her dissertation. Elle describes strongly held values of reciprocity and

authenticity, which she connects to her dissertation research, and uses these values to explain why she is no longer comfortable writing from her dissertation data. She feels her cross-country move has broken the reciprocity she established with her participants, and she feels inauthentic writing as though the relationships are ongoing. She doesn't want to benefit from the dissertation data in an inauthentic way: "It feels a little weird to kind of then be like, well, I'm gonna use what we did just so I can have something to say" (Elle manuscript discussion 10/12/2014).

These two processes of (dis)identification are specific ways the writers' identities mediate their literacy practices. In their discussion of how socially available possibilities for selfhood shape the autobiographical self, A. Burgess and Ivanič (2010) state that writers do not simply reproduce possibilities for selfhood when they take them up, but rather that they integrate these possibilities with other resources they have adopted, resulting in combinations unique to each writer. We see those combinations at work when Isabel combines academic and workaholic discourses and when Chris draws on resources from working class and middle class discourses as well as discourses of being an academic, a journalist, and a creative writer. A. Burgess & Ivanič (2010) also observe that the writer's autobiographical self includes "interests, views of the world, values and beliefs, and his or her sense of authoritativeness and agency" (p. 239). Elle is incorporating a *contingent labor* identity and an *unsuccessful job seeker* identity into her autobiographical self, and these identities are overriding her past positionings as a successful researcher and writer. The result is that she lacks a sense of agency in professional academic writing and ends up deferring the work of writing.

The meanings the new PhDs ascribe to professional academic writing can also be understood as *values* in the sense that A. Burgess & Ivanič (2010) describe values as being part

of the autobiographical self. Again, everything each writer has experienced in life up to now is shaping how she sees professional academic writing as personally meaningful (or not). Reading and writing have been meaningful to Isabel her entire life, and she carries this sense of meaning into her academic reading and writing. Chris's engagement with academic writing is influenced by the relative lack of personal meaning it holds for her, compared to her family and her fiction writing. Elle's experience stands out in that she attaches a strong personal meaning to research, but uses specific values of reciprocity and authenticity to limit her opportunities for writing.

The Salience of Family Roles, Relationships, and Responsibilities

For all of the women, *mother* and *partner* are identities that somehow surface in their case studies, whether or not they are mothers or partners. Granted, I was asking them about their personal lives during the background and context interviews, and they were all aware that I was a new mother at the time of our conversations. But all of the women connect these identities—again, whether or not they take them up—to their academic practice. Chris is both a mother and a partner, and she has shaped her position in higher education to prioritize these identities. She chooses online teaching to stay close to her children, and also works incredibly hard to fulfill her role as co-breadwinner with her husband. Elle similarly connects her income-earning responsibility to her role as a partner, deciding with her husband how much work each of them takes on. That Elle doesn't have children comes up because she is trying to be active in her nephews' lives, but demands of teaching sometimes circumvent her efforts. Isabel is “out of the baby loop” (Isabel interview 5/19/2014) and has been teaching overloads to cover colleagues' family leaves, and her primary institution, while perhaps not the ideal fit for her as an academic, is in a location she and her husband both love. Nicole's marriage and divorce were turning points

in her career trajectory, impacting where she found her first academic jobs and where she chose to pursue her doctorate. Now, as a single woman without children, she is conscious of how her personal time is easily filled by her work. For these new PhDs, family roles, relationships, and responsibilities (or the absence of those) can't be separated from their career trajectories. A similar finding came out of McAlpine et al.'s (2014) work on early career academics, and in putting forward their framework of *identity-trajectory*, McAlpine et al. argue that greater attention must be paid to the personal arena to understand how people engage with academic work.

Chris and Elle show how family relationships and responsibilities shape career goals, which in turn shape academic publishing purposes. These are dynamic processes that involve fluid (re)positionings within their families, which might be best understood through a lens of positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1990). Chris's responsibilities to her family are very important to her, and these responsibilities are on her mind as she envisions and pursues her professional goals. As mentioned above, Chris chooses to teach online to fulfill her "personal desire to stay close to my young children (by working from home)" (Chris participant check 1/9/2015). Her desire to work from home likely grows out of her experience with her own mother: "She stayed home with us, which I think was kind of a huge gift" (Chris interview 5/20/2014). Chris saw her mother's decision as a factor protecting her from dangers of her low-income neighborhood. But Chris's sense of responsibility to her family also impels her to work, and to be able to take on the role of primary earner. Her decision to pursue a PhD was "a family decision [...] We felt it was key for me to obtain my PhD, so that if necessary I could support the family" (Chris participant check 1/9/2015). And now Chris is stepping into the primary earner

position as she is about to begin a full-time online teaching job while her husband is working part-time. She recognizes how she and her husband are repositioning themselves when she says: “It’s good, since he’s in a career change, that I’m doing what I need to do. It might actually be since I’m in a position to do this, he’s able to make a career change” (Chris interview 5/20/2014). While Chris values the opportunity to work from home, she also recognizes that she pays a price for it. Because she perceives her online teaching as low status, she feels she needs to enhance her CV to stay competitive for other academic jobs. This is Chris’s purpose for academic publishing.

Family relationships and economic considerations play into Elle’s choice about where to live. After earning her PhD, Elle moved from the west coast to a southern state to live near her brother and to find a more reasonable cost of living. She left behind a long-term job as a tutoring center administrator, which had provided a stable income and health insurance: “I never gave that job up until now because of the benefits” (Elle interview 8/4/2014). Now, in her new location, she is trying to regain that stability. Her sense of economic responsibility within her family is reflected in a conversation she related in which her husband had offered to work more so she could work less. Elle had said, for now, no, indicating that she positioned herself as an equal or greater earner for the family, and despite feeling overloaded, she wasn’t ready to give up that position. So while Elle would ideally obtain a tenure-track position that would support her research, what is more pressing is finding a benefited, full-time job. This immediate career goal disrupts Elle’s sense of purpose for publishing. On the one hand, she recognizes that she needs publications to be competitive for tenure-track jobs (and perhaps for some non-tenure-track jobs), but she senses that publishing might hurt her chances for staff jobs. Her experiences on the

job market and as contingent faculty make her feel more and more removed from academic publication, until she can no longer find a purpose for publishing. Under different family and economic circumstances, Elle's job search experience might look quite different.

