Neither book focuses on the field of composition studies, though two of the contributors to *Power, Race, and Gender in Academe* (Bramen and Hwang) do mention it in passing. Both books, however, are directly pertinent to our concerns. Martin devotes considerable attention to the devaluation of the field of education in the academy. She says, "The academy's devaluation of the social institution and practice of education is incontrovertible." What is especially devalued, she explains, is early childhood education and schooling, both of which are denigrated in the way home economics and nursing are. Her discussion of the struggles of the field of education to gain legitimacy within the academy parallels discussions within composition studies of the feminization of the field and the difficulties it has faced within English departments and the academy as a whole to gain acceptance given its emphasis on pedagogy and on student writing. Bramen's discussion of the problem of part-time and nontenure-track faculty in *Power, Race, and Gender in Academe* parallels our own concerns given that the hiring of part-time and nontenure-track faculty is widespread within composition studies. Both books remind us that women and minorities are still struggling to find a comfortable place within the academy as a whole, as they are in the field of composition studies.

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Finding Voice in English Studies

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I was a journalism major and then a "hard news" journalist. I became a graduate student in English primarily because there was no master's degree program in journalism in Tulsa when I began to study. "Voice" was one thing I could never get right. Unlike my fellow graduate students, I had not been force-fed E.B. White and the essayist ethos. If it weren't for the eight or nine years that I spent making my living by writing, I might have gotten the idea that I couldn't write. As it was, I merely felt half a bubble off on the intellectual level. The point of this anecdote is that I am no fan of "voice" pedagogies; still, I find myself drawn to theories that hint at the linguistic surplus we never acknowledged in J-school.

Perhaps that's why I was intrigued by the apparent contradiction produced by reading Ruth Salvaggio's *The Sounds of Feminist Theory* alongside Darsie Bowden's *The Mythology of Voice*. When they are rubbed together, they produce enough friction to start a small forest fire. Salvaggio listens to the sounds of a residual oral language in critical writing; Bowden eviscerates the metaphor of voice in composition pedagogy. Both are similarly social in orientation, yet they part ways in their different purposes: Bowden is concerned with how emphasis on authentic personal voice in writing keeps students from learning traditional academic prose, while Salvaggio is interested in how listening for sound in writing can disrupt and liberate traditional critical writing.

What possible relationship(s) can there be between a book in the field of rhetoric and composition that critiques the metaphor of voice in writing pedagogy and a book in feminist literary studies that critiques and essentially rearticulates *écriture féminine* in feminist critical writing? These are two books from two different areas of English studies, addressing two very different problems; perhaps they have no business being considered together in one review. At the same time, both books address similar problematics and critique the concept of voice in writing. Both concern themselves with issues centering on the professional discourses of their respective fields. Both tease out some of the practical implications of earlier poststructuralist and later postmodern theories in English studies, such as Derrida's critique of the metaphysics of presence or Anzaldúa's discussion of "borderlands." The difference is that Bowden rejects the concept of voice (almost) absolutely because it "epitomizes a

logocentric, Eurocentric, patriarchal approach to discourse," while Salvaggio attempts to translate "voice" as "sound." She focuses her project on "Hearing the O," the destabilizing oral residue in the written text. She, in effect, offers us sound without voice.

If teachers of rhetoric and composition are interested in a variety of theories on voice, sound, orality and literacy, and the body in writing, both of these books, if read against each other, may elucidate key aspects of the issues for both pedagogy and professional discourse. Enacting the intertwining of literary and composition studies, the books contain sources and issues that could have been—and in some cases should have been—considered in the other. They both have sections on narrative theory, contain critiques of traditional "voice" theories, and cite many of the same poststructuralist and postmodern theorists, such as Bakhtin, Cixous, Derrida, Irigaray, and Kristeva. The literary-oriented Salvaggio introduces and explains theories of orality and literacy by Havelock and Ong. In contrast, Bowden, perhaps assuming her audience knows orality-literacy theory, includes only one short footnote on Ong; she spends more time explaining literary theories. Both authors note similar metaphors as alternatives to voice, such as "text as fluid," but only Bowden pays attention to technology in transformations in writing.

