

CHAPTER 8.

IE AND PEDAGOGICAL
POSSIBILITIES: A FRAMEWORK
FOR THIRDSPACE EXPLORATIONS

Michelle Miley with Anna Couch, Juliana Greene, Hannah Telling, and Lauren Adams Turner

Montana State University

At least temporarily, set aside the demands to make an either/ or choice and contemplate instead the possibility of a both/and also logic. . . . [Thirdspace] is . . . an efficient invitation to enter a space of extraordinary openness, a place of critical exchange where the geographical imagination can be expanded to encompass a multiplicity of perspectives that have heretofore been considered by the epistemological referees to be incompatible, uncombinable.

—Edward Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined-Places*

My impulse to start in practice and to work towards theory is perhaps what drew me to Edward Soja's Thirdspace theory. I discovered Soja while incorporating Rhonda Grego and Nancy Thompson's studio model into our writing in the disciplines program at a previous institution. My simple understanding of Soja's theory is this: First space, representing the ideal or what we believe "should be," rarely is a mirror image of second space, representing "reality," or "what is." The space between first and second—thirdspace—reveals the lived, material space where those two collide. When we pay attention to thirdspace, we can begin to understand how our lived spaces form, and we can begin to bring the "ideal" and the "real" into better alignment. As I've written elsewhere, Soja, whose explanation of thirdspace as a collision between the ideal and the real, helped me articulate the gaps between what I was learning in my study of rhetoric and writing studies and what I saw in the students' lived experiences of writing when they came into the writing center ("Writing Studio").

The world we are living in at this moment in time has me reflecting often on thirdspace. We have become a society fixed in an either/or logic, desperately in need of the flexible space for critical exchange, for both/and also thinking, that thirdspace offers. Those who are in college now and who will be entering our

classrooms in the foreseeable future have come of age during this time of deep polarization. The public world they live in has given them access to either/or thinking but has not often modeled the complexity and nuance of both/and also thinking. And stepping into thirdspace does not come naturally; these are not comfortable spaces. Stepping into that gap between ideal and real, Soja warns, “can provide daunting challenges to practical understanding and application” (22). Acknowledging when our ideals do not match up to material experiences can leave us feeling unmoored, anxious, in despair, frightened. I would argue, however, that exploring thirdspace becomes more and more necessary to our survival as our world becomes more divided.

But to explore thirdspace, Soja argues, “requires a strategic and flexible way of thinking that is guided by a particular motivating project, a set of clear practical objectives and preferred pathways that will help to keep each individual journey on track while still allowing for lateral excursions to other spaces, times, and social situations” (22). We need structured frameworks, methodologies, to keep us on our path. Institutional ethnography, with its focus on beginning in the lived, material experience of those doing the work and then looking up to map the web of relationships, has become one such way of strategic thinking for me, helping me navigate through the collisions between what I imagine to be ideal and what happens in the real. Through IE, the complex, relational activity of my own work and the work of others becomes visible. When IE guides my thinking, I am able to explore the thirdspaces I encounter.

Because I understand my teaching work to include showing others how language both connects and divides us, how it shapes our thinking, and thus how it shapes our world, I believe it is also my responsibility now more than ever to also offer strategies for navigating the thirdspace complexities such study requires. Others have offered ethnographic frameworks as such a process of inquiry for undergraduate students, noting that ethnographic processes offer students the ability to see writing as social, to connect with community, and to conduct critical inquiry (Malley and Hawkins). I, too, have seen how ethnography can positively shape the experiences we create for our students. And I have also seen how IE offers students a visibility of the interrelatedness and interdependence of individuals and institutions. With its insistence of starting in standpoint and mapping up to ruling relations, IE offers a view of how, as LaFrance notes in Chapter One, “practice emerges in a unique relationship to the values and relationships that situate, compel and organize both ephemeral and more stable patterns of activity. . . . [how] local discourse compels (but does not determine) the shape of our practice” (28).

The visibility of the interrelatedness of discourse and practice, of individuals and institutions, is a valuable one not just for researchers but also for our

students. I would like to add to our pedagogical frameworks institutional ethnography, using as an example an institutional ethnography I conducted in 2018–2019 with a team of four undergraduate tutor researchers. Although the chapter will draw from the research project as an example of IE as a framework for thirdspace exploration, I will focus primarily on the experience of the undergraduate tutor researchers rather than on the findings from the study.

