5-12-2005

Determining Quality through Audience, Genre, and the Rhetorical Canon: Imagining a Biography of Eudora Welty for Children

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DETERMINING QUALITY THROUGH

AUDIENCE, GENRE, AND THE RHETORICAL CANON:

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by

CINDY SHEFFIELD MICHAELS

Under the Direction of Elizabeth Sanders Lopez

ABSTRACT

While numerous studies on academic writers composing for non-academic audiences exist, few if any studies address academic writers composing biographies for children. This self-reflective case study of a Eudora Welty biography for children provides insight into how an academic writer can effectively write in a specific genre (biography) for a specific audience (children) and into practical rhetorical choices such as choosing photographs and designing page layouts. The study also offers triangulated data regarding essential criteria of quality children's literature as identified by experts in the field (editors, publishers, award committee members, scholars, and authors). The author's findings include sixty-eight of the most often cited criteria, such as accuracy and the use of documented evidence, that serve as guidelines and a means of evaluating biographies written for children.

INDEX WORDS: Rhetoric, Visual rhetoric, Children, Biography, Genre, Audience, Eudora Welty, Rhetorical situation, Ethos, Logos, Pathos, The five canons of rhetoric, Children's literature, Nonfiction, Readers, Publishing, Author, Writing, Quality in children's literature

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Georgia State University

2005

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I. Introduction—Background, Purpose, and Aims

Citing several studies conducted in the 1990s and 2000s, Carl B. Smith claims "[r]ecent

research has suggested that there needs to be a more balanced approach in using fiction and

nonfiction books in teaching reading" (2) in elementary schools because children who read

nonfiction "learn about their world" and enhance their literacy development (3). As proof that

nonfiction enhances children's literacy development, Barbara Moss and Judith Hendershot

explain that the 1995 National Assessment of Educational Progress reveals that "[s]tudents who

reported having experiences with magazines and informational books had higher average reading

proficiencies than those who had never read these types of materials." Moss and Hendershot add

that nonfiction not only enhances children's development but "can facilitate students'

understandings of a wide range of topics, thereby providing an important complement to

textbooks." They even suggest that "middle graders may prefer nonfiction to fiction trade

books," a claim they say has been supported in research from the 1950s onward. They also cite

studies that found that "successful dyslexics" reported reaching high levels of competence

through voluntary reading in areas of passionate personal interest, that "unmotivated seventh-

grade readers" listed nonfiction materials as reading they found motivating, and that nonfiction

has "great potential for motivating the many reluctant readers in middle-school classrooms." In

addition, Moss and Hendershot's two-year ethnographic case study of sixth grade language arts

classes provides evidence that when students are allowed to choose their own reading selections, many often choose nonfiction titles. The researchers report that seventy-five percent of the participating students admitted that they were driven to select their nonfiction titles by their curiosity about the topics, and an earlier study reported that many children choose nonfiction selections because their "areas of interest were typically addressed through nonfiction: biography, science, history, physics, math, religion, and business."

According to Lisa Banim, a children's book editor and author of children's literature, biographies are "absolutely important" nonfiction selections for children because they help them "learn about history and how people fit into their particular time period." Citing multiple studies, Myra Zarnowski, a respected scholar in the area of biographies for children, suggests that biographies are common nonfiction selections of young readers because

> children during their elementary school years and even beyond are interested in exploring the boundaries of achievement. The subjects of biographies, achievers of note, feed children's interest in understanding what is truly possible. In essence, as they read biography, children are learning about life by tapping the experiences of others. If it is possible for the people described in biographies to overcome obstacles such as ignorance, poverty, misery, fear, and hate, then it must also be possible for the rest of us. (*Learning* 8)

Banim iterates the same idea, stating that children like reading biographies because they feel they are reading about "somebody like me"—about a real person who has grown up and lived in the real world. Moss and Hendershot reveal that the sixth-grade students they studied chose books that revealed this "interest in the 'lived through' empathetic experience," stating that some students chose books because of their "identification with people found on the book cover."

Children's biographer Natalie S. Bober says that biographers writing for children can dramatize

for their readers "the possibilities for human choice, and help them to better understand their own

lives (78). She continues:

> Young people must be helped to recognize that people the world over are
>
> basically the same. Indeed, the greatness of our subjects is brought home to our
>
> readers when they feel them to be more human—more like themselves…. We
>
> must help our readers to see the universals implicit in all lives: that all great
>
> people were once young, with the same fears, doubts, and concerns that young
>
> people have today. (78)

Zena Sutherland, "whose textbook *Children and Books* is a classic in the field of library science"

("Zena"), suggests that adolescent readers may also choose biographies because they are

"dramatic and well told" or because of "their historical background, their association with causes

and movements, or their association with a field in which the reader has a special interest" (438).

As of October 2004, Amazon.com offered numerous biographies for children about

female writers such as Alice Walker (5 titles), the Brontë sisters (4), Maya Angelou (11), Toni

Morrison (7), Virginia Woolf (4), Harriet Beecher Stowe (8), Emily Dickinson (9), Edith

Wharton (3), Willa Cather (4), Zora Neale Hurston (7), and even the Grimke sisters (2), with

whom I was unfamiliar until graduate school. There was not listed, however, a single biography

written for children about American writer Eudora Welty. Abundant scholarship on Welty in the

world of adult literature exists—dozens of critical studies of her literary works have been

published, as well as a handful on her artwork, including a forthcoming book on Welty's

juvenilia, *Early Escapades*, by Patti Carr Black (November 2005).[1] Welty figures prominently in

more than 115 of the dissertations listed in the Dissertation Abstracts/Digital Dissertations

database, and there are also several books concerning Welty's personal life, including *Eudora: A Writer's Life* by Ann Waldron and the forthcoming book *Eudora Welty: A Biography* by Suzanne Marrs (August 2005), both for her adult readership. Scholars of American literature find Welty compelling because of her use of description, skaz, place and time, imagination, and characterization, among many other things. Welty's writings have also inspired others to become writers, as Pearl A. McHaney's *Writers' Reflections Upon First Reading Welty* details. Should children not be afforded the same benefits of reading Welty's literature?

Some argue that since Welty's works are not read by children there is no need for a book about Welty for children. Banim, for example, stated in an interview that a biography for children about Welty will not likely be published unless publishers can be convinced that children will want to read about a writer whose works they have not read. To this I respond that *Robinson Crusoe* and the satire *Gulliver's Travels* once were not considered children's reading material, and *Wuthering Heights* and Sir Walter Scott's novels still may not be—but children have appropriated these stories (or adults have appropriated these stories for them) as part of their literature (Kooistra 181; Allen 11). If children can and do read Daniel Defoe and Jonathan Swift, Emily Brontë and Sir Walter Scott, then they can and will read Eudora Welty. Similarly, what child would know any details about the lives of Abraham Lincoln or Eleanor Roosevelt if they hadn't read about them in the Childhoods of Famous Americans series or, more recently, in Russell Freedman's biographies? The publication of biographies about such subjects is often justified because the subjects are historical figures, and indeed there are an abundance of biographies written for children about now-household names like Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Martin Luther King, Jr. Yet, aside from famous figures, the subjects of biographies for children have also been a fossil hunter, an African traveler, an Egyptologist, and the creator of the Stetson

hat, among others (Zarnowski, *History* 5). The subjects of biographies, then, do not have to be writers whose works children have read, nor do children require that they be famous political figures. Children will read simply to satisfy their curiosity, as the study by Moss and Hendershot reveals.

Thus, instead of the argument that children who don't read books by Welty and who are unfamiliar with her life will not want to read a book about her, the argument can be made that children don't read about Welty because they haven't yet appropriated her stories and they don't yet know any details of her life. A biography about Eudora Welty written for children will introduce children to Welty's literary works, her photography, and the life she lived. A biography about Welty will "help kids learn about history and how people fit into their particular time period" as well as satisfy their curiosity about "somebody like me"—an ordinary person who overcame obstacles and made a difference. For example, Welty's photographs of the American South from the 1930s illustrate how Mississippians lived during and after the Depression, Welty's obstacle was that she wanted to leave Mississippi but couldn't, and although she was just one voice, she aided in integrating Millsaps College (McHaney, "A Tribute"). According to Christine Marmé Thompson, an Associate Professor of Art Education at the Pennsylvania State University, in 1991 the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) offered

> a description of the cycle of learning which is retraced throughout life whenever we confront a new topic or process of thought or action. The authors suggest that all learning begins in awareness of a phenomenon and proceeds through a process of personal exploration to more structured forms of inquiry, moving finally toward utilization of the knowledge and skills thus acquired. (4)

While some may argue that children won't want to read about Welty because they don't know who Welty is, this NAEYC paper encourages my belief that once children are aware of Welty they will personally explore her life and experiences, then move toward incorporating into their own lives the life lessons learned from reading about Welty's experiences or gathered from viewing her photographs.

This project therefore addresses the process of creating a biography for children about an author whose works children rarely read and with whom they otherwise might also be unfamiliar. Welty is the focus of the proposed biography, but the focus of the study is how a writer adapts her style to write in an unfamiliar genre. While there have been numerous studies on how writers write in multiple genres, numerous studies on how academic writers learn to compose for non-academic audiences (such as technical or professional audiences—for example, see Esch; Whiteside), and numerous interviews with children's book authors discussing their craft, to my knowledge there have been no studies focused on the transition of an academic writer learning to write in the genre of children's biography, or even any genre of children's literature. In this self-reflective case study (a study of my personal, particular research into the creation of a biography about Eudora Welty for children), I will provide insight into the rhetorical choices involved in writing a specific genre (biography) for a specific audience (children). The paper will detail my research findings and the practical rhetorical choices to be made before and during the creation of the biography, as well as the theories behind the choices. The project will also offer information on the variables that need to be considered when writing a biography for children as well as triangulated data regarding the criteria considered essential for quality[2] biographies by experts in children's literature (editors, publishers, award committee members, scholars, and authors).

In her self-reflective case study about creating a virtual reality story, *The Thing Growing*, Josephine Anstey speaks frequently of learning how to compose in a genre that is new to her (292, 297) and of the differences of this new genre as compared to genres that are familiar to her (300). Related to her learning to write in a new genre is her use of the tools and knowledge already at her disposal—i.e., using film techniques in the creation of a virtual reality sequence (293) or writing the story for the virtual characters in a similar manner as she writes short stories (296). My background is solely academic writing; both biography and children's literature are new genres for me. However, like Anstey, there are some resources that I already have at my disposal, such as my researching skills, which will be beneficial not just for the collection of data for this paper but also for the collection and triangulation of facts about Welty's life for the biography. Similarly, while Anstey reveals throughout her discussion what she learned or decided before and during the process of creation (290–91), I will reveal what I learned as my research progressed. Although the general idea for the study was planned out in advance, many aspects have not been pre-structured, a type of study design Keith F. Punch calls "unfolding" (14). This lack of structure leads both to freedom and to flexibility but also, at times, to anxiety. However, the study should provide insight into how an academic writer can use her available skills to write in a specific genre (biography) successfully for an unfamiliar audience (children) and make that work rhetorically effective for that specific audience.

The biography itself will fill a gap in children's biographies, offering young readers— from Southerners to aspiring writers to amateur photographers—a book about a renowned writer and photographer who was once a child just like they are. With this biography, children will be introduced to the fiction and nonfiction of a respected writer, they will understand Welty's contributions as a writer and photographer of the South, and they will come to know of the

events in Welty's life and the obstacles she faced or avoided. With the availability of the

biography, readership of Welty's works in the child audience should increase, beginning with her

children's book, *The Shoe Bird*, essays such as "A Sweet Devouring," "The Little Store," and "A

Pageant of Birds" (*Stories*), her reviews of fairy tale collections and of E. B. White's *Charlotte's*

Web (*A Writer's Eye*), short stories such as "Why I Live at the P. O.," "A Worn Path," "A Visit

of Charity," and possibly even the more challenging stories "The Winds" and "Moon Lake"

(*Stories*), the novella *The Robber Bridegroom* (*Complete Novels*), and especially sections of her

autobiography, *One Writer's Beginnings*.

II. Research Questions

The general questions, related to the field of rhetoric, that drive this research are: How

does an academic learn to write in an unfamiliar genre for an unfamiliar audience? How does the

writer ensure that his or her work is rhetorically effective for its specific audience? Questions

relating specifically to writing for children are: How does one write a biography for a child

audience? What does the writer need to include or exclude to keep child readers interested? What

do child readers look for in their nonfiction selections? What do publishers look for? What do

award committees look for? How should a nonfiction book for children be laid out visually?

Secondary questions related specifically to my proposed biography of Eudora Welty are: How do

I as the writer, using the skills I have as an editor, a reader of children's literature, a rhetorician,

and a photographer, research and then create for this specific genre and audience successfully?

How do I write a biography for children about a writer that many children have not heard of?

The questions driving the creation of the biography—in other words, the questions that will be

answered for the child readers—are: What kind of person was Eudora Welty? How did she live?

What was her time period like? Who were her friends? How did she choose the subjects she

wrote about? How did she become a writer? What were the obstacles she overcame or to which she succumbed? How did Welty learn to write like Welty?

Although the questions driving the biography will only be answered through extensive research into Welty's life, this self-reflective case study, through information gathered via an interview and a literature review, will answer the questions related to the fields of rhetoric and children's literature, as well as the questions regarding my specific project, and will provide insight for the field of rhetoric into how writers adapt their styles for different genres and audiences and insight for novice children's writers into how to write a specific genre, biography, for a specific audience of children. The data collected will determine the criteria of quality children's literature—criteria that are useful to not only writers for children but also teachers of children, children's book publishers, and children's literature award committee members.

III. Research Method

Janice M. Lauer and J. William Asher state that qualitative descriptive research in the field of rhetoric aims to "discover variables that seem important for understanding the nature of writing, its contexts, its development, and its successful pedagogy" (23), offer an account of "the complexity of writing behavior," and "show the interrelationships among multifaceted dimensions of the writing process by looking closely at writing from a new point of view" (45). The case study, one approach to qualitative descriptive research, allows researchers to closely examine particular writing situations *as* they occur, and its strength lies in "identify[ing] new variables and questions for further research" (23). I used a case study approach for my research in order to closely examine a particular process that the field of rhetoric often addresses: that of writers adapting their methods and styles to write for specific audiences. My particular study, however, offers specific qualitative details of how a specific writer (an academic) learns to write

in a specific genre (biography) for a specific audience (children). This writing process is not a frequent subject of rhetoric and composition research; thus, a case study approach is most appropriate, as the variables of this writing situation need to be identified before further study is possible. The goal of this study is to highlight the process of researching and writing a biography for children, to determine the essential characteristics of quality children's literature, and to offer practical research and writing guidelines to novice writers of biographies for children.

