

**Local Histories of Composition and the Student Writer:  
Women Students Writing Within, Against, and Beyond Required Classroom  
Genres**

By  
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## Abstract

This study argues for the importance of analyzing individual students' responses to writing instruction in crafting histories of the field of rhetoric and composition. I engage in an archival study of student writing at the University of Kansas during the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, specifically through a genre-based local history analysis of a course called "Advanced English Composition" and two women writers who were enrolled in it. In particular, I examine the ways in which these students write within, against, and even beyond the genres they are required to complete for their courses.

Recent histories of the field of rhetoric and composition have taken a revisionist turn, examining the contributions to writing instruction's past of more diverse sites and subjects than those studied in the 1980s and 1990s. Even within this revisionist turn, however, the degree to which student writings play a role in these histories varies widely. Sometimes student writing serves as briefly-mentioned artifacts used in service of other research goals, such as recovering the work of teachers. Other times, students and their writings are scarcely mentioned at all. This is especially problematic in that rhetoric and composition claims to be a field that heavily values student writing. If rhetoric and composition is as closely reliant on students and their writing as it professes, if student texts truly are what Joseph Harris calls "a form of currency in the knowledge economy of composition" (Harris 667), the same ought to be said of the narratives produced of composition's past.

In the first part of this study, I provide a larger contextualization of writing instruction at the University of Kansas during this particular time period. I examine archival materials within this genre system, such as course catalogues, instructor diaries, department of English

publications, faculty meeting minutes and more, all of which allowed me to situate student writings more fully within the contexts and genre system of their production.

In the second part of this study, I analyze the writings of two women students enrolled in “Advanced English Composition,” Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen, using rhetorical genre theory and theories of *uptake*. I perform an extensive analysis of two sets of genres that these women were required to produce as part of their courses—the 1899 course notes of Margaret and the 1900 course papers of Kate. I argue that these women’s writings illustrate the phenomenon of uptake chains, and that the individual genres in which Margaret and Kate compose both enable and constrain their responses in differing ways, as well as carry and impart ideological beliefs. However, I likewise demonstrate that Margaret’s and Kate’s responses are unique and worthy of careful analysis; each woman manages to write herself within the genres they were required to produce, modifying genres even in small ways to fit their individual responses to the writing instruction they received, and occasionally even to carry out their own goals and purposes. This study as a whole cultivates a more inclusive, representative narrative of the field’s history that values the experiences of women students, rather than assuming that students responded to instruction in the same ways, likewise carrying implications for writing teachers today.

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## Chapter 1: Revisionist Histories of Rhetoric and Composition and the Student

### Writer

In the spring of 1899, twenty-eight-year-old Margaret Kane enrolled in a course at the University of Kansas titled “Advanced English Composition.” One year later, in the spring of 1900, twenty-year-old Kate Ingeborg Hansen took the same writing course. Each of these women led very different lives before and after their time at the University. Margaret was the first woman elected to the office of county treasurer in the state of Kansas. She worked as a bank cashier and later bank manager and was active in women’s organizations, including as an officer in her local Ladies Auxiliary Club of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (A. O. H.) and as Kansas state organizer of the Philanthropic Education Organization (P. E. O.) (*The Leavenworth Times*, June 29, 1901, 5; *The Topeka State Journal*, February 22, 1919, 8). A property owner and a frequent traveler, Margaret often visited friends in the region and afar, even attending two World’s Fairs (*The Globe Republican*, September 22, 1904; May 16, 1907). Kate Hansen’s life was very different from Margaret’s, but no less noteworthy. The daughter of a Danish immigrant, Kate attended the University of Kansas for three degrees, after which she became a career-long missionary and music teacher at the Miyagi College in Japan. Eventually, Kate became a dean at that same institution (“Guide to the Kate I. Hansen Collection”).

Though much about their lives is worth studying, these women’s work as students at the University of Kansas has not previously been the subject of much scholarly attention. But for scholars seeking to study the history of writing instruction, the student periods of these women’s lives—and any surviving documentation of those periods—can provide tremendous insight into not only how writing was taught, but how Margaret and Kate specifically responded to being taught.

Archival materials relating to the lives of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen are housed as “personal papers” collections within the University Archives division of Kenneth Spencer Research Library in Lawrence, Kansas. It was while searching for student writings from this time period using the Library’s online finding aids that I first encountered Margaret and Kate. My investigation of these collections revealed that, not only were Margaret and Kate each *enrolled* in “Advanced English Composition,” but their collections likewise contain materials related to these specific courses—the 1899 course notes of Margaret and the 1900 course papers of Kate, which were written in response to writing assignments. Though Margaret and Kate did not take “Advanced English Composition” during the same semesters, these course notes and papers nevertheless provide an opportunity to gain a fuller sense of this particular course and these two women’s participation in it. Further, these materials constitute the only evidence of class writings produced by students at the KU during this time period that I have been able to locate within KU’s University Archives, making the opportunity to study these writing all the more significant due of their rarity.

The theory through which to most effectively approach these student writings should be one which both accounts for texts’ individual variations and their shared prototypicality, as well as texts’ situatedness within specific contexts, concepts which are effectively forwarded by the field of rhetorical genre studies. Each of these sets of archival documents—these course notes and course papers—constitute particular genres of writing, and ones which these women were expected to produce to complete their courses. The basic tenets of rhetorical genre studies explain that genres are typified in form and in function. That is, these texts are in many ways similar in features and in purpose to other writings of the same genre. Even so, rhetorical genre studies scholars recognize the role of individuals in selecting, using, and shaping genres. In

describing individual uses of genres, Amy Devitt writes that recent scholarship “recognizes and helps to account for the variation that necessarily occurs every time someone performs a genre in a particular text” (“Genre Performances” 2). This variation within genres occurs because “genres are at once shared and unique” (“Genre Performances” 2). Devitt continues,

Each performance of a genre demonstrates its degree of prototypicality, disciplinary membership, historical moment, authorial identity, and many other qualities shared with other members of its category. Yet all of those sources of variation gathered together cannot account for the unique text that an author performs in a unique moment in a unique rhetorical situation, its unique action carrying out a unique communicative purpose through a unique process. In the end, each text is a unique performance. (Devitt, “Genre Performances” 2)

Given this understanding of genre use as unique to individuals and their particular situations, what about the writings of Margaret and Kate? In what ways do these women students take up the genres they were expected to write, yet use them in their individual, uniquely performative ways?

While the instructors for Kate and Margaret’s courses have been the subject of previous study in rhetoric and composition histories—particularly Professor Edwin M. Hopkins for his work studying the labor conditions of writing teachers in the early twentieth century<sup>1</sup>—the writings of actual students in these courses have not yet been examined, and certainly not for their value as individuals taking up particular genres. The writings of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen present an important opportunity to consider the responses to writing instruction of

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<sup>1</sup> Included among scholars who have studied the work of Edwin M. Hopkins are Randall Popken and Margaret R. O’Leary and Dennis S. O’Leary.

Progressive-Era women attending the University of Kansas at the turn to the twentieth century. I argue that this type of attention to individual uses of genres and students' uptakes and innovations of them should play more prominent roles in the construction of histories of the field of rhetoric and composition, particularly recent histories that are revisionist in nature, as doing so allows a focus on individual students that is highly in line with rhetoric and composition's claim to be a student-centered field. This study of student writing at the University of Kansas at the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century advocates for a more intentional focus on student experiences and the way in which students—and white women in particular—write within required genres.

In addition to its emphasis on students' individual responses to instruction and uptakes of required genres, the use of rhetorical genre studies—as well as theories of *uptake* I describe in detail below—to accomplish this study's goals are likewise significant because rhetorical genre studies has not previously been employed to construct histories of the field of rhetoric and composition. In this way, this genre and uptake-based lens provides a new way to study local history. Further, this study also has implications for the field of genre studies itself, as it contributes to current conversations about student writing and the potential for genre innovation in academic contexts.

In this initial chapter, I open by foregrounding this study within major trends in historical work in rhetoric and composition. I begin by examining the challenges of such work, followed by recapping the various approaches to its undertaking. In particular, I consider the role which students—particularly women—and their writings have played in prominent histories of rhetoric and composition. Afterward, I situate my own study of writing instruction at the University of Kansas within this trajectory, elaborating on my research goals and their contribution to

revisionist histories, the method and methodologies for advancing them, and the theoretical framework—rhetorical genre studies and theories of *uptake*—which inform my interpretation of archival texts. I likewise reflect on the complex nature of archives and archival research and the implications which these have for my own work. Finally, I conclude by offering an overview of remaining chapters.

### **Historical Scholarship in Rhetoric and Composition**

The task of compiling a history of the field of rhetoric and composition is not without challenges and may even be more difficult than constructing histories of other academic disciplines. Rhetoric and composition's place within the academy—and the tie between each of its two halves—may contribute to this difficulty. As Robert J. Connors notes, composition is part of the larger field of rhetorical studies, “which has existed for over 2000 years,” with histories of rhetoric dating back as far as ancient Greece (“Writing the History of Our Discipline” 49). Following the American Civil War, American universities began to departmentalize, with composition grouped under the umbrella of English departments, while speech and oral rhetoric moved to Communications (Connors, “Writing the History of Our Discipline” 50-51). Connors likewise asserts that the eventual re-joining of composition with rhetoric can be attributed to the rise of the general education movement (“Writing the History of Our Discipline” 52). This movement of the location of rhetoric and of composition makes tracking its development a greater challenge.

Closely connected with the challenge of rhetoric and composition's departmental placement within the university, Kelly Ritter notes that its status as a discipline may serve as an explanation for scholars' difficulty with producing a “master narrative” of its past, saying that composition experiences this difficulty more than other disciplines because of its low level of

“academic hierarchy” (“Archival Research in Composition Studies” 461-2). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the tremendous influx of students unprepared for college writing connected to the rise of the professional middle class, (what James Berlin terms a “meritocracy”), resulted in the rise of required freshman writing courses to instruct them (“Where do English Departments Really Come From?” 20; see also: Susan Miller; Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric*; Debra Hawhee, “Composition History”). This urgent need for writing instruction, as well as the substantial labor of grading such a large number of student writings that came with this instruction, resulted in the development of an underclass of writing instructors, particularly women, adjuncts, and student assistants, a notion explored by Debra Hawhee in her article on “Composition History and the Harbrace College Handbook” (507). These trends, unfortunately, continue today, with first and second-year writing courses viewed by some as less important than other disciplines or less important even than upper-level writing courses. Because of this low level of academic hierarchy, the production of histories of composition may be particularly challenging, as it may be viewed as a discipline less worthy of being studied than others (Ritter, “Archival Research in Composition Studies” 461).

Despite these challenges, scholars have taken up the task of writing histories of the field of rhetoric and composition, and I next provide an overview of this work. The scholar regarded in the present collective memory of the field as the first to formally undertake this work was Albert J. Kitzhaber in his 1953 dissertation (and eventual 1990 publication), *Rhetoric in American Colleges, 1850-1900*. Kitzhaber conducts a historical survey of this fifty-year span, and his work covers changes in higher education, including new educational theories, the “decline of religious influence on higher education” (6), and the influence of German

universities, explaining the development of the field of English and charting major textbook writers and forms of discourse.

Many historians following Kitzhaber regard him as a foundational historian of the field. For instance, Connors labels Kitzhaber the “grandfather of composition” (“Dreams and Play” 33). Following both the norm of the time and Kitzhaber’s model, many of the histories produced in the 1980s and 1990s provide broad, overarching narratives of composition’s development, span multiple decades, frequently focus on the experiences of white men, and rarely use (or overtly acknowledging the use of) student texts to construct understandings of the past. Berlin, for instance, surveys “major and minor developments” between 1900 and 1985 in *Rhetoric and Reality: Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1900-1985*, an extension of his earlier work in *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges (Rhetoric and Reality 18)*. Berlin advocates for an understanding of the major theories of rhetoric and their epistemological foundations. Connors, too, undertakes a very extensive period of study in *Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, and Pedagogy*, covering various “eras” of writing instruction after 1780 and ending in the 1960s.

Another common characteristic of these early histories is their emphasis on the importance of Harvard as a site of writing instruction. Wallace Douglas focuses in particular on the establishment and history of the Boylston Professorship. Berlin notes that Harvard first established its freshman English course in 1874 (*Rhetoric and Reality*). Kitzhaber calls Harvard’s English program the “most influential” one in the country and its use of entrance examinations in English, created in response to the influx of under-prepared writers entering the university, Harvard English program’s most “far-reaching development” (34). Harvard and other

elite, male-educating institutions in the eastern United States are quite frequently the only sites discussed in these early histories,<sup>2</sup> and they rarely focus on student texts to construct their claims.

Patricia Donahue and Gretchen Flesher Moon label these early historical undertakings “landmark histories,” and fittingly so, for these early historians’ contributions have been invaluable in establishing a foundation for understanding rhetoric and composition’s development (*Local Histories* 12). Even so, more recent scholars have problematized these landmark histories’ attempts to distill such extensive time periods, particularly since one undesirable result of sweeping narratives may be the harmful omission of minority experiences, those of diverse students and teachers who did not learn and teach at elite, eastern schools. As a result, the trajectory of historical work in rhetoric and composition has experienced an important shift in recent years. No longer seeking to compact the field’s complex, nuanced past into these types of broad, potentially-essentializing narratives, historians instead recognize the need for what Gold calls “revisionist historiography” (“Remapping” 17) and Glenn and Enoch call “transformative historiographies” (322).

These more contemporary histories seek to “recover neglected writers, teachers, locations, and institutions,” all the while attempting to position these recovery efforts within larger “scholarly conversations” (Gold, “Remapping” 17). Researchers have focused on particular unstudied institutions, sometimes grouping together multiple sites, or on particular marginalized or unstudied groups (Ritter, *To Know her Own History*; Gold and Hobbs; Ostergaard and Wood; Gold, *Rhetoric at the Margins*). Researchers have likewise narrowed focus in other ways, such as examining particular texts or genres (Carr, Carr, and Schultz),

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<sup>2</sup> For other examples of early histories of composition, see John C. Brereton, Lester Faigley, and Susan Miller.

educators (Enoch, *Refiguring*), or organizations (Gere). As the examples I draw from throughout this chapter illustrate, revisionist histories frequently use gender as a lens for historical narrativization, privileging the experiences of women rather than the experiences of men that frequently formed the basis of earlier histories.

As for the particular means by which revisionist efforts have been undertaken, historians have employed a variety of methods and methodologies to examine archival documents. For example, Donahue and Flesher Moon advocate for a local history approach. Of their collection, *Local Histories of Composition: Reading the Archives of Composition*, Donahue and Flesher Moon write that their goal is not to “construct a single narrative of composition’s history, but rather to extend, challenge, complicate, and thereby enrich the narrative as it has thus far developed” (3). In particular, they and their contributors complicate the view of composition forwarded by the earlier histories described above (in which students are frequently portrayed as white, male, and eastern; institutions as only elite universities; the only form of education practices as current-traditional). Instead, they show the ways that writing was taught and experienced at other kinds of institutions, by other kinds of students, and in forms other than the freshman theme in freshman composition.

Others, such as McComiskey and Gold, overtly claim a microhistorical approach to revisionist historiography. Microhistory is characterized as a “negotiation of social history and cultural history,” (McComiskey 17) meaning it pays heed to both small details as well as larger historical contexts. McComiskey writes that this helps to address a potential difficulty of producing local histories, in that they need to be situated within larger scholarly conversations (Gold, “Remapping”). Microhistory also stresses that sources are rhetorical, or that they seek to accomplish specific goals. Microhistory likewise asks researchers to pay special attention to the

artifacts and evidence that at first appear out of place from other sources; in other words, microhistory uses artifact outliers as starting places for historical investigation (McComiskey).

Whether local or micro in scope, McComiskey writes that these challenges to the dominant narratives of the 1980s and 1990s “have taken a number of different forms, yet in every case they are critical of grand historical abstractions, and they rely heavily on archival sources that reflect local knowledge, not abstract trends” (McComiskey 9). In this way, revisionist histories eschew the sorts of broad, abstract claims about writing instruction that characterize most earlier histories of rhetoric and composition, and it is this avoidance of broad, essentializing claims that my own study seeks to emulate by focusing on a specific, local context.

### **The Role of Student Writing in Revisionist Histories**

*[...] The lives and careers of teachers tend to be well documented, while student texts are seldom published, and tend to be erratically archived, if at all. But I suspect that this bias also stems from an overweening interest in, well, ourselves. As I reread CCC with an eye for how students appear in its pages, I was struck instead by the omnipresence of teachers: our ambitions, our disappointments, our theories, our textbooks, our syllabi, our assignments, our class plans, our questions, our comments, our assessments. We need to shift our gaze, to inquire into not just the materials we prepare as teachers but the uses students make of them. (Harris 681)*

Having recapped some overarching trends in histories of rhetoric and composition, I now consider the place of the student writer in the construction of contemporary historical undertakings. One readily apparent pattern in locally based revisionist work in rhetoric and composition has been its focus on pedagogy, on the ways in which writing and rhetoric were taught at programmatic levels and at the level of individual instructors. This focus is quite logical, particularly given that composition’s chief interest is the teaching of writing, making those who teach writing one of the field’s natural subjects of interest. However, what of the

students of the past who were the recipients of said teaching? What roles have students and their archived writings played in recent revisionist historiography?

Speaking of the importance of student writing to rhetoric and composition as a field, Joseph Harris notes that “the value of work in composition is bound up with student writing [...] Indeed, working with student texts is one of the defining moves of our field, part of what distinguishes a career in composition from one in literature, rhetoric, education, or communication. Students texts are a form of currency in the knowledge economy of composition” (Harris 667). As one of the “defining moves of our field” and a form of “currency” in our “knowledge economy,” the ways in which student writings have been utilized within historical constructions of rhetoric and composition are certainly worthy of consideration.

Historical student writings, particularly those written for courses and not for university-sanctioned organizations such as yearbooks or newspapers, can be challenging documents to find. Donahue and Flesher Moon, for instance, note that locating teachers’ assignments and student writings responding to them are rare because students often did not save their writing and teachers lacked the space to store all of their students’ writings indefinitely (7-8), trends which likely hold true today. Connors likewise suggests that freshman composition writings in particular may not have been viewed as valuable by student writers, and therefore not saved (“Dreams and Play” 58). Julie Garbus points out that this lack of value may extend to the level of the archive, as well, since “institutional archives tend to show a preference for the papers of committees, administrators, and professors over students (Sullivan 365, 366; Moon 2-3)” (Garbus 564-5). Thus, even in the matter of finding student writings, it is clear that such writings exist low on the hierarchy of preservation-worthy documents, perhaps both within the eyes of archives and instructors and within the eyes of students themselves.

Despite the challenges of locating student writing, archival researchers who *are* able to locate these works frequently employ student writings among the repertoire of sources that contribute to their historical constructions; however, the degree to which student writings take a central focus varies. In their introduction to *Local Histories*, Donahue and Flesher Moon explain that contributors to their collection draw on a number of archival source types, including “faculty meeting minutes, personal letters, student literary magazines, alumni magazines, yearbooks, course catalogues, reports to the trustees, class notebooks, student essays, unpublished lectures, and mission statements” (2). Donahue and Flesher Moon’s summary of their collection’s usage of archival sources likewise functions as an apt illustration of how student texts have been one of many types of sources employed by researchers. But how, precisely, have student writings specifically been employed when studying writing instruction, particularly instruction that takes place in post-secondary contexts?

For some researchers, archived student writings function as secondary or tertiary materials in service of larger research goals, quite frequently to study particular instructors and writing programs, rather than to study students themselves. In his 2008 study, *Rhetoric at the Margins: Revising the History of Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1873-1947*, David Gold employs a vast number of archival sources in his efforts to study three sites “founded to educate the disenfranchised,” all located in the state of Texas (x). In his second chapter on a public women’s college in Denton, for instance, Gold explains that some of his archive-based sources include “student and teacher diaries and class notes, complete collections of the student newspaper, literary journal, and yearbooks,” among others (*Rhetoric at the Margins* 10). While Gold’s larger goal in this chapter is to argue that the curriculum of this women’s college allowed its students to “take part in political discourse, and to think of themselves as rhetors,” Gold

certainly must draw on student writing to make this argument about said curriculum (*Rhetoric at the Margins* 68). But these student writings are not Gold's primary focus.

In other instances of revisionist histories, student writings may not be directly referenced at all. In *Refiguring Rhetorical Education: Women Teaching African American, Native American, and Chicano/a Students, 1865-1911*, Jessica Enoch performs an in-depth analysis of women educators Lydia Marie Child, Zitkala-Ša, Jovita Idar, Marta Peña, and Leonor Villegas de Magnón, who she argues used their positions as rhetorical educators to “[argue] for culture-based educations that enabled their students to enter into and change dominant society without having to surrender their cultural heritage and language practices” (Enoch, *Refiguring* 4). Because her study is based on recovering the work of marginalized educators, particularly the ways that “dominant discourses constructed the female teacher and how they composed a rhetorical education for black, Indian, and Mexican students,” Enoch looks at archival materials reflecting those dominant discourses (especially those “produced by teachers, school officials, and political leaders”) (*Refiguring* 25). Enoch also considers materials that “perpetuated” those dominant discourses, including “newspapers and magazines, educational journals, and teaching materials” (*Refiguring* 25). It is noteworthy that the writings of students, the very subjects who Enoch argues these women educators “enabled,” are not directly mentioned as being consulted in Enoch's study. This in no way invalidates her important work, for her ultimate goal is to argue about the ways in which marginalized *educators* made such education possible. Though Enoch's particular focus on neglected educators is an important one, the notion of focusing on individual educators is not an unusual one in histories of rhetoric and composition. As an alternative, an understanding of students and their writing can be positioned as the research goal, one which will

enrich historical studies of the field by showing students' responses to instruction, rather than just considering the instruction itself.

For other archival researchers, students and their writings do take a more central focus in the historical narratives they construct. One such example appears in Donahue and Flesher Moon's aforementioned local histories collection. In her study of Mahala Pearson Jay, a student at Oberlin College and Antioch College in the nineteenth century, Kathleen Welsch performs a close reading of five of Mahala's essays, arguing that, unlike other histories that show women students as lacking seriousness about their educations, this example shows a student who *was* serious about her education and writing and who used her position to inform her writing. Welsch stresses the importance of examining students and their writings, arguing that we need "investigations that imagine individuals as products and participants in their nineteenth-century world" (16). Welsch writes that Mahala's writings "[teach] us to read nineteenth-century student writing as a cultural artifact connected to an agenda beyond the academy and rhetorical theory" (36). For Welsch, student writing is valuable for the understanding it provides of students as individuals simultaneously influenced by and influencing their education, a notion of student agency my own study seeks to explore.

Similarly, Kelly Ritter's work in *To Know Her Own History: Writing at the Woman's College, 1943-1963* serves as an example of a book-length study that places student writing at its center, using both archival and personal documents and photos, as well as "oral interviews with three surviving alumnae" from the Woman's College in North Carolina (15). Ritter examines this postwar women's public college and these student-oriented materials in order to understand three particular issues, including the shaping of women's education by the general education movement, the rise of creative writing and its impact on rhetorical instruction, and the "contested

definitions” of literacy and the purpose of education which arose during this time period (*To Know Her Own History* 13). Ritter laments the lack of attention paid to “women as viable, agentic *students*, or as student-writers” (*To Know Her Own History* 8), and Ritter’s desire to view women as agents within their education is complemented by her ability to actually interview surviving alumnae, further positioning these women writers as actual people and their writings as more than one-dimensional documents. Like Ritter, my study seeks to embrace an understanding of women students as unique individuals producing unique responses to instruction.

Welsch’s and Ritter’s studies most certainly fall under the category of revisionist histories of the field. Though this type of clear attention to students and their writings is more likely to occur within revisionist histories, (though the examples above certainly show that they are far from the norm even in revisionist work), it is significant to note that earlier, landmark histories do occasionally demonstrate this type of clear focus on students as individuals and writers. The clearest example of this generated from my survey of landmark histories occurs within Catherine Hobbs’ 1990 collection, *Nineteenth-Century Women Learn to Write*, a collection containing chapters which draw on student writing with tremendous frequency.

In particularly, though, Sue Carter Simmons’ chapter is one titled “Radcliffe Responds to Harvard Rhetoric: ‘An Absurdly Stiff Way of Thinking.’” Simmons performs a close analysis of the school papers of women students at Radcliffe College, effectively the “sister” institution of Harvard University. The original goal of Radcliffe was to provide the same educational opportunities to women as men, but in separate spheres. As such, women students at Radcliffe were taught only by Harvard instructors (Simmons 267). However, Simmons’ analysis of women’s writings indicates that the rigid, “alienating and ineffective” pedagogy of Harvard

professors did not effectively reach the learning styles of Radcliffe women (269). Further, in her close examination of the papers of student Annie Ware Winsor Allen, Simmons argues that these writings indicate that Annie was able to learn and eventually manipulate the academic discourse she was taught to “[transform] the hostile curriculum she met into a more personally fulfilling one that enabled her to meet her own goal of becoming a school teacher” (270). In this way, Simmons argues that Annie made use of her daily themes—themselves a genre—to help achieve her own educational and personal goals, and it is this type of targeted focus on women’s uses of assigned genres that my own study attempts to likewise undertake.

Work like that of Welsch, Ritter, and Simmons is much rarer than is ideal, as many revisionist histories of post-secondary writing instruction fail to consider how individual students responded to and utilized writing instruction and writing assignments for their own purposes. If rhetoric and composition is as closely reliant on students and their writing as it professes, if it truly is “a form of currency in the knowledge economy of composition” (Harris 667), the same ought to be said of the narratives produced of composition’s past. Just as revisionist efforts have demonstrated that there was no one way to *teach* writing (for instance, in troubling previous assumptions that all early composition instruction was current-traditional, a particular goal of Donahue and Flesher Moon and their collection’s contributors), there is likewise no homogenous way to be a student and *receive* writing instruction.

Following the lead of these exemplar researchers who position students as agentic rhetorical practitioners worthy of study, not just for what they can tell us about instructors or about writing programs, but for their own merit as writers and individuals, I build upon and extend their work, not only by working in a new local site that contributes to a more nuanced picture of composition’s history, but, perhaps more importantly, through the use of rhetorical

genre studies as a theoretical lens for viewing these archival documents and the actions of the students who produce them.

### **Methods and Theoretical Grounding: Rhetorical Genres Studies and Theories of *Uptake***

In the chapters that follow, I perform a local study of student writing at the University of Kansas at the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, a site and time period that has received little focus in histories of the field. My analysis contains two major parts: First, I engage in a contextual study of KU and its department of English during this time, drawing on a range of archival documents that help to understand the exigencies and material conditions surrounding the writings of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen, in effect analyzing the larger institutional systems of genres that influenced their work. Second, I narrow focus to the writings of these women themselves, performing genre-based close readings of the archived course notes of Margaret and the papers and other responses to writing instruction written by Kate.<sup>3</sup> My research goal is to gain an understanding of these students as individuals through their particular uptakes of instruction as evidenced through their writings.

The desire to know students as individuals is not a unique one and has indeed been observed as a result—intentioned or not—of extended work with historical subjects. Welsch writes of her study of student Mahala Pearson Jay that “The pleasure in reading Mahala’s essays is experiencing her mind at work on the page, actively engaging in negotiating the discursive maze of assignments, rhetorical precepts, cultural narratives, [her school’s] vision of the

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<sup>3</sup> I refer to the writings of Kate Hansen from this point forward as “papers” in order to more easily reference her work, which is composed of multiple genres. I explore these various genres in depth in Chapter 4.

exemplary student, and her own views of herself as a student and future teacher” (36). Like Welsch, I seek to experience Margaret’s and Kate’s minds “at work” through their writings. But this phenomenon of knowing students via their writing is not unique to students of the past. In her 2018 address to the Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2017 CCCC Exemplar Award winner Kathleen Blake Yancey remarks that reading students’ writing is “reading them.” Though speaking particularly about contemporary students and their writing courses, a similar type of knowing is achieved by reading historical student texts. Through the process of carefully and repeatedly reading the work of Margaret and Kate, I gain a better sense of them as individuals.

Beyond reading and simply appreciating the intellectual work of Margaret and Kate, in order to more fully see these women students as individuals, I analyze the ways they take up the genres their writing courses expected that they produce using a particular theoretical lens—rhetorical genre studies. In Carolyn Miller’s 1984 article “Genre as Social Action,” she argues that the definition of genre should be based on the action the genre accomplishes. Thus, she defines genres as “typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations” (C. Miller 159). This conception of genre serves as the foundation of rhetorical genre studies and provides a lens for viewing student writing—whether historical or contemporary—as situationally-embedded rhetorical actions. Rhetorical genre studies scholarship has previously examined a variety of text types. Dara Rossman Regaignon, in particular, notes the utility of rhetorical genre theory as a “tool” for engaging with “historically distant texts” (141). Even with Regaignon’s and other scholars’ recognition of the theory’s utility for engaging in historical studies, however, rhetorical genre studies has not previously be employed to construct narratives of the history of rhetoric and composition’s past. I view the genres of writing Margaret and Kate produced—which are

indeed “historically distant texts”—as uptakes of writing instruction that are based in social, rhetorical situations, and my use of rhetorical genre studies to do so adds to this study’s contribution to knowledge even further.

Contributing to the notion of genres as social action, Anne Freadman introduces the notion of *uptake*, a term from J. L. Austin meaning the “bidirectional relation” between texts (“Uptake” 40), and a concept Freadman illustrates using the metaphor of tennis players exchanging shots (“Anyone for Tennis?”). According to Freadman, genres need to be understood as series of uptakes or “interaction[s]” (“Uptake” 40). Summarizing Freadman’s conception of uptake, Anis Bawarshi and Mary Jo Reiff explain that uptake is “The ability to know how to negotiate genres and how to apply and turn genre strategies (rules for play) into textual practices (actual performances)” (85). In other words, uptake is both knowledge and application of genres; it is understanding the “rules” for negotiating meaning as well as carrying these rules out within “textual practices.” Part of this negotiation relates to genre selection, of which Bawarshi and Reiff write that “knowledge of uptake is knowledge of when and why to use a genre; how to select an appropriate genre in relation to another or others; where along the range of its uptake profile to take up a genre, and at what cost; how some genres explicitly cite other genres in their uptake while some do so only implicitly, and so on” (86). Uptake, then, can be understood in part as the phenomenon by which individuals and groups select genres to employ based on their memory and understanding of which genres are appropriate to given situations, as well as the individual composing decisions users make within the genres they select, including possible deviations from genre norms. In other words, uptakes are individual uses of genres.

Since Freadman’s initial work, rhetorical genre studies scholars have continued to articulate and add nuance to the notion of uptake and the ways in which processes of uptake

occur, and several features of uptake as articulated within this scholarship make it a fitting lens for my own study of the writings of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen. First, uptake is frequently utilized in rhetorical genre studies scholarship to examine writing within academic settings, a context in which the writings of Margaret and Kate belong. Reiff and Bawarshi, for instance, consider the antecedent genre knowledge that students bring to their first-year composition courses. One implication of their study advocates that instructors should attempt to disrupt their students' "habitual uptakes," such as by assigning tasks that begin with metacognitive exercises that ask students to reflect on their prior knowledge (Reiff and Bawarshi 331-2). Likewise examining contemporary students' utilization of genres in the first-year writing classroom, Heather Bastian describes the usefulness of uptake in that it "allows [her] to highlight the ways in which the individual as well as genre and context influence how writers take up texts and make use of their discursive resources." To make uptakes, which are largely invisible processes, more visible, Bastian employs "disruptive pedagogical interventions" within her study by giving students a writing task but not specifying the genre in which they are expected to complete it. As work such as Reiff and Bawarshi and Bastian indicates, genres scholars are concerned with the cognitive processes by which students recall and select genres to achieve desired outcomes, as well as the ways in which instructors can assist students with that process.

Another important facet of uptake relates to the subjectivities which uptakes reinforce. In "Acknowledging the Rough Edges of Resistance: Negotiation of Identities of First-Year Composition," Melanie Kill explains the fittingness of uptake for describing students' positions in the university:

If we understand the academic writing of first-year students to be largely delimited both by these students' position within the university and by the materials and assignments

provided to them, this formulation [uptake] seems to describe their situation quite well. To participate successfully in the academic and intellectual communities to which they are presumably pursuing entrance, they must write in genres, and thus assume subject positions, for which they might not yet understand the motivations or possibilities. (Kill 219)

Kill's work adds an important facet to the conception of uptake. More than just the selection of genres and strategic composing decisions within selected genres, uptake also entails the risks and affordances of particular genres through the subjectivities they construct. Kill's focus on subjectivities and the ways which genres and uptakes of genres construct student identities within the university is particularly fitting to my study of Margaret's and Kate's writings, as their uptakes of required genres necessarily position them within the academy in particular ways. Importantly, though, Kill notes that this positionality does not mean that students are completely without agency (219), which the studies above in which instructors study their students' individual uptakes and create tasks designed to encourage new, productive uptakes likewise indicate. By studying Margaret's and Kate's work closely, I gain an understanding of how they as individuals accept, resist, or transcend their positionality as women students via their particular uptakes.

Closely connected to issues of identity and subjectivity, uptake also has implications for power relations. Emmons, for instance, considers a particular field—the biomedical field and texts related to the “discourse of depression as mental illness”—asserting that most uptake scholarship incorrectly focuses on “sequences of texts at the expense of attending to individual, embodied subjectivities” (135, 136). Emmons, on the other hand, wants to account more fully for the power which genres and uptakes of them confer, saying that “individuals choose from

alternatives” (such as the genre of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) which confer both “medical recognition and subsequently the regulation [of users’] lived experiences” (139). In this way, the genres the user decides to take up to tell them whether they are depressed carry a tremendous amount of power. Like Kill, Emmons pays particular heed to power in the way in which uptakes of genres construct individuals’ identities.

Rhetorical genre studies and uptake constitute the theoretical lens through which I view the writings of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen, and some of the many features of uptake as a genre phenomenon which previous scholarship has articulated and I have described help to explain its meaning and reinforce its utility to this study. To summarize, first, there is substantial precedent for the study of academic genres of writing within academic contexts, particularly within composition classrooms, a setting in which Margaret and Kate most certainly write. Second, uptake and studies of uptake prompt consideration of issues of subjectivity; that is, of the ways that uptakes position individuals in relation to others, as well as the power dynamics within and through which uptakes operate. Finally, (and a theme running throughout each of these observations about how uptake operates), uptake allows for a focus on individual uses of genres, for consideration of how individuals *employ* them, rather than just broad claims about how they are *typically* employed. Margaret and Kate wrote within genres that they were required to produce for successful completion of their “Advanced English Composition” courses, as many other students undoubtedly did. Even with this requiredness and commonness, however, I explore Margaret’s and Kate’s particular, individual uptakes, their “abilit[ies] to know how to negotiate genres and how to apply and turn genre strategies (rules for play) into textual practices (actual performances)” (Bawarshi and Reiff 85).

My primary research questions in this study include: In what ways do Margaret and Kate work within, against, and beyond the genres of writing they were required to produce for successful completion of their courses? If these women writers do move beyond the normalized uptakes of the genres in which they write, where and how, precisely, do they find room within these required genres for their own expressions of interest and possibly even advocacy for and accomplishment of their own goals and causes? Given this study's prerogatives for viewing students as individuals, I likewise follow the examples set by Welsch and Simmons in using the first names of the women students whose writings they examine, and I refer to Margaret and Kate by their first names throughout this study, rather than by their last names alone.

With this particular use of rhetorical genre studies and uptake as a theoretical lens, my study contributes even further to revisionist histories of composition by not only placing students at its center and considering how they wrote themselves into their required genres of writing, but also by employing a theoretical lens yet un-utilized in revisionist local histories of composition, and one which enriches historical research on writing instruction by adding individualized student accounts that reflect the ideological systems of value and power in place in this local context. Additionally, this study also contributes to current genre theory scholarship by exploring the extent to which genre users (and students in particular) are both enabled and constrained by genres (Devitt), as well as the complex processes of genre normalization, innovation, and creativity (see, for example, Christine Tardy).

Before proceeding to a discussion of the nature of archival research that forms the basis of this study, I next provide an overview of the lives of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen, particularly their lives up to the time they entered the University and enrolled in "Advanced

English Composition.” This discussion will serve as a foundation for understanding these women as individual students who engaged in individual uptakes of required classroom genres.

