

Introduction

This issue of *Technostyle* examines the production of, constraints on, and results from professional, situated writing. We welcome these timely discussions that make explicitly socially situated statements about the complex worlds in which technical writing originates and acts.

Phillipa Spoel and Susan James use Giltrow's (2001) concept of meta-genre to examine the interrelated texts involved in the process of disciplinary professionalization: in this case, midwifery in Ontario. They raise important questions about the abilities of bureaucratic texts to satisfy the needs for which they are initially invoked. By doing so, they also raise questions about the capabilities of genres. Resonating with Carolyn Miller's (1994) claim that genres, while being the means for individuals to fulfil their ends, also constrain the kinds of ends those individuals can have, Spoel and James, work raises important questions about whose ends may be fulfilled by bureaucratic genres.

Sandra Ingram and Ann Parker study the problems of professional genre acquisition in academic situations. They find that the engineering students they observe succeed in performing the discipline-specific collaborative writing requirements only as well as they learn the social, non-writing based strategies of team work. That is, they note that the non-written attributes of teams who write together are what allow for successful writing, and perhaps are what should be taught. Thus their findings remind us of the dominance of the sociality of language over mere form in use that we do well to bear in mind as teachers of technical writing.

Diana Wegner's article is concerned with the textual (inter)face of municipal bureaucracy and decision making. Wegner, too, is concerned with the sociality of language and finds surprising instances of textual collaborations that effectively recontextualize altruistic statements, attaching them to unanticipated objects and usages and, further, tending to sequester them from direct discussion. Wegner uses Burkean key term analysis to see Foucauldian patterns of bureaucratic social manipulations and raises important questions about rhetorical alterations of values by non-discursive means.

We are especially pleased to further this conversation about situated professional writing by reprinting in this issue Catherine Schryer's award winning article, "Walking a fine line," that theorizes the writing of negative ("bad news") letters in an insurance company. Schryer (a long standing CATTW member and past president) applies an array of analytic tools (new rhetorical genre theory; discourse analysis) to a kind of writing (the "bad news letter") on which all business writing texts offer

advice but that nevertheless continues to pose real difficulties for those writing and reading them. Observant readers will notice that, contrary to *Technostyle's* policy, Schryer's article is NOT in APA style. This is because we reprint it (with gratitude) in the style in which it originally appeared in the *Journal of Business and Technical Communications*.

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