

# Rhetoric and Cultural Explanation: A Discussion with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

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Although Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is somewhat unfamiliar with the field of rhetoric and composition, the common concerns addressed in the following interview underscore the extent to which the boundaries separating rhetoric and composition, literary theory, and cultural criticism are shifting—and are, to some extent, illusory. Spivak's Preface to and translation of Derrida's *Of Grammatology* (1976) played a key role in introducing continental postmodern thought to the American academy. Since then, in numerous addresses, articles, and books, Spivak has been a vital spokesperson for a practice of cultural criticism rigorously informed by postmodern theory.

Spivak's concern with the shaping forces of race, class, and gender persistently refocuses critical attention onto the rhetorical—the specific circumstances of the enunciation of cultural explanations and the construction of “addressers” and “addressees.” This concern with the rhetorical contexts of cultural explanations—from those generated on Capitol Hill to those produced in the university classroom—cuts across the boundary that would separate rhetoric and composition from what Spivak calls the analysis of cultural politics. In this interview, Spivak demonstrates an acute awareness of issues vital to rhetoric and composition: the problem of severing theory from practice, the strategic role of the classroom in bringing theory to crisis, and the part played by social institutions—the university in particular—in the production of cultural explanations—explanations which Spivak maintains are generated to manage crises.

Indeed, perhaps one of the most interesting suggestions Spivak makes in the following interview is her location of rhetoric, as a *techne* or art, at that very point of crisis. In her initial definition of rhetoric, Spivak at once sharply challenges the restriction of rhetoric to tropology and strongly identifies rhetoric with deconstructive theory. Recalling de Man's description of rhetoric in *Resistance to Theory*, she defines rhetoric as “the name for the residue of indeterminacy which escapes the system.” Rhetoric is thus situated at a tactical point of indeterminacy, where it both looks backward to

its resistance to rendering what Derrida might call exhaustive accounts and looks forward to the exploitation of indeterminacy in discursive production. The significance of rhetoric's location at that point of crisis is explicated in Spivak's discussion of rhetoric's role in the duel between theory and practice.

Spivak agrees that rhetoric refigured as a *techne*, or art, deconstructs the binary of theory and practice—not, however, by creating for itself a new place of privilege. Spivak argues that “practice persistently brings the notion of theory into crisis,” and theory “just as persistently . . . brings the vanguardism of practice into crisis as well.” If rhetoric sees itself not as creating a balance between theory and practice, but rather as “inhabiting a kind of productive ‘unease,’” then rhetoric may be, as Spivak notes, a powerful ally in exposing practices that attempt to demarcate boundaries or hierarchies between, for example, creative writing and literary theory—between the “practice” of pure art and the practice of interpretation. Rhetoric thus inhabits a space of tactical indeterminacy rather than a place of strategic balance. Spivak describes this space as a point of both “persistent critique” and productive crisis—rhetoric and composition as an art of critique and invention.

- Q. The term *rhetoric* has a long history of multiple definitions. Aristotle defined it as the “art of persuasion,” Isocrates described it as “effective communication,” and Nietzsche, Derrida, de Man and others have written about rhetoric as a tropological activity. How do *you* conceptualize rhetoric, both as an activity and as a discipline?
- A. I see rhetoric as I see most other important master words in the tradition of poststructuralist nominalism. Foucault says in *The History of Sexuality* that in order to think power one must become a nominalist; power is a name that one *lends* to a complex network of relationships. In Paul de Man's *Resistance to Theory*, rhetoric is the name for the residue of indeterminacy which escapes the system. In this reading, the idea that rhetoric is tropology is not adequate to the notion that it is the name of what escapes even an exhaustive system of tropological analysis. In Derrida it would be very hard to find a definition of rhetoric that calls it a tropological activity. I think that in Derrida there is no concerted, or organized, use of the word *rhetoric* as there is in de Man. Derrida does not consistently use any master word that enables one to put together a body of definitions as something to be applied. I think the word *rhetoric* serves in the same way or does not serve in the same way in Derrida's writing. I think Derrida uses the word *rhetoric* when he's actually dealing with Greek material, but not otherwise. As for the discipline, I cannot say very much because I don't know much about its performance. I've been involved in the teaching of comparative literature, English, and, of late, cultural studies. I can't really comment on what goes on *in* the discipline of rhetoric.

- Q. You are probably best known as a cultural critic. Would you give us a working definition of what you mean by cultural criticism?
- A. Cultural criticism, which I am going to rephrase a little and call a “study of cultural politics,” involves itself, as I understand it, with the way in which cultural explanations are generated. It seems to me that *culture* is a word which is now being used to give a sense of why large groups of people behave in certain ways. In other words, culture is being used as a description of collective agency, and these descriptions are almost always generated in order to manage various kinds of crises. So, a study of cultural politics is a study of the politics of the production of cultural explanations that are used in the academy, outside the academy, in global politics, in metropolitan politics, in national politics of various kinds, migrant politics of various kinds, articulations of majority and minority, domination/exploitation, a very wide field of managing various kinds of crises that are coming up in order to give people who act within these crises a certain way of describing what the position is. This is what we are trying to look at in the new version of “cultural studies.”
- Q. Your work seems to raise questions about the relationship between cultural criticism and historicism, both “old” and “new.” What are some distinctions that might be drawn between cultural criticism and historicism? This is an important questions in rhetoric and composition studies because of recent attention to the problematics of historiography and the role of cultural studies in the teaching of writing.
- A. Historicism is something that is studied within the project of cultural studies because the production of historical narrative is an activity within the production of cultural explanations; and, in fact, explaining cultural phenomena in terms of produced historical narrative falls within the scope of the study of cultural politics of which I’m speaking. And I think it would be correct to say that all of my efforts in the study of cultural politics have, in fact, been within what I have just described.
- Q. You speak of “crisis management.” Is there a particular rhetoric involved in crisis management, or do rhetorical formulations always depend upon the contingencies of each particular crisis?
- A. It depends upon various kinds of crisis. I don’t think there is a specific kind of discourse used to manage all crises.
- Q. You have been critical of the “artificial” distinction between theory and practice; and in “Explanation and Culture: Marginalia” you discuss the theory/practice binary, arguing in an endnote that Aristotle’s concept of *techné* was, as you put it, a “dynamic and undecidable middle term” between theory and practice. Do you see Aristotle’s concept of *techné* as a deconstruction of the theory/practice binary? If so, how does this deconstruction bear upon your vision of cultural studies?
- A. I think I have really looked at some of these questions already. It’s interesting that you point at the connection between rhetoric as an art, or

a *techné*—that “middle” term, which can deconstruct the binary of theory and practice. The deconstruction of something is, of course, not a deconstruction of the binary. What I think I was trying to suggest in that essay, which I don’t remember very well because it was written about eleven years ago, was that practice persistently brings the notion of theory into crisis. And theory—just as persistently, and depending upon the situation—asymmetrically brings the vanguardism of practice into crisis as well, so that neither one of the two really can take “first” place. Now if the middle term is taken as creating a balance rather than a tension, then I think I would have a problem. I’m not interested in an artificial balance as much as I’m not interested in a hierarchy, a ranking between the two sides. If the middle term is something that cannot be sure of itself as either theory or practice, but finds itself inhabiting a kind of productive “unease,” and every time it settles into either the theory of rhetoric or the practice of rhetoric, something on the other side beckons and says, “Look here you, you know you are dependent upon me and you’re ignoring it,” then I feel that the discipline of rhetoric can be an extraordinary ally in, let’s say, exposing the artificial distinction between literary theory at one end and creative writing at the other end of our divided terrain. The discipline of rhetoric can be an ally, but not if the productive middle term is seen as a balance.

- Q. Might considering *techné* as a middle term, however conditionally, in some way temporarily balance the tension between the privileging of either theory or practice?
- A. It is quite possible, but then I would be troubled by the balancing because balancing is, in fact, too elegant a solution; it doesn’t really do away with privileging but only creates a new privilege. I think that tension is productive, whereas balance is suspect. That’s what I was trying to say in the previous answer. If the middle term is treated as a balance, a mediator, then a new system of privilege is created. In fact, this system of privilege is of very long standing when one thinks that the aesthetic is the medium through which practical reason and theoretical reason reach the rational will. This structuring in Kant, for example, of the access to the moral is through that middle term in itself, is in itself a kind of hierarchization. That privileging of the aesthetic sphere, which finds a remote analogy in thinkers like Habermas, does not strike a “balance” between two ends, but rather hierarchizes that “balanced space” into a privileged space. I’m much more interested in the “shuttle” between one end and the other and in the one end bringing the other to productive and real crisis rather than finding a middle space where an “apparent balance” is created. I’m not interested in choosing between balance and tensions. I’m much more interested in persistent critique.
- Q. Some compositionists speak out against what they see as a new privileging of theory in composition studies. What problems do you see in this

reversal of the theory/practice hierarchy? We seem continually to shift between the privileging of one or the other. Is there some way that we could possibly “mediate”—not reconcile—our differences in order to maintain a more productive dialogue in which we seek to recognize rather than suppress our differences?

- A. I don't think that reconciliation is ever going to happen, frankly, because mediations are always interested. There is always a residue of either this or that side in the way in which mediations are performed. I think we should make use of the fact that our institutional system of education emphasizes committee structures, and, therefore, we should open and reopen these questions constantly. It's a great waste of time, I know, but, in fact, we should think of it as a spending of time rather than a wasting of time. It is also true that the composition—I shouldn't use the word *composition* here because it's misleading—but the constitution of our student bodies changes. It is also true that the nature of departments and their emphasis on service, and so on, quite often change with different hiring practices and philosophies of chairs, and various roles of chairs—as, for example, the chair as first among equals rather than a somewhat imperious director. So, it seems to me that much of this should actually be persistently acted out, performed in the governance of the programs in the everyday business of managing the institution. What's really happened is the construction of a theory of theory or a theory of practice, whereas the practice is actually the governance and the teaching—which is also quite informed by theories. To separate these things is already so artificial. Any mediation will always be a theory of mediation and any kind of supposedly practical mediation, that is to say the breaking down of a theory into teaching one way or the other. I don't think these are ever really going to be true solutions. I think if we acknowledge that the place of practice involves committees and governance as well as classroom practice, then we can see that we should take advantage of the way our educational system is structured and use the fact that we are not, for example, a nationalized educational system with directives coming down from ministries of one kind or another. These particular kinds of decisions should not be separated from the way we run our workplace.
- Q. Speaking of the governance of institutions, do you see greater diversity in hiring practices or in the way students are treated in programs presumably oriented toward multicultural, multiracial consciousness? Do you see any progress?
- A. Yes, I see it in some institutions. I think that progress is being made because if you look at recent job descriptions you will see that in our own area, English, for example, there are lots of jobs opening up in commonwealth literature and literature of the Third World, and so on. But I don't believe that this reflects anything like parity. I think there are, indeed, recruitment programs that concern themselves with minorities and eth-

nics. I certainly see an influence on the part of radical faculty to emphasize that hiring be more socially just. In spite of all this, however, it's still an uphill battle; it's not at all as entrenched as we would like it to be.

I would also like to say that as these things come into being, part of the proof of the success of these enterprises is to be seen also in the immense centralized opposition that one finds at the same time through all sorts of books and media programs, partly the National Endowment—Allan Bloom has become a figure to be isolated as representing the backlash—and so on. But as the emphasis on the marginal, the ethnic, the minority is gaining ground, the institution is also, in many ways, domesticating these groups so that I'm not sure that this is necessarily the reflection of any kind of resistance to the "structure." So, here again, my idea of a persistent critique of balancing is something that I would want to urge. On the other hand, when I was talking about governance, I was really only talking about the day-to-day business of running a department or program, rather than long-term policy-making. I'm saying that in those sorts of committees the question of how to mediate between rhetoric and composition, between theory and practice, depends upon the kind of student bodies that come from year to year and change from decade to decade. That is the sort of thing that I was talking about when I raised the issue of governance.

- Q. Certain scholars in rhetoric and composition promote rhetoric as an epistemological act. This perspective seems dangerously close to what Derrida calls "rhetoricism," which he describes in a recent *JAC* interview as "a way of giving rhetoric all the power, thinking that everything depends on rhetoric." What are the benefits or dangers of positing rhetoric as an epistemological act?
- A. I think there are dangers implicit in thinking of anything as an epistemology or thinking that epistemology is a way of thinking without limits. As I said in my answer to the first question, rhetoric is the name of that which is the limit—that which escapes, that which is the residue of efforts at "catching" things with systems. Maybe the power with which the term has been charged betrays an attempt to describe something that stands in for knowing rather than being a description of knowing.
- Q. Would you say, then, that defining rhetoric as an epistemological act is an attenuation of rhetoric?
- A. A domestication, a circumscription.
- Q. In "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography," you make an interesting distinction between illegitimate writing, associated with rumor and insurgency, and phonocentric writing, associated with the "authoritative writing of the law" and the metaphysics of presence which has characterized Western humanism. This distinction is particularly intriguing to scholars of rhetoric and composition in that the earliest Western rhetorics, which were sophistic, were viewed by ancient Greek philosophers as both illegitimate and insurgent; however, by the fourth century

B.C., rhetoric was an express servant of Athenian democracy and the humanist project to which it gave birth. Would you comment on the relationship of insurgent discourse to Western humanism and democracy?

A. When I was talking about rumor and how rumor works in the spread of insurgency, I was commenting on the colonial aggression which accompanied the spread of Western humanism. I was commenting on the use of Western humanism as an alibi for the development of markets and the establishment of western democracy under imperial authority. Rumor could in fact be operative in insurgent efforts against the organized *logos*. But this requires situation-specific study. Just as people like Derrida say that they cannot speak of anything outside of Western metaphysics, I do not feel authorized to establish my critique of the imperialist field as a general theory. The moment I go outside of the imperialist field, in the neocolonial field where I do my teaching, I see the various ways in which we are complicitous with both Western humanism and so-called Western democracy. The analysis belongs to an extremely specific situation of the use of Western humanism and the establishment of Western democracy as alibis and explanations for the development and preparation of the field of operation for industrial capitalism. But outside of it, the focus changes, and the critique gets deconstructed into rumor as *techne*, the shifting *bolus* of truth.

Q. On the issue of rumor, many individuals have divided “opinion” into at least two categories: instinctive feelings, and “examined” opinion. Can a distinction be made between “informed” and “uninformed” opinion, between *doxa* and *endoxa*?

A. I was not talking about *doxa*, no. I was speaking, in fact, of rumor in various situations within specific imperialist contexts. From where I work, I am not a philosopher, and I’m not a historian. On the other hand, I do not think that literary criticism is a sort of “playground” of indeterminacy. Therefore, given this kind of tactical interdisciplinarity, I don’t think about it in this way because when I look back on the way I read these things, I see that I’m an amateur in these three disciplines (philosophy, history, literary criticism). In the case of literary criticism, I have kind of “amateurized” myself in shifting between the empirical and the historical/theoretical and the morphological/theoretical; these lines are always moving. So, it is quite possible to see the lineaments of what might gel into what we are calling the technical use of the word *rumor* in my commentary on the operation of rumor in a very specific case. So, in fact, having said “no,” I am now perhaps saying “yes” and “no”—as usual.

Q. Until recently, rhetorical theory has depended heavily on models of communication that demarcate a speaker/writer, an audience/receiver, and a supposedly autonomous message. This model has been critiqued on many fronts, and we are now faced with the task of refiguring the subject

in rhetorical theory. You address the problem of the subject in “Subaltern Studies,” where you describe the “crucially strategic” project of the Subaltern Studies group as that of “subject restoration,” as the “strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest.” Would you elaborate on your formulation of the subject?

- A. My notion of the subject, subject restoration, in that passage in “Subaltern Studies” as a strategic positivism has been appropriated especially by feminists in the United States in a way which I have found a little alarming. I did an interview with Ellen Rooney in *Differences* where I talked this out at great length. I see here a use of essentialism and then giving it an alibi with poststructuralist talk. The way I see it now is in another formula, a persistent critique of what one cannot “not” want. And what one cannot “not” want in a political interest. I now put the emphasis on the pursuit of collective agency, as secured, say, by the privative and normative discourses of constitutions (or, on a less grandiose scale, the disciplines) on the one hand, and the transformation of consciousness on the other. Notions of subject formation must bring the idea of collective agency into crisis.
- Q. Judith Butler’s recent book, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, offers a thorough critique of both biological and cultural theories of gender as a dramatic, performative set of activities. In commenting on Butler’s text, you say, “This powerful and constructive political autocritique of gender theory performs, on its way, a critique of the ethical philosophy of gender in general.” How does Butler’s formulation of gender as drama bear upon the notion of “women’s writing” and “women’s teaching”?
- A. Women’s writing and women’s teaching, based on gender and drama, bring into play notions like performance, both in the sense of acting out and bringing about through saying, representation, and self-representation, both in the sense of standing in for and seeing oneself as metonymy in the sense of the point of agreement standing in for provisional “collective consciousness,” persistently to be dissolved as a presupposition. If this seems a little cryptic, I think the best way to decrypt it is, once again, in the technology of the classroom.
- Q. Many individuals who have studied and taught in universities outside of the United States, like yourself, have observed that the life of the intellectual is distinctly different in Europe than it is here. In speaking of teaching, for example, Paul de Man says, “In Europe one is of course much closer to ideological and political questions, while, on the contrary, in the States, one is much closer to professional questions.” Derrida observes, “In the United States, culture or intellectual life is confined to the university more or less. In France, this is not the case, especially in Paris. Here (in the United States), the people I know, the people to whom I speak, are on the faculties. In France, it’s almost the contrary: I’ve very few relations with



colleagues or with the professors in the university.” What intellectual and academic differences between America and Europe do *you* see? What rhetorical modifications do you make in addressing academic audiences versus groups comprised of laypersons, both in the United States and overseas?

- A. I'm quite struck by the fact that neither of the sentences quoted from de Man and Derrida considers that perhaps some of what they are saying is dependent upon *who they are*. I can imagine that there are people in the United States who, in fact, are involved with ideological and political questions and teach at universities, although by and large perhaps it's true that Europe is much more a place broken up into small nation states with histories that began before the eighteenth century. So, to an extent, the history of the university in those places and its relationship to the state is rather different from the history of the university system in the United States, which was founded with a certain historical consciousness that was not the case in Europe. So it seems to me that it is not an “also” question. France, Belgium, West Germany, Italy, to an extent Spain, and Britain—these places are themselves rather diversified, and Derrida is at least careful enough to say that he is speaking of Paris. I feel that in the case of Derrida, it may be quite true that he is not in touch with the people and the faculties, but there are extremely universitarian people in France who work very much within the faculties. It's *the way* in which de Man relates to the university system in the United States and the way in which Derrida relates to the university system in France that comes through in those statements.

As for me, I am not a European, so when I go to European universities I am either treated as an American or as an Asian, depending upon what kind of audience is relating to me. So I really have very little to say about academic differences. I'm not a participant in European academic life. Certainly, I've taught in France some, but not as a participant in the way in which American/European intellectuals like de Man or Derrida—both powerful main figures—would teach. So, when I talk about academic situations in Europe, I am clearly talking as an observer rather than a participant. I feel quite strongly that there is a real tradition of academic radicalism in Britain, which has been both “good” and “bad” in the current context. I think in Britain there is a tendency towards universalizing British experience. I'm not saying everybody does this; obviously there are very strong cultural critics in Britain who know that this is a mistake, but radical critics in Britain quite often tend to think of their radicalism as representing more than it actually does. I think that the British situation is much more provincial in many ways, and I think the relationship between the old universities and the so-called red brick universities, the polytechnics, and so on, is much more clearly marked and at the same time sometimes not so clearly marked among the faculty because the radical people from the so-called great universities come into the so-called more

public institutions. More interesting changes take place when I travel to Canada, Australia, India, the Middle East, and Bangladesh. The changes are complicated, because the negotiations of my “identity” vary from nation to nation, sphere to sphere, levels of work shading from the academic to grass roots. And much depends also on the language used—and my positioning in the great waves of gendered and classed diasporas that constitute the history and geography of our lives.

Q. You’ve spoken out against the emphasis on great works at the expense of other works. However, is it reasonable to assume that the corpus of any particular course, period, or genre is necessarily a “zero sum game”—that nothing can be added without a corresponding deletion? Don’t those of us interested in reshaping what is taught face the difficulty of eliminating precisely those texts that are most in need of an ongoing process of critique? We’re reminded of Derrida’s recent comment in *JAC* on the importance of tradition: “I’m respectful and a lover of the tradition. There’s no deconstruction without the memory of the tradition.” Is it possible to retain the memory of tradition while reshaping what is taught?

A. I would say that it is not possible not to retain the memory of tradition while reshaping what is taught. I would also say that it is a great mistake to think that one has become an amnesiac. In fact, it is only with reference to certain kinds of memories that one constructs alternative memories. It is interesting that the issue arises today, when in transnational capitalism it no longer matters what nation-state capital is located in. On the other side is the national identity scenario: negotiated independence, national liberation, revolution/counter-revolution. The cultural explanations that are being generated are precisely attempting to undo the rupture of negotiated independence, revolution, national liberation, and so on, and construct a past with which a present and a future would be resonant, even as the idea of the division into national identities is becoming useless in the management of the global marketplace. The role of the constructing of memory in order to deal with the history of the present that is being written two ways, within politics and within economics, is now absolutely crucial.

Having said this, let me shift 180 degrees to the question about the canon—that nothing can be added without a corresponding deletion. I will move from talking about the whole world to talking about my specialty. In the English major, there is a lot of room to eliminate things. I am not against the teaching of traditional great texts, but I cannot see how this continued emphasis on single author courses has anything to do with the memory of the tradition. That is the tradition usurping the present. I’m not denying the importance of a few significant “traditional figures”; I’m simply denying the hierarchy in the kind of stratagem for eliminating the usurping of the “current” by a sort of orthodoxy—let’s not even use the word *tradition*—that operates in the teaching of the English major. But that is a problem that is different from the broader problem that I think

Derrida is speaking to. I think there is great danger in pretending that the tradition simply disappears because we keep on saying “make it new.”

- Q. Would you give us some examples of what you have done in your own teaching to reshape what is being taught?
- A. I teach everything these days with reference to the big picture. That’s all; it’s not a big change. For example, in a lecture last night when I was talking about French Feminism, I didn’t divide my work into work on European theory and work on so-called Third World matters. I’m not an expert in the Third World, whatever that might be. I’m trained in the European and French modernist tradition, which is incorrectly taught if its imbrication with the world at large is not considered. So I’m really interested in teaching what I have been taught to teach in the “correct way,” which means considering the big picture. When I’m giving a lecture on French Feminism, I also check it out with the work of an Algerian feminist who can teach and exchange with the French feminists. If I’m giving a lecture on Derrida and Foucault, I check it out with the work of Mahasweta Devi, who is almost exactly Foucault’s age. She relates rather differently to the question of theory because she is basically an activist who has been an academic and is also a creative writer. In other words, the student who comes to my class to do Foucault and Derrida is obliged also to consider the texts of Mahasweta or Ife Amadiume. Teaching becomes intervention. I don’t forget to look at the general critique of humanism. I don’t think these things should become turf battles. I don’t think that feminists of the individual rights stripe should waste their time speaking against deconstruction. To repeat, the discourse of the off-center subject should bring the discourse of constitutions to shuttling and productive crisis.
- Q. In the teaching of writing in specialized courses—such as physics, chemistry, or art history, for example—do you think students should be taught to write for general audiences or should they be taught to address audiences familiar with specialized jargon, grammars, and methodologies?
- A. I guess I’m a little old-fashioned about this. First of all, in any kind of a course, since writing is a tool that goes across the board, I should care if it’s done competently. On the other hand, it does seem to me that it’s not a very good idea to teach writing through physics, chemistry courses, and so on, because the teaching of reading cannot be done, let’s say, in the “Senate house.” Although we do, in fact, read the world as we are engaging in politics, you cannot, in fact, bring the training in reading into the arena where reading is something that is also done. I think there have to be places where you do nothing but the skill, and then the application of the skill develops. I’m not saying that when you teach the skill you should confine yourself to nothing but the skill itself, as a subject matter, but I am saying that when you are actually teaching, when you are actually involved in a major where the teaching of the content is important, you also must emphasize content. I don’t know if this is an old-fashioned point of view,

but it is certainly my conviction.

- Q. In a recent interview with *Harper's*, you argued that one important responsibility of a college teacher is "to teach the young America to recognize that this is a multiracial, multicultural country." You emphasized that "the teaching of a multiculturalism should not be used in the service of some old-fashioned pieties, but is something that could work as a critical force underlying our general culture." Is there a radical pedagogy that individuals who teach writing in English departments might appropriate in meeting this particular responsibility?
- A. I think if there is, it isn't a package that can be appropriated. I think work has been done at my university in the composition program. Many people are working on this in Pittsburgh, but I'm closely associated with Barbara McCarthy, a graduate student working on what such a pedagogy might be. I think that question is always directed toward the future. It's not something that exists that might be appropriated. I think it is something that might exist, that should be worked at. So I would like to end by looking forward to an indefinite future and a hope of more work rather than by making a premature closure and saying, "Yes, there it is, there is your text, there is your work, there is your book appropriate it, then teach writing in that way."

**Kinneavy Award Winner Announced**

The James L. Kinneavy Award for the most outstanding essay of 1989 published in *JAC* was awarded to David Bleich at the CCCC meeting in Chicago. Professor Bleich received a cash award and handsome plaque generously endowed by Professor Kinneavy, Blumberg Centennial Professor of English at the University of Texas. The award is presented each year at the meeting of the Association of Teachers of Advanced Composition at the CCCC convention. Bleich's article, "Genders of Writing," expands the notion of genres using feminist perspectives.