### **The Early Lives of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen**

Beyond each enrolling in “Advanced English Composition” at the University of Kansas, Margaret and Kate share other similarities after they completed their courses. Both had successful careers outside the home, and both were frequent travelers (with Kate traveling internationally between Japan and Kansas and Margaret making frequent travels within and outside the state). Both were active in the organizations and communities where they lived. Neither married or had children. At the same time, these women were also very different, and they had very different early life experiences, all of which informed their participation in their coursework at the University of Kansas. In order to situate their writings for “Advanced English Composition” and to view their work as that of unique individuals taking up writing instruction, I open with a brief sketch of their lives and circumstances leading up to their composition courses.

Details about the life of Margaret Kane are scarce. Her one-box collection at Kenneth Spencer Research Library contains only course notes, and the Library has no surviving records of how these notes came to be preserved in their holdings. Most information about Margaret is found in either contemporary newspapers of the time or in KU’s sparse student records. Margaret was born on January 1, 1871. She had at least three sisters and one brother. She and her family lived for the first part of her life in Bradford, Pennsylvania, and it was there that Margaret attended and graduated from preparatory school (Kane 1898 enrollment card). Later, at an unknown date, the Kane family moved to Kansas, and the majority of Margaret’s life from this point forward seems to have been spent in either Greensburg or Bucklin, both small towns in south-central Kansas. In 1896, numerous Kansas newspapers report that Margaret was elected

the treasurer of Kiowa County, making her the first woman county treasurer in the state<sup>4</sup>.

Margaret was a capable and effective public servant in this capacity, with the *Lawrence Journal World* reporting that she paid back interest owed to the state by her county well ahead of schedule (*LJW* December 9, 1896).

When Margaret entered the University of Kansas two years later on October 24, 1898, she was twenty-eight years old (Kane 1898 enrollment card). The local newspaper for her hometown of Greensburg, the *Kiowa County Signal*, reported on October 21 that “Miss Margaret Kane left Tuesday evening for Lawrence where she will take a course at the University” (*Kiowa County Signal* October 21, 1898). One day later, the *Kansas University Weekly*, KU’s joint student-faculty newspaper, reported that she did so alongside her brother, John Kane, who was already a student (*Kansas University Weekly* October 22, 1898). Margaret was enrolled as a “special student” in the School of Arts, a distinction given to “persons of mature age,” which the University defined as students age twenty-one or older (1898-99 *Course Catalogue* 153, 31). Special students comprised ninety-five of the five-hundred fifty-eight total students in the School of Arts. As such, Margaret was in the minority in terms of age range within this particular school, but she was by no means an anomaly. The following spring, one of her courses was “Advanced English Composition,” for which she earned the grade of I, the highest possible mark, indicating she had received above a ninety percent (Kane 1898 enrollment card).

Although she performed well in this and in her other courses, Margaret did not finish a degree at KU at this time, leaving after completing two years of coursework. Instead, she returned to KU nearly thirty years later, graduating in 1929 with an A. B. in English (Kane 1926

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<sup>4</sup> For instance, the *Globe Republican* of Dodge City, Kansas, wrote on November 19, 1896, that “Miss Margaret Kane was elected treasurer of Kiowa County. She is said to be the first woman elected county treasurer in the state.”

enrollment card). Margaret does not appear to have been active in any university organizations or clubs during her initial time there, though she was awarded a Phi Beta Kappa key for her academic achievements upon her graduation in 1929 (1929 *Jayhawker Yearbook* 336). In the interim between her KU attendances, she worked as a bank teller and later manager, and local newspapers remark on her skill and adeptness in these positions, as well as note the scarcity of women serving in them.

In comparison with Margaret Kane, information about Kate Hansen is much more readily available. Her life has been the subject of two book-length publications, including Dane G. Bales, Polly Roth Bales, and Calvin E. Harbin's *Kate Hansen: The Grandest Mission on Earth from Kansas to Japan, 1907-1951*, published by the University of Kansas Continuing Education Press, and William Mensendiek's Japan-based publication, *To Japan with Love: The Story of Kate Hansen and Lydia Lindsey of Kansas and Japan*. Additionally, Kate is frequently mentioned in Billy Mac Jones' biography of one of her brothers, *Dane Gray Hansen: Titan of Northwest Kansas: 1883-1965*. At Kenneth Spencer Research Library, Kate Hansen's collection spans thirty-six boxes ("Guide to the Kate I. Hansen Collection"). These publications, as well as the archival materials contained in the Library, most heavily document her later life and missionary work in Japan, what Kate herself called "the grandest mission on earth." Even so, some information helps to show her path to the University of Kansas and the situation surrounding her work in "Advanced English Composition."

Kate was born on July 5, 1879. Her mother was an American, and her father was a political refugee from Denmark (Bales et al. 2). Kate was the eldest of their six children, two of whom died in infancy (Jones 31). Kate completed grade school in Logan, Kansas in 1891 (Jones 45). Her schooling was somewhat interrupted by a family trip to Copenhagen to visit her father's

family when Kate was fourteen, though it was on this trip that Kate first began to learn German, a language in which she would eventually develop fluency (Mensendiek 5). During this trip, as well as a separate family trip to Colorado, Kate served as diarist for the family, documenting their travels (“Guide to the Kate I. Hansen Collection”).

In 1896, Kate graduated from high school preparatory work in Beloit, Kansas, as valedictorian (Mensendiek 7). Her early schooling likewise included attending the Normal School in Phillipsburg (Jones 45). She passed the county teacher’s examination after finishing high school, and she taught school in Phillips County during the 1896-1897 school year, serving the next year as assistant principal of her former grade school in Logan, Kansas (Bales et al.110). In 1898, rather than continue teaching or serving as principal in the public school system, she instead worked in her aunt’s millinery store, as well as taught private music lessons (Bales et al.110). In 1899, she and one of her brothers, George, moved to Lawrence and enrolled in coursework at the University of Kansas (Bales et al.110). Thus, like Margaret, Kate was accompanied to KU by a male sibling. Kate was admitted as a student in the School of Fine Arts, and it was during her second semester (spring 1900) that she took “Advanced English Composition” and, like Margaret, earned a I grade (1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* 195; Hansen enrollment card). A photograph of Kate Hansen, likely from her time at K.U. is pictured in figure 1.



Figure 1 An undated photograph of Kate Hansen, with handwritten text: “Kate Hansen- Probably at K.U.”

During her first years at KU, Kate worked toward a teaching certificate, which she earned in 1901. She then left the University to teach music and German at a school in Denver, Colorado (Bales et al.110). She returned to KU in 1903 and graduated in 1905 (Bales et al. 111). Like Margaret, she earned a Phi Beta Kappa key (Jones 47), but, unlike Margaret, Kate was very clearly active in campus organizations, particularly the Young Women’s Christian Association, of which she became president (1905 *Jayhawker Yearbook* 40). It was through one particular campus organization, the Student Volunteer Movement, that Kate committed to the initial missionary work in Japan that would span the rest of her life (Bales et al. 113).

## Considerations Related to the Nature of Archival Work

This study, like many revisionist histories of rhetoric and composition, draws heavily on materials housed in archives. In “Dreams and Play: Historical Method and Methodology,” Connors explains that archives constitute the second of three elements of historical research (the first being awareness of the past based on our present perceptions and the last being realization of our prejudices as researchers). The archives are what historians visit in between, where they study materials from the past, or, as Connors is often-quoted in later archival scholarship, “The archive is where storage meets dreams, and the result is history” (“Dreams and Play” 17). Susan Wells writes that the archive offers “three gifts” to rhetoric and composition, including that the archive resists permanent closure, offers freedom from resentment against other disciplines, and allows a broadening of rhetoric and composition’s disciplinary relationship to history, such as through re-examining past pedagogies. It is because of these gifts that we should “claim” the archive for rhetoric and composition (Wells 55-64).

While archives are invaluable to the work of historians, it is important to acknowledge they are not neutral, objective spaces of knowledge construction. Scholars outside of the field of rhetoric and composition have certainly noted this characteristic, with Jacques Derrida reflecting in particular on the political power of the archive in *Archive Fever*, a work which Carolyn Steedman notes is about more than just archives, “but is rather a sustained contemplation on the work of history,” on beginnings and origins of knowledge (Steedman 3). Like histories based on their holdings, archives do not (nor should claim to) offer a fully complete picture of the past. Gesa E. Kirsch and Liz Rohan write that archives have the potential to “re-inscribe power structures and imperialist discourse” (6). Certainly, archives can and should play a role in knowledge construction, but with their use should come an understanding that, as Antionette

Burton writes, archives are “not innocent of power” (6). This lack of innocence is perhaps particularly palpable within institutional archives, in which decisions about acquisition, curation, and cataloguing are subject to the potentially-hegemonic power structures of their universities or institutions, leaving the views and experiences of those with less power at risk of being omitted. Of particular relevance to my study, one source type that may be subject to erasure is student writing. As I elaborate above, student writings are less likely to be preserved by universities than the papers of faculty and administrators, and perhaps also by faculty and students themselves. Here, we see the role of power in the creation and ongoing curation of archival spaces, as student writings are often assigned less value than other documents.

Some researchers help mitigate the subjectivity of large, institutional archives by extending their scope to consider personal or family collections. Glenn and Enoch, for instance say researchers should look beyond large university archives to “nontraditional” ones (“Invigorating Historiographic Practices”); Kirsch and Rohan write that one goal of their collection *Beyond the Archives* is to “enrich our notion of what constitutes an archive” (2); and Enoch models this herself by consulting a community archive for her research in *Refiguring Rhetorical Education* (Enoch, “Changing Research Methods, Changing History”). In the case of my own work in this study, the nature of my focus on writing in the university unfortunately necessitates a primary focus on materials contained in university archives. As a result, I strive to remain ever aware of where there may be silences as I conduct my research, bearing in mind questions such as: Whose voices are most readily heard in this archive? Whose voices and experiences are left out?

In addition to these questions about archival inclusion and exclusion, archival researchers likewise pose questions about the ways in which materials are organized within archives. In

*Retroactivism in the Lesbian Archives: Composing Pasts and Futures*, Jean Bessette explores a variety of lesbian archives and collections, particularly those produced and curated by and for lesbian communities, which take on a variety of mediums ranging from print to digital or multimodal. Bessette stresses the rhetorical nature of archives, yet also the “rhetoricity of historiography” itself, in that the writing of history has the ability to shape understandings of the past, as well as of the future (8). Bessette highlights lesbian communities’ strategic deployment of archives to construct memory and shape communities’ identities. Thus, in addition to questions regarding whose voices are heard and whose are excluded in the archives, I approached this study likewise keeping in mind questions such as: How are the materials in this archive arranged? How are they located? Who makes decisions regarding these issues? What (and whose) histories and identities are constructed by such decisions?

Issues of inclusion and exclusion, as well as issues of organization and deployment of materials, have considerable implications for my own work at Kenneth Spencer Research Library. To first consider organization of the materials, (in relation to other collections and within their individual collections), the writings of Kate and Margaret are the only student writings produced for writing courses at the University of Kansas during this time period that I located within the holdings of the Library. Each are designated “personal papers” and held within the University Archives division of the larger Library, Kate Hansen’s as call number PP 19 and Margaret Kane’s as PP 23. The majority of personal papers collections are housed near one another within the Library, though oversize items are more likely to be housed in other locations as space permits. Although the collection call numbers largely designate the physical order of personal papers collections on the shelves, (for example, PP 2 is located after PP 1), this ordering is likewise subject to the size of collections and space availability. Further, personal

paper call number designations themselves, (whether a collection is designated PP 18 or PP 42), does not appear to hold tremendous significance in this specific archive, but are likely due to the order in which collections happened to be acquired and processed. However, even this may not fully determine a sequential ordering, as a collection acquired in, for example, 1995, may take longer to process than one acquired in 2002 and therefore receive a higher call number.

All this is to say that the physical ordering of Margaret's and Kate's collections in relation to other collections does not reflect a concern for the ordering of collections by the collections' dates or content. Rather, the ordering of collections in relation to one another reflects more on priorities of space and processing feasibility. As such, the material conditions under which archivists and staff work primarily dictate how the materials come to be ordered in the stacks. Further, unlike Bessette's findings regarding the lesbian archives she studied, students Margaret and Kate had no control over where their collections would later be held in the archive, which itself was not opened until 1968 (with materials acquired prior to that time being held in various other departments and libraries at KU). Instead, decisions about the arrangement of materials at Kenneth Spencer Research Library are dictated by the Library, its priorities as an institution, and the material conditions under which it operates.

However, in considering the arrangement of these collections, it is important to recognize that their locations in relation to other collection is not something that most researchers would be aware of, as the stacks for the entire Library are closed to all except staff. As I worked simultaneously as a student employee in the Library at the same time that I was engaged in the majority of the research and writing stages of this study, I was in a position to have a better understanding of such structures than most researchers would experience. A researcher visiting the Library to view a collection would not encounter it on the shelves in the stacks, but, rather,

would locate a digital record of the collection in the online finding aid and create a digital request for specific boxes, which would then be retrieved by staff.

To turn then to an understanding of arrangement and access in terms of the individual collections, Kate Hansen's collection spans thirty-six boxes and contains materials dated between 1882 and 1986. According to the collection's online finding aid, the materials "have been kept largely in the order in which they were received" upon their donation by Kate's family in the 1980s. As such, the collection is mainly grouped into papers, correspondence, diaries, printed material, and photographs and photo albums. Kate's "Advanced English Composition" papers are located within the first series of papers, within box 5, folder 30 ("Guide to the Kate I. Hansen Collection"). I became aware of Kate's writings prior to finding Margaret's, and I did so fairly readily by searching within the Library's manuscript finding aids using a variety of keywords related to student writing and writing instruction. Ultimately, I found Kate's collection through use of a keyword "composition," which retrieved the line entry for her "Advanced English Composition" papers within the digital finding aid.

Margaret Hansen's collection is only one box in scope. According to Associate University Archivist Letha Johnson, the Library has no record of how the collection came to be acquired by the University of Kansas (whether by donation from a family member, from Margaret herself, through purchase, or some other means). I located her collection through use of the keyword "class notes," which retrieved her collection's finding aid. This finding aid described the collection as containing class notes from various courses at KU from the year 1929, though I would later discover that it likewise contained notes written by Margaret in 1899, but which were unmentioned in the finding aid. Within the box itself, Margaret's notes reflected very little processing, as they were housed in a variety of notebooks and binders, many of which

were in need of preservation attention, and none of which appeared to have been placed in sequential order.

This leads to another important observation on the nature of archival work, which is the role of serendipity or chance in the research process. Though happenstance undoubtedly plays at least somewhat of a role in most research methods, discussions of serendipity seem increasingly common within discussions of archival methods, particularly as researchers strive to more transparently describe their methods. Kirsch and Rohan note that their entire collection, *Beyond the Archives: Research as Lived Process*, is intended to “promote themes of serendipity, chance discoveries, and personal connections as key ingredients for sustained research when working with archival documents” (8). Likewise, included within Alexis E. Ramsey, Wendy B. Sharer, Barbara L’Eplattenier, and Lisa S. Mastrangelo’s collection, *Working in the Archives: Practical Research Methods for Rhetoric and Composition*, are “seven tales of serendipity” in the form of interviews with experienced archival researchers about how chance influences their work. Gold, for instance, experienced a series of small serendipitous moments, rather than one large moment. He encourages researchers to keep a “beginner’s mind” to stay open to accidental discoveries, for “the more we know about a topic, the easier it is for our expectations to guide our interpretations” (Gold, “On Keeping a Beginner’s Mind” 43). An even more recent collection, Maureen Daly Goggin and Peter N. Goggin’s *Serendipity in Rhetoric, Writing, and Literacy Studies*, documents serendipity in rhetoric and composition as a whole. Even in this collection, though, archival work features quite heavily, with at least five out of twenty chapters directly focusing on serendipitous moments in archives.

Like other archival researchers in the field, serendipity plays an important role in my work, particularly in the locating of Margaret Kane’s course notes I mention above. I located and

began a study of Kate Hansen's course papers first. I then became aware of Margaret's collection while searching for a project in a graduate course on feminist methods, and I located it through trial and error in keyword searches, eventually finding the finding aid describing Margaret's 1929 class notes. This date was nearly thirty years after the date of the course materials I had previously located belonging to Kate, and so I assumed they would not be directly relevant to my other, separate study. However, I decided to view Margaret's one-box collection anyway, as I was simply in need of a small-scale project to complete a course project. I found the collection to be in a partially processed state with notebooks and loose leaves of paper filling the box in a somewhat haphazard fashion. But I was most surprised to find that, although the majority of the course notes were indeed from 1929, Margaret also had one notebook containing course notes from 1899. As I later learned, (and as I describe above in the section on the early lives of Margaret and Kate), Margaret first enrolled as a student at KU in 1898, but did not complete her degree until she returned to KU three decades later. Further, these 1899 notes were for the exact same course as Kate Hansen, but just one year earlier.

Finding Margaret's "Advanced English Composition" notes left me initially shocked and later elated. I had previously combed through the manuscript finding aids for evidence of other course-based student writing from around 1900 and been largely unsuccessful. However, here, completely by chance, I came across student writing not only from this same time period, but also from the exact same course (and, as I later discovered, taught by the same instructors). The finding aid made no mention of course notes from 1899, and the reference librarian who I immediately consulted about their inclusion was just as surprised as I was. My experience aligns with Ramsey's discussion of the three different layers or types of archives that exist within archives: the hidden, the partially hidden or partially processed, and the visible (79). My chance

discovery of Margaret's notes, itself a partially processed collection, likewise reflects what Lynée Lewis Gaillet says is "the best part of archival research"—"the unexpected find" ("The Unexpected Find" 150). Additionally, though, this experience emphasizes the difficulty of reliably locating student texts from the past, as their arrangement, cataloguing, and even their presence or lack thereof in an archive to begin with may not align with the values of larger institutional structures.

I conclude this discussion of the nature of archival work by pointing once again to the subjectivity of archives. As curated spaces, in some ways they reflect histories in their constructedness and potential for exclusion. I have spoken above about limitedness, which may mean that researchers have to search very carefully for particular materials, be unsuccessful at finding them, or only be able to do so through happy accidents. I have likewise considered organization and deployment of materials, which Margaret and Kate appear to have had little control over themselves. But what about excess of materials? In some cases, a researcher may be confronted with an overabundance of materials to sift through. In the second chapter of *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*, Steedman describes a familiar type of archive "fever" (referencing Derrida) felt by researchers working in archives. They may feel pressured by time constraints, tired from travel, stressed by depleting funds, overwhelmed by an abundance of materials to consult, and confronted with a fear that they may never complete their research (Steedman 17-37).

Indeed, other researchers likewise remark on this fear of missing something. Describing in detail his fourteen-year-long process of researching and writing his book on the postwar discourse of Freshmen English, Thomas Masters notes that, eventually, a project must come to a conclusion. But, much like writing itself, Masters found that his experience "produced more

possibilities than conclusions” (167). It may feel as though there are always more materials that could be searched for, more files that could be combed through, and more secondary sources that could be used to substantiate claims. Wells calls the resistance of “permanent closure” one of the gifts that archives offer to rhetoric and composition (58). Indeed, the emergence of revisionist histories of the field signal a readiness to revisit the claims of earlier landmark histories, viewing them not as prescriptive mandates about rhetoric and composition’s disciplinary past, but as openings to newer, more diverse historical undertaking that more fully account for the field’s complexity. Archives help to accomplish this goal. Even so, this goal is a daunting one, for seeking to do justice to the presence and important work of diverse people may mean that the archive work feels ever incomplete.

In the chapters that follow, I employ this reflection on archival research theories, along with rhetorical genre studies and uptake, to carry out my own archival research study at the University of Kansas at the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. In Chapter 2, “Situating Writing at the University of Kansas, 1899-1900,” I more fully establish the context of this study, drawing on information about the University’s founding and examining archival documents which chart the KU Department of English’s development. In this chapter, I likewise seek to provide background about the genre systems, rhetorical situations, and material conditions under which Margaret and Kate took up their required genres of writing, including information about the specific course for which both women wrote and the instructors who taught their course.

Moving, then, into a highly focused, genre-based close reading of student writings, Chapter 3, “Recording Instruction (Ideologies and All): The 1899 Course Notes of Margaret Kane” performs a close analysis of Margaret’s notes. Chapter 4, “Innovating, Advocating, and

Writing the Self: The 1900 Course Papers of Kate Hansen,” provides a case study of Kate’s writings. In Chapter 5, “Genre Uptake, Student-Centered Local History, and Pathways for Future Investigation and Pedagogy,” I place the case studies from Chapters 3 and 4 in dialogue with one another, remarking on the significance of this study for both the continued revisionist historical efforts in rhetoric and composition and the growing interest in individual uptake and innovation within rhetorical genre studies.

## **Chapter 2: Situating Writing at the University of Kansas, 1899-1900**

In this chapter, I elaborate on the context of this study, situating the writings of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen for “Advanced English Composition” within the genre systems that surrounded them at the University of Kansas between 1899 and 1900. Charles Bazerman writes that genre systems entail “interrelated genres that interact with each other in specific settings,” and Devitt defines a genre system as a “set of genres interacting to achieve an overarching function within an activity system” (Bazerman 97; Devitt, “Writing Genres” 56). An activity system, according to David R. Russell, is “any ongoing, object-directed, historically conditioned, dialectically structured, tool-mediated human interaction” (510). Bringing together Bazerman, Devitt, and Russell’s work emphasizes that genres exist and interact with one another within larger systems of related interaction.

The genres and materials I consulted to study this specific genre system and provide this contextualization of the University of Kansas during this time period include the following: course catalogues, faculty and Board of Regents meeting minutes, yearbooks, enrollment cards, artificial records (which Kenneth Spencer Research Library defines as those assembled by archivists in their collection and organization of materials, rather than ones contributed to archives by departments or organizations themselves), enrollment cards, instructor diaries, and newspapers, as well as published scholarship. These materials allow me to study the conditions under which Margaret and Kate produced their writings for “Advanced English Composition.”

I proceed in this chapter by first surveying the national trends in access to higher education for women during the time of Margaret’s and Kate’s coursework, then narrowing focus to the University of Kansas, its Department of English, and “Advanced English Composition” in particular. My primary focuses are the rhetorical situations and genre systems

specifically present at KU, for, as Suzanne Bordelon, Elizabethada A. Wright, and S. Michael Halloran write, recent revisionist-minded histories of rhetoric and composition recognize that “pedagogical approaches are often linked to local needs and practices,” rather than operating under the assumption that all students and all courses operated under the same model as Harvard University, as some earlier histories of the field suggest (210). At the same time, I recognize the importance of larger contextualization (see Gold, “Remapping”), and so I also discuss larger national trends in higher education surrounding this time period. Thus, like microhistory, my work in this chapter balances between local and larger perspectives, alternating between scales of focus (McComiskey 18).

Throughout this chapter, I pay particular heed to gender, examining these contexts and genre systems in light of Margaret’s and Kate’s positionalities as white women attending college during the Progressive Era. I am conscious that my work here does not provide a complete history or picture of student experiences at KU. I largely omit information about other minority experiences, including those of women of color, because information about women students of color is largely unavailable, and the actual writings of women students of color from this time period seem to have not been preserved at all. Instead, I narrow my focus in this particular study to give close attention to Margaret’s and Kate’s experiences.

### **Women’s Access to Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth-Century Higher Education**

Formal educational opportunities in the United States, particularly those for women, were on the rise in the nineteenth century. Following preparatory schools and seminaries, which were among the first higher education institution types for women (Hobbs 12), other college models began to come into existence. Many of the early colleges for women were “religiously motivated” in nature, such as Vassar, Wellseley, Smith, and Bryn Mawr (Solomon 48). Barbara

Miller Solomon notes that, most often, these colleges were founded to prepare women for marriage and the domestic sphere or for work as schoolteachers, as teaching served as one of the few socially-accepted forms of employment for women (Solomon 48). Normal schools were likewise on the rise and offered more formal training for aspiring teachers beginning in the late 1830s (Ostergaard and Wood 10).

Key in understanding the growth of women's access to higher education is the issue of coeducation. Though women's educational opportunities had certainly expanded since colonial times as a result of women-only colleges, seminaries, and normal school models, women in the United States still lacked opportunities equal to men. Some colleges had begun to develop completely separate branches for men and for women, as was the case for Harvard University and its female-only counterpart, Radcliffe College (see Sue Carter Simmons; JoAnn Campbell). However, as Simmons' archival work demonstrates, this arrangement of separate, seemingly identical instruction was not always effective for women's learning, as men's education was characterized as a hostile, competitive environment to which women had not been conditioned (Simmons). Rosalind Rosenberg notes that early advocates of coeducation said it was "the only way of ensuring equality" with men (107). Further, early women's movement leaders said that separating men and women led to "an undue preoccupation with sex"; as such, coeducation "promised intellectual emancipation and sexual well-being" for both sexes (Rosenberg 108).

Rosenberg argues that three major factors eventually helped lead to the implementation of coeducation in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. These factors included "moral exhortation," (the notion that women's presence in colleges would help to correct the "good deal of rowdyism and brawling" that frequently characterized "male college culture" in the nineteenth century), the growing need for women teachers, and, finally, the 1862 Morrill Land Grant Act,

“by which Congress fostered the growth of the state universities” (Rosenberg 110-2).

As a result of these factors, the model of coeducation flourished between 1862 and the end of the nineteenth century (Hobbs 13). Some schools made decided shifts from male-only to coeducational. In the case of the University of Michigan, the school’s 1870 adoption of coeducation was financially motivated, as the alternative was to build a separate school for women (Rosenberg 110). Still other schools were coeducational from the start. The University of Kansas was one such school, founded as a coeducational institution in 1865.

Regardless of how coeducation was instated, it flourished as a model of education. With the exception of Harvard, Yale, and other “male preserves, especially in the East and South,” which were either too firmly-established or simply too slow to change, Rosenberg says that “by the end of the nineteenth century coeducation had become the predominant form of higher education in this country, and today more than 95 percent of all college women are enrolled in coeducational institutions” (Rosenberg 109).

Women’s contributions to the growth of colleges and universities following the end of the Civil War were significant. Solomon writes that “Between 1870 and 1900 the number of females enrolled in institutions of higher learning multiplied almost eightfold, from eleven to eighty-five thousand” (Solomon 58). This increase was even greater than for men, with “the number of women as a percentage of all students [rising] from 21 percent to at least 35 percent in this time” (Solomon 58). Most of these women entered the coeducational institutions described above, and “by 1900 there were more than twice as many women in these than in the separate women’s colleges” (Solomon 58). Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen were a part of this surge in women students, attending KU at a time when national trends toward female education were on the rise.

Though this tremendous growth in the number of women students attending colleges and universities might suggest a positive public perception of women's education, in reality, not everyone considered this increase in women students a positive change. Beginning around the turn to the twentieth century, some feared that, with women on track to outnumber men, coeducational schools would effectively become women's schools (Rosenberg 115). This fear, which modern historians describe as a fear of "feminization," essentially entailed "the judgement that unless men enrolled in a course or program in substantial numbers, the subject was devalued" (Solomon 81). This led to several reactionary movements, such as the Boston "more men movement" (Rosenberg 116). Examples such as this demonstrate that it should not be assumed that more ready access to education for white women meant that their presence in colleges and universities went unchallenged.

Influencing and influenced by women's growing access to education around the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century were changes to women's social roles. Marking the shift that began to occur in women's place in the larger culture as a result of increased access to education, Vicki Ricks remarks as follows:

For many nineteenth-century college women, then, higher education became an enlightening experience, but a troubling one as well. As historian Carroll Smith-Rosenberg explains, by the turn of the nineteenth-century many women students and faculty no longer saw college as a simple way to prepare themselves for marriage. Women began to view higher education as a path to a new and more complex independent life, one that may have brought opportunities to women but one that also threatened male students, faculty, administrators, and trustees who questioned women's entry onto the public scene. (Ricks 64)

Rather than preparation for domestic life, higher education began to offer other possibilities for women.

The lives that Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen lived during and following their time at KU certainly illustrate a range of possibilities for women, with Margaret going on to work as a bank manager and active member of women's organizations and Kate serving as a missionary, music teacher and eventual dean at the Miyagi College in Japan. It should not be assumed, however, that Margaret's and Kate's lifestyles and participation in the public and in positions of authority would have occurred without challenge. Having provided a larger picture of women's increased access to and participation in higher education, I now move to a more specific focus on the University of Kansas.

### **The University of Kansas**

The University of Kansas has been the subject of three major historical publications. In 1891, Wilson Sterling compiled a *Quarter-Centennial History of the University of Kansas*. In 1974, Clifford S. Griffin published *The University of Kansas: A History*, covering the University's history from its founding in 1865 until its 100-year anniversary in 1965. In 2015, editors John L. Rury and Kim Cary Warren compiled *Transforming the University of Kansas: A History, 1965-2015*, a series of essays which chronicle the next fifty years. Though Griffin does make occasional reference to the Department of English, none of these histories include substantial information about the Department of English or writing instruction at the University.

Within the field of rhetoric and composition, two book-length studies have used the University of Kansas as their partial focus: In *Writing in the Academic Disciplines*, David R. Russell examines writing in various disciplinary contexts. Rather than considering writing within composition courses alone, Russell looks at writing in various secondary and post-secondary

educational settings from the 1870s to the 1980s, and KU serves as one of the institutions on which Russell draws. Additionally, in *Conceding Composition: A Crooked History of Composition's Institutional Fortunes*, Ryan Skinnell devotes five pages to examination of the University of Kansas and its writing instruction. Rather than the marginalized status the discipline is usually attributed, Skinnell argues that composition has served throughout its history (at KU and at various other institutions) as a valuable, even essential facet of U.S. higher education, a “symbolic token manipulated as necessary to curry educational, promotional, or political favor for the institution[s]” (14). I am grateful to the work of Russell and Skinnell, which provide a foundation for my own work in studying student writing at the University of Kansas.

With the exceptions of Russell and Skinnell, little scholarship has been published which describes writing instruction at the University of Kansas, during the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century or any other time period. Other mentions of KU are most prevalent when referring to the work of career-long KU professor, Edwin M. Hopkins, whose research on labor issues marked one of the first attempts at labor reform in the field and which I describe in further detail below. In contrast to repeated references to Hopkins in rhetoric and composition scholarship, the type of close analysis of student writing at the University of Kansas to which I aspire has yet to be undertaken.

### *KU's Founding and Early Years*

Having provided a brief overview of scholarship on the University of Kansas, I now provide an overview of the University's founding and early history. The desire for a university in Kansas existed long before one was actually established, and even before Kansas officially became a state in 1861. Competition amongst Kansas towns to serve as the site of a university

was likewise a competition amongst pro-slavery and anti-slavery groups. Kansas officially joined the Union as a state only a few months before the start of the Civil War, yet was still home to some slavery-supporting groups, with the Missouri-Kansas border serving as the site of multiple battles and raids, including the notable William Quantrill's Raid. Disputes about which town and side of the slavery debate should have the power of housing a university ultimately led to the school being split into three parts in three locations—one established in Manhattan, one in Emporia, and one in Lawrence (Griffin 10, 25). The University's charter wrote that "The object of the University shall be to provide the inhabitants of this state with the means of acquiring a thorough knowledge of the various branches of literature, science, and the arts" (1898-99 *Course Catalogue* 4).

The role of women in the University of Kansas was an issue of discussion from its origins. The original charter for the University stipulated that men and women would be educated in separate branches, with different buildings, different courses, and different instructors; however, this feature of the charter was never enacted (Griffin 29). In the *Quarter-Centennial History of the University of Kansas* published in 1891, Sterling notes that this division among men and women "was not a part of the original draft" of the charter, but that the notion of "equal educational privileges of both sexes" was at the time still such a "radical proposition" that the bill for the charter was in danger of not passing in the conservative legislature (15). Sterling explains that, even though KU's charter said the University would have separate branches, "this provision has been persistently and constantly overridden from the opening of the institution, and the day of the possible enforcement of this dead letter has long since passed away" (76). In commenting on the "growth of a distinct college community," Professor James H. Canfield wrote in 1891 that

[C]ertain general features of this community [The University of Kansas] declared themselves early, and were the necessary result of the constitution of the University or of circumstances of the time. Foremost among these is the presence of women on a perfect equality with men, and their association with them in all college relations. This is the key to most, perhaps, of the differences that distinguish college life here from that in the older eastern institutions. (Sterling 131-2)

The inclusion of women from its founding may have made KU a more welcoming atmosphere for women than other eastern schools, as Canfield claims, or even of previously male-only schools that later became coeducational, though it is impossible to say with certainty.

The University officially opened in Lawrence on September 12, 1866 with three full-time professors: one of belles lettres and mental and moral philosophy; one of languages; and one of mathematics and natural sciences (Griffin 33). The school had just one building, later called North College, which sat atop a ridge that would later be renamed Mount Oread. According to Kansas historian Monroe Dodd, on the day of the school's opening, the faculty interviewed the prospective students who arrived to be admitted, but found that none of the students were sufficiently prepared to engage in college-level work (Dodd 12). As a result, the University formed a preparatory department, a department which would remain a part of KU until it was abolished in 1891 (Griffin 122). With no students prepared for college work, the University essentially functioned as a high school for the first few years of its existence. During its first term, twenty-six women and twenty-nine men were admitted, all of whom were white (Sterling 85). The following year, two students, both women, were admitted as college-level students. Unfortunately, neither woman completed their degree, with one withdrawing and the other instead marrying one of the faculty members (Griffin 38-9).

Three years later, in 1869, there were two college freshmen that began college work (Griffin 56). The first graduating class of the University graduated in 1873, its first valedictorian a woman, Flora Richardson (Griffin 58; Dodd 19). It was also in 1873 that a second building was added to the campus, though the original building would still be in use by the time Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen attended; in fact, Kate would write a paper for “Advanced English Composition” arguing that the School of Fine Arts deserved a better location than the school’s dilapidated original structure, North College.

### *KU’s Continued Growth*

The University continued to make strides toward advancing itself as an institution of higher education. The first PhD was awarded by the graduate school in 1895, helping to raise the professional status of the University (Griffin 175). With the growing development of Kansas high schools, the University had closed its preparatory department in 1891, further distinguishing itself as a true university, a move that took place less than a decade before Margaret and Kate would arrive at the University. Even so, the University still sought to ensure students entering it were sufficiently prepared. Enrollment cards from the time, which functioned as genres within this system that conveyed students’ academic and extracurricular records, also required a thorough listing of students’ preparatory school courses and the grades they had received in each course. This feature is apparent in the range of years of enrollment cards I consulted, beginning with Margaret’s 1898 initial enrollment card and Kate’s 1899 card, all the way through Margaret’s 1926 card from when she later returned to complete her degree. Course catalogues likewise contained ample sections devoted to detailing admission requirements. Clearly, the University placed heavy importance on ensuring students were prepared to engage in college-level work before they enrolled in the University, and Margaret and Kate were no exceptions.

Preparatory requirements and the logistical issues they raised would likewise have implications for the Department of English, which I elaborate on below.

Dodd writes that, between 1891 and 1901, the number of students enrolled in the University more than doubled, growing from 505 to 1154 (Dodd 49). During the 1898-1899 academic year, in which Margaret took “Advanced English Composition,” the University had a total enrollment of 1087 students, comprised of 674 men and 413 women. Information about the racial composition of enrolled students during the years of Margaret’s and Kate’s coursework was not collected, neither for the total University enrollment nor for the individual schools.

In the School of Arts, the school in which Margaret was enrolled, there were 558 total students—315 men and 243 women (1899-99 *Course Catalogue* 165). In 1899-1900, enrollment had risen to 1150, comprised of 757 men and 393 women. In the School of Fine Arts, the school in which Kate was enrolled during this year when she took “Advanced English Composition,” there were 98 students—7 men and 91 women. This is the only school within the University during this academic year in which women students outnumbered men (1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* 206). Griffin likewise notes this gender disparity, writing that there were actually “more women than men enrolled in 1860s and early 1870s,” but that by 1872 “there were almost always more males than females” (Griffin 197). Further, “both sexes enrolled in all the departments and schools, but there were few women in the professional schools and comparatively few men in the School of Fine Arts” (Griffin 197). It is clear, then, that Kate would have interacted with a significant number of women students in her Fine Arts courses, though not necessarily within “Advanced English Composition,” which was open to students in all programs, a feature which I discuss further below.

The student population as a whole is described by Griffin as being a “notably varied lot”

(Griffin 196). Though the renewed Morrill Act of 1890 added a provision requiring that states must also improve or establish separate black colleges (Gold, Hobbs, and Berlin 250; Solomon 44), the University of Kansas permitted the admission of Black students from its founding. Though permitted to enroll from the school's start, the first Black student did not actually enroll until 1870 (Griffin 209). Even while celebrating the diverse student population, Griffin notes that racial and socioeconomic disparities caused divisions within the student body, particularly within the student organizations (Griffin 209-19).