In their case studies, the new PhDs express a sense that family responsibilities conflict with the dominant discourse of being an academic. Nicole puts this plainly when she says, "I feel like I'm being successful so far as a professional but perhaps at the expense of a healthy work life balance" (Nicole interview 5/21/2014). In anticipation of her cross-country move to begin her new job, Nicole knows she will want to make frequent visits to see her parents and sister, but she wonders if doing so may endanger the administrator and colleague identities she is also trying to enact. She expresses concern that her colleagues will perceive her as "always jetting back and forth to home, and [...] not really here in the downtimes" (Nicole interview 5/21/2014). Elle feels the conflict between being an academic and maintaining family relationships through her sense that she needs to compromise in her job search because of her desire to live close to family. Chris has found a way to be an academic and to be a work-at-home mother, but she believes that by doing so she is placed on the margins of academia.

A struggle for work-life balance or integration has been a common finding in many new faculty studies (e.g., Austin et al., 2007; Eddy & Gaston-Gayles, 2008; Rice et al., 2000; Stupnisky et al., 2015). The sense that family responsibilities are in conflict with the discourse of being an academic can be interpreted through the lens of the ideal worker norm (Williams, 2000), which is the idea that an ideal worker is always available to work full-time and overtime without the distraction of family responsibilities. That sense of limitless availability fits with the new PhDs' ideas about the heavy workload expectations of being an academic. But the ideal

worker concept may be problematic when bound up with gender. For the early career women in this study, the tension between family responsibilities and being an academic is much more salient than a sense of conflict between their gender and being an academic, so I want to be careful not to conflate gender identities and family priorities. Still, there is evidence in the literature that the conflict between family responsibilities and academic roles impacts women differently than men; for example, with more married women and mothers opting out of the tenure-track path during the early career stage (Mason et al., 2013) and with women and men experiencing different decision-making processes when determining whether or not to take family leave for the birth or adoption of a child (O'Meara & Campbell, 2011).

Some literature specifically addresses family responsibilities as impeding women's production of professional academic writing (Carnell et al., 2008; Grant & Knowles, 2000). However, the new PhDs in this study respond to the family-academy conflict in different ways, which ultimately impacts their literacy practices in different ways. They choose to write more, to write less, or to write the same amount. For Chris, her perceived marginalized status as a contingent, online instructor "is likely one of the primary reasons building my CV with academic publishing credits is paramount to me" (Chris participant check 1/9/2015). For this reason, Chris publishes frequently, using strategies for producing publications quickly. Elle is committed to living near family and earning a living for herself and her husband; rather than go on a national tenure-track job search, she is working hard to make money and open doors in her chosen community, and she chooses not to write under these circumstances. Nicole expresses concern about work demands competing with her family time, but she doesn't feel this has impacted her rate of publication so far. Clearly it is not simply that family responsibilities keep women from

doing professional academic writing or even that the responsibilities are always an obstacle to be overcome. Also challenging that perception is Park (2013), who describes how the perceived marginalization of being a mom on the tenure-track pushed her to write and publish more. Speaking to gender generally, not just motherhood, some of O'Meara's (2015) tenured women participants also decided to publish more in response to perceived marginalization based on their gender. And speaking about motherhood, but not just publishing, Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2012) found that the women in their study successfully combined being mothers and being faculty, and that, even at the early career stage, most felt that academic work was "compatible with having a family, given the flexibility" (p. 62). So, while the case studies present an overarching sense that family responsibilities conflict with the discourse of being an academic, the new PhDs' responses to that tension suggest that there are ways to work within it.

Accumulating Capital

What is at stake for these new PhDs doing (or not doing) professional academic writing? While Nicole sees publishing as a way to earn tenure and to establish a professional reputation—"to be known for something" (Nicole interview 5/21/2014)—in her field, the other new PhDs are thinking about future job opportunities in other contexts outside their current institutions. Isabel is secure about earning tenure at her primary institution, but she wants to keep the door open to a position at another school, and eventually to administration: "if I were to leave my current institution, I can't just not have any publications" (Isabel interview 5/19/2014). Additionally, because Isabel takes up the discourse of being an academic, her identification with this discourse is at stake. For Chris and Elle, however, publishing is a (potential) way out of a marginalized position. Chris wants to accumulate publishing credits as part of her "backup plan" (Chris

interview 5/20/2014), to be positioned to apply for tenure-track jobs should the need arise. Elle is conflicted about publishing as a means to advance her career, both because she fears it may actually hurt her chances for a staff position and because she worries about benefiting from her dissertation research when she can no longer offer reciprocal benefits to her dissertation participants. Thus, for all of the participants, publications are a form of *capital* (Bourdieu, 1986), which can help the new PhDs access future jobs, or, in Nicole's case, to secure her current position through tenure.

In Bourdieu's theory of how the social world works, *capital* is a key concept for explaining how possibilities are both opened up and constrained: it is "a force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 46). Bourdieu elaborates on several forms of capital:

capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications, and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility. (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 47)

What counts as capital and how it is converted among its various forms depends on the particular field of social life in question. Additionally, *symbolic capital* is associated with a shared recognition of prestige or status within a particular field (Bourdieu, 1991).

The case studies illustrate that publications are not the only form of capital to be accumulated in the composition academic field. Particularly for Chris and Isabel, who take on a lot of different activities to build up their stock of experience, accumulating capital is an investment in the future. Teaching experience is one valued form of capital for them. Isabel has taken on additional teaching outside her primary institution, advising doctoral students and teaching first-year writing for a community college, to extend her experience. Chris also plans to continue teaching face-to-face on top of her new full-time online teaching job, which signals the perceived benefit of the experience even beyond the paycheck. Similarly, Chris and Isabel do service beyond institutional expectations. In Isabel's case, service is an expectation of her tenure-track position, but she has also "taken on a number of service things on my own, whether it's in the institution, outside, in the community, a lot of virtual stuff" (Isabel interview 5/19/2014). Chris has been active on committees at both of the community colleges where she teaches, even though service is not required of a part-time adjunct. Especially for Chris, only the teaching is directly compensated, but for both Chris and Isabel teaching experiences are economic capital now and cultural capital—possibly converted to economic capital—for the future. Publishing and service activities are uncompensated and thus cultural capital, but they may also generate social capital, as these activities have them working with colleagues both in the institution and beyond. Isabel's point about the publisher Bedford being a "good publisher to have experience with and have on my CV" (Isabel manuscript discussion 5/30/2014) also illustrates the social capital aspect of publishing, not only because she will be interacting with people who work at Bedford but also because Bedford's prestige will be enshrined on her CV, affording her symbolic capital, as long as readers of her CV recognize Bedford's status (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 72).