The voices of the undergraduate tutors—Anna Couch, Juliana Greene, Hannah Telling, and Lauren Adams Turner—will come through their 2019 IWCA conference presentations, our conversations both before and after our inquiry, and our emails. What their stories show is the power of IE as a strategic way of exploring and beginning to understand not only the collision spaces between the ideals of institutions and the reality of lived experiences, but also how those ideals come into existence. With IE as our framework, together we began to explore how a group of students often considered “at-risk” in the “ideal” of the institution, understood the work of academic writing. We began to see how our pedagogical ideals were sometimes disrupted in the lived reality of those students. The undergraduate tutor researchers noted that with its insistence on starting with the material experience of those who do the work and then mapping it to understand how things happen within institutions, IE provided a framework that was useful for making concrete, in ways other experiences had not, how we act and are acted upon in the world. IE became for all of us a tool for thirdspace exploration, and, for me, a pedagogical framework I had been looking for. I offer our experience together as a reflection on and example of how IE can be useful as a methodology for students learning to navigate the complexities of both/and also thinking.

STANDPOINT – WHO DOES THE MATERIAL WORK OF ACADEMIC WRITING?

The research project the tutor researchers and I conducted emerged from a discussion at the 2016 International Writing Centers Association annual conference. At the conference, I attended a reader’s workshop of Leigh Patel’s *Decolonizing Educational Research* during which we brainstormed how we might design our research studies to honor our students’ cultures and educational desires. One participant who had read my earlier work suggested to me that IE, grounded in the experience of those doing the work, provides a way to begin from the students’ experiences. Since students are the population materially “doing” the work of academic writing, and are the population writing centers should be supporting, these student voices are imperative for us to hear.¹ With an internal

1 Until this discussion, I had grounded my IE research on the work of writing centers from the

grant from my institution, followed by an IWCA research grant, I set out to develop just such a study beginning with the standpoint of the students. I first began the research of mapping student perceptions of academic writing in the fall of 2017. I designed the project so that the undergraduate research tutors would interview students, following Michelle Eodice, Anne Geller, and Neal Lerner's model. In the first year of the study, the tutors and I recruited widely. Because the research team happens to be made up of one engineering and one science major, we discovered our interviews were skewed to engineering students in their senior year. We realized that while interesting, what those students understood the work of academic writing to be might not represent the population of students we most needed to hear from. Because the writing center had been partnering with a new program at our institution designed to offer support to students often considered "at-risk" for economic, social, or academic reasons, and because we knew we would like to better understand those students' needs, in the second year of our study, the team of researchers made up of Juliana, Hannah, Lauren, Anna, and I focused on the Hilleman Scholars program. That is the year from which this chapter draws.

The Hilleman Scholars, instituted in 2016, named after Dr. Maurice Hilleman, is a program providing "worthy high school graduates from Montana with exceptional financial and academic support throughout their four years at MSU so that they, too, can realize their full potential and actively contribute to their communities" (Hilleman Scholars Program). In its ideal, the Hilleman Scholars program provides financial and academic support for a population of students that typically struggles to navigate higher education. During the first years of the program, scholars enrolled in a summer math and writing class (WRIT 100) designed to prepare them for first semester writing (WRIT 101). The writing center provides support for the Scholars on their writing during the Summer Success Academy.² Hannah, Lauren, Juliana, and Anna were tutors in the summer program. From the beginning, we noticed gaps between our understanding of the work of the summer writing class, the writing instructors' understanding, the program's understanding, and the scholars. Our IE formed out of our need to explore this gap: we wondered, how did the Scholars understand the work of academic writing that they were being asked to do?³

knowledge and experience of the administrator (Miley "Mapping," "Looking").

2 In 2019, the program discontinued the writing class and designed a freshman seminar class. They cited a desire for students to receive credit towards graduation, which they did not receive taking WRIT 100. However, because the freshman seminar class is writing intensive, and because the administrators of the program wanted the scholars to connect with the writing center, we continue to work with Hilleman Scholars each summer.