Despite its continued growth, the University experienced a series of financial difficulties in the 1890s and early 1900s. Griffin argues that this is partially because Kansans were still skeptical about the value of a university: "Kansans had not yet subscribed—partly because they were economically unable, mainly because they were intellectually or emotionally unable to do so—to a determined and vigorous pursuit of the ideal university" (Griffin 195). Concern about the University's economic situation was palpable with the student population as well. A brief news story in the January 7, 1899 issue of the *Kansas University Weekly* describes the situation: "Statistics show that the University is falling behind, that the appropriations do not increase in proportion to the number of students. This is a most lamentable fact. We sincerely hope for proper treatment at the hands of the State Legislature."

With regard to the cost of attending the University of Kansas during this time, tuition was free for Kansas residents in select schools "and no contingent or admission fees [were] required of inhabitants of the state" (1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* 40). As such, Margaret, a Kansas resident in the School of Arts, paid no money to the University for her coursework. Though Kate was also a Kansas resident, Kate had to pay fees for being enrolled in the School of Fine Arts. The course catalogue from 1899-1900, the year of Kate's admission, opens its section on

expenses for the School of Fine Arts by expressly stating that instructors in this school “receive no compensation from the state for the work of the first three years, and this work must be paid for at rates indicated below. The instruction in the Senior year only is free to residents of Kansas” (1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* 41). As a pianoforte student in her first year, Kate’s fees amounted to thirty-one dollars per quarter.

In addition to any expenses owed to the University, both Margaret and Kate would have had lodging expenses. Dormitories had not yet been built on the campus, and the course catalogue provided some guidance on the average costs of living (for instance, that the average price of “board, rooms, light and fuel may be placed at \$3.75 a week”) (1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* 42-3). Likewise, the *Kansas University Weekly* contained frequent advertisements for rooms available in town. Students were also advised to add other expenses to their budgets, such as “laundry” and “incidentals” (1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* 42-3). It is unclear what Margaret’s living situation was like during her time at KU, only that her home in Greensburg was too far away to travel back and forth by train from Lawrence, save for holidays (for instance, the *Kiowa County Independent* reported on June 16, 1899, that Margaret had returned home from Lawrence). Kate, according to a paper dated May 15, 1900 written for “Advanced English Composition,” had a landlord named Mr. Jones, who she found a “decidedly interesting character” (Hansen, “Our Landlord”).

As for campus life, the University had a number of organizations, including literary societies, clubs, and sports teams. In addition to her participation in the Y. W. C. A., Kate was a member of the Snow Literary Society, which was “a co-educational club featuring lectures and various social events, such as parties and dances, football and hiking, sledding and ice-skating, and outings to look for rocks and fossils” (Mensendiek 9). The University placed an emphasis on

the importance of religion and morality in its campus culture, at least within its official publications. The “General Information” section of the 1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* opens with a section on various “religious aids” of which students were expected to make use, such as the university chapel, various Bible studies, and local churches (31-2). A Women’s League was even established in 1892 by the wives of faculty members with the goal of offering both “friendship and advice” to women students (Griffin 215). Kate was clearly a participant in the religious opportunities on campus via the Y. W. C. A. and Student Volunteer Movement, and Margaret would have found ample opportunity to be involved if it suited her interest.

### *Curricular and Writing Requirements*

By the years of Margaret’s and Kate’s “Advanced English Composition” courses in 1899 and 1900, the University of Kansas was composed of seven university schools: The School of Arts, the School of Fine Arts, the School of Engineering, the School of Law, the School of Pharmacy, the School of Medicine, and the Graduate School. Coursework requirements were determined by the individual university school in which students enrolled. As a final component of this overview of the University, I examine the curriculum requirements at this time which are conveyed within the genre of the course catalogue, focusing most closely on the two schools in which Margaret and Kate were enrolled—the School of Arts and the School of Fine Arts—though I likewise expand on the writing requirements in greater depth in the section on the Department of English that follows. Here I also discuss Margaret’s and Kate’s enrollments in “Advanced English Composition,” which for Margaret was an optional course and for Kate was required.

### The School of Arts

Instruction in writing, whether by the Department of English or by its earlier fusions with

other departments, has always played a role in the structure of KU's School of Arts curriculum. In 1869, the year in which the first two college freshmen began college-level work, the School of Arts (referred to by Griffin throughout his history as "the college") had instated two four-year courses of study. English was required in each—the first called for coursework in English grammar, composition, and elocution, and the second required courses in English grammar, composition, and rhetoric (Griffin 56-7). The School of Arts underwent curricular reforms in the 1870s and 1880s, moving toward a sort of elective system that Griffin describes as "midway between complete freedom and complete prescription" (Griffin 129). Within this structure, freshmen and sophomores followed a clear structure of courses, but juniors and seniors had some ability to choose from a list of approved classes, using their majors and minors to shape their choices (Griffin 129). Minor adjustments to the School of Arts curriculum likewise took place in 1892, 1898, and 1903 (Griffin 304-6). As Skinnell points out, courses in English remained a requirement throughout each of these shifts, and its inclusion may have helped to "maintain connections" between the University and the high schools that had been weakened when the preparatory department was removed (*Conceding Composition* 98).

At the time in which Margaret Kane was enrolled in the School of Arts as a special student, this quasi-elective system was largely still in place. Students spent the terms of their freshman and sophomore years focusing on courses that fell into prescribed groupings labeled "Group A," "Group B," and "Group C"<sup>5</sup> (1898-99 *Course Catalog* 34). The courses within each group differed for each term, but, in general, Group A contained language courses (French, German, Greek, and Latin). The contents of Group B varied from term to term, but Group C consistently contained Physical Training and Military Drill (1898-99 *Course Catalog* 34-5).

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<sup>5</sup> These A, B, and C groupings are not to be confused with English A, B, and C discussed below.

As an example of this structure, I provide an overview of the course of study followed by a student in the School of Arts. However, it should be first noted that Margaret Kane, as a “special student,” did not have to follow this exact course structure. Nevertheless, it is useful to understand the course structure which traditional students followed. During the first term of their freshman year, School of Arts students took two courses within Group A, which included English B I, “Rhetoric,” as an option (1898-99 *Course Catalog* 34). A note following the Group A listing explains that whether or not students took rhetoric depended on the number of years of English preparatory work they had engaged in—they would be required to take rhetoric if they had completed less than three years of English (1898-99 *Course Catalog* 34). First term freshmen also took all of the courses listed in that term’s B and C groups (1898-99 *Course Catalog* 34). During this specific term, Group B contained only Mathematics. The presence of a special stipulation on an English course likewise occurred during students’ second term of their freshman year, in which students who had entered the University with one year of English preparatory work had the option of taking English A I, “History of English Language and Literature,” while those who had taken more years of English did not have this course option (1898-99 *Course Catalog* 34).

During the two terms of their sophomore year, School of Arts students could select English courses as part of their coursework (including “English History” and “Eighteenth Century Literature”), but they were not required to do so. Instead of required English coursework, sophomore students were required to write “three themes of 1000 words each” during each semester (1898-99 *Course Catalog* 35). Likewise, during their junior and senior years, students had to write “two forensics or equivalent theses” during each term (1898-99 *Course Catalog* 35). These, themes, theses, and forensics were part of an overarching forensic

system of writing requirements employed at KU (as well as many other U.S. colleges and universities during this time) (Russell). At this time at KU, forensic requirements were utilized within the School of Arts, the School of Fine Arts, and the School of Engineering (1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* 120). I discuss the forensic system in greater depth below, but it is most simply understood as a written version of the oral rhetorical exercises that had previously existed. All theses and forensics were graded by the faculty in the Department of English. Completion of forensics or theses was the only major mandate of students' final two years of coursework in the School of Arts, as they were largely able to choose from a range of "optional studies" in various departments, including those in the Department of English (1898-99 *Course Catalog* 35-6). "Advanced English Composition" was one such optional study.

As a special student in the School of Arts, Margaret Kane had more flexibility in determining her schedule of courses than traditional students. Special students first had to "file with the Registrar of the University, prior to entering classes, a statement of the work which they desire to pursue, and a written statement from the instructors under whom work is to be carried that the student is prepared to undertake the work specified." Then, "With the advice and consent of the Faculty, special students [might] carry other studies than that in which they are specializing, provided such studies are closely connected with their special work and necessary to it" (1898-1899 *Course Catalogue* 31-2). In the course of study for non-special students in the School of Arts, they could select "Advanced English Composition" as one of their "optional studies" during their junior or senior years (1898-99 *Course Catalogue* 34-6). Margaret, however, opted to do so during the second term of her freshman year, spring 1899.

Margaret Kane's course notes for "Advanced English Composition" clearly indicate that she took the course during the spring 1899 term, her second semester at KU. In the interest of

full transparency about my archival work, Margaret's enrollment two cards contained in the University Archives division of Spencer Research Library present contradictory information, both in relation to one other and in relation to Margaret's course notes. In the enrollment card from her 1898 matriculation, she is listed as taking the course during the spring term of her junior year, spring 1901. In her second enrollment card, which is from her return to KU in 1926 to pursue a Bachelor's degree in English, she is listed as taking the course in the spring term of her sophomore year, spring 1900. Based on the clarity of her course notes and their repeated inclusion of the course title and the date of each lecture, my conjecture is that her enrollment cards—which are a combination of handwritten text and circling or selection of pre-typed requirements—suffered from clerical error. An added difficulty with the potential unreliability of Margaret's enrollment cards is that I cannot be certain which other courses she took during the same semester as “Advanced English Composition.”

### The School of Fine Arts

The School of Fine Arts, the school in which Kate Hansen was enrolled, developed substantially in the decade leading up to her enrollment in her 1900 “Advanced English Composition” course. Griffin notes that much of the development within this school was due to the work of dean George B. Penny, who claimed in 1890 that the curriculum was far too limited. Indeed, in 1890, “there was only a two-year piano course leading to the degree of Graduate in Music, and several courses in drawing, perspective, and painting leading to no degree at all” (Griffin 294). In 1892, Penny was able to institute a Bachelor of Music degree, and the school was renamed the School of Music and Painting. It then became the School of Fine Arts in 1894 and remained so when Kate was enrolled (Griffin 294).

In the School of Fine Arts as it existed in 1900, the courses of study students followed

were based on their particular specialties. Its structure had clear distinctions from that of the School of Arts. For instance, Fine Arts utilized no A, B, and C groupings to categorize courses. The School of Fine Arts courses of study were also more prescriptive in nature than the quasi-elective system in the School of Arts and included multiple required courses each term all the way through completion of their degrees (versus the relative freedom of the final two years of the School of Arts curriculum). Even so, the School of Fine Arts did allow for the taking of some optional courses in addition to required ones, so Fine Arts students did have some flexibility with how to round out their course selection each term. The School of Fine Arts likewise participated in the forensic system of writing requirements shared by the schools of Arts, Fine Arts, and Engineering and graded by the Department of English. However, examination of the presence of forensic requirements in the School of Fine Arts shows that there were some subtle variations in its implementation.

As an example, Kate's focus was in Pianoforte, a program which had expanded from the 1890 two-year course to a full four-year course. In the Pianoforte emphasis, freshmen in their first term were required to take Piano I, Technic, Harmony, and Physical Training I, as well as participate in Seminary, Recitals and Ensemble Playing. In their second term, Pianoforte students took this same set of courses again, though Physical Training was now course number II. In addition, like in the School of Arts, the writing requirement during the first freshman term was English B I, "Rhetoric and English Language," while English A I "English Literature" was required in the second freshman term<sup>6</sup>. Unlike in the School of Arts, though, students took these

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<sup>6</sup> The University Catalogue shows that some courses offered by the Department of English underwent slight name changes between the 1898-99 and 1899-1900 school years, which accounts for the slight difference between English A I and B I in 1898-99 and 1899-1900.

English courses regardless of their preparatory work. All Fine Arts students, regardless of program, completed three themes during each term of their sophomore years, another similarity to the School of Arts. Forensics were also required within the junior and senior years, but there was one small distinction that took place within the first term of Fine Arts students' junior year—all Fine Arts students, rather than completing two forensics each term of these final two years, were required to take “Advanced English Composition” during the first term of their junior year, which then excused them from that term's forensics (1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* 93; 1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 16). In this school, then, the course was a requirement, rather than an optional course as in the School of Arts.<sup>7</sup>

As with Margaret, the logistics of Kate's enrollment in “Advanced English Composition” at the time that she took the course are not completely clear. Kate took the course in spring 1900 as a second term freshman. According to the course of study provided within the catalogue described above, Kate should have been enrolled in English A I, “English Literature” during this term. She likewise should have been enrolled in English B I, “Rhetoric and English Language” during her first term, but her enrollment card shows that she took no English course at all that first term. Possible substitutions for English A I and B I for Fine Arts students are not described in the catalogue. The included plan of study for students in this emphasis did not involve taking “Advanced English Composition” until the first semester of students' junior year, when it was likewise required for all other Fine Arts students. It is unclear why Kate instead took it during the second term of her freshman year. Nevertheless, her papers produced for this course, which I analyze in depth in the following chapter, clearly identify in each individual paper's

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<sup>7</sup>The School of Engineering also required enrollment in “Advanced English Composition” and excused students from forensic-writing that term, but the specific term in which the course had to be taken varied amongst the five different courses of study offered by the School of Engineering.

superscriptions that she was enrolled in “Advanced English Composition” during the spring 1900 semester.

### **The Department of English**

Having provided a brief picture of what it was like for Margaret and Kate to attend the University of Kansas, including the general curriculum requirements within each of their schools during the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century that are chiefly conveyed within the course catalogue genre within this genre system, I now narrow to an examination of the Department of English during this time.

Compared with those of the University as a whole, the records of the Department of English surrounding the time of Margaret’s and Kate’s coursework are somewhat scarce. There are only two photographs connected with the Department of English taken prior to 1950 preserved in the Kenneth Spencer Research Library’s holdings, one of which is pictured below in figure 2. Within its artificial records, (which Kenneth Spencer Research Library defines as those assembled by archivists in their collection and organization of materials, rather than ones contributed to archives by departments or organizations themselves), the Department of English has materials dating only as far back as 1885-86. Between 1888 and 1900, there are only ten individual text-based documents contained in Spencer Research Library’s holdings. I draw heavily on these materials, but by necessity also look to archival material from outside the department, as well as to previously published scholarship.

In this section, I examine three major features of the Department of English as it existed during Margaret’s and Kate’s enrollment in “Advanced English Composition” in 1899 and 1900. These features include the structure of the department, its staff, and its course offerings, including its division into English A, B, and C categories; the forensic system, a system of

required writing that was a written adaption of previous oral exercises that involved themes, theses, and forensics; and the implementation of detailed policies and procedures by the department for its successful functioning. Throughout, I historicize each feature and show its significance to the state of the English Department at the time of Margaret’s and Kate’s coursework. Finally, I provide details about “Advanced English Composition” itself.



Figure 2 An English classroom at the University of Kansas in 1899. English Professor Edwin M. Hopkins is pictured on the far left.

### *Departmental Structure, Staff, and Course Offerings*

The Department of English underwent multiple name changes and restructurings prior to Margaret’s and Kate’s “Advanced English Composition” courses, some of which reflect its changing relationship to other disciplines. In the University’s early days, English courses were not housed within an independent unit or department. In 1877, for instance, the University as a

whole was divided into four departments: Collegiate, Preparatory, Musical, and Normal (1877-78 *Course Catalogue* 27). Though some literature courses appear within the Collegiate Department, no writing-specific courses appear at all within this year's catalogue.

It is clear that English courses still had no independent home by the year 1880, as the teaching of English courses was handled by only one faculty member, James H. Canfield, who was likewise responsible for courses in a range of other subjects. According to Griffin, Canfield taught "history and English language and literature," "grammar, composition, etymology, rhetoric, and early and modern literature," plus "American, Greek, Roman, and medieval and modern European history" (Griffin 143). Canfield himself argued that his position, the Chair of History and English Language and Literature, simply held too much responsibility (Griffin 143). In September 1881, the Board of Regents meeting minutes, another genre within this larger system, note that this position was split into a Chair of History and Political Science and a professorship of English Literature, Rhetoric, and Belles-Lettres (Griffin 145-6; 1881 BOR minutes, 362).

Now separated into a much more specialized department than in its previous fusion with History and Political Science, The Department of English Literature, Rhetoric, and Belles-Lettres maintained this name until April 1895, when the department name was changed by the Kansas Board of Regents to The Department of English Language and Literature (1895 BOR minutes 18). This was still the department's formal name in 1899 and 1900 when Margaret and Kate were enrolled in their English courses, though all of the department's publications abbreviated the name to "Department of English." But change occurred not long after the conclusion of Margaret's and Kate's courses when, in January 1903, the department was divided into the Department of English Literature and the Department of Rhetoric and English Language (1903

BOR minutes 308). Randall Popken notes that the departments then merged again in 1909, and they remain united today (“The WPA as Publishing Scholar” 19).

In addition to its name and relationship with other departments, the Department of English underwent changes to its course offerings. The academic year 1886-1887 was a pivotal year in the transition toward the Department as Margaret and Kate would experience it in 1899 and 1900. For one, it was during the 1886-1887 academic year that the department had a set of “prescribed studies,” which included both a freshman rhetoric course requirement using A. S. Hill’s book, *The Principles of Rhetoric*, as well as required themes, theses, and forensics, a structure David Russell terms “the forensic system” and which I describe more fully below (1886-87 *Course Catalogue* 64). But another important distinction occurred during this catalogue year, which was the first listing out of all English courses available for students to choose from as part of their optional studies in their junior and senior years, a feature of the elective system I describe above. It is here, in this 1886-87 list of optional English courses, that “Advanced English Composition” first appears in the course catalogue. I discuss this first offering of “Advanced English Composition,” as well as the offerings of that were taken by Margaret and Kate in further depth below.

In 1893-94, another important shift occurred within the structure of the Department of English and its course offerings, and one which would bring the Department even closer to resembling its 1899-1900 iteration. Rather than simply a numbered listing of courses in the catalogue, which is the way courses appeared from 1887 until 1892, the structure of English course offerings instead became divided into two categories: English A, “English Literature,” and English B, “Rhetoric and English Language.” “Advanced English Composition” was grouped within the English B category, relating more strongly to rhetorical and language

concerns than to literature. Later, a third category of courses would be added, English C, “Elocution and Oratory,” which included courses such as “The Elements of Vocal Expression,” “Action in Oratory,” and “Oratory” (1898-99 *Course Catalogue* 51). However, it would not remain so for long. During the 1900-1901 school year, English C was removed as a unit of the English Department (1900-1901 *Course Catalogue*). Though it is unclear what motivated this shift,<sup>8</sup> it is clear that the English Department was in the midst of a changing structure during and after Margaret’s and Kate’s “Advanced English Composition” courses in 1899 and 1900.

As far as its spatial location within the University, in 1899 and 1900 the office of the Department of English was housed within room 22 of Fraser Hall. Far expanded from its early iteration staffed by James H. Canfield alone, the faculty was now composed of two full professors, one associate professor, and two assistant professors. The full professors included Charles G. Dunlap, Professor of English Literature, and Edwin M. Hopkins, Professor of Rhetoric and English Language. The associate professor (of Elocution and Oratory) was Charles Vickrey, and the assistant professors included Raphael D. O’Leary and H. Foster Jones (both Assistant Professors of English) (1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* 65-6). These five men are the only English faculty listed in the course catalogue; however, documents produced internally by the Department of English from this and the preceding year likewise list seminar librarians (Edith M. Clark and Dora C. Renn) and manuscript readers of the department (Robert Wilson Neal, Annie H. Abel, and Will B. Sutton), several roles of which were occupied by women. So,

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<sup>8</sup> Connors and others have pointed out that there was a movement of rhetoric teachers leaving the National Council of Teachers of English in 1914 to form the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking; likewise, many of these teachers pushed for the development of separate Departments of Speech in their universities (“Writing the History of Our Discipline” 51). This movement may have occurred at KU prior to 1914 and explain the removal of English C.

although women helped to comprise and perform important labor within the department during the years of Margaret's and Kate's courses, the professorship roles, those that the University apparently assigned the most institutional credibility by their listing in the catalogue that circulated to all of the other schools, belonged only to men. Additionally, as I discuss in further depth below, Margaret's and Kate's "Advanced English Composition" courses were co-taught by two of these male professors, Edwin M. Hopkins and Raphael D. O'Leary.

*The Forensic System: Themes, Theses, and Forensics*

Another key feature of the Department of English at the time of Margaret's and Kate's courses was the presence of the forensic system of writing. Like the required rhetoric course and listing of course options, the forensic system began at the University of Kansas during the 1886-87 school year. Russell broadly defines the forensic system as "various college wide writing requirements from entrance to graduation, which endured in the curriculum until 1900 at Harvard and elsewhere into the 1920s" (Russell 51). Grouped within this large category of "various college wide requirements," the forensic system at KU encompassed *themes*, *theses*, and *forensics*, all of which were graded by Department of English faculty. An understanding of the forensic system's origins helps to explain its first appearance in 1886, as well as its endurance to the time of Margaret's and Kate's coursework.

According to Russell, the forensic system originated from *rhetoricals*, which were an often-required component of writing in the "old liberal curriculum" utilized in nineteenth-century United States colleges, including the University of Kansas (Russell 38, 41). Rhetoricals were "a public oral exhibition of rhetorical skill" (Russell 40). At KU prior to 1886, students were required to engage in these "daily rhetorical exercises" immediately following morning chapel, with each student required to speak twice during the year (Russell 61). Exemplifying

Russell's claim that some universities "clung to oral, community rhetorical performance," KU actually reinstated rhetoricals once again from 1892 until 1894, though at this time only juniors and seniors had to deliver speeches (Russell 60-1).

After it had first ceased rhetoricals in 1866, KU moved to a forensic system, which endured throughout and past the second installation of rhetoricals. KU's forensic system, according to Russell, followed the model of Harvard University's, which began around 1867 (Russell 342, note 42). The change from rhetoricals to forensics can be viewed as part of the "transition from oral to written requirements" within the new liberal culture (52). Forensics are best understood as a continuation of the previous oral tradition, but forensics were "a *written* adaptation of oral debate" (Russell 52, emphasis mine). During the time of Margaret's and Kate's 1899 and 1900 coursework, forensic requirements were utilized at the University of Kansas within the School of Arts, the School of Fine Arts, and the School of Engineering (1899-1900 *Course Catalogue* 120).

There is no evidence that students at KU were required to deliver their forensic writings orally. However, the *English Bulletin*, a department publication authored to students outlining procedures for the submission of student work, which I discuss in the section below, does make it clear that the delivery of orations could substitute in place of forensics. Appropriate substitutions included "public orations," those delivered on "any public occasion at the University," which excused a student from one forensic, or "commencement orations," which excused a student from their last senior forensic (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 16). In either case, students were required to submit their orations "to an English instructor for criticism at least a week before delivered" (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 16-17).

When the forensic system first began, students were able to substitute papers they had

written for other courses, provided that they met certain requirements. Russell writes that by 1890, however, when enrollments were continually growing, “the English department refused to accept papers on topics it had not approved in advance to prevent conflicts over its competence to evaluate technical material in highly discipline-specific fields,” which was the motivation for the English Department’s publication of its first *English Bulletin* in 1894, which outlined acceptable subjects for forensic system writings and logistical criteria for submitting them (Russell 61).

The forensic system at KU was composed of differing genres of writing, including themes, theses, and forensics, though the distinction between each is not always clear. Speaking specifically of Harvard, where the forensic systems began in 1878, Russell says that forensics “differed from themes in that they ‘should be matters of debate,’ with both sides of the issue ‘acceptable of good argumentative treatment’” (Russell 54). The surviving themes that Russell located from Harvard appear to him to be “primarily expository” (54). At KU, themes referred exclusively to the required writing done within most courses of study by sophomores, and themes were expected to be “not less than 1000 words each” and had specific due dates throughout the year (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 9).

Regarding the distinction between theses and forensics, which were the junior and senior requirements, the *English Bulletin* stated that “All Junior and Senior papers submitted will be designated *forensics* when argumentative, and *theses* when expository. The argumentative method is to be employed whenever the subject will admit of it” (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 14-15). Topics for theses and forensics were chosen from a list of subjects within the *English Bulletin*, had to be at least 2000 words in length, and, like themes, were due on set calendar dates (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 9).

Though distinct from regular coursework, the required writings within KU's forensic system did require students to enroll in designated credit hours to complete them. Students who failed to enroll for their appropriate work would "receive only a passing grade (III) on the work of the term" (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 9). Further, "This enrolment [sic] will be made whether substitutions are to be made or not" (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 9).

Harvard's forensic system began to fade by the late 1890s and had completely ended there by 1899, which, according to Russell, was due to increasing university enrollments and specialization within disciplines (Russell 55-6). Due to the unsustainable labor involved in grading the required themes, theses, and forensics, the Department of English at KU petitioned the School of Arts to have its forensic requirements dropped in 1902, but this request was unsuccessful (Russell 61). Finally, in 1905, "the faculty reluctantly agreed" to the removal of forensics, but "substituted a four-hour junior rhetoric course, which was in turn dropped for lack of staff" (Russell 61). I elaborate on the challenges of the forensic system for the English faculty in the section that follows. During the years of Margaret's and Kate's "Advanced English Composition" work, the faculty in the Department of English were in the midst of the forensic system, just a couple of years away from first petitioning to have it removed.

### *Policies and Procedures*

In the two decades leading up to the time Margaret and Kate engaged in their coursework, the Department of English established multiple policies and procedures in order to most effectively carry out its teaching. For one, the department needed to make clear recommendations and requirements regarding preparatory coursework, the work students engaged in prior to being accepted and admitted to KU, and they did so using a specific genre within this institutional system. In 1895, the English Department published its first

*Supplementary Circular*, a twenty-five page pamphlet listing the “Courses in English Required for Admission to the University of Kansas.” Authored by Edwin M. Hopkins, the primary instructor of Margaret’s and Kate’s courses, the 1898-1900 *Circular* discusses the rapid changes taking place in high school preparatory work, stating that the “greatest present evils” in high schools were their lack of “uniformity in course and subjects”, as well as lack of “arrangement of time” (1898-1900 *Supplementary Circular* 5). What was needed instead, claimed the *Circular*, was a “more definite system of instruction from the grades to the University” (1898-1900 *Supplementary Circular* 5). The audience to whom the *Circular* and its recommendations for adjustments to the preparatory coursework in English are directed is not completely clear; it may have been directed to secondary school administrators or curriculum designers, or perhaps to high school teachers themselves. Certainly, some of the content indicates that the information was intended to at least be conveyed to teachers second or third-hand, such as a note on the final page which “caution[s] the teacher” that excessive commenting on student work may not be a productive or sustainable practice (1898-1900 *Supplementary Circular* 25).

Whether this supposition about the audience for the *Circular* is correct or not, the need for this circular is described by Hopkins as quite pressing. The desire to prepare students for admission to KU and its English course was doubtless an important one, but the genre of the *Supplementary Circular* also manages to maintain a dynamic of power between KU’s Department of English and Kansas high schools, allowing the more highly educated experts to determine proper methods of instruction, coursework, and textbook selection.

Connected to (yet also in addition to) preparatory requirements, the Department of English at KU had to find ways to manage the grading of written assignments of students once they were admitted to the University, and, again, they did so via a specific genre within this

system. The struggle to manage the grading of student writing was due at least in part to the dramatic increases in student enrollment in the nineteenth century, including the growth of women students discussed above. At KU, enrollment numbers totaled 1087 in 1898-88 and 1150 in 1899-1900. Large enrollments likewise had significant implications for the use of the forensic system in the schools of Arts, Fine Arts, and Engineering, all of the themes, theses, and forensics for which had to be graded by the English faculty.

In response to the challenge of managing this work, the Department of English published its *English Bulletin* for the first time in 1894. This booklet was written by the department and intended to be read by all students engaged in English coursework (which itself also sometimes included the production of themes, theses, and forensics) and forensic system writings themselves. The 1899-1901 *English Bulletin*<sup>9</sup> opens by articulating its purpose, remarking heavily on the “need of a system” for handling its immense number of themes, theses, and forensics received by the department. The *Bulletin* remarks that

The English Department receives each year from 1,100 students about 45,000 pages of manuscript aggregating nine million words, requiring for critical reading and correction the equivalent of four years' labor by a single reader working four hours per day, which is the limit of endurance for such work. Only by making it as systematic as possible can it be done at all; and it is evident that in the handling of such a mass of material every detail, however minute, is of importance [ . . . ] every student is required, by careful attention to these instructions, to aid the department in the most burdensome part of its duty. (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 8)

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<sup>9</sup> There are four issues of the *English Bulletin* preserved in the Department of English artificial records. The 1899-1901 edition is the only one that spans two academic years rather than one, and the document itself offers no explanation as to why.

The Department of English at the time of Margaret's and Kate's "Advanced English Composition" courses had very specific procedural expectations for the submission and handling of student work in their writing courses and in their completion of themes, theses, and forensics, and the *English Bulletin* served as a genre through which those expectations could be conveyed.

The 1899-1901 *English Bulletin* instructs students to use paper of a specific size, "known at the local bookstores as 'theme paper'" (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 9-10). Writing was to be done only on one side of the paper using black ink, and script was to be "as clear as possible, avoiding the angular and microscopic styles" (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 10). Pages were to be numbered and folded lengthwise when submitted (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 10). On the exterior of the folded pages, which would be readily seen on the outside of the paper, students were expected to write a very specific "superscription" containing, in the following order: "First, the subject of the paper; then, in this order: the writer's name, the writer's class, and the date of presentation" (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 10). Accompanying these instructions in the bulletin were diagrams and examples of correct, complete superscriptions. Students were required to submit papers by their due dates; to do so, "all papers [were] to be left in the box at the office of the English department, room 22, and at no other place" (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 17).

In addition to specifications for turning in work, the *Bulletin* also explained expectations of instructors for when and how graded papers would be returned: "All papers accepted will be critically read, corrected and made ready for return to the writers at the earliest possible date. Notice will be given on the bulletin board at the door of the English office, room 22, and in the *University Weekly*, of the date and hour when the papers will be returned" (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 18). Immediately following this passage, though, the *Bulletin* returns once again to instructions for students, for "Each student will be expected to receive his paper at the time

announced, and at no other time; and until a paper has been called for and redeposited, no other will be accepted from the writer of it. Within one week after this date all papers must have been redeposited at the office of the department for permanent filing. No credit will be given for papers not so deposited” (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 18). In other words, the receipt of graded papers was not the last responsibility of students; they then had to *return* the graded paper back to the Department, lest they risk not receiving credit for their work.

Much like a contemporary handbook, the *English Bulletin* also provided expectations for quoting and citing material and constructing bibliographies (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 11-12). Particular requirements were also provided for the structuring of outlines (*English Bulletin* 13-14). And, much like a modern syllabus, the *Bulletin* provided late work submission policies, office hours, and a grading system and scale. Work was assigned II, III, or I—a grade of I meant the paper had received above ninety percent; a II meant above eighty percent, and a III meant above a seventy percent. Pluses and minuses were likewise utilized to indicate intermediate grades (*English Bulletin* 18). Clearly, the *English Bulletin* played an important role within the genre system connected to writing instruction at KU.

### **Advanced English Composition**

With this understanding of the Department of English in mind, I turn to the specific courses for which the archived writings of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen were completed, “Advanced English Composition.” This course was first listed and presumably first offered at KU in 1886-87. During this academic year, the course appears in the course catalogue as course number twelve in a list of thirteen “optional studies” courses offered by the department as part of the larger elective system (64-5). This first offering of the course is described as “Lectures. Exercises. Theses. Practical criticism of the style and construction of students’ work in English”

and was taught by Professor Marsh (1886-87 *Course Catalogue* 64-5). According to Griffin, during this decade of the 1880s, the Department still had only one professor of English literature, rhetoric and belles-lettres, and this professor supervised any and all assistant professors.

Professor Marsh, who instructed this first iteration of “Advanced English Composition,” served in this professorship beginning in 1886, but he remained at KU for only three years (Griffin 145-6).

During each of the two years of my study, 1898-1899 and 1899-1900, two sections of “Advanced English Composition” were offered per year, with specifications as to what majors were allowed to enroll in each. One section was reserved for and required to be taken by students in the School of Engineering, offered two days per week, and taught by just one instructor, Mr. O’Leary. Margaret and Kate, neither of whom were Engineering students, took the other section, which met three days per week (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays) with a lecture at 8:00 and a seminar at 9:00, and was co-taught by two instructors, “Professor Hopkins and Mr. O’Leary” (1898-99 *Course Catalogue*; 1899-1900 *Course Catalogue*). Again, for Margaret, this course was optional, but it was required for Kate, though not during the specific semester she chose to take it, and these specifications are conveyed to students within the genre of the course catalogue.

### *Course Description*

The ways in which “Advanced English Composition” is described varies somewhat across the genre system of the University and Department. The course description for the class in the course catalogue—which, again, serves as a key informational genre within this genre system—during Margaret’s academic year describes “Lectures, exercises, theses; practical and individual criticism as to structure and style of each student’s written work” (50). For Kate’s

course, which took place exactly one year later in the Spring of 1900, the catalogue describes the course as “A study of the general theory of all forms of discourse, with copious original exercises” (119). Within the *English Bulletin* of 1899-1901, the course is a “Study of the forms of discourse with reference to structure and style; lectures, exercises, reference reading, and seminar” (6). The first description, the one for Margaret’s course, seems to stress the amount of feedback students would receive on their work from their instructors. The second, the description for Kate’s course, shifts to use of the phrase “forms of discourse” and emphasizes the amount of writing, calling it “copious original exercises.” The final description, found within the *English Bulletin* that spanned both course years, again calls the course a “study of the forms of discourse,” (though no indications is specifically provided as to what these forms consist of) but, unlike the other two descriptions, gives a better sense of the range of types of work and instruction students would complete and receive (they would attend lectures, write exercises, perform reference reading, and engage in a seminar, which may indicate less actual writing was required than the other iterations). The motivations for the distinctions across these course descriptions are unremarked upon in any faculty meeting minutes or other archival documents I have consulted.

### *Edwin M. Hopkins*

A final factor to consider in understanding the writings of Margaret and Kate is the instructors who taught their courses, Edwin M. Hopkins and Raphael D. O’Leary. Edwin Mortimer Hopkins, the same instructor who authored the *Supplementary Circular* and who is frequently mentioned in histories of composition, received his PhD from Princeton University and spent his entire career teaching in the Department of English at the University of Kansas, spanning from 1889 to 1937 (Popken, “Edwin Hopkins” 620). Hopkins led a busy, productive

life, both within and outside the university, as the personal papers and other materials contained at Kenneth Spencer Research Library pertaining to him, as well as the scholarship of the foremost Hopkins scholar, Randall Popken, indicate.

Within composition histories, including those authored by Connors, Berlin, Russell, and Skinnell, Hopkins is referenced most often for his work on the issue of labor in the field of English. An activist and advocate throughout his career for fair teaching loads and working conditions, Hopkins' most cited work is his empirical study, *The Labor and Cost of the Teaching of English in College and Secondary Schools with Especial Reference to English Composition* (1915), which scholar Popken calls the "first of its kind in composition history." Hopkins surveyed close to nine hundred teachers via U. S. mail, and this final report was the product of fifteen years of survey-taking and data interpretation (Popken "The WPA" 7-11). Dedicated to both teaching and research, Hopkins published iterations of this and other work throughout his career. For instance, he also published his less-referenced handbook for teachers of literature, *Handbook on the Teaching of English* ("The WPA as Publishing Scholar" 6). Afterward, he published several articles in journals like *Journal of Education* and *Education* ("The WPA as Publishing Scholar" 22).

Hopkins was likewise active within professional organizations in rhetoric and composition and the field of English more broadly, serving as a leader in the professionalization of secondary and post-secondary writing instruction. He was a founding member and early president of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), as well as the author of the leading article in the first issue of the *English Journal* (Popken, "The WPA" 6; NCTE). Additionally, Hopkins was a founder of the Kansas Association of Teachers of English (Popken, "The WPA" 6). He also served as Writing Program Administrator to KU's Department of

English later in his career. His service to the KU community spanned beyond the classroom, as well. In 1900, Hopkins formed KU's first literary club, the Quill Club (O'Leary 238). His personal diaries and papers show that he frequently played the organ, directed the choir, and even wrote and delivered sermons in the university chapel (Hopkins, personal diary). Hopkins was also KU's first football coach (Dodd 47).