While Lauer and Asher state that case studies and other forms of qualitative descriptive research have the disadvantages of the inability to make cause/effect statements and to generalize (46), Thomas Newkirk says that "[t]he strength of [case study] research is not in producing generalizable conclusions … the strength, according to [Stephen] North, comes from the 'idiographic' nature of case studies, their capacity for detailed and individuated accounts of writers writing" (132). Newkirk also says case studies offer "missing voices" (147)—those individual accounts of the writing process missing from research consisting of "the accumulation of an immense sample of descriptive information" (132). While my findings clearly are not generalizable to all writers, as they concern an academic writer learning to write a biography for children, this study is significant to the field of rhetoric because it provides insight into how an academic writer uses her available skills to write in an unfamiliar genre for an unfamiliar audience and make that work rhetorically effective for that audience.

Data Collection

For this study, "quality" is defined as being held in high regard by children's book editors and publishing companies, children's literature award committees and their members, children's literature scholars, and authors of children's literature. For any study, reliability is defined by Lauer and Asher as "the ability of independent observers or measurements to agree" (134).

Although I was the only coder for this project, the multiple sources used for data collection lend to reliability, as triangulation eliminates presenting once-mentioned criteria for quality children's books as criteria of great importance.[3]

The data collection questions that make this gathering of the characteristics of quality children's literature relevant to both the field of rhetoric and the field of children's literature are: What characteristics of children's literature should novice writers strive to include in their documents so that the documents are rhetorically effective for an audience of children? What do child readers look for in their nonfiction selections? What do publishers look for? What do award committees look for? What elements should a biography include or exclude to keep child readers interested? Which elements of the subject's life should be emphasized? Should negative aspects of the subject's life be included or excluded? Is the use of dialogue acceptable? Should biographies for children be didactic? What language should be used or avoided when writing for children? How should a biography for children be laid out visually? Can photographs be included? Is back matter important?[4]

The tools used to gather the criteria of quality literature were an interview and a literature review; I am the "primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (Punch 57) in all cases. The interview was conducted with a writer and editor who has worked with children's literature for over twenty years, Lisa Banim. The literature review involved researching the elements of children's books (specifically children's nonfiction books and children's biographies) that children's literature editors and publishing houses, children's literature award committees, scholars in the field of children's literature, and authors of literature for children deem most important when evaluating books for publication, award receipt, or use in the classroom, as well as the elements that children consider important in their biographies and nonfiction.

Sources considered credible and valuable for this collection of data are publishing companies and their editors, children's book award committee criteria lists and members' statements, scholars of children's literature, and authors of children's biographies; sources discussing quality children's literature in general are included but sources that discuss only children's fiction are excluded from this study. The only delimitation of the literature about children's book awards or children's nonfiction and biographies is that only works published after 1990 are used as sources; this delimitation ensures adherence to recent trends in children's literature, in children's nonfiction and biographies specifically. The delimitation of the children's book award committees is that only United States or United States and Canadian award committees that do not exclude nonfiction are used as sources; international award committees and those whose awards are offered only for fiction have been excluded. Only one publishing company is represented in this study due to accessibility; I worked as an editorial intern at Peachtree Publishers, Ltd. (PPL), a small trade book publishing house in Atlanta, Georgia, and thus have access to their guidelines for manuscript selection. As it is not common for children's publishing companies (including PPL) to list their manuscript selection criteria on their Web sites, selection criteria from other publishing companies was unavailable to me. The problem of skewed data from a small publishing house in a particular area of the country is alleviated by the triangulation of PPL's criteria with those of Banim (who has worked for both PPL and Random House), award committees' listings, scholars' essays, and children's biographers' articles. Similarly, while no children were interviewed directly by this researcher to collect data regarding the criteria they considered most important in their nonfiction reading selections, their input is included by virtue of the award committees' lists, scholars' essays, and the children's authors' articles. Adults considered experts in the field of children's literature are those who have worked

with children and children's literature (as editors, scholars, authors, librarians, teachers, etc.) for many years and thus are trusted to understand the needs and wants of child readers. Children's authors used in this study are prolific authors of books for children, and the success of their books (many which have received awards) signifies their understanding of the needs and wants of child readers. Award committees reveal children's reading preferences in two ways—Moss and Hendershot found in their study of sixth graders that "knowledge of book awards and genre" was one of the categories by which the children selected their nonfiction titles, and children themselves are the judges in two of the award committees from which criteria was culled: the William Allen White Children's Book Award and the Young Reader's Choice Award.

Data Analysis

The characteristics of quality children's literature, once culled from the various sources, were entered into a modified data matrix,[5] which is available in appendix B. The criteria were listed down the left of the data matrix and the sources were listed across the top, with scholars speaking about specific awards included in the top variable of the award (e.g., whenever Myra Zarnowski writes generally about the qualities of quality literature for children, her criteria are included under "Zarnowski"; whenever she writes specifically about the Orbis Pictus Award, her criteria are included under "Orbis Pictus"). Keith Grant-Davie says that "[t]he main reason for dividing and classifying data is to simplify material and impose order on it" (272) but "the more reductive the coding system, the greater the threats to its validity" (277).[6] I therefore strove not to reduce the criteria to too reductive a number of categories. I determined that the data collected can be categorized under four of the five canons of rhetoric—invention, arrangement, style, and delivery—plus an overall category, but I chose to use these categories only as grouping headings. The criteria under each heading more closely resemble the statements of criteria collected from

the sources. For example, "excellently written" and "artful language" both fall under the category of style, but they are not identical so they have been left as separate criteria. The grouping categories have been determined by William A. Covino and David A. Jolliffe's definitions of invention, arrangement, style, and delivery, which are quoted in the rhetoric section of the literature review (part IV); criteria relating to more than one of the canons is listed under the overall category (e.g., the criteria "piques readers' interest" relates to invention, style, and delivery; it is therefore under the overall category).

Findings

The first of the raw data for the data matrix (see appendix B) were collected from an interview with an editor experienced with biographies for children. The interviewee, Lisa Banim, has worked with children's literature for over twenty years, writing for the Lizzie Maguire book series and working at such publishing houses as Peachtree Publishers, Ltd., and Random House. Questions for the interview were created by brainstorming with peers for questions any novice children's biography writer might ask of any children's book editor. The questions were arranged into categories and in order within those categories (i.e., related questions were grouped together). There are a total of five categories and thirty-one questions (not counting the restated questions, the question topics that actually consist of two questions in order to make the intent clear). The categories are general questions about children's biographies, specific content questions, technical questions, questions I assume all writers face, and personal experience questions. (The interview did not follow the order of the questions, of course, as one topic led to conversation about another topic.) The list of questions can be seen in appendix C.

During the course of the interview, Banim revealed many qualities that children's book editors and publishing companies expect of publishable manuscripts. She says that quality

children's biographies bring to life the subject's personality and the times in which he or she lived. She also states that both publishers and readers of children's biographies prefer straightforward presentations of the facts, incorporation of the subject's historical context into the text rather than prefacing the tales of the subject's life with a history chapter, more focus on the subject's childhood than on his or her later life, and the inclusion of an abundance of photographs—including not just photographs of the subject but also photographs of the subject's house, family members, pets, etc. Banim says that children appreciate these additional photographs because they aid in the understanding of objects and appearances for which children may not have visual references. Likewise, she reveals that detailed descriptions of the subject's physical appearance are expected and in fact "absolutely essential" for child readers and that specific buzzwords for certain personality traits (such as "loyalty," "kindness," etc.) are often not reiterated throughout the book as much as they are shown through examples. Says Banim, because children understand a lot more than we give them credit for, "the worst thing you can do is be didactic." Also important is the inclusion of back matter such as suggestions for further reading.

Banim also informed that much emphasis should be placed on the subject's accomplishments and that aspects of the person's life that many say "don't belong" in children's books should *not* be excluded unless they are not relevant to the person's accomplishments. Banim also said that narrators of children's biographies should never use "I" in the text because it confuses the readers, that chapters are practically mandatory when writing children's literature, that sentences should be kept short and uncomplicated ("semicolons *bad*," Banim explains), that dialogue and quotations may be used if they are from primary sources, and that fictionalized retellings should be avoided. It is important, Banim says, that information and quotations are

accurate. She strongly suggests checking multiple sources to verify claims about the subject's life—what researchers call triangulation. Banim also says that publishers and editors prefer that undocumented assumptions be stated as such (e.g., "Although no one is sure, many think that…"). She shares that the best method for breaking up chapters (which should all be approximately the same length) is a sort of cliffhanger method: end the chapter with "a big event or a turning point or suspense or an 'a-ha' moment" and then begin the next chapter with a continuation of that event, the relevance of the turning point, alleviation of the suspense, or the importance of the "a-ha" moment. This method, where "each chapter has its own arc," engages young readers and holds their attention so that they keep reading, says Banim. What she stressed most often throughout the interview was that "kids want to read it as a story" and that "kids absorb the information by following the story," so the *story* must be interesting to the audience and the writer should not break the flow of the story with irrelevant information or material.

Banim provides these insights from her position as an editor and writer of children's books—an employee of a publishing company. More information regarding what this publishing company, Peachtree Publishers, Ltd. (PPL), values in submitted manuscripts was collected from an editorial intern introduction (a personal conversation with the intern supervisor) and the printed guidelines given to interns by PPL. According to the intern supervisor, Elizabeth Snow, the most important aspect of a text that PPL, which does not separate criteria for fiction and nonfiction, looks for as a mark of quality children's literature is a fresh perspective on a familiar or frequently covered topic. PPL offers questions to guide reviewers as they evaluate manuscripts: Does it grab you? Does it involve all five senses? Is it descriptive? Is it believable? Is it original? Is the story good? Do you want to keep reading? Does it teach? Does the page/word length fit the intended audience? Does the language fit the age group? Are characters

well developed? Is it of high literary merit? (Snow). According to the "Guidelines for

Evaluating, Documenting, and Corresponding with Authors of Unsolicited Manuscripts" packet

that PPL provides to its editorial interns, PPL judges manuscripts "on the basis of presentation,

content, writing style, and marketability. A good manuscript stands out from the rest; it is a piece

of writing that induces and demands further complete reading" (1). Continues the guidelines,

PPL is "looking for stories that aren't merely fluff—they are original—they offer a new

perspective on an issue or tell a good story or entertain. Books that teach kids something are

good…. These 'learning books' can't be too academic, however—we don't publish textbooks"

(3). Like Banim, the PPL guidelines state that publishers look for "books that tell a good story—

that kids will want to come back to over and over again" (3). PPL is also more likely to accept a

submitted manuscript for publication if that manuscript is "excellently written," has "content

[that] is engaging and interesting," and is written by an author who "presents himself/herself as

intelligent and well-informed on the subject" (4). The guidelines also state that the publishing

house will reject any manuscript that has "structural problems, style problems, etc.," "indicates

racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise intolerant or close-minded attitudes," or "tries to preach

rather than teach" (4).

The information provided by Banim, Snow, and the PPL guidelines reveal only one

perspective, that of a particular publishing house in a particular region of the United States. In

order for the data collected to be reliable, triangulation of the data is important. Triangulation of

data for this project was achieved through the use of multiple sources, in the form of a literature

review. The literature reviewed provided either support for the importance of the criteria listed

by Banim, Snow, and PPL, or additional criteria. The data collection sources by scholars of

children's literature and authors of biographies for children are discussed in the children's

literature experts and authors section of the literature review (part IV); these data are not included in full here because the sources of this data also serve as the background for this study and provide insight into the craft of writing a biography for children; thus, they must be included as part of the literature review. Samples of statements used in the collection of criteria but not provided in the literature review follow:

- "Accuracy is an essential criterion for good biographies according to all the major children's literature textbooks" (Lechner 229).

- Text for middle-grade nonfiction must be "lively and well organized, and concepts should be within the understanding and experience of the reader" (Seuling 14).

- "The objective biographer must include or omit events and details as they suit the interests and age level of the readers for whom the biography is intended" (Lukens 261).

- Only "those details which will most truly reveal the subject as the author has come to know him or her" should be presented (Sutherland 424).

- "Young people want their information straight; they want material with which to explore and discover for themselves. It is not necessary to fictionalize the facts" (Seuling 107).

- "The best of the older children's biographies now provide not only additional sources but explain the methods they and other biographers have used in researching their subjects" (Lechner 240).

- Anecdotes and "dramatization of an interesting incident" can "enliven a subject and make a complicated piece of information easier to absorb" (Seuling 107).

- "We must know who our audience is. Only then can we grab readers' attention and keep them turning the pages" (Bober 87).

- "Concept [or theme] is needed in biography as it is in other literature; preoccupation with fact must not blind us to idea" (Lukens 270).

- "Pictoral material is essential to clarify subject matter" (Seuling 14).

These and similar statements quoted in the literature review were compiled for the data matrix of criteria for quality children's literature, but not all of the information used for the data matrix is quoted in the literature review. In other words, the data matrix includes comments not cited in the literature review; no collected data regarding the criteria of quality nonfiction or biographies for children have been left out of the data matrix.

The criteria collected from the interview, the publishing company, and the literature review were held for triangulation with the information collected about children's literature awards. The literature on these awards, such as award committees' Web sites and articles devoted solely to specific awards, are not included in the literature review because they are used only as sources of criteria, not as sources for research into the craft of writing a biography for children. As was stated earlier, the award committees were delimited by region (United States or United States and Canada) and content (nonfiction or fiction and nonfiction). Any awards for books in languages other than English are excluded, including the Batchelder Award for books originally published in another language and then translated into English ("Mildred"). Also excluded are awards based on author ethnicity and those for storytellers, picture book illustrations, video ("Awards"), and an author's entire body of work ("Laura"). The information provided in this section consists mostly of direct quotations, as these statements serve as the raw data collected for the data matrix.

The John Newbery Medal is a prestigious award for which fiction and nonfiction are not considered separately; fiction and nonfiction titles compete equally for the award each year. The Web site for the award states that the medal is awarded to the author of the "most distinguished contribution to American literature for children" in that year. Newbery Award-winning books are "truly distinguished," where *distinguished* is defined as "marked by eminence and distinction" and revealing "significant achievement," and excellent in quality and individual distinction. To identify distinguished writing the Newbery Medal Web site states that committee members must consider the author's interpretation of the book's theme or concept, information presentation ("including accuracy, clarity, and organization"), plot development, character and setting delineation, and the appropriateness of the book's style. Newbery Award committee members must also "consider excellence of presentation for a child audience," but non-textual elements of a work are to be considered "only if they distract from the text." The winning book also "displays respect for children's understandings, abilities, and appreciations" and exhibits "literary quality and quality presentation for children" ("Newbery"). Ruth Allen, who worked in public libraries for over twenty years, says that since the award's originator, Frederic Melcher, mandated that the award be given every year, "there can be no absolute standard which must be reached for a book to be considered" (25). Instead, "the standard is to be new-minted each year, depending on the publication output of the year," and the criteria each year is "comparative, and subjective" (250).

The Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction for Children criteria are listed on its Web site as accuracy, organization, design, and style. Accuracy means that "facts must be current and complete," there must be a "balance of fact and theory," varying points of view must be taken into account, stereotypes are avoided, the author has adequate qualifications, the scope

of the book is appropriate, and details are authentic. Organization means that there is "logical development [and] clear sequence" and that there are "interrelationships indicated [and] patterns provided." Design means that the book is "attractive [and] readable," that the illustrations complement the text and that their placement is appropriate, and that the media, format, and type are appropriate. Style means that the writing is interesting and stimulating, revealing the author's enthusiasm for his or her subject, that appropriate terminology is used, that there is rich language, and that "curiosity and wonder [are] encouraged." The Web site also says that selected books "should be useful in classroom teaching grades K-8, should encourage thinking and more reading, model exemplary expository writing and research skills, share interesting and timely subject matter, and appeal to a wide range of ages" ("NCTE").

Julie M. Jensen, once an Orbis Pictus committee member, says that the Orbis Pictus award founder, Sylvia Vardell, said winning authors should show quality writing, an individual style, beauty in expression, and creativity with language and that they "were to use rich language and appropriate terminology; they were to write in an interesting and stimulating way; their enthusiasm for the subject matter was to be evident; and they were to encourage children's curiosity and wonder." Winning books should also involve readers and stimulate their interest, and Orbis Pictus committee members look for artful prose because it "engages the reader; offers information and enjoyment; is imaginative, accurate, thought provoking, and memorable; and is born of meticulous research." Also important are "reliable information" and "mastery of subject matter," which come from deep research (3). Hand in hand with deep research, says former committee member Karen Patricia Smith, are cited sources, endnotes, and bibliographies (35)— but not just any bibliography will do; a quality bibliography includes a "thoughtfully constructed recommended reading list" (37). Such information is valuable, says Smith, because "for every

subject out there is a child who wants to go further, a young person so intrigued with a subject or a series of events that he or she just must know more" (38). Jensen says that winning authors also use "authentic dialogue … quotes … [and] fascinating anecdotes" and she stresses that all information should be related in "language accessible to [the] child" (4) and be informative, interesting, and "consequential to young readers" (8). The content must also engage readers and "inspire them to explore further." Jensen adds that "authors of winning titles enlivened their nonfiction through the artistic use of narrative techniques traditionally associated with fiction"; no winning book will be a "textbookish or encyclopedic collection of mind-numbing facts." Orbis Pictus-winning authors, she says, "create living, breathing characters; settings that transport the reader in time and place; gripping action; and a significant unifying focus" and are masters of "fascinating detail" (8).

Elaine M. Aoki, also a former Orbis Pictus committee member, says some questions committee members ask during book discussions are, "Does this text add significantly to the body of literature already available on the topic? Does it 'say (or illustrate) better' what we already have at hand? Is this a pioneering work on a subject about which nothing previously has been written for young people?" (47) "What is the potential impact of this text? Is the presentation 'timeless,' enabling the reader to draw analogies to other events occurring in different contexts? What is the relationship of the subject to contemporary concerns? And, finally, to what extent does the text enlighten, enhance, or illuminate curricular issues?" (42). Another former committee member, Myra Zarnowski, adds the questions "Is the information in this book worth knowing?" and "Would children understand [this book]?" ("Ten" 1). She also says that "committee members tend to read children's nonfiction with a 'prove-it-to-me' stance"; they want to see evidence of detailed, extensive research and sources ("Intermingling" 14). Thus,

the Orbis Pictus award is clearly not given to fictionalized biographies (13). Aoki says winning books "are distinguished from other nonfiction works by their presentation and treatment of topics and issues" and because they exhibit "that special potential to stimulate the interest, curiosity, and imagination of the young reader" (42). She says, "[t]he best nonfiction transcends the author's message and encourages the audience to branch out by reading more about the topic" (46). Aoki also adds that "[s]tudents are often asked to conduct research on specific individuals. Therefore, it is important to provide books that offer new information about well-known people, as well as information about those who were previously, sometimes purposely, overlooked" (48).

Another former committee member, Richard M. Kerper, says that for many years nonfiction books for children were mostly text with only occasional illustrations or images, "[t]hus, for many children reading was a linear process." "But in recent years," he says, "we have been encountering books that do not appear to be this straightforward" (22). Kerper says this came about after television and the World Wide Web because, as a result of the way the Web presented information, "[b]ranching processes became a dominant way of thinking" and "[t]his highly visual medium fostered greater consumer interactivity." He continues, "[u]nlike linearly organized books, information in electronic formats is fluid; it is not frozen in a linear sequence. Thus, today's viewer-reader comes to the handheld book with different expectations and purposes that are framed differently than those of the first readers of" the first Newbery award winner (25). Today features such as sidebars, captioned illustrations, and other marginal materials "permit, and actually invite, nonlinear, nonsequential exploration" (27) and "viewer-readers are empowered to determine the order in which they encounter ideas and to reformulate that order based on changing purposes" (29).[7] Kerper warns against designs in which the text and

illustrations or other materials do not link and therefore cause confusion or disorientation, however. He says, "[w]hat the best creations share is a clear link between the visual/design elements and the linguistic ones" (29).

According to the Web site for the ALSC/Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award, this prize is presented to authors whose nonfiction informational books ("those written and illustrated to present, organize and interpret documentable factual material for children") have "made a significant contribution to the field of children's literature," where *significant contribution* is defined as "how well the entire work elucidates, clarifies, and enlivens its subject." The committee honors books that are "truly distinguished," where *distinguished* is defined as "noted for significant achievement; marked by quality; marked by conspicuous excellence or eminence; individually distinct." The Web site also states that "[a]ccuracy, documentation and organization are of significance and illustrative material must meet the same standards of informing the reader and illuminating the text." Besides the quality of the writing and illustrations, committee members must also take into consideration the clarity and accuracy of text and illustration presentation, appropriate documentation, distinctive use of language, and excellent artistic presentation where the illustrations are concerned. Additionally, the facts, concepts, and ideas must be presented in a stimulating way, the writing and illustrations must be engaging, and the style of presentation must be appropriate for the topic "and with respect to the different age levels for whom the book may be appropriate" ("Robert").

Susan Faust, chair of the Sibert Award committee member during its first year, says that while no "checklist or formula that insures excellence" exists, "[i]n examining hundreds of information titles published in 2000, our committee gradually honed in on what makes or breaks a book and on what elevates it to the level of 'truly distinguished.'" First, says Faust, the

committee defined "the central question: Is information presented for a child audience in a distinguished way?" To determine whether the information is presented in a distinguished way several qualities must be examined, says Faust. First, aside from "[t]he solid authority of the author [that] makes for a convincing informational book," the author's passion for his or her work or subject is also important. Sibert Award-winning books should also display respect for children by being "child-friendly"—that is, the authors of the books must recognize that "[c]hildren are intelligent and curious. Powerfully presented information holds them." Says Faust, "[t]hese assumptions underpin the 2001 Sibert Award winners. Not one encases the facts in a phony story." "As for literary style," she says, "subject and audience make demands," thus the style should be appropriate and eloquent. Faust also includes "[s]trategic and [a]rtful [g]raphics" as one criterion for winning books. She says, "[g]raphic elements in the 2001 Sibert winners are used to best advantage. They often convey information better than words—maps, archival reproductions, and original art. They also contribute to mood." Regarding text Faust says, "[a]ccuracy and clarity build trust. Their absence undermines it. That's the ruling principle. The Sibert Award-winning authors verify facts and figures, clarify concepts, and develop complete pictures. Up-to-date information and ideas are critical, even in the historical works." She also says that "[e]ducated guesses come into play when there is a gap in the factual record. The Sibert Award books carefully delineate what's verifiable, conjecture, theoretical, and just not yet understood." Ultimately, says Faust, "Sibert award-winning histories set a high standard for documentation"—some of the winners incorporate references into the text, some provide sources in a "concluding explanatory chapter," and some supply extensive bibliographies and endnotes," but all provide detailed documentation of facts and sources. An additional criterion of winning books is the inclusion of suggestions for further reading, with "strong, up-to-date

entries." Tables of contents, author's notes, maps, timelines, "instructive captioning," and indexes are also important. "Multilayered [c]ontent" lends to excellence and distinction, as well. Explains Faust, "[l]ayering broadens and deepens appeal…. Facts connect with issues and ideas, and, from context, understanding grows." Sibert Award-winners are also "[o]rganized to [e]ase [a]ccess and [e]nhance [m]eaning," for format must follow function: winning authors use formats appropriate for the information they are providing. For example, says Faust, the Sibert Honor Book *My Season with Penguins: An Antarctic Journal* by "artistic field scientist" Sophie Webb is presented as "a journal of notes and sketches" with "loose layout and handwritten labeling, reminiscent of the real thing." When it comes to book design, says Faust, "[s]mart design decisions are in sync with content and audience." Concludes Faust, "[s]timulating [o]verall [p]resentation" is the final category, as

> [t]he whole is greater than the sum of its parts…. Wise choices about literary and graphic styles, documentation, organization, extensions, ancillary material, format, and book design contribute to overall excellence. Authors also make personal contributions—authority, passion, respect for children, and commitment to accuracy. It's the whole package that simultaneously satisfies and stimulates young readers, the whole package that successfully garners 'distinguished' status.

Authors whose books are written with these criteria in mind are the authors that win the ALSC/Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award.

Authors who win the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, which is equally available to authors of fiction and nonfiction, are so honored for books of "quality and distinction" that display "excellence" in children's literature (Allen 106). Unfortunately, this is the only information regarding the criteria for winning the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award that is

available; the award's Web site ("Boston") does not publish a set of criteria, nor do the judges

use a specific list of characteristics to critique the books under consideration each year.

According to Marika Hoe, a Marketing and Circulation Assistant with *The Horn Book* whom I

contacted via email, "[e]ach book is judged by its own individual merit [because] we worry

about supporting and perpetuating a standard. Each and every book is different, and we have

never presumed to define a standard for excellence." Regardless of the criteria used to evaluate

the books, this award clearly denotes children's literature of the highest quality, as the award is

not limited to books first published in the United States (Allen 106). Says Allen, "the titles under

consideration [for the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award] are being judged, not only against the

rest of the massive US publishing output, but against the children's books of the whole English-

speaking world. It could thus be argued that the choice of a title for any of the Boston Globe-

Horn Book categories potentially carried more prestige than any other award" for children's

literature (107).

The Golden Kite Award is presented by members of the Society of Children's Book

Writers and Illustrators—the winning authors' peers, in other words. A standard list of criteria is

not provided on the SCBWI Web site; it says only that winners are the "most outstanding

children's books published during that year, written or illustrated by members of the Society of

Children's Books Writers and Illustrators" and that they are "those that the judges feel exhibit

excellence in writing and illustration, and genuinely appeal to the interests and concerns of

children" ("Golden Kite").

The Jefferson Cup Award is presented by members of the Virginia Library Association

only to books about United States history or Americans. Many of the recipients of this award,

therefore, are biographies. The Virginia Library Association's Web site states that the award

goes to books that are "accurate, informative, well researched, unbiased, literate, and give a clear and interesting picture of America's past" ("Jefferson"). The Jefferson Cup committee manual lists separate selection criteria for books of biography, history, and historical fiction. In addition to the general criteria listed on the main Web site, the specific criteria for biographies are that they "interpret character as well as recount deeds," give "a sense of the historical period," make the subject's historical context clear, provide facts "with wit and imagination," treat a subject "whose life work is comprehensible and meaningful" to child readers, cite sources, are organized well, present the subject honestly, and are written "in a clear and lively style" ("Appendix L"). This award may be regional, as only librarians in Virginia participate in the selection process, but it does provide insight into the criteria of quality children's biographies because many of the winning books have been biographies.

Another regional award is The William Allen White Children's Book Award, which is presented by the children of Kansas to books chosen from a master list compiled by Kansas teachers and librarians. This award is given for two age groups: third through fifth grades and sixth through eighth grades. Master list selection qualities include "originality and vitality, clarity, factual accuracy in the case of non-fiction, sincerity of the author and respect for the reader as well as acceptance by children" ("Award"). This award, though regional, is significant because it provides insight into children's choices as opposed to adults' choices.

Another award that provides insight into children's choices is the Young Reader's Choice Award. This award is also regional, as nominations for this award and the child voters may be from the Pacific Northwest only (Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington). According to the award's Web site, the originator noted in 1938 that the award should be presented to a book that "readers endorse as being an excellent story … most

entertaining and instructive from the young person's point of view." The Web site also says that

the award reflects "high standards of quality in children's literature," listing the criteria for ballot

placement as the number of nominations received; "reading enjoyment; reading level; interest

level; genre representation; gender representation; racial diversity; diversity of social, political,

economic, or religious viewpoints; effectiveness of expression; creativity; imagination;" and

availability. There is also a disclaimer that "[i]ndividual titles which in and of themselves may be

controversial or offensive to some people, may be selected if they have received a substantial

number of nominations or if their inclusion contributes to the diversity of the ballot" ("Young").

The sources cited in this findings section (the editor, the publishing house, and the award

committees), as well as the scholars of children's literature and authors of biographies for

children cited in the literature review, list over and over the same characteristics as important for

biographies for children. Regarding children's literature evaluation, Sutherland believes "it is

particularly important for us to analyze books as carefully and objectively as we can" (25);

however, it must be remembered that the selection criteria gathered from these sources are

nevertheless subjective for, as Allen says, "[n]o one can be entirely objective and unbiased about

judging decisions" (252). She adds that objective and unbiased judging is not even necessarily

desired because "a dispassionate judging panel can end up making a 'safe' choice" (252). The

data collected for this project, though they cannot be entirely objective, are at least reliable, in

that they were culled from numerous sources, which allows for triangulation of the criteria. Thus,

from these data the most often cited criteria—and thus the criteria considered essential—for

evaluating quality children's literature can be chosen with some degree of certainty.