3 Although we came to our problematic because we saw the gaps between the ideals of the

In the first semester of our study, Juliana, Hannah, and Lauren recruited 16 interviewees from the Hilleman Scholars program. Anna joined the project later, offering her own experience as a first-generation college student writer through autoethnography,⁴ bringing her lived experience to our IE mapping as a data point that allowed us to see how beyond the Hilleman program to the larger system of ruling relations in our educational institutions. Because “the IE framework shifts the ethnographer’s eye away from reified or static understandings of the people, events, or sites studied,” the methodology invited the students into a practice of embodiment, making visible how “individuals within a location co-create the dynamics and processes under investigation” (LaFrance 5). In the classroom, our students do not often experience research that begins in material, lived experiences. By starting our project grounded in the Hilleman Scholars’ experiences and then mapping up, the tutor researchers made visible the collision spaces between our understanding of the ideals of academic writing and the material experiences of those enacting those ideals. Starting from the standpoint of the scholars, we began our thirdspace exploration.

I immediately noted how grounding our project in the material, lived experiences of the scholars, and using a number of heuristics for IE (Elder, this collection), allowed our team to map up and see the larger web of activity that created the understanding of what the work of writing is in the academy. Although the structures of a classroom experience and the limitations of a 15-week semester make a full institutional ethnography difficult, I have used standpoint and mapping up as a frame in later conversations with tutors as well as with the students I am teaching in the classroom to make webs of activity more visible for them. In the writing center, I often overhear students working through rhetorical concepts, able to define terms like “rhetorical context,” “exigence,” or even “audience” in the theoretical abstract but struggling to fully understand how they apply those concepts to the situations in which and about which they write.⁵ When students learn IE as a methodology, when they learn to begin with

summer writing course curriculum and the students’ lived experience of the class, we chose to work specifically from the standpoint of the students so that we could better understand what they understood as the work of academic writing.

4 In 2019, Lauren, Juliana, and I presented what we had learned from our study at the International Writing Centers Association/ National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing Conference in Columbus, Ohio. Because Hannah was also presenting at the conference, we were able to continue to keep her in our conversations. Lauren focused her presentation on explaining institutional ethnography as a methodology, and Juliana provided findings from her analysis of the interviews. Anna expanded our analysis through her autoethnography.

5 In her recent longitudinal study, Anne Ruggles Gere found that undergraduate students particularly had difficulty understanding audience. “In interviews, a number of students said they would ‘just write’ with no thought about the reader. The need to consider imagined or actual

the material, lived experience that starting in standpoint provides, they have a concrete strategy for thinking through the gaps between what is often a very abstract ideal and the lived experiences of our complex webs of relations. As our study continued, we found, similarly to Erin Workman, Madeline Crozier, and Peter Vandenburg (this collection), that IE “continued to reshape our understanding of the problematics we set out to explore.”

DISRUPTING ACADEMIC IDEALS: FROM PROBLEM TO PROBLEMATIC

IE made visible one thirdspace moment almost immediately. As the tutor researchers and I designed our study, we realized how important—and possibly how countercultural—IE’s focus on “problematic” rather than “problem” was. Our team quickly discovered that shifting to problematic thinking pushes against what we have learned as the academic ideal. As actors in an educational institution that values and prioritizes scientific research methods, the undergraduate tutors came to our project understanding research as an objective, solution-oriented activity. The shift to “problematic” as a viable research focus did not come naturally. It took some time and discussion for us to move to a mindset that we were not “solving” any problems we might discover within the Hilleman program but rather making visible the heretofore invisible web of coordinated relations that shaped the academic writing experience of the Hilleman students.

In her conference presentation, Lauren described how shifting from “problem” to “problematic” changes the perspective of a researcher. “When we see something as a problem,” she explained, we have a tendency to look for the cause of the problem, to place blame. We also tend to focus on a narrow view, fixated on how to “fix” the problem in front of us. “Problematics,” Lauren explained, “encourage us to look at the greater context of the institution and examine which structures and patterns are giving rise to the problem we initially observed” (Adams Turner “Crafting”). Lauren then told about her experience reading an article on the Hilleman Scholars in the local newspaper, one that described the “Hilleman program as a ‘remedial’ program that helped ‘save’ students who, without the help of the program, would not be able to graduate college.”⁶ She noted that the article did not reflect her own perception or experience with the Hilleman program but that because the article was a text she viewed as

audiences, including what that audience knows and needs to know and their reasons for reading a given text, were largely beyond their ken” (21).