Isabel is “constantly looking for new opportunities” (Isabel interview 5/19/2014), and Chris is “covering all bases” (Chris interview 5/20/2014). Alongside the drive to accumulate capital, another way to understand how these two new PhDs engage with professional academic writing is to see them as *shape-shifting portfolio people* (Gee, 2004). These are people who

see themselves in entrepreneurial terms. That is, they see themselves as free agents in charge of their own selves as if those selves were projects or businesses. They believe they must manage their own risky trajectories through building up a variety of skills, experiences, and achievements in terms of which they can define themselves as successful now and worthy of more success later. Their set of skills, experiences, and achievements, at any one time, constitutes their portfolio. However, they must also stand ready and able to rearrange these skills, experiences, and achievements creatively (that is, to shape-shift into different identities) in order to define themselves anew (as competent and worthy) for changed circumstances. (Gee, 2004, p. 105)

Chris particularly reflects a readiness to shape-shift when she says, “I don’t like to be stuck in one particular path” (Chris interview 5/20/2014). Chris and Isabel fill their portfolios with publishing, teaching, and service experiences to define themselves as successful and to be ready to leverage their experience for new opportunities in the future. Chris’s case study also suggests the idea of managing risk, with her expressions of responsibility for family income and her experience growing up in a risky, low-income situation. Also of note, Gee places his discussion of shape-shifting portfolio people in the sociohistorical context of the new capitalism (the capitalism characterized by a globalized economy with its shift of manufacturing to “developing” countries and emergence of “knowledge work” in developed countries), and he connects shape-

shifting to the generation of people who have lived their entire lives in the new capitalism, the generation sometimes called Millennials. Chris and Isabel are younger than Nicole and Elle, and, while the definition of Millennial is not fixed, Chris and Isabel could be placed in this generational category.

Seeing Chris and Isabel as shape-shifting portfolio people also helps explain why their academic identities don't seem to be bound to their institutions. Isabel especially conveys the sense of being a free agent: her identity as a professional academic transcends her primary institution, both through the amount of additional work she takes on outside the institution and through her sense of authoritativeness despite her junior status within the institution. While academic identity frameworks (like Henkel, 2000) have stressed the importance of the institution and discipline in constructing professional academic identities, Isabel's and Chris's case studies challenge the salience of a single institution and open up alternative settings for academic identity construction.

Accumulating Capital Quickly: Strategies for High Output

As a result of their desire to build portfolios that will keep many options open, Chris and Isabel have developed strategies for producing a lot of publications quickly. First, they shape their research projects to be accomplished in a short time frame, which for them seems to be a few months: Chris alternates every few months between working on "batches" (Chris interview 5/20/2014) of academic writing and fiction writing, and Isabel suggests that short-term means less than six months, when she relates the questions she asks herself when deciding to do a project: "is this a study that would require IRB and be, you know, a six-month study? Or is it short term, whatever that may be?" (Isabel interview 5/19/2014). Both Chris and Isabel have

writing habits that help them produce texts quickly. Chris ascribes her ability to write quickly to her journalism experience: “I tend to write from a journalist’s perspective. So, you know, I’ll just sit down, and I’ll sort of binge write and just get it all out” (Chris manuscript discussion 5/27/2014). From there she will “let it sit for maybe a day or so and then go back and smooth out all the little pieces” (Chris manuscript discussion 5/27/2014). Furthermore, Chris facilitates her own writing process by taking the perspective that her work simply needs “to move the discussion forward” (Chris interview 5/20/2014) rather than make some kind of discipline-altering contribution. Her more pragmatic goal helps her create doable projects and finish them.

In addition to focusing on short-term projects and writing quickly, both Chris and Isabel are strategic about selecting publication venues with a high chance of publication and quick turnaround times. This strategy avoids wasting time by having manuscripts flat-out rejected, and it also avoids lengthy waits for manuscripts to be reviewed and published. Specifically, Chris and Isabel describe submitting abstracts in response to calls for papers and writing once their abstract has been accepted, knowing that publication is basically guaranteed. Chris says, “I’m so busy with a lot of things that I don’t want to write something—I don’t want to develop it and write it and then just send it out [...] the calls seem to work better for me” (Chris interview 5/20/2014). And Isabel, in considering whether or not to do a project, asks herself “is it pretty much guaranteed to be published somewhere? Or do I think I’m gonna have to sit on it for a while? I’m not real good at sitting on stuff” (Isabel interview 5/19/2014).

Time is an issue raised in the literature on professional academic writing practice, with views that writing takes long hours that must be protected (Carnell et al., 2008), that the institution works against the protection of this time (Essén & Värlander, 2013), and that writers

must find their own ways to disengage with other tasks to engage with writing (R. Murray, 2013). What hasn't been discussed widely is the idea of reducing the amount of time spent on writing for academic publication while still building up the publication record. The work that comes closest to addressing Chris's and Isabel's practices is Nygaard's (2015), which focused on how researchers work on professional academic writing amidst competing demands. Several of Nygaard's participants described decisions that resonate with Isabel's and Chris's choices. For example, Nygaard's participants spoke about balancing the prestige of the publication venue with the feasibility of writing something that could be published there, as one participant put it: "There's ready to be published somewhere, on paper, or there's ready to be published somewhere great" (Nygaard, 2015, p. 8). Another described a strategy of "submit[ing] articles when they were about 80% finished because 'there's a diminishing return' in continuing to polish after a certain point" (Nygaard, 2015, p. 8). One result of Chris's and Isabel's decision to write primarily in response to calls for papers is that their CVs are heavily skewed toward book chapters. Nygaard's participants agreed that, in their context, journal articles were more valued than book chapters. The value of book chapters versus journal articles in US composition may vary by institution. Poe (2015) is convinced that, in US higher education, book chapters are among the publication types "no longer valued for the purposes of tenure" (p. 509), but in Nicole's case study, her department chair had made a point that book chapters would be rewarded, even though they may not be elsewhere.

