

In Cold Blood as influential creative nonfiction and the applicability of nonfiction in critical writing instruction.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The publication in 1965 of Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* re-familiarized America with the brutal slayings of a prominent rural family in southeast Kansas in November 1959. Since 1965, Capote's account of the murder of the Herbert Clutter family, the investigation that followed, and the arrest, trial, conviction, and execution of two ex-convicts for the killings has been the focus of much critical examination. The author's blending of journalistic and novelistic writing styles in the book, along with his claim that it created a new genre, "the non-fiction novel" (Plimpton 25), has prompted criticism from the worlds of both fiction and journalistic writing. One group concentrates on whether *In Cold Blood* lives up to Capote's claim or whether it is just another variation on already established sub-genres that combine the two styles, such as the realistic or documentary novel or "New Journalism." This group of readers uses specific traditional novelistic conventions such as narrative viewpoint to discredit Capote's claim of founding a new genre. The other group calls into question Capote's claim that the book is "immaculately factual" (Plimpton 1), citing several scenes in the book that are clearly fictional creations. They point to the incompatibility of this with journalism's emphasis on the reporting of verifiable facts.

While most critics concentrate on whether *In Cold Blood* is deserving of being considered the founding work in a new literary genre, few have focused on the novel's impact on novelistic and journalistic writing, subsequent works that incorporate similar techniques, and readers' perceptions of each. Examination of the book in light of novelistic and journalistic conventions and the resulting critical literature leads to the conclusion that Capote's claim to have created the new sub-genre of the nonfiction novel by employing the

specific blend of techniques he used in *In Cold Blood* is questionable. This, however, does not diminish the novel's importance as an influential work in the genre of creative nonfiction. *In Cold Blood* has further defined, refined, and legitimized this genre by exemplifying the many advantages and disadvantages of combining journalistic and novelistic techniques.

To truly grasp *In Cold Blood* and its significance, we need to examine how it fits within its contributing genres by defining journalism and the novel (fiction-writing) and variations of each, such as New Journalism and the realistic, documentary, or nonfiction novel. Having defined journalism and fiction, we can examine how techniques from both are incorporated in Capote's writing and further differentiate the book from journalism and the novel. Having established the incorporated techniques we will examine their effect on the accuracy of Capote's portrayal of the crime and its aftermath, drawing distinctions between his account of the Clutter family murders and those which appeared in traditional news stories in four major Midwestern newspapers. Differences in types and content of information included, and the amount of attention paid to specific facts, not only illustrate the contrast between traditional journalism and *In Cold Blood*, but also reveal specific instances where Capote created events that never occurred. I will also explore the advantages and disadvantages of combining fiction-writing and journalistic techniques from the viewpoints of critics including fiction-writers and journalists as well as the reading public. This will lead to a discussion of the ethical implications for each type of writing, in light of Capote's fictionalizations. A brief examination of subsequent works by authors incorporating techniques similar to Capote's will serve to further emphasize the novel's defining influence on creative nonfiction and introduce how such literature can be used as a tool in teaching a critical composition pedagogy course based on this examination of *In Cold Blood*.

Definitions: Journalism and Fiction

In order to evaluate Capote's assertion that he is combining journalistic and fiction-writing techniques in *In Cold Blood*, we must define each, beginning with journalism, that is, writing associated with factual recounts of real-life events.

Specifically we must concentrate on the area of journalism from which Capote borrowed many techniques, traditional news writing. This area of journalism provides the reader with factual information by "reporting regional and national events" (Root 248) using verifiable documentation and direct verbal quotation. Its practitioners follow a set of standards that stipulate accuracy in fact, attribution of factual information, direct and indirect quotation, maintenance of objectivity through use of third person viewpoint, and identification of a prescribed set of facts known as the "Five W's": who, what, when, where, and why, as well as an explanation of how. This structure also emphasizes "currency or immediacy...the consistent use of one-or-two sentence paragraphs, and the formula of cramming information into the top of the story so that less important information can be trimmed from the bottom of the story if space limitations demand it" (Root 248).

The traditional straight news story, in general, follows this definition closely. The "strict cramming" that Root describes is referred to as "the inverted pyramid" structure. It specifies that information appear in the story in descending order of importance. Straight news stories recount events such as fires, accidents, crimes, and accounts of meetings and speeches. This format also provides certain advantages in allowing the busy reader to be able to read just the first couple of paragraphs of a straight news story and get all of the most important information without having to read the entire article. Newspaper accounts of the Clutter family murders followed this format.

While this format provided a time-and space-efficient way of communicating the news quickly, journalists found it lacking in allowing them to write stories describing interesting individuals or events about which immediate publication wasn't as much of a necessity. The feature story as a result was developed as a less formal type of journalistic writing that adheres to the traditional definition in regard to factual information, direct and indirect quotation, maintenance of objectivity and third person point of view, but doesn't follow the "inverted pyramid" structure. Its format gives the writer more freedom in that, while its content is factual, it allows more creativity through description and more freedom to include details beyond the "Five W's." The "feature story" and "New Journalism" are steps in a progression towards actual blending of fiction writing and journalistic techniques.

The novel is a form of fiction writing that uses narrative viewpoint and dialogue to tell an extended story. The author creates characters, situations, actions and outcomes, and develops them into a plot, which may or may not have a basis in reality.

The novel is differentiated from its predecessors by its internal cohesion, its emphasis on a tightly orchestrated plot and action, its realistic portrayal of characters and situations, and its eschewing of overtly allegorical elements. Characters in novels are more than archetypes, they are invested with a sense of interior consciousness, a psychological depth missing from the figures that populated earlier prose works. It is less fantastic than the romance, relying more heavily on mimesis, i.e. the attempt to accurately "mirror" the real or quotidian world in a fictional setting. (Keep)

Fiction writing, as a whole, includes many other forms in addition to the novel including the novella and short story, and incorporates a variety of narrative viewpoints

including first (subjective) and third (both objective and subjective) person. It also incorporates techniques such as flashbacks, in which events that happened prior to the action portrayed are incorporated into the story to provide the reader with background information necessary to understand it or a character's motivations, and foreshadowing, which allows the author to enhance the suspense and emotional appeal of the story by incorporating (often through use of dialogue or action) hints of impending events.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Blending of Genres

The definitions of fiction (the novel) and journalism seem clear-cut, and if writers were content always to follow the conventions of one form or the other, these definitions might suffice to distinguish the two styles of writing. Many journalists and novelists such as Tom Wolfe, Norman Mailer, and Philip Roth, however, have found these conventions too confining. They have attempted to combine the descriptive elements and use of dialogue of forms of fiction with the factual subject matter of journalism. This has resulted in what some have identified as a fictional sub-genre, which has been designated by various terms and definitions.

“Creative nonfiction” is the most recent term coined to define such writing, and as with many of the other terms used to try to identify this combination of genre techniques, its definition and use has generated debate. Critics such as Robert L. Root, Jr., disagree on whether creative nonfiction should be used “as an umbrella term to cover the widest range of nonfiction literary production” (Root 249), or as a way to designate writing strictly literary and journalistic in nature. Root argues for the elimination of “creative nonfiction” as a distinct term and in its place, an all-inclusive definition of nonfiction. This definition would incorporate sub-genres traditionally classified as nonfiction such as biography, history, the essay, and journalism (which he interprets as separate, yet related genres) and those which would fall under the present definition of creative nonfiction such as “the personal essay, the memoir, narrative reportage (i.e., literary journalism), and expressive critical writing (i.e., personal academic discourse, personal cultural criticism)” (255). Root bases his definition on

his dislike of “categorizing and compartmentalizing, because they limit our vision” (Root 255). The definition has some merit, but it fails to recognize a distinction between traditional forms of nonfiction writing, which in many cases follow strict standards of factual reporting and documentation of information, and those that incorporate elements and techniques of fiction writing.

The nature of Capote’s blending of journalism and fiction writing doesn’t require standards of source documentation as stringent as those in other forms of nonfiction because he bases most of his account on the first person observations and perceptions of those involved which he personally collects. Each person is clearly identified when expressing his or her viewpoint or account of what happened and Capote makes sparing use of written documents. Capote’s writing therefore lends itself to different analytical standards. Therefore, for the purpose of this discussion, the definition of creative nonfiction as encompassing all forms of nonfiction that incorporate elements of fiction-writing, will be used.

In Cold Blood clearly falls into this broad definition of creative nonfiction; however, a significant body of critical literature has been devoted to more specific designations of the book, attempting to situate it within the various sub-genres and categories of creative nonfiction. Critics have attempted to label it from both the fiction and journalistic/nonfiction perspectives. Those who designate books such as *In Cold Blood* as a novel use the terms “documentary novel,” “realistic novel,” and “nonfiction novel.” From a nonfiction viewpoint the book has been identified as “New Journalism,” “literary journalism,” and “literary nonfiction.” Identification with so many different terms and concepts has itself created some confusion and much disagreement among critics as to just where *In Cold Blood* fits as a

literary work. Despite disagreement among critics, examining definitions among sub-categories of the novels and “New Journalism” reveals many similarities.

Two subdivisions in particular that have been used to identify works such as *In Cold Blood* are the documentary novel and the realistic novel. The documentary novel is defined by David Galloway as a novel that “incorporates specific facts of a specific incident, together with all possible variants” in a vigorous manner (Galloway “Real” 146).

The term works admirably well for a book like John Hersey’s *The Algiers Motel Incident*, which offers a chronological construction of the killing of three Negroes during the bloody Detroit riots of 1967. It is written in a functional reportorial style complete with maps, coroners’ reports, confessions, lengthy swatches of official transcripts, and interviews conducted by the author himself. (Galloway “Real” 146)

Tom Wolfe, in *The New Journalism* (1973), identifies the realistic novel by citing its “emotional involvement” or its “gripping and absorbing quality” as well as its “scene by scene reconstruction and resorting as little as possible to sheer historical narration” (31). Robert Augustin Smart, in *The Nonfiction Novel* (1985), further draws a contrast between the documentary novel and the realistic novel. He defines the realistic novel as “incorporating omniscient narration with a timeless theme, unfamiliar setting and a large cast of characters allowing the story to be told from various points of view” (76). Smart contends that many of the characteristics of this sub-genre are identical to characteristics Capote used to define the nonfiction novel (76). John Hollowell in “Capote’s *In Cold Blood*: The Search for Meaningful Design” (1997), further defines the term through its impact on the reader: “The supposed effect on the reader is a reconstruction of events with full dialogue and

psychological depth without the anonymous summary or narration of traditional journalism” (97).

Critics from the field of journalism generally classify *In Cold Blood* as a work of “New Journalism.” An examination of how the critics define “New Journalism” shows very little difference between it and what others call the documentary or realistic novel. Many of the critics including Hollowell, in his previously cited article and *Fact & Fiction: The New Journalism and the Nonfiction Novel* (1977), and Phyllis Frus McCord in “The Ideology of Form: The Nonfiction Novel” (1986), cite Tom Wolfe’s *The New Journalism* in which Wolfe points to common characteristics of the New Journalism such as “‘emotional involvement’.... or its ‘gripping’ and ‘absorbing’ quality” and “‘its scene by scene reconstruction and resorting as little as possible to sheer historical narration’” (31) in equating New Journalism with the realistic novel and the nonfiction novel.

David L. Eason in “New Journalism, Metaphor and Culture” (1982), cites Hayden V. White’s extensive writing on “historical narratives,” a designation which would apply to both the nonfiction novel as defined by Capote and “New Journalism,” as both deal with actual events or situations. Eason’s interpretation of White’s analysis is that specific narrative techniques are not endemic to either fictional or factual forms of writing, only formal methods that help the writer make sense of situations for the reader (143). This implies that White did not take into account the effects that choice of narrative structure have on what “sense” the reader receives.

The inclusion of Capote and his book in many discussions of New Journalism argues for an even more inclusive definition. James Stull’s examination in his article “New Journalism: Surveying the Critical Literature” provides several examples of critics who

recognize the evolution of “New Journalism” into an umbrella term. Stull says that Tom Wolfe, in *The New Journalism* (1973), provides a specific yet inclusive definition. Wolfe says that New Journalism’s “extraordinary power” primarily results from using four literary devices common to realistic literature. They are “extended dialogue, scene-by-scene construction, third-person point of view, and documentation of status details” (Stull 166).

For the purpose of this examination of *In Cold Blood*, the reader should assume use of the terms “nonfiction novel” and “New Journalism” as interchangeable and to denote the more inclusive definitions as postulated by White and Wolfe, which concentrate on incorporation of specific, commonly-employed techniques from their respective contributing genres. This allows us not only to examine how well *In Cold Blood* incorporates the techniques and relates to the concepts, but also to explore whether the combination of techniques demonstrate an effective way of telling a story to the reader.

