

EXPLORATIONS IN READING AND WRITING

T O M Z A N I E L L O



*Explorations in
Reading and Writing*

Tom Zaniello

Northern Kentucky University

Random House



New York

*For my parents, Anthony and Augusta
(Tony and Gussie)*

First Edition

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Preface: To the Instructor

Explorations in Reading and Writing may be used in writing courses in three distinct ways:

- (1) It may be used as a *reader*, as it offers numerous essays which may be assigned on either a topical or a rhetorical basis.
- (2) It may be used as a *controlled research text*, since it offers a variety of self-contained readings on each topic.
- (3) It may be used as a *cross-disciplinary text*, in that it provides readings from different disciplines on each topic.

The text offers students the opportunity to read and write about six important topics from different perspectives. I designed the collection for use in both first- and second-semester composition courses but, because of its flexibility, it can also be used in advanced composition and honors courses. The flexibility in the use of the text is for you to experiment with, but I had in mind at least three ways in which the materials could be used:

- (1) An essay in the text may serve as a starting-point or as a model for a student's essay.
- (2) A group of essays from different disciplines may provide the student with different viewpoints with which to interpret a given topic.
- (3) Using an essay or group of essays as a base, the student may follow suggestions from the "Assignments," "Explorations," or

"Sources," and do research outside the classroom and, in many instances, outside the library as well.

The flexibility of the text is also built in to the chapters themselves. Each chapter is divided into four sections, representing a full range of informational, polemical, and expressive writing as well as models of professional and student writing:

- (1) *Discursive essays and fictions:* the traditionally more "literary" materials give a general view of the topic. Although a number of classic writers have been included in this section, the emphasis throughout the text is on some fine contemporary writers who are typically underrepresented in textbooks.
- (2) *Essays from the disciplines:* academic or formal essays that are written from the perspective of a single discipline or, in some cases, with a cross-disciplinary emphasis, including an appropriate methodology and reference style.
- (3) *Documentary materials:* journalistic and archival pieces which offer some of the "raw" stuff of a research project. In some instances, these have been seen in print only rarely.
- (4) *Student essays:* actually written for one of the "Assignments," these pieces close each of the chapters. The sample pieces may be expository essays based on the materials of a single chapter, research papers involving library or other kinds of research, or essays which have resulted from a "creative writing," or more open-ended, assignment.

Each selection is complete as originally published, unless noted otherwise. Since I have attempted to reproduce the text as it originally appeared in every instance, one will occasionally encounter the use of the masculine pronoun to denote persons of both sexes. For the few selections which have been excerpted from longer essays or from books, I have added my own title in brackets. I have also identified the primary discipline related to the selection or to the type of writing it represents.

Although certain disciplines may be expected in a given chapter, students may be encouraged to move out from the territory of a discipline familiar to them toward the consideration of the points of view of other disciplines. Thus, within Chapter 4, "Investigating Murder," students may combine both sociological and psychological

ways of looking at murder. Additionally, after studying Chapter 5, "Perspectives on Salem," students may use the disciplines and methods applied to the analysis of the more social problems of Salem to confront the seemingly quite individual cases of murder presented in Chapter 4.

Accompanying every selection is an "Introduction" which places the selection in the context of its topic and explains whatever disciplinary and rhetorical features are of note. Whenever possible, the introduction also covers the kind of periodical or book in which the selection originally appeared, and its intended audience. If the selection incorporates notes or references of any kind, its specific reference style is explained briefly in the "Appendix: Reference Styles." Every chapter includes "Questions for Discussion" to bring out important issues in the chapter at hand as well as in related readings in other chapters, "Assignments" which may be completed using only this book, and others which may require additional research, "Sources," an annotated list of published materials, and "Explorations" of other open-ended ways students may follow up on the topics.

The assignments fall into two major groups: The first set can be done with only the materials *within the chapter* itself; the remaining ones reach *beyond the chapter* in various ways, either by taking the student outside the text (interviews, visiting sites, etc.) or by offering additional readings or sources to pursue. I would urge you to be selective in your choice of assignments—there are too many for a one-semester course! Do not assume that the first one necessarily provides the best way for your class to begin. I have included a fairly large number of assignments in case you wish to vary the disciplinary mix from semester to semester. The *Instructor's Manual* contains numerous suggestions geared specifically to the assignments. (You may find that, in the *Manual*, I have included a fair amount of the information which often is included in a text itself, so please consult the *Manual* often.) The "Explorations" and "Sources" also offer numerous possibilities for assignments you can construct yourself.