My data collection revealed a total of 208 criteria as listed by twenty-seven sources;[8] only

those criteria listed by three or more sources have been included in the data matrix for this paper

(see appendix B). Sixty-eight of the 208 criteria were cited by three or more sources each: twenty criteria were listed by three sources, ten criteria were listed by four sources, ten criteria were listed by five sources, ten criteria were listed by six sources, nine criteria were listed by seven sources, three criteria were listed by eight sources, one criterion (the inclusion of back matter) was listed by ten sources, one criterion (that the story be interesting to children or that the story be good) was listed by thirteen sources, and one criterion (accuracy) was listed by seventeen sources. Of the sixty-eight criteria cited by three or more sources, twenty-eight fall under the category of invention, six under arrangement, nine under style, seven under delivery, and nineteen under overall. Thirty-eight of the sixty-eight criteria were listed by five or more sources as elements of quality biographies for children. Those are:

- Excellence in quality

- Subject is brought to life

- Time period is brought to life

- Straightforward presentation

- Back matter included

- Dialogue and quotations come from primary sources

- Author's speculation is noted

- The story is interesting to children/good

- Accuracy

- Candor (positive and negative traits)

- Anecdotes used

- Unusual approach/fresh perspective

- Of high literary merit

- Excellently written

- Artful language used

- Storyteller's techniques/tools used

- Adhere to the facts/tell the truth

- Documented evidence

- Subject is "really real"[9]

- Appropriate format

- Avoids stereotypes

- Attention to literary style

- Both informs and entertains

- Inviting design/layout

- Lively, well-paced writing

- Thorough research

- Copious details included

- Historical context is clear

- Avoids fictionalizing

- Not a laundry list of data

- Author knows/respects audience

- Passion of the author comes through

- Arrangement/organization

- Models for students' writing

- Sources cited

- Shows insight of the author

- Theme/concept clear

- Relevant photos/illustrations used

Of these thirty-eight criteria, seventeen fall under invention, four under arrangement, five under style, three under delivery, and nine under overall. It is therefore safe to infer, both from the number of criteria listed under the five categories and from the number of criteria under these categories cited by five or more sources, that the invention and overall categories are those most important to children's literature editors, publishers, award committee members, scholars, and authors. However, children's literature professors Carl M. Tomlinson and Carol Lynch-Brown would remind judges and others evaluating children's books that "every work of nonfiction need not meet every criterion … and ... no one book can cover a topic completely" (181), and Sutherland insists that "[e]ach book must be judged on its own merits" (25). A writer learning to write in a new genre for a new audience needs to understand the expectations of both that genre and that audience, however; thus, while the criteria should not be considered definitive, the data matrix in appendix B does provide a set of characteristics of quality literature for children by which nonfiction for children—in particular, my biography of Welty—can be guided and eventually judged.[10]

Regarding the generalizability of my findings (Punch 55), it must be acknowledged that all statements made by children's literature editors, publishers, award committee members, scholars, and authors are subjective. Peter Hunt, an essayist and lecturer on children's literature, explains:

> What is regarded as a "good" book might be "good" in the sense which the currently dominant literary/academic establishment prescribes; "good" in terms of effectiveness for education, language acquisition, or socialization/acculturation or

for entertainment for a specific child or group of children in general or specific

circumstances; or "good" in some moral or religious or political sense; or "good"

in a therapeutic sense. "Good" as an abstract and "good for" as a practical

application are constantly in conflict in judgments about children's literature.

(2–3)

Hunt's term *good* can be equated with the term *quality* used in this paper, as both terms signify

approval and acceptance of the literature by those concerned with publishing children's

literature. Hunt says that the idea and definition of childhood also shifts (13)—meaning that what

is written for the children of one era will not be the same in content or in quality as what is

written for the children of another era; this assertion supports my reasoning for using only post-

1990 literature about writing for children. With the shifting definitions of good children's

literature and childhood thus displayed, Hunt goes on to say, however, that the idea of *literature*,

which is overtly defined by and subconsciously accepted by the culture simultaneously, is

"thought to be 'higher', 'denser', 'more highly charged', 'special', 'apart', and so on; it is also

thought to be the 'best' that a culture can offer" (9).[11] The sources used in the collection of data

for this study reveal that such indicators of an elevated status of literature are prevalent.

Aside from addressing the subjectivity of statements of quality, Hunt also addresses the

problem of one group (adults) determining what is quality literature for another group (children).

He says that when adults read children's books "they usually have to read in four different ways,

simultaneously": as an adult (as if the book is a peer text), "on behalf of a child" ("to recommend

or censor"), critically (to discuss with other adults), and as a child ("surrender[ing] to the book

on its own terms") (4–5). While Hunt believes that "the most rewarding type of reading … is that

involving acceptance of the implied role," i.e., surrendering to the book on its own terms, he also

admits that often books are not judged based off of readers' abilities to surrender themselves to the books. Books for children are published by, marketed by, and purchased by adults; therefore, children's books are also read by adults who view them as peer texts, material to be censored, and fodder for critical analysis. These adults are those who determine which criteria are important for quality children's literature. Sutherland asks, "[b]ut how can adults know what book a child is going to enjoy?" then admits, "[a]ctually, they can't know with any degree of certainty" (24). She continues, "[a] book may be judged a juvenile classic by experts in children's literature, but if it is beyond children's understanding, or too subtle or sophisticated for their level of appreciation, they can turn it down with a stony indifference" (24). Thus, it must be remembered that while these criteria are held as essential characteristics of quality children's literature, they are nevertheless subjective criteria determined not by the children who read the books but by the adults who publish, market, and purchase them.

IV. Literature Review

> *Books can make a difference in dispelling prejudice and building*
> *community: not with role models and recipes, not with noble messages*
> *about the human family, but with enthralling stories that make us imagine*
> *the lives of others. A good story lets you know people as individuals in all*
> *their particularity and conflict; and once you see someone as a person—*
> *flawed, complex, striving—you've reached beyond stereotype.*
>
> – Hazel Rochman, "*And Yet… Beyond Political Correctness*," 134

When I first entertained the idea of writing a biography for children about a well-known and respected author, I felt great anxiety. Many of the books I read as a child have stayed with me even as I have added more and more to my list of cherished books. I believe the words of the

quotation from children's literature critic and reviewer Hazel Rochman, above, despite the fact that the quotation borders so closely on idealism. Yet I worried, could any book I write ever meet such standards? I have never written "enthralling stories that make us imagine the lives of others"—I write formal papers for professors or for publication. Questions swarmed my brain: How do I write for children? How do I write a biography? Should a biography for children be written differently than a biography for adults? Do I need to include visuals? Is layout important? Will what I write be in the right style? How should I go about sending out the manuscript once it has been completed? The questions and anxiety seemed never to cease. I soon realized, however, that the anxiety I experienced about writing a children's biography is similar to the anxiety all writers experience before writing in any genre with which they are unaccustomed or for any audience with whom they are not familiar. I realized, too, that while these writers face similar anxiety, their books *are* written and published. Therefore, clearly the anxiety can be overcome and writing in an unfamiliar genre for an unfamiliar audience can be accomplished.

In order to overcome the anxiety myself, I made use of the strongest skill already at my disposal: researching. I knew that since I would be writing in a specific genre and for a specific audience that I would need to do a lot of research on both *before* I began the research on the facts of Eudora Welty's life that will be required for the biography itself.[12] This literature review thus reveals my findings on this new audience and genre. I have categorized the literature into the sections rhetoric, visual rhetoric, and writing and publishing biographies, though several of the sources touched on more than one of the topics. Rhetoric and visual rhetoric are separate sections because although rhetoric includes the visual aspects of a text and visual rhetoric comprises textual elements as well as images, the visual rhetoric literature merits separate consideration: even though publishers often control the appearance of a completed book, writers do face

important rhetorical choices concerning the use of visual elements when writing a biography about a writer/photographer and when creating a book for children.

Rhetoric

Aristotle defines rhetoric as "an ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion.… it does not include technical knowledge of any particular, defined genus [of subjects]" (117, translator's brackets). Andrea A. Lunsford, John J. Ruszkiewicz, and Keith Walters, who are writing for newcomers to the fields of rhetoric and visual rhetoric and thus provide important theoretical and practical information for any novice writer of a genre involving visual elements, consider *persuasion* to mean *argument*, and they state that

> [a]n argument can be any text … that expresses a point of view. When you write an argument, you try to influence the opinions of readers…. Sometimes arguments can be aggressive, composed deliberately to change what readers believe, think, or do. At other times your goals may be more subtle, and your writing may be designed to convince yourself or others that specific facts are reliable or that certain views should be considered or at least tolerated. (4)

One of these more subtle types of arguments the authors call "arguments to inform." Such arguments have as their purpose informing in order to help others or the author make a choice. As an example of an argument to inform they provide a statement about Georgia O'Keeffe by Joan Didion in which Didion states that O'Keeffe told her admirers in 1939, "[a] flower touches almost everyone's heart." Explain Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters, "[b]y giving specific information about O'Keeffe and her own ideas about her art, this passage argues that readers should pay close attention to the work of this artist" (7). I will be making similarly informative arguments to the child readers of my biography about Welty, claiming that the events of Welty's

life and Welty's writing and photography are important and deserving of close attention and consideration. The arguments will be subtle, asking readers to take the information presented as reliable fact and encouraging them to consider the information offered in the images. Yet how should arguments for a child audience be composed so that they are effective? Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters state that no one can delineate "a simple process for writing a convincing argument" and that "no serious forms of writing can be reduced to formulas" (23), but they do believe that by paying attention to certain aspects of argument writers can compose compelling, effective arguments. These aspects to which Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters refer are the traditional elements of persuasion offered so many centuries ago by Aristotle.

In William A. Covino and David A. Jolliffe's words, Aristotle's elements of rhetorical theory are "the *rhetorical situation*, the *audience*, the *pisteis* or 'proofs' (and their subdivisions), and the five canons of rhetoric: *invention, arrangement, style, memory,* and *delivery*" (10, emphasis in original). The rhetorical situation is defined as any situation in which there is a need for the text or document (or a gap that only the text can fill), an audience concerned about the text, and the rhetorical constraints of the audience and the writer (10–11). Summarizing Lloyd Bitzer's 1968 essay entitled "The Rhetorical Situation," Covino and Jolliffe explain rhetorical constraints as "the features of the audience's—and perhaps the speaker's or writer's—frames of mind, belief systems, and ways of life that lead the audience to accept the speaker's or writer's ideas" (11). Audience and rhetorical constraints will be discussed in more detail below; in my case, the need for the text is the gap in the knowledge of the child audience about Eudora Welty. The biography will fill that gap by providing information about Welty's texts, photographs, life, and time period.

In any rhetorical situation, the orator, writer, or creator must consider the second element of rhetorical theory: his or her audience. Several writers and designers highlight their concerns with audience in their self-reflective case studies included in the text *Eloquent Images: Word and Image in the Age of New Media*. For example, regarding the creation of her virtual reality story, Josephine Anstey states, "[e]verything in *The Thing Growing* is designed around the psychological state I am trying to create in the user" (290). Ellen Strain and Gregory VanHoosier-Carey say their goal for the interactive CD-ROM *Griffith in Context: A Multimedia Exploration of* The Birth of a Nation was "to communicate certain ideas about Griffith's film to a specific audience in the most understandable and convincing matter possible." In order to do this they say they had to "consider [their] audience's particular point of view and the assumptions and concerns that go with it and then focus [their] argument in a manner that addresses those assumptions and concerns" (265)—in other words, these authors paid close attention to their audience's rhetorical constraints. Writing with the audience in mind is of course important whenever an adult writes for a child audience (Amoss and Suben 3). Like Anstey and Strain and VanHoosier-Carey, I, as an author of a specific document for a specific audience, also need to be aware of my audience's point of view and any possible concerns they may have.

However, as James E. Porter says, "'audience' is a floating, perhaps an empty, signifier…. We talk about audiences in different, sometimes contradictory ways" (x).[13] Thus, he asserts, "[t]he task of considering one's audience is not quite as simple as it first looks" (3). At first glance I would consider my audience to be "children." But the answer is not that simple. Who is my audience *really*? Are they all children of one mind, easily lumped together into one generalized "audience"? Are they all aspiring writers? Are they all fans of biography, regardless of the subject? Are they all students studying life in the South during the Depression, forced by

their teacher to read the book? I as the writer have no way of knowing the many contexts of my readers as individuals. The only aspect of my audience I truly know is that it will be composed of children between the ages of nine and twelve, possibly including eight and thirteen year olds. I know this only because unlike books for adults, books for children are divided into separate reading levels based on age or grade. When writers write for children they usually choose a reading level or age group before they begin to write so they know their expected book length, the kind of content they will be generating, and in what style they will be writing. Publishers have generally accepted that middle reader books are for children ages nine to twelve; this is the age and reading level for which I have chosen to write the biography about Welty, as children around this age may have already read Welty's *The Shoe Bird*, also written for this age group, or, if they have not, after reading the biography they will be able to move directly to *The Shoe Bird* or her other fiction if they so desire.

Regarding audience, Porter says that the people in the act of reading the writer's document, the *actual* audience, are never exactly who the writer imagines; the audience as the writer considers it is instead an "imaginative construction" (3). While I may assume that I know my imagined child audience, I cannot know each child individually and what preferences and interests he or she might have. So, knowing that I cannot know my audience as individuals, how do I write for this audience? I must construct my idea of my audience from fact-based research, for, as Covino and Jolliffe state, when writers "cannot know with any certainty who their readers are … writers work to *construct* an audience, playing on the assumptions and operating within the rhetorical constraints to which they presume the constructed audience would adhere" (14). Before the research from which I construct my audience can be discussed, another of Covino and Jolliffe's claims must be addressed. They state that the audience "is not simply the aggregation

of people who listen to or read the text…. More specifically, the audience comprises the people who have a reason to be concerned about the [text] and who are capable of acting on it or being acted upon by it" (11), and to be most effective, a document should address the rhetorical constraints of all those concerned about the text (13). Thus, theorists have "distinguished the *primary* audience for a text from various *subsidiary* audiences" (12, emphasis in original). What does this mean for my project? As experienced children's book editor Barbara Seuling says, "children's books are mostly purchased by adults…. This makes selling a children's book a double-barreled challenge: not only do you have to satisfy the child reader but the grown up reader and buyer as well" (23). My constructed audience, therefore, is comprised of both child readers (the primary audience) and adult readers (the subsidiary audience). In order to address the assumptions and expectations of my both audiences I must understand the criteria by which they select and evaluate books. My research into the rhetorical constraints of both audiences led me to an abundance of facts offered by children's literature editors, publishers, award committee members, scholars, and authors for children; these findings (the research from which I construct my audience) are included in the findings section of part III of this paper and in the writing and publishing biographies section of this literature review.

Once the creator of a text has constructed his or her audience, he or she must consider how to use the third element of rhetorical theory, the appeals or means of persuasion, for this particular audience. According to Aristotle, there are three species of the appeals, or pisteis: "some are in the character of the speaker, and some in disposing the listener in some way, and some in the argument itself, by showing or seeming to show something" (118)—or, in other words, the appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos. Aristotle explains the three appeals: "[There is persuasion] through character whenever the speech is spoken in such a way as to make the

speaker worthy of credence…. And this should result from the speech, not from a previous opinion that the speaker is a certain kind of person"; "[There is persuasion] through the hearers when they are led to feel emotion by the speech"; and there is persuasion through the arguments "when we show the truth or the apparent truth from whatever is persuasive in each case" (118, translator's brackets). In order to use the appeals effectively the writer must understand how each affects the audience as well as the writer and how the appeals might be used differently for different audiences.