Capote’s Use of Both Journalistic and Novelistic Techniques

At the time of the novel’s publication in 1966, Capote was well known for his novels and short fiction. *In Cold Blood* marked his first serious foray into novel-length nonfiction. In his *New York Times Book Review* interview with Capote, George Plimpton documented Capote’s recognition of the merits of combining the techniques of fiction writing and journalism to recount an actual event. Capote said his recognition of these merits led to his search for an appropriate subject on which to test them, a search that often proved disappointing and required

that the material will not soon “date.” The content of much journalism so swiftly does, which is another of the medium’s deterrents. A number of ideas occurred, but one after the other, and for one reason or another; each was

eventually discarded, often after I'd done considerable preliminary work.

Then one morning in November 1959, while flicking through *The New York Times*, I encountered, on a deep-inside page, this headline: Wealthy Farmer, 3 of Family Slain. (qtd. in Plimpton 28)

Having found the appropriate subject, Capote traveled to Kansas, informed those he interviewed that he was researching a book on the Clutter family murders, and proceeded to spend five years doing extensive research. He then took the material he gathered and instead of relating it in a straight historical narrative, blended journalistic and fictional techniques to recount the story of the Clutter family murders and the trial and execution of the murderers.

Examination of *In Cold Blood* reveals the influences of journalism and "New Journalism." One aspect of the book common to both fiction and nonfiction writing was Capote's choice of narrative perspective. His third person, omniscient narration is especially consistent with traditional journalistic style, in which the reporter does not insert himself into the story but attempts to tell the story without coloring it with personal biases or beliefs. Capote also felt that this same objectivity was necessary to his "new" form of novel.

My feeling is that for the nonfiction-novel form to be entirely successful, the author should not appear in the work. Ideally. Once the narrator does appear, he has to appear throughout, all the way down the line, and the I-I-I intrudes when it really shouldn't. (qtd. in Plimpton 32)

He also took advantage of another journalistic technique to keep from inserting himself into the novel. Capote's use of multiple varying points-of-view is also consistent with traditional journalism in that a reporter also promotes objectivity by presenting differing viewpoints in stories involving conflicting positions and beliefs on issues or the perception of events. By

telling the story from the viewpoints of a number of different people, Capote attempted to achieve a balance, just as a journalist does by interviewing and including the viewpoints on each side of an issue. One of Capote's major concerns was not passing judgment on Hickock and Smith. His use of various viewpoints in describing the crime scene and confessions of the killers indicates he was cognizant of not wanting to appear to show bias in favor of the killers, even though he ultimately saw them as "pawns of fate in the committing of the crime" (Whitby 247).

One other significant link to journalistic writing can be seen in the way Capote structured the book. In his examination of the book from the perspective of literary journalism, Gary L. Whitby notes that:

In Cold Blood is written in eighty-five short reportlike chapters and placed within the context of four large sections: "The Last to See Them Alive," "Persons Unknown," "Answer," and "The Corner." In other words, the book is handled as if it were a breaking news story, some of the chapters appearing as almost features and sidebars. The temporality of the major sections is crossed, and the reader has the feeling that he or she is reading simultaneous accounts of the crime in several different newspapers or magazines. (247)

The sections and chapters of the book do provide an organization separating different focuses, much as a newspaper will divide different focuses or aspects of a story into separate articles. The sections of the book organize specific aspects of the story. The first provides an introduction to the characters involved as well as background information on the events leading up to the murder. The second recounts the investigation of the murders and Hickock's and Smith's travels while trying to avoid capture. The third describes the arrests

and confessions of the killers, and the fourth, the trial, their subsequent incarceration, and execution. Each of these aspects of the story would naturally have appeared in separate articles and editions of a newspaper due to their happening at different times. In addition, the separate chapters divide concurrent aspects of the events into separate focuses. For example the first chapter of the book describes Holcomb and the surrounding landscape while the second introduces us to the Clutter family and the third to Hickock and Smith. Both Larry Hendrick's account of the crime scene (76-82) and excerpts from Dr. Jones' evaluation of Hickock and Smith and Dr. Joseph Satten's article from *The American Journal of Psychiatry* (333-335), which featured an examination of the psyche of Smith, provide good examples of what would appear in a newspaper or magazine as a sidebar, a story which provides background information helpful to the reader's understanding of the main article or story.

From the perspective of "New Journalism," the blending of fiction writing techniques with journalistic writing is almost identical to blending of techniques used to define it. Capote makes use of extended dialogue throughout the book as well as scene-by-scene construction, and he documents details such as psychiatric reports on the killers. For critics such as Heyne, *In Cold Blood* matches one other characteristic of "New Journalism," the presentation of events as cultural symbols. Heyne and others have interpreted Capote's portrayal of Smith as coming from a dysfunctional background as sympathetic and cite, as support, his discussion of the way Kansas law prohibited much of the psychiatric evaluation, that might have mitigated Smith's culpability in committing the murders, from being admitted in court (Heyne 481). Eason identifies this characteristic in his article "New Journalism, Metaphor and Culture" (1982):

Whereas routine journalism treats reports and events as parts of a whole which is distinct from perceptual categories, New Journalism treats events as symbols of some deeper cultural trend, ideology or mythology. The significance of an event emerges not from its uniqueness but from its enactment of cultural paradigms. (Stull 146)

Capote's sympathy toward Smith, along with his criticism of the death penalty and Kansas law's failure to make an allowance for diminished capacity, reflect the larger society's reconsideration of the death penalty as ethical and moral.

Capote made use of other techniques common to fiction. These include description of the surrounding landscape and use of multiple points-of-view to convey to the reader emotional impact and empathy with the characters. While some of these techniques are shared by journalism, (e.g., narrative viewpoint and description), others, such as extended dialogue, are much more prominent in fiction.

Capote recounts the tale largely through the viewpoints of three characters: Alvin Dewey, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation agent in charge of the investigation, and Richard Hickock and Perry Smith. He also uses minor characters to present the reader with as complete a picture as possible of the murders and their aftermath. Such minor characters as Larry Hendricks, the English teacher who recounts the discovery of the crime scene, Myrtle Clare, the Holcomb postmistress, and Sadie Truitt, her mother, serve to show how the local populace perceived as well as reacted to the crimes (Capote 76-89). Such use of several points of view also allowed Capote to present different perceptions of the events while not inserting himself as a character into the book. Had he done so, it would have provided the

reader with a more overt indication that what he or she was reading might be Capote's interpretation of what happened rather than that of those directly involved.

The use of varying viewpoints also allows Capote to incorporate extensive dialogue to create a sense of being there in the reader. This technique also allowed him to give his account a sense of authenticity by setting the dialogue in the book in speech patterns matching those of inhabitants of the region. Though critical of the book as a whole, Hilton Kramer, in his review of *In Cold Blood*, "Real Gardens with Real Toads," recognized Capote's effective use of this fictional technique.

There was shock of an altogether different, more delightful, more sheerly literary kind, too, in the wonderful talk of these figures—that living mid-Western American speech for which our writers of the '20s, so many of them mid-Westerners themselves, had an expert and sympathetic ear, and which they coaxed so successfully into forming a new fictional instrument. Capote has filled his book with this talk—has, one may say, cut and pasted his book out of that living speech—and not the least of one's pleasure in reading his dreadful narrative was the sense it gave one of what, after all the calculated artifice of recent fiction, that speech could mean again for the art of the novel.

(67)

One particularly vivid example in the novel shows not only unique sentence structure within the dialect, but also vocal communication between the rural Holcomb residents. Nancy Clutter, the murdered daughter, takes a phone call from a neighbor asking her help in teaching the neighbor's daughter to bake a pie.

“I *told* your daddy not to wake you up. I said Nancy must be *tired* after all that wonderful acting she did last night. You were lovely, dear. Those white ribbons in your hair! And that part when you thought Tom Sawyer was dead—you had real tears in your eyes. Good as anything on TV. But your daddy said it was time you got up; well, it *is* going on for nine. Now, what I wanted, dear—my little girl, my little Jolene, she’s just dying to bake a cherry pie, and seeing how you’re a champion cherry-pie maker, always winning prizes, I wondered could I bring her over there this morning and you show her?” (Capote 28)

This passage not only provides a good example of Midwestern speech patterns, but also gives the reader a real feel for the people of rural Kansas and the friendly chatter, praise, and gentle chiding between adults and young people. Capote’s use of italics to indicate verbal emphasis on specific words helps the reader “hear” the speech, further helping to eliminate the barrier separating the characters and reader. This varies from traditional journalism, which has traditionally preferred correction of any errors in verbal grammar or use of colloquialisms to avoid placing any connotation on what is being reported. It also in a sense reinforces a barrier between the reader and those being written about by not presenting what a person says in exactly the way it was said.

Capote also makes use of details gained through extensive interviews with the residents of Holcomb and the surrounding area to deepen “the context and texture of the story by focusing on seemingly irrelevant details which, when added up, scenically undergird the story with the resonance of a concrete particularity” (Whitby 246-247). Capote’s inclusion of such details provides the reader with information that at first may not have

seemed important, but foreshadows events to come. One example is the way the contrast of Mrs. Clutter's despondency despite the family's peaceful, idyllic life mirrors the impending shattering of that stability by two brutal murderers. Another is Mrs. Ashida, a neighbor of the Clutter's, telling Mr. Clutter that "I can't imagine you afraid. No matter what happened, you'd talk your way out of it" (Capote 49), which adds to the irony of his later inability to talk Hickock and Smith out of killing his family.

Capote further removes the "objective barrier" with his use of descriptive imagery. He opens the book by describing the landscape and peaceful atmosphere of rural western Kansas: "The village of Holcomb stands on the high wheat plains of western Kansas, a lonesome area that other Kansans call "out there" (Capote 13). He then describes its residents. "The local accent is barbed with a prairie twang, a ranch-hand nasalness, and the men, many of them, wear narrow frontier trousers, Stetsons, and high-heeled boots with pointed toes" (Capote 13). He also demonstrates their economic priorities through description. He contrasts the "unnamed, unshaded, unpaved" streets of Holcomb, and its former bank with its "irrelevant sign...in flaking gold on a dirty window..." to the Holcomb School:

...a good-looking establishment which reveals a circumstance that the appearance of the community otherwise camouflages: that the parents who send their children to this modern and ably staffed "consolidated" school...a fleet of buses to transport the students...are in general a prosperous people.
(Capote 14)

He also compares the streets and bank to "the comfortable interiors of the farmhouses," and "the steep and swollen grain elevators" (Capote 15). After setting the scene, Capote makes

full use of it to create suspense, contrasting the peaceful, quiet, contented atmosphere of Holcomb to the violent crime and its effect on how they relate to each other in the aftermath.

But then, in the earliest hours of that morning in November, a Sunday morning, certain foreign sounds impinged on the normal nightly Holcomb noises—on the keening hysteria of coyotes, the dry scrape of scuttling tumbleweed, the racing, receding wail of locomotive whistles. At that time not a soul in sleeping Holcomb heard them—four shotgun blasts that, all told, ended six human lives. But afterward the townspeople, theretofore, sufficiently unfearful of each other to seldom trouble to lock their doors, found fantasy recreating them over and over again—those somber explosions that stimulate fires of mistrust in the glare of which many old neighbors viewed each other strangely, and as strangers. (Capote 16)

Each of the fictional techniques discussed above plays into Capote's overall plan or structure of the book, but while the techniques may be effective in and of themselves, Capote knew as an experienced writer of fiction that the way a story is structured and the fictional techniques can complement one another. In *Fact & Fiction: The New Journalism and the Nonfiction Novel*, John Hollowell explains that in nonfiction novels such as *In Cold Blood*, unlike traditional journalistic or historical accounts where factual information is presented in a clear concise manner with as little bias as possible, "...dramatic events are foreshadowed and dialogue takes on hidden meaning not apparent in its original context." He adds that because the novelist must inevitably select materials from the flow of real life, Capote had to impose a form—a narrative structure—upon the experiences he had so carefully documented." He later points out that even though Capote was working toward a goal of

being “immaculately factual,” he also recognized “the need to select and arrange his materials for maximum emotional impact” (70-71).

One of the most effective examples of this recognition is the way Capote structures the novel to create a sense of suspense for the reader. In “Crime and Punishment in Kansas: Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood*” (1966), George Garrett praises Capote’s structure and explains how Capote’s combination of techniques within that structure compels the reader to continue reading.