While both aim for some sort of transformative change, the standpoints of both are diametrically opposed. Bowden buys her groceries (putatively) through the teaching of composition, working as an associate professor of rhetoric and composition at Western Washington University. In contrast, Salvaggio admits to having "long abandoned" a concern for business communication after spending "years of teaching mindless memo-centered courses in 'Effective Business Writing.'" A professor of American Studies at the University of New Mexico, she advocates the teaching of "poetic literacy," at times agreeing with the conservative values of E.D. Hirsch's cultural literacy (despite her feminist stance). She enjoys the sounds of language, especially as sound and thought intertwine in feminist critical writing. Bowden also likes sound (as long as it is literal), and she advocates the use of voice in having students read aloud, as she does in her writing center work.

Salvaggio's rearticulation of voice to sound begins in her discussion of a cathedral in Paris, where a woman's "high clear" singing voice dispersed the overwhelmingly masculine visual dominance of San Sulpice (lucky it wasn't a choir boy). She writes that while she has "let go of most of these appealing yet potentially deterministic theories about female voice," she has continued to listen for their sounds," referring to theories that nostalgically seek a "feminine language" as a disruptive force.

Salvaggio's chapters move teleologically to a vision of "poetic literacy," in effect healing the old philosophy/poetry rift. Aiming to reconnect poetry with philosophy, her final epilogue asks "Is the motion of sound like thought?" (This is a point Bowden rejects, using a Derridean critique of presence.) To reach this final destination, Salvaggio examines a range of feminist criticism, making the book an excellent source for teaching feminist theory. Chapter one, "Vocal Critics," is not a critique of voice but an examination of feminist critics who use sound and thus exemplify her effort to examine "a reworking of critical language instigated by the emergence of sound within the written word, and the effects produced by the oral and aural reverberations of language as they infuse writing and thought." As she explains, "I sense that something is happening with the language of feminist theory, a kind of discursive shift in the midst of the linguistic turn, one which opens spaces 'within linguistic territories' for sound and for the 'resounding' meanings that have peculiar and crucial bearings on feminist thought." She cites such theorists as Woolf, Rich, Irigaray, Cixous, Kristeva, and a variety of American critics. Other chapters include ones on narrative and bodies, as well as an important chapter on queer theory, "Queer Curves," which traces the way the materiality of the body intersects with language, how "this continual interchange of language and matter unfolds like a voice, like a space within a body where things converge." In this "site of conjunction" between language and the body, the voice regains body, something cut off in traditional voice metaphors.

In her final chapter, "Poetic Literacy," Salvaggio's perspective is most fully expanded in an examination of the work of such critics as Rich, Tompkins, and Andalzúa. As she writes, "Seizing the poetic dimensions of language and all that it represents is not simply a process of ornamenting language or indulging lyrical expression. It means thinking differently through language, through sounds and rhythms that buzz, thickly, with messages. I call this poetic literacy—the fusing together of oral sounds and literate delineation. Yet this fusion is not produced simply by any fusion of sound and idea, rhythm and theory." The purpose of her emphasis on the "O" is not to express a personal voice, but to provide an alternative language to think with, to mend the age-old severing of rhetoric from philosophy, of poetic from scientific language.

As Salvaggio explains in the beginning, she turns to sound and to listening as a way to avoid the visual metaphors linked with knowledge since Plato's critique of the sophists. (Surprisingly, unlike Bowden she

does not cite sophistic theory, although feminists such as Susan Jarratt have linked feminism and the sophistic tradition.) As she announces in her preface, "This book is my effort to meld the poet's 'cave of sound' with the critic's attention to language as 'a wavering of the visible.'" She historicizes literacy with the themes of orality and literacy, drawing primarily on Havelock and Ong, but also on histories of early women's writing such as that by women troubadours. She describes early writing in the vernaculars used by women as concrete and filled with everyday detail, without the abstractions that had developed in classical languages which women were denied. Compositionists should note her reliance on Elaine Pagels's work on the gnostic gospels to explain "the way certain modes of language construct the discourse of early Christianity, and the way other kinds of language are ultimately suppressed."