Appeals of ethos refer to the character of the writer and are used to instill in the audience a sense of the writer's authority. This sense of authority is linked to credibility and trust, which writers can gain "by demonstrating to readers that they are knowledgeable, by highlighting shared values, by referring to common experiences related to the subject at hand, by using language to build common ground, by respecting readers—and by showing that they are trying hard to understand them" (Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters 40). Credibility and trust are also established when writers present accurate, honest, and balanced information (25). However, as Covino and Jolliffe say, "[t]he ethos one projects to one audience may not be effective with another" (73) and, as I have stated, I have two audiences for my children's biography: a primary child audience and a subsidiary adult audience. Therefore, I will need to use different appeals of ethos for each audience. The subsidiary audience of adults (editors and publishers, award committees, scholars, reviewers, teachers, etc.) will inevitably receive materials that directly state the credentials that project my authority (that I am the Associate Editor of the *Eudora Welty Newsletter*, for example). While a list of credentials may be sufficient evidence of my authority for the subsidiary audience, the primary audience will neither receive nor likely care about such credentials. For children, the authority and credibility of a children's nonfiction writer instead

must come through in the bibliography, notes, and end-of-book material, according to children's literature essayist Susan Dove Lempke (431).

Whereas ethical appeals concern the character of the writer, appeals of pathos "activate or draw upon the sympathies and emotions of the [audience members], causing them to attend to and accept [the text's] ideas, propositions, or calls for action" (Covino and Jolliffe 16). Covino and Jolliffe insist that modern rhetors must "distinguish between texts that indiscriminately titillate and pander to an audience's emotions and texts in which *pathos* is tied to a virtuous *ethos*" (17, emphasis in original). In other words, if writers wish to present themselves as high in character, credible, and trustworthy, they must not rely on appeals of pathos that guide readers to feel only certain emotions about the subject or situation but instead must present evenhanded appeals of pathos that allow readers to experience a range of emotions, allowing them to understand more than one aspect of a subject or situation. Covino and Jolliffe's insistence is important for me to remember while working on my biography. I must not sensationalize or downplay the various events of Welty's life, trying to evoke in child readers emotions that will cause them to feel as I do about Welty or her actions. I must instead present the facts of and anecdotes from Welty's life factually and evenhandedly, allowing the readers to decide for themselves whether they like or dislike, agree with or disagree with, condemn or condone the events and actions of her life. My primary audience may not recognize appeals to their emotions as biased or evenhanded, but my subsidiary audience certainly will discriminate between the two. In my subsidiary audience's view, then, my appeals of pathos will truly be linked to my ethos. My subsidiary audience is the one that publishes and purchases the books for my primary audience; thus, if my subsidiary audience looks for and finds "a virtuous ethos" in my text, my

primary audience will not be subject to biased appeals of pathos that "titillate and pander" to their emotions and the appeals of pathos used will have been appropriate for both audiences.

Appeals of logos are unemotional; they "appeal to patterns, conventions, and modes of reasoning that the audience finds convincing and persuasive" (Covino and Jolliffe 17), or, in other words, "persuasive examples" (64). Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters describe writers who use effective appeals of logos as those who write with a skeptical reader in mind, one who will question the causes and effects offered in the argument and the merit of sources (29–30). While my primary audience may not be able to articulate that they read skeptically, surely some of them will question a claim from a writer who seems to be overly sentimental or sensationalist, and many will question a claim juxtaposed with an image that seems to contradict the claim. My subsidiary audience should be actively reading skeptically. According to Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters, appeals of logos are "arguments backed with the best evidence, testimony, and authority you can find" (30), and Covino and Jolliffe say that an effective logical appeal "mobilizes the power of reasoning" (17). Thus, claims I make in my biography of Welty need to be supported with evidence and quotations, and appeals that lead my readers to think through a problem or course of action for themselves will be effective and convincing. I must present the facts and events of Welty's life in a reasonable way, a way that will encourage readers to consider the causes and effects, both insignificant and profound, of the events on Welty's character, and what I offer as evidence of these causes and effects also must seem reliable (19), meaning that the facts and details I list should come from credible sources and be verified by triangulation.

Often not just one appeal is used in a document, but all three are incorporated into one argument and "intersect and interact" (Covino and Jolliffe 15). Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and

Walters reveal the interconnectedness of ethos, pathos, and logos with examples of how the appeals of pathos that a writer uses and the logical organization of his or her argument both play a part in how the audience perceives the writer's ethos: "[l]anguage that is hot and extreme can mark you as either passionate or intemperate. Organization that is tight can suggest that you are in control. Confusing or imprecise language can make you seem incompetent; technical terms and abstract phrases can characterize you as either knowledgeable or pompous" (28). Covino and Jolliffe also state that logos is tied to arrangement and style (73), meaning that facts must be presented in sequences that are not confusing or unintelligible. This interconnectedness of the pisteis leads to the fourth element of rhetorical theory, the five canons of rhetoric.

The canons of rhetoric were proposed by Roman rhetoricians (Covino and Jolliffe 21) and are invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery (10). Covino and Jolliffe explain that invention is generating effective new material and recalling previously learned information for particular rhetorical situations, arrangement is ordering the material appropriately for a particular audience or a particular text's purpose (22), and style is "producing sentences and words that will make an appropriately favorable impression on readers or listeners" (24). In his day Aristotle addressed style in this manner: "let the virtue of style be defined as 'to be clear' … and neither flat nor above the dignity of the subject, but appropriate" (120). Memory was in Aristotle's time the rhetor's act of relating the parts of an oral speech to parts of a house in order to memorize the speech and in medieval times the memorization of the parts according to "images of humanity" (Covino and Jolliffe 66–67), whereas today memory has declined as an important canon of rhetoric because the focus has moved from oral speeches to written discourse. Recently, however, the use of computer memory has brought about a revival of sorts for the canon of memory (67). As the focus is on written rather than oral arguments these days,

delivery now refers not to the gestures and voice of the rhetor but to the presentation of the material (24). Like the appeals of persuasion, these canons of rhetoric are not devices to be used in isolation. These canons are all interconnected, and they are also related to ethos, pathos, logos, audience, and the rhetorical situation. Invention, arrangement, and style, for example, require understanding of one's audience (22–23), and style relates to pathos in that it refers to writing arguments that are not "dull, inappropriate, or offensive" (Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters 33). These five canons of rhetoric will be addressed in more detail for my specific audience and genre in the writing and publishing biographies section of this literature review.

Visual Rhetoric

To discuss visual rhetoric, I return to Aristotle's definition of rhetoric as "an ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion" (117, translator's brackets), for, as Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters state, "all language—including the language of visual images or of symbol systems other than writing—is persuasive, pointing in a direction and asking for response" (v). The elements of visual rhetoric are important for my project because children's books rely heavily on both text and images and children's biographies usually include images of their subjects (Banim). In addition, Welty was not only a writer but also a photographer, so I therefore intend to include selections of her images in the biography. Further, visual rhetoric scholar Anne Frances Wysocki states that "[g]iven our current cultural and technological situation, readers expect the visual aspects of texts … to be given more attention than they were afforded in the past" (184). This means that because I am writing for readers born into and growing up in times of a television in every home and nearly boundless access to the World Wide Web, I will have to carefully consider my photograph selections and layout decisions. Since "we have all grown up in densely visually constructed environments, usually

with little overt instruction in or awareness of how the construction takes place," warns Wysocki, "it is easy to think of the visual elements of texts as simply happening or appearing" (195). The visual elements of texts do not simply happen, however: "visual aspects of texts are rhetorical … they are designed by people who choose among different possible strategies to achieve different possible ends" (195). Writers and designers, then, need to give equal attention to the elements of the rhetorical situation, audience, the pisteis, and the five canons of rhetoric for both the textual and the visual aspects of their documents. This section of the literature review therefore focuses on the specific role that visual rhetoric will play in my creation of a biography about Eudora Welty for an audience of children.[14]

If Covino and Jolliffe's definition of the rhetorical situation cited in the previous section of this literature review is applied to visual rhetoric, then the rhetorical situation for a visual text is the need for the visual text, the visual text's audience, and the rhetorical constraints of the visual text's audience and writer. As before, the audience and rhetorical constraints for this specific project will be discussed in further detail below, and the need or gap is the gap in the knowledge of Welty on the part of child readers. The visual aspects of the biography will fill the gap by providing examples of Welty's own photography as well as pictures of her, her family, where she lived, when she lived, places she visited, things she talked about, and the like.

As far as the audience and their rhetorical constraints are concerned, these two elements are intricately bound together in the case of a visual text for children. Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters say that images "are constructed to invite, perhaps even coerce, us into seeing them just one way. But each of us has our own powers of vision, or own frames of reference" (255). This is certainly true for child readers, whose experiences and available references (or lack thereof) will cause them to read images in ways that adults might not consider reasonable or in

ways that adults simply might not consider. This difference in experience from which to draw comparisons is the most important constraint to keep in mind when designing for an audience of children. Marcia F. Muth and Karla Saari Kitalong offer general questions to aid creators of visual documents for any audience in designing documents "that readers can readily absorb regardless of constraints" (7). The questions, discussed next, will be useful in aiding me to understand and address my particular audience's visual rhetorical constraints and then design with their needs and expectations in mind.

Muth and Kitalong first ask, "Who are your readers? What are their key concerns? How might your document design acknowledge their concerns?" (4). As has been discussed, it is impossible to truly know one's audience, so I will be working off a constructed idea of my child readers. Moss and Hendershot's study reveals that one of the key concerns of child readers is curiosity; if I construct my audience off of this information, my document will have to address children's curiosity. My biography can address their curiosity by providing visual information on the life of a renowned writer who was once a child just like my readers—visual information on what she looked like, what her parents and siblings looked like, how she lived, and where and when she lived. Muth and Kitalong ask next, "What form or genre do readers expect? What features do readers see as typical characteristics of that form? What visual evidence would they expect or accept as appropriate?" (4). While some members of my primary audience might be familiar with the genre of biography and therefore expect images of the subject, her house, and her family, many of my primary audience may not have genre expectations. My subsidiary audience, however, does indeed expect such images to be included (Banim), and they expect that the images will be reliable and truthful (Freedman, qtd. in Giblin, "Russell" 457) and that they

will be incorporated within the text rather than separated from their textual references or counterparts (Giblin, "Biography" 44).

The next questions Muth and Kitalong ask are, "What problems or constraints will your readers face? How can your document design help to address these constraints?" (4). As stated previously, the largest visual rhetorical constraint of child readers is the availability of experiences they have with which to draw parallels to the information offered in the text. What this means is that historical context is important when considering the visual elements of a document for a child audience (Wiley 210). A writer of a children's book needs to pay close attention to whether or not certain images or visual references (references to images) will have meaning for children; if the images will not be familiar to children, the writer needs to provide the context of the images for the readers. One example from Welty's life is that of bottle trees. Bottle trees are not common today, nor were they common in the past in parts of the United States outside of the south ("Bottle Trees"). Thus, if I reference bottle trees in a biography of Welty for a child audience, I will need to include her photograph of bottle trees (image 121 in *Photographs*) so that my audience members who are not familiar with the object will have a visual image and thus a better understanding of what I am referencing.

The final questions from Muth and Kitalong are, "What is the purpose of your document? How can your document design help you to achieve this purpose? How can it enhance your credibility as a writer?" (4). The purpose of a biography of Welty for children is to fill the gap in children's understanding of Welty's life and times as well as to satisfy their curiosity about such things. The biography can achieve both by providing images that reveal Welty and the surroundings with which she lived—people, places, and objects. The visual elements will enhance my credibility and authority if they are truthful representations of aspects of Welty's

life, including aspects that a child audience might not understand. The visual elements of a biography for children not only assist in achieving the document's purpose but are integral to its effectiveness.

A document's audience and their rhetorical constraints are of course tied to the appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos used in any rhetorical situation, as was discussed in the rhetoric section of this literature review. Regarding visual texts, Wysocki says ethos is "the sense we get of a writer from the appearance of a text" (185) and Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters state that those visual texts whose presentation is considered an important aspect of the argument give the sense of an author who is "authoritative and credible" (261). In other words, if the photographs used are authentic and if it is clear that the design of the document is an important consideration on the part of the author, then the author will be seen as reliable and trustworthy. Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters add that nearly every element of a document's design reveals the writer's character. For example, the typefaces used for the text can display warmth, efficiency, informality, or modernity, among other things (262), and the colors used reveal the author's "taste, personality, and common sense" (263). Appeals of pathos in visual texts are those that attempt to "trigger" specific emotions in the audience (267)—such emotional triggering is often achieved through the use of color (269) but can also come from the subjects of the photographs. Appeals of logos in visual texts are those "based on facts and reason" and include not only photographs that serve as evidence but also graphs and tables of significant information supplied when necessary (264). As has been discussed, these three appeals are not to be used in isolation and usually are integrated in a document. An example of a visual text in which the appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos are intertwined is that of a Web page created by one of Wysocki's students. Says Wysocki, the designer is aware

of how her visual choices give her authority—or not—in the eyes of her readers,

and she has thought about the kind of appearance … she wishes to present of

herself … through words and visual presentation; these are all matters of ethos.

She has also chosen to ask her readers to take on similar attitudes while reading,

recognizing that the somber grey-brown, fully justified text and lack of

photographs of drawings ask her readers to approach these pages in a still and

intellectual manner; these are matters of pathos. Finally, she has chosen how to

arrange her screens visually so that her readers might most readily grasp the

structure of her arguments and see their order and progression; this is logos. (189)

Although Wysocki's student is designing for the World Wide Web, like this student I, too, will

need to consider how all three appeals interrelate and work together in my document design for

both my primary and my subsidiary audiences.

Just as the pisteis are tied to the idea of audience in visual texts, so too are they tied to the

canons of rhetoric. Yet when it comes to visual rhetoric the canons—invention, arrangement,

style, memory, and delivery—can be grouped together under the umbrella term *design*, as design

involves the creation and recollection (or finding) of material to use, the organization of the

material, the art of producing "an appropriately favorable impression on readers or listeners"

(Covino and Jolliffe 24), and the presentation of the materials; only memory does not seem to be

applicable to visual texts, unless the use of computer memory in the creation of the document is

considered. There are some design principles that apply no matter the age of the audience

members, and then there are studies that have been done on how children's learning specifically

is affected by visuals. I knew I would need information on both for the creation of my biography.

Instead of separating the design literature by age group, however, I have separated the

information according to the two main features of the design of my biography about Welty for children: the photographs and the page layout.