With regard to Hopkins' teaching of composition, Popken points out that, sadly and somewhat ironically, "Hopkins's story is particularly revealing because he was both a victim of labor conditions in his day and a theorist on the issue of those conditions" ("Edwin Hopkins and the Costly Labor of Composition Teaching" 620). As the 1899-1901 *English Bulletin* and its explanation of the hours required to grade student themes, theses and forensics emphasizes, the teaching of writing at KU was no small task. Hopkins' teaching loads seemed to vary from semester to semester: during the first term of the 1898-99 year, he taught four preparations; during the second term, he taught two (one "Advanced English Composition" alongside O'Leary and the other English B VIII "Teacher's Course in Language and Rhetoric") (1898-99 *Course Catalogue* 49-51). During the 1899-1900 year, he taught 5 preparations during the first term and two during the second term (one "Advanced English Composition" alongside O'Leary and the other English B IV, a "Teacher's Course").

Hopkins' personal diaries from the semesters of Margaret's and Kate's courses frequently record teaching classes for several hours per day, and numerous entries list "work on lecture and papers" as time-consuming tasks (Hopkins, personal diary, March 10, 1900). In his own analysis of Hopkins' diaries, Popken tallies the diary entries in which Hopkins read student papers during the span of the first two years of Hopkins' employment at KU, 1889-1891. Popken finds that "Hopkins read student papers nearly 20% of all his calendar days" (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins"

624).

In later years, Hopkins' health suffered because of overwork (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 630). Hopkins continued to advocate on behalf of writing teachers throughout his career, to mixed success, but he more than likely brought to his teaching of Margaret's and Kate's "Advanced English Composition" course an all-too-personal awareness of the difficult task faced by himself and other instructors to read and assess the work of so many students. In other words, these instructors likely held a strong awareness of how their work was shaped by materials conditions. Further, in the case of Hopkins, in particular, he placed value on activism and advocacy work that sought to improve those conditions.

*Raphael D. O'Leary*

Raphael Dorman (R. D.) O'Leary, the second co-teacher of "Advanced English Composition" to Margaret and Kate, was an 1893 graduate of the University of Kansas, where Edwin M. Hopkins had been his rhetoric professor. At the time, only Hopkins and one other professor—Charles G. Dunlap—comprised the English Department faculty (O'Leary and O'Leary 76). After graduating from KU, O'Leary earned a second Bachelor's degree from Harvard University in 1895 (O'Leary and O'Leary 150). The following fall, O'Leary received a one-year teaching contract at the University of Kansas to teach English, a contract that was extended the following year despite the school's financial difficulties resulting from the 1893 depression (O'Leary and O'Leary 219). According to Margaret R. O'Leary and Dennis S. O'Leary<sup>10</sup>, Raphael D. O'Leary's hiring and subsequent extended contract was likely due to the fact that "the English department was woefully short of instructors to teaching English

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<sup>10</sup> Dennis S. O'Leary is grandchild of Raphael D. O'Leary and the husband of Margaret R. O'Leary. Margaret and Dennis self-published their biography of Raphael D. O'Leary, *The English Professor*, in 2016.

composition to incoming freshmen” (219). This supposition coincides with my findings about KU’s increased enrollment and use of the forensic system, which contributed to the labor of English faculty.

With regard to his specific teaching load, unlike Hopkins, O’Leary regularly taught multiple sections of the same course during the years of 1898-99 and 1899-1900. According to the course listings within the University catalogues, O’Leary’s teaching loads were as follows during these years: three sections of one course during the first term of 1898-99; two courses with two sections each during the second term; five sections distributed among three courses in the first term of 1899-1900; and three total sections divided among two courses in the second.

O’Leary was promoted from assistant professor to associate professor in the spring of 1901. One year later, O’Leary helped to establish the University’s *Graduate Magazine* as well as served at its first editor-in-chief (O’Leary and O’Leary 245). He remained at KU for the remainder of his teaching career, which concluded in 1935 (“Guide to the Raphael D. O’Leary Collection”). Hopkins and O’Leary first began to co-teach “Advanced English Composition” in the spring of 1897, with Hopkins teaching the lecture at eight and O’Leary teaching the seminar at nine (O’Leary and O’Leary 226). Thus, when Margaret Kane took the course in the spring of 1899, Hopkins and O’Leary were not unused to working together, nor were they unused to teaching Advanced English Composition.

This in-depth analysis of the University of Kansas, the Department of English, and “Advanced English Composition” helps to situate the writings of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen and their particular uptakes of instruction, showing the larger institutional structure and genre system within which these women wrote and learned. For instance, this analysis of the genre system shows that, in attempting to further establish itself as a legitimate, rigorous

university and to distance itself from its preparatory school past, KU and the Department of English developed detailed writing and literature requirements for admission, as well as crafted suggestions to secondary school teachers for how specifically to ensure students met those requirements, as presented within the *Supplementary Circular*. Once admitted to the University, writing within the required genres of courses such as “Advanced English Composition” entailed abiding by the expectations of instructors, as well as the larger Department of English, the university schools and their varying programs of study (which are frequently detailed in the course catalogues), and the University itself. KU’s Department of English struggled to manage the labor of responding to large amounts of student writing required by the forensic system, and that efforts to mitigate that labor appear as mandates to students in genres such as the *English Bulletin*. Narrowing further to a detailed analysis of student writing within this system and the ways in which a specific woman responded to instruction, I proceed in the next chapter to a case study of the 1899 course notes of Margaret Kane.

### **Chapter 3: Recording Instruction (Ideologies and All): The 1899 Course Notes of Margaret Kane**

The Margaret Kane Collection is housed at Kenneth Spencer Research Library in Lawrence, Kansas, and consists of only one cubic foot box. This box chiefly contains Margaret's course notes from her return to KU in 1926. In fact, this year is the only one by which the box and its contents have been catalogued; its finding aid makes no mention of course notes from other years. However, my initial perusal of the Margaret Kane Collection revealed that this box likewise contains Margaret's course notes from her "Advanced English Composition" course during her initial enrollment at the University of Kansas in the spring of 1899. The reasons for the thirty-year gap in Margaret's KU attendance are unclear; also unclear are the reasons her 1899 course notes are not mentioned in the collection's finding aid.

Margaret's "Advanced English Composition" notes consist of eighty-seven unlined, loose-leaf pages, each of which contains writing on the front and back sides, amounting to a total of one hundred seventy-four pages of notes. The notebook and its pages measure approximately eight and a half inches long by five and a half inches wide, making their pages smaller in size than the paper on which Kate Hansen was required by the *English Bulletin* to complete her course assignments.

Margaret's pages of notes are hole-punched on their shorter sides and fitted into a red and black bracketed notebook. All writing on the pages is completed in pencil. Some of Margaret's pages of notes are completely filled with writing; others contain only a few lines. Margaret appears to have written on all pages while they were loose sheets, rather than writing on them while they were affixed within the notebook. This is apparent because none of the pages show indications of creasing, nor do they contain smaller or distorted handwriting from having to write

within the notebook's interior margin. Rather, it appears that she (or someone else) secured the pages onto the notebook's metal brads after the pages had been written on. An example page is pictured below in figure 3.

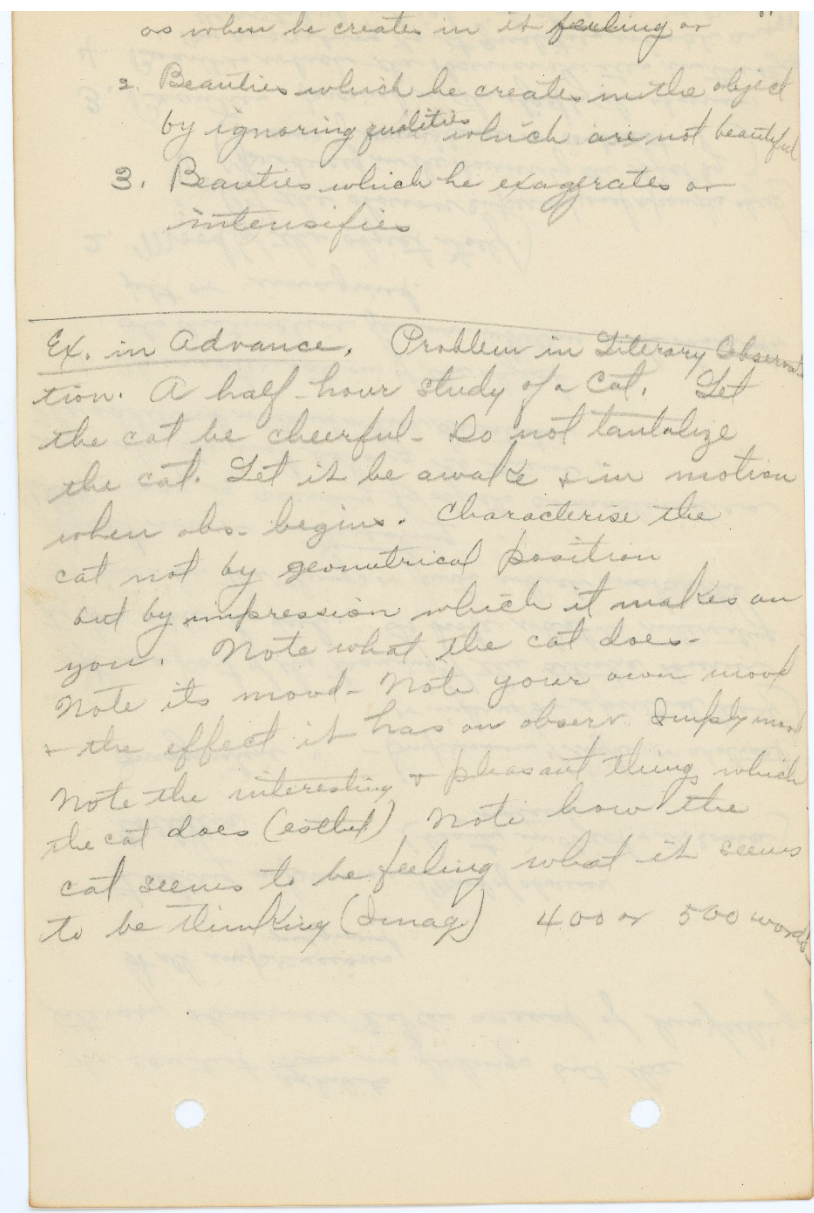


Figure 3 Margaret Kane's assignment description for a "Problem in Literary Observation" involving a "half-hour study of a cat."

Dates are included sporadically throughout Margaret Kane's "Advanced English Composition" notes. These dates range from the earliest, February 1, 1899, to the latest, May 31, 1899. However, determining the precise dates during the semester on which specific notes were

taken is not an exact science. A total of twenty-three dates are listed within the notes, all of which occur on Mondays, Wednesdays, or Fridays, (though not *every* Monday, Wednesday, and Friday), which coincides with the *1898-99 Course Catalogue's* description of the course meeting on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday schedule. While each of the pages containing date listings do appear in chronological order, it is entirely possible that Margaret omitted some date listings. This almost certainly occurs on the first page of her notes—this page is undated, but lists an assignment which is due on February 1 (“200 to 250 words. Subject- Advanced Eng. Composition for Wednesday Feb. 1- 1899”) (Kane 1). The first page of notes that does contain a date at the top, February 1, occurs four pages later. It can therefore be assumed that her three pages of initial notes were written prior to February 1, particularly since they include an assignment she was to have completed *by* February 1.

Though the dates written in its pages may not represent the full number of days on which the notes were recorded, there is no evidence to suggest that this set of Margaret’s “Advanced English Composition” notes is incomplete; there are no notes that appear to end abruptly or cut off completely in the middle of topics, save for a few instances in which Margaret provides internal indicators that she will return to a given topic in later pages. If there are pages missing from this set of notes, there is no physical evidence to indicate it. As it is possible that Margaret was not the person to insert her notes into the bound notebook, there is likewise a possibility that some pages might appear out of order. However, all dates that are included appear in sequential order, and I have found no other direct indications that the notes’ contents are out of their original order.

Before continuing with an overview of her notes’ contents, it is important to recognize that Margaret did not complete her notes for “Advanced English Composition” in a bubble of

isolation. She was a student taking multiple courses, and her notes show that this course was not the only subject that required her attention. The red and black notebook which houses Margaret's "Advanced English Composition" notes contains evidence that Margaret was likewise enrolled in a Shakespeare literature course during this same semester, a fact which her enrollment card confirms. This physical evidence appears on the first page of her notes. She begins by listing logistical information about her course, such as "Adv. Eng. Comp./Attendance required- No absences excused/All absences must be made up- except [...] 8:05 Lecture begins. More than 15 min. late counts as absence. 2 tardiness counts as absence. Every omitted exercise must be made up," as well as the textbooks required for her course: "Text books - Newcomer's Elements of Literature/In about 4 to 6 weeks- Cairns Forms of Discourse 2 Pamphlets" (Kane 1). After then listing her composition assignment for an upcoming date, Margaret also includes the following note: "Shakespere [sic]- Dowden's Shakespere Primer 1st chapter." Margaret here appears to also list her reading assignment for her Shakespeare course on the same page as information and assignment requirements for "Advanced English Composition."

This first page is the only place within pages otherwise devoted to "Advanced English Composition" notes in which Margaret references her Shakespeare course. However, after the conclusion of her one hundred seventy-four pages of composition notes, there are a series of blank pages, after which Margaret then includes pages of notes which are devoted exclusively to her Shakespeare course. This same red and black notebook houses notes for both courses. Though my focus in this chapter is solely on Margaret's "Advanced English Composition" notes, this serves as a reminder that Margaret was an individual who, like all students, experienced her courses within the context of others; her participation in "Advanced English Composition" and

her uptake of writing instruction within it are only one facet of her experience as a student at KU, and likewise only one facet of her life and identity.

### **The Course Progression of “Advanced English Composition”**

Narrowing focus to Margaret Kane’s “Advanced English Composition” notes provides insight into both the instruction she received and her individual uptake of it. Before proceeding to an analysis of her uptakes, here I provide a brief overview of the course’s overall progression as indicated by the content of Margaret’s notes. Again, some of these date ranges are approximate, as it is possible that Margaret omitted other specific dates besides the ones she includes. In addition, some topics blend into others.

Margaret’s notes indicate that the course begins with cognitive and expressive processes related to writing. Her February 1 notes referenced above are on the “Relation of Expression to Thought.” By the following week, the course moves to an overview of “Expositional Categories,” such as narration and description. This is followed by extensive coverage of outline-making, as well as amplification. By February 20, the course begins to focus on the production of paragraphs of various types, which continues until around March 3. Instruction in paragraphs likewise includes a focus on the function of the sentence or “sentence-thought.” This focus on units of language narrows even further by mid to late March to a focus on word-choice, grammatical correctness, and style. This portion of the course seems to reflect what Connors calls “Pedagogy of ‘Levels,’” “a way of dividing up the hierarchical structure of words, sentences, and paragraphs” (*Composition-Rhetoric* 240). The basis for this teaching was “the assumption that writing was essentially a process of mastering a series of discrete building blocks, starting with the smallest ones (grammar) and word choice) and working gradually toward the major elements (sentences, paragraphs, and whole themes)” (Connors, *Composition-*

*Rhetoric* 241). Connors also notes that these levels may be addressed in reverse order, as appears to be the case within this middle portion of Margaret's course.

Beginning in early April, the course does seem to discuss various genres of discourse in further depth, including observations, descriptions, characterizations, and narrations, as well as various sub-forms of each. By early May, the course begins to cover argumentation and the various components needed for a successful argument, including a discussion of theses, briefs, and proofs. On May 29, the course discusses verbal arguments, particularly orations. On May 31, the last date included in Margaret's notes, the subject of focus is poetry, possibly reflecting an interest in belletristic rhetoric, which Wright and Halloran describe as occurring during the end of the nineteenth century.

### **Methods for and Results of Studying Margaret's Uptakes of Course Notes**

My methods for analyzing the course notes of Margaret Kane began with scanning, creating digital files, and carefully transcribing all one hundred seventy-four pages of notes. In transcribing, I attempted to preserve all textual features of her notes, including misspellings, line breaks, capitalization, and other visual features, such as underlining, strike-throughs, brackets, horizontal lines dividing pages, and diagrams or doodling. In instances in this chapter where I quote from her notes, I attempt to provide indications of line breaks, misspellings, etc. I likewise numbered my transcribed pages for ease of citation, as Margaret's original pages lack numbers. All page number citations I provide in this chapter are based on my own numbering of the notes pages as they appeared in Margaret's bound notebook.

Next, I carefully reviewed these transcriptions to establish an understanding of Margaret's normal uptakes, her most frequent patterns of uptake of writing instruction via her course notes. Because I lacked samples of other students' notes for the course, and because there

are no other clues to the expectations of the notes genre by the department or the instructors—no direct indications of how a student at KU was instructed to take notes—my goal was to establish an understanding of what moves and features appear standard in the note-taking of Margaret in particular. While for the course papers of Kate Hansen, inferences about what constitutes writing within, against, or beyond the genres she is assigned can be aided by external genres such as the *English Bulletin* or even by Margaret’s notes, inferences about what constitutes writing within, against, or beyond the genre of course notes is based on establishing standards or patterns in Margaret’s own note-taking.

This understanding of note-taking as an individual practice is likewise in keeping with the occluded nature of the genre, a term employed by John Swales referring to a genre that is “out of sight” (Swales 18). That is, though note-taking was a collective practice in that all students took course notes in class, students wrote their notes individually and wouldn’t typically have viewed other students’ versions. After I established these patterns in Margaret’s note-taking, I then narrowed focus to rhetorically analyze her less frequently-occurring movements away from them. As such, this chapter is an in-depth analysis of an individual student who establishes her own rhetorical norms, as well as makes occasional movements away from them.

In this chapter, I describe Margaret’s uptake of the genre of course notes using the schema of “within,” “against,” and “beyond” what appears most typical or standard for her individual enactment of the genre. Again, these determinations are based on my observations of her typical uptakes as an individual, the rhetorical moves and patterns of features that most frequently appear within her notes.

I argue throughout this chapter that Margaret’s production of the genre of course notes demonstrates the high frequency with which she employs course notes to function as an

extension of the instructors of her course, Edwin M. Hopkins and Raphael D. O’Leary. Her course notes most frequently provide records of the information her instructors delivered orally in class, with Margaret selecting which information was most important to record. This is what it means for Margaret to write “within” the course notes genre.

Though my goal in this chapter is to consider Margaret’s individual uptake of the course notes genre, I wish to briefly point out that the notion of utilizing the course notes genre in this way does appear in keeping with standard classroom practice at the time, for, though I have access to no other KU students’ notes, course notes are discussed occasionally in secondary scholarship. Winifred Horner, explains that one source for her work is student course notes, and that “Because of the wide practice of dictating lectures, student notes are more reliable than they might appear” (Horner 335). Similarly, Gaillet writes that within Scottish universities in the nineteenth century student course notes were “highly reliable accounts of the professors’ ideas,” in part because students could receive awards for “the best sets of student notes, a practice which encouraged highly organized and legible note taking” (“An Historical Perspective” 95-6). Further, during this time in Scotland, “professors often dictated their lectures verbatim year after year, resulting in student notes which over a period of years vary little and serve as accurate accounts of the lectures” (Gaillet, “An Historical Perspective” 95-6). Note-taking practices of the time suggest that the genre promoted the passive reception of knowledge by students from their instructors, though with students still selecting what information they thought was most significant to record.

Beyond simply recording information, however, I argue that Margaret’s notes demonstrate her likewise recording the ideologies about writing, writers, and even genre, views which her instructors held that Margaret viewed as important and worthy of being written down.

In this way, Margaret takes up the genre of course notes to serve as a reference for the information her instructors convey, and, in the process of which, she also takes up and records her instructors' ideologies. But this distinction—between content knowledge and ideologies—is not one which Margaret identifies or differentiates between herself. Margaret may not even be aware that what she is recording are ideological values, those being instilled in her just as she records them within her notes. They are simply parts of her instructors' lectures that it is her task to record. She records notes containing ideological values in the same way that she records, say, notes on an upcoming reading or writing assignment.

The nature of ideology in Margaret's course notes is complex. The relationship between genre and ideology—particularly that genres reinforce ideologies—is one that has been established and studied by rhetorical genre studies scholars.<sup>11</sup> However, in most scholarship, the ideological nature of genres and their ability to reinscribe identities and power relations are embedded features of the genres, ones that becomes apparent through intensive study of the genres in their context of use. And, indeed, the course notes of Margaret most certainly reinforce ideological values about student/teacher power dynamics; the genre reveals that the student's role was to record the knowledge the instructor conveyed, and this hierarchy is embedded within the genre's nature.

However, on another level, Margaret's uptake of the course notes genre likewise contains more explicit ideologies than are present in many other genres, perhaps due in part to the process of knowledge transmission and uptake that occurs in this classroom structure. Her instructors first make verbal, explicit statements that convey their ideological beliefs about writing within

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<sup>11</sup> For instance, see Richard M. Coe, Lorelei Lingard, and Tatiana Teslenko's collection *The Rhetoric and Ideology of Genre: Strategies for Stability and Change*.

their lectures. Margaret, in taking up that instruction within her individualized uptake of the course notes genre, then records these ideologies in the same way that she would any other content from the course, and I provide examples of this in the section below on “Recording of Instructor Views of Writing, Student Writers, and Genre.” Rather than ideology as an embedded component, the nature of Margaret’s individual uptake of the course notes genre as a space for recording what her instructors say—as an artifact she can later reference—necessitates her recording and taking up her instructors’ language ideologies alongside their content knowledge. In this process, Margaret’s course notes reinscribe the explicit language ideologies her instructors state in their lectures.

In terms of Margaret’s responses to these ideologies, the nature of Margaret’s individual uptake of writing instruction in “Advanced English Composition” results in her production of explicitly ideological course notes, which more readily provide a record of Margaret’s understanding of her *instructors* and *their* views of language than they do an indication of how *Margaret* precisely responds to those views. To some degree, her selection of what to record at all can be read as her response to instruction, as she is logically selecting which pieces of information to record.

However, I argue that Margaret’s course notes do demonstrate her individual response to writing instruction in more than just her selection of what to record. In the sections below on “Writing Against Genre” and “Writing Beyond Genre,” I demonstrate that Margaret makes periodic movements away from her most frequent patterns of uptake and includes traces of her more personalized interactions with the course, its lectures, and its assignments. This occurs in particular in instances where she awaits instruction, indicates her own areas of needed study, makes use of pronunciation aids, and begins to take up assignment genres. Glimmers of

Margaret's own responses to and usage of instruction are tangible in these instances and provide indications that Margaret did more than passively receive and record instruction.

Even so, by far the standard form and function of the course notes genre which Margaret establishes in her individual use of it demonstrates that its chief goal is to record the information her instructors convey, selecting which material to record, and, in the process of which, also selecting to record her instructors' ideological views of writing. Instances in which Margaret moves entirely beyond this standard uptake are significant, but ultimately rare, and their rarity serves to reinforce the standardness of her typical uptake.

### **Writing Within Genre: Most Common Features of Margaret's Notes**

For Margaret, the most typical uptake of writing instruction within the genre of course notes is to write down the information that her instructors provide during their lectures. The form that this takes varies slightly, and I begin below by detailing the various types of course notes she produces. I then elaborate on the non-alphabetic features most frequently present within Margaret's notes, such as symbols, shorthand, and diagrams, which likewise emphasize that the function of her notes is to select and record what information her instructors convey. This entails using non-alphabetic text as both a tool for quick recording and as a direct record of non-alphabetic content her instructors provide. Finally, in the remainder of this section, I argue that Margaret's uptake of the course notes genre likewise entails conveying her instructors' attitudes about writing, student writers, and genre. Because conveying course information as well as her instructors' ideologies are the most frequently occurring uptakes of the notes genre Margaret engages in, this is what it means for her to write "within" the genre, to conform to the standard forms and functions of it that she establishes.

*Writing Within: Types of Notes*

In using the genre of her course notes to convey both the information and attitudes of her course instructors, Margaret produces two main categories of course notes: lecture notes and exchanges. Within lecture notes, there are three types: lecture notes on general principles, lecture notes offering examples, and lecture notes recording assignment directions.

Margaret most frequently produces notes that fall under the category of lecture notes, or notes that Margaret takes during class time to record the course content delivered by her instructors. Lecture notes of the first type, those offering notes on general principles, typically open with an overview of the material that will be covered in class on a particular day. This usually occurs in the form of an outline of the lecture, after which Margaret's notes move into an in-depth coverage of the instructor's discussion of each main point and subpoint of the lecture outline. For instance, on February 8, Margaret begins her "4<sup>th</sup> lecture" notes on "expositional categories" as follows: "Feb. 8- 1899/4th lecture/Expositional Categories & the beginnings of discourse/I. General Nature of/II. Relation to Argument/III. Classes of expository structure/1. Exposition proper/2. Description/3. Narration/4. (argument)/IV. Expository processes- in discourse/1. General Nature/2. Classification/1. Definition/2 (Description)/3. Division" (Kane 16). Margaret continues this overview outline further, after which she begins a new page of notes, which delves into main point I., the "General Nature" of expositional categories, and so on.

This pattern of opening with an outline of the lecture is typical of Margaret's lecture notes on general principles. Afterward, Margaret continues by delving into each component of the outline as the instructor orally describes it. On March 13, for instance, Margaret records the following information regarding word order or listing of items within sentences:

Normal order of sentence should always be followed unless there is a reason./When should the normal order be departed from. First for emphasis. Given a series of elements one of which we wish to emphasize, that one should be placed at one end- When this inversion is made other elements should be readjusted./A less important reason for varying from normal order is for variety./For sake of adjustment [page division]/Compound groups are most difficult to manage. It is hard to decide whether they should not be separated into difference sentences./Place most important member of group last./Groups of same nature should be of similar structure [page division]/Like members of a complex group are to be alike in structure. (Kane 55)

In this example, Margaret's notes elaborate on principles related to word order and listing of items, conveying the information related to these issues provided by her instructors in their lectures.

A second form of lecture notes which Margaret writes are those offering examples of the given topic or form of discourse which her instructors discuss. On May 10, Margaret includes the following example structure of a brief.

T.  
 Int  
 I \_\_\_\_\_  
 II \_\_\_\_\_  
 Brief Proper  
 I \_\_\_\_\_  
 A. \_\_\_\_\_  
 B. \_\_\_\_\_  
 b \_\_\_\_\_  
 c \_\_\_\_\_  
 d \_\_\_\_\_  
 II \_\_\_\_\_. (Kane 127)

This example is one in which Margaret records a sort of template. In other instances, she includes more specific examples, rather than ones in which she can simply insert in her own

ideas. For instance, on February 20, her notes contain an example of an entire proof on “Placer Mining in British Columbia” (Kane 33). Likewise, on March 15, Margaret takes notes over constructing logical sentences. She writes, “That which is the thought subject must be retained as far as possible” and then provides the following example of how to enact this principle: ““Whenever he went to the theater or other public place he attracted the attention of the audience by his air of distinction”” (Kane 56, emphasis in original).

In addition to lecture notes on general principles and those providing examples, the third form of lecture notes that Margaret produces are assignment directions, those which explain her upcoming reading and writing assignments, their particular requirements, such as word counts, and their due dates. Most of these assignment directions are offset from other types of notes by a horizontal, page-dividing line Margaret draws on the page and are often titled “Ex. in Advance” or “Advance Ex.” On March 29, Margaret records the following required writing assignment, also pictured above in figure 3:

Ex. in Advance. Problem in Literary Observation. A half-hour study of a cat. Let the cat be cheerful. Do not tantalize the cat. Let it be awake & in motion when obs. begins. Characterise the cat not by geometrical position but by impression which it makes on you. Note what the cat does. Note its mood- Note your own mood & the effect it has on observ. Imply mood Note the interesting & pleasant things which the cat does (esthetic) Note how the cat seems to be feeling what it seems to be thinking (Imag) 400 or 500 words. (Kane 81)

This particular assignment is fairly detailed in its requirements, explaining precisely how this observation of a cat is to be carried out. Other assignments have fewer parameters, such as this one from May 24: “Adv.- Read in text 292- 309./Ex.- An optional argument involving both

direct & refutation, minimum 1000 words/A complete brief to be handed in Fri-/On Mon. hand in corrected brief arg-/Assume a definite audience & occasion & shape introduction accordingly-/Introduce the element of persuasion” (Kane 162).

The vast majority of Margaret’s course notes fall into the category of lecture note and its three categories I describe above—general principles, examples, and assignment instructions. And each of these three types of notes demonstrate that the forms which Margaret’s notes take are intended to accurately convey what her instructors say.

Before further elaborating on the most frequently occurring features of Margaret’s uptake of the course notes genre, there is one additional identifiable form of notes within her notebook—exchanges. Exchanges appear to be documentation of a form of peer review in which students in the class read one another’s work. Evidence of exchanges occur three times within Margaret’s notes, and, presumably, three times within her semester-long course. In each case, what appears in Margaret’s notes is a listing of the instructions her professors provide for completing the exchanges, which often requires multiple rounds of peer review. In each of these instances, Margaret only includes the instructions given by the instructor for engaging in the exchanges; her notes do not contain the feedback she wrote on her classmates’ papers or her plans for revising based on feedback she received from others.

To illustrate this type of course notes, in a section of notes recorded around February 6, Margaret lists three sets of exchanges she and her classmates engaged in of themes and accompanying outlines they have produced. Questions in the first round include those such as “Are theme & outline correctly related[?],” “In natural order,” and “Clear- similar in form,” as well as the directive to “Make suggestions” to the owner of the theme and outline (Kane 12).

Exchanges such as this one within Margaret's notes occur less frequently than the other three forms of course notes. In some ways, they are quite similar to other forms, such as assignment instructions, in that they provide instructions for completing course requirements, which is in line with the typical form and function of the larger genre of course notes as Margaret takes it up—recording what her instructors say. However, exchanges are slightly distinct in that they show evidence that Margaret and her classmates interacted with one another and, presumably, improved their writing through peer response. Exchanges suggest that Margaret's learning was likely influenced by her fellow classmates, rather than developed exclusively by the instruction directly provided by her instructors and textbooks. But Margaret does not use the genre of course notes to actually convey what *she* says about her peers' writing or what she *learns* about writing by engaging in peer response; rather, the course notes genre as she enacts it only functions to convey the instruction and instructions of her professors. In this way, exchanges are in keeping with the functions performed by the other three forms of course notes, and the genre itself reinforces an ideology that the words of the instructors are more important to record than the words of students.

#### *Writing Within: Symbols, Shorthand, and Other Non-Alphabetic Features*

In addition to production of these four types of course notes, Margaret makes ample use of non-alphabetic visual features within her notes. Though scholarship in rhetoric and composition has not specifically taken up discussions of non-alphabetic features as they are employed in course notes, the notion that genres employ multiple modes beyond alphabetic text for conveying meaning is a well-studied concept, with Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen defining multimodality as “the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event” (Kress and van Leeuwen 20), and scholars such as Jodi Shipka arguing that

multimodality is not a “relatively new phenomenon” as an increased focus in new media composing might suggest (Shipka 12). Rather, many texts have always relied on combinations of modes to convey meaning. Extending the conception of multimodality to consider symbols, shorthand, and other non-alphabetic features within Margaret’s course notes allows for a greater consideration of the forms and features which allow the genre to accomplish Margaret’s intended purposes.

The various forms of non-alphabetic features Margaret employs within her notes can each be understood as two types having two distinct functions: First, there are those that Margaret develops or makes use of in her note-writing process for the purposes of more readily recording what her instructors say. These features include page divisions, paragraph symbols, ditto marks, and brackets. It should be noted that Margaret likewise uses other shorthand that is alphabetic in nature, such as abbreviations for “thought” as “thot” that I include within quotations from her notes throughout this chapter. But, in this section, I focus on shorthand and symbols which are non-alphabetic. Second, there are non-alphabetic features within Margaret’s notes that are actual components to the content knowledge she is verbally provided by her instructors, which she then records. In other words, this second type are non-alphabetic forms of writing she would have overtly been taught to use (and likewise presumably expected to copy down). These include “thought units” or “sentence thoughts” and diagrams.

To begin, one of the most common non-alphabetic features within Margaret’s notes is her use of page divisions, which take the form of horizontal lines drawn across the pages to separate them into sections. This sometimes occurs to divide notes of the same type, (such as dividing up sections of lecture notes), and sometimes to divide between notes of differing types, (such as lecture notes on general principles versus those providing assignment instructions). On February

3, for example, Margaret's lecture notes discuss introductions and their presence within outlines and themes. Afterward, Margaret includes a horizontal, page-dividing line and begins to detail her upcoming "Exercise for Monday," shifting to assignment description notes (Kane 7).

Page divisions occur within Margaret's course notes on eighty-one pages, making them a highly recurrent feature of Margaret's uptake of the notes genre. More than likely, Margaret chooses to include them herself, rather than being instructed to do so by an instructor. Most likely, she includes page divisions to indicate when the instructor has made a shift in topic, whether in moving on to a new subject within a lecture or shifting to providing instructions for an upcoming assignment. In this way, Margaret employs page divisions to mark a change or movement in what her instructor is saying, helping to delineate shifts in the focus of her notes. This use of page divisions appears likewise in keeping with the broader genre of notes, in general, as well as with the patterns in Margaret's uptake of the genre.

Another highly common visual feature in Margaret's notes is the paragraph symbol (§). Paragraph symbols appear on fourteen different pages within Margaret's notes, frequently multiple times within each one of these fourteen pages. And, understandably, these appear most often in sections of notes that discuss paragraph-writing. For instance, on page 31, Margaret employs the paragraph symbol, among other places, within the following sentence: "A § with topic neither stated nor implied is very defective" (Kane 31). Though aids to speed her recording occur in other non-alphabetic forms that I do not discuss explicitly here, such as her use of the ampersand (&), Margaret's use of the paragraph symbol is particularly noteworthy because it allows her to abbreviate a term which is specific to the content-matter within her notes, specifically its frequent reference to the paragraph as a unit of language. Rather than just a replacement for a conjunction, as the ampersand serves, the paragraph symbols enables Margaret

to employ a symbol for an extremely frequently occurring term that is so much a part of her course's focus.

It is impossible to attribute Margaret's familiarity with and frequent use of the paragraph symbol to any one definitive source. It may have been a symbol included within one of her numerous course texts for "Advanced English Composition." She may have learned it in another writing course. Or she may have begun employing it in a context outside of the University altogether. It is also unclear whether her instructors directly asked their students to employ it within their notes or whether her instructors used it themselves in class, such as when writing on the blackboard. Though it is unclear whether use of the paragraph symbol was something Margaret was explicitly taught in this or another course, emulates from her instructors, or picked up in a non-school context, Margaret's use of it shows it to be a highly recurrent feature of her uptake of the course notes genre, and it likely allows her to more quickly record information presented by her instructors in class. In this way, Margaret's use of this shorthand allows her to more quickly and efficiently carry out what she establishes as the function of her notes—to record the information conveyed in "Advanced English Composition" by her instructors.

Of close similarity to the paragraph symbol is Margaret's use of ditto marks (") within her notes, which occur on thirty-five separate pages, and frequently multiple times within each of these thirty-five pages. Most often, they appear within notes over lectures. Ditto marks are used by Margaret to represent a repetition of the word used in the line directly above it. For example, on the fifth page of her notes, while taking notes over the "Relation of Expression to Thought," Margaret writes: "Some thots [sic] come from within," followed by a line containing three ditto marks and then "without" (meaning that some thoughts come from without) (Kane 5). Like

paragraph symbols, Margaret appears to employ ditto marks as time-saving devices, allowing her to more quickly record the information her instructors convey.

Like page divisions and paragraph symbols or ditto marks, Margaret frequently utilizes brackets within her notes. Brackets are employed on thirteen pages throughout her notes. Most often, Margaret employs brackets to create a visual grouping of segments of text she has written. For example, on the very first page of her course notes, when listing the texts for the course, Margaret places brackets around three of the texts, those by “DeQuincy” “Raleigh” and “Spencer,” and writes “On Style” next to the brackets. This, of course, indicates that these three texts will be used in the course for matters relating to style, and this grouping via use of brackets allows Margaret to create a visual distinction for the commonality amongst these required texts as indicted by her instructor.

Page divisions, paragraph symbols, ditto marks, and brackets are non-alphabetic features which allow Margaret to more efficiently record the information her instructors present by abbreviating her use of a frequently occurring term like “paragraph” or repeating a word or set of words used in an above line of text, visually indicating shifts in topic, and conveying groupings of ideas. But Margaret likewise uses non-alphabetic features within her notes which are part of the course content, including symbols for “though units” and “sentence thoughts,” as well as diagrams.