Building around a conventional four-part classical structure, he manages to keep suspense at a very high level throughout. The first three sections race along, breathlessly yet easily, moving back and forth between murderers and victims and, later, the hunters and the hunted, without strain, always allowing for great freedom of time and space, for the metaphorically relevant digression, the superb use of the tricky flashback, permitting profoundly realized and dimensional characterization, and, not least, a cumulative, haunting evocation of place. (Garrett 3)

Capote’s use of cross-cutting scenes creates the impression that he is telling several independent stories, one about the Clutter family and its daily life, another about Dick Hickock and Perry Smith and how they came to meet and plan a crime, and a third about the reaction of the people and area involved (i.e. Holcomb and Garden City, Kansas). The stories intersect finally at the end of Part I with the arrival of the two at the Clutter farm, then split again in Part II with the focus again dividing among the townspeople, the police and the murderers.

CHAPTER 3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Advantages and Disadvantages of Blending the Genres

Given the preceding analysis the advantages and disadvantages of blending genres become apparent.

In the late 1950's and throughout the 1960's, novelists turned to the advantages presented by nonfiction writing -- a ready-made set of characters and events that allowed them to avoid what Norman Podheretz termed "suffering the long incubation periods required by fiction" (Hollowell 8). The popularity of the advantages became more prevalent as media accounts of real events sometimes were more spectacular or entertaining than what was being produced in fiction. These advantages, according to critics such as Phyllis Frus McCord and novelist Phillip Roth, were the major reason for the rise of this new form of writing (McCord 62).

The fiction writer attempting to compose a novel depicting a real-life occurrence is well acquainted with the novelistic techniques of scene-by-scene construction, dialogue, narrative structure, etc. As a result, he or she is able to make effective use of these tools as well as foreshadowing, flashbacks, and pacing to increase or enhance the emotional impact of his or her work on the reader. The writer also has the advantage of not having to create a "real" world and "real" characters. Those are provided for in the reality of the event, relieving the writer from having to worry about whether the reader will accept his or her created reality and characters.

While this type of writing provides many advantages to the fiction writer, it also provides several disadvantages, some of which relate directly to its advantages. Obviously taking a real-life event and relating it in novel form requires research. While some fiction

writers are known to do extensive research in writing their novels, by its nature, a real-life event recounted in a nonfiction novel such as *In Cold Blood* requires more meticulous and exact research if it is to be portrayed as “immaculately factual.” Capote did extensive research including interviews with Holcomb residents, law enforcement authorities, Hickock and Smith, and other murderers incarcerated in Kansas over a three-year period. In fact, as do many journalists, Capote collected far more information than he used in the book. He even estimated that “if I had used 20 percent of all the material I put together over those years of interviewing, I’d still have a book two thousand pages long!” (qtd. in Plimpton 30). This requires interviewing skills and research skills a fiction writer may or may not have, depending upon his or her writing background. If the writer aspires to the level of factuality and integrity which Capote’s definition of the nonfiction novel implies, he or she must strive to influence the interviewee as little as possible in order to get as accurate a picture as possible. This is one of the reasons Capote cites for his not taking written notes or tape recordings of his interviews.

Even note-taking artificializes the atmosphere of an interview, or a scene in-progress; it interferes with the communication between author and subject—the latter is usually self-conscious or an untrusting wariness is induced. Certainly a tape-recorder does so. (qtd. in Plimpton 38)

Therefore, the writer attempting such a genre-blending project needs a command and understanding of the techniques of both genres in order to utilize the advantages and avoid or minimize the impact of the disadvantages such blending provides.

How Traditional Journalism Told the Story

The advantages and disadvantages of Capote's blend of fiction and journalistic writing become more apparent when we examine *In Cold Blood* in comparison to how traditional journalistic outlets covered the events surrounding the Clutter murders. It is apparent that the strictures imposed by traditional journalistic writing have an effect on how, what, and when information is presented. Unlike writing a novel, which allowed Capote to compose his account after the executions of the killers, the concern of journalism with proximity and timeliness dictated not only the comprehensiveness but also the accuracy and pertinence of the information provided to the reader. A comparison of the newspaper coverage of the initial discovery of the murders, the arrest of the killers, and the trial and convictions in the *Kansas City Times*, *Kansas City Star*, *Omaha World Herald*, and *Des Moines Register* clearly shows the effects proximity and timeliness had on how the story was presented. (Kansas City is located about 400 miles east of Holcomb, with Omaha, Nebraska, and Des Moines, Iowa, both about 600 miles northeast).

Proximity

In the days immediately following the slayings, a dramatic difference in coverage existed among the papers. The *Kansas City Times* and *Kansas City Star*, were published in the morning and evening respectively, on November 16, 1959, the day following discovery of the slayings. Both featured articles about the crime. The morning *Times* devoted about one quarter of its front page to a story detailing the murders and pictures of the Clutter farmhouse and of each of the four slain family members ("Four" 1). Its importance, inherent in the unusual nature of the event, was indicated by its placement at the top center of the page. This was further reinforced not only by the pictures of the Clutter house, but also of all

four victims. The story was followed in the evening *Star* with a front-page story detailing investigators' efforts to find clues as to the perpetrator(s)' motive(s) and identity(s). The story also appeared near the top of the page and ran in a single column to the bottom of the page, but since it appeared after the initial report in its sister paper, and no new information was available, it was not given as much space ("Clues" 1). Both papers continued coverage on the following day (November 17). The *Times* published an article reporting that no concrete clues had been found, detailing the location and contents of Mr. Clutter's billfold, and providing further details as to the locations in the house where each of the victims was found ("No" 1). This article, while longer than the others, received placement on the front page like that of the previous evening's article in the *Star*. That evening's *Star* featured a page-one story which focused on the type of knot used in binding each victim and the confusion in identifying the culprits caused by the number of different fingerprints found in the house ("A Murder" 1). This story also appeared at the top of the page and was similar in length to the one published that morning in the *Times*. The initial coverage concluded two days later (November 19) in the *Times* with an article detailing the discovery of spent shotgun shells at the crime scene and efforts to determine whether they had been fired from a shotgun stolen days before ("Used" 1). The placement of this story lower on the front page is indicative of the fact that with time and extensive coverage, the placement of the story on the front page changes. The story had received such comprehensive coverage and its initial value as "breaking news" had faded, indicating the event's decline in importance in relation to other events in the news. While coverage in the *Times* and *Star* appears to be quite comprehensive and extensive, a stark difference becomes apparent when comparing it with

coverage during the same time period in the *Omaha World-Herald* and the *Des Moines Register*.

The *World-Herald* also published a front-page story on November 16. It focused on basic facts, such as detailing that a family of four had been murdered, designating Mr. Clutter as a prominent wheat grower, identifying who found the bodies, and establishing that neither female victim had been sexually molested (“Four Found” 1). The article occupies one-eighth of the page, appears at the top right-hand corner of the page, is equal in length to the follow-up articles in the *Kansas City Times* and *Kansas City Star*, and is the only article the paper printed during the same time period. The *Register* also ran a single article on November 16 very similar in content and length to that published by the *World-Herald* (Well 1). It also received placement at the top of the front page. A similar pattern occurs during a period beginning January 1, 1960 following the December 30 arrests of Perry Smith and Richard Hickock in Las Vegas. The similarity in both content and quantity of coverage demonstrates that a decrease in proximity to Holcomb directly correlates to a decrease in the amount of coverage provided.

The January 1, 1960, issue of the *Kansas City Star* reported that two men, arrested in Las Vegas, were to be questioned about the murders (“Farm” 1). As an initial story in the next phase of the case, it received prominent placement, both at the right-center of the front page, as had the November 19 *Times* story that reported finding the used shotgun shells. This is followed on January 2 by an article in the *Times* revealing authorities’ efforts to connect the two with the crime and that items were stolen from the Clutter house (“On” 1) and a report in that evening’s *Star* requesting the public’s help in finding a radio stolen from the house (“Hunt” 1). These articles both occupy approximately one-eighth of each issue’s front

page, with the first appearing at the top and the other in the center of the front page. The January 4 edition of the *Times* included a front-page article reporting that Hickock confessed to the Clutter murders, a picture of the agents with Hickock, and a separate photo of Smith (“Confesses” 1). The story begins at the top and occupies a fourth of the front page and an equal portion of page 2. In the following day’s *Times*, a similar amount of space is devoted to the killers’ extradition. It includes a front-page article and two pictures showing Smith and Hickock in handcuffs being led by Kansas Bureau of Investigation agents to awaiting cars for transport back to Kansas (“Two” 1). Once again, the stories appear at the top of the front page, indicating the importance of this new phase of the story. This is followed two days later by another front-page story dealing with the killers’ arrival and the large crowd of onlookers (“Return” 1). Unlike the preceding articles, it occupies only an eighth of the *Times* front page, but like the follow-up articles in the initial coverage of the murders, it still is placed at the top of the page.

Once again a dramatic difference is seen when comparing the *Times*’ coverage to that contained in the *World-Herald* and the *Register*. The *World-Herald* on January 4 published an article detailing both the arrest and confessions, occupying one-sixteenth of the front page. The *Register* published a similar article in its January 4 edition. It was half the size of the *World-Herald* article, appeared at the bottom of the front page, and failed to include as detailed a description of Hickock’s physical condition during his confession. The pattern continued, with the *Times* and *Star* devoting much more space to daily coverage of the trial in March 1960 than both the *World-Herald* and the *Register*.

The Kansas City papers published a significantly higher number of highly detailed articles devoting more space to the story than either the Omaha or Des Moines papers. This

is because the murders would naturally hold more interest and significance to the residents of Kansas than those of either state to the north. The *World-Herald* and *Register* stories include only the basic facts deemed to be most important and use information and quotes obtained from, for the most part, law enforcement authorities. A closer examination of the *Times* and *Star* articles results in similar findings regarding use of sources. The brevity of the *World-Herald* and *Register* articles more clearly demonstrates the effect proximity plays, because the articles don't include the more detailed factual information which may not interest readers further removed from the crime's location.

Timeliness

Timeliness also plays an important part in dictating what information is included in traditional journalistic writing. The impact of timeliness becomes especially apparent when we compare the information being provided in daily newspaper accounts following the murders.

As with any developing story, the quantity of information builds as more is released to the media. In their quest to keep the public informed, journalists report any new information that is either released or they uncover. The resulting increase in quantity however does not necessarily correlate to an increase in quality. In their eagerness to report every bit of information they obtain, journalists inevitably report theories or leads law enforcement authorities have which ultimately prove to be wrong, unreliable, or unconnected. The stories that appeared in the newspapers covering the murders clearly illustrate this.

A number of leads were reported in the early reportage of the *Kansas City Times* and *Kansas City Star*. One story in the November 19, 1959, issue of the *Times* concentrated on

used shotgun shells found near the Clutter home. Authorities were attempting to find out if the shells had been fired from a gun stolen from Clyde E. Kennedy, a neighbor of the Clutters. Capote chose not to include this in the novel. He also chose not to discuss the importance placed on the fact that all the victims were bound and tied by a single type of knot. Finney County Sheriff Earl Robinson was reported as telling the media “the fact the same knot was used in tying each victim might indicate that only one person was involved in the murders.” However, he also told reporters that this could not conclusively rule out an additional assailant (“A Murder” 1).

All four of the newspapers consistently reported law enforcement authorities’ contention that robbery was not a motive in the killings, as exemplified by Logan Sanford, head of the KBI. Sanford was quoted as saying: “there is no direct evidence to substantiate a theory that some former employee of Clutter had returned, thinking there was a large amount of money in the home and had tortured Clutter and had ultimately killed all those present to escape detection” (A Murder 1-2). Herb Clutter’s dislike of cash, the lack of a safe in the house, and the fact that Mrs. Clutter’s and Nancy’s jewelry had been left behind all seemed to contradict a robbery motive. Capote noted this dismissal of robbery as a motive in *In Cold Blood*, but he had the advantage of telling the whole story at one time. This knowledge allowed him to foreshadow robbery eventually being revealed as the motive. He recounted KBI Agent Harold Nye’s musings that it could have been the motive despite all evidence indicating otherwise. Nye kept coming back to Herb’s wallet, found open and empty on his bed and Nancy’s purse found lying in the den (103). But Finney County Attorney Duane West was reported as saying, “he did not believe the billfold had been disturbed by the slayer” (“No” 1). Reporters had also reported the empty wallet and purse, but didn’t portray

them as contradicting the dismissal of robbery as a motive because the conventions of journalism prevented them from drawing connections that law enforcement didn't acknowledge. Journalists were only able to report robbery as the motive after Hickock and Smith had confessed. They didn't have the advantages Capote had in being able to take advantage of fiction writing techniques such as foreshadowing.