Photographs

Jan Baetens says the most often cited reasons for using images in nonfiction texts are readability (breaking up large text blocks by using visuals), economy of information (providing information visually is "supposed to be more rapid, more clear" than with textual explanations), the appearance of modernity (the absence of images may signify to readers "old-fashionedness, and refusal of the contemporary world and the habits of today's readership"), and networking (images serve as additional evidence of facts presented in the text) (185–86). Regardless of these benefits of using images in nonfiction texts, Strain and VanHoosier-Carey state in their self-reflective case study that within the humanities there is still a "long-standing ambivalence toward the multivalent power of the image" (260). While I am indeed steeped in the humanities, having focused on Spanish as an undergraduate and English as a graduate student, I am also steeped in the arts—as an undergraduate I minored in art and as a graduate student I have been studying film, and throughout both undergraduate and graduate studies I have cultivated my passion for photography. Therefore, I hold no such ambivalence toward the power of images. In fact, the first aspect that I considered in the creation of a biography about Welty for children was the inclusion of her photographs—just one example of this academic writer using the skills she already has for the creation of a work in a new genre. Ruth Allen states that "the right picture can enhance and transform a story; it provides the images on which a child can draw in adult life; it can form for ever the way in which a particular character is remembered" (15). This importance and impact of the right picture, however, creates difficulty when authors attempt to insert images into nonfiction texts, says Baetens (179). He explains that the difficulty is "a problem of …

correct use (how to combine words and images in order both to avoid misunderstandings and to facilitate comprehension). Moreover, this problem is not just *technical* … but *tactical* and *strategic*: 'how' to use images cannot be separated, indeed, from 'why' they should be used" (185, emphasis in original).

Jennifer Wiley addresses the humanities' resistance to using images in texts as well as the how and why of using them in her study, in which she discusses whether or not "visuals can be an adequate surrogate for educational text" (201). Although she is referring to *digital* educational texts, her study is significant to my project because she examines how visuals "may affect the processing of conceptual information" for children (201–02). Relying on a review of studies in cognitive science and on her own experiments, Wiley lists some conditions under which images can be detrimental to the processing of information as well as some advantages that writers may achieve by including images in text (202), as will be discussed in greater detail below.

Wiley says that in 1989 Bernd Weidenmann found that readers process images differently than they process written text. She explains, "[w]hereas reading text requires readers to fixate on every word or two, for around 300 milliseconds a word, going from left to right and from the top line to the bottom line, images are scanned much more quickly and globally" (202–03). While this may seem to be an advantage that images have over text, because images can be scanned more quickly many readers assume that the information images provide is easier to process and that the content can therefore be absorbed with only a simple glance (203). Since readers do not spend as much time on images as they do on text they often miss important information provided by the images. As support for this claim Wiley cites a study from 1970 in which the researcher found that in certain instances text-plus-visual presentations lowered the amount of learning as compared to text-only presentations (205). It is important to note, however, that "[f]ollow-up

investigations suggest that one reason for the lack of a consistent positive effect of images on learning is that any learning effect depends greatly on the kind of image that is used" (205–06). As an example of the difference in learning with different kinds of visuals, Wiley provides the results of a 1987 study that reveal that decorative illustrations lead to minimal learning improvements and sometimes even negatively affect the learning process (206). This minimal-sometimes-negative effect occurs because "although [decorative] images may be more attractive, in that they are more pleasing, they are also more distracting, in that they attract attention even when the reader would be better off engaged in deep thought or reading" (203). Another reason that some texts with images might impede learning, adds Wiley, is that illustrations of complex concepts may convey to people the descriptive information (how something works) but not the explanatory information (why it works), which Wiley supposes may only be transmitted when readers must imagine for themselves the workings of the system or concept (206–07).

Despite the possible detriment using images in nonfiction texts may cause, there are nevertheless instances in which images can be useful for conveying new information (Wiley 203). Because readers can only imagine a system or concept when they understand what it is they need to imagine, images that provide the basic workings of the system may spur the imaginations of readers who, without that basic starting point, might otherwise be confused (207). Similarly, images prove useful to the learning process when "deep processing" of the textual information is impossible or overwhelming, as images may be able to present complex information more simply. Another advantage of using images in texts is that images allow for "information to be represented in memory in multiple ways" (203). Because readers more easily remember information that is received in multiple ways (both visually and verbally, for example), Wiley explains, providing the information both visually and verbally can improve

readers' understanding (204). Wiley also says that images can be useful for presenting information even if the information does not need images in order to be understood (204). A biography, for example, does not necessarily require visuals in order for the life of its subject to be understood. But providing an image of an oak tree for children who have never seen an oak tree, says Banim, helps them understand and relate to the subject and his favorite oak tree. My earlier example of the bottle trees in Welty's time and place are such an instance in which images can be useful even though they are not required. An additional advantage of using images in nonfiction texts, as reported in a 1996 study, is that since individual learners may prefer different methods of learning, images can be beneficial to those who learn better with visually presented information (205). This finding is important for my project: as I cannot truly know my audience members as individuals, I will provide images in order to facilitate the understanding of those readers whose constraint may be that they learn better with visual rather than with verbal modes of communication.

Wiley suggests two ways that designers can use images to enhance their readers' understanding of the information presented: by decreasing the competition between images and text or by using only those images that pertain directly to the subject matter (209). In her experiment testing the competition between images and text in presentations of science-related educational materials, Wiley found that students who were presented images of "emotional interest" at the same time as the text did not develop a complete understanding of the causes of an event, whereas students who were presented the images before the text and could not return to the images when reading showed no negative learning effect due to the images (209–10). In fact, Wiley reports that these latter students had similar learning levels but "rated the task as more interesting" (210). From this experiment Wiley concludes that if images are presented in ways

that do not detract from the explanations of concepts provided by the text, then images of emotional interest can be used to pique readers' interest in scientific subject matter (210). Regarding the use of images relevant to the material, Wiley insists that images "will be especially communicative to the extent that they highlight important conceptual relations and emphasize key features" (211). More significant to my creation of a biography as a visual document is Wiley's second experiment, which involves historical text. In this experiment Wiley found that, unlike with the scientific text, images presented at the same time as the historical text generated more interest, led to increased reading time, and improved students' understanding of the subject matter (210).[15] She adds that it is common for history teachers to use historical photographs to engage students in discussions about specific time periods or historical events, and in such instances visuals may improve students' learning rather than detract from it (210). Perhaps this is because, as celebrated children's biographer Russell Freedman insists, "archival photos can evoke the past in a way that nothing else can" (qtd. in Giblin, "Russell" 457).

A 1992 study found that often readers report that illustrated texts are more interesting than texts without images, and when readers find material interesting they spend more time on it; increased time with the material leads to improved understanding of the information, therefore texts with images may lead to higher levels of understanding (Wiley 202). Forty-eight percent of the sixth graders studied by Moss and Hendershot reported that the visual elements of nonfiction books—either the covers or the photographs inside—influenced their choices. Although adults may regard choosing books based on visuals as superficial, state Moss and Hendershot, "for some students, visuals prompted reflection and prediction about the nature of the content" or "prompted students to speculate on connections between text content and their own lives." One student in their study reported choosing the book *Buried in Ice* after seeing the image of a corpse

on the back cover because he "wondered why he didn't decay and what the big hump was," and another student revealed how the photographs used inside *The Wright Brothers* intrigued him: he said, "the pictures showed how big they could build it and get it moving. I liked how they did the photographs instead of drawings. It is more real and interesting" (qtd. in Moss and Hendershot). Thus, just as historical photographs can provide biographers with valuable information (Zarnowski, *History* 32), such photographs can also provide child readers with valuable information, leading to an increased understanding of historical context.

The photographs that I choose to use in my biography of Welty, then, are important because not only will they reveal to children aspects of Welty's personal life, the life of a writer and photographer, the time period in which Welty lived, and her region of the United States, but they will also stimulate thought about the text and the connections between the text and their own lives. The use of images can make for an interesting presentation (Williams and Tollett 27; Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters 267), and sometimes, say Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters, "images have power in and of themselves to persuade" (267). As means of persuasion, photographs used in a biography about Welty will therefore need to be considered for what they will add to my presentation in terms of visual interest as well as in terms of the information they will provide regarding ethos, pathos, and logos. The three appeals were discussed earlier for visual elements in general; the use of these appeals with photographs needs to be considered separately.

Photographs are appeals of ethos when they are reliable as sources of information—for example, if photographs in biographies truthfully represent the subject or his or her time period. My primary audience will not scrutinize the facts presented in my images, but they will benefit from the subsidiary audience's scrutiny of the reliability of the images. Lempke states that aside

from being truthfully presented, visual information must also be readable. It is true, she says, that children are attracted to books with colorful photographs, but often what's more important is not the use of color but the quality reproduction of the photographs, whether they be in color or in black and white (431). Children's literature scholar Ed Sullivan provides an example of the impression of ethos that the reproduction of photographs can leave on adult readers of children's books by comparing two children's biographies of the same subject: he says that although both biographies use the same archival photographs, he considers the biography whose reproductions are "grainy, dark, and smaller" to be of lesser quality. Explains Sullivan, this poor reproduction of the images makes their presence seem "formulaic and obligatory" (38); thus, the author presents an ethos of insincerity or of unconcern for the audience's ability to process the information provided by the image. Also part of the reproduction of photographs is the cropping of them. As Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters say, photographs aren't faithful representations of reality but shaped reality (254); this shaped reality is molded by both the photographer as he or she captures the image in the camera and by the author as he or she crops it for reproduction. For my biography, then, it is important that I reveal my credibility and honesty not only by providing quality reproductions of the images but also by presenting the images as they were originally presented by Welty.

This being said, however, I understand that at times cropping may be required, for, as graphic designers Robin Williams and John Tollett suggest, designers can "crop in tight on just one detail of a complex photo to get a stronger visual impact" (31) or to avoid "anything that is not visually pertinent to the image" (28). When discussing the previously mentioned bottle trees, for example, I will likely crop Welty's photograph *House with bottle-trees/ Simpson County/ 1941* (image 121 of *Photographs*) to exclude the house, thereby focusing readers' attention on

the bottle trees. Also, if I want readers to identify with Welty I might crop a photograph so that she is the prominent element for, as children's illustrator Molly Bang says, when the subject appears farther away from viewers they don't identify or sympathize with the subject as much as they would if he or she were closer (24). As can be seen, cropping photographs for use in a biography is clearly related to ethos; therefore, any use of cropping should always result in truthful presentations of the information.

Just as photographs should not be reproduced or cropped untruthfully, neither should they be used for the sole purpose of evoking specific emotions. As Covino and Jolliffe have been quoted as saying, "*pathos* is tied to a virtuous *ethos*" (17); thus, if I am to present myself as a reliable author I must present the images as reliable fact and allow the readers to decide for themselves how they feel about what's presented, not coerce them into feeling a certain way. As with photographs as ethical appeals, photographs as appeals of pathos will not necessarily be recognized as such by my primary audience, but my subsidiary audience should be alert to inappropriate uses of images as appeals of pathos. An inappropriate use of images as appeals of pathos might be the images of post-earthquake destruction used in Wiley's study of the scientific text; she found that the students presented with these images showed a lesser understanding of the causes of earthquakes (209). Since the images portrayed the emotional aspect of earthquakes (the destruction of property and possibly life) instead of the scientific properties (the machinations of the earth's crust), the students were distracted from the scientific fact by the emotions that the photographs evoked. A scientific text is not the same as a biography, of course, and emotional images are acceptable in biographies if they are used correctly, as Wiley's study of images used with historical text implies. Using a photograph that encourages empathy with Welty or evokes feelings of sadness will be appropriate for my biography when I am visually

representing the sadness surrounding Welty after her father's death. However, I should not use this same emotionally charged photograph as a representation of her entire life, as such a representation is untruthful and thus inappropriate. Also, when using images to relay facts or explain concepts or historical events, I will need to use documentary-style photographs rather than emotionally charged ones.

Images used for presentations of factual information can be considered appeals of logos. As Covino and Jolliffe have been quoted as stating, logos is both "persuasive examples" (64) and a way of reasoning (17). Using photographs as logical appeals, then, means that any photographs used as evidence must not contradict the text supporting/being supported by the image nor present the information in a confusing way. Images should also allow readers to consider for themselves any claim presented by the images—as was discussed in the rhetoric section of the literature review, for my primary audience it is most effective to use appeals of logos (including photographic appeals of logos) that allow child readers to think through a problem or course of action for themselves. It is also important to keep in mind that "for most students, a battery of images of varying degrees of relevance will only overwhelm them and obscure any lesson that is intended to be learned from the images" (Wiley 212). Thus, the images I choose for my biography of Welty should be both relevant and not overwhelming for the reader. For example, if I intend for child readers to understand the conditions of the Depression by use of Welty's photographs, I must be sure not to include images not pertinent to the experience of the Depression or to use too many such images, otherwise I may potentially lessen their understanding of this period in American history or interfere with their gaining an accurate impression of the impact it had on Welty's life. Logical visual representations, predictably, also are related to ethos: to retain my credibility and authority I must present the images in a truthful

manner and in a manner that facilitates the readers' understanding of the information presented. My subsidiary audience will be especially vigilant for photographs used effectively as appeals of logos.

Just as I as an academic writer can apply my previous understanding of ethos, pathos, and logos to a new genre, I can also rely on my already-at-hand photography skills to assist in the choosing of the photographs and in the explaining of the photographs to the child audience. Although children's literature professor Christine Marmé Thompson is referring to children creating their own works of art when she says that creating art is a natural part of childhood and something that children understand and do without prompting from adults, her discussion has relevance to my project because, as she says, "the nature of children's experience with art depends crucially on the adults who are responsible, by design or default, for guiding the course of artistic development and learning" (1). As I have stated before, while I can research my primary audience to determine their general characteristics, I have no way of knowing the different interests of the individual children who will ultimately pick up and read a biography about Eudora Welty. As I cannot be sure that a child reading about Welty developing photographs in her kitchen will not want to learn more about photography, it is conceivable that I will become one of the adults responsible for guiding that child's artistic development.[16] Therefore, the photographs I include in the biography can teach children about visual analysis and how photographs can serve both as documentary records of the past and as works of art. (I have been discussing both the primary and subsidiary audiences up to this point; from here forward I will be addressing my primary audience's needs and concerns with the understanding that the subsidiary audience reads with the needs of the primary audience in mind.)