Thought units (“thot units”), as well as “sentence thoughts,” are concepts discussed in Margaret’s notes starting around March 3 (Kane 48). Thought units appear to be a way of conceptualizing units of language and thought in relation to one another, all of which build to form sentences. A thought unit is not the smallest unit of understanding, but “consists of a group of elements” (Kane 47); “A concept added to concept gives a notion./A notion added to a notion

gives a thought” (Kane 48). Throughout several pages of notes, Margaret includes sporadic symbols for various thought units, as well as types of sentence. For example, she draws a square with a period inside of it and writes that it represents a “subject entity” (Kane 47). She draws a circle with a period inside and labels this a “simplest sentence” (Kane 48), while an abstract shape containing two periods represents a “compound sentence thought” and one containing more than two represents a “complex [sentence thought]” (Kane 50).

In addition to symbols for various thought units and sentences, Margaret’s notes contain two instances of diagrams. In her notes taken around May 10, Margaret draws three diagrams, all contained on one page: The first is a diagram for a “chain of reason illustrated” (Kane 140). This first diagram has the appearance of an outline like those Margaret includes elsewhere in her notes, with a space for a thesis labeled “T.” and main points I and II that follow, as well as sub-points. But, for the thesis as well as each line, Margaret draws only a horizontal line, indicating this is where each point would go in an actual chain of reason. The second diagram is for a “chain of inductive reasoning” (Kane 140). This diagram shows main points that branch off the thesis, rather being listed after it. The third diagram is for a “Deductive chain of reasoning supported by inductive proofs,” and is the most complex of the three, with minor and major premises that branch off the thesis (Kane 140). This use of a set of diagrams in Margaret’s notes demonstrates her yet again carrying out the recording function of course notes she establishes elsewhere—she appears to write down these diagrams in her notes because they are information presented by her instructors that she determines will be necessary to recall later.

The second instance of diagram use occurs later, in a section written around May 24. On page 155 and 156 within her notes, Margaret includes a lengthy brief whose thesis is that “Salaries should not be paid the President & other gov’t officials” (Kane 155). She then includes

an elaborate diagram which shows a detailed visualization of the brief using vertical and horizontal connecting lines, all of which are labeled with the components in the brief (for example, point A or subpoint 3) (Kane 156). At the very bottom of page 156, beneath this diagram, Margaret writes a parenthetical statement that “The above is Prof. Hopkins’ Brief & diagram” (Kane 156). In this instance, Margaret copies down a diagram that is not her own, but rather that was created by one of her instructors, Edwin M. Hopkins. This visual diagram once again demonstrates Margaret recording the information her instructors provide, even to the level of the examples they provide in class. And this recording takes place in both alphabetic and non-alphabetic forms.

Unlike page divisions, paragraph symbols, or brackets, Margaret employs thought units and sentence symbols and diagrams within her course notes not to more efficiently or accurately convey the information provided by her instructors, but because these symbols and diagrams are part of the content her instructors are actually teaching. Rather than part of her note-taking system and her attempts at recording efficiency, thought unit and sentence symbols and diagrams must be recorded because they constitute the actual material her instructors were imparting on those occasions.

*Writing Within: Recording Instructor Views of Writing, Student Writers, and Genre*

In addition to employing the course notes genre to convey content knowledge about writing (and in as efficient a manner as possible), Margaret’s usage of the genre of course notes likewise shows her taking up and conveying ample information about her instructors’ ideological views about both writing and writers, as well as about genre and the teaching of genre. Though these ideological views about writing, writers, and genre are indeed part of the content knowledge for “Advanced English Composition,” just as much as, say, assignment instructions,

they are distinctive because they overtly show the ideological views which Margaret is being asked to take up.

One of the phases of the course most noticeably filled with instructor views about writing is the course section devoted to style. Discussions of style appear in Margaret's course notes around March 20. Style is defined within her notes as "the expression of thought. Of personality & individuality" (Kane 69). Margaret writes that "It is impossible for us to acquire the style of an other [sic]. We should take that which is ours by nature & make the best of it./We have no business to imitate" (Kane 70). On the following page, these sentiments are reinforced: "Style lies above rules/[Style] cannot be imitated/[Style] cannot be developed" (Kane 71). Here Margaret's usage of the course notes genre as a reflection of what her instructors say about language conveys their views of style quite clearly—that it is an unlearnable, innate quality.

Though I discuss this conflict in more depth in Chapter 5, here I wish to briefly discuss the degree to which this ideology related to style taken up by Margaret within her course notes reflects the beliefs about style held by other instructors during the end of the nineteenth century. Style is a difficult concept to study because of its changing nature throughout the history of writing instruction. As Brian Ray summarizes in *Style: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy*, "Style has been defined in a variety of ways by scholars working in areas within and related to rhetoric and composition [...] Some definitions are precise [...] Other definitions are vague" (7). In general, though, Ray points out that the nineteenth century marked a shift "away from classical rhetoric and style, and toward an emphasis on grammar and correctness" (77). And Margaret's notes certainly reflect an emphasis on grammar and correctness, as seen through a different section of notes on word-level writing errors that appears in the pages prior to her notes saying that style cannot be imitated or developed (Kane 71).

Therefore, if teaching style within this time period means a concern for correctness, then Margaret's notes reflect that shared valuing of correctness.

However, in the section of notes explicitly using the term "style," Margaret's instructors say that style cannot be imitated or developed. As such, for Margaret's instructors, "style" must mean something other than grammar, particularly since these instructors *do* provide grammar instruction elsewhere and expect their students to improve their writing based on it. Rather, Margaret records a definition of style that calls it "the expression of thought. Of personality & individuality" (Kane 69). On the next page of notes, Margaret takes notes concerning the terms "sincerity" "clearness" and "beauty" as characteristics related to style, but ones which cannot be "imitated" or "developed" (Kane 70, 71). Rather than conceptualizing style as correctness, Margaret's instructors seem to view it more in line with a treatment of style that Connors (drawing on Kitzhaber) defines as "static abstractions" (*Composition-Rhetoric* 270). Connors writes that static abstractions are "any pseudo-heuristic listing of what linguistics all 'derived nominals'—abstract adjective-based nouns—whose purpose is to define good structure in prose writing" (*Composition-Rhetoric* 270). Connors provides examples of terms such as "Unity, Variety, Precision, Energy, Clearness" and more, which appear similar to "sincerity," "clearness," or "beauty" recorded by Margaret when discussing style (*Composition-Rhetoric* 270; Kane 70). Connors writes that "Such terms are *static* because they exist in an unchanging theoretical context, are presented as paradigmatic and absolute, and are concerned with labeling finished texts. They are *abstractions* because they exist only as general terms, without qualifiers or specificity" (*Composition-Rhetoric* 270). The conception of style included within Margaret's course appears more in line with one connected to static abstractions, qualities to assign to a finished piece of text that are abstract and ill-defined. As a result, students cannot fully learn to

imitate them, and this ideological view is taken up by Margaret in recording class lectures within her notes.

Beyond these abstract views of style, though, Margaret also conveys the views of the instructors of “Advanced English Composition” within her notes with regard to writers and their levels of writing skill and experience. These ideologies seem to relate most frequently to the instructors’ views of the student writers in their course, in particular. On page March 15, for example, Margaret’s notes contain the statement that “A common error with young writers is bald statements” (Kane 57). Examples such as this one show Margaret using the language that her instructors use when she takes lecture notes, speaking of student writers as a homogenous third party. The inclusion of this statement in her course notes suggests that her instructors equate youth with lack of writing experience, and a lack of experience likewise as “error.” In using the phrase “young writers,” Margaret accepts her instructors’ depiction of her and her classmates as subjects separate and distinct from the instructors.

The notion that Margaret’s instructors view their students as novice writers is evidenced elsewhere in her notes. On February 27, when discussing how to create unity within theme paragraphs, Margaret writes “A ¶ is a unit itself while being part of a whole. It must have unity./A trained mind will not, can not violate the law of unity if thought process is correct from the beginning” (Kane 36). This phrasing creates a sharp sense that Margaret and her classmates, who in all likelihood want to appear “trained mind[s]” in the eyes of their instructors, cannot “violate” this “law” and be regarded as such. The course instructors, in this discussion of unity, promote a view of their students as in need of training which, once provided, means they cannot commit such errors.

In keeping with this view of student writers as inexperienced and lacking in skill, Margaret's notes suggest that her instructors used care and discretion when assigning readings to their students, seeking to ensure that what students read corresponded with the instructors' views of their students' capabilities. For example, toward the latter portion of Margaret's course notes, the following statement appears: "Do not look on page 270 & 271 of Cairns'/Very defective" (Kane 145). In these lines, Margaret's notes indicate that her instructors sought to censor certain sections of the course text that they felt would be harmful to their students' writing development. These pages surrounding pages 270 and 271 in Cairns' 1898 textbook *The Forms of Discourse*, (the only edition of this text published early enough to have been utilized in Margaret's 1899 course), contain "selections [of texts] chosen to illustrate the methods of argumentation" (269), and the specific selection on these pages is a "speech delivered by [Benjamin] Franklin before the Constitutional Convention" (270). Though it is possible that Margaret's instructors provided a more thorough discussion that does not appear in Margaret's notes of why this page of the text was "very defective," it is not readily apparent to me what that reason is by examining these pages in the textbook.

In keeping with this recurring pattern of including notes that indicate the instructors' views, Margaret's notes likewise include one instance that shows her instructors' views of genre and the teaching of genre. In a section of notes from March 3 on paragraph writing, Margaret's notes include a subsection on "Special types" of paragraphs. One of these types is the genre of news paragraphs. Her notes stress that "Colloquialism, sensational (reparation), use of abbreviations & nick names, veiled reference (which only one or few understand) are forbidden" within news paragraphs (Kane 42). Here her instructors provide students with an understanding of the expectations of the news paragraph genre, yet their use of the term "forbidden" suggests

an attitude about language and genre that, rather than rooted in contextualized rhetoric situations, provides a proscriptive listing of rules. Likewise, her notes offer little explanation to students as to why these features must not be employed. As such, Margaret's notes demonstrate her taking up and recording an ideology about genre and the teaching of genre that stresses prescriptivism of genre form—with standard features of a particular genre being required and non-standard features “forbidden”— and give little attention to the social action which the genres accomplish. Likewise, the student writers to whom these directives are given should take up that instruction without question.

The presence of ideological values such as these constitute frequent features of Margaret's course notes, and thus are part of the standard uptake of the course notes genre in which Margaret engages. They appear just as much a part of her notes as the various types of notes she includes or her usage of non-alphabetic features.

### **Writing Against Genre: Less Common Features of Margaret's Notes**

Having established the most frequently recurring features of Margaret Kane's notes—what it means for her to write within the genre of course notes in the various types of notes she produces, the use of non-alphabetic features within them, and the subsequent recording of her instructors' ideologies about writing, student writers, and genre—I now consider textual and other features which are sporadically present within her notes. These do not occur frequently enough to be viewed as part of Margaret's standard uptake of course notes and their form and function for her as an individual; rather, they appear as infrequent movements away from the standard but which nevertheless provide insight into Margaret's uptake of writing instruction and of this particular genre.

I begin by considering Margaret's use of the possessive pronoun "my" within her course notes and the indications this provides of her preparations to take up the assignment instructions she records. Afterward, I consider Margaret's usage of internal references within her notes.

*Writing Against: Use of Grammatical Person and Assignment Uptake*

As samples of her course notes above indicate, Margaret's course notes frequently alternate in their use of grammatical person. While in the instance above about young writers making "bald statements" student writers are referred to in the third person, in other places, a second-person "you" is employed. Each of these may indicate instances where Margaret was recording the exact words spoken by her instructors, resulting in references to writers in her course notes as subjects distanced from herself. And these instances may likewise demonstrate Margaret using her course notes to convey her instructors' ideologies, grouping together all young writers or employing a collective "you," either of which may homogenize and fail to do justice to the diversity of student experience and identity present within every classroom.

By contrast, the use of first-person pronouns is much less frequent within Margaret's course notes. More precisely, there are five instances in Margaret's notes where she employs a first-person possessive pronoun "my." Three of these instances of "my" appear within sections of Margaret's notes that are assignment instructions. Thus, the majority of her usage of first-person possession occurs as she prepares to take up new genres, those of the assigned writing assignments. For her March 15 exercise, for example, she is to write "400 words" on the idea that "'All inanimate objects are totally depraved.' The subject to be suggested by this such as 'The depravity of my alarm clock.' 'The eccentricities of my kitchen stove', etc.'" (Kane 58). For her March 20 writing assignment, Margaret writes that she must produce an "Exercise" "400 to 500 words" in length using one of the following six topics: "My style and the influence that have

shaped it/Dialect of my family & my friends/The Books I have read/The Teachers I have had/The Good Points in my Style/The Errors & Causes” (Kane 62). Finally, for March 29, the exercise portion of her assignment is to include a “Description from memory of my old home, my grandfather's old home or some one's old home- the house as the center & some of surrounding from a single point of view[...].” (Kane 90). These instances of “my” in assignment instructions are the most common usage of the pronoun.

The fourth and fifth usages of “my” are perhaps less significant because of the contexts in which they are written. The fourth occurs when Margaret writes an example sentence within her lecture notes of an “Indirect presentation of details” that may have been dictated by the instructor (“I thot of the rocky glen around my father’s home”) (Kane 88). The fifth usage of “my” takes place when Margaret writes out the stages of argumentation, the fourth being “What are my reasons?” (Kane 111), again perhaps using wording offered by the instructor.

But in each of the three instances described above used in assignment instructions, Margaret’s use of “my” merits closer consideration. Assignment instructions as a sub-type of Margaret’s course notes serve as a bridge between the instruction Margaret receives in class, her uptake and recording of that instruction within course notes, and her uptake of that instruction to produce her actual assignments. In connection with this uptake chain, it is possible that each of the corresponding assignments with which Margaret uses “my” are related in that each are based in personal experience and permit more of a personalized uptake. I discuss these uptake chains existing between genres and the impact of assignment genre variation on uptake potential in more depth in Chapter 4 on the course papers of Kate Hansen. These usages of “my” in assignment instructions within Margaret’s course notes show her preparing to uptake the assigned assignment genre. In each instance, Margaret describes her writing assignment from her

own positionality through the use of “my,” as she prepares to take up her new assigned task. Rather than writing that she should prepare to write about “the book *you* have read” or a “description from memory of *your* old home,” Margaret uses a possessive pronoun, showing her preparation to take up the assignment and her sense of agency in positioning herself within it.

### *Writing Against: Internal References*

Just as Margaret makes infrequent, yet significant use of the possessive pronoun “my” within her course notes, she likewise makes occasional use of internal references to other pages within her notes. This occurs four times. In the first instance, which occurs in a section of notes dated February 20, Margaret records an outline of a lecture on “The Paragraph.” As she reaches the bottom of this page, Margaret has just completed a third outline section on types of paragraphs. She then writes at the bottom of the page the words “see \* 4<sup>th</sup> page from here,” along with the accompanying asterisk (Kane 30). Indeed, four pages later, Margaret resumes her lecture outline on “The Paragraph” with a matching asterisk and the beginning of section four on “General principles of paragraphs” (Kane 34). This particular internal reference was almost certainly written by Margaret after-the-fact, meaning that she went back to her notes later and wrote this note to indicate where she would find the resumed notes on “The Paragraph.” The three pages between these internal references contain an example proof on “Placer Mining in British Columbia,” as well as assignment instructions (Kane 31-3). Margaret would not have known how many pages later she would resume the outline when she was in the midst of producing it, so it seems logical that she would have to have written this internal reference at a later time. The reason for this three-page gap before the resuming of the lecture outline is unclear; it may have been due to a gap in the lecture in which the professor decided to move periodically to a different topic of focus. But Margaret employs this reference—as well as the

accompanying asterisks—as an aid to herself to more readily navigate to the resumption of the outline at a later time.

The second and third internal references present within Margaret’s course notes are very similar to the first in that they were likely written on their pages after those pages’ content had already been added. And like Margaret’s usage of the asterisks above, these next two internal references are interrelated, though with use of alphabetic text, rather than asterisk symbols. The first appears in a section dated March 8. On page 52, Margaret is in the midst of writing down a lecture outline on “The Form of the Sentence; the sentence as a means of expression” (Kane 52). When she reaches subsection C of this lecture outline, she writes “C- see second page from here.” The next page, page 53, contains lecture notes primarily on the function of words for expressing thoughts, as well as the connotative and denotative meanings of words. But the next page, page 54, opens with Margaret employing her third usage of internal references: “For beginning of this outline see 2 pp back” (Kane 54). And, indeed, this page of notes appears to then resume the lecture outline on the sentence that she began two pages earlier. By placing the internal references in two places—one on the page where the lecture outline initially begins and one on the page where it resumes—Margaret creates a more readily trackable system of note-taking that both follows the non-linear pattern that her instructors apparently sometimes employed in lecturing and also manages to make it easier for her to navigate and reference afterward. Likewise, these internal references point out that Margaret *did* go back to her notes after recording them originally, even if only to add the internal references.

In the final instance of internal references within her course notes, Margaret instead employs a note to herself that appears to have been written *during* her note taking, rather than after-the-fact, as with her previous usages. In a section of notes written on March 29 on “Types

of description,” she includes the parenthetical note “(see several pages back)” (Kane 91). Though it is unclear which specific previous page Margaret is referring back to, the pages preceding this note likewise all relate to writing descriptions. But this lack of clarity also brings to light another feature of Margaret’s uptake of the notes genre. While I as an outside reader of her notes am not sure which specific page she is referencing (or whether she meant to refer to an entire set of pages), this internal reference was not written for me or for any other outside reader. The point is not that outside readers like myself can understand where to go next; what is important is that internal references make sense to *Margaret*, that she can employ them in such a way that she knows which other sections of course notes to which they refer. Margaret’s use of the course notes genre—and of internal references, in particular—are for her own purposes of referring back to course material, and they show the actions she takes in order to more successfully take up instruction.

Margaret’s use of internal reference within her notes is not a highly recurring feature; these four instances are the only ones present within the full scope of her notes. But these internal references help to demonstrate that, although her primary uptake of the course notes genre is as a record of the information her instructors present, an important component to that function is Margaret’s ability to refer to and understand the notes later on. Internal references can be utilized by Margaret at various kairotic moments—some she may employ while in the process of taking notes, whereas others she would need to go back and include at a later moment. In either case, internal references serve to make her notes more accessible by helping her recall where certain sections or content begin and resume, allowing her to create points of access to navigate the genre. Unlike the majority of the information she writes within her course notes, internal references are her own inclusion, not something she was instructed to include or that

came from the minds of her instructors. In this way, her notes write against the genre by showing that she synthesizes and makes sense of the information she has been recording all semester and more actively takes up the genre.

### **Writing Beyond Genre: Uncommon Features of Margaret's Notes**

Thus far, I have established the most common forms and features of Margaret Kane's uptake of the course notes genre in her "Advanced English Composition" notes, all of which serve the function of providing a record of the information her instructors provide that she can later reference. This frequently results in the subsequent corresponding uptake of her instructors' ideologies about writing and writers. I have likewise established less-frequently-occurring features within Margaret's notes, such as use of personal possessive pronouns and internal references.

In this final section, I consider highly uncommon features present within Margaret's "Advanced English Composition" notes, features which only occur in single instances. Because they are out of keeping with her standard uptakes of the genre of course notes described above, I view these features as writing beyond the genre. They show Margaret taking up writing instruction in ways out of keeping with her standard uptakes, reinforcing the patterns of normalcy I describe above through their rarity. At the same time, these moments of writing beyond the genre provide insight into Margaret's individual responses toward the instruction she receives, something that her standard uptake of the genre does not frequently permit. It is most often unclear whether she found her tasks daunting, confusing, exciting, boring, or was indifferent to them. Likewise, it is most often unclear how Margaret responded to the content or the ideological values she was being asked to take up. Did she agree with the content instruction she was provided? Was she resistant at being referred to as an unskilled, novice writer? I begin

this section on Margaret's non-standard uptakes of the course notes genre by describing instances where traces of Margaret's feelings toward assignments and to the content of the course more generally are tangible.

*Writing Beyond: Awaiting Instruction*

First, there is one instance in Margaret's course notes that shows her awaiting further assignment details from her professors. This occurs in a section of notes taken on or around May 19. One page in this section, page 147, contains only assignment instructions. Margaret begins, "Advance Ex-.p. 147-153. pamphlet./2 272-275 in text Analyze Speech of Franklin- Find thesis-prin. proof & minor proofs-" (Kane 147). In the next line, after having listed this reading assignment, Margaret lists the writing assignment: "Besides this prepare a full & carefully affirmative Brief- on?-" (Kane 147). Here Margaret appears to await instruction as to the specific topic of her brief. After a line break, she provides the topic her instructor specifies: "The faculty of K.U. should wear Academic gowns & caps at exercise of commencement Day" (Kane 147).

This inclusion of "-on?-" within this set of assignment instructions is highly irregular. Nowhere else in her course notes does Margaret write a question of this nature. But by including it here, Margaret demonstrates a response other than a simple recording of instruction, moving beyond the genre's standard function she establishes in her most frequent patterns. Instead, she demonstrates in this instance the possibility that she is awaiting instruction, (perhaps even impatiently), that she feels a sense of uncertainty about her assigned task. Because this instance showcases this possibility, it likewise shows the possibility that she has moved beyond her standard uptake of course notes that is primarily concerned with recording information and instead demonstrates a more active engagement with the course and carrying out its assignments.

*Writing Beyond: Areas of Needed Study*

In addition to this single expression of awaiting further details, there are two instances in Margaret's notes of her indicating her individual learning needs, particularly expressing knowledge she needs to acquire to be a more successful writer.

In a section of notes from March 20 on common word-level writing errors, Margaret provides a series of words on page 65 that she must learn to distinguish between. While in an earlier page in this section, Margaret had included specific errors to avoid (for example, "The misuse of the word start. Start means to begin to go. It is a child-like phrase & should be used with caution" (Kane 64)), on this page Margaret does not list grammatical rules or differentiations. Instead, she writes the underlined words "Look up!" at the top of the page and then lists a series of twelve pairs of words to distinguish between, such as "either & any" or "poor & bad" (Kane 65). While it is possible that one of her instructors provided the entire class with this list, this seems unlikely, as other grammatical and word-level instruction notes in Margaret's notebook provide more details, such as how words should be used, as in the "start" example above, rather than simply saying to look them up. This list appears more like one which indicates Margaret's own differentiation difficulties, and it suggests the possibility that Margaret made attempts to take some measure of control in her own learning, and that she used these "Look up!" moments as catalysts for future uptakes that moved beyond the course notes genre itself.

The page of notes that follows this one likewise includes a second instance of Margaret indicating her personal gaps in knowledge. The top two sections of this page (which are divided on the page as indicated) include the following notes: "Find out if words ending in ics is singular or plural- athletics, mathematics/[page division]Find out subjunctive./Sequence of tenses/Should

ing or plur. verb be used with collective nouns- When?” (Kane 66). In these two sections on the page, Margaret uses the phrase “Find out” to indicate gaps in her own grammar knowledge. She likewise uses the question “When?” when questioning whether collective nouns should utilize a plural verb or an -ing verb. Language such as this does not appear elsewhere in Margaret’s notes, whether in assignment descriptions or anywhere else. It is possible that these “Find out” and “When?” comments are an assignment the instructor is asking her to fulfill. However, it is also possible that these gaps in knowledge are specific to Margaret as an individual. They show evidence of her using course notes as more than just a reference of what her instructors have said, but as something she can use as an initiation for further study on her own. These inclusions point to future uptakes that extend beyond the genre and context of note-taking in the kairotic moment of an instructor providing lectures within the classroom.

*Writing Beyond: Phonetic Symbols*

These occasional breaks from the typical form and function of Margaret’s notes take a very different form in a section of her notes dated May 3. In this section, Margaret writes instructions for composing within a narrative genre. She writes: “Narration with plot is a longer one than a narration of incident & has more characters./A plot is a complication of incident arising from intertwining chains of causation./It is a denouement [sic] (dā nū’ mōng)/Some incident, character, purpose & plot [...]” (Kane 106). Margaret includes a parenthetical pronunciation for the term “denouement,” a feature which occurs nowhere else in her notes.

This use of phonetic symbols could serve at least two possible purposes. For one, Margaret may include them to ensure that she knows how to pronounce the term “denouement.” However, her misspelling of the term may also mean that she includes a phonetic spelling because she is not certain how the term is supposed to be spelled; in other words, Margaret may

have heard her instructor speak the term out loud during a lecture, been uncertain as to how it should be spelled in her notes, and then written the parenthetical notation as an aid to herself. This single example shows Margaret engaging with the course content—here, a particular term or concept—in a way that shows her attempts to learn and understand. Margaret moves beyond the conventions of recording she has established in her course notes genre as a whole in this instance by showing her desire not just to record, but to understand and interpret what her instructors say, even if just to determine a correct spelling. In this way, she showcases her individual response to instruction.

*Writing Beyond: Selecting and Drafting an Assignment*

In addition to these breaks from the normal features of her course notes, there is one instance in Margaret's notes in which she departs from her typical uses of non-alphabetic features. In a section of notes dated March 29, one of Margaret's pages contains a small sketch or drawing. While the lower portion of the page is devoted to notes on an upcoming assignment (a "Description of Spooner Library"), the upper portion contains a combination of what appear to be intentional drawings of a stone wall made of rectangular blocks, resulting in a drawing resembling a wall.

My early hypothesis in encountering this drawing was that it was doodling, that it served as the only evidence that Margaret's mind was elsewhere while taking notes in "Advanced English Composition" or that she experienced boredom. However, closer study of the drawing in the context of the surrounding pages of notes led me to conclude otherwise. The drawing does indeed have no connection with the text which appears on that same page, page 84, which is related to an assignment describing Spooner Library. But her notes around March 29 are on forms of observation, such as "artistic" or "scientific" (Kane 79). The page of notes which

appears before her drawing, page 83, contains a list of five exercises, which include the following: “The Douglas County Mills as seen from the Bridge- Characterization/The Stone Retaining Wall 1400 Blk Tenn St. [...] /The 3rd person you meet the first time you go down Mass. St./Char. Some person you most dislike/Latest illness” (Kane 83). When viewed in the context of the surrounding notes, this drawing appears to correspond with the second writing prompt, “The Stone Retaining Wall” on the 1400 block of Tennessee Street.

It is unclear whether Margaret was asked by her instructors to respond to each of these writing prompts or select one. Either way, the presence of this drawing may be explained in a number of ways. It is possible, for instance, that her instructor drew part of the wall so that students would be able to find and identify it when they went looking for it on the 1400 block of Tennessee Street. Alternatively, this drawing may instead provide evidence of Margaret beginning to take up an assignment, of her using her apparent sketch of the stone retaining wall as a starting place for completing her assignment. If this is the case, then, like Margaret’s use of the possessive pronoun “my” I describe above, this single instance of the beginnings of an assignment draft may help to show the connection—the uptake or “bidirectional relation” described by Anne Freedman—which exists between the genre of the course notes and the genres which students will compose next, their assignment genres, as I explore within the course papers of Kate Hansen in Chapter 4.

But this drawing within the course notes of Margaret may nevertheless showcase her individual response to the course instruction, showing her beginning to draft a response to one prompt and reinforcing an image of her as an individual student whose notes are personalized to herself, if only in small ways.

## Synthesizing Margaret's Uptakes

Margaret Kane's course notes for "Advanced English Composition" provide a clear sense of Margaret's standard uptake of the genre, of the way in which she employs it as an individual. Careful analysis of these course notes indicates that the way she most frequently takes up the genre is as a record of the information her instructors provide in class, whether in providing examples, in lecturing over course content, or in giving instructions for upcoming assignments or exchanges. These are the most frequently occurring forms which her notes take. Likewise, there are certain features which most frequently occur within the pages of her notes, such as grammatical person, shorthand, and other visual components, some of which aid Margaret's more rapid recording of information and some of which are components of the course itself.

But taking up the genre of course notes to provide this recording of information means that Margaret likewise selects and takes up the language ideologies of her instructors, including their views about writing, student writers, and the rule-bound nature of genres. Her notes demonstrate that her instructors, Edwin M. Hopkins and Raphael D. O'Leary, believed that style (as opposed to grammar or correctness) was not something which students could be taught, and that their students were novice, inexperienced writers lacking in skill. Likewise, students' writing would be improved by following prescriptive directives and heeding their instructors' expertise, even to the level of avoiding reading pages in the textbooks that the instructors deemed unfit. Insights such as these into the ideological views of the instructors for "Advanced English Composition" are useful in understanding the writing instruction Margaret received, and therefore also useful to historical research in writing instruction and histories of the field, which I will discuss further in Chapter 5. But insights into these ideological beliefs are also useful in providing an understanding of Margaret's uptake of the course notes genre. The frequent

inclusion of instructor ideologies within Margaret's notes make them part of her standard uptake of the notes genre; to include her instructors' view of writing and writers is, for her, to write within the genre of course notes as she establishes it.

Writing within the genre of course notes, for Margaret, means recording both course content and instructor viewpoints. Even so, some features within Margaret's notes subtly push against these forms and functions, such as instances in which Margaret shows ownership of her writing or utilizes textual features such as internal references that aid her own use of the notes genre. These features indicate that the course notes genre, for Margaret, is not only about recording what her instructors say and believe, but likewise about being able to successfully revisit and navigate that information in later moments. And, as can be inferred by her use of internal references, in particular, it is likewise likely that course notes, for Margaret, are a personal genre, one she intended to utilize herself and which included navigational references that she would understand, not ones that others would necessarily understand.

And, in rare yet enlightening occurrences, Margaret makes movements away from the standard she establishes to write beyond it. She does so in the form of asking questions, expressing her own knowledge gaps that are in need of additional instruction, and even by beginning to draft an assignment. Even so, it is important to acknowledge the rarity of these movements against the genre; their infrequent presence reinforces the model of Margaret's standard uptake of course notes, which is focused on recording content and values alike, but not necessarily focused on showcasing her own feelings regarding this content or values. I reflect more fully on the significance of these findings for historical and rhetorical genre studies scholarship in Chapter 5.

This final example I provide of Margaret writing against the genre of her course notes—the one in which Margaret sketches a drawing of the retaining wall on which she will possibly base an upcoming assignment—likewise prompts an understanding of Margaret’s course notes as but a single link in a chain of uptakes which comprises her responses to writing instruction in “Advanced English Composition.” In Chapter 4, which follows, I explore this next uptake link in the form of the course papers of Kate Hansen.

## Chapter 4: Innovating, Advocating, and Writing the Self: The 1900 Course

### Papers of Kate Hansen

In this chapter, I engage in a case study of the course papers of Kate Hansen written for her “Advanced English Composition” course in the spring of 1900. These forty-two individual assignments are contained within box 5, folder 30 of the “Kate I. Hansen Collection” at Kenneth Spencer Research Library. For a full listing of Kate’s papers, see Appendix A. Each of these papers are handwritten with pencil on lined paper, and each is labeled with a superscription and folded in half as indicated was required by both the *English Bulletin* and by Margaret Kane’s course notes.

The information contained in Kate’s superscriptions is highly valuable for my study of her writings and the uptakes of writing instruction they represent. The *English Bulletin* required that students include in their superscriptions the following: “First, the subject of the paper; then, in this order: the writer's name, the writers’ class, and the date of presentation” (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 10). Kate’s superscriptions are most often full and complete, and their dates provide a clear indication of the order in which her papers were submitted throughout the course. The earliest paper’s date is February 2, 1900, and the latest May 28, 1900. Only four of her papers are missing dates within their superscriptions.

In many cases, clues to the genres in which Kate composes are likewise provided by her papers’ superscriptions. Twenty-seven of her papers include a title in their superscription, while fifteen of Kate’s papers lack a title in their superscription. In these cases, I rely on the title that appears at the top of the interior first page of the assignments, as all her papers contain these interior titles. These titles in either Kate’s superscriptions or her papers’ interior first pages frequently provide what I call *genre labels*, named indications of what genre she was asked to

write. For instance, her February 25 paper is titled an “Exercise in Editorial and News Paragraphing,” which indicated that Kate was asked to produce the genre of editorial and news paragraphs, or at least exercises closely connected to the imitation of these genres.

The range of labels present within Kate’s paper set demonstrates that students in “Advanced English Composition” were required to write within a wide variety of genres. For example, beginning on March 19, Kate produces a series of nine assignments that are either labeled “Exercise in Briefs,” “Exercise in Brief-making,” or “Brief and Amplification,” which I discuss below. The full range of explicitly-labeled genres in Kate’s papers include: descriptions, exercises in paragraphing, an exercise in outlines, a definition and synopsis, an exercise in editorial and news paragraphs, an exercise in letter writing, an exercise in theses, exercises in briefs and brief-making, exercises in refutations, an exercise in brief and amplification, an exercise in characterization, a theme, and an oration. Some papers do not contain a direct indication of their intended genre via a label. Of Kate’s forty-two papers, eleven fall into this category of lacking a clear genre label.

In considering the range of genres present within Kate Hansen’s paper set, it is important to recognize that the genre labels that appear on some of Kate’s papers—and likewise, the genres these papers constitute—appear in keeping with what Elizabeth Wardle calls “mutt genres.” Mutt genres are those which writing teachers assign which “mimic genres that mediate activities in other activity systems, but within the [First-Year Composition] system their purposes and audiences are vague or even contradictory” (Wardle 774). In other words, mutt genres are those that only exist within the context of composition courses. Though Wardle is speaking specifically of modern-day assignments, this may very well be the case with some of Kate’s papers, particularly since many are labeled as “exercises” in various genres, rather than just the

genre names alone. Thus, Kate's writings can be understood as school genres that might not necessarily perform a full function outside the context of the classroom but that are nevertheless deserving of careful study for what they can tell us about her uptakes.

In this chapter, I provide three loose categories of identification within the spectrum of Kate's uptakes that I use to describe Kate's papers and her uptakes of her writing assignments: those in which she writes within the genres she has been assigned, those in which she writes against or appears to resist the assigned genres, and those in which she writes beyond the assigned genres. I describe these designations more fully within these individual sections below, and I emphasize that the distinctions between these three categories are highly flexible. They function more like a spectrum or continuum of genre adherence than confined categories.

I primarily determine the genres Kate was asked to produce based on the genre label Kate assigns to them in their superscriptions or interior page titles described above. In the papers lacking genre labels, I make as educated a guess as possible about what genre Kate was expected to write based on my analysis of the content and other textual features of the papers.

My methods for analyzing Kate's papers and determining whether Kate has taken them up in ways that adhere to their genres, their forms, and their functions (whether she might be writing "within," "against," or "beyond" their genres) entail close reading and careful rhetorical analysis. I began by transcribing each paper, after which I carefully read them to understand their structure, content, and language features, such as grammatical person. I used these careful observations to establish patterns among common genres, in keeping with the best practices for genre analysis described by Amy Devitt, Mary Jo Reiff, and Anis Bawarshi in *Scenes of Writing: Strategies for Composing with Genres* (63). I then began to form observations about the types of uptakes and degree of genre "within-ness" Kate's papers demonstrate.

The means through which I determine the degree of “within-ness” of Kate’s uptakes of her writing assignments come from four sources of knowledge: First, I determine “within-ness” from information about the assignment genres that appear within other genre systems surrounding Kate’s “Advanced English Composition” course described in Chapter 2, chiefly the *English Bulletin* and its discussion of writing requirements in English Department courses. Second, I gain information about some assignment genres from Margaret Kane’s course notes. Third, I make these claims based on examining multiple samples of genres within Kate’s own paper set; in other words, I use the genres which she produces multiple times to form an understanding of her normal uptake of particular assignments. Fourth, and finally, in instances in which there are no other indications of the assignment genre’s expectations and only single samples of the genre in Kate’s paper set, I draw on my own understanding of the labeled genre and its typified form and function in contemporary and historical iterations of the genre.

Though I create these loose divisions of “within,” “against,” and “beyond” for the sake of organizing my findings, I ultimately argue that the distinctions between these categories are very flexible. Rather than residing solely within clearly divided categories, Kate’s writing demonstrates a continuum of adherence to and movement away from the genres she has been assigned to write. For instance, even in the papers which Kate seems to engage in uptakes of instruction inconsistent with the labeled genre, there are often still instances within these same papers in which she still writes within them. Conversely, even in papers where Kate’s primary uptake of writing instruction is to write within the genre, I find that Kate’s attempts to do so still entail her inserting herself, her interests, and her prior experiences into the assignment. This spectrum of uptakes is much more nuanced than a simple categorization scheme allows.