6 We began to see the overlapping institutions—our institution of higher ed overlapping with the greater community’s institutions. IE provides a methodology to see the relationships between these overlapping institutions, as Elisabeth Miller writes in this collection.

authoritative, she began to question her own understanding of the Scholars program. In her words, she “began to see the work of the Hilleman program and even the Hilleman scholars as a ‘problem’—something that needed to be fixed.” What the framework of IE helped her to do was shift away from the “problem” that needed fixing to ask “how did this happen? “If the work of Hilleman scholars is being perceived as ‘remedial,’ what social or structural patterns might be in place at MSU that position their work that way? . . . [IE]’s idea of ‘problematics’ gives me the language and the eyes to begin questioning how the work of Hilleman scholars is institutionally organized and valued” (Adams Turner).

Any of us who perform qualitative research have had to push against the academic valuing of objective research. To put subjectivity, individual perceptions, back into our understanding requires us to resist what we have learned is “good research” from a young age. But what I hear from Lauren’s narrative goes beyond valuing subjectivity as well as objectivity. What IE has offered her is a mindset that asks her to see a gap and ask, “how did this happen,” to explore the full web of social relations. I hear in her explanation an understanding that “how things happen” is often complicated, a result of the web of forces that lead us neither to “right” or “wrong” ideal but rather to an awareness of “what is.” As Juliana explained, with IE as a framework, we have to slow down long enough to understand how individuals’ work coordinates within the contexts in which we live. She explained that we were using IE as “LaFrance and Nicolas wrote, ‘to uncover *how things happen*—how institutional discourse compels and shapes practice(s) and how norms of practices speak to, for, and over individuals’ (130). If we learn *how things happen* in the writing of the Hilleman Scholars, then we can learn *how things happen* in our writing center and tutoring sessions” (Greene “Crafting” her emphasis).

In a later email to the tutor researchers, I asked them what shifting from problem to problematic meant for them. Juliana responded, “When I think of IE as not coming up with a solution, I think of a solution as something being imposed on a situation without understanding of that situation, while IE as mapping provides a larger understanding of the context” (Greene email). She continued to explain the importance of working towards a goal of understanding rather than solving, referring to Krista Ratcliffe’s (2005) explanation of understanding as “standing under discourses that surround us and others while consciously acknowledging all our particular—and very fluid—standpoints” (28). She noted, “I think that IE lets us do this through mapping because we are not given one answer or one situation to impose a solution on, (sic) we are given multiple experiences, actors, and situations where there can never be one solution, only an understanding of the larger context that created what we are attempting to understand” (Greene email). By shifting to problematic, the

tutor-researchers began exploring from a both/and logic rather than the either/or logic of a problem mindset. They saw the Scholars *and themselves* as actors within a “complex, dynamic, flexible, multifaceted, layered, and shapeshifting site,” one in which many of their practices would continue to be “scripted for [them] but that [each Scholar] will also actively negotiate these points of institutional contact in highly personal and unique ways” (LaFrance 39).

Our world is one that values quick solutions to problems. Our educational system reflects those values. Solutions are often easy to imagine in an either/or world. Learning to navigate both/and also logic, however, requires us to understand how something came into existence rather than simply focusing on how to fix it. In an educational system where students understand their work as an academic researcher/writer to be that of “solving a problem,” of “fixing” a situation so that it is “what should be” rather than “what is,” an IE way of thinking moves us away from “problem-thinking” to “problematic-thinking,” offering students a tool to recognize the gaps between what they understood as “should be” with “what is” and “how it came to be.” Such thinking offers them a way of better navigating through and actively participating in the world around them.

MAPPING UP: STANDPOINT TO RULING RELATIONS

By beginning with the student’s standpoint and focusing on the problematic, the tutors and I were better able to practice the embodiment necessary for making visible the web of coordinated relations that shapes the academic writing experience. As we began to “look up” from the individual standpoint of the Hilleman Scholars and map their narratives of the work of writing to the individuals and texts that mediated their understanding of that work, the tutor researchers and I explored how the Hilleman Scholars “negotiated the site of their work in alignment with the ruling relations, entrenched patterns of labor and expertise and other expectations and understandings of the site” (LaFrance 67).⁷

We knew from our experience with the program that tension existed between the ideal communicated within the summer preparatory writing course (WRIT 100) and the lived experiences of the Scholars. This tension, rather than empowering the Scholars, often left them unsure how to move forward with their writing. As we interviewed the students, we began to hear in their words the gaps between their perceptions of the work of academic writing and what they were hearing in their WRIT 100 class. In Juliana’s analysis of the interview