Visual analysis of an image, according to Muth and Kitalong, should begin with an in-depth examination consisting of three things: seeing the big picture (the image's source, purpose, audience, prominent element, and focal point), describing the characteristics (the image's story, the people or animals visible, other visible elements, and arrangement), and interpreting the meaning (the feeling or mood, cultural signs, and symbols) (34). Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters provide several questions for analyzing visual arguments: What was the creator's intent? What cultural values or ideas does the visual evoke or suggest? Does the visual reinforce these values or question them? What emotions does the visual evoke? What draws the eye first? What is in the foreground? In the background? What is in or out of focus? What is moving? What is placed high, and what is placed low? What is to the left, in the center, and to the right? What effects do these placements have on the message? Is any particular information highlighted (such as a name, face, or scene) to attract attention? How are light and color used? What effect(s) are they intended to have on the viewer? What details are included or emphasized? What details might be omitted or deemphasized? Is anything downplayed, ambiguous, confusing, distracting, or obviously omitted? Does the visual evoke positive or negative feelings about individuals, scenes, or ideas? Is anything in the visual repeated, intensified, or exaggerated? What effects are intended by these strategies, and what effects do they have on viewers? (258–59). Paying attention to the elements listed by Muth and Kitalong and the elements questioned by Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters aids viewers in understanding images' historical significance and their aesthetic qualities. Thus, not only will these guidelines and questions be used by me to select the images included in the biography about Welty (I currently have nearly 100 that are being considered),[17] but they can also be used in the biography either verbatim, to prompt readers'

thoughts about the images, or indirectly, to offer suggestions about what the image reveals or aid child readers in understanding the images' significance.[18]

While some writers and designers might be frustrated that controlling the meaning of images is almost impossible (Baetens 186), I for one intend to encourage my readers to derive many possible meanings from Welty's photographs, highlighting the ability of images to serve as documented evidence of the past. Encouraging in children this kind of thinking (about both the visual and the verbal aspects of the text) is what children's literature professor Myra Zarnowski refers to as a "*questioning approach*" to history (*History* 3, emphasis in original). She says biographers should ask questions about "historical context, perspective, cause and effect, and significance" (117); these questions mimic the questions historians use and thus teach children a way of thinking about history (3). Two aspects of images to question in order to help provide contextual information to readers are the original purpose of the photograph and the original intended audience for the photograph (Muth and Kitalong 35). Such information can provide more historical context than an analysis of the elements inside the photograph alone. Other sources of information to consider are the "facial expressions, poses, hairstyles and colors, ages, sexes, ethnicity, possible education, suggested occupations, [and] apparent relationships" of the people in the photographs, as well as the plot and location (38). Muth and Kitalong also suggest that what is not shown in a photograph is at times equally as important as what is shown (45). An example of this suggestion for my project is the rarity of photographs of both African Americans and Caucasians together in photographs from the largest collection of Welty's images, the book *Photographs*.[19] It is both documentary-like and telling of Welty's character that she took photographs of people of both races, yet the infrequency of photographs of people of these two races together is just as significant historically. At a superficial glance the exclusion and its

significance might possibly be overlooked (specifically by adults; it is difficult to predict whether children would notice the infrequency of this occurrence immediately or ignore it altogether). The significance of this fact, however, can be pointed out to children in the biography to show the time in which Welty lived and to compare it to today's society, in which commercials and television shows often strive (sometimes obviously) for racial diversity.

Aside from providing historical context and meaning, photographs are also works of art. Molly Bang, who has been a children's book illustrator for over twenty-nine years, explores in her book *Picture This: Perception and Composition* the connections between viewers' emotions and the structure of pictures (xi). She says that when looking at photographs, illustrations, or drawings, viewers' emotions arise because viewers consider pictures extensions of reality (54), and she suggests that some of the aesthetic questions viewers can ask of pictures are: What is the essence of the thing represented? Which elements evoke strong feelings? What feelings does the author want to evoke? What principles were used to evoke these feelings? (137). Bang also details the "structural principles" of pictures (54), and although she uses abstract images—basic shapes and colors—as examples of these principles, the principles hold for any picture (which is, in essence, nothing more than an arrangement of shapes and colors). Bang's structural principles will be useful to me in the selection of photographs for the biography about Welty because they will help me analyze the compositional elements of Welty's photographs.

Bang's structural principles of all pictures are:

- Smooth, flat, horizontal shapes offer a sense of stability and calmness (56).
- Vertical shapes are exciting and more active because they imply energy and a "reaching toward heights or the heavens" (58).

- Diagonal shapes are dynamic because they imply motion or tension. They lead viewers into the picture or back into space and thus can give a sense of depth in an asymmetrical frame (62). Viewers' eyes can't resist traveling up and down diagonal lines, and diagonals are usually read by Americans from left to right, thus they often imply upward or downward movement (68). Additionally, diagonal shapes "that lean toward the protagonist [in the image] feel as though they are blocking or stopping forward progress, whereas shapes leaning away give the impression of opening up space or leading the protagonist forward" (26).

- The upper half of a picture is a place of "freedom, happiness, and triumph," and objects placed there often feel more "spiritual" (76). The bottom half of a picture, on the other hand, feels "more threatened, heavier, sadder, or more constrained," and objects placed there feel more "grounded." Also, any objects placed high on a page have "greater pictoral weight," meaning that viewers' attention is more drawn to an object when it is placed higher up rather than if the same object were placed lower in the picture (78).

- The center of the page is "the most effective 'center of attention.'" Since the picture's frame forms a separate world inside itself, the center of that world becomes the focal point and the edges trap viewers' attention and guide their eyes to that central focus. However, if a designer wants viewers to explore a picture, the main element will not be in its center (84). Viewers feel tension when an object is either close to the edge of the picture or close to but not at the center of the picture (88).

- Humans equate light-colored or white backgrounds with daytime or daylight and dark backgrounds with "night, twilight, or storm"; thus, light-colored or white backgrounds make viewers feel safer than do dark backgrounds (92). Both black and white may be used to represent death, however (94).

- Pointy shapes make viewers feel more scared and round or curved shapes make viewers feel secure or comforted (98).

- Larger objects in a picture feel stronger (100), whereas smaller objects feel more vulnerable (102).

- Viewers "associate the same or similar colors much more strongly than [they] associate the same or similar shapes" (106), meaning that if there are two objects of the same size in the picture and one of those objects is the same color as a third object, then viewers connect the two objects of the same color more readily than the two objects of the same size.

- Contrast "enables us to see" (110), meaning that the human eye is drawn to contrast of many elements—color, shape, size, or stillness and motion.

Bang also adds that viewers imagine for stationary pictures movement or life (90), and feelings of movement are sparked by the shapes as well as the spaces between them (120). She also says that empty space is important in a picture because "space isolates a figure, makes that figure alone, free, and vulnerable" (118). While Bang lists and illustrates the structural principles of pictures separately, she points out that there are "exceptions to every rule, usually due to context" or the pictoral elements' associations to one another in the frame (92). Bang also explains that the principles are never used in isolation but always in combination, and as new elements are added to the picture the emotional effects of the other elements may change (80).

An example of combining principles to evoke feelings other than those listed in the principles above is the combination of a horizontal bar and vertical bars; when the horizontal is placed across the top of the verticals, the energetic effect of the verticals is reigned in by the stabilizing feeling of the horizontal and the reaching feeling of the verticals gives regality to the horizontal element (60).[20]

Also related to pictures and photographs are the captions that accompany them in books. Zarnowski says that writer Jim Murphy "suggests that captions must be more than self-evident labels" (*History* 78)—a photograph of a tree with a caption that reads "A tree," for example, adds nothing to the information provided by the image or to the document as a whole. Useful and informative captions, on the other hand, can incorporate terms like *foreground* and *background* to direct readers' attention to specific elements of the photograph. They also can serve as places to point out details that readers might not notice on their own, provide additional information not offered in the text, give the authors' opinion, speculate, refer to other photographs in the book, or pose questions (79). In my biography of Welty for children, captions will be used to stimulate thought about the connections between the image and the text, draw attention to specific objects in the photograph, provide historical evidence of aspects of Welty's life or the time in which she lived, or focus attention on the structural elements of the images as works of art.

Page Layout

Photographs and their captions are both elements of a document's layout, as is the text that will run throughout the document, the table of contents, and any back matter provided, for all these parts unite to form one whole.[21] Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters say that the presentation of a written argument affects how the argument is read, and many elements of the design—from the typeface to the inclusion of illustrations to the scholarly or whimsical layout—

affect the presentation (255). Muth and Kitalong provide four basic principles for designing

effective presentations, principles that will sound familiar as they are key concerns in all matters

rhetorical: know the audience (4), satisfy readers' expectations (6), consider readers' constraints

(7), and remember the document's purpose (7). The audience for my document, their

expectations, and their constraints, as well as the use of the pisteis—ethos, pathos, and logos—

with visual documents have all been discussed in earlier sections of this literature review;

therefore, the discussion that follows focuses on practical tips and tools that can aid me in the

creation of a rhetorically effective presentation for my specific audience.

Children's librarian Susan Dove Lempke states that effective children's book designs are

those that invite readers' eyes to move easily within the document and to consider the many

elements separately (431), and designer Robin Williams says that information that is organized

clearly is more likely to be read and remembered (26). She quotes typographer Jan Tschichold as

saying—as early as 1935—that "[p]ublishers and, even more so, readers want what is important

to be clearly laid out. They will not read anything that is troublesome to read, but are pleased

with what looks clear and well arranged, for it will make their task of understanding easier" (6).

This statement holds true today in our society of billboards, advertisements on buses, and easy

access to the World Wide Web. Today's readers want important information clearly laid out; if it

is not, they can and will go elsewhere to find what they are looking for. Helen Burgess, Jeanne

Hamming, and Robert Markley state in their self-reflective case study that "find[ing] strategies

of visualization that would supplement or enhance the narrative rather than disrupt it" (70) was

one of the challenges they faced during their creation of a multimedia/hypermedia document.

This is a challenge I assume all writers face, not just those composing multimedia/hypermedia

documents. What it means for my biography is that I will need to find a way to incorporate the

photographs and their captions into the text near where they are referenced or relevant, for the placement of visuals near related text makes documents easier to follow and alleviates readers' distraction by having to flip from the body of the text to an appendix or central collection of images (Muth and Kitalong 30). Russell Freedman also advises laying out a children's biography "so that the photos and text are synchronized, forming a kind of counterpoint with each other" (qtd. in Giblin, "Russell" 457), and another children's author, James Cross Giblin, favors the placement of photographs so that they are "dispersed throughout the book rather than being clumped together in one or two crowded inserts" ("Biography" 44). When more than one relevant image is desired for a page, Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters advise that the significance and importance of the images should be revealed by their placement: elements that are more important should be bigger or central while less important elements should be in places of less focus (264).

Robin Williams has taught graphic design since the 1980s and, alone or with designer John Tollett, has published numerous best-selling and award-winning design books covering all manner of visual presentations, from business cards and letterhead to Web pages and books. Williams's *The Non-Designer's Design Book: Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice* and Williams and Tollett's *Robin Williams Design Workshop* are popular, widely used titles. Both books provide easy-to-understand tips for revamping existing layouts or creating new ones, and the principles advocated are demonstrated with several examples of the same document in various stages of reorganization or creation. Both books stress four basic principles of design—proximity, alignment, repetition, and contrast—but the information I provide in the next four paragraphs comes from *The Non-Designer's Design Book*.

The design principle of proximity refers to the grouping together of related items so that the items become a cohesive visual unit. Williams explains that proximity helps with the organization of information and the reduction of visual clutter (14), allowing for the information to be "instantly accessible to the reader" (15). In clarification, she states that following the principle of proximity doesn't mean that designers should put everything close together; only the elements that are "*intellectually* connected" should also be visually connected (21, emphasis in original). For my biography, proximity means not only that any images used should be near the text that references them but also that the images' captions should be close to the images they explain or call into question. An example of the application of the proximity principle is placing individual images of Welty's parents on one page of the biography. As these images are connected intellectually, I will not place them several pages apart, or likely not even on facing pages. These two images will instead be on one page, probably close together; the relationship between them will be even more evident if there is a third image on the page that is as far away from these two as possible. Placing the images of Welty's parents in close proximity to one another organizes them logically and unifies them as a set of related aspects of the text (and of Welty's life).

Also aiding in organization and helping to create visual unity is the principle of alignment. What alignment means is that no visual elements should be arbitrarily placed in a layout; every element should be connected visually to another element on the page. In other words, designers should be conscious of where they place items in a layout, not "just throw things on the page wherever there happens to be room" (Williams 27). I will employ alignment in my biography by lining up the left and right edges of caption text with the images' borders and by making photographs level with one another even though they are on opposite pages or are not

the same size or shape. For example, in a discussion of two of Welty's Depression-era photographs, even if one photograph is on the left page and one is on the right, I will organize the images visually by aligning the bottom edges of both photographs along the bottom margin of the pages. If one image were placed in the middle of the left page and the other placed in a top corner of the right page, the layout would appear to be unorganized and haphazard, which is unpleasing. As Williams says, "[l]ack of alignment is probably the biggest cause of unpleasant-looking documents. Our eyes *like* to see order; it creates a calm, secure feeling" (35).

Another element that adds order and a sense of secure predictability is repetition. Repetition can be thought of as consistency, and it means repeating some visual element of a document throughout (Williams 43). Consistency is an aspect employed in most academic and recreational books: page numbers run along the pages in the same place and chapter headings are printed in the same typeface throughout. Publishing houses, of course, handle such matters of consistency in document design for most authors, but Williams says that authors and designers can also achieve repetition by taking one simple element and using it in different colors, sizes, and angles throughout the publication (50), as long as the element is not repeated so much that it becomes an annoyance or overwhelms readers (52). While page numbers and chapter headings will of course be consistent throughout my document, I will also maintain a sense of order and repetition by designing all the images' caption areas to look the same. I will also place the same border around every photograph, and I hope to find in my research a drawing of Welty's or some other illustration relevant to her life to use as decoration at the end of every chapter. Such repetition will add visual interest to my document, and, as Williams says, "if a page looks interesting, it is more likely to be read" (52).

One of the most effective means of adding visual interest to a layout, says Williams, is to employ the principle of contrast, which involves making two elements different. Williams warns, however, that if the two elements are only slightly different then it isn't *contrast* but *conflict*. Therefore, the rule is that "for contrast to be effective, it must be strong." Williams says that in addition to adding visual interest contrast also has the practical function of creating a hierarchy of organization of the various elements of a document (53). Such a hierarchy allows readers to grasp at a glance how information is organized (56). An obvious example of using contrast to organize information is a book's table of contents. Another way I can use contrast for organization in my biography is listing the important events of Welty's life in a timeline that has headings and subheadings of contrasting size or typeface to delineate the years or decades or whatever other measurement I might choose to categorize the events. Clearly, a timeline with contrasting headings and subheadings provides a clearer visual organization of information than a timeline in which every line is printed in regular, twelve point type.