I proceed by first describing some frequently occurring features of Kate's uptakes of her writing assignments across different genres, as evidenced by analyzing her full paper set. These include evidence of Kate's personal interests and investments, her use of vivid descriptions and detailed storytelling, and her use of prior experiences and familial heritage to inform her writing. I then consider each loose category of genre adherence, beginning with those in which she remains within the genres she is required to produce. Afterward, I consider ways in which she pushes against genres, including through attempts to write within, through criticism of the material conditions under which she writes, and through use of humor and genre imitation. Finally, I examine her movements beyond assigned genres.

### **Writing Across Paper Genres: Common Features of Kate's Individualized Uptakes**

There are several recurring features within Kate's writings that characterize her individual uptakes of writing instruction. These features occur within her papers which contain clear genre labels, as well as within those which lack genre labels and thus whose genres are more ambiguous. Further, they occur no matter which predominant category of genre adherence to which her papers seem to correspond ("within," "against," or "beyond"). In other words, many of these features occur in papers where she writes mainly within genres, where she pushes back against them, and in which she writes beyond them. In this section, I describe these noteworthy patterns that mark these papers as coming distinctly from Kate.

#### *Writing Across: Interests and Investments*

One clearly discernible pattern in Kate's uptakes of writing assignments are her incorporation of her own interests within her papers. Though Robert J. Connors notes the growing appearance of personal topics in writing courses the second half of the nineteenth century, Kate's papers demonstrate her uptake of assignments relies on her personal interests

even in genres that would not necessarily require student writers to draw on the personal as the basis for their work (Connors, “Personal Writing Assignments”). In other words, drawing on her personal interests and experiences spans across genres.

### The Presence of Personal Interests in Briefs

This occurs frequently within Kate’s briefs, a genre best summarized as an argumentative outline, which I describe in much further depth in the section on “Writing Within Genres” below. Though I find and discuss below that Kate most frequently remains “within” the genre of the brief within the briefs she produces, she selects arguments and topics with which she is familiar to form the basis of them. My confidence as to her familiarity with these arguments and topics are due to my research into Kate’s biographical information in Chapter 2. For example, Kate begins her brief from March 21 with the thesis “The study of German is preferable to that of Latin.” Kate herself was fluent in German, having first begun to learn it on a family trip to Copenhagen to visit her father’s family during her childhood (Mensendiek 5). I provide further examples of brief topics which connect to Kate’s interests in the more detailed section on briefs below.

But similarly to the ways in which Kate selects arguments with which she is familiar to form the basis for her briefs, many of Kate’s other papers for “Advanced English Composition” show her incorporating her own interests into her uptakes of writing instruction. This inclusion of subjects and issues about which she is passionate (such as music, the German language, or education) take place even in genres which she otherwise seems to perform in ways consistent with their assigned genres. In other words, Kate writes herself into her papers no matter what their genre and no matter how firmly enmeshed in the genre her work seems to be.

The Presence of Personal Interests in “The Greatest Need of the University of Kansas”

To illustrate, consider her paper from February 16 titled “The Greatest Need of the University of Kansas,” pictured below in figure 4. This two-and-a-half page paper is more than likely a theme or forensic, as an outline is included following the paper’s paragraphed structure, and the *English Bulletin* points out that themes and forensics were to be accompanied by such outlines (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 13). Kate’s claim as to what the greatest need of the University is appears within her first sentence: “The University of Kansas is very much in need of a new building for the school of fine arts- not a mere make-shift like North College, but a building which shall be worthy of the school and of the important element of education which it represents” (Hansen, “The Greatest Need” 1). “North College” refers to the original structure of the University of Kansas, which served as the only building from 1865 until 1873, after which point it was abandoned for the new building, Fraser Hall. Dodd writes that the schools of Fine Arts and Law moved back into the old building in 1892, and here they resided still at the time of Kate’s 1900 essay. As a student in the School of Fine Arts, Kate would have taken many of her courses here. Dodd writes that at this time, “Old North College showed its age; its walls cracked and its floors creaked” (37), suggesting that the complaints Kate raises about the building within her essay were well founded.

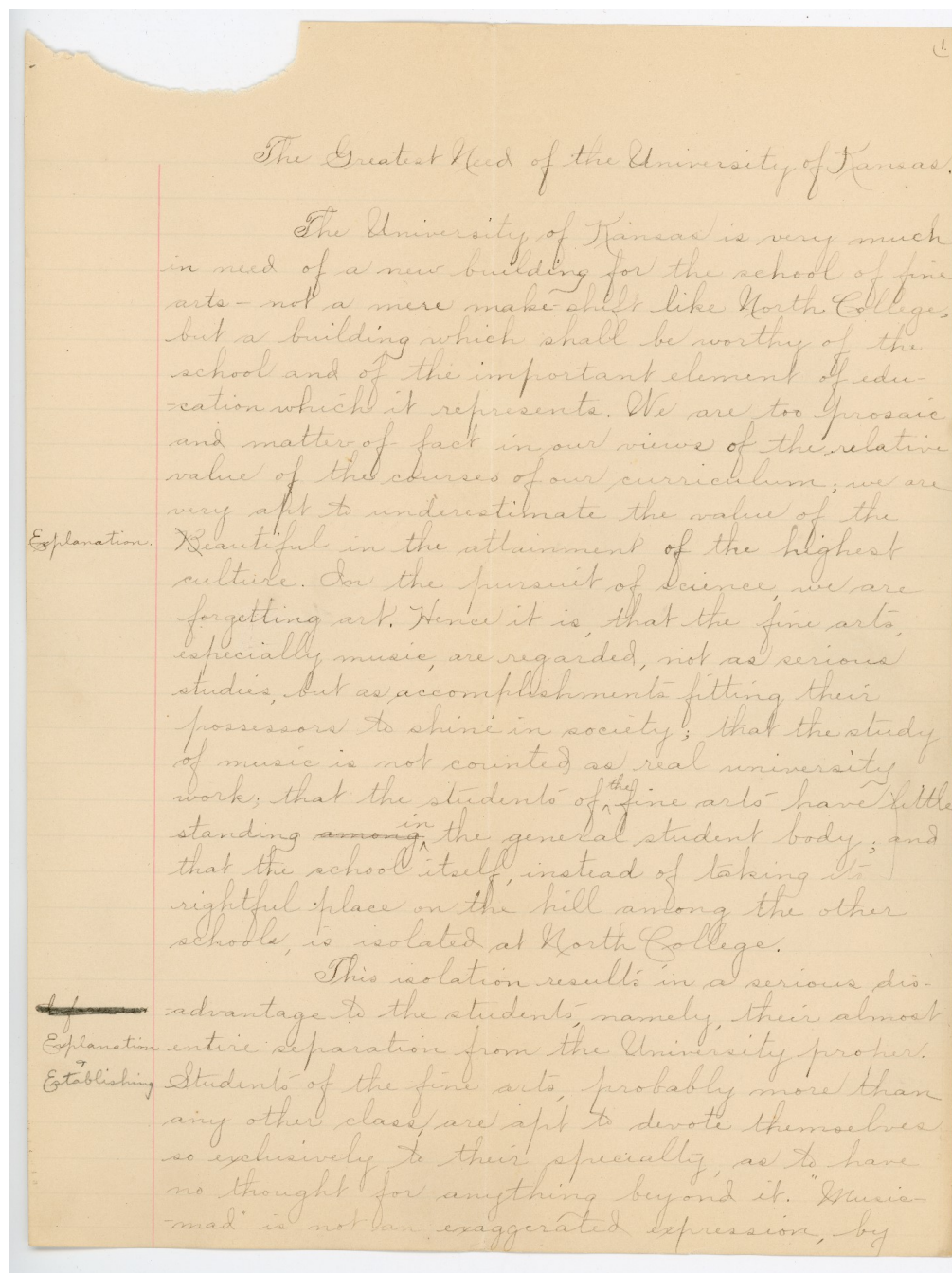


Figure 4 The first page of Kate Hansen's course paper titled "The Greatest Need of the University of Kansas" from February 16, 1900.

But beyond the make-shift, dilapidated nature of North College and its negative impact on Fine Arts students, Kate claims that this is part of a larger problem, one of the low status of the fine arts in the eyes of the larger university curriculum. She continues,

We are too prosaic and matter-of-fact in our views of the relative value of the course of our curriculum; we are very apt to underestimate the value of the Beautiful in the attainment of the highest culture. In the pursuit of science, we are forgetting art. Hence it is, that the fine arts, specifically music, are regarded, not as serious studies, but as accomplishments fitting their possessors to shine in society, that the study of music is not counted as real university work, that the students of the fine arts have little standing in the general student body; and that the school itself, instead of taking its rightful place on the hill among the other schools, is isolated at North College. This isolation results in a serious disadvantage to the students, namely, their almost entire separation from the University proper [...] (Hansen, “The Greatest Need” 1)

Kate produces this theme and outline of it in a manner that fits with its goal of arguing for an issue that is the greatest need of the University, as well as the form of a theme and its accompanying outline. In this way, her uptakes of the assignment fit with its assigned genre. It is likewise apparent that Kate selects a particular “need” of the University which she genuinely feels invested in as a Fine Arts student.

Even when writing within this genre, Kate is able to insert her own interests and investments. Thus, engaging in a genre-conforming uptake does not exclude a personalized uptake. It may be that this particular assignment and its exigence requiring students to describe the University’s greatest need more readily positions Kate to shape her uptake of the writing task in terms of her own experiences. But coupling Kate’s inclusion of personal interests in a paper such as this one alongside papers such as briefs—which do not necessarily position students in a manner that might automatically encourage a personalized uptake—shows that Kate does incorporate her own interests and investments across a variety of genres.

*Writing Across: Vivid Descriptions and Detailed Storytelling*

In addition to Kate's use of her personal interests in constructing her writing assignments, many of Kate's papers demonstrate that she takes up her writing assignments and completes them using vivid descriptions and details. In considering the presence of these features of Kate's course papers, it is useful to reflect likewise on Hawhee's theory of "rhetorical vision," which explores "the ways that language interacts with vision directly" ("Looking Into Aristotle's Eyes" 140). Drawing on Aristotle's work, particularly his term *phantasia*, Hawhee writes that this theorization of rhetorical vision is important because "At stake in such a consideration is rhetoric's role in sense perception and the importance of developing a rhetorical style that infuses words with perceivable movement and life, with visualizable action" ("Looking Into Aristotle's Eyes" 140). Hawhee's theory of rhetorical vision is particularly useful to considering Kate's writings because, as Hawhee explains here, a rhetor's usage of tactics to strengthen rhetorical vision have a direct effect on the reader or audience. Kate's usage of vivid descriptions and imagery have a direct impact on her readers' "sense perception" and are important components to her papers' overall effect, and the fact that Kate makes use of these features across genres is significant, as they constitute a pattern in her individualized uptake of genres.

Kate's use of vivid descriptions and details occurs within her explicitly genre-labeled papers, such as her "Description of a Library Chair" from April 30, as well as within papers lacking clear genre labels. Though ample descriptions would logically be a feature of a description text like "Description of a Library Chair," the frequency with which she employs these writing features even in un-named genres suggest that this is a commonality within Kate's uptakes of her assignments as an individual.

### Vivid Descriptions in “Our Landlord”

On May 18, for instance, Kate produces a paper whose interior title is “Our Landlord.”

Kate begins this two-and-a-half-page, un-genre-labeled paper as follows:

Our first impression of Mr. James was not a very marked or distinct one. We had met him among a number of other strangers, and had no particular idea of any of them. He appeared like many other elderly men, being probably about seventy. His hair and beard were white, his eyes of that faded blue which is so often seen in old age; his shoulder were quite bent. He must have been a strong man in his youth, for he was tall and broad-shouldered. His face was usually long, rather square than oval. Its shape, together with the whiskers around his chin, reminded us of the pictures of the typical elderly Englishman [...]. (Hansen, “Our Landlord” 1)

Kate continues on, describing Mr. James as a “decidedly interesting character,” discussing his personality, his conversation style, his love of storytelling, his sharp memory, and his chief occupation, his garden, with which “no one must interfere” (Hansen, “Our Landlord” 1). Her descriptions of Mr. James develop a stronger rhetorical vision and affect her readers’ sense-based perception of him as a person.

### Vivid Descriptions in “Mrs. Mandell and Her Home”

Kate’s aptitude for constructing vivid descriptions is likewise displayed in her May 4 paper, “Mrs. Mandell and Her Home.” Like “Our Landlord,” this paper also has an unidentified genre. In this two-and-a-half-page paper, Kate describes a house in Lawrence, Kansas, which she frequently walked past. She writes,

It was an old frame one. Its paint, if it ever had any, had long since disappeared. The walls had a rickety appearance. Two porches seemed about to fall. The yard was

overgrown with weeds, while a dense growth of trees and shrubs, all unpruned, gave it a deserted air. However, a glance at the side, where another house seemed to have been placed beside the first one, removed the impression, for there were always signs of activity there. Also, heaps of rubbish, old cans, jars, and tubs, showed that the place was yet a human habitation. (Hansen, "Mrs. Mandell and Her Home")

One day, Kate and her unnamed companions noticed many people coming and going from the house. Kate writes that, after speaking with several of these people and piecing together whatever information she could gather, she determined the "main points of the story" (Hansen, "Mrs. Mandell and Her Home").

Kate next recounts these main points as follows:

The property belonged to a widow, Mrs. Mandell, who had lived there for many years- according to one informant, since the Quantrill raid. Her husband had been a shoemaker. According to the stories told of his crabbed disposition and general worthlessness, he must not have been an especially congenial companion. Possibly this may account for some of her vagaries. He was an invalid for some years, during which she earned their living by washing. This she continued until her death. She was a good washer-woman, did her work well, always had plenty to do, and was scrupulously hones. Her neighbors say that she was really a kind-hearted woman, and not unsociable. But to most people she seemed very odd, and also repellant. She never admitted anyone to any room except her kitchen, where the washing was done. She was not of prepossessing appearance, being "tall, angular, and raw-boned- masculine, in short." Her features were sharp, her nose long, her hair strained back from her face. She was always uncomfortably straight and stiff. She lived alone, except for her pet parrot. Even in her last illness she would have no

one about her. She went into the inner part of the house, and locked the door. The neighbors, becoming anxious, sent for a doctor [. . .] They lifted her onto a chair, where she remained until her death. Around her, piled almost to the ceiling, were masses of old newspapers and boxes. Among them the people found thousands of yards of muslin, calico, and various finer fabrics, including silk. We were told also of “seventeen large lamps,” “dozens of fine tablecloths,” “expansive shirt waists,” “shoes and stockings without number,” even “a white silk dress, made in the latest fashion”. She had evidently been collecting and hoarding for many years. Some say that she had intended some day to build and furnish a new house with her treasures. If so, her desire will never be accomplished, for they were all sold by her heirs, and the old house is to follow them.

(Hansen, “Mrs. Mandell and Her Home”)

In this paper, Kate describes in extensive detail both what she herself has observed in viewing the exterior of Mrs. Mandell’s home and what others have told her regarding the woman’s life and death. Using details, such as those relating to Mrs. Mandell’s physical appearance or a listing of her possessions, allows Kate to create a more detailed rhetorical vision of the subject she describes.

#### Vivid Descriptions and Detailed Storytelling in “Ingi’s Last Watch”

Kate’s descriptions within “Our Landlord,” as well as within “Mrs. Mandell and Her Home,” seem to be based in part on Kate’s actual observations. That is, she has actually observed Mr. James and Mrs. Mandell’s home to construct her papers. With the latter, though, she likewise claims to have gathered her information from others, chiefly the people coming and going from Mrs. Mandell’s house following her death. It is possible that Kate recognizes similarities in these two assignment genres, and therefore deploys similar strategies of using

descriptions within them. However, Kate’s tendency to include vivid descriptions within her writing, no matter what genre they are intended to imitate, likewise extends to her production of fictional stories.

Kate titles her February 23 paper “Ingi’s Last Watch.” The contents of this paper appear to be fictional and tell the story of a fishing community near a fjord and an old woman—“Crazy Ingi”—who watches the sea waiting for her love to return. Kate opens her paper by describing the landscape of the setting:

It is winter. The icy north wind rushes unimpeded up the Sonderburger fjord, seeming as though it would freeze the very hearts of the few lonely fishers, who in their [...] boats are braving its wrath. It carries the banks of clouds swiftly against the beach, it whistles through the branches of two weather-worn beech trees by the shore, it whirls their withered leaves about like skeletons of dead hopes, it tosses the scanty gray hair of a woman, who sits on the gnarled roots of one of the trees, and gazes out over the water.

(Hansen, “Ingi’s Last Watch” 1)

Kate’s story then moves to flashbacks from Ingi’s youth, and these flashbacks are likewise marked by changes in the seasons Kate describes, progressing toward greener, warmer-weather seasons, as compared with the frozen landscape which she describes in the story’s beginning when Ingi is elderly.

During one of these flashbacks, a young man with whom Ingi falls in love carves their names into one of the beech trees—“He tells that it will be only a few months; and she promises, that every day she will come here and watch for the sail” (Hansen, “Ingi’s Last Watch” 2).

Kate’s story then moves back to the present in which the now gray-haired Ingi still sits waiting: “The night passes, and still the figure remains motionless leaning against the tree. The first rays

of the morning sun light up a face no longer strained with watching, but filled with the brightness of that summer day. For her, the ship has come” (Hansen, “Ingi’s Last Watch” 2-3).

Kate’s storytelling in this paper is highly detailed and creates a narrative which a reader can mentally visualize, particularly due to her descriptions—those of Ingi, of the passage of time, and of the natural world around Ingi. These features of her writing occur here and within her other “Advanced English Composition” papers, and not just within genres that are more descriptive in nature, such as stories or profiles of people, which might be more likely to permit uptakes that make use of vivid descriptions. For example, Kate’s February 14 paper argues for “Some Advantages of Eight O’Clock Classes” and contains descriptions of waking early in the morning when “the thought of English Composition proves stronger than the delights of Morpheus” (1). Kate utilizes similar strategies of description and detailed imagery that evoke a more powerful rhetorical vision across these varying genres, and her reasons for doing so may be due to the flexibility of these classroom genres for enabling such an individualized uptake. On the other hand, it may be that Kate consciously decides to do so no matter what the assigned genre, reflecting her individual penchant for heavy descriptions and details. In either case, Kate receives the highest possible grade in “Advanced English Composition,” and so her recurrent usage of descriptions seems at least permitted, if not encouraged.

#### *Writing Across: Recollections of the Past*

Another frequent characteristic of Kate’s uptakes of her writing assignments entails drawing on her past experiences. As with descriptions, part of this tendency may be due to the nature of specific writing assignment tasks, such as her April 25 paper titled “Two Games of My School Days,” in which Kate attempts to describe some games she played as a child. But drawing on her past likewise occurs within other papers.

Recollections of the Past in “The Victory of the ‘Little Upstarts’”

On May 21, Kate produced a paper whose interior title is “The Victory of the ‘Little Upstarts.’” Though it is unclear what genre she is writing, it is quite clear that she draws on her past experiences to produce it.

“The Victory of the ‘Little Upstarts’” tells the story of an experience Kate had during her schooling in Logan, Kansas, in her youth, prior to attending the University of Kansas. This paper is written in first person from Kate’s perspective, but is written in the present tense, resulting in it following a present tense, first person, narrative structure. The chief conflict of this narrative occurs between two groups of girls at the Logan school: the “little girls,” a group to which Kate belongs containing “A half dozen girls, ranging in age from twelve to fourteen,” and the “big girls,” those who are “at least seventeen years old,” the oldest in the school and those who “regarded themselves as grown people, assumed an air of great dignity and propriety, and refused to associate with us, the younger girls” (Hansen, “The Victory of the ‘Little Upstarts’” 1).

Beyond a refusal to socialize with the little girls, who they call the “little upstarts,” the big girls also attempt to “control” the school’s teacher, who all the girls refer to as “Taddie,” who is “a young man and bashful, seemingly very easy to manage.” On the final day of the school year, the big girls prepare to throw a large party. The little girls are not invited. Kate and her friends then develop a plan to throw a party of their own, to which they will also invite their teacher, Taddie (Hansen, “The Victory of the ‘Little Upstarts’” 1-2).

Kate and her friends put this plan into action, and they gather a group of fifteen girls and boys to participate. They do not invite the big girls, who still remain unaware of the competing party. The little girls then execute their party with great success—it includes games, singing, and

jokes, and their teacher has a wonderful time. Only at the end of the party do the big girls learn what has transpired and recognize why their own party was so under-attended. Kate concludes her narrative: “We ended our party in a great glee, for we felt that we had gained the decisive victory. But the ‘big girls’ have not forgiven us to this day” (Hansen, “The Victory of the ‘Little Upstarts’” 4-5).

In this paper, Kate recalls an experience from her past, using a narrative of events from her school days as the basis for her entire assignment. Though it’s unclear to what specific prompt “The Victory of the ‘Little Upstarts’” responds, this type of heavy reliance on her past experiences occurs across the genres Kate produces for “Advanced English Composition” and shows that Kate’s prior knowledge heavily influences her schoolwork at KU. Kate views her past as valuable and worthy of serving as the basis for many of her writings now that she has entered the University. She does not belittle herself or her rural Kansas background, but rather views them as valuable components to identity that are deserving of being read by her instructors within her uptake of the assignment.

#### Recollections of the Past in “The Naughtiness of the Naughty Nisses”

Kate’s recollections of her past occur in other papers, as well. On May 25, she submits her second-to-last-assignment, one she titles “The Naughtiness of the Naughty Nisses.” This paper is ten pages long, making it by far the longest paper she submits for “Advanced English Composition.” Like the “Little Upstarts,” this paper is a story that appears to draw on Kate’s memory of past experiences. But, by contrast, “The Naughty Nisses” is written as if told by a third person, omniscient narrator. The paper begins with three children asking the “Old Maid” Aunt Kate to tell them a story. One of these children is “little Kate the second” (Hansen, “The Naughtiness of the Naughty Nisses” 1). As best I can determine, Kate Hansen, the writer, is the

child, while the aunt is her Aunt Kate with whom she lived for a short time in Beloit, Kansas, prior to enrolling at the University.

In Kate's paper, the children beg Aunt Kate to tell them a story, one which their father describes as a "crazy Danish story," "a fairy tale," but which the children nevertheless love (Hansen, "The Naughtiness of the Naughty Nisses" 1). The "Naughty Nisses" is the story Aunt Kate selects, and her telling of it comprises the remainder of Kate's extensive paper. This story is about tiny creatures called nisses who live on farms in Denmark. While nisses are generally peaceful and good, after a time they begin to imitate the Vikings' ways, plundering neighboring farms and causing mayhem. Eventually, fairies and a Fairy Queen arrive to investigate the problems. The nisses are put on trial before the Queen, and their punishment is decided to be that the nisses will sail away with Leif Erikson to another land (Hansen, "The Naughtiness of the Naughty Nisses" 1-10).

Kate appears to write this paper based on her recollections of the past. She draws on her prior knowledge of Danish fairy tales and her memory of having been told them by her Aunt Kate in order to do so. In this way, Kate uses the knowledge she gained prior to enrolling in KU and her "Advanced English Composition" class to form the basis of many of her writings, thus influencing her uptake of her writing assignments. As with the "Little Upstarts" paper, Kate seems to readily allow her identity—her past experiences from her girlhood in Kansas and stories related to her Danish heritage—to shape her uptakes of her writing assignments. Rather than a hindrance to her participation in "Advanced English Composition," Kate's readiness to draw on her personal and familial past are a recurring pattern within her uptakes of writing instruction.

## Writing Within Paper Genres

Having discussed what I see as common features of Kate Hansen's patterns of uptake in her entire paper set, I now consider papers in which she appears to write within the genres she has been assigned. When I use the term "within," I mean that Kate takes up the assignment and produces a text that appears in keeping with the form and function of the genre she has been assigned to produce. In other words, her uptakes of these writing assignments are expected or in-line with what she has been assigned to submit for her course and for particular assignments.

In this section, I describe three genres in which Kate appears to write "within": Outlines, briefs and refutations, and descriptions. In these assignments, Kate appears to make no obvious deviations from the form, content, or function of these genres. Some genres in which she writes perhaps lend themselves to remaining within these genres more than others, as my discussion of outlines and briefs below will demonstrate. Even within the genres for which Kate performs seemingly normal uptakes, she frequently still includes clear traces of her own interests and experiences, as well as her past experiences.

To begin, I consider two closely-related genres which Kate seems to clearly remain within: outlines and briefs. Kate produces multiple examples of each of these genres throughout her course, including one "Exercise in Outlines," three stand-alone outlines, and three outlines that appear within and accompany other assignments. For each of these genres, my analysis of Kate's use of them is aided by other genres surrounding her course, namely the *English Bulletin*, which I discuss at length in Chapter 2. The *English Bulletin* likewise provides an explanation of the distinctions between outlines and briefs, genres that at first appear very similar.

*Writing Within Outlines*

Regarding outlines, the *English Bulletin* notes that all student themes, theses, and forensics produced as part of the forensic system require outlines. For these outlines, students had to write “two logical outlines or analyses upon separate sheets of paper, one fully superscribed” (13). Although Kate’s outlines in her paper set are for her “Advanced English Composition” course and not for the additional forensic system writings to which the *Bulletin* is directly referring, it is not surprising that in Kate’s course she would have been asked to produce outlines, a genre which the Department of English clearly viewed as an essential component of the successful production of themes and theses. The *English Bulletin* continues: “The outline should be at least roughly sketched before the paper is written, and filled out afterward, and should give the principal divisions of the subject-matter and usually the paragraph topics under each. The outline of a theme or thesis is known as the plan, and is expository in character, as in this illustration (from Scott & Denney’s “Paragraph Writing,” page 133)” (13). Here, the *Bulletin* explains how the outline is to be written in relation to the paper which it outlines, explains that outlines are expository, rather than argumentative, and even provides a reference to an outside text, Scott and Denny’s “Paragraph Writing.” The *Bulletin* next provides an example outline upon which students are expected to model their outlines.

Regarding Kate’s actual production of outlines, Kate submits an “Exercises in Outlines” on February 9. In this three-page paper, Kate produces three separate outlines. The first and second are quite short. The first is titled “What I think of Being Vaccinated” and contains only two major points, (“It is a disagreeable ordeal” and “It is a wise precaution”), each of which have three subpoints. The second outline in this paper it titled “Why I Do Not Skate” and likewise contains two major points, but each contain four subpoints. The third outline she produces in this

paper is by far the longest and is titled “Description of a Danish Wedding.” This final outline spans the final two pages of the paper and provides four major points, each with multiple subpoints (Hansen, “Exercise in Outlines”).

This assignment as a whole shows Kate producing outlines that match with the expectations of the genre established in the *English Bulletin*. Kate does not appear to actually write a full theme or thesis to go along with these outlines (at least, these are not included in her set of papers preserved from “Advanced English Composition”); instead, the assignment seems to be simply practice at producing the outline itself, perhaps explaining its title, “*Exercise in Outlines*,” rather than “Outlines” (emphasis mine). Even so, in each of these three exercises within this February 9 assignment, Kate also includes approximate word counts for the theme or thesis. It is unclear whether these pieces were actually written, though, as they are not included in the preserved set of Kate’s “Advanced English Composition” papers at Kenneth Spencer Research Library.

In addition to the “Exercises in Outlines” assignment, three of Kate’s other papers are stand-alone outlines. Two contain the genre label of “Outline” within their titles (those written on March 2 and March 5), while the third (written on March 12) is not explicitly labeled by Kate as an “outline,” yet clearly appears to be one.

Regarding the two outlines which are labeled as such, these are outlines of already-written pieces of writing, though not necessarily those written by Kate. The first, dated March 2, is titled on its first interior page as “Outline of Theme as Written.” This outline is for a piece titled “Placer Mining in British Columbia.” The outline is four and a half pages long and follows the features of an outline present in the *English Bulletin*, including dividing the subject matter into distinct points and providing paragraph topics underneath. Kate’s title on this assignment for

a “Theme as Written” suggests that it was produced from an already-written piece. But this piece on placer mining is not one which appears in her paper set for this course. Further, Margaret Kane’s course notes from the previous year likewise contain an example of a similar outline also labeled “Placer Mining in British Columbia,” which is not identical to Kate’s, yet seems to follow the same general progression of ideas (Kane 33). As such, while it is still possible that Kate later wrote (or had already written) a finished piece on the subject herself, the fact that an example outline on the same subject appears in Margaret’s notes suggests the possibility that students in each course were asked to practice developing outlines based on the same finished piece. This finished piece may have been one published in a periodical, is the case for the next outline I discuss.

This second stand-alone outline in Kate’s papers is dated March 5 and it titled “Outline of ‘The War Against Consumption.’” This outline is quite clearly not one for which Kate wrote the full iteration of the piece of writing being outlined. Instead, this outline is one Kate produced based on a published article. She indicates this at the top of her paper in a parenthetical note, explaining that this outline is for an article by this title written by John A. Girdner in the March 1900 issue of *The Munsey*, a popular magazine. In this instance, Kate seems to have been expected to create what contemporary composition instructors might call a “reverse outline” or a “descriptive outline,” one produced from a fully-written text. It is unclear whether all students in the course were required to produce an outline based on this particular article from *The Munsey* or whether they had the ability to select an article of their choosing (Hansen, “Outline of Theme as Written”).

In addition to the March 2 and March 5 stand-alone outlines, Kate likewise produces a third stand-alone outline on March 12. Rather than containing an “outline” genre label in its title,

this paper's interior title is "Meaning of the Term 'Nature.'" The main points of this outline include point I. "Reasons for the discussion," II. "Method of ascertaining the meaning of such general terms," and III. "Two principal means of 'Nature'" (Hansen, "Meaning of the Term 'Nature'" 1). Each of these points likewise contain various sub-points that further develop each section. Though not labeled as such, this one-page paper seems to clearly follow the structure and formatting of both Kate's two other outlines, as well as the structure and formatting detailed as desirable in the *English Bulletin*.

Beyond these outlines which stand alone as submitted assignments, Kate also produces outlines that appear within three other papers she submits. In these instances, her work aligns even more so with the *English Bulletin's* explanation of the function of an outline, which was intended to be produced in conjunction with another, longer genre, such as a theme, thesis, or forensic. For example, on February 14, Kate submits a paper titled "Some Advantages of Eight O'Clock Classes," which is followed by a detailed outline of the piece. Based on how closely Kate's outlines adhere to the genre features of an outline as presented with the *English Bulletin*, she demonstrates a habitualized uptake of the outline genre within her enactments of it—she writes within the genre.

#### *Writing Within Briefs and Refutations*

Briefs exist as a similar, yet distinct genre from outlines in the course papers of Kate. As with outlines, Kate seems to take up the instruction she has received related to brief-writing in ways that correspond with the assignment's intentions. According to the *English Bulletin*, briefs were a sub-genre of outline to be written specifically for forensics, which are characterized by their argumentative nature: "The outline of a forensic indicates its argumentative character, showing the principal steps in the reasoning, and the subordinate proofs under each. Such an

outline is called a brief, and its form is illustrated on next page” (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 13). Briefs were to begin with a proposition. Briefs were then to follow with a structure similar to an outline, with each of the major points serving as reasons “the proposition is true” (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 14).

“Briefs” (as well as other iterations of the term) are the most frequently used genre labels within Kate’s “Advanced English Composition” papers. The term “briefs” appears in papers titled “Exercise in Briefs,” “Exercise in Brief-Making” and “Brief and Amplification,” amounting to a total of eight of her forty-two papers having these genre designations. These briefs are dated mid-March through mid-April, near the halfway point of the spring 1900 semester. Each begins with the proposition mentioned in the *English Bulletin*, though Kate labels each of these propositions as a “thesis.”

Interestingly, nearly all of Kate’s arguments in her briefs connect closely to the subject of education, a subject Kate has an investment in as both a former educator in rural Kansas schools and, of course, as a current student herself at KU. Some thesis statements which begin her briefs include: “Industrial education should be given a place in the public schools,” “The study of German is preferable to that of Latin,” “All teachers in country schools should be required to pass an examination in music,” “Students should not study on Sunday,” “Students in college should help frame the laws by which they are governed,” and “Undergraduate students should devote themselves to a single line of study.” Only one, “The poet makes use of his earlier writings in his Latin works” does not directly address education or students. Each of these briefs begins with a clear thesis and then follows with an outline-like structure, detailing reasons that the thesis is true. In this way, Kate seems to engage in uptakes of her assignment consistent with the form of the briefs genre she has been assigned to produce.

In many of these briefs and the arguments they convey, a connection to Kate's own interests is present, such as her knowledge of the German language and her experience teaching in a country school prior to coming to KU. These personal connections do not appear to be required components of the form and function of briefs as established in the *English Bulletin*, which instead appears very logic-based in its requiring of an argument and evidence or proofs. However, writing within the genre of a brief seems to intrinsically require an insertion of the self and an investment in the selected proposition or thesis. Kate must have familiarity with the argument she presents in order to readily and successfully convey it. As such, Kate's use of personal connections within her briefs does not seem to constitute a deviation from the genre. Or, at least, having familiarity with her topic and argument serves as an aid to make her task in producing a brief more feasible.

This is not to say, however, that a student is unable to successfully write a brief based on an argument they may not personally connect to or believe in. Kate herself demonstrates this in her papers through her production of a closely-connected genre to the brief: the refutation. On March 11, Kate produced the aforementioned brief with the thesis "Undergraduate students should devote themselves to a single line of study." Two days later, she submits a refutation titled "Undergraduates should *not* devote themselves to a single line of study" [emphasis mine]. It is clear that refutations in "Advanced English Composition" are a very closely related genre to briefs. They essentially *are* briefs, yet are distinguished from them by arguing for an opposing claim. Kate seems to be able to do so successfully, producing a refutation of her earlier argument for single lines of study. Thus, writing within the genre of a refutation appears highly performative. In this refutation on undergraduates *not* devoting themselves to one area of study, Kate enacts an identity that is in opposition to the one she asserts in her uptake of brief that

argues that undergraduates *should* do so. Her uptake of this refutation genre requires a removal—and even a reversal—of the personal investment she previously drew upon to craft her initial brief. Writing within a refutation that argues the opposite of a brief she had previously produced, for Kate, may entail writing against herself.

### *Writing Within Descriptions*

Like outlines and briefs, the descriptions that Kate produces for her course demonstrate her taking up the assignment tasks in ways that appear consistent with the form and function of the genre. Unlike outlines and briefs, though, my understanding of the “within-ness” of her uptake of her assignment task does not come from the Department of English’s publications. Instead, my understanding of her uptake comes from both a comparison of samples of descriptive writing she produces, as well as my own understanding of contemporary technical descriptions and the components, style, and visual components that comprise them. For example, in the 2019 textbook *Technical Writing Essentials: Introduction to Professional Communications in the Technical Fields*, author Suzan Last describes both technical descriptions and definitions. Last writes that these genres employ “a combination of visuals and text to both ‘show’ and ‘tell’ the reader about the information being conveyed” (7.4). Depending on the specific context for which a description is being written, a writer may “draw on the ‘five senses’ and metaphorical comparisons (analogies) to allow the reader to fully conceptualize what is being described” (7.4). However, descriptions more frequently “[rely] on concrete, measurable descriptors” (7.4).

### “Description of a Library Chair” and the Production of Clear Descriptions

As an example of Kate writing within the genre of a description, on April 30 Kate submits an assignment titled “Description of a Library Chair.” Just over six pages in length, this paper includes very thorough descriptions, as well as multiple hand-drawn figures which she

labels as “Fig. 1,” and so on. Her paper begins, “The chair is of light wood, polished and varnished. For the purpose of description, it may be divided into the back, the arms, the seat, and the legs. The following is a projection of the back, as seen from behind. The scale is one to six. [...]” (Hansen, “Description of a Library Chair” 1). Kate then proceeds to describe each of these features of the chair, following the division in its physical structure she first established. At no point does Kate appear to deviate or digress from her task. She conveys “concrete, measurable descriptors,” as well as uses figures to accompany her descriptions, thereby writing within the genre (Last 7.4).

“What I Saw in One Short Hour,” “What I Saw During an Hour on May Day,” and the Production of Clear Descriptions

Kate’s “Description of a Library Chair” is the only one of her papers that contains the “description” genre label. However, she produces other papers that lack genre labels that may actually be part of this same genre. Her next assignment following “Description of a Library Chair” is dated May 1 and titled “What I Saw in One Short Hour.” This three-and-a-half-page paper provides an extremely detailed description of events that occurred on campus that day, May Day 1900. As part of an ongoing tradition at KU, the freshman and sophomore classes engaged in a “scrap,” a fight for control of the flag flying atop the May Pole on Mount Oread (Hansen, “What I Saw” 1). One day later, on May 2, Kate submits a second iteration of this apparent description, one which conveys the same basic information, but which has some revisions. For instance, her title is now more specific: “What I Saw During an Hour on May Day.” But in each of these May Day papers, Kate provides detailed descriptions of the events from her own point of view.