While Chris and Isabel exemplify similar strategies for producing publications quickly, it is unique elements of their autobiographical selves that lead them to rapid output. Isabel sees her workaholic tendencies and her ingrained belief that she is supposed to do a lot of teaching,

research, and service as driving her to get as many experiences as she can; she limits the amount of time on any one project so she can do more and more. Chris limits the amount of time she spends because, while she is also driven to get as many academic publications as she can, she has other priorities—her fiction and her family—that she wants to protect time for. In each case we see how “the autobiographical self will be sustained by and sustain a range of writing practices: ways of engaging in writing, habitual times, places, speeds, rhythms, feelings, comfort zones, tools, technologies, and materials” (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010, p. 239). The case studies show how Chris and Isabel have developed their writing practices within a broader social context, the higher education field, where publications are to be accumulated as capital, which may be exchanged for future job opportunities.

Inspirations of the Study

The merging of identities and literacies, as illustrated in the case studies, can be interpreted using Ivanič’s (1998) framework of the discursal construction of identity. As the cross-case analysis above has demonstrated, the new PhDs’ identities can be described using Ivanič’s concepts of possibilities for selfhood and the autobiographical self. This study’s finding of two processes of (dis)identification affirms A. Burgess and Ivanič’s (2010) repositioning of the discursal construction of identity as processual. The ways the new PhDs’ identities mediate their literacy practices can be understood as their autobiographical selves sustaining specific practices, also as described by A. Burgess and Ivanič (2010). Thus this study contributes to the theoretical literacy-and-identity discussion by offering additional examples of these concepts from a new context, that of new PhDs working in US composition.

This study also speaks to the methods of practice-oriented literacy research using the *talk around texts*. Developed by Ivanič, *talk around texts* is “talk between the researcher and the writer-participant about a text that the writer is writing or has written” (Lillis, 2009, p. 171). Because I asked participants to discuss a text in progress, rather than something finished, I approached the manuscript discussions as a facilitated work session, with me playing the role of a peer writing consultant (what is also referred to as a peer writing tutor in writing center literature). To my knowledge this is a modification of the talk around texts method without direct precedent in academic literacies research, although Ivanič (1998) described three of her participants as using their discussions for assistance with their writing. In this study, structuring the talk around the text as a work session provided many glimpses of the new PhDs’ positionings within their specific writing contexts: for example, Nicole’s shifting sense of authority as she struggled to breach stylistic conventions in the collection she was editing, and Elle’s resistance to selecting a target journal for her manuscript because she was “kind of removed from what’s going on journal wise” (Elle manuscript discussion 10/12/2014). Furthermore, focusing the work session on what the participants themselves identified as their next action to move the text forward helped keep the discussion grounded in their perspectives; this helped me achieve the writer-focused stance Lillis (2008) promotes for researchers using talk around texts. While, overall, the work-session structure benefitted the study, it didn’t always play out as I had envisioned. For example, Isabel didn’t really have any work to do on her text and Elle resisted working on hers, so both of their manuscript discussions turned into something more like an interview. Future research using a work-session version of talk around text should account for such possibilities in the study design.

The case studies also offer inspire several considerations for practice. Stake (2006) acknowledges that readers of a multicase report will expect the study to guide policy for cases similar to those studied and to provide vicarious experience that can be used to apply assertions of the study to other cases. Still, multicase studies “abstain from formal projection to cases that are not examined; rather, they show how a variety of components and constraints lead to a partly irreducible individualism among the cases” (Stake, 2006, p. 90). In this dissertation, I have presented case studies of four new PhDs working on writing in unique circumstances. While their experiences do not represent all new PhDs, or all new PhDs working in composition, their experiences suggest ways to rethink aspects of practice in several areas.

Inspirations for Early Career Faculty Development

The case studies suggest ways departments and institutions might rethink how they support professional academic literacy-and-identity development, through doctoral education, job searches, and either the pre-tenure period (for those who end up on the tenure-track) or the first five years in any stable, secure position (Bazeley, 2003). First, regardless of which phase of the early career the support is designed for, graduate faculty, faculty developers, and mentors could help early career academics explore, establish, and/or strengthen their academic identities, offering opportunities to think about how research and writing fit into their broader academic practice, professional goals, and personal lives. One way to do this, inspired by this study’s frameworks, would be to offer early career academics opportunities to explore their autobiographical selves (Ivanič, 1998), including aspects of the autobiographical self that are, thus far, imagined or desired but not yet realized (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010). Such an activity would need to give participants freedom to acknowledge aspects of their autobiographical selves

that might not fit with the dominant discourse of being an academic; if the activity were to take the form of a free-writing exercise, for example, participants should be assured that the writing would remain private.

Nicole's case study illustrated her "sense of relative authoritativeness and agency" (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010, p. 244) and how this fluctuated during our conversation. One of the places this surfaced was in the context of Nicole editing a volume for the first time and thus taking on what was for her a new position of authority in publishing. How might faculty development help early career academics like Nicole navigate such moments? Lea and Stierer (2009) suggest that academic development work become "more textual, non-normative, enquiry-based and grounded in the totality of lecturers' lived professional practice" (p. 426). Thus it may be possible to use literacy as a way into identity development. Nicole's case study suggests that discussion of a text for academic publication could provide an opportunity for recognizing the identity work of producing such a text. Guided discussion, either one-on-one or in a group of peers, of a particular text in progress, could help junior faculty see where they are enacting less authoritative positions or being constrained by conventions, and then to find ways to enact authoritativeness in pursuit of their goals. Also inspired by Nicole's case study—specifically her question "How do I sort of shape my work towards some goal when I don't really know what that goal is yet?" (Nicole interview 5/21/2014)—junior faculty may benefit from discussions with peers about their current positioning in their disciplines, the common threads of the research they have already done, and how their interests or questions may be built into a research agenda. In her manuscript discussion with me, Nicole came to a realization that the concept of reflection

was a thread running through her research and teaching practice. Such discussions could be built into a workshop, ongoing new faculty program, or facilitated writing group.