Of course, her subject is not all writing, but feminist critical theory in particular:

> I have in mind not simply metaphors for sound and voice, through descriptions of polyvocality, dialogic exchange, cries, murmurs, semiotic eruptions, and buzzing discourse permeate contemporary critical theory. I mean the actual *effects* of sounding, wavering language in critical and theoretical writing—a distinctive turn toward the oral within the panorama of contemporary thought. My project is therefore about the necessary fusion of sound and knowledge, the aural and critical, ear and epistemology. I call this project "Hearing the O." (2)

Salvaggio's theories of sound are appealing. In my own system of values, sound and the oral are what link us to our past, to the broader culture, to our bodies, and—in a significant linguistic practice mentioned in neither book—to conversation. To de-emphasize sound, as Bowden does, seems to feed into the dematerializing of the world or the valuing of a world that privileges wealth as a signifier, professionalism, rationality, consciousness without bodies, location in no-place or across cyberspace, the pleasures of the visual and the imagination without the sensory, a community premised in solitude—in short, the hyperliterate world of computers and writing. Perhaps this is why our culture has such a glut of poets, amateur and professional: it is to compensate for the abundance of this hyper-intellectual reality. Just as belletrism served as a complement to scientific prose in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Salvaggio marks off a space within feminism for a feminine land of poetic literacy.

Yet, as a long-time student of Giam Battista Vico's, I enjoy, celebrate, long for, and also mistrust such poetic alternatives as offered by Salvaggio.

Vico's "poetic wisdom," coded as "feminine" by my female co-Vichians, is an anti-Cartesian parallel to Salvaggio's anti-clarity epistemology and discourse. It is also a founding text for colonialist linguistics as well as a touchstone for the kind of expressivist discourse critiqued by Bowden (although the socio-cultural nature of Vico's project must be warped to produce such a reading). Yet, these sorts of oppositional yet compensatory discourses early on fed into belletrism and Romanticism, becoming the "other side of the piece of paper" to the values of scientific discourse. With scientific discourse and its knowledge still dominant, such poetic alternatives have remained residual, "occulted" (in Timothy Reiss' terms), overshadowed modes for at least two centuries. Both Salvaggio's poetic discourse and Bowden's more mainstream philosophical prose are situated and relatively moderate voices in this debate, and if they could be so attuned as to perform their differences as a live debate, it would make a more than usually interesting conference panel.

When I began reading Bowden's critique of voice, I was teaching Anna Julia Cooper's *A Voice from the South* in a course on turn-of-the-century women's writing. Cooper's essay uses the metaphor of "voice as power" in contrast to the historical silence of black women, especially southern black women. In her introduction, Bowden acknowledges marginalized groups' use of the aural dimension of language for empowerment, but she does not mention these groups again until her discussion of women's studies in her sixth chapter. Nonetheless, she does address the issue of voice and power in discussing Mary Field Belenky and her coauthors' *Women's Ways of Knowing*. There she questions whether voice as a metaphor is really helpful in empowering women. It is not that women don't have voices, she argues, protesting that "if any writing has voice it all does. These just may be the wrong voices because they lack authority. Thus, having a voice does not axiomatically confer power or instill self-confidence."

Like Salvaggio's chapters, Bowden's trace the progression of her thought from critiques of traditional narratology to alternative metaphors for voice, such as those from computer technology. She, too, presents her argument in historical context, and while she relies on Foucault, Vygotsky, and especially Bakhtin, Derridean theory is her foundation. She believes that using the metaphor of voice after the poststructuralist critique is "a kind of dinosaur." Yet, poststructuralist critique does not make things go away, as Derrida once said of the field of philosophy after his critique. Similarly, social critique may not entirely do away with the something that is individual, whatever one wishes to call its traces in writing.

Explicating the complexity of the issue with nuanced sensitivity, she writes, "If personality is created or elucidated by language, and language is polyglossic, then the concept of voice in most of its instantiations can only exist in its perpetual disintegration and reconstruction." This fluidity makes it clear why the metaphor of voice is difficult to use in pedagogy. To operationalize the problems, she offers the interesting and pertinent example of Bruno Bettelheim's plagiarism/intertexuality from one of his colleagues. But her overall trajectory is toward offering alternative metaphors for voice, including her favorite choice: the interactive computer network. In her women's studies chapter, she presents other alternative metaphors, including writing as a web, which demonstrates interdependency (from Belenky et al.); writing as a fluid (primarily from Irigaray and Cixous); writing linked with other parts of the body, stressing the sexual, but also its adaptable and transformatory nature; and writing as both an embrace and a dance.