Like outlines and briefs, Kate's descriptions appear to be uptakes that remain largely within the genre of a description. She produces descriptions based on her observations, whether of a library chair or of the sequence events which took place during the May Day fight between the freshman and sophomore classes. Freedom of expression within the description genre seems to appear only when selecting which specific details to include. Writing within the forms and functions of specific genres, as Kate does in her production of outlines, briefs, refutations, and descriptions, are the most common uptakes in which Kate engages in her course papers.

### **Writing Against Paper Genres**

Though the majority of Kate Hansen's uptakes of writing assignments in the form of her "Advanced English Composition" papers demonstrate her writing within these required genres, she engages in other kinds of uptakes, as well. In particular, in this section, I describe and analyze instances in which Kate writes against genres. By "writing against genres," I am referring to Kate writing in ways that appear to push back against her assigned writing tasks, even in subtle ways. These appear in the form of deviations or movements away from the typified form and function of the assigned genre. In this section, I identify and describe three forms of "writing against" in which Kate engages in her papers—including expression of difficulty within her papers, commentary on material conditions, and use of humor and genre imitation in constructing her assignment response.

#### *Expressions of Difficulty*

Distinct from the examples above of Kate writing in ways that appear in keeping with the form and function of genres such as briefs, outlines, and descriptions, there are instances in Kate's course papers in which she attempts to take up the genres she has been assigned to produce but expresses her difficulty with doing so.

Expressions of Difficulty in “One Student’s Directions for Cultivating Cabbages”

On April 23, Kate submits an assignment—one whose contents reveals is the genre of a theme—titled “One Student’s Directions for Cultivating Cabbages.” This assignment opens as follows:

The cultivation of cabbages! Dire dismay overwhelmed the mind of at least one long-suffering student, when this subject was announced. “What do I know about the cultivation of cabbages?” she exclaimed. “I never cultivated a cabbage in my life! I do not know if cabbage grows from a seed or a bulb!” For two days she worried over those cabbages. She searched every nook and corner of her brain for “subject” or “theme material”, but she searched in vain. She annoyed all her friends with questions about cabbages. They knew but little more than she did. She obtained only two bits of information which she thought of any value- the first, that cabbages do not grow from bulbs, and the second, that the plants must be transplanted to make them grow well. But that could never be made into a five hundred word theme, she thought. At last, into the gloomy emptiness of her brain there flashed a dangling light. It was, an idea- at last. “Now,” she thought, “I have been studying reasoning for these past six weeks, and I surely ought to know something about it. Why should I not reason out the proper manner of cultivating cabbages?” She did so, and here is the result of her reasoning [...] (Hansen, “One Student’s Directions” 1)

In this theme, Kate spends nearly half of her two-page assignment expressing the difficulty she has with completing this writing task. Narrating her pre-writing process, she begins by explaining that she took an inventory of her already-held knowledge. Finding nothing useful to aid her in writing about cabbages, she writes that she then consults her friends, which yields

some information, yet not enough for a “five hundred word theme,” which is apparently the required length for her paper. After narrativizing this process, she claims that she draws on her skills of “reasoning,” and with these she writes the remaining page of her two-page paper (Hansen, “One Student’s Directions”).

Kate’s meta-commentary on the difficulty she has with completing this assignment, as well as the percentage of the whole theme that these commentaries take up, show her engaging in writing moves that seem out of keeping with the genre of the theme. The *English Bulletin*, Margaret’s course notes, and Kate’s other themes within this paper set suggest it instead ought to begin with a clear focus or point and then proceed in a logical order to address that focus or point. Instead, Kate’s uptake of this particular assignment show her devoting substantial time and space to overtly describing why she has difficulty carrying out the assignment. The challenges Kate faces in taking up this theme are certainly valid—she simply does not know how to cultivate cabbages. But Kate’s use of the theme itself to describe those challenges pushes against the form and function of the genre she has been assigned to compose.

#### Expressions of Difficulty in “Two Games of My School Days”

Kate’s expressions of difficulty with writing tasks are most obvious in this theme on cultivating cabbages. However, shorter commentaries on the challenges of taking up her assignments likewise occur in other papers. In her April 25 paper titled “Two Games of My School Days,” Kate is apparently tasked with describing games she played as a child. She opens her essay by saying that

It is indeed a difficult task to go back in memory to the games of childhood. The distance is so great, that very few objects can be recalled with sufficient accuracy for the present scientific investigation. Vague pictures, scraps of verse with their accompanying

monotonous chant, one or two names- these are all that now remain. Here is one of the verses which come to me: [...]. (Hansen, “Two Games of My School Days” 1)

Kate next provides two verses that appear to be nursery rhymes, after which she further elaborates on the lyrics and the actions that accompany them. Kate could have omitted this opening and moved directly to providing these verses; instead, she chose to open the paper by expressing the challenge this assignment presents. This may be because she feels these “verses” are not in keeping with the “games” about which her paper’s title suggest she was expected to write.

In this paper, as in “One Student’s Directions for Cultivating Cabbages,” Kate seems to want to take up her assignments in a way consistent with her assigned task. But when she feels she is unable to do so successfully, she modifies the genre’s contents to instead devote (sometimes substantial) length to explaining the challenges she encounters. She may do so for a variety of reasons, such as to expand her papers’ lengths to meet their requirements, or perhaps in order to ensure her readers, Edwin M. Hopkins or Raphael D. O’Leary, are aware of the challenges she faced (and perhaps not grade her harshly for remembering verses but not actual games). For whatever reasons she does so, these moves can likewise be interpreted as Kate pushing against—and possibly even criticizing—the specific assignment with which she has been tasked.

#### *Commentary on Material Conditions*

The expressions of difficulty that Kate includes in “One Student’s Directions for Cultivating Cabbages” and “Two Games of My School Days” are not the only ways in which her papers demonstrate evidence of her writing against the genres she has been assigned. There is also evidence that she makes modifications to her papers and their genres’ typical form and

function in order to provide commentary—and even criticism—of the material conditions under which she is writing.

Before discussing Kate’s commentary on material conditions, it is interesting to note that referring to “Advanced English Composition” within the papers she produces for it is not an unusual writing move for Kate. In her February 14 paper on “Some Advantages of Eight O’Clock Classes,” she describes the need to arise “at six o’clock on a cold winter morning” when “the thought of English Composition proves stronger than the delights of Morpheus” (Hansen, “Some Advantages” 1). Likewise, Kate also refers to the course by occasionally mentioning one of her course instructors, Edwin M. Hopkins. For instance, she does so in her February 25 “Exercise in Editorial and News Paragraphing,” in which one of her paragraphs describes a “series of three concerts” the music department will hold “before the close of the school year”(Hansen, “Exercise in Editorial and News Paragraphing” 1). Kate writes that Professor Hopkins will participate in one of these concerts to fill in for another instructor, Professor Penny, “who is at present conducting an educational excursion to Europe and Egypt” (Hansen, “Exercise in Editorial and News Paragraphing” 1). But beyond these sorts of mentionings of the course and its logistical information, such as its starting time and its instructors, Kate also makes direct commentary on the material conditions that surround her as she participates in “Advanced English Composition” and engages in uptakes of its writing assignments.

#### Criticism of Material Conditions in “Exercise in Characterization”

In Kate’s May 9 paper, which is an “Exercise in Characterization,” she provides five paragraphs labeled with Roman numerals I through V. Each paragraph entails characterization of a different location, object, or person. Paragraph VI focuses on the “English Recitation Room”

(Hansen, “Exercise in Characterization” 2). In it, Kate writes: “The English recitation room occupies the north end of the second floor of Fraser Hall. A noticeable feature is the picture of Shakespeare’s epitaph, which hangs on the west side of the entrance. This is the one room in Fraser Hall in which I expect to keep my mind absolutely on the work” (Hansen, “Exercise in Characterization” 2). This characterization of the English Recitation Room is similar in length, structure, and content to the other paragraphs of characterizations Kate produces within this assignment. However, the final line appears distinct. In it, Kate diverges from the third person, neutral characterizations present in her other paragraphs to instead provide a first person commentary on her own relationship with the room, saying that here she is able to focus on her work.

#### Criticism of Material Conditions in “Exercise in Paragraphing”

In addition to this very brief evidence of Kate writing against the genre of characterizations evidenced by her other sample characterization paragraphs, another of Kate’s papers provides an overt criticism of the material conditions under which she writes in producing her papers for the course. This appears in an undated paper whose interior title states that it is an “Exercise in Paragraphing.” This exercise is only one paragraph in length. Kate writes:

The need of additional arm-chairs in the English recitation room is a very noticeable one. For instance, the writer of this paragraph is obliged to sit in a high common chair, resting this paper on some note-books on her knee. It will be strange, if the writing done under such circumstances be even legible. As to correctness of thought and expression- who would expect them from one bent nearly double over this work, and with a high collar causing torture every time the head is bent, as it must be now for want of arm chairs? Stooped shoulders are very likely to result from this position, which must be continued

every morning for half a year. It is not only one or two students who are thus inconvenienced; almost a third of the class are obliged to use these common chairs. In view then of [the] importance of their work, should not the state provide sufficient arm-chairs for the use of the English department? (Hansen, "Exercise in Paragraphing" 1)

In this paper, Kate provides what seems to be a contradiction to her May 9 characterization paragraph above. Here, rather than remarking that she is able to accomplish substantial work in the recitation room, she adamantly remarks on the difficulty of doing so due to the state of the room's chairs. It is possible, though, that this undated "Exercise in Paragraphing" was written before her "Exercise in Characterization." Perhaps the chairs had been replaced by the time of her May 9 characterization.

In any case, Kate's assignment in this "Exercise in Paragraphing" was likely to demonstrate her understanding of how to successfully produce a paragraph. According to Margaret Kane's course notes from March 3, 1899, a "complete" paragraph "must contain a topic & a development," and the length of this development will depend on the specific topic of the paragraph, which is typically expressed at the beginning of the paragraph (Kane, 40). Kate's paragraph in this exercise does indeed contain a topic in its beginning, which she then develops within the remainder. As such, it appears that Kate does produce a paragraph that fits with the form and function of the genre as it is established in Margaret Kane's lecture notes.

Though the form of Kate's paragraph in this "Exercise in Paragraphing" would seem to fit with the genre of the paragraph, her selection of this particular topic to demonstrate her paragraph-writing ability is interesting, and not simply because it seems at odds with her "Exercise in Characterization." This subject of the arm chairs is one that would have literally been close to her as she was writing. In other words, she may have chosen to write her paragraph

about the English room's chairs because she was sitting in one while writing. As such, it may have come to her mind as a topic for her exercise. Even so, Kate's paragraph is harsh and adamant in its criticism of the conditions under which she and her classmates must write.

The issue of topic and content in her enactment of the paragraph genre become more complex when considering her audience. Her paper would almost certainly have been read by her instructors, Edwin M. Hopkins or Raphael D. O'Leary, both members of the English Department. What is Kate's motivation or actual desired outcome in selecting this topic to show her genre knowledge? Does she actually want to make the issue known to her instructors? Kate is emphatic that clear writing is nearly impossible to accomplish under these material conditions, and she states as much all the while working under these conditions herself, as she has been assigned to do. In this way, Kate's work can be interpreted as her pushing the assigned genre—not precisely in altering its generic form—but in her selection of topic and its relation to the genre's audience. She pushes against the genre of a paragraph by writing a paragraph about the difficulty of successfully writing under these circumstances.

### *Use of Humor and Imitation*

In addition to expressing difficulty with her writing assignments, as well as commenting on the materials conditions under which she completes them, Kate subtly pushes against the genres she has been assigned through a use of humor or playfulness. Many of the papers discussed above show Kate's use of humor, such as "The Victory of the 'Little Upstarts'" or "The Naughtiness of the Naughty Nisses." Another clear example of Kate employing humor is illustrated within her March 9 "Exercise in Letter Writing."

Use of Humor and Imitation in “Exercise in Letter Writing”

Kate’s “Exercise in Letter Writing” contains a letter is dated “Lawrence, Kans. March 9, 1900” and addressed to “Mr. J. S. Bach, The Seventh Heaven.” Kate writes:

Most Honored Master:- A poor student, who for the past six months has been laboring, with ardent devotion, but alas! all in vain, to gain some conception of the meaning of your wonderful Inventions and three part Fugues, ventures to address you, the Master, alike of past, present, and future music. Words are indeed inadequate to express my admiration for those sublime compositions. They are also inadequate to express my opinion of the labor involved in mastering them. O, Master, We work so faithfully: we practice, "one, two, three, four," regularly as the clock ticks, for four weary hours every day. We think we understand your meaning; we go to class full of confidence. We play one measure, or perhaps, in rare cases, two; then our instructor, hard-hearted as he is, interrupts- tell us it is all wrong, that we have not the slightest idea of your meaning, and in short makes us feel that we never can attain any understanding of your works, no matter how we work. We wish, so earnestly, that we might see you, and year you tell us what to do, and how to express your thoughts- But what do these Inventions really mean? One voice says something; then another one begins, then a third one interrupts- All three keep on, each one with a different something to say, until it seems that neither is saying anything. So they keep on quarreling, arguing, disputing. Sometimes one stops for a measure or two, apparently for lack of breath. Once in a while, although rarely, two agree for a measure enough to follow each other in thirds and sixths. Finally, with a last parting thrust, they die away one after the other. Is that what you think people do? Is this meant to be a philosophy of life? Or is it just so much "exercise for the independence of the

fingers?" Forgive the presumption of the questions, dear Master, and set at rest the mind of one who is well-nigh distracted with these confusing, conflicting "voices." With all humility, Your disciple, Kate Ingeborg Hansen. (Hansen, "Exercise in Letter Writing" 1-2)

In this letter, Kate describes the difficulty she has with learning Bach's musical compositions. This letter clearly shows a connection to Kate's own interests, as is the case for so many of her writings. Kate was enrolled in the School of Fine Arts as a piano student during its writing, and music had been one of her chief focuses even before coming to KU. It would likewise continue to be for the remainder of her life, as seen in particular through her career teaching music in Japan.

Aside from taking up the genre in a way that connects to her personal interests—selecting a letter recipient and focus that relate to her passion for music—Kate's uptake of the letter genre is significant in that she has addressed it to a non-living recipient. Other features of the letter seem in keeping with the genre: the structure of the heading, paragraphs, salutation, and closing all seem to match the form of a personal letter. But the actual content of these features show Kate crafting an imaginative, humorous letter, one addressed to long-deceased composer Johann Sebastian Bach who resides in "The Seventh Heaven," entreating him to reveal the purpose of his complex musical compositions (Hansen, "Exercise in Letter Writing" 1). In these ways, Kate shows her understanding of both the form and function of a letter, and, in this sense, she is writing within the genre. However, these modifications to its form and function may likewise show her ability to imitate the genre, to use it in playful ways that do not fit its real-world function. Kate may also be pushing against the constraints of a fairly prescriptive genre and

looking for ways to exercise creativity or choice within those constraints. This is her “unique performance” of the genre (Devitt, “Genre Performances” 2).

On a deeper level, Kate may here be showing a keen understanding of the artificiality of classroom writing assignment genres. She may recognize that she does not need to write to a living person in order to successfully complete her assignment. In these ways, too, her writing pushes against its genre.

### **Writing Beyond Paper Genres**

Kate Hansen most frequently writes within the genres she is assigned as part of her course. And there are occasions, as I demonstrate above, in which Kate may even push against the genres she is required to produce. In either case, she still frequently draws on her own interests, utilizes vivid descriptions and detailed storytelling, and makes connections to her past or her prior knowledge. In this final section, I analyze ways in which Kate may do more than write within or against genres. In the two examples that follow, I argue that she may even write beyond genres. When I use the phrase “beyond genres,” I mean that she utilizes the genres she has been assigned and required to write within “Advanced English Composition” in ways that expand beyond their intended form and function, thereby engaging in alternative uptakes.

#### *Writing Beyond Genre in “An Experiment in Artistic Observation”*

On May 7, Kate submits an untitled paper slightly over three pages in length whose interior title is “An Experiment in Artistic Observation.” Unlike most other papers, Kate opens this one by directly identifying the writing task she has been assigned: “We had been assigned as a subject for composition, ‘A Night in the Deserted House.’ Not being possessed of sufficiently vivid imaginations to manufacture a story about it, and never having been in such a place, several of us were at a loss what to do” (Hansen, “An Experiment” 1). Kate and her friends have

apparently been assigned to construct a paper—perhaps a theme—related to this subject. Though the genre is not completely clear from this opening, it does seem that this assignment requires students to use their “imagination” to construct this piece of writing.

Next, Kate discusses the plan formulated by herself and some fellow students, who she identifies only by their first initials, to accomplish this work. She writes that “At last M. had a brilliant idea. ‘Why not go there tonight?’ Four of us agreed to try it. The owners of the place looked surprised at our request, and cast some unkind reflections on our common sense. However, on our explaining our object, they granted us the desired permission” (Hansen, “An Experiment” 1). Kate and her three friends (M., B., and R.) find their assigned task to be challenging, and, in response, they apparently actually go to a deserted house. The remainder of Kate’s paper recalls their experience, which includes their arrival at the deserted house, their surveillance of it, and their splitting up to spend the night in separate rooms within it, “In order to make [their] impressions more vivid” (Hansen, “An Experiment” 1). Kate manages to fall asleep, during which time she experiences a terrible nightmare. She is awakened by a loud noise (which her paper later reveals to be one of her friends falling out of their hammock) that scares Kate and her companions, many of whom then flee the deserted house (Hansen, “An Experiment” 1-3).

Kate turns in this assignment for “Advanced English Composition,” and she titles this experience “An Experiment in Artistic Observation.” Again, this title that Kate writes at the top of the interior first page of her assignment is quite distinct from the assignment Kate says in the beginning of the paper’s body that she and her classmates have been assigned to write. She writes that “We had been assigned as a subject for composition, ‘A Night in the Deserted House,’” and that it is supposed to be written through use of the imagination alone.

Before moving on to a consideration of genre implications, I wish to reflect on the fact that Kate's construction of her *ethos* within this paper is complicated. On one hand, her movement well beyond the genre she has been assigned to complete shows somewhat of a disregard for the instructions she has been given. However, she is careful to include an indication in her paper that she and her friends did ask permission to stay in the house, and that they were not trespassing or breaking actual laws in modifying their assignment to actually go to a deserted house. Even so, Kate identifies the sex of at least one of her friends accompanying her on this excursion as male. As such, Kate spends at least a portion of the night in the house with other male students, a mixing of company that likely would have been frowned upon in 1900.

While in papers such as "One Student's Directions for Cultivating Cabbages" or "Two Games of My School Days" Kate expresses her difficulty with carrying out her writing tasks, and while in "Exercise in Letter Writing" she carries it out in a humorous, genre-imitating fashion, in this "Experiment in Artistic Observation" she moves well beyond the task she has been asked to undertake, and she is doing so using a complicated construction of personal *ethos* that likely would not have been raised had she remained "within" the confines of the original assignment. Scholar Brad Peters describes his own student's use of a different genre to accomplish a writing task an "antigenre" (201). Likewise, as Peters says may be the case of his modern-day student, Kate may "[feel] a need to conceptualize and articulate what she knows about a topic in a new way," one other than the genre that has been assigned (Peters 201). Rather than imitating or playing with the assigned genre, Kate experiments with a new genre to achieve her purposes.

Not only is the genre very different, but so are her methods for completing it. Whereas "A Night in the Deserted House," Kate's actual assignment, asked that she produce a fictional account based on her imagination, Kate and her friends instead opt to enact first-hand field

research. Rather than construct their papers from their imaginations, as Kate's opening suggests they were asked to do, they actually go to a deserted house to be inspired and gain material for their assignment, moving beyond the assigned genre and task in both their writing process and their final writing product.

*Writing Beyond Genre in an "Oration"*

Kate's decision to alter the parameters of her assignment in order to produce "An Experiment in Artistic Observation" shows her taking up the assignment in a unique way, though one apparently shared by her three friends. But there is one other instance in Kate's papers of her entire paper writing beyond the genre she has been asked to complete.

On May 28, Kate submitted the final paper contained within this collection of her "Advanced English Composition" papers. This "Oration" is one, according the line following the main title, that she "Delivered Before the Freshman Harmony Class." The full transcript of this oration is as follows:

Miss President, ladies and gentleman [sic]:-

It is indeed a sorrowful occasion which calls us together. For nearly nine months we have had toil and suffering in common. Our brains have vibrated in unison as we labored to calculate the ratios of the vibrations in a chord of the augmented sixth. The most violent discords have not disturbed the concord of our relations with our esteemed instructor.

Without a word of complaint we have robbed ourselves of our much-needed sleep, which we strove to rid our exercises of parallel fifths, augmented seconds, and doubled leading tones. We have strained our ears to comprehend the difference between consonances and dissonances, until our whole existence seemed to be moving to the time of a diminished seventh. With unmixed patience we have striven to understand the mysteries of mixed

chords. With unalterable determination we have wrestled with the difficulties of altered chords. Dominated by the one desire to do our whole duty, we have not shrunk from the multitudinous array of dominant discords. These were comparatively easy. But what shall I say of our last month's work? it is unnecessary to speak of that; for the pale face, in which the lines of care are all too deep, the tired eyes, the attenuated forms before me bear a far more eloquent testimony than I could every do, to the devotion with which we have given ourselves to the last task-master, the subject of modulations. We have succeeded. Even our professor admits that. The family of keys is to us as our own kindred. The relative minor of the dominant, the opposite mode of the relative minor of the sub-dominant, present no more difficulties to use. Direct extraneous modulations, consecutive dominants, enharmonic exchanges, have become as integral parts of our minds. We have avoided no part, however abstruse or mystifying. At last, our labors seemed about to be ended. it would be only one week, and then freedom, for had not the chancellor decreed it. Do you remember our rejoicing? Alas, that it was in vain! Soon there came to use the awful news, that when all the other schools had ended their work, when all the other students, happy in their release from quizzes [sic] and "cramming," were hastening homeward- we alone were to be compelled to remain, in order to prove our possession of this dearly-bought knowledge of ours. No matter, that our instructor already knows we possess it. Classmates, you do not need to be told that this is unjust and injurious. You all agree that such cruelty must not be. For the sake of our health, which will surely give away under the strain of that extra day; for the sake of our faithful work in the past; for the sake of Harmony in every sense, I move that we present a petition to

our instructor, most humbly begging and entreating him to spare us that last crowning ordeal. (Hansen, "Oration" 1-3)

This particular paper is likewise transcribed in Bales, Bales, and Harbin's biography of Kate, though the only commentary or analysis Bales, Bales, and Harbin offer is to say that it was a "good-natured student protest" (Bales et al. 117). The situation surrounding this particular assignment is somewhat complicated: Kate claims that her "Freshmen Harmony" class had worked exceptionally hard to learn a difficult set of chords, finally succeeding in doing so. It then appears that the instructor decided to hold their course even after all the other schools had dismissed for the semester so that the Harmony students could be quizzed on the material and prove their "dearly bought knowledge" (Hansen, "Oration" 2). Kate's oration is an address to her fellow "Freshmen Harmony" classmates, asking them to stand together and petition the music professor for a release from this final exam.

At the end of this paper, Kate includes the following parenthetical comment on the outcome of her oration: "The motion was carried unanimously. The petition was written in the most touching style. But the hard-hearted professor, instead of being moved to compassion, seemed only amused at our suffering. The quiz will proceed" (Hansen, "Oration" 3). In other words, Kate was successful in getting her classmates to agree to petition their instructor for a release from the exam. They then did so; however, their attempts to persuade the professor were unsuccessful.

In this paper, Kate engages in an uptake of her writing assignment that, in many ways, resides "within" the genre of an oration. The course notes of Margaret Kane from May 29, 1899, include ample information about this genre, the various classes of orations, and many of their characteristics. Margaret's notes likewise indicate that in her own "Advanced English

Composition” course, an “address to a class” was one of the options from which students could select for their assignment (Kane 169). It is likewise feasible that Kate was given this option during her course a year later. In this sense, Kate is writing within the parameters her instructors likely set.

Even so, there are two features of Kate’s oration that call its “within-ness” into question. First, Kate actually delivers her oration. Margaret’s course notes on her own assignment are unclear as to whether this was a requirement; rather, Margaret simply writes in her notes that she has as “choice” of six possible orations and that she must “avoid oratorical errors” (Kane 169). But Margaret gives no indication on whether this entails simply writing a script for an oration or whether actually delivering it is a requirement. In this sense, it is possible that Kate may be writing beyond the requirements of her assignments in writing and actually delivering an oration.

This issue of delivery is unclear, but a second factor, and one which I argue does indicate Kate moves beyond the genre of the oration, is the particular exigence and function of her oration to her harmony class. Margaret’s course notes indicate that, while an “Oration contains persuasion,” its actual likelihood of being persuasive is not likely (Kane 166). Among Margaret’s options listed for the assignment are seemingly non-persuasive situations, such as “an after dinner speech” or “a toast to a class” (Kane 169). Margaret writes, “One goes to hear an oration expecting to be entertained and expecting the orator to try to convince him against his better judgement & so he is less easily convinced” (Kane 166). Because it is unlikely that a speaker will actually be able to persuade within the genre of an oration, “Oratory is not considered practical now-a-days” (Kane 166).

Assuming that the instruction that Kate receives in her “Advanced English Composition” course taught by the instructors one year later is similar, Kate should not have expected to be

successful in actually persuading an audience through the genre of an oration. However, Kate selected an exigence for her oration that she actually felt was pressing and in need of modification, rather than something she needed to do simply to fulfill the requirements of a classroom mutt genre, which Wardle describes as a feature of modern-day first-year writing assignments, and as perhaps Kate does in a paper like her “Exercise in Letter Writing.” Moreover, Kate used her oration writing assignment from the course to attempt to enact change where she saw need for change. As her later missionary work suggests, this would not be Kate’s last attempt at enacting change in situations where she felt it was called for. Further, her speech itself was successful, as her classmates were persuaded that they should petition their harmony instructor. Although this later petition to the instructor was not successful and did not yield Kate’s desired outcome, her speech did what she intended it to accomplish.

By using her assignment to attempt to enact change in a situation which the instruction she likely received indicates was unlikely to be successful shows Kate’s desire to move beyond the genre of an oration, do more than entertain, and successfully persuade for a cause connected to her own interests and beliefs. In this way, Kate has taken up the oration genre in a way that moves beyond the function which her instructors expect an oration can perform.

### **Synthesizing Kate’s Uptakes**

Kate frequently takes up genres in ways that entail drawing on her personal interests, as well as her past experiences and her prior knowledge. Further, Kate’s papers frequently make use of very vivid descriptions and detailed storytelling in order to accomplish their assigned tasks. These features appear across multiple papers, both those with clear genre labels and those whose genres are unclear. Likewise, they appear within papers in which Kate seems to write within, against, or even beyond genres. These most obvious recurring features are evidence of Kate

writing herself—her interests, her passions, her past—into her papers no matter what their intended genre.

Attempts to categorize Kate's papers as clearly "within," "against," or "beyond," show that these qualifiers function less like distinct categories and more like a continuum or overlapping spectrum of genre adherence. For instance, though Kate appears to write "within" in many her papers, even in these there are instances of her pushing against or moving beyond the genres' typical forms or functions. Though academic genres, including mutt genres, may encourage habitualized uptakes, Kate manages to insert her own identity and assert her agency in her individualized uptake of her writing tasks.

As an individual receiving writing instruction and taking up her assignments, Kate does not do so passively. When Kate finds a writing task difficult, she seems to express as much in a range of fashions, from the rambling narrative of searching for "theme material" in "One Student's Directions for Cultivating Cabbages" or in the total movement beyond the assignment, as in the deserted house immersion experience in "An Experiment in Artistic Observation."

Kate as an individual also appears consistently aware of (yet largely unintimidated by) her positionality as a student in a writing course, whether by making reference to the instructors or the course within her papers or even by outright criticizing the material conditions under which she has been asked to produce her work. Kate also appears aware of the artificiality of what writing within a writing course may entail, such as in her playful imitation of the personal letter genre in "Exercise in Letter Writing." Kate knows she is in a writing course. She also knows that successfully writing within some genres—such as the refutation that argues the opposite of a previously written brief—may entail temporarily setting aside her personal beliefs.

Yet, as her final paper, her “Oration” to her “Freshman Harmony” class suggests, Kate also seeks to use the genres she has learned within the classroom to effect change outside of it.

## **Chapter 5: Genre Uptake, Student-Centered Local History, and Pathways for Future Investigation and Pedagogy**

In this chapter, I reflect on the findings of this archival, genre-based study of writing instruction at the University of Kansas at the turn to the twentieth century, and in particular the writings of women students Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen. I begin by reiterating this study's findings with regard to the uptakes of required genres engaged in by Margaret and Kate. In particular, I consider how these women find room for their own expressions of interest and advocacy for and accomplishment of their own goals and causes, as evidenced through their attempts at writing within, against, and beyond the genres they were required to produce. I likewise synthesize this information and the subsequent insights it provides about chains of uptake and the movement of ideological beliefs within the larger system of genres at play within the University of Kansas. Next, I discuss this study's contributions to local histories of rhetoric and composition, both in terms of its findings and in terms of the methods for arrival at those findings. I then reflect on the process, challenges, and rewards of conducting archival research. I end by describing this study's implications for current pedagogical practices, including the ways it can shape the work we, as writing teachers, do in classrooms and the ways we preserve our field's history into the future.

### **The Individual Uptakes of Margaret and Kate: Evidence of “Unique Performance[s]” and Positionalities**

This study helps to illuminate the phenomenon of genre uptake through its focus on uptake as a practice both engaged in by individuals and shared by groups. Bawarshi and Reiff helpfully summarize that uptake is “The ability to know how to negotiate genres and how to apply and turn genre strategies (rules for play) into textual practices (actual performances)” (85).

As Devitt writes, although specific genres share numerous qualities that unite them as the same genre, “In the end, each text is a unique performance” (Devitt, “Genre Performances” 2).

Through careful analysis of the writings of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen, we gain insight into these women’s individual composing decisions with regard to the genres they were expected to craft as part of their “Advanced English Composition” courses, including the ways in which they write within, against, beyond, and even across genres. Further, we begin to learn how genres and these women’s particular uptakes of them position them within their courses, and perhaps also as women within the larger University.

To summarize, the patterns within Margaret Kane’s one-hundred seventy-four pages of course notes demonstrate that her individual uptake of this genre is intended to convey the information her instructors present during class time. Writing “within” the genre of course notes, for Margaret, is about creating a record of what her instructors convey and serves as by far her most prominent uptake of the genre. In so doing, Margaret produces two main types of course notes, the majority of which fall under the category of notes regarding information presented within lectures. Many of the visual features of Margaret’s notes exist in service of this goal. For instance, her use of short-hand allows her to more rapidly and efficiently record what her instructors say. Writing “against” the genre of course notes, for Margaret, entails making occasional use of features such as the possessive pronoun “my,” perhaps showing Margaret’s ownership of the writing assignment she will next produce, as well as including internal references of her own generation that allow her to navigate her production and later re-reading of the genre. Writing “beyond” the genre of course notes occurs very rarely for Margaret and entails one-time inclusions such as evidence of awaiting instruction, adding phonetic symbols to aid her pronunciation, and possibly even the beginnings of drafting an assignment.

Based on my analysis of the course notes of Margaret, it appears that her place within the university is a clearly-constructed one. Her role in the classroom, based on the evidence in these course notes, is to serve as a vessel for knowledge. Rather than providing her individual thoughts and responses to instruction, course notes suggest that her role, and the role of other students in recording course notes, is to simply receive and redirect that knowledge into the genre of course notes. To extend this understanding to the university as a whole, Margaret and students like her represent the passive passing of knowledge from the educated to those being educated.

It is difficult to say the degree to which Margaret was aware of the positioning that the course note genre reinforces. As Melanie Kill explains when speaking of genres of writing engaged in by contemporary students, “To participate successfully in the academic and intellectual communities to which they are presumably pursuing entrance, they must write in genres, and thus assume subject positions, for which they might not yet understand the motivations or possibilities” (Kill 219). Margaret’s success in “Advanced English Composition” as seen through her high grade in the course, suggests that she must have understood her role somewhat, and that Margaret must have been familiar with the fairly routinized genre of course notes and understood how to deploy the genre’s features. If course notes were the only surviving, archived representation of students’ responses to writing instruction, this positioning of students as passive receptors of knowledge would be the primary conclusion to be drawn regarding students’ positions at the University of Kansas in 1899.

However, my research into the life and lived experiences of Margaret, though somewhat limited by available evidence, suggests that she was an individual who excelled at meeting the demands of the various tasks presented to her in professional and community spaces. As a bank teller, bank manager, and officer in the Kansas P.E.O. Sisterhood, Margaret carried out her duties

in effective, time-efficient manners, submitting her county's taxes ahead of schedule, managing money and staff at a bank, and serving in the P.E.O. in an exemplary-enough manner to merit being elected an officer. To what degree is Margaret's uptake of the course notes genre influenced by her personality and penchant for efficiency? On the other hand, to what degree does Margaret's acceptance and uptake of the course notes genre and its forms and functions manage to train her to be a more transparent and efficient recorder of taxes and follower of directions? It is impossible to say. But, regardless of whether due to the genre's form and function alone or a result of a combination of that form and function alongside her individual personality, her uptake of the course notes genre is certainly not about advocating for goals or causes outside of the classroom; rather, Margaret's course notes are about recording what transpires there.

However, even within this more routinized genre, there are still glimmers of Margaret's individual responses to the instruction she received, such as through her use of internal references to help her re-visit and navigate her notes, her use of the personal pronoun "my" in positioning herself in relation to assignment instructions, her phonetic spelling of an unfamiliar term, and her preparation to take up an assignment. Even though these instances are limited, they do suggest that Margaret was at least a bit more than a passive recipient of knowledge, but attempted to take up the genre of course notes in ways that would best allow her to actively learn.

Course notes are not the only archived materials through which to understand students' places in the academy. Kate Hansen's forty-two assignment papers demonstrate that there are features that occur across many of her uptakes of various assigned genres, in particular her tendency to draw on her personal interests and her past experiences to complete her writing

tasks. Further, Kate makes ample use of vivid imagery and detailed story telling even across different genres. In terms of writing “within” genres, Kate most often does so within four particular genres: outlines, briefs, refutations, and description. Kate’s tendency to write within the conventions of the first three of these genres—outlines, briefs, and refutations—may be due to these genres seeming to be more stable and routinized, permitting less flexibility in moving away from those conventions.

Perhaps the more interesting moments within Kate’s papers are those in which Kate appears to write “against” genres, such as by expressing the challenges she feels in completing certain writing tasks, commenting on the material conditions under which she composed them, and even using genre imitation that both show her understanding of genres’ forms and function, yet also her manipulation of them to evoke humor. Finally, movements beyond genres occur for Kate when she employs genres for purposes other than what appear to be their intended functions as assigned in “Advanced English Composition,” such as her oration.

The course papers of Kate Hansen add to an understanding of her role within the university that can perhaps extend further than that provided by the course notes of Margaret Kane. In Kate’s papers, we can see that she is permitted to exercise a more individualized response to instruction. I say that she is “permitted” to do so because, like Margaret, Kate received the highest possible grade in “Advanced English Composition,” suggesting that the course papers she produced were of a satisfactory enough nature to merit successfully passing the course by a wide margin. Although the genres in which students were expected to compose their assignments were likely dictated by the instructor, and students would have been expected to demonstrate their understanding of both those genres and any other concepts conveyed in instructor lectures, Kate produces assignments which do more. The responses Kate constructs

showcase her lived experiences by drawing on her past experiences, and her present interests, as well as her unique observations of the campus and community. Throughout her papers, traces are seen of her passion for music, her strong opinions on education, and her reverence for her familial heritage. These are uptakes of instruction that show inclusions of individuality. Kate may have either been presented with assignment genres that allowed such expressions, or, if these expressions are not part of the genres' typified forms, they were at least not viewed by her instructors as major deviations from the writing tasks. In either case, Kate's final course grade suggests that individuality on the part of students was permitted within these genres.