Inspirations for Faculty Writing Support

Faculty development focused specifically on writing may also benefit from an identity- and-literacy approach. From this perspective, writing support would focus on the writer's connection to professional academic writing before moving into specific strategies for producing writing. As was clear in Elle's case study, her disconnection from research and writing meant that no genre-specific strategies or time management plan were going to help her produce a manuscript. In fact, in her manuscript discussion, she resisted my attempts to help her choose a target journal and set a deadline for a draft. Without recognizing and resolving her disconnection from writing, these helping strategies were useless. A similar observation comes from Banks and Flinchbaugh (2013), who found that the writing support programs they developed for faculty at their institution were successful only when they shifted their focus to helping faculty see themselves as writers. Recognizing that academic publishing may be a way out of a contingent faculty position—as Elle's and Chris's case studies illustrate and as Guglielmo and Gaillet (2013) argue—those offering faculty writing support might consider how that support could be accessible to all faculty at the institution regardless of employment status. At the same time, the four cases in this dissertation can help anyone designing or implementing faculty writing support understand how academics may have different career goals and different levels of engagement with professional academic writing. Baldi, Sorcinelli, and Yun (2013) also make the point that faculty have diverse needs as writers and will benefit from different kinds of writing support. With diverse faculty and diverse needs in mind, an additional inspiration for writing support

builds on Chris's and Isabel's strategies for producing publications quickly: faculty development and writing support could expose early career faculty to a range of projects and publications with different time commitments, as well as helping faculty hone in on publication venues with faster turnaround times or more certainty in publication outcome. Having this knowledge may help faculty make strategic writing choices that account for both their publication goals and the time and resources they have.

An identity-and-literacy perspective on writing support also invites consideration of how faculty writers and the professionals supporting them make use of existing resources about academic publishing. Many books on writing for academic publication emphasize advice about the text (manuscripts should do this or not do that) or advice for organizing the writing process, especially time management. Often what seems to be missing is the writer. For example, Silvia (2007) is transparent about his "practical, behavior-oriented approach to writing. We won't talk about insecurities, feelings of avoidance and defensiveness or inner mental blocks that hold people back" (p. 3). But even resources that recognize the importance of affective dimensions of professional academic writing, like Boice (1990) and W. L. Belcher (2009), still heavily emphasize time management of the writing process. Some academic publishing books can offer newcomers valuable behind-the-scenes perspectives on publishing and various strategies, especially when gathered from multiple authors (e.g., Casanave & Vandrick, 2003; Rocco & Hatcher, 2011), but whether or not these strategies and new information will resonate with a particular professional academic writer has much to do with that writer's positioning within higher education, autobiographical self, and purposes for academic publishing. Before turning to these types of books, or seeking advice from colleagues and mentors, early career academics

may benefit from reflection on their own goals and desired level of engagement with professional academic writing. If a writer feels disconnected from higher education and academic writing, it may be worthwhile to explore and resolve (either changing or accepting) that disconnection. Finding one's own particular purposes for and connections to academic writing, from the autobiographical self (Ivanič, 1998), including past, present, and future circumstances (A. Burgess & Ivanič, 2010), may help the writer identify and sustain her own repertoire of productive practices.

Inspirations for Composition

The case studies also inspire considerations for professionals within the composition community. Elle's job search struggle illustrated how departments can send mixed messages about research expectations. Since concern about unofficial research expectations for non-tenure-track faculty has been raised before (Poe, 2015), and since the very existence of non-tenure-track positions has been explained as a result of the separation of teaching and research functions (ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing, 2008; Bartholomae, 2011), this is an issue worth addressing. In response, departments hiring non-tenure-track faculty might consider whether or not they currently expect research in these positions—either formally or as an unwritten expectation—and how they make (or don't make) their expectations transparent. Can the presence or absence of research expectations be made clear in the position advertisement, in the position qualifications, the job description, and in any reward system in place? Is any expectation for research accompanied by support for it in terms of time, resources, and recognition?

Professional organizations in composition and English Studies more broadly are in a position to advocate for the needed transparency described above. CCCC has position statements

which stipulate the need for clear expectations and support for expected activities (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1987, revised 2015, 2016), as does the MLA (Modern Language Association, 2003). Additionally, organizations might consider offering resources to help fill the gap for faculty who are not currently in jobs that support research but who are trying to position themselves for such a move by publishing. For example, Chris's case study showed how, as a community college instructor, she lacked access to library databases she needed to write the literature review for her book chapter. Even a small grant that would cover Chris's expense to purchase a library card for the nearby university library may prove helpful. A review of awards and grants currently offered by MLA, CCCC, TESOL, CWPA, and NCTE (as listed on their websites) did not reveal any small grant programs of this kind.

Future Directions for Research

Throughout the process of working on this dissertation, I have frequently found myself thinking ahead to new projects sparked by what I have experienced and learned by doing this study. Below I present future research directions, first through ideas for three manuscripts sharing the results of this study, and then through plans for three future studies that will follow up on and extend what has been started here.

Manuscript 1: Chris and Isabel. Chris's and Isabel's case studies present some intriguing similarities as well as important differences. Both women are high producers, going beyond the expectations of their primary jobs, and they employ some similar strategies for building up publication credits quickly. At the same time, they are positioned quite differently in higher education, and they have different personal priorities and professional goals. To share these results and explore them further, one manuscript will focus on Chris and Isabel, using the

concept of *shape-shifting portfolio people* (Gee, 2004) to interpret their identities, and connecting their goals to their strategies for high output. Because this manuscript will deploy frameworks from New Literacy Studies and academic literacies to explore the lives of college writing teachers, it will be targeted for the journal *Literacy in Composition Studies*.

Manuscript 2: Elle. Elle's case study is unique in that it illustrates what leads her to defer writing. Her situation personalizes many of the dilemmas of contingent labor. A second manuscript focused just on Elle's case study will explore these issues as well as reasons for her painful disconnection from research and the structural factors that lead her to feel shut out of professional academic writing. With its focus on the lived experience of a writing instructor, this manuscript will be targeted for *College English*, a venue which has also shown a commitment to exploring issues of contingent labor in the field.

Manuscript 3: Nicole. Nicole's case study offers insight into early career experience, especially in illustrating her concerns about developing a sense of authority as a new assistant professor and writing program administrator. In addition to fleshing out those themes, I would like to further explore how Nicole's writing process and her discussion of her writing with me seemed to aid her search for a research agenda. Given the intersection of Nicole's administrator and faculty identities and the manuscript's goal to connect early career development to the writing process, I will target this manuscript for *WPA: Writing Program Administration*.

Study 1: Exploring literacy practices of academic mothers. Literature on mothers in higher education tells stories of perceived marginalization (Evans & Grant, 2008), details the likelihood of mothers opting out of tenure-track roles for other positions in the academy (Mason et al., 2013), and offers counter narratives of women who successfully combine motherhood and

tenure-track life (Park, 2013; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012). I propose to study academic motherhood through a literacy-and-identity lens, employing the frameworks of this dissertation to further explore what is at stake for mothers in various kinds of academic positions as they write (or don't write) professionally. I feel a strong personal connection to this topic because I became a mother while writing this dissertation, and I chose to change my position in higher education as a result. For this reason, I would adapt the methodological strategies of the academic literacies approach to design an autoethnographic study and position myself as a participant. I see this study as a possible collaboration with Chris and other academic mothers in our field.