7 We find LaFrance’s explanation of ruling relations in the introduction to this collection to be useful. Particularly, our project helped us understand that “[r]uling relations carry ideas, language, and rhetorical frameworks between individuals (even those with little personal interaction), impose ideals of practice and affiliation.”

transcripts, she observed that the scholars perceived “the work of writing [expressed in WRIT 100] to be a tool to express their identity” (Greene “Crafting”). In one interview, for example, a student describes the first day in the WRIT 100 class. She reports that her instructor told them that the instructor did not want to ever see “the five-paragraph format that they had you write in high school and middle school” again. Instead, the instructor communicated valuing hearing about the students’ own identities, experiences, opinions—all in direct opposition to what they had been taught in high school. The student said it took about a quarter of the course “to kind of realize it’s okay to have your own opinion and to talk about your own opinion in your writing . . . and so it’s given more, voice, it’s given more body to how I write.” For this Hilleman Scholar who had learned the five-paragraph essay as the way writing “should be,” to have a new ideal posited in the class that totally threw out what she had learned before created a thirdspace gap. Her lived experience as an academic writer had to reconcile what she had been given as “should be” in high school with the “should be” of WRIT 100. She was asked to give up her way of knowing when she entered the WRIT 100 classroom without a clear understanding of why.⁸

Although the ideals communicated by the WRIT 100 instructor was one the tutors and I knew well from our own scholarship in writing studies, we saw the gap between those ideals and the reality of what others in the academy understood as the work of academic writing. When we began to map Anna’s autoethnography alongside the interviews, this gap became even more visible. Anna’s experience of college writing began not with WRIT 100 but with WRIT 101, our university’s freshman writing course. In her autoethnography, Anna articulated her understanding of academic writing as “a way to show what I knew from class lecture and as a way to show what I had learned from researching and making connections to the text” (Couch “Crafting”). Mapping up from Anna’s experience and those of the scholars, Juliana and Anna analyzed the WRIT 100 and 101 course descriptions:

The WRIT 101 description says that its learning outcome is to “Demonstrate ability to read rhetorical situations” (“Core 2.0”). The WRIT 100 description, on the other hand, says that “Ultimately, our hope is that students understand themselves differently as writers, setting them on the path to meet the writing challenges in their college classes and beyond”

8 Harry Denny, John Nordlof, and Lori Salem found a similar gap in the ideals professed by writing centers and the experiences of working-class students. They write, “For working-class students, writing centers evoke the feelings of dislocation and discomfort that come from mismatched implicit assumptions: we are not what they expect us to be, and we do not do what they expect us to do” (71).

(“Hilleman Scholars”). Instead of being taught to think of one’s self rhetorically, which is often a process of familiarizing yourself with the different ways you can write and have written, WRIT 100 is asking the Hilleman scholars to think differently about themselves, to defamiliarize themselves with who they thought they were as writers. This lesson of defamiliarization is also something Denny and Towle resonate with. They write that “To belong in an academic setting as a first-generation student, one must give up what’s familiar, comfortable and known.” (Denny and Towle 5)

Juliana noted that the gaps between their previous experiences of writing and the ideals communicated by the WRIT 100 class often left the Hilleman Scholars paralyzed. “Most of the sessions went the same; we sat with a blank Google doc in front of us and a worried expressions on both of our faces. How can you start all over again from nothing?” (Greene “Crafting”).

To help us continue mapping up, Lauren brought in texts describing the work of the larger institution. Our institution is a land grant institution. Our identity as such is important to the shaping of our institution; like Miller’s “Wisconsin Idea” (this collection), the land grant mission serves as a “boss text” for our university. Students have access to many documents describing our role as a land grant institution, and Lauren had previously studied several histories of land grant institutions for another class. Drawing from these texts, she connected the tension Hilleman Scholars might feel between the understanding of work coming from the institution and that articulated in their WRIT 100 experience:

[A]s a Land Grant institution, MSU values writing because it prepares students to get a good job. Understanding writing solely as “self-expression” prevents students from writing rhetorically for different purposes and for different audiences, as they would be required to in jobs. The ruling relation of “writing as self-expression” and the ruling relation of the Land Grant mission came in conflict with one another. (Adams Turner)

Beginning from the standpoint of the Hilleman Scholars and mapping up to the ruling relations represented in our work texts provided a better understanding of the thirdspace the Scholars were experiencing in WRIT 100. It also helped us understand why the Hilleman Summer Success program decided in 2019 to eliminate WRIT 100 as an experience and replace it with a career preparation course. The gaps between the reality of the Hilleman program and the ideals

of the WRIT 100 curriculum design were too great. We confirmed LaFrance's observation that "these materialities make a difference in how we do what we do; we are also always negotiating local values, histories, hierarchies, and established work processes" (LaFrance 66). The maps made visible for us how the writing we engage in when in the academy are a "process of co-constitution" (66), ringing in the texts and mapping them to the experiences of the scholars, thinking through how those experiences came into being, made ruling relations—and the social and rhetorical nature of writing that exist within those ruling relations—visible.