Kate's uptake of course paper genres likewise suggests that students were expected to move beyond the classroom and observe the world, or at least the campus, whether in documenting the May Day celebrations or in writing descriptions of library chairs. Thus, being a student entailed at least a bit more than simply being passive recipients of instructor knowledge. Students were likewise expected to enact and practice that knowledge and skills in other physical spaces before bringing their resulting writings back to the classroom for instructor response.

In her course papers, Kate not only expresses her individual interests but also makes decided attempts to use the classroom genres she was assigned in order to enact change where she felt it was needed. This occurs both within genres that seemed to encourage such actions, such as "The Greatest Need of the University of Kansas" and in those that the instructors themselves said in lectures were unlikely to persuade, namely the "Oration" which Kate delivers to her freshman harmony class.

As with my discussion of Margaret's uptakes, my findings would be lacking if they did not also consider the motivations for Kate's particular uptakes. Is she able to write against or beyond some genres because the nature of those genres permits or even encourages a non-

habitual uptake? Or are these composing decisions motivated by her individual personality? As I have already pointed out, Kate's composing decisions are certainly shaped to some degrees by her personal interests, influencing her performances of those academic genres. Kate would go on to be an educator for the rest of her life, as well as later an administrator in education. Even at the point that she enrolled in "Advanced English Composition," she was not a stranger to teaching, having already served as a school teacher, principal, and music teacher prior to arriving at KU. Does Kate's awareness of the role of teachers and the experience she herself had with assigning writing tasks shape the ways in which she responds to assigned genres herself? It is entirely plausible, and this study's focus on both biographical information about her life and on her specific uptakes of instruction illuminates these possibilities, showcasing the myriad forces and factors which shape students' participation in required genres. While I can only speculate regarding motivations for uptakes, this study has highlighted the individual uptakes in which students engage, stressing their unique responses to instruction.

### **Course Notes and Course Papers, Genre Systems, Uptake Chains, and Ideologies**

Before I proceed to a discussion of the genre system present at KU during the time frame of this study and the chains of uptake between the genres that comprise them, I now wish to make some additional observations regarding the similarities and distinctions between the genres of course notes and course papers. Here I also reflect on some limitations of studying these genres and these particular student-authored samples of them.

To turn first to course notes, my analysis of those belonging to Margaret Kane in part calls attention to the often-occluded nature of the genre. Students did not seem to be provided with direct instruction as to how to compose the genre or given examples of what effective notes looked like. Further, students would have been unlikely to see other students' notes. And I

myself do not have samples of other students notes from this course to which to compare Margaret's work.

By contrast, course papers composed in response to assignments are distinct from notes in that students appear to have been given direct instruction on how to compose many assignment genres (and, ironically, this appears within the course notes). Some assignment genres even have examples on which students can draw, such as the outlines or briefs contained within the *English Bulletin*. But, like course notes, I lacked other contemporaneous student papers from this time and localized institution to which to compare Kate Hansen's.

This leads to a way in which this study could benefit from expansion. In an ideal situation, course papers and course notes of other students would have been preserved at Kenneth Spencer Research Library, either for "Advanced English Composition" specifically or for other writing courses during this same time frame or taught by these same instructors. This would allow me to consider the ways in which the individual uptakes of course notes and course papers written by Margaret and Kate compare in form and function to other students' work from comparable contexts. Even finding the other writings of Margaret and Kate—the course papers that Margaret completed after taking notes and the course notes Kate recorded before taking up assignments—would be tremendously enlightening.

Further, papers from male students would allow for a more gender-based analysis. To what degree do Margaret's and Kate's uptake of writing instruction via these required genres likewise demonstrate their positionality as women in higher education? As I emphasize in Chapter 2, women's opportunities for education were expanding at this time, with not only opportunities to attend coeducational schools, (including those like KU that were coeducational from their founding), but with the beginnings of new career possibilities beyond housewives and

schoolteachers. An ideal expansion of this study would likewise consider the ways that Margaret's and Kate's uptakes reinforce or subvert their gendered positions in the university, but to do so would likely require a larger sample of student texts.

Even without other genre samples to which to compare these women's, I have been able to make other important observations about the writings of Margaret and Kate, in addition to the insights into their individual uptakes I describe above. The level of genre adherence present in these women's work suggests that there may be more freedom of expression within course papers, while course notes appear less flexible in their form and function, serving as records of instructor knowledge that encourage a habitual uptake (though even in course notes Margaret demonstrates glimpses of her responses to instruction), while course papers permit students to enact that knowledge in more flexible ways. Ultimately, course notes and course papers serve very different functions, and, as a result, carry ideological beliefs in differing ways and enable different uptakes, a notion I return to below.

This study clearly provides insight into Margaret's and Kate's individual uptakes of assigned genres and likewise outlines a picture of these women's roles—and the roles of students in general—in the University. At the same time, this study sheds light on the interwoven nature of genres and the chains of uptakes that work to bind them together within the genre systems of the University. To revisit the meaning of “genre system” as I introduced the term in Chapter 2, Bazerman writes that genre systems entail “interrelated genres that interact with each other in specific settings” (Bazerman 97). Further, Devitt defines a genre system as a “set of genres interacting to achieve an overarching function within an activity system” (Devitt, “Writing Genres” 56). David R. Russell explains that activity systems constitute “any ongoing, object-directed, historically conditioned, dialectically structured, tool-mediated human interaction”

(510). This recognition that genres interact within these larger activity systems is particularly important given that the genres that Margaret and Kate compose, like all genres, are situated in the particular rhetorical situations present at the University of Kansas at this time.

In conceptualizing the particular genre system with which I have engaged in this study, the University of Kansas course catalogues outline the course descriptions for “Advanced English Composition,” explaining its brief goals and logistical information, such as meeting times and instructor names. The course catalogues also detail which students were required to take the course in the catalogue sections explaining each school’s program of study. The course catalogue most likely serves as students’ first encounter with “Advanced English Composition.”

The instructors’ lectures (including course content, examples, and assignment instructions) within “Advanced English Composition” are presented to students orally in class. Students then take up this lecture material, selecting what information is most important and recording it within their course notes, as we see in the case of Margaret Kane’s notes. The course notes provide a record that students can then draw on when taking up subsequent genres of writing assignments.

In composing writing assignments, students likely need to reference their course notes, which perform as an intermediary genre that often leads to the writing assignment, most obviously because, as Margaret’s notes show, course notes detailed specific assignment instructions, but also because the content of instructors’ lectures were recorded there. Students likely reference other related genres in preparing to take up writing assignments, as well, such as the textbooks they were assigned to read or even the *English Bulletin*, which contains parameters for composing specific assignments and other logistical information, such as how to write the

assignment superscription on the outside of the paper or the location on campus in which to submit a finished assignment.

Course papers—responses to the writing assignment directions recorded within course notes—demonstrate students’ abilities to enact the knowledge and writing skills conveyed by instructor lectures and course texts, as demonstrated in Kate’s course papers. And course papers are the genre that instructors then assess and use (at least in part) as the basis for assigning a final course grade. This study clearly shows that uptakes occur between these various genres in the system, as well as demonstrates that course notes and course papers like those produced by Margaret and Kate are vital components to this genre system. Without course notes and course papers, the transmission, reception, uptake, and enactment of knowledge and writing skills would be incomplete.

Even more significantly, uptake chains and the connection between genres are likewise noteworthy with regard to the movement of ideological beliefs in this system. Ideologies are particularly palpable in the movement between instructor lecture and student course notes. In the case of Margaret Kane’s notes, I found that instructors Edwin M. Hopkins and Raphael D. O’Leary made multiple ideological statements about writing, student writers, and genre which Margaret then copied into her course notes in the same way she would write, say, notes about constructing paragraphs. Margaret’s notes suggest that these instructors viewed their students as novice writers needing extensive assistance in learning to write. At the same time, these instructors did not seem to be particularly overt with students about the specifics of their need for writing growth. That is, the instructors made it clear that students needed to develop as writers and to avoid committing mistakes—stylistic, grammatical, or otherwise—but they were not clear as to *why* the things they must avoid constituted mistakes.

For instance, the contents of Margaret's notes suggest that students were not given much instruction on the rhetorical situations of the genres they were asked to write, but were instead given prescriptive rules to follow. In one instance, the course instructors even told students to avoid looking at a certain page in one of their course textbooks, but the instructors did not seem to provide an explanation about what on the page was misleading or might cause confusion. Conversely, the instructors may have provided a reason, but Margaret may have not found it significant enough to write down. If so, this further emphasizes what Margaret views as the function of course notes, which entails merely the recording of rules and instructions, not additional commentary on the motivations or impetus behind them.

These sorts of ideologies about language and writing instruction that are transferred from instructors' lectures to course notes would then presumably carry over to the writing assignments students compose, though I found that such ideologies were less readily apparent. However, I turn next to a discussion of the ideologies that the genres of course notes and assignments are *inherently endowed with*, which I view as distinct from the ideologies that instructors overtly state aloud that are then physically copied down in course notes. In particular, I am concerned with the ways ideologies manifest differently between course notes and course papers.

The genre of course notes, as evidenced through those produced by Margaret Kane, suggest that this genre reinforces an instructor/student hierarchy of power, one in which instructors hold all knowledge and student writers are primarily receptors of that knowledge. There is no evidence in Margaret's notes that students were expected to perform in the genre as, say, co-learners alongside their teachers by brainstorming ideas, engaging in free-writing, or writing out questions. The nature of the genre instead reinforces this top down power dynamic, as its form and function simply promote the recording of lecture material, with little or no

expectations or space for dialogue about the material or posing of questions. Though Margaret's notes suggest that the course notes genre can certainly contain composing decisions made by the individual writer (such as particular forms of shorthand, symbols, or internal references), these features are nearly always in service of the larger function of the course notes as a record of the instructors' lectures (as well as instructors' ideological views). Likewise, these features and this function reinforce the notion of students as passive receptors of knowledge, and the glimpses of Margaret's individual responses to instruction and exercise of agency regarding her learning, though significant, are very rare.

In considering the genres present within Kate Hansen's course papers, the notion of ideology appears slightly more complex. This hierarchy of power between instructors and students certainly still exists and carries over to Kate's uptakes of the genres of various course papers. For example, there is evidence that Kate remains aware of the audience to whom she is writing, such as in her periodic references to the course and to Edwin M. Hopkins within her papers. Beyond ideologies related directly to hierarchies of power between instructor and student, it is important to recognize that many of the genres which Kate is asked to produce have more complex functions than just to record information, which is the goal of Margaret's uptake of the course notes genre. Rather, the wider variety of genres which Kate is asked to produce may mean she has more opportunity to move beyond the ideology of student as passive receptor, as different paper genres have different ideologies inherent in them. For instance, the oration Kate produces for her final assignment requires that she attempt to persuade a group of people. This genre operates within an ideological assumption that she has (or will be able to manufacture an exigence in which she has) a voice that others will at least pause to listen to.

As I discuss in Chapter 4, Kate makes decided movements against and beyond genres in ways that Margaret's course notes cannot because of each genres' function within their women writers' uptakes. Further, Kate even manages to display her awareness of the mutt genre nature of some of her writing tasks. Conversely, Margaret does not seem to be able to overtly demonstrate her awareness of the ideologies inherent in course notes, though, based on the evidence of Margaret periodically writing against and beyond the course notes genre, my suspicion is that she is fully aware of her positionality.

### **Contributions to a Fuller Picture of Rhetoric and Composition's Past and of Genre Uptake**

Though my primary focus in this study entailed close analysis of individual women writers and the ways in which they take up the genres they were assigned to produce, this study likewise contributes to historical work in rhetoric and composition in multiple ways, including by adding to knowledge of composition's past, by emphasizing the importance of continued reliance on student texts to construct it, and showing the utility of rhetorical genre studies and uptake as means for doing so.

#### *Writing Instruction at a Local Site*

On one level, this study provides insight into writing instruction at a local site which has received only passing study by previous historians of the field. This is not to say that a local or microhistorical approach is a perfect research methodology that has gone unchallenged. Skinnell writes that historians have to frame the local histories they construct in light of what they already know; these new local histories may then have a "tendency to reaffirm what we believe" (Skinnell, "*In the Archives*" 272). So, while revisionist, local history claims "an imperative to 'broaden' the field's horizons in order to develop new perspective(s) on and for the

field,” Skinnell cautions that it may in fact be “reinforcing the field’s beliefs instead of critically examining them” (Skinnell, “Who Cares” 112-3). Likewise, Ritter advocates that local historians have been compelled to assign narratives to make sense of the field’s past, but Ritter points out that composition’s various “branches of inquiry” mean that it “perpetually resists a master narrative that would allow for this neater ordering of effect” (Ritter, “Archival Research in Composition Studies” 461-2). Instead, Ritter advocates for the practice of archival ethnography, which actively takes into account a researcher’s own positionality and an archivist’s role as an “external force” that shapes the archive’s construction, rather than having to the researcher having to maintain a façade of impartiality. Despite these potential limitations to a local or microhistorical approach, through reading across archival documents in this study, I have nevertheless begun to construct a picture of the University of Kansas and its approaches to the teaching of writing at this time.

One important issue this study illuminates is the labor involved in teaching writing during this time frame, as well as the concerns about this labor held by writing teachers. University-wide writing requirements, such as themes, theses, and forensics—all of which comprise the forensic system—as well as specific courses like “Advanced English Composition” and the tremendous number of student papers they yielded, contributed to an atmosphere of overwork for professors in the Department of English. This is even palpable in considering the number of courses taught in a given year by Professors Edwin M. Hopkins and Raphael D. O’Leary. The *English Bulletin* speaks directly to these issues of labor in its opening, citing the number of hours it takes to grade student writing and stressing to student readers of the *Bulletin* that “Only by making it as systematic as possible can it be done at all” (1899-1901 *English Bulletin* 8). Indeed,

Hopkins would go on to spend a large portion of his career studying and advocating for better labor conditions for writing teachers at KU, in the region, and nation-wide.

KU's usage of writing requirements such as these suggest both a recognition of the importance of writing for all students regardless of major, yet a lack of understanding or an unwillingness to make adjustments to the feasibility of the labor required by writing teachers to enact those requirements. Ultimately, this system was unsustainable, with the Department of English petitioning to have the forensic requirements dropped in 1902, and, three years later, finally permitted to do so (Russell 61).

Perhaps in correspondence with (or contributing to) the labor of responding to student work, the writing expectations of students enrolled in "Advanced English Composition" between 1898 and 1900 were significant. Kate Hansen produced at least forty-two writing assignment responses, as well as possibly more that were not preserved in her paper set, while Margaret's course notes for the class spanned at least one-hundred seventy-four pages. This study also provides a sense of the types of assignment expectations of students, showing that they were expected to compose in a range of genres, spanning descriptions, briefs, orations, and much more. The nature of these genres and their progression throughout the course suggest a correspondence to the modes of discourse which Connors stresses reigned during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Connors, "The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse"). And, as the course papers of Kate suggest, many of these papers seem to function as "mutt genres" as described by Wardle in her discussion of modern first-year-writing courses.

Through its careful study of student writing—particularly Margaret's course notes—this study also provides insight into the lectures which Hopkins and O'Leary provided during class time. It does appear, for instance, that the instructors employed what Connors calls a "Pedagogy

of ‘Levels,’” a hierarchical movement within a portion of the course from smaller to larger units of language (*Composition-Rhetoric* 240). It is also clear that the lectures, and the course as a whole, emphasized grammatical correctness. However, this grammatical correctness was viewed by Hopkins and O’Leary as distinct from style, despite the fact that some scholars, such as Ray, suggest that teaching style in this period equated to teaching grammar and correctness. Rather, style, according to Hopkins and O’Leary, was an innate skill, not one a student could develop over time. These instructors also seemed to rely on “static abstractions” discussed by Connors to describe style and features of effective style to students, which likewise seem to reinforce the idea that style could not be overtly taught.

This dissonance between Hopkins’ and O’Leary’s suggestions that a student has control over their exercise of grammar, yet that a student does *not* have control over their deployment of style, is an interesting one for a study of the history of writing instruction. I believe that this dissonance may reflect an overlap of epistemologies about writing instruction. Berlin argues there were three main approaches to teaching writing between 1900 and 1920—current-traditional rhetoric, which he claims had dominated in the nineteenth century, the rhetoric of liberal culture, and the rhetoric of public discourse (43). Rather than appearing as segmented, separate approaches that occurred in distinct writing programs as Berlin describes these three approaches, Margaret’s notes may demonstrate the presence of a combination of both current-traditional and liberal culture rhetoric. While Berlin claims that current-traditional was “democratic” and “practical” in its teaching of grammatical correctness, liberal cultural rhetoric was instead “aristocratic and humanistic,” claiming that writing should be to a few “gifted” students with a natural aptitude for writing (and that the way to do so was through teaching literature) (43). Within “Advanced English Composition” at KU, we see a mixture of these two

views and approaches to teaching. On one hand, students were given grammar and other practical, direct instruction on how to write, whether in the form of lectures or in other genres such as the *English Bulletin*. On the other hand, Margaret's notes also show that she was told that style could not be improved or developed, that it was instead a natural ability a student either had or did not have.

In considering what other insight scholars of the history of writing instruction can gain from this study, the instructors of "Advanced English Composition" seemed to exercise a quasi-authoritarian stance in their classrooms, positioning students as novices in desperate need of assistance that could be attained only through careful instruction. In these ways, this evidence of writing instruction suggests it shared many similarities with the current-traditional paradigm of writing instruction earlier historians, such as Berlin, note. However, as many more recent revisionist historians have posited, the variations in writing instruction which occur from place to place and year to year even within those same places suggest that "current-traditional" is a wide-sweeping, homogenizing term that fails to do justice to the full range of pedagogical philosophies which influenced individual instructors (Donahue and Flesher-Moon; Gold, *Rhetoric at the Margins*; Connors *Composition-Rhetoric*).<sup>12</sup> The same is likewise true of writing instruction at KU, as I have begun to show by considering the seemingly-disparate views of grammar and other practical instruction coexisting alongside the static-abstraction-driven views of style advanced within "Advanced English Composition." Further, although Hopkins and O'Leary stressed correctness, their lectures and assignments show evidence of student

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<sup>12</sup> Gold likewise points out that previous scholarship tends to disparage perceived current-traditional approaches to teaching, but he argues that its emphasis on prescriptivism can actually be beneficial within specific student populations, as he shows is the case in Melvin B. Tolson's teaching at Wiley College.

collaboration (through exchanges, plus conducting primary research for assignments alongside other students as Kate does in “Exercise in Artistic Observation”) and of students writing in university spaces that extended beyond the classroom itself (such as in Margaret’s assignment to describe a stone retaining wall on Tennessee Street).

Though the course notes of Margaret demonstrate multiple approaches to the teaching of writing that might be viewed today by contemporary teachers as less than pedagogically sound, a combined analysis of them alongside the course papers of Kate helps to show that the teaching of writing in “Advanced English Composition” at KU was complex. It is not easily categorized as being part of one pedagogical approach or another. This study carries on the revisionist work that characterizes current historical scholarship by pushing back against earlier narratives that focused on elite, Eastern institutions educating primarily white men. This study focuses on a local site of instruction—a Midwest university that from its start included women students, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century—showing that courses and teachers of writing engaged in work more complex than is captured by either a “current-traditional” or a “liberal culture” label.

#### *What Historical Studies Gain from a Student-Centered Perspective*

In addition to providing an understanding of writing instruction at the University of Kansas, on another level, this study stresses the importance of studying student writing in constructing narratives of composition’s past. In “The Problem of the Student in Composition Studies,” Mariolina Rizzi Salvatori and Patricia Donahue caution that, “when the student disappears, histories of writing will revert to the mode of ‘great teacher narratives,’ singing the praises of individual teachers rather than of student learning” (Salvatori and Donahue 31). Like Harris’s observation that the field professes to believe that student writing is “a form of currency

in the knowledge economy of composition” (Harris 667), Salvatori and Donahue’s caution emphasizes that rhetoric and composition struggles with a tendency to focus on educators as the center of its historical productions. In my own survey of histories of the field, I found that the degree to which even more recent revisionist histories utilize the writings of students varies widely, ranging from occasional reference, to full focus, to no mention at all.

Troubled by this variation, and particularly by histories which profess to accurately depict how students were taught to write but that scarcely mention students at all, I sought out exemplar studies which position women students and their writings as the central focus of their work, including those produced by Welsch, Ritter, and Simmons, and expanded their work through my particular use of rhetorical genre studies and theories of uptake, which I address further below. Like these exemplars, my study shows that much can be learned about writing instruction at the University of Kansas by studying student texts. But, more importantly, this study shows that the study of student texts can serve at the goal itself, for I have gained tremendous insight into these women’s unique responses to writing instruction, particularly the ways that they write within, against, and beyond required genres and the significance of those uptakes.

*The Utility of Genre and Uptake in Constructing Local, Student-Centered Histories*

This leads to my unique approach to this work. Though I drew on the work of Welsch, Ritter, and Simmons as the foundation for my work in its focus on women students and their writings, the particular theoretical and methodological frameworks through which I approached this study differed significantly. Rather than close reading or rhetorical analysis alone, this study has shown the utility of genre, rhetorical genre studies, and theories of uptake as lenses for undertaking in this kind of work, for engaging in “historically distant” texts (Regaignon 141).

Rhetorical genre studies forwards the notion that genres are rhetorically situated and socially constructed, and that understanding genres can be furthered by close examination of these contexts in which they occur, and vice versa. Further, though, genres are more than just categories, but instead constitute and perform social action within these rhetorical situations. Simultaneously shared and unique, uptakes of genres allow individuals to perform membership within groups. Genres and uptakes of them reinscribe ideological beliefs and show the movement of those beliefs across a genre system, illuminating how genres position users within systems of power. Examining the genres of course notes and course papers allows historians to understand how students of the past were necessarily positioned within these larger rhetorical and social systems by the genres they interacted with and composed.

At the same time, a genre-based uptake lens also sheds light on instances in which individuals use genres in other ways, pushing boundaries of forms and functions to work beyond genre typifications. This theoretical lens sheds new light on what historians can learn about students of the past and their individual responses to instruction, likewise shaping the way historians position students in the narratives they write of the past. The fact that genre and uptake expose innovation—and particularly innovations engaged in by the marginalized (women, students)—is perhaps its most valuable contribution to revisioning a picture of rhetoric and composition's past. More than just a homogenous group, students become active, agentic individuals whose writings and actions are worthy of careful consideration. As such, genre should continue to be employed for future historical undertakings.

### **Reflections on Working in the Archives**

Conducting this study has entailed extensive work at the archive that houses the majority of these materials, Kenneth Spencer Research Library. This involved searching for materials

using online finding aids, physical card catalogues, and secondary sources; consulting with archivists and curators and placing requests to view materials; handling materials using approved procedures; and scanning materials. In addition, this study also entailed working with the materials remotely, since, once I located items, I was nearly always permitted to scan them for my later reference. This was particularly important and fortunate when I worked with Margaret's and Kate's writings themselves, as I needed to transcribe all of their writings, as well as frequently re-visit the originals in my digital files to check for errors, re-consult page layouts, which can be difficult to capture with transcription, and more. In this section, I wish to consider some of the challenges, rewards, and other observations I have made regarding working in the archives, whether in the physical space of the archive, working remotely with digital files I had scanned myself, or using online databases, such as those housing nineteenth- and twentieth-century newspapers.

The foremost challenge of working with and in this archive has been locating materials. As I explain in Chapter 1, the course notes of Margaret Kane had been incorrectly catalogued in such a way that I only found her 1899 course notes by chance. And, while the larger collections of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen were relatively easily located via their online finding aids, other student class writings from this time period were not, either because they were not preserved at all or because they are somehow embedded within other collections in ways that makes them un-trackable. In other words, it is possible that somewhere in the vast expanse of the University Archives there are other student writings related to "Advanced English Composition," but they are not catalogued—physically or digitally—in any locatable manner. This may point to both the priorities of institutional archives in deciding how and what materials are preserved, as

well as to larger concerns about the value of student work to the discipline, which I return to in the final section of this chapter below.

An added challenge beyond locating student writings is in locating contextualizing materials, such as the ones I sought and studied in Chapter 2 regarding the larger system of genres at KU or in the biographical information about Margaret and Kate in Chapter 1. In the case of many items, I often found that I did not know what I was looking for until I found it. For instance, this occurred frequently in my study of Margaret Kane's life, which was largely constructed using local newspapers articles from the cities and communities in which she resided. Additionally, because I was learning about the structure of KU, its founding, and the history of its governance as I went along (not having begun this study as an expert, by any means, of KU history), there were some materials I would not have thought to consult had it not been for the assistance of research librarians and archivists. For example, I was struggling to find more information about changes in the requirements within each university school's program of study when Associate Archivist Letha Johnson directed me to faculty meeting minutes. Johnson was also instrumental in suggesting other materials to consult throughout my research, often ones I would not have been able to locate in a catalog without knowing their specific names or titles.

In discussing my need to collaborate with and ask for assistance from Johnson and other archivists, curators, and reference librarians to address the challenges of locating materials, I do not mean to suggest that the cataloguing, organization, and arrangement of materials which these professionals engage in is ineffective. Drawing on her interviews with activist librarian Jenna Freedman, Kate Eichhorn writes that

Although scholars frequently depict libraries, special collections, and archives as arbitrary and aleatory spaces where materials simply surface, such dismissive

assumptions erase the complex work of professional librarians and archivists. Indeed, as Freedman argues, materials don't 'simply 'surface'—it's not random or chaotic—librarians and archivists work really hard to help that stuff get out there,' and this is precisely where activism enters their profession. (Eichhorn 20)

Like Eichhorn, I recognize that the labor which these professionals engage in is important, challenging, and even can even function as forms of activism. In fact, I count the relationships begun and further developed with Spencer staff throughout this study as one of its most significant rewards for me.

This is not to say that this work does not come with other rewards, and I believe the rewards of working in the archives for this particular study have been substantial. In Chapter 1, I write that, like Kathleen Welsch, I wished to experience Margaret's and Kate's minds at work through their writings. Through the process of transcribing, carefully reading, re-reading, and studying the work of Margaret and Kate, I have certainly done so. I have gained a better sense of them as individuals, as well as gained an understanding of their individual uptakes of the genres they were asked to compose. Further, I have experienced what Jacqueline Jones Royster calls "passionate attachments" to my research subjects after working closely with their collections for extended periods of time. Similarly, in her chapter within *Writing Studies Research in Practice: Methods and Methodologies*, Rohan describes the connection between researcher and subject as a form of "befriending," one that can occur even between a researcher and a deceased subject (29).

Indeed, the more I read and worked with Margaret's and Kate's writings—as well as learned about their lives in conducting biographical research related to their lives in Chapter 1—the more I came to recognize their individual writing styles and voices, much in the ways I

would students in my own classrooms today. But, more so, I began to look upon their writings with more than familiarity; I have come to regard them as friends. I laughed aloud when I read many of Kate's papers, such as "The Victory of the Little Upstarts." I sighed in frustration when I read in Margaret's notes that she was instructed not to look at a certain page in the textbook (yet she was either given no explanation why or didn't consider that reason in keeping with her task and role, and therefore not fitting or worthy of writing down).

Yet with this work also comes an awareness of ethical challenges. Archival work, like all forms of scholarly research, grapples with ethical questions and concerns. In some archival studies, for instance, researchers may be studying private genres, such as diaries, materials that likely were never intended by their writers to be read by the public. The writings of Margaret and Kate are not of this precise nature. Kate's papers were read by her instructors. Margaret's notes do not seem to contain any private, personal information, but the nature of the genre and Margaret's uptake of it suggests that it was nevertheless a private genre read only by herself. This issue is likewise complicated by the fact that there is no information available on how Margaret's collection came to be housed at Kenneth Spencer Research Library in the first place, while Kate's was donated by a family member after Kate's death. How did Margaret's work come to the archive, which was built nearly seventy years after her "Advanced English Composition" course was conducted? Because I do not have answers to this question (nor does the archive or its staff), I cannot be completely certain whether Margaret wanted her personal course notes read by others. As such, in my initial pilot examination of her notes, I read for any private information that I thought would be of a nature that an individual might reasonably not want shared with the public. Finding none, I proceeded with my study.

An added ethical consideration I carried throughout this study is that an analysis of Margaret's and Kate's writings can only tell me so much about them as people. It will necessarily be an incomplete picture of who they are as individuals and as women. One way in which I attempted to address this issue was to supplement my understanding of Margaret and Kate as individuals with as much biographical research as possible. Even with this work, though, I recognize and appreciate that Margaret and Kate are not completely knowable by the documents they left behind. Heidi A. McKee and James E. Porter write that we should "Shift from seeing archives as *documents* to viewing the archives as *persons*" (77). I view these understandings as part of my ethical responsibility as an archival researcher, and accepting that archival work may always feel slightly incomplete—that it "refuses closure," as Wells writes—is a necessary reality (58).

### **Implications for Contemporary Pedagogical Practice and Research**

Though, as I suggest above, genre and uptake expose the innovative moves student writers make even within required genres, and that this is its most significant contribution to local histories of rhetoric and composition, this study of the course notes and course papers of Margaret Kane and Kate Hansen likewise has implications for contemporary writing teachers and our approaches to assignment creation and response, as well as for our pedagogically-based research.

On a cognitive level, this study of student uptakes of instruction reinforces the notion that, as teachers, we should be aware that the genres we assign in our courses (and, likewise, our classrooms themselves) are not innocent of power. Examination of the course notes of Margaret and the course papers of Kate demonstrates that genres both enable and constrain action, carry and reinforce ideologies, and position students within larger hierarchies of power. I modestly

propose that these awarenesses should continue to shape the assignments we, as writing teachers, design and the work in which we expect our students to engage.

Beyond pedagogical application, research in rhetoric and composition can benefit from further studies on the cognitive processes involved in students' uptakes of instruction. For example, we as a field might continue work like Mary Jo Reiff and Anis Bawarshi's study of prior knowledge or Melanie Kill's work on the presentation and preservation of self in first-year writing classes. Additionally, this study has implications for our understanding of genre innovation. Christine Tardy explores genre innovation in academic writing, defining innovation as "departures from genre convention that are perceived as effective and successful by the text's intended audience or community of practice" (Tardy 9). I believe that the movements beyond genre conventions engaged in by Margaret and Kate (which apparently their instructors believe were successful enough to merit the highest possible final course grades) suggest that, even in the distant past, students manage to make varying degrees of innovation within their writings. Just as I have explored the particular ways in which Margaret and Kate manage to do so (and the ways in which some genres remain too constraining to do so), so too might our future studies of both historical and contemporary student writing explore specific student composing strategies.

The issue of genre innovation and its pedagogical implications becomes more complex when considering the mutt genre nature of many assignment forms. Are all assignment genres assigned within classrooms destined to perform as mutt genres because of their graded nature? How might we develop assignments which move beyond mutt genres assessed by an instructor and encourage true genre innovation for the causes and purposes to which students feel drawn? In the case of Kate Hansen, some genres enabled and showed her innovations more than others. For instance, while genres like briefs and descriptions encouraged a habitualized uptake, Kate

found more freedom of expression within others. While I learned that Kate nearly always wrote herself into her work, regardless of genre, (and the same is likely true of our students today), Kate was able to innovate more readily in genres that encouraged an individual response and that permitted an audience beyond the instructor, as was the case for her oration. Instructors today should assign (or continue to assign) work that prompts a response to real-world exigencies and audiences, moving beyond mutt genres. Further, instructors should consider utilizing other models of assessing student writing that will permit more innovation and lessen the possibility of students feeling that they must write in a manner and form that will simply please their instructors. For instance, instructors might consider the use of portfolio-based grading or labor-based grading contracts discussed by scholars such as Asao B. Inoue. Methods such as these for assessing student work may encourage students to explore alternative genre possibilities by lessening the instructor-as-evaluator power dynamic that otherwise might inhibit students' genre innovation.

In addition to these areas for further pedagogical exploration, I end this chapter, and this study as a whole, by stressing the need to continue to value student work in the production of histories of our field. Even more tangibly, I wish to stress the need to preserve the student writings produced in our contemporary classrooms. Doing so will help to ensure that future historical endeavors value student work and keeps their study possible. As Garbus and others have pointed out, the difficulty of finding student writings has been an incredible barrier to the writing of histories of the field's past; by taking initiative to preserve student writings now, we can help to ensure this problem does not persist into the future.

As for the logistics of their preservation, instructors can consider saving their students' work, with their permission, within their personal archives. Another alternative is to preserve

student work in more professional archives at individual universities, such as those contained in Harvard University's archives, or even within the University of New Hampshire's growing National Archive of Composition and Rhetoric. Efforts such as these to archive student writings in more official, professional spaces may help to assign institutional credibility to their preservation, which may serve as a necessary step to helping to ensure that such materials are not lost.

The preserving of contemporary student writings—whether in personal collections or in institutional archives—further the field's commitment to student voices. Further, their preservation will also stress to students themselves that their work is of value, holds legitimacy, and is as deserving of archivization as the papers of instructors or English departments. Rhetoric and composition claims to value the work of its students. Let us ensure that our archiving practices in the future support that prerogative.

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## Appendix A: Kate Hansen’s “Advanced English Composition” Papers, Spring

1900

Date	Paper Title	Genre Label
	The titles in this column are the ones which Kate wrote within the superscription on the outside of her folded papers. For papers lacking an exterior title, I indicate [no title] and provide the first line or title from the paper’s interior pages.	Papers that lack genre labels are indicated with [brackets.] Within the brackets are descriptions of the paper and possible genres.
[no date]	Subject, Ancient Literature	[Unclear. Includes “divisions,” but appears distinct from an outline]
[no date]	[no title] Description of the English Room	Description
[no date]	[no title] Exercise in Paragraphing	Exercise in Paragraphing
[no date]	Exercise in Paragraphing	Exercise in Paragraphing
2/5/1900	Problem III	[Responses to 3 questions/prompts]
2/7/1900	Definition and Synopsis of the Hildebrant’s Lied	Definition and synopsis
2/9/1900	Exercise in Outlines	Exercise in Outlines
2/14/1900	Some Advantages of Eight O’Clock Classes	[Outline + theme/essay]
2/16/1900	The Greatest Need of the University of Kansas	[Outline + theme/essay]
2/21/1900	Exercise in Paragraphs	Exercise in paragraphs
2/23/1900	Ingi’s Last Watch	[Unclear. Fictional story.]
2/25/1900	Exercise in Editorial and News Paragraphs	Exercise in Editorial and News Paragraphs
3/2/1900	[no title] Outline of Theme as Written	Outline + [criticism + additional/revised outline]
3/5/1900	[no title] Outline of “The War Against Consumption”	[Outline of a published article + criticism of it + “list of subjects requiring expository treatment”]
3/7/1900	Culture	[Outline + theme/essay]
3/9/1900	Exercise in Letter Writing	Exercise in Letter Writing
3/12/1900	[no title] Meaning of the term “Nature”	[Outline]
3/16/1900	Exercise in Theses	Exercise in Theses
3/19/1900	Exercise in Briefs	Exercise in Briefs
3/21/1900	Exercise in Brief-making	Exercise in Brief-making
3/23/1900	Exercise in Brief-making	Exercise in Brief-making
3/25/1900	Exercise in Brief-making	Exercise in Brief-making
3/27/1900	Exercise in Briefs	Exercise in Briefs
4/4/1900	Exercise in Briefs	Exercise in Briefs
4/5/1900	Exercise in Briefs	Exercise in Briefs
4/9/1900	Exercise in Refutation	Exercise in Refutation
4/11/1900	Exercise in Briefs	Exercise in Briefs
4/13/1900	Exercise in Refutation	Exercise in Refutation

4/20/1900	Exercise in Brief and Amplification	Exercise in Brief and Amplification
4/23/1900	[no title] One Student's Directions for Cultivating Cabbages	Theme
4/25/1900	[no title] Two Games of My School Days	[Unclear]
4/30/1900	[no title] Description of a Library Chair	Description
5/1/1900	[no title] What I Saw in One Short Hour	[Unclear. Description.]
5/2/1900	[no title] What I Saw During an Hour on May Day	[Unclear. Possible revision of description]
5/4/1900	[no title] Mrs. Mandell and Her Home	[Unclear]
5/7/1900	[no title] An Experiment in Artistic Observation	An Experiment in Artistic Observation
5/9/1900	[no title] Exercise in Characterization	Exercise in Characterization
5/14/1900	Where the Battle Was Fought	[Unclear]
5/18/1900	[no title] Our Landlord	[Unclear. Characterization or description.]
5/21/1900	[no title] The Victory of the "Little Upstarts"	[Unclear]
5/25/1900	The Naughtiness of the Naughty Nisses	[Unclear]
5/28/1900	Oration	Oration