Study 2: Longitudinal follow up with Isabel, Nicole, Chris, and Elle. Since participating with me in data collection for this dissertation, Isabel, Nicole, Chris, and Elle have all progressed further in their careers. They've made additional decisions about how they integrate their personal and professional lives, and they've had more encounters with professional academic writing. Their autobiographical selves (Ivanič, 1998) today are not the same autobiographical selves they brought to the writing projects they discussed in this study. A follow up investigation would invite the participants to repeat the data collection steps from this dissertation. Lillis (2008) argues for the benefits of long-term engagement with participants when studying literacy practices, and McAlpine et al. (2014) have demonstrated advantages of a longitudinal approach for studying early career experience and academic identity formation. In addition to extending the women's case studies, I would like to use this study as an opportunity to explore how the frameworks of academic literacies (Lillis & Scott, 2007) and the discursal construction of writer identity (Ivanič, 1998) might be used in conjunction with McAlpine et. al's

(2014) framework of *identity-trajectory* for understanding early career academic identity-and-literacy.

Study 3: Professional academic literacies of contingent faculty. The final proposed study would use the frameworks of this dissertation and have similar research questions, but would target a different, though overlapping, population. Focusing on contingent faculty, this would be a much larger, longer-term academic literacies study. Envisioned as a text-oriented ethnography (as in Lillis & Curry, 2010), the study would leverage the academic literacies approach to document how contingent faculty position themselves and are positioned within higher education and academic publishing through their professional academic writing practice. Modeled after Lillis and Curry's (2010) study of multilingual scholars, about 50 participants would be located at several different institutions and come from at least two disciplines. This study would be significant in challenging widespread deficit views of contingent faculty, through which these academics are "assumed to have less commitment and engagement, to be less productive, and generally to be a poor fit for the academy" (Kezar & Sam, 2011, p. 1420). The major challenge in implementing such a study would be in finding a way to "harness research resources which would enable selectively designed/larger scale and/or longitudinal studies to be carried out" (Lillis & Scott, 2007, p. 22). I could not carry out such a project in my current position as contingent faculty. A collaborative, autoethnographic iteration of text-oriented ethnography might be a solution.

Reflections on the Research Process

Conducting this research has transformed me as a thinker and researcher. I now have an understanding of qualitative research that could not have developed without the experience of

doing this work. Part of that understanding is how studies can change once underway. Two significant changes in this study occurred after it was proposed. First, the participants turned out to be all first language users of English, all working in the United States, and all women. Although I knew my collection of cases would be small, I had expected diversity in terms of language, country, and gender. Once the participants were in place and I saw how their unique situations began to shape the study, the reminder I'd received several times from my advisor during the proposal stage—"you don't know who your participants are yet!"—suddenly made sense. My cases turned out to be diverse in terms of their institutional settings, their positionings within English Studies, and their personal situations, while the common ground they shared leant a helpful focus to the study. The second change involved the study's conceptual frameworks. When I proposed this study, I planned to make sense of my data using frameworks of activity theory (Engeström, 1987) and a sociocultural linguistic approach to identity and interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). As I worked on the case reports, however, I began to sense that these conceptual frameworks did not fit with my data or what I really wanted to learn. As I began cross-case analysis, that sense continued to nag at me. In fact, I went through a period of struggle to make those frameworks fit with my study. It felt like trying to put on a shoe that was too small. I was only able to move forward once I opened up to the possibility of changing the frameworks. The academic literacies approach (Lillis & Scott, 2007) and the discursal construction of writer identity (Ivanič, 1998) ultimately allowed me to articulate my research purpose, support my methodological decisions, and interpret my results. As a result of this change, my understanding of the need for alignment between frameworks, research questions, and research design transformed from a superficial understanding to one grounded in experience.

Another transformation in my understanding of research regards the participant-researcher relationship. I began data collection with previously established relationships with my participants, and during data collection I came to know them better. My experience has shown me how qualitative data can be enhanced by a willingness to get close to participants (Toma, 2000) and mutual self-disclosure and trust (J. M. Johnson & Rowlands, 2012). Furthermore, my immersion in the interview transcripts helped me understand what Lillis (2008) means when she discusses the performative/relational aspect of talk around texts and says, “the kinds of things that are shared between researcher and participants depend very much on the immediate situation/identities/status of both and how these are perceived by the other” (Lillis, 2008, p. 366). For example, I eventually came to see that because my participants and I viewed each other as peers (or close to it) within academia, we were able to express stances at odds with the dominant discourse of being an academic, such as Chris’s view of the tenure track as a “backup plan” (Chris interview 5/20/2014), and to share fears of inauthenticity, such as Nicole’s and Elle’s worries about being “a fraud” (Nicole manuscript discussion 5/30/2014) or “a fake” (Elle manuscript discussion 10/12/2014).

But it was not just during data collection that I grew in my understanding of researcher-participant relationships. As I began writing the case reports, I was struck by the sense of “deep intimacy” (Stake, 2010, p. 204) I felt while writing each participants’ story. At the same time, I was surprised by the intensity of my gratitude for their willingness to let me into those stories and then to let me render those stories for others to read. While drafting Nicole’s case report, which was the first one I worked on, I observed, “I’m also feeling this great sense of love for Nicole. Of course because she is my friend. But also because she has shared so much with me.

I'm getting inside her story, and that is incredibly intimate" (researcher journal 10/8/2014). I did not always feel comfortable with this level of intimacy. I found myself wondering if I could justify the familiarity I had established and was presenting to the world, thinking about Moje and Luke's (2009) critique that literacy-and-identity studies can "border on voyeurism" (p. 434). I also felt a heightened sensibility about potential consequences for my participants should they be recognized, and a tension between wanting to honor their comfort with their case reports (confirmed by the participant check) and wanting to protect them, especially after the generosity they had shown me. These uncomfortable feelings have not resolved, and I don't expect them to. I see it as a sign of my growth as a researcher that I can recognize both the positives and negatives of closeness and the ethically precarious terrain of researcher-participant relationships.