Negative Consequences of Journalistic Constraints

In addition to the effect that timeliness has on the issue of choice and validity, the speed at which information is disseminated by authorities and sources and gathered by reporters may result in inaccurate reports. Discrepancies appear between information presented in newspaper articles and the full story presented by Capote in *In Cold Blood*. One such discrepancy appeared in the initial stories that appeared in all four of the newspapers. Each reported that Nancy Ewalt and Susan Kidwell discovered the bodies of the Clutter family. While the newspaper articles and Capote agree on this fact, the newspaper articles report that Susan's father, Clarence Kidwell, was waiting in the car for them, while Capote's account says it was Nancy's father, Clarence Ewalt, who waited. While more credence might be lent to the newspaper accounts due to their being written shortly after the incident and their genre's concentration on accuracy, in this instance, the facts reported were incorrect. Capote's account is backed up by an article co-written by the lead KBI investigator on the case, Alvin Dewey, 25 years after the murders. Recounting the discovery of the bodies, Dewey says "Clarence Ewalt, who brought them out to the Clutter farm was waiting in his car" (Dewey 3A).

An additional discrepancy occurs upon the capture of Hickock and Smith in Las Vegas and Hickock's subsequent confession. An article in the January 4 issue of the *Kansas*

City Times states, “Richard Eugene Hickock sobbed out the story of the murders implicating Perry Edward Smith, 31, of Las Vegas.” Capote never indicates any emotion other than perhaps an unsteadiness when recounting Hickock's confession: “Hickock said, ‘Perry Smith killed the Clutters.’ He lifted his head, and slowly straightened up in his chair, like a fighter staggering to his feet. ‘It was Perry. I couldn’t stop him. He killed them all’” (260). This is confirmed by Hickock’s taped confession, which appears on an episode of the A&E cable TV network’s *American Justice*. Hickock’s voice indicates no emotion at all upon confessing (“Murder”). However, while the nature of journalistic writing resulted in some demonstrable errors in newspaper coverage of the time, that does not mean that Capote’s account in *In Cold Blood* is entirely accurate.

The Effect of Genre Blending on Integrity

Selecting an actual event as the basis for his experiment in combining fiction and journalism and claiming to be completely factual is one thing, but to pick an event which received considerable coverage by the traditional news media set a more exacting standard of factuality for Capote. He had to have known that critics would examine the record provided by traditional journalistic accounts of the event, in addition to those provided by the public record (arrest warrants, interrogation transcripts, etc.). Subsequent examinations by critics have called into question the accuracy of Capote’s version of some events in the novel. The questioning is based mainly on the accounts of those involved who felt events weren’t accurately portrayed.

Phillip K. Tompkins first exhaustively explored these discrepancies in a 1966 article in *Esquire* magazine entitled “In Cold Fact.” In the article Tompkins attempts to evaluate *In*

Cold Blood in light of Capote's claims of factual accuracy. He determined that due to the nature of the new genre that Capote claimed to create,

the only relevant criteria would seem to be those normally applied to journalism and history. In other words, is the work good reportage? If facts are basis for the plot, and if the artistic success of such a work must rest upon their accuracy, is the author's account of the events, by objective standards, true? (125)

His research initially uncovered the work of Robert Pearman, a *Kansas City Times* reporter who, in a January 26, 1966, newspaper story, detailed several minor inaccuracies. Pearman discovered the discrepancies by interviewing some of the individuals involved in both Holcomb and Garden City. Nancy Clutter's boyfriend Bobby Rupp said Capote exaggerated his athletic ability and the man who bought Nancy Clutter's riding horse, Seth Earnest, disputed not only Capote's portrayal of the horse's buyer as "a Mennonite farmer," but also the sale price. Capote contends that the horse wasn't in great demand at the auction and was sold for \$75 to be used for plowing. Earnest, who actually bought the horse, says, "Hell, I couldn't even get a bid in until the mare got to \$100" (127). According to Pearman, Earnest is neither a Mennonite nor a farmer. Tompkins, while admitting that these discrepancies are minor in nature, bases his case on more substantial discrepancies between the novel and court documents detailing testimony from Hickock's and Smith's trial.

Tompkins first focuses on an incident Capote portrays as Smith and Hickock are being transferred back to Kansas after their arrest in Las Vegas and Hickock's confession. In the novel, Smith confesses to the murder after being told by KBI Agent Dewey that Hickock implicated him in the murder of a "Negro." Smith denies the accusation and begins

confessing assuming that Hickock had confessed. Smith based his assumption on Hickock's reported repetition of a false story Smith had told him about murdering the "Negro" (Capote 263). Tompkins uses court records once again to demonstrate discrepancies between the events as portrayed in court testimony by the law enforcement officials. During the trip back to Kansas, Capote also refers to an angry Smith turning around in his seat trying to see Hickock. According to testimony from KBI Agent Dewey, Hickock was actually in a car riding in front of the car in which he, Agent Duntz and Smith were traveling (127). An article in the January 5, 1960, issue of the *Kansas City Times* corroborates the order of the cars. Reporter Dick Parr, in describing Hickock and Smith being placed in cars for the trip back to Kansas, clearly states that Hickock was placed in the first car and Smith in the second ("Start" 1). Tompkins also points out that according to Dewey's testimony, Smith actually implicated himself in the crime by revealing where Kenyon Clutter's stolen radio was sold. Capote makes no mention of this in the novel and portrays Smith as finally confessing his involvement in the car on the way back to Kansas in reaction to being asked about murdering the Negro.

Tompkins also examines Capote's portrayal of Smith committing the murder of Herb Clutter. Capote says Smith indicates that he was not fully conscious of killing Clutter and referred to Smith's state of mind at the time as a "brain explosion" (167). Once again, testimony by Dewey regarding Smith's confession in which Smith said he shot Mr. Clutter after asking Hickock if he should do so, contradicts this and portrays Smith as having been completely cognizant of what he was doing (166-167). Tompkins also points out two incidents relating to what Smith told Capote during many hours of personal interviews conducted while he and Hickock were in the Finney County Jail. Capote includes two scenes

involving Undersheriff Wendle Meier and his wife Josephine. Tompkins says that both Meier and his wife denied the validity of a scene that portrays his wife as commenting to him that “Smith was not the worst young man that she had met” (168). and his reprimanding her for the remark. Josephine Meier points out that she rarely saw her husband during that time because he was so busy working on the case. She said that on the rare occasions he was able to get some sleep, he didn’t want to talk about the case (168). Capote also portrays Josephine Meier as saying she heard Smith crying and that when she went to him he reached out for comfort saying “I’m embraced by shame” (Capote 345). Tompkins says that she denied in an interview that any of the events ever happened. She said she was in a different room than portrayed, never went to comfort Smith, and didn’t hear him say he was embraced by shame (168).

Tompkins’ final example concerns the discrepancy between Capote’s portrayal of Smith’s final words and the accounts of reporters and Dewey who were all present at Smith’s execution. According to Capote, during Smith’s final comments he said, “It would be meaningless to apologize for what I did. Even inappropriate. But I do. I apologize” (381). Tompkins reports that Bill Brown, editor of the *Garden City Telegram*, said that both his notes and those of wire service reporters present showed that while Smith said an apology would be “meaningless” and “inappropriate,” he never uttered the words “I apologize.” Tompkins says that a tape of a radio news report made by Tony Jewell of Garden City’s radio station KIUL also has no mention of Smith actually apologizing. Tompkins also points out that Capote walked away during the execution while Brown and other reporters stood four feet away, calling into question not only whether Capote heard the words firsthand, but also whether his method of taking notes later rather than on the scene ensured accuracy

(170). Dewey provides further reason to question Capote's portrayal of the executions as inaccurate by pointing out that Capote portrayed him as closing his eyes during the hanging. "I didn't. I watched the whole thing. I had worked hard to get them to the gallows and I was quite prepared to see them swing" (Dewey 11A).

Capote's admission to his official biographer "that the poignant final scene of *In Cold Blood*, a meeting between KBI agent Alvin Dewey and young Susan Kidwell at the grave of her friend Nancy Clutter, is made up from whole cloth" (Heyne 111), provides additional reason to be skeptical of Capote's claim of being "immaculately factual."

Journalism bases its integrity on inclusion of only verifiable factual information and objectivity in the perspective of the writer. Discrepancies in how Capote, journalists, individuals involved, and the public record portray events suggest that Capote didn't live up to the journalistic standard of presenting facts that have been verified by several sources. In addition, his use of narrative structure to build suspense leading up to the motive and exactly how the murders were committed and his personal relationship with the killers, especially Smith, directly contradict a journalist's goal of remaining an objective observer. However, if the reader examines it from a wider perspective taking into account the main facts of the case, that four members of the Clutter family were murdered by two ex-convicts, Richard Hickock and Perry Smith, who were tried, convicted and executed for the crime, he or she would conclude that the novel is an accurate portrayal of the story. Many times such details, including those whose accuracy is questionable, never make it into newspaper or media reports, so many of the liberties taken by Capote don't effect the overall portrayal of the main facts of the story. Taking this into consideration, along with the novel's blending of genres

and the intense scrutiny since its publication, the novel's actual impact on the integrity of journalism as a genre is minimal.

Capote is able to manipulate the reader through his choice of what information to include and its placement, as demonstrated by the discrepancies described by Tompkins. He also clearly creates sympathy for Smith through his inclusion of fabricated scenes of Smith exhibiting remorse (as detailed by Tompkins) and extensive personal background information. Capote not only presents the reader with mini-biographies of the murderers, that detail their lives from childhood through adulthood, but also with psychological profiles that attempt to explain how these men came to lives of crime. His sympathetic portrayal of Smith has been the subject of much criticism. Both Tompkins and George Garrett contend that Capote identified with Smith. Tompkins concentrates on physical similarities between the two, citing height and facial characteristics as well as Harper Lee's comment in a *Newsweek* magazine interview in which she said "I think every time Truman looked at Perry he saw his own childhood" (170). Garrett says that Smith embodied "all the characteristics of his [Capote's] fictional protagonists" (87). This sense of connection between reporter and interviewee not only violates a journalist's responsibility to remain objective about what he or she is writing, but provides an explanation of why Capote may have made the choices he did in portraying Smith.

Capote's factual discrepancies, use of narrative structure to create suspense, selective use of sources and information, and personal identification with and sympathy for Smith preclude *In Cold Blood* from exemplifying the integrity of journalistic writing. However, fiction writing confirmed the impact of *In Cold Blood* by demonstrating that techniques heretofore only used in fiction, such as characterization, plot, dialogue, and narrative

structure could be effectively used to recount a real-life event. Despite not being able to create his characters out of thin air, Capote structured his narrative in a way that kept the reader interested. He portrayed events from the viewpoints of several characters, and therefore emphasized the individuals who he felt had the best dramatic appeal to his audience. The very techniques which discredit the novel's journalistic integrity strengthen its power as fiction. The contrast in portrayal of Smith as a more three-dimensional sympathetic character and Hickock as one-dimensional and sinister illustrates the power of character development to draw an emotional reaction and keep the reader interested in the story. The fact that Capote was able to do this with a story whose end was already known demonstrates the power that fiction-writing techniques provide in relating real life events.