Regarding timelines in biographies, Zarnowski says that in recent years they "have become more elaborate, providing authors with the opportunity to add illustrations and additional written material" such as quotations (*History* 79). They also do not have to be lists from top to bottom or lines from left to right but can be winding and even borderline chaotic as long as there is a line for readers to follow (80).[22] Williams and Tollett say that neither do tables of contents have to follow the traditional "stuffy" format, although they should match the feel of the content and the rest of the design layout (e.g., serious, whimsical, or contemporary) (186). They add that the same principles of proximity, alignment, repetition, and contrast apply to the design of tables of contents (180). Using the idea of proximity in a table of contents means setting the page numbers close to the content, using leaders (181), or, if the numbers are very close to the lines of

text, simply placing the numbers near the text lines (184). Using alignment in a table of contents means creating matching leaders so that the numbers all line up the same (180). Repetition in a table of contents can be seen in the matching capitalization of the table of contents entries and the chapter headings (183). Contrast is apparent in a table of contents when the different levels of content (subheadings under chapter headings) are not visually similar to the other levels (181). If the various levels of headings are too similar, then the divisions will not be very apparent; again, as Williams says, for contrast to be effective it has to be strong. Williams also advises designers to remember that proximity, alignment, repetition, and contrast all work together to create a cohesive whole, so no principle will be used by itself to design a single page or layout (61). The conscious consideration of these design principles as tools and guides will aid any document designer in creating page layouts that are rhetorically effective.

Muth and Kitalong also offer guidelines for designing documents that appeal to the audience and achieve the documents' intended purposes. They state that designers should use a prominent element to attract readers' attention and give emphasis to important elements (8), choose a typeface that sets an appropriate tone for the entire document (9), choose emphatic words rather than rely on boldface type for emphasis (12), make information more accessible and easy to read by organizing it into lists (13) or tables (29), credit sources (29), and use white space to highlight important information or add emphasis while guiding the reader through the document (16). They warn, though, of extra space or "trapped white space" (blank space between two other elements such as photographs) because such extra space interferes with readers' perceiving the document as a cohesive unit (18). The guidelines and suggestions from Williams and Muth and Kitalong provide myriad aspects that need to be considered when designing and therefore may seem overwhelming. Wysocki suggests, however, that in order to

keep design decisions from seeming overwhelming designers should justify each of their visual rhetorical choices *as* they design (198). She says that "having to describe why they think a particular strategy—used alone or in concert with other strategies—will help them achieve their intentions with their particular audiences" will lead to only those design decisions that make each document most effective for its rhetorical situation (198). During the creation of my biography of Welty for a child audience, the checklist offered by Muth and Kitalong that addresses the principles and suggestions discussed in this section of the literature review will serve as a means of examining and justifying (or rejecting) my visual design choices:

- Does the document design meet readers' expectations and acknowledge their constraints?

- Does the document design help to achieve the purpose or the reason for writing? Does it help emphasize key points and demonstrate a clear organization?

- Have appropriate typefaces been used throughout the document? Are boldface and italic type used sparingly, for emphasis only? Are displayed lists used when appropriate to call out information?

- Does the white space in the document work strategically, calling attention to or linking certain portions of text rather than creating gaps between textual elements?

- Do the contrast and alignment of headings and subheadings provide the reader with clear and purposeful navigational cues?

- Are elements repeated, such as running headers or footers, to increase visual coherence?

- Do diagrams, photographs, or other illustrations clarify the content? Do graphs, charts, or tables present numerical or textual information at a glance?

- Is color used effectively to highlight, distinguish, or organize information?

- Does the layout integrate the visuals using appropriate placement, sizing, and alignment?

- Has any permission needed to use copyrighted material been secured? Have the sources of each visual been credited? (30–31)

This checklist will ensure that I address the many principles of design and ultimately choose the appropriate presentation format for my genre and audience instead of being overwhelmed by my design choices.

Writing and Publishing Biographies

Zarnowski says that new design features are "invigorating older ways of writing biography" and thus the genre of biography is evolving (*History* 88+). Hence, an understanding of the evolution of children's nonfiction and of the current processes of writing and publishing children's biographies is necessary knowledge for one who intends to write a biography for children. For this section of the literature review I gathered information on the history of children's nonfiction with a focus on biographies, as well as information on submitting and publishing children's books, writing biographies for children, and writing biographies for adults. Scholars in the field of children's literature and authors of biographies for children provide insight into writing biographies for children, and adult biographers provide information regarding their own writing and researching experiences. The research for this section of the literature review was done in order to facilitate the composition of and to achieve publication of my ultimate product, the biography of Eudora Welty for a child audience, and it was also done in

order to collect data regarding the characteristics of quality literature for children, the data discussed in the findings section of part III of this paper and included in the data matrix in appendix B.

The history of children's nonfiction and biographies begins with the earliest books about others' lives that were written for children, the collections on saints' lives and noble Greeks and Romans, written in the mid-1500s, that served as instructions in "the right way to behave." The first biography of an American seems to have been an 1808 biography of George Washington (Chatton 84). These earliest biographies often idealized their subjects, providing only their noble and admirable deeds and qualities; this tendency to idealize carried over to the biography writers of the twentieth century. The Childhood of Famous Americans biography series (which every adult over the age of thirty with whom I spoke during my research mentioned as seminal reading of their youth) was first begun in 1932. With its quick dialogue, this series "helped to create a climate of acceptance for the fictionalized approach" to nonfiction, says Giblin ("More" 416), and Barbara Chatton, in her entry on biographies in the *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, says that the "winners of the Newbery and Caldecott Medals [in the 1930s and 1940s] reflect these tendencies to idealize and fictionalize aspects of their subjects' lives" (84). Not only did these biographies encourage hero-worship and a writing style filled with conjectured conversations (84), but they also encouraged focusing only on the childhoods of the subjects. Says Giblin of one of the series, *Ethel Barrymore: Girl Actress*, "[o]ne hundred and seventy-six of the book's two hundred pages take the reader up only to Ethel's stage debut at age fourteen…. The rest of the actress's life is crammed into the next fifteen pages, and the book ends with Ethel's seventieth birthday celebration, ten years before her death" ("More" 417). Just as ending biographies before the subjects' deaths was common, also common was avoiding

assassination, affairs and mistresses, and other topics deemed unsuitable for child readers. Says Giblin, it was thought best to "shield young readers from the harsher realities of life and give them a happy ending, no matter what the truth" (418).

Carl M. Tomlinson and Carol Lynch-Brown, both professors of children's literature, say that if a subject was considered worthy of a biography in those days, then the subject was placed on a pedestal and his or her weaknesses, mistakes, failures, and personal tragedies were avoided (185). The nonfiction of the 1950s was also filled with happy endings and inaccuracies due to fictionalization, and Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown also characterize it as having dull, long, and stiff or sentimental prose and too few illustrations or illustrations without color (185). In the 1960s and 1970s, however, biographies began to change; they were "greatly affected by the more liberal attitudes and relaxed topic restrictions" for children's fiction (185). Says children's literature professor Judith V. Lechner, in the early 1970s those critics who had been condemning the inaccuracies of idealized and fictionalized biographies for children were finally heeded, and biographies of perfect (yet "unbelievable and therefore uninspiring") heroes were replaced with biographies in which the private lives of the subjects were openly discussed and all the subjects' weaknesses and flaws were shown (230). Giblin says that illustrations received more attention in the 1970s as well, and the nonfiction titles of this decade included high-quality reproductions of photographs ("More" 420). Because of this, says Giblin, researching and selecting the images to be included became a common aspect of nonfiction writers' jobs (420), and he credits the success of Freedman's 1987 publication *Lincoln: A Photobiography* for the trend of putting "greater emphasis … on illustration and design in biographies for young people" ("Biography" 44). In addition to high quality illustrations, the nonfiction of the 1980s was also written with a lighter style and a more factual tone (Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown 185), and although there

were still some that advocated fictionalized biographies (Giblin, "More" 416), during the late 1980s the push was for more focus on evidence and facts (418).

Children's nonfiction titles that included high quality illustrations and were based off of documented evidence were not grabbing the attention of only adult audiences of children's literature (editors and award committee members) in the 1980s and 1990s—they were also accepted by the children for whom they were written (Giblin, "More" 422). Giblin lists several explanations for this increased acceptance among young readers, the most obvious being that the children of the 1990s were becoming accustomed to obtaining information from television and, later, from the World Wide Web, and thus they expected of their books the same attention to the visual aspects as was shown by these other media sources (422). Lempke conveys the same sentiments in her discussion of nonfiction series, in which she praises DK Eyewitness Books for their integration of photographs and text. She says that prior to the Eyewitness books for children, which were first published in the late 1980s, "most nonfiction series books were made up of large blocks of text interspersed with square photographs or drawings. Eyewitness, perhaps because of the trend toward shorter attention spans as exemplified by the popularity of *USA Today* or MTV, used an entirely different technique" (432). She believes that Eyewitness Books's focus on illustrations and photographs and their attention to layout and design are some of the aspects that "have made [this series] a dominant force that has changed the world of nonfiction publishing" (432).

Rosemary A. Bamford and Janice V. Kristo, award-winning researchers of nonfiction, delineate in a 2000 article some of the distinguishing characteristics of quality children's nonfiction from the 1990s—features that at that time they felt sure would continue to be important aspects of children's nonfiction in the future. Their characteristics involve content,

access features, and visual information. Content includes "accuracy, style of language including use of metaphor, and organizational structures"; access features are "those aspects of a book that help readers access or get into the information … such as the table of contents, index, and sidebars"; and visual information includes "photographs, maps, diagrams, figures, or graphs" (50). Regarding the content features of quality children's biographies of the 1990s, Giblin predicted in 1996 that accuracy, the inclusion of humor, the inclusion of dramatic moments, the writer's attention to his or her literary style, and the ability to both entertain and inform ("Trends" 340) were the qualities that would endure into the twenty-first century. He also says that additional trends of successful biographies of the 1990s involve newness—these biographies approach familiar subject matter with fresh angles, treat entirely new topics, and "include the contributions of non-Western peoples and cultures" (340). They also openly discuss previously taboo topics ("More" 422). Regarding access features, Giblin feels, as do Bamford and Kristo, that the inclusion of source citations, glossaries, tables, timelines, lists of suggested titles for further reading, indexes, and other forms of supplemental material is also a trend of quality children's nonfiction that will continue (418). Visual information is, however, the aspect that Giblin feels is most important. He says that the biographies of the 1990s were successful because they were "visually inviting," meaning that the layouts were designed with care and with attention to the audience, and because they included an abundance of photographs (340).

Many of the aspects and trends of the nonfiction of the 1990s have indeed continued into the next decade. Chatton states that "[w]hile heroic figures from our past are still very much the subject of contemporary biography, the portraits of these figures are more rounded and honest" (84). Children's literature scholar Zena Sutherland says that nowadays it is also understood that weaknesses and failures do not signify that a subject is not heroic but instead teach children that

everyone faces obstacles and setbacks (423). The biographies of today also do not focus on only

Caucasian male heroes as did the earlier biographies; modern biographies tell the lives of

"people of color, of women, and children, and of everyday heroes who have lived exemplary

lives in spite of difficult circumstances" (Chatton 86). Added to this list of subjects of

contemporary biographies are authors and illustrators (85), additions obviously encouraging for

my project. Chatton is referring mostly to children's book writers and illustrators, but there are

some adult authors who have been profiled recently such as Bram Stoker and Charles Dickens

(biographies forthcoming September 2005). Chatton says that since subject coverage has

expanded, the tone of modern biographies has also changed (85). Rather than providing only

uplifting stories of perfect ideals, contemporary biographies for children teach about their

individual subjects' lives and about "what it means to be human" (86). Today's biographies

therefore deal with once-taboo topics such as racism, discrimination (85), and death which

Sutherland says writers for children are finally coming to understand as a part of life that cannot

be ignored (423).

Hazel Rochman, assistant editor of *Booklist*, warns, however, that in our modern society

that is willing to discuss previously ignored minorities and promotes acceptance and diversity,

there are "p.c. watchdogs eager to strip from the library shelves anything that presents a group as

less than perfect" (133). Some people, in other words, still want to censor some aspects of life

because they are afraid that these aspects will reflect negatively on the groups or individuals

discussed in biographies. She also says that some people are increasingly vigilant about

authenticity, meaning that they decry books about people of one race that are written by people

of another race (133). She insists, however, that although books about racial oppression, mass

suffering, apartheid, slavery, the Holocaust, and other events and the people who suffered or

survived them will be unsettling, children want to understand these events and people and it is important that they understand them, so books about these events and people should be written for children (145). She says, "if we give young people didactic tracts, or stories so bland that they offend nobody, we're going to make them read even less. If you're going to grab kids and touch them deeply, if you want them to read, books must have tension and personality, laughter, and passionate conflict" (136). She doesn't advocate books for children that rely on inappropriate appeals of pathos, however—appeals that "exploit the violence" or "grab attention by dwelling on sensational detail"—and she feels that children's authors should avoid moralizing in books about unsettling subjects, for "after a while, words like 'horror,' 'atrocity,' 'terrible' cease to mean anything." Children's books on these topics should accurately reflect the events and the people involved, believes Rochman (145), and modern children's nonfiction, unlike its predecessors, does strive to present accurate and evenhanded portrayals of historical events and figures.

Over time, children's nonfiction and biographies have changed and adapted to the times in which they are written. Subjects have increased in diversity, and topics that were previously ignored are now included freely. Understanding these changes in the history of the trends for children's biographies is important for me, new to writing in this genre, so that I understand what is no longer accepted or advised and what is now expected and praised. Barbara Seuling, an editor of children's literature for nine years as well as an author and illustrator of numerous children's books, also advises that new writers for children need to read children's literature and know a bit about the publishing industry (21). I am already a fan of children's literature, but I have been reading fiction; I need to expand my selections to include biographies. Several biographies have won awards for children's literature, and as children's literature award

committees are some of the sources for the criteria of quality biographies listed in the findings

section of part III, I realize that the first biographies I should read are those that have won these

awards. I also already have an understanding of the children's literature publishing industry, as I

worked as an editorial intern at Peachtree Publishers, Ltd. However, as information from just one

publishing house is limited, I made use of my academic's research skills to gather additional

information. Seuling reveals, for example, that authors do not need agents to sell manuscripts to

publishing houses (142), but she says that "[f]inding the right home for your manuscript" does

require skill (156) and thus should not be entered into lightly. Writers should research publishing

houses and be familiar with their publishing trends and styles before blindly submitting

manuscripts (24). In practical terms, what this means for me is that I will need to research

publishing companies to discover which of them publish biographies. In my research I have

found that Clarion publishes many of the award-winning biographies for children, so this

publishing house would be a possibility for submission. Banim also suggested Scholastic, a

publishing house of biographies and other trade books used in schools.

Banim also informed me that the biggest problems for publishers pertain to gaining

permissions for images; she then talked in detail about how writers do not have to secure

permissions nor even provide images with their submitted manuscripts. Seuling, too, advises

against sending artwork with manuscripts (139). I shared with Banim that I am eager to suggest

photographs for inclusion in my biography of