Conclusions

This dissertation began with an overview of the study in chapter one, followed by a review of the literature in chapter two. The literature review introduced the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study, summarized insights from recent studies of professional academic literacies and professional academic identities, and provided background information on early career academics and composition. Chapter three outlined the methodology for the study, and the remaining chapters described the results of that methodology: chapters four through seven presented the case reports of the participants, and chapter eight presented the multicase assertions and their inspirations, as well as my reflections on the research process.

As I write these concluding thoughts, I have been working on this dissertation for four years. Over the course of that time, many different autobiographical selves have sat down at my desk to write—or read, or transcribe, or do analysis. When I started, I had incorporated the

discourse of being a doctoral candidate into my values, interests, beliefs, and social positionings. I was able to identify with being an academic-in-training, and I could think, read, write, and rewrite in ways that were recognized as acceptable doctoral student work. But as my autobiographical self changed over time, I also went through a period when my values, interests, beliefs, and social positionings were at odds with the discourse of being an academic. I resented the work, resisted it, considered quitting, and just didn't want to be the kind of person who did a dissertation and got a PhD. Through that time, I kept working, but the work I produced was not recognized as acceptable. The text itself was marked by my disconnection from academia and from my project: I left arguments unsupported, I didn't reference enough literature, I wasn't precise with my terms. Only after searching my autobiographical self—including the self I aspire to be in the future—for a connection to my dissertation could I begin again to think and write in a way that I am proud of, and that I sincerely hope will be recognized as acceptable doctoral work. Having this experience of doctoral student literacy-and-identity alongside my inquiry into professional academic literacy-and-identity has confirmed for me that literacy and identity are inseparable. At times I have wondered if literacies and identities are the same thing. I'm not ready to make that claim—after all of the theoretical reading I've done while creating this empirical contribution, I know that I still have much to learn—but I am grateful that the scholarship I've encountered has given me a way to understand the challenges I've faced and to push through those challenges.

As I move forward to become a new PhD myself, I take the experiences and insights of Isabel, Nicole, Chris, and Elle with me. I have to decide how I will continue to be a mother, a partner, and an academic. For now, at least, I am in a privileged position to be able to make such

choices. Like Chris, I've found valued flexibility by teaching online, meaning I can mostly arrange my work around my family life. With that flexibility I've also seen the disadvantages of adjuncting, as I've had courses canceled or my salary reduced due to low enrollment. Such experiences will factor into my decisions about my future career trajectory and what, when, and how I write for publication. Part of my personal valuing of this dissertation's results is that I now see different ways to factor the personal into the professional while honoring both. I hope readers of this study can take that away as well.

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Appendix A

IUP IRB Approval Letter



Indiana University of Pennsylvania
www.iup.edu

Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Stright Hall, Room 113
210 South Tenth Street
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15705-1048

P 724-357-7730
F 724-357-2715
irb-research@iup.edu
www.iup.edu/irb

March 20, 2014

Kathleen Vacek
1625 S. Liberty Cir.
Grand Forks, ND 58201

Dear Ms. Vacek:

Your proposed research project, "New Faculty Identities and the Activity of Writing for Publication," (Log No. 14-093) has been reviewed by the IRB and is approved as an expedited review for the period of March 18, 2014 to March 18, 2015.

You should read all of this letter, as it contains important information about conducting your study.

Now that your project has been approved by the IRB, there are elements of the Federal Regulations to which you must attend. IUP adheres to these regulations strictly:

1. You must conduct your study exactly as it was approved by the IRB.
2. Any additions or changes in procedures must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented.
3. You must notify the IRB promptly of any events that affect the safety or well-being of subjects.
4. You must notify the IRB promptly of any modifications of your study or other responses that are necessitated by any events reported in items 2 or 3.

Should you need to continue your research beyond March 18, 2015, you will need to file additional information for continuing review. Please contact the IRB office at (724) 357-7730 or come to Room 113, Stright Hall for further information.

The IRB may review or audit your project at random or for cause. In accordance with IUP Policy and Federal Regulation (45CFR46.113), the Board may suspend or terminate your project if your project has not been conducted as approved or if other difficulties are detected

Although your human subjects review process is complete, the School of Graduate Studies and Research requires submission and approval of a Research Topic Approval Form (RTAF) before you can begin your research. If you have not yet submitted your RTAF, the form can be found at <http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=91683>.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Mills", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Professor of Psychology

JAM:js

cc: Dr. Gloria Park,
Ms. Brenda Boal, Secretary

Appendix B

Email Invitation to Participate

Hi [Name]!

How are you? I hope your semester is going well. I'm writing to ask if you might be interested in being a participant in my dissertation study about new faculty writing for publication.

I'm looking for people who teach and research English language or literacy, have completed a graduate degree within the last five years, are working in higher education, and who will be working on a manuscript for publication during the summer. Will you be working on a manuscript (either to submit or something you are revising) during that time?

The study will include time to talk with me about your project and draft—my hope is participants will find the opportunity to talk about the project useful in their writing process. If this idea appeals to you, please reply and I'll tell you more about the study.

Best,
Kathleen

Appendix C

Informed Consent for Participants

You are invited to participate in this low-risk research study. The researcher is Kathleen Vacek, a PhD candidate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any questions now or during the study, please ask.

The purpose of this study is to explore how new faculty members' identities shape and are shaped by the activity of writing for publication. You are invited to participate because you are a new faculty member in English language/literacy and you are writing for publication. If you participate, your comments will be used to create a case study describing your identities and writing for publication activity. You may benefit from this study by learning more about yourself and by discussing one of your current writing projects.

To learn about your identities and writing for publication activity, Kathleen will interview you and discuss one of your current writing projects with you. In addition to the interview and discussion, you will share your CV and the manuscript draft you choose to discuss with Kathleen. The interview and discussion will be conducted online using an audio/video chat application. You can decide if you want to use a webcam in addition to your microphone during the interview and discussion. The interview and discussion will be scheduled at a time convenient for you.

Because this study creates an opportunity for you to speak freely about yourself, your experiences at work, and your experiences publishing scholarship in your field, it is possible that statements you make might have repercussions for you if linked to you. To protect against this risk, Kathleen will keep information shared during the study confidential. When writing the final report, Kathleen will, to the extent possible, write in a way to make you anonymous. You will have the opportunity to review a draft of your own case study and notify Kathleen of identifying details, which will then be removed or changed. Kathleen takes confidentiality seriously and will secure all relevant materials with password protection. By consenting to be a part of this study, you acknowledge that you are aware of this fact.