Because I do not believe it is possible to represent all disciplines fairly and equally in a single text, I have concentrated instead on using materials and assignments which have already proven successful in introducing the ideas and writing habits associated with a cross-disciplinary approach to composition.

I would very much like to hear how the text has worked for

you. Please write to me: c/o Literature Program, Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY 41076.

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For advice and support over the years, as I developed this book, my thanks go first of all to my teaching colleagues at Northern Kentucky University: Judy Bechtel, Carmine Bell, Bob Collier, Paul Ellis, Bill McKim, Bob Wallace, Ted and Mary Ann Weiss, Jeff Williams, and Fran Zaniello. For helpful administrative support over the years, I am indebted to Darryl Poole, Bill McKim, and Frank Stallings.

The students whose "sample" essays appear here are but seven of the many fine students I have taught at Northern Kentucky University. Without their cooperation, a text like this would have been impossible. I have also benefited from the suggestions made by students at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies in Silver Spring, Maryland.

The support staff at Northern Kentucky University has also been very helpful: I would like to thank Edith Armstrong and Vanessa Johnson, secretaries in the Literature Program; Mary Ellen Rutledge and Connie Mulligan, librarians; and Debbie Tucker, Mary Kelm, and Sharon Taylor, interlibrary-loan staff.

I have been inspired by the active assignments created by two teachers from other universities: W. Keith Kraus, of Shippensburg State, developed the *New York Times* "murder" assignment in Chapter 4, and Herbert F. Crovitz originated the combination of Duncker's problems with Ogden's Basic English, featured in Chapter 2.

John Hall of the University of Missouri has given me valuable suggestions for Chapter 6, specifically the Jonestown transcript, although the version printed here is my own. Bonnie Winters provided both helpful and timely typing service.

I have also learned much from two very different books. An anti-textbook, Leonard A. Greenbaum's and Rudolf B. Schmerl's *Course X*, served as a reminder of how students can often get lost in the shuffle called Freshman English. A fine little textbook by Walker Gibson, *Seeing and Writing*, demonstrated to me how well challenging readings and active writing assignments go together.

The notes provided by Dixie Goswami and Harold Douglass for their session at the 1976 Conference on College Composition and

Communication helped me to understand the importance of process in teaching writing.

I would like to thank Sylvan Barnet and X. J. Kennedy, my undergraduate English teachers at Tufts University, for demonstrating how to combine good teaching and good text-writing.

I am very grateful for the advice and help from Random House, especially from Steve Pensinger, Cynthia Ward, and Lisa Haugaard.

My children, Sarah and Benjamin, always kept me going by asking: "Are you finished with your book yet?"

TOM ZANIELLO

Preface: To the Student

Here is "A Little Fable," written by Franz Kafka:

"Alas," said the mouse, "the whole world is growing smaller every day. At the beginning it was so big that I was afraid, I kept running and running, and I was glad when at last I saw walls far away to the right and left, but these long walls have narrowed so quickly that I am in the last chamber already, and there in the corner stands the trap that I must run into."

"You only need to change your direction," said the cat, and ate it up.

Too often you have been in the unfortunate position of that mouse, facing an assignment which looks like a trap, while an instructor—who bears a striking resemblance to the cat—stands by, whispering, "Change your direction! change your direction!" Kafka was a great writer, though a very anxious one, yet I'm sure that even *he* did not have writing classes in mind when he wrote his fable. Since this fable *does* describe many classrooms I have been in, I have tried to design a book which will help both you and your instructor "change directions," a book which presents writing as an active exploration and partnership, not a pursuit with baited traps.

The readings and assignments, organized by disciplines but within a cross-disciplinary framework, will help you read, do research, discuss, and write about important and compelling problems in human experience and thought.

The "Introductions" will explain the characteristic disciplines and approaches to writing of the individual selections. The "Appen-

dix: Reference Styles" at the end of the text will help you through the maze of problems associated with footnoting. And finally, there are "Questions for Discussion," "Assignments," and "Explorations," all designed to help you study the materials in the text.

Your reaction to the text is important to me. Write and let me know how it has worked for you: c/o Literature Program, Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY 41076.

TOM ZANIELLO

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