In her final chapter, Bowden argues for the network as her favorite metaphor for the teaching of writing: "Interactive networks, multiple media, and interconnected information bytes and computational systems—in other words, webs of associated constituents—invite conceptions of knowledge and knowledge making that are quite different from the reading, writing, speaking, and listening paradigms that made voice possible. The interactive aspects of modern computer systems signal a shift away from linear and logical thinking and toward intuition; electronic constituents work on levels that are associative, layered, and multisensory." The use of the voice metaphor in this environment, "because it relies narrowly on the connection between speech and writing for its explanatory power, explains and elucidates very little."

For the record, I am not a technophobe and can be seduced by computers and electronics. I like to surf the Web, download new software, and program or repair VCRs, cell phones, and other household electronics—my form of electronic play, since video games don't interest me. Nevertheless, Bowden's call to shift away from sound to networks leaves me cold. Computers may be multisensory, but for most of us, they are primarily visual and mental, even if they can be made to speak and play music. Metaphors of artificial intelligence and the notion of downloading my consciousness into a computer for eternity don't turn me on, and shifting away from speech-and-sound-linked metaphors seems to go down that road. Perhaps this reveals my hopeless humanism, reactionism, and romanticism. I don't crave an authentic voice, but I need or desire something of sound or body.

Yet, Bowden's real target throughout her book is not voice in general, but traditional advocates of "the authentic voice" in writing pedagogy. She writes disparagingly of "the idea of a singular text emanating from a single individual or having a single voice," and she criticizes those who champion the individualist notion of purity of voice or stylistic integrity. She admits, however, that postmodern uses of voice overlap with or conflate authentic voice uses, which is not surprising considering the overlaps between modernism and postmodernism. Although she would jettison the metaphor altogether, she admits from the outset that the varying conceptions of voice make it "difficult to completely support or to completely reject as a useful metaphor for textual analysis or for pedagogy." However, the book's main argument holds—namely, that for all her well-stated reasons, voice as a metaphor "has outlived its usefulness."

In her women's studies chapter, Bowden argues that the concept of voice puts women "in the same metaphorical situation as we have been since Plato; those who talk are subjugators, and those who are silent are oppressed." Although I generally agree with Bowden, sharing with her a standpoint in work and a disciplinary field, it is difficult to agree with her when she writes that "voice" is "inherently masculinist," even if she does trace the metaphor through the male tradition. This seems to be the very kind of conceptual purity and essentializing that she explicitly works against in her book.

As she explains in her discussion of Carol Gilligan, women who seek to have a voice often must seek a *different* voice. When women are encouraged to just "be themselves," they may lose out in a world where male voices are "loudest and most dominant because they are already in positions of control." There is no question but that we should share valuable insider knowledge with our students who are unfamiliar with dominant discourse values and patterns so that they can succeed in their goals. That's what they pay us for. But in discussing the power of silence (as a free choice), Bowden adds that "women may want control over their lives, but they don't necessarily want to belong to the dominant communities of utterly secure and consequently static, confident, and voiced selves." Many women see themselves and their worlds as in flux and accept that, she notes.

Finally, whether women see themselves as secure and static or in flux and labile, those who are marginalized need some way of reading and writing culture that allows them to understand, talk back, and be heard (or networked with?) by those they choose as their interlocutors (correspon-

dents? internetters?). Neither book, however, views students primarily as citizens or political agents, although Bowden's Foucauldian-influenced work has the most potential space for such a construction. It must be added that Salvaggio assumes that feminist criticism and its different forms of knowledge will work somehow to transform society. How this can be so in a discourse designed to be read primarily by those within a particular circle of academia is not clear, and other readers are never overtly considered, unless they are students influenced by feminist teachers. The tradition of feminist activists reading academic feminists' work seems to have diminished with the professionalizing of women's studies and the integration of women scholars into the disciplines.

Like Salvaggio, I, too, think we in English departments should teach poetic literacy, but her "critical literacy that is questioning, craving, and crisp" sometimes seems trite. Bowden's scientism can be equally off-putting, as when she assumes that technological advances that let us peer into brain processes will solve writing problems. Both books suggest a problematic that we as writing teachers—even those of us who are feminists—need to work through. As for me, I'll hold to sound over traditional voice, but I plan to keep some of the other metaphors in my pocket just in case they come in handy.

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