Participation in this study is voluntary. If at any time you wish to withdraw from the study, you may do so by contacting Kathleen or her dissertation committee chair, Dr. Gloria Park (see contact information below). At that time, any information that was collected will be permanently destroyed at your request.

Researcher:
Kathleen Vacek
English Dept., IUP
Indiana, PA 15705
(701) 215-8276
k.e.vacek@iup.edu

Research Supervisor:
Dr. Gloria Park
English Dept., IUP
Indiana, PA 15705
(724) 357-2261
gloria.park@iup.edu

VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM:

I have read and understand the information on the preceding informed consent, and I consent to volunteer to be a participant in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.

Participant Electronic Signature: _____

Date: _____

Phone number or email address where you can be reached: _____

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

Researcher's Electronic Signature: _____

Date: _____

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: (724) 357-7730).

xc: participating subject

Appendix D

Possible Questions for Context and Background Interviews

Part 1: Context

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Tell me about your current position and duties.
 - a. How long have you been in your current position?
 - b. Research: What are your main considerations when you choose a research topic? when you apply for research grants? when you design your research? when you choose research tools? when you decide whether to work alone or to cooperate with others? when you decide to what journal to send your work for possible publication? when you choose a conference?
 - c. Teaching: list the courses you teach, and the main considerations that influence the design, scope and the introduction of changes in your courses. What are your considerations when you agree or refuse to supervise students?
 - d. Service/involvement within the university and outside: What are your main areas of involvement? What are your main considerations when you decide to increase or decrease your involvement in the university and in the community?
 - e. How do you think your professional consideration might change in the future?⁵
 - f. What sort of advice, if any, have you received from colleagues (solicited or unsolicited)?
 - g. What are your immediate goals (this semester) and long term?⁶
3. Tell me about your department and institution.
 - a. What are your general impressions of your department? Of your institution?
 - b. What is your impression of your colleagues' attitudes toward the institution? What do they say are the good and bad points of their work lives here?
 - c. How similar is your institution to the school you attended as undergrad? As a grad?⁷
 - d. What are the informal channels of information that indicate to you what is important and/or valued in your context or academe in general?
 - e. How does the power structure reveal itself in your institution? To assist you in this reflection, the following are possible scenarios involving power dynamics: faculty meetings, research/project meetings, collaborative teamwork, socials,

⁵ Questions 2a-e adapted from Nir, A. E., & Zilberstein-Levy, R. (2006). Planning for academic excellence: tenure and professional considerations. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(5), 537-554.

⁶ Questions 2f-g adapted from Turner, J. L., & Boice, R. (1987). Starting at the beginning: The concerns and needs of new faculty. *To Improve the Academy*, 41-55.

⁷ Questions 3a-c adapted from Turner, J. L., & Boice, R. (1987). Starting at the beginning: The concerns and needs of new faculty. *To Improve the Academy*, 41-55.

hallways (water cooler) conversations, distribution of work and credit for work done⁸

4. Tell me about the community where your institution is located.
 - a. What are the social, cultural, historical, and political factors affecting your context?
5. Tell me about your life outside of work.
 - a. Tell me about your interests, hobbies, activities.
 - b. Tell me about your family.

Part 2: Background

6. Previous work
 - a. What did you do before taking your current position? Tell me about that job (or jobs).
7. Publishing experience
 - a. From your first publication to date, what have been the most significant factors in your writing, for example, being part of a research team, being asked to write for a particular audience, being asked to write on a particular subject, about a piece of work that you felt passionate about...
 - b. What has helped your writing, for example, writing with a more experienced writer, getting advice from others (what advice have you listened to; what have you ignored)?
 - c. (Given the other pressures) How have you managed to keep writing for publication a part of your life?
 - d. What does your published writing say about you; how would you describe your sense of identity?⁹
8. Language and literacy history
 - a. What languages do you use? What purposes do you use them for?
 - b. What are your most vivid memories of the role that written language played in your home and family's social, cultural, occupational, or religious practices as you were growing up?
 - c. What role(s) do you remember written language playing in your relationships with peers as you were growing up?
 - d. What kinds of reading and writing did you do in and out of school?
 - e. Do you have vivid memories of specific successes or failures with literacy?

⁸ Questions 3d-e adapted from Mullen, C. A., & Forbes, S. A. (2000). Untenured faculty: Issues of transition, adjustment, and mentorship. *Mentoring & Tutoring*, 8(1), 31-46.

⁹ Questions 7a-d adapted from Carnell, E., MacDonald, J., McCallum, B., & Scott, M. (2008). *Passion and politics: Academics reflect on writing for publication*. London, England: Institute of Education, University of London.

- f. Do you feel that literacy has played a role in shaping your identity?¹⁰
9. Anything else you'd like to tell me about your personal, professional, or literacy background?

¹⁰ Questions 8b-f adapted from Belcher, D. D., & Connor, U. (Eds.). (2001). *Reflections on multiliterate lives*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Appendix E

Possible Questions and Activities for Manuscript Discussion

Part 1: Questions about the writing project and writer's needs

- What are you working on?
- Tell me about your project.
- Tell me about the journal you're submitting to.
- How do you feel about your draft?
- What stage (of the writing process) are you at?
- When is this submission due?
- What would you like to focus on today?
- Do you have any particular concerns about the draft?

Part 2: Activities for discussing manuscript and addressing writer's needs

- Brainstorming
- Concept mapping
- Reading aloud
- Discussing questions that arise from reading the draft
- Outlining
- Reverse outlining
- Annotating (adding comments to the draft)
- Reading backwards (reading a draft one sentence at a time in reverse to facilitate editing)

Part 3: Questions to close the discussion and determine writer's next action

- Were there other questions you wanted to ask?
- Is there another place in the paper we should take a look at?
- How do you feel about your draft now?
- What are you going to do next?

Appendix F

Participant Check and Reflections on Narrative Draft

On your first reading of the draft, please check it for accuracy. Please make any comments or corrections within the draft using comments or track changes. Please also respond to any questions in comment boxes in the draft.

On your second reading of the draft, please respond briefly to the following prompts (you can type your responses directly into this document).

In 1-3 sentences, reflect on how this narrative draft reconstructs your story as a woman in academia, a writing teacher, and a publishing scholar.

In 1-3 sentences, reflect on how the draft does or does not protect your privacy and anonymity.

Please comment on any details you would like to add, delete, or modify.