Ethical Considerations

Working in a genre such as creative nonfiction places responsibilities on both the author and the reader. The author who depicts an actual event must take into account numerous ethical considerations. Lynn Z. Bloom in "Living to Tell the Tale: The Complicated Ethics of Creative Nonfiction" (2003) equates the motives of creative nonfiction writers as being the same as any writer writing something important: "...to get at the truth; to make sense of things that don't make sense; to set the record straight; to tell a good story" (277). These motives seem to fall in line with Capote's goal in writing *In Cold Blood* and when we examine what Bloom considers to be the only ethical standard for writers of creative nonfiction, to present "their understanding of both the literal and the larger Truth" (278), Capote's discrepancies in fact and character portrayal diminish in significance. An examination of the major facts in the story of the Clutter family murders shows that Capote faithfully portrayed the literal fact that four members of the Clutter family were murdered on

November 15, 1959, in their rural Kansas farmhouse near the town of Holcomb; and that on January 1, 1959, the two murderers, Richard Hickock and Perry Smith were arrested in Las Vegas, questioned and returned to Garden City, Kansas, where they stood trial and were convicted and sentenced to death on March 29, 1960, and were hanged on April 14, 1965. The instances where discrepancies occur, the dialogue and scenes he seems to have created, and his sympathetic portrayal of Smith seem to be efforts to convey Capote's understanding of the larger "truth" of the story. From Bloom's perspective, Capote would then seem to be fulfilling the authorial responsibilities of the genre very well. However, if we examine how well Capote fulfilled ethical responsibilities in light of Bronwyn T. Williams' concept of the ethical considerations necessary within creative nonfiction, we find those same discrepancies of fact and character portrayal more problematic. Williams, a college English professor and former journalist, sees the necessity of setting higher standards for factual representation. In "Never Let the Truth Stand in the Way of a Good Story: A Word for Three Voices," (2003) Williams concentrates his concern on the power held by the creative nonfiction writer in telling a story depicting real life events and persons. While focusing his discussion on family members telling stories of their families, his comments in regard to power also relate to authors of nonfiction novels such as Capote. Williams says, "It is only the writer, however, who gets to define those stories—even the stories that are true—in print for an audience of strangers to see. It is only the writer who decides which stories that larger audience 'deserves' to hear" (Williams 299). Our examination of the liberties Capote took in choice of information to relate and viewpoint from which to tell certain events in the novel seem to violate Williams' contention that a creative nonfiction author has the responsibility to portray events and people as factually as possible. Williams argues that a lack of concern with the

effect such writing has on those portrayed and with the “ethics of reportage and observation and representation” (304) is a problem that needs more attention and one I would argue needs to be given equal consideration, especially when an author, such as Capote, is claiming to be using the techniques of a genre such as journalism that holds such ethics as its bedrock foundation. Use of the term “nonfiction” in creative nonfiction implies to readers that the product they are receiving is factual and as long as the author wants to portray his work as exemplary of such standards, he or she must do his or her best to deliver on them. The fact that Capote didn’t take written notes or record the interviews and relied totally on his memory because he felt these had a negative impact on the interview dynamics could account for some of discrepancies within the novel. Such a consideration, when combined with the fact that few challenge Capote’s presentation of the basic facts of the story, would at least indicate that he was striving to present the reader with as accurate an account as possible. Capote’s accurate portrayal of the basic facts in the case is attested to by Dewey.

It was based on facts Capote observed first hand, the trial, the prisoners on death row and the execution. He did a prodigious number of interviews and a lot of research. Out of the thousands of facts he worked with, he reported practically all of them accurately. (Dewey 11A)

If he had not claimed to being “immaculately factual,” perhaps his novel would not be as susceptible to criticism on ethical grounds.

In an ideal world, nonfiction novels such as *In Cold Blood* would present an entirely accurate account of a story and the reader could rest assured that what was on the printed page was exactly what happened. However, people perceive things differently and as a result any piece of writing may only represent that writer’s understanding of his or her subject.

This difference in perception makes it necessary for a reader to approach any form of communication, written or verbal, with a critical eye. A critical approach to reading *In Cold Blood* would hold any claim such as Capote's as highly questionable. Dismissing such a claim allows a critical reader to view the work as one person's perception of a real-life event and as a result recognize that its author may have an agenda or bias that can influence how the event is portrayed. Once a reader approaches a nonfiction novel or other form of creative nonfiction with such factors in mind, he or she is prepared to evaluate the accuracy of such works. A critical evaluation of *In Cold Blood* by a skilled reader would take into account the conventions of the novel and journalism, and the effects of blending the genres, and in turn how those factors affect presentation of facts. That reader would probably come to many of the same conclusions as those presented in the preceding analysis.

CHAPTER 4. APPLICATIONS OF MATERIALS

Truman Capote's successful blending of fiction-writing and journalism not only broke new ground in the way real-life stories are told and inspired a series of similar works (such as Joseph Wambaugh's *The Onion Field* and Joe McGinnis' *Fatal Vision*), but it has also provided an example of the advantages and disadvantages inherent in such blending. Examining such works in comparison with materials from other genres such as newspaper stories, motion pictures, and documentaries that recount the same stories provides a vivid example of how authors choose, structure, and present information and, as a result, assists in development of critical reading skills.

Multiliteracies and Post-Secondary Education

In an information environment that not only includes the blending of literary genres, but electronic media such as the motion picture, television, and the Internet, it becomes , vitally important to develop a critical consciousness regarding the processing and interpretation of information presented through these forms, and a recognition of how the techniques and conventions germane to each affect that interpretation. College students are faced with a plethora of information from a variety of sources on a daily basis. In order to effectively navigate and use this information, students need to develop the ability to critically evaluate it rather than passively accept it as a mirror of a reality that is "out there." As Charles A. Hill puts it in "Reading the Visual in College Writing Classes,"

One might assume—or at least hope—that a major goal of the educational system is to help students develop the abilities necessary to comprehend,

interpret, and critically respond to the messages that they will likely encounter in their lives as part of this culture. (Hill).

Instruction in rhetorical analysis skills in first-year college composition classes provides students with an understanding of what features to examine in regard to textual, and in some cases, visual analysis. However, students are more often than not coming into contact with similar information presented in a variety, and in some cases combination, of genres both textual and visual. Sean D. Williams says:

To be literate in the twenty-first century means possessing the skills necessary to effectively construct and comfortably navigate multiplicity, to manipulate and critique information, representations, knowledge, and arguments in multiple media from a wide range of sources, and to use multiple expressive technologies including those offered by print, visual, and digital tools. (22)

The combination of both genre blending as exemplified in textual forms (such as creative nonfiction) and the Internet (which combines visual, textual, and sometimes audio and video) modes is the new challenge to instructors in terms of making pedagogical space for these increasingly sophisticated multiple literacies and demonstrating both the importance of and the skills for critical analysis of these texts. To accomplish the goal of helping students develop the skills necessary to critically analyze multiple literacies in our information, media, and academic environments, I propose that use of artifacts from several different media detailing the same information would effectively demonstrate to students not only the techniques and conventions of each mode, but also how authorial choices can affect interpretation on the part of the reader or viewer.

Creative nonfiction like Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* provides both literature and composition instructors an opportunity to demonstrate not only the blending of techniques from separate genres, but also to raise students' rhetorical sensitivity about the constructed nature of texts, attuning them to the author's choice on material included, how and from what viewpoint it is presented, and how those choices and the author's own biases affect the impact of a text on an audience. Unlike more conventional works of fiction, nonfiction novels such as Capote's also offer instructors and students unique artifacts that can be compared with accounts from other media such as newspapers, motion pictures, television documentaries, and the Internet. Such comparison helps students develop a sharp awareness of how rhetorical choices affect the multiple forms of literacy that surround them every day.

Subjectivity in viewpoint and its effect on the presentation and reception of information as "factual" lies at the heart of what students are asked to examine closely in critical composition pedagogy:

The aim [of critical composition pedagogy] then is . . . the development of a critical process. This process, in turn, aims to enable the demystification of texts and contexts, allowing students to enter into the process of constructing meaning, rather than to believe it is done for/to them or that they might inscribe meaning unproblematically or naturally. (Lee 153)

Nonfiction novels such as *In Cold Blood*, Norman Mailer's *The Executioner's Song*, Joe McGinnis' *Fatal Vision*, or *Dutch*, Edmund Morgan's biography of Ronald Reagan, have undergone extensive critical examination. Each also provides students with a wealth of material that presents them with perceptions of historical events that may or may not completely adhere to what the majority of society accepts as "truth." When works such as

these by respected authors and journalists are examined in comparison to accounts by other writers and in other media, students see the complications that arise from subtle differences in content and presentation. Using critical thinking and rhetorical analysis skills, students examining the conventions and flexibility of the varying genres (i.e., print and broadcast journalism, fiction writing, movies, documentaries, etc.) see the rhetorical choices made in various genres and how each affects a text's impact—the “demystification” which Lee says is the goal of critical composition pedagogy. The systematic nature of their examination and the similarities and differences that become apparent between accounts of one event, one life, one phenomenon, or one issue encourage students to question any version's representation as truth. The result of such an examination demonstrates James Berlin's interpretation of Goren Therborn's thoughts on the role ideology plays in writing. Therborn says that:

No position can lay claim to absolute, timeless truth, because finally all formulations are historically specific, arising out of the material conditions of a particular time and place. Choices in the economic, social, political and cultural are thus always based on discursive practices that are interpretations, not mere transcriptions of some external, verifiable certainty. (qtd. in Berlin 478)

Writers' rhetorical choices, when viewed as individual perceptions in conjunction with potential motivations and layered with the format imposed by the varying genres in which the content is presented, inspire students to question an account's representation as truth. For example, they might ask:

- Does the author have an ideological agenda (i.e. structuring presentation of information to support a position on an issue)?

- Do the conventions of the genre have an effect on the way information is presented (e.g., structuring narrative to create suspense in fiction writing or highlighting more sensational information in news accounts)?
- Does the author present him or herself in a subjective or objective stance (i.e., journalist, essayist, novelist, etc.)?
- Does the author's status as novelist, journalist, essayist, or noted authority affect how the information is perceived, and how does this relate to the popularity and social impact of a particular text?

Consideration of these questions provides the student with a complete rhetorical framework with which he or she may evaluate the work's status in relation to other accounts and ultimately come to view it only as one person's interpretation of what happened. Berlin, in his discussion of social-epistemic rhetoric indicates the need for such questioning, pointing out that:

Arguments based on the permanent rational structures of the universe or on the evidence of the deepest and most profound personal intuition should not be accepted without question. The material, the social, and the subjective are at once the producers and the products of ideology, and ideology must continually be challenged so as to reveal its economic and political consequences for individuals. (489)

The examination of different genres necessary to demonstrate how conventions can affect choice of information and the way a story is presented also opens the opportunity to develop students' ability to navigate and make use of the multiple forms of literacy used to disseminate information. Douglas Kellner, in "Multiple Literacies and Critical Pedagogies:

New Paradigms,” stresses the necessity of “attaining competencies in practices in contexts that are governed by rules and conventions” (197). The examination of nonfiction novels provides fertile ground for the exploration of multiple literacies in that the information and stories recounted in these works have also received coverage in other forms of media. This opens a way not only to demonstrate critical pedagogy in examination of the novels themselves, but also in the varying media recounting the same information. Its objective is the same critical competency Lee describes above:

Critical media pedagogy provides students and citizens with tools to analyze critically how texts are constructed and in turn construct and position viewers and readers. It provides tools so that individuals can dissect the instruments of cultural domination, transform themselves from objects to subjects, from passive to active. Thus critical media literacy is empowering, enabling students to become critical producers of meanings and texts, able to resist manipulation and domination. (Kellner 198)

The ability to view how an author or director structures the information or story he or she is trying to present provides the student with an understanding of the techniques used to transmit the story. Through this understanding, students develop a broad media literacy that “empowers people to use media intelligently, to discriminate and evaluate media content, to dissect media forms critically, and to investigate media effects and uses” (Kellner 200).

The opportunity to use nonfiction novels and related media artifacts such as motion picture adaptations and documentaries recording the same events provides the instructor a platform not only to highlight differences in convention and technique, but also to point out that

media themselves are a form of cultural pedagogy and thus must be countered by a critical media pedagogy that dissects how media communicate and affect their audiences and how students and citizens can gain skills to analyze the media critically. The media are an important form of socialization and pedagogy that teach proper and improper behavior, gender roles, values and knowledge of the world. One is often not aware that one is being educated and constructed by media culture; thus its pedagogy is often invisible and subliminal, requiring critical approaches that make us aware of how media construct meanings, influence and educate audiences and impose messages and values. (Kellner 200)

As students begin to view media they have regarded as sources of objective, reliable information (i.e. newspapers, magazines, television, the Internet) through a critical perspective, they are able to see “how texts are constructed and in turn construct and position viewers and readers” (Kellner 201). This, in turn, helps them recognize that media artifacts, as well as written texts such as nonfiction novels may have agendas beyond providing factual information, that the creators of the artifacts may, through the nature of the medium or through their own point of view, be perpetuating or advocating a certain position or interpretation of information or of an event.

In theory, using multiple literacies to teach students rhetorical analysis skills shows much promise, but how effective is it when implemented in an actual post-secondary composition classroom? In order to determine if the application of such material is effective in teaching these skills, the following questions must be answered:

- How does the use of multiple forms of media contribute to student understanding

of the restrictions imposed by format and the choices writers make in selection and organization of the information they are presenting?

- How do small group, journal activities and rhetorical analysis papers drawing on these different forms of media assist students in recognizing, for example the techniques Truman Capote implemented in the selections from *In Cold Blood*?
- How does this method of illustrating the constraints imposed by formats (newspaper articles, nonfiction novels and motion pictures/documentaries) and the choices writers make in selection and presentation of material compare with more conventional activities in our post-secondary composition classrooms, in which we have traditionally concentrated only on how such choices are made in argumentative essays?

A Classroom Teaching and Research Project on Multiliteracies

In order to determine whether use of multiple literacies meet the need for rhetorical and critical analysis skills the scholars cited above have called for, we must examine student work in a class that makes deliberate use of multiliteracies.

With this in mind, I included *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote as required reading in my English 105 First-Year Composition course and used it along with the original motion picture based on the book and an episode of the A& E cable television network program *American Justice* on the Clutter murders as the basis for not only the rhetorical analysis activities and essay assignment described in this study, but also as the basis for a summary essay and subsequent movie review assignment.

This incorporation of a nonfiction novel was somewhat of a departure from the argumentative essays I normally used to teach summary, rhetorical analysis, and argument to my First-Year students, a departure I felt would engender more enthusiasm and interest from students more accustomed to argumentative essays written on current issues than narrative forms of writing and “true stories.”

Data such as journal exercises in which students reflect on what they have learned in group activities comparing similar information in multiple genres, and the formal rhetorical analysis essays that the activities were preparing the student to complete enabled me to examine my implementation of multiple literacies in my classroom. The data I collected enabled me to view the students’ development of critical analysis skills in a continuum from early group activities, which concentrated on more traditional forms of rhetorical analysis using argumentative essays and the Toulmin method, to subsequent activities which implemented direct comparisons between accounts of the same event in a nonfiction novel and newspapers, a motion picture and a television documentary. I was then able to examine the cumulative effect of the activities and their progression by examining students’ rhetorical analysis essays that asked them to confine their analysis to the selections in Capote’s nonfiction novel. This forced students to focus their attention on the work of a single author and examine more deeply the choices made by that author in inclusion and presentation of information and the techniques and conventions that help shape those choices and the final product.

Incorporating Nonfiction and Other Genres

I divided Capote’s novel into sections and distributed them as reading assignments on a weekly basis throughout the semester. This enabled me to develop journal assignments,

group activities, and essay assignments based on specific sections of the book. It also required students to keep up with the readings, ensuring that they were familiar with the sections of the novel that were used as the basis for their initial summary essay, in-class group activities, journal entries, and rhetorical analysis papers. The assigned reading schedule also made sure they completed reading the book prior to the final movie review essay, in which they were asked to evaluate the motion picture adaptation of the novel in comparison to the book.

For their formal summary essays, students were assigned a section of *In Cold Blood* describing Herbert Clutter, father of the slain family (See Appendix A). This enabled students to begin examining Capote's use of descriptive imagery and choice of information important enough to include to establish the reader's image of Clutter as a well-respected, successful, and influential wheat farmer and family man. The assignment required students to condense the description down to its most important facts and concepts, not only teaching valuable summarization skills, but also giving them a small taste of what an author or journalist does when writing a story.

I then used the novel in conjunction with the motion picture and TV documentary in a series of in-class group activities. I divided students into four groups of six that remained constant for the two activities. In the first, two groups were given photocopies of newspaper articles detailing discovery of the murders in November 1959; the other two groups were given copies of articles detailing the confession of Richard Hickock in February 1960. The groups were then asked to compare details included in the article to Capote's account of the same event in *In Cold Blood*. (See Appendix B). The groups using the articles recounting discovery of the murders were faced with small discrepancies in facts between the accounts

and how viewpoints affect the presentation of information. The groups examining accounts of Hickock's confession dealt with the more extensive and detailed newspaper coverage of the confession, in comparison to Capote's brief and much less detailed account. This demonstrated how authorial interpretation of the importance of events affects what and how much information is presented. Both groups also were asked to consider how the conventions of both the novel and journalism as genres affect how information is chosen and presented.

The following class period the same groups engaged in a second activity that asked them to draw on what they learned in the first and to apply that to materials conveying the same information in yet another genre. Students viewed a scene from the motion picture version of *In Cold Blood* depicting the discovery of the murders and an excerpt from the *American Justice* episode including audio of Hickock's full confession, and were asked to compare and draw distinctions between the movie's and documentary's portrayal of the same information. Students were able to draw distinctions between both how the discovery of the murders was portrayed in a medium that attempts to portray action visually and verbally within a set time limit, and how audio of the actual confession compared to accounts in newspapers and in the novel. Following each activity, students were asked to reflect on what they observed and learned in individual journal assignments.

The separate activities led directly into the students' rhetorical analysis essay assignment (See Appendix C), which asked them to make a choice between three selections from the novel and to analyze in regard to purpose, audience, main idea, development/support, organization/coherence, and persona. These categories, while especially applicable to argumentation, are also applicable to a nonfiction novel such as

Capote's. Students identified the elements they felt were the most important and evaluated Capote's implementation of techniques in accomplishing his main purpose in their chosen selection.

To conclude the semester's work, students were assigned a review of the motion picture, evaluating it in comparison to the novel and the documentary.

The material was presented to a section of English 105 at Iowa State University consisting of 25 students in the spring semester of 2004. The class consisted of 17 males and eight females. All but two students were freshman in the traditional 18-19-year-old age range and only one had previous knowledge of the story. A majority of the class consented to have their journal entries and rhetorical analysis essays examined.

CHAPTER 5. RESULTS OF APPLICATIONS

Student Work: Perceptions of a Multiliteracies Approach

In order to determine how effective the use of sources from multiple genres was in helping students learn rhetorical analysis specifically and develop an appreciation for multiple points of view generally, I examined journal entries asking them to reflect both immediately after each of the two in-class activities and then following completion of both activities. I also examined the rhetorical analysis papers, which the activities were designed to prepare them to write, for evidence that students were able to focus effectively on strategy in these essays, which are widely known to be a very difficult type for first-year students to write.

The use of these materials as preparation for a rhetorical analysis paper was designed to fit within the prescribed curriculum for English 105 at Iowa State University, which focuses on summary, rhetorical and visual analysis, and argument. This design removed potential artificiality from student responses that could result from asking students to respond to prompts outside normal classwork and also any negative response which might result from asking students to complete work in addition to the normal assignments. It also ensured that students in this study were receiving instruction and achieving learning outcomes consistent with other sections of 105.

Journal Entry Responses

The three journal entries students were asked to complete were designed to gain an understanding of individual development of skills in recognizing rhetorical techniques between the different genres as a result of the in-class group activities. The identification of

techniques in interaction with classmates provided students the benefit of exposure to varying insights and observations, and as a result, encouraged them to look at the differing accounts in new and different ways.

Journal #1 (Novel vs. Newspaper accounts)

Following the in-class group activity asking students to compare newspaper accounts of the discovery of the Clutter murders and Richard Hickock's confession with newspaper accounts of the same events (See Appendix 1), I assigned them a journal entry asking them to do the following: "Write a brief entry detailing your own conclusions following the group's examination of Capote's account versus that of the newspapers. What differences stood out most clearly to you? Which account do you find more reliable? Why? Does either genre help or hinder the writer's purpose? Why?" This prompt was designed not only to determine how many and what types of differences the student and the group discovered during examination of accounts from the novel and newspapers, but also to determine if the student perceived the newspaper accounts as more or less reliable than Capote's and to see if students could articulate why that perception may or may not exist. The final question in the prompt then asks them to consider whether the conventions of each genre benefit or constrain the author in recounting each event. The reflection and thought this prompt required of students challenged them to notice differences between factual accounts, examine their own preconceived beliefs as to factual reliability of certain genres, and then explore how different genres of writing affect how a story is presented.

Some students focused on factors such as the nature of journalistic writing, especially in regard to time, proximity, and length. For instance, Connie pointed out that newspapers had to get

the story out as soon as they could. They had to interview witnesses, review police reports and consolidate what they viewed to be the most important information into a news story. This meant that they may have gotten a slightly different take or depiction of what happened based on what they read, or whom they talked with. Reporters tend to leave out extraneous details and commentary and instead try to pick out the most important points and details. Something that is viewed as important by Capote, may not be viewed as useful to a newspaper writer.

Jennifer also commented on the fact that the newspapers were not able to obtain all of the information that Capote had access to in completing his nonfiction novel, some of which “was kept confidential and ...not released to the media.”

Other students pointed out the advantage of the length of the novel and longer period of elapsed time between the event and its recounting by Capote, and what this provided in making sure facts were correct, providing more detail, and enabling Capote to tell the full story from beginning to end. Several students pointed to inconsistencies between the accounts and speculated as to their impact on the novel in particular, each attributing the discrepancies to the nature of fiction and Capote’s desire to make the book entertaining.

Thomas commented on the discrepancies in factual details between Capote’s account and those of the newspapers and why one genre would include them and another would not. He pointed out that

one story said Kenyon was tied to a pipe in the basement; in the book, it was his father who was tied to the pipe. The papers also mention that the women were tied up in the bathroom; the book did not mention that scenario. I guess

the main point is that books and newspapers appeal to different crowds, and because of this, their presentations would not be the same. Capote attempted to re-create the scene, while the newspaper just reported the scene.

Robert posited that newspaper stories recounting Hickock's confession may have been purposely structured to emphasize Hickock's "fingering" of Perry Smith as not only a way of "keeping a reader reading," but also an indication "that Perry was more responsible for the actual murders." He contrasts this to Capote's account, saying that Capote covered Hickock's interrogation in much more detail: "The interrogation process allows a reader to associate Dick as a dishonest character before he makes his accusation. The buildup to this accusation and the prior character development leads me to feel as if Dick is using Perry as a scapegoat for the murders."

While Robert recognized the effect the choice of details and how the event was portrayed had on reader perceptions of the characters, other students attributed such choices made by Capote to simple motivation to entertain the reader. Jennifer says, "since it is a book, and only 'based on' a true story, he could stretch the truth a little more and also add in a few more details than newspapers could." Charles also points to use of character development: "Books can dramatize characters to be better or more evil than they actually were. They are out to get your attention and keep you involved in the story."

Journal responses from this first activity already indicate that critical reading and recognition and interpretation of rhetorical technique are occurring. The activity accomplishes what Charles Hill identifies as "a major goal of the educational system...help(ing) students develop the abilities necessary to comprehend, interpret and critically respond to the messages that they will likely encounter..." The observations of

Robert, Jennifer, and Charles all demonstrate what Amy Lee sees as the aim of critical composition pedagogy, that students become able to demystify “texts and contexts” and “enter into the process of constructing meaning, rather than to believe it is done for/to them” (153). Student recognition of how timeliness and space constraints imposed by journalistic writing also demonstrates Goren Therborn’s thoughts on ideology in writing, “that all formulations are historically specific, arising out of the material conditions of a particular time or place” (qtd. in Berlin 478).

Journal #2 (The Novel, Newspapers and Documentary/Movie)

The second journal response/data collection followed an in-class group activity in which students were asked to contrast what they observed and learned in the first activity (comparing the novel and newspaper accounts and depiction strategies) with corresponding depictions in the 1967 motion picture version of *In Cold Blood* and an episode of *American Justice* in which the events surrounding the Clutter murders and the subsequent manhunt, trial, and executions are recounted retrospectively in documentary style through recent interviews with the lawmen, journalists, and attorneys central to the events. Thus, students were deliberately contrasting verbal and visual mediums and asked to make some specific comments about available depiction strategies in each and the attendant effects of these strategies. In groups, the students compared and examined how both Capote’s and the newspapers’ accounts were portrayed in a visual and verbal medium. Out of that examination, they collaborated to determine how the conventions of that medium affected what the respective authors could portray and how they could do it effectively. Students were then asked in their individual journal entries to “Pick an account of the event your group worked on and write a page on why you think the writer or director presented

information in the way he or she did. Think of the nature of that medium and discuss what advantages or constraints it imposes in trying to depict the event and the effect that has on the final product. Be specific.”

Student responses concentrated on the advantages a visual medium (the movie and the documentary) offered in its ability to convey the horror of the murders, in the case of the television documentary; in addition they noted the directors’ choice of information, how it is presented, and the resultant effect on character and event portrayal. The students also commented on how the era when the movie was made (1960’s) affected what could be portrayed (less graphic and obvious violence than that of today’s motion pictures, as well as the black-and-white "restrictions" of the time) and how the novel and the documentary were able to provide a much more complete and detailed picture of the discovery of the murders.

Thomas, whose group examined the portion of the television documentary with Hickock’s taped confession, commented that

Hickock’s chilling testimony appealed directly to the senses of the audience.

His direct account of the minutes leading up to the so-called “robbery,” the vicious slayings of four innocent people, their escape to Mexico and Florida and everywhere in between; each part added to the rage felt by the viewer.

The producers made this documentary because they wanted the audience to feel no sympathy for these men. By portraying the men in such brutal form, the documentary succeeds in doing this.

Thomas also pointed out that the television episode, by the nature of its broadcast on television and its one-hour time length, reached a larger audience, some of whom might not have the time to read the novel. He also explicitly acknowledged the effect a director's

particular presentation could have on an audience, thus showing that he is aware of and articulating the idea that the information, while based in fact and presented in a straightforward and seemingly unvarnished way, in fact is one director's/author's representation of the events and their meaning, and that there is consequently a considerable amount of power over the audience's interpretation. While the passive viewer may think that all he/she must do is watch and learn, the more critical viewer/reader is always aware of an authorial presence making decisions and affecting audience perceptions, as Jeff points out: "The directors could have swayed the audience any way they chose by adding or cutting certain pieces of information." Jeff believes that there is evidence of this in the way Hickock and Smith were portrayed as "evil, uncaring, maybe even crazy" in both the movie and documentary. He specifically refers to the scene in the movie where Hickock and his father are listening to a newscast recounting discovery of the murders, during which Hickok is portrayed as reacting with no remorse, and keeps right on eating. This deliberate portrayal, combined with the grave, monotone quality of the documentary narrator's voice, builds a lack of sympathy or even of understanding for the killers in the viewer. Robert recognizes that there is nothing "transparent" about this; neither the movie nor the documentary is a simple, clear window onto these events and the characters' frames of mind or motives. While it may be based on fact, a motion picture or documentary is still calculated, through the various available rhetorical devices, to have a deliberate effect on the audience.

Other students chose to focus their comments on how the era in which the movie was made limited presentation of certain details. Karen and John both commented on the absence of grisly descriptions of the killings and murder scene in the book movie. John points to the director's alternative way of presenting the horror of the situation by "displaying the reaction

of Susan Kidwell as she stumbles upon the scene on Sunday morning. The audience never gets to see the victims, but rather sees the different detectives' reactions to them." John also points out that the motion picture medium, like the novel, has an obvious investment and interest in entertainment value. "Whereas a newspaper should provide the facts only, a film (based on an actual event) must be both appealing and fairly accurate. *The accuracy of a film depends on what the director feels he or she should focus on*" (emphasis added).

Cody and Robert also commented on how differences in time and space constraints between the novel and the visual media allowed Capote to gather and verify detailed information. Cody points out that "Capote had time to go back to the town and get every last detail."

Student analyses of visual representations of the events described in Capote's novel demonstrate the advantages that Kellner attributes to critical media pedagogy's "tools to analyze critically how texts are constructed and in turn construct and position viewers and readers" (198). The journal entries demonstrate that students are transforming from "objects to subjects, from passive to active" (198). The students demonstrate their abilities through dissecting "how media communicate and affect their audiences, and as a result became "aware of how media construct meanings, influence and educate audiences and impose messages and values" (Kellner 200).

Journal #3 (Capote's Use of Rhetorical Techniques Effect on Accuracy)

The third journal entry assignment was independent of any group activity. It acted as a way to have students examine the potential effect of rhetorical techniques on rendering of perceived factual accuracy in light of the previous group activities, and as a bridge to the argumentation unit, demonstrating the connection between their identification of such

techniques and the ability to determine their effective use in argument. In as much as accurately was Capote's argument about his novels, students were given the following prompt: "Write a brief argument essay focusing on how Capote's use of rhetorical techniques affected the accuracy of his portrayal of the Clutter family murders. Support your argument with specific examples from the book and/or activities we did in class using newspaper and movie/documentary material."

Student responses tended to focus most prevalently on Capote's choice of detail and narrative structure in his portrayal of Richard Hickock and Perry Smith; Capote's use of differing points of view to relate specific parts of the story; students' exploration of potential reasons for discrepancies among Capote's and the newspaper and movie/documentary accounts; the perceived veracity of Hickock's taped confession as opposed to Capote's portrayal of it; and Capote's use of narrative structure, choice of information, and use of regional dialect to create suspense and provide readers with the sense of "being there."

For instance, Thomas zeroes in on the details that Capote used in his description of Perry Smith as Smith was being transported back to Kansas following his arrest. Thomas feels Capote's choice of detail "made Smith out to be a moral person caught up in a bad situation." Thomas cites Capote's portrayal of Smith as being unable to light a cigarette due to being handcuffed, and Smith's breaking down and telling "of how he tried to back out of the plan (to rob the Clutters) that fateful evening." Thomas also lists Smith's placing the blame on Hickock and refusal to accept responsibility as an accomplice as examples of how Capote's account downplays Smith's culpability in the murders. Similarly, Jodie commented on how Capote's choice not to reveal the killers' motive until Floyd Wells comes forward results in the reader simply assuming "that Smith and Hickock had just killed the Clutters for no reason.

So that at this point in the story, the reader feels hatred and distrust for both Smith and Hickock.” She also points to how Floyd Wells’ story creates a stronger sense of hate in the reader towards Hickock and, as a result, confusion about how to feel towards Smith. To emphasize her observation of how Capote’s choices in the novel have specific effects on the reader, Jodie then comments on how Capote’s later, more sympathetic portrayal of Smith creates for the reader a picture of Smith as “a nice young man caught in the wrong life.” Robert too notes Capote’s use of detail in the portrayal of Hickock’s contention that Smith killed all of the Clutters as the author’s effort to show Hickock as trying to place the blame totally on Smith, creating a more negative reaction toward Hickock in the reader.

Karen focused her argument on how two individuals were used to tell the story of the discovery of the murders. She feels that Capote chose to use Susan Kidwell to tell of the initial discovery of the murders due to her close relationship to the family, especially Nancy, noting how this choice increased the emotional impact of the discovery by communicating “the initial shock and terror that Susan actually felt.” She also points to the contrast Capote created by switching to the viewpoint of Larry Hendricks, a schoolteacher, who knew Nancy and Kenyon, but whose relationship with the family was not as close as Susan’s, to relate the more detailed description of what the police found on closer examination of the house. “He did this because if he would have had Susan explain how each of the members of the family had been murdered, it would have been very emotional, gory and sickening. As a reader we wouldn’t want to read on.” Karen sees that it is precisely Hendricks’ more distanced status that enabled him to describe the scene in a more detached and clinical manner, allowing the reader some distance from the grisly nature of the murders. Steve also focused on the use of varying viewpoints in describing the discovery. He understands that Capote deliberately

made a choice to use Susan Kidwell to describe the initial discovery “because he wants the reader to grasp the horror of what had taken place” and switched to Larry Hendricks for “an in-depth interpretation” that “would not have focused on the emotional aspects of the story.”

Jeff, in response to the discrepancies between Capote’s and the newspaper and movie/documentary accounts, attributes the differences to obtaining information from several individuals whose perceptions of the event may differ. “Not that Capote was lying, or that Capote misrepresented the facts, but with a number of people recounting an event, not everyone will have seen the same thing.” Jennifer also focused on the discrepancies, and while placing her faith unquestioningly in newspapers as the most accurate account, pointed out that Capote’s ability to choose the information and structure the way it was presented created his differing portrayals of Hickock and Smith and therefore, on how the reader interprets these characters and events: “He may have had a bad first impression of Hickock, which could be a possible reason for making him out to be the worse of the two criminals.” Charles felt the actual audio of Hickock’s taped confession in the documentary invested it with more veracity than Capote’s account, but recognized the importance of the entire context in understanding these events: “only the people involved with the actual case know what really happened; everyone else is trying to come up with their best version and understanding of the facts.” Erica stressed that Capote’s use of character development and local dialect in dialogue added a sense of credibility to his account. “Characters used language true to the areas from which they originate and the testimony given by the characters as Capote switched from third person omniscient to first person allowed accurate reflections of the facts of the case.”

The students' responses to this prompt once again demonstrate their ability to interpret critically the techniques Capote, journalists, and movie and documentary directors use to accomplish the purposes they each have in recounting the story of the Clutter murders. The entries also reinforce the fact that students are becoming aware of Kellner's contention that "media construct meanings, influence and educate audiences, and impose messages and values" (200). In other words, through having been able to examine accounts of the same event rendered in multiple types of literacies, these students not only became aware of the fact that no account is a pure and entirely stable entity, but they also heightened their understanding of the impact of various medium-specific techniques in creating intended impressions on the audience.

Rhetorical Analysis Essays

The culmination of the group activities and individual journal entries was each student's rhetorical analysis essay. Students were asked to choose one of three sections of *In Cold Blood* and analyze the rhetorical techniques Capote used in accomplishing his purpose in that section (See Appendix D). Many of the essays echoed the focus of students' third journal entries. Some students focused on Capote's use of differing viewpoints to relate certain parts of the story, while others either cued in on the more sympathetic way he portrayed Perry Smith, or Capote's use of fiction-writing techniques in accomplishing his purpose and the advantages such techniques offer in comparison to accounts of the same information in other genres.

Steve and John both focused on Capote's contrast of viewpoint in presenting the discovery of the murders. Steve reemphasizes Capote's intentional and effective use of a close family friend (Susan Kidwell) to relate the initial discovery and a more casual

acquaintance (Larry Hendricks) to relate the more grisly details of the police investigation. Hendricks “was able to tell the story in a suspenseful and compelling way, without focusing on the emotional aspects of the story.” Steve’s analysis then goes a step further, adding that Capote’s next change in viewpoint to Alfred Stocklein, the Clutter’s hired hand, served to bring the reader back to the shocking reality of the event by again recounting information through a source close to the family. John interprets Capote’s use of varying viewpoint as indicative of the combination of journalistic and fiction writing Capote used in the novel. Lisa posited yet another motivation for Capote’s use of multiple viewpoints echoing comments made by others in journal entries. She also felt this was a potential motivation of Capote’s unexplained discrepancies. She says, “creating a full concept of what happened is not only rooted in the manner in which characters communicate, but also with the idea that no two stories are going to be alike, and no single story is going to contain the whole truth.” Lisa feels that providing varying and contrasting viewpoints “allows readers to extract what they believe the truth could be, much like the investigator.”

Jodie and Jennifer’s rhetorical analyses emphasized Capote’s sympathetic portrayal of Smith and the methods he used to accomplish this, specifically his choice to include or to emphasize some elements of the event and not others. Jodie contends that he “wrote Smith’s confession in an organized manner that leaves the reader feeling sorry for Smith rather than despising him.” She feels he does this “by the way he presents certain characters in the scene where Perry Smith confesses to the murder.” She cites Alvin Dewey’s arguing that the killer placed the mattress box for the comfort of the victim, and how Capote writes that “[Dewey] found it possible to look at [Smith] without anger – with rather a measure of sympathy.” She feels that “by using a trustworthy character, Capote manages to portray Smith as a decent

man. She also cites Capote's account of Smith's confession, in which he claims he tried to dissuade Hickock from hitting and killing the family, as giving the reader "the impression that Smith was a good man caught in a bad lifestyle." Jodie feels that Capote creates the persona he wants for a particular character through the way he portrays character interactions. Jennifer also focuses on Capote's differing portrayals of Hickock and Smith. She recognizes the latitude Capote has in portraying each man despite interviewing both an equal amount of time. She directly points to the difference in quantity of content between the presentation of Hickock's confession, which is covered very briefly, and the extensive, detailed account of Smith's. She feels that the difference in concentration and quantity "gives the reader a large amount of confidence that Smith is telling the truth." She also points out that the manner in which Capote presents information on each man "paints a sympathetic tone for Smith, and a monstrous one for Hickock."

Jeff, Robert, and Thomas highlighted fiction-writing techniques in their essays. Jeff feels that "Capote elaborated for the sake of the story, for the sake of entertaining the reader." Jeff points to the fact that Capote doesn't reveal the details of how the murders were actually committed until three-quarters of the way through the novel. Jeff feels Capote's reason for delaying this information was to create suspense by first developing the characters, describing the murder scene, and relating people's reactions. Robert chose to focus his analysis of Capote's technique on a discussion of Capote's use of section headings and a change of tone to provide readers with a sense of certainty that the case will be solved. Robert contends that until this point, Capote had not allowed the reader to feel certain about the motives for the murders and talks about the fact that Capote deliberately structured his novel to provide readers with a sense of certainty that the story will reach a satisfying resolution. He points to

how “Capote begins the section entitled ‘The Answer’ with the first promising lead for the purpose of adding reliable information to the array of misleading assumptions.” Robert also points to how Capote led into this section emphasizing the uncertainty with comments indicating that many of the café’s customers felt that the Jones family were the real intended victims and not the Clutters. Recognizing that too much certainty might make the reader less likely to continue reading, Robert also points to Capote’s ending the section with ambiguity about finding the two suspects. Thomas concentrates on technique in character development to show how Capote supports Hickock’s plausibility as a suspect by relating his criminal background, interest in money, and the effect of greed on his personality. “In building this idea, Capote continually adds on to his claim, culminating in Hickock’s confession of his intent to rob Herb Clutter.”

Karen and Cody discussed the advantages Capote had in writing his account of the story in comparison with accounts in newspapers and in the movie version of *In Cold Blood*. Both agree that the extensive detail Capote was able to provide was advantageous. Karen cited Capote’s use “of a very detailed approach that stood out among the other two genres.” Cody said, “when you read newspaper stories about the murder, they just relay a few facts so that you get the gist of what happened, but Capote wanted to do all that he could to retell the murder in the best way that he could.” Cody also stresses the advantage that time provided Capote, in that “since this book was written quite some time after the murders took place you know that Capote made sure he knew every last detail about the murders.”

In addition to demonstrating the development of students’ critical analysis skills, the papers again demonstrate what Sean D. Williams feels is a necessity to be literate in the twenty-first century: “possessing the skills necessary to construct and comfortably navigate

multiplicity, to manipulate and critique information, representations, knowledge and arguments in multimedia” (22). Therborn’s contention that no position can claim absolute truth” (qtd. in Berlin 178) is also reemphasized as students recognize that individuals perceive or choose to emphasize elements differently resulting in conflicting accounts. Significantly, even the student who accepted one account without question (Jennifer) demonstrated the ability to recognize techniques used in the novel that affected the tone and content of presentation.

Ultimately the journal entries and rhetorical analysis papers clearly demonstrate the students’ development in understanding the constraints imposed by individual media forms. The comments on how time factors affected the accuracy and quantity of details in the novel, newspaper articles, movie, and documentary show students’ understanding of how the individual formats help structure each account, and also how the writer/director uses that format to accomplish his or her purpose.

The activities and journal entries making use of these materials also clearly demonstrate that students recognized the effect the timeliness and space restrictions imposed by traditional journalistic news writing had on the newspaper accounts, and that the era in which the movie was made affected the level of graphic detail depicted. They became more attuned to how Capote used the conventions of fiction-writing to structure revelation of details in such a way as to heighten suspense, and chose the details to create different emotions in the reader regarding Hickock and Smith.

These activities also provided me, as the instructor of this first-year composition course, with a method of demonstrating rhetorical techniques in a way familiar to students and using material (true crime in various genres) that seemed to lead to and increase in interest

because of the ability to concentrate on one theme or issue for a time rather than following the structure of many textbooks for this class: jumping from one contentious current issue to another (gun control, abortion, the death penalty) in the space of only a few days. Whereas more traditional ways of teaching rhetorical analysis, such as use of the Toulmin method to analyze argumentative essays, help students to recognize rhetorical technique in arguments, my use of multiliteracies demonstrates such techniques exist in all manner of texts and may make it somewhat easier for students to see these methods at work when they are not also caught up in their beliefs about a current issue. My examination of the journal entries and rhetorical analysis essays from this semester as compared to the past four semesters I have taught English 105 reveals a marked contrast in the number of students who were able to identify and provide valid examples of both the advantages and disadvantages provided to both the writer/director and the reader through individual media. It also shows a deeper understanding of how the format itself can structure the message and how each text has an authorial intention behind it, rather than being simply a transparent window onto the “reality” of the events. This understanding doesn’t develop as well when the focus is concentrated solely on argumentative essays which provide students an example from a single format.

Implications in the Use of Multiliteracies in Teaching Rhetorical Analysis

The implementation of multiliteracies in the teaching of rhetorical analysis provides instructors with an alternative way of demonstrating how rhetorical techniques are used to structure the many forms of written and visual discourse students which students come in contact with and how these techniques are central to the audience’s interpretation of subject matter. This approach was also easily implemented into the proscribed English 105 curriculum; therefore, students were learning summary, rhetorical and visual analysis, and

argumentative skills and were able to apply them in understanding how messages are encoded in different formats. As a result, students heightened their awareness of the need to look critically at multiple forms of representation of the information with which they are bombarded on a daily basis.

The fact that three of the students' major essay assignments, three group activities, and several journal entry assignments focus on Capote's book not only ensured students kept up with the reading, but also kept them interested by challenging them to see *In Cold Blood* as more than just a nonfiction novel to be read for entertainment. Their examination of accounts of the same information in other forms of written discourse and visual media starkly revealed differences in both content and technique as students expanded their notion of "text" from an essay in a textbook to multiple types of literacies. This resulted in a level of interest in the topic that sustained discussion in group activities up to and sometimes past the end of class and saw students retaining copies of the newspaper articles well past the conclusion of their use.

While this study reinforced my belief that *In Cold Blood* was an ideal choice for the use of creative nonfiction and multiliteracies to teach rhetorical analysis skills, I might experiment with rotating a number of books that I also believe would work well. *The Executioner's Song* by Norman Mailer, *Helter Skelter* by Vincent Bugliosi, *Fatal Vision* by Joe McGinnis and *The Onion Field* by Joseph Wambaugh provide similar opportunities in that both are about actual events whose subject matter has been covered in newspapers and documentaries and both have been adapted into movies (*Fatal Vision* has also been rendered as an *American Justice* documentary). McGinnis' book also provides another dimension in which ethical issues can be explored. McGinnis was hired by the convicted killer to write an

account exonerating him and ended up doing just the opposite. Another change I would make is to perhaps spend a little more time introducing the newspaper accounts. I might give each student copies of articles prior to the class period their groups will discuss and compare them to the book. This would allow them to spend less time in the group activity reading and comparing and more time to concentrate on differing purposes behind the texts, and the effect of and potential reason for discrepancies, especially those endemic to the conventions imposed by the nature of journalistic writing.

Finally, I would include a minimal amount of additional reading on both Capote as an author and how *In Cold Blood* was received by critics when it was first published. Several students indicated a lack of familiarity with Capote as a writer, some identifying him as a journalist and writer of nonfiction. I think it may be useful for them to be completely familiar with his extensive background in writing fiction and how this is clearly exhibited in his nonfiction novel, as well as how critics reacted to his blending of techniques in writing *In Cold Blood*.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*, through its blend of different genres of written discourse, not only attracted the public's attention--but serves as an effective pedagogical tool to examine rhetorical technique both singly and in comparison with other media formats. Its choice of subject matter, real-life brutal murders made more shocking by their locale and unlikely victims, and Capote's blend of techniques from both fiction-writing and journalism are enough to hold students' interest, even 50 years after the fact. However, students' subsequent critical examination of this text as well as of the story's recounting in other mediums adds the dimension necessary to transcend its status as just an entertaining literary work. Its applicability to the teaching of rhetorical analysis in post-secondary composition provides new and exciting pedagogical uses of Capote's nonfiction novel and similar works. Thorough examination of such techniques helps students become more discerning consumers of a variety of discourse and to see the connections between assignments in the English 105 curriculum.

APPENDIX A

***In Cold Blood* – Newspaper Comparison Activity**

Today you will compare a selected section of *In Cold Blood* with newspaper accounts relating the same information from the *Kansas City Times*, *Kansas City Star*, *Omaha World-Herald* and the *Des Moines Register*. We have briefly discussed the nature of journalistic writing; use this information in drawing contrasts between the two accounts and answer the following questions.

1. What differences do you notice between Capote's and the newspaper's accounts (i.e. in factual information both in accuracy and inclusion,)
2. How do the types of writing affect the accuracy and choice of what information to include in each account?
3. Is one form more reliable for presenting accurate information than the other? Why?
4. What advantages does each genre provide to the writer?

Follow-up Journal Activity

Write a brief entry detailing your own conclusions following the group's examination of Capote's account versus that of the newspapers. What differences stood out most clearly to you? Which account do you find more reliable? Why? Does either genre help or hinder the writer's purpose? Why?

APPENDIX B

***In Cold Blood* - Rhetorical Analysis Activity**

You have now examined accounts of two major events in the story of the Clutter family murders as depicted in several different genres. Groups have identified differences in not only the factual information presented, but also in the way in which that information is presented. Now I ask that you look deeper. Remember, just because an argument isn't explicitly stated, does not mean that one does not exist. Capote, as the writers of the newspaper accounts, and the producers, writers and directors of the movie and documentary are presenting their own versions of the story in the ways they feel are most effective and in the ways that best fit the mediums they are working in (i.e., novel, newspaper article, movie, documentary). Therefore, their choice of information and how it is presented can be viewed as their argument for how the story of the Clutter murders can most effectively be portrayed in this medium and serve the needs of its intended audience. Now I would like each group to identify the following elements in each of the genres for their assigned selection.

Who is the intended audience?

What persona is the writer/producer trying to project?

What types of information are presented?

Why do you think specific choices were made?

What could account for discrepancies or differences in information presented?

Which medium is most effective at presenting the information to its audience? Why?

Journal Activity

Pick an account of the event your group worked on and write a page on why you think the writer or director presented information in the way he or she did. Think of the nature of that medium and discuss what advantages or constraints it imposes in trying to depict the event and the effect that has on the final product. Be specific.

APPENDIX C**Journal Activity #4**

Write a brief argument essay focusing on how Capote's use of rhetorical techniques affected the accuracy of his portrayal of the Clutter family murders. Support your argument with specific examples from the book and/or activities we did in class using newspaper and movie/documentary material.

APPENDIX D

Paper #3: Rhetorical Analysis

English 105

G. Newgaard

DUE: March 12, 2004

700-750 words

Your third paper will analyze how an author's content and strategy carry out his/her larger purpose for writing the essay, and whether those content choices and strategies are successful given the audience he/she was addressing. Your purpose in this paper is to present an important insight you have about an author's purpose and techniques in an essay you've read for this class. This insight about the author's purpose and technique will constitute your paper's analytical thesis statement, and the body of your essay will provide examples of how the author has matched, successfully or not, details of technique to purpose and audience.

Choose one of the following sections of *In Cold Blood* and work through the process of writing an analytical essay as described here, on the accompanying handout, and in class presentations:

- 1) Discovery of the murders - ICB 58-73
- 2) Floyd Wells' implication of Hickock in the murders – ICB 159-172
- 3) Perry Smith's confession 232-246

1. **Read** the section several times using your **active reading skills** of underlining, commenting in the margins, outlining/diagramming, and summarizing. Pay special attention here to more than what the author is saying, but **primarily to how he/she is presenting the ideas**. Double check your notes at this stage against the section to be sure you haven't missed anything important that will affect your analysis and evaluation of the essay.
2. Free-write comments about **each of the six analysis categories** on the accompanying handout: audience, purpose, main idea, development, organization and coherence, and expression. Write comments about any feature of the text that seems to you to stand out from your rhetorical analysis of it, being sure you have studied the section enough to understand both it and the author's underlying techniques--and remembering **not to respond to the ideas with your personal opinion**. At this stage you should begin to see how several elements relating to the various analysis categories interrelate and will need to be mentioned in your analytical thesis statement.
3. Your paper's introduction should include the book's title and author, as well as the main idea you are presenting about the essay. The latter will be an **analytical thesis statement** and will address the **section's overall design**, perhaps with an emphasis on a particular strength or weakness of technique. This statement is your **assertion** about the section and

will dictate everything else that you include in your paper: "The connections you make between the details of technique and the analytical statement are what give your essay its strength and direction" (Bazerman 167). Early in your essay you should also provide a brief summary of the section, including a mention of its purpose, apparent intended audience, and its main idea.

4. Next, your paper should analyze the section's **development, organization and coherence, and expression**. At this point, you may well find that you don't have as much to say about one of the above elements as the others; you may be focusing on one or two of these features, but **don't completely overlook something noteworthy** in an analysis category. Your paper's body (basically, from your third paragraph on) will now expand on all the separate elements that contribute to the author's overall goal. Discuss all the smaller, relevant technique elements through a process of **listing and providing textual examples** of each. You will need to paraphrase, quote, and/or describe particular sections of the text to make your analysis sound and convincing. Use **transitions** to relate each element's discussion to the thesis statement.

5. Conclude by reiterating (not simply repeating) your main ideas about the rhetorical analysis of the section. In the course of your analysis, your analytical thesis statement has gathered momentum, so you should be able to make a **final, insightful observation** without veering into ground not covered in your paper: "**...the conclusion should both grow out of and reinforce the analysis**" (Bazerman 168).

6. Stay away from lengthy, verbatim quotation and/or paraphrase of the original; limit your use of these to the circumstances described in #4 above. Do not extend your summary of the section beyond 3-4 sentences in the second paragraph. Stay away also from a simple chronological "look" at the section--moving from paragraph to paragraph in the original telling us what the author says and does in each. Organize your essay around the steps above and the categories and questions described here and on the accompanying handout.

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