CONCLUSION: IE AS THIRDSPACE EXPLORATION

As the tutor-researchers and I reflected on our experience of our research study, they articulated how IE became for them a framework through which they made visible the coordinated activity within their worlds. Like Dorothy Smith, we all noted paying attention to what before was the abstract activity that coordinated the experience of our work. Anna described that she began to understand "how language can both form community and [build] shared meaning of something . . . I'm really interested in applying IE to other aspects [of my life]" (Couch "Importance"). She observed that the experience with IE gave her the space and the time to "pause and reflect and think about" the ways in which we act and are acted upon in the world.

For all of the scholars, the maps IE provided gave them a sense of their own agency in their world, particularly as they thought through how to advocate for themselves and others. When I asked them how IE shifted/refined/honed their awareness or understanding of how "texts" coordinate work, Hannah, an English education major, noted, "[I]t made me think or understand . . . how texts in certain people's hands can become a mechanism for policing behavior. Both for the Hilleman project and then after the research project I noticed how people in my life or in my classes would use texts to almost police my behavior and get me to fit their idea of [how] a student in a discipline should act" (Telling "Discussion"). Hannah described, for example, the institutional texts in higher ed that mandated what teachers cover within any given course. She described the documents that she received as a student teacher that told her what she "should" do as a teacher.

Hannah was planning her graduation as we were wrapping up our discussions of our project. I asked her how her experience with IE would shape how she imagined her not-so-future work as an educator. She replied, "I definitely know I am going to want to be involved in the union at whatever job I end up in and be involved there—it's another discourse community with more texts—IE will be so helpful in navigating those worlds" (Telling "Discussion").

Anna was more hesitant, noting that, while she “definitely [could] see how the context affects the relationship,” she was going to have to think about how change might occur. Reflecting, Anna said, “Are we ever in a context where the people in power are willing to change? . . . [Are] people in power willing to change?” (Couch personal interview).

Perhaps the first step to change is simply making visible/ mapping context. In Anna’s final paper for her independent research study on our project together, she wrote:

So, what now? How can writing studies include the rhetorical situation so students can write about the self and gain agency in the academic discourse? LeCourt writes, “If rhetorical situations attempt to ‘stabilize’ identity, then they also can potentially announce their identity work . . . students are not unaware of the identity work academic discourse may be seeking to perform. Such awareness represents an opportunity to intervene at the site of difference, with the moments at which difference is being produced” (47).

Anna’s “what now” echoes in my thinking about how to bring institutional ethnography and its ability to, as Anna said at one point, “lift the veil” to reveal the complex webs in which we live to my pedagogical practices. My experience practicing institutional ethnography with Anna, Hannah, Juliana, and Lauren shows the possibilities for IE experiences in undergraduate education. Our experience enabled me to think about how to make concrete the social nature of writing for students. I discovered how to make visible thirdspace. From these experiences, we could better map how language and texts mediate our world. Anna, in her final essay “The Importance of Cultural Capital,” says it well: “Institutional ethnography . . . can be used as a way of thinking that reminds us of the complex relationships not only in writing centers but within the institutions that writing centers are in. As the context is important in the rhetorical relationship, so is the context of an institution and the individuals within the institution” (qtd. in Le Court 47). In Lauren’s words, “IE humanizes institutions,” making visible the complex relationships of the work of living together. By providing IE as a strategic framework for thirdspace exploration, we do not simply offer our students a way to make the complex web of relations of writing more visible; rather, with its focus on experiential knowing through standpoint theory, its shift from finding solutions to mapping the terrain (a shift from problem to problematic), and its ability to make visible the web of ruling relations in which students enact their lives, I believe IE offers them as it does us a strategic way to see and explore thirdspace. It allows them to consider both/and rather

than simply either/or. And in the worlds in which we live, both/and logic is a valuable—if not necessary—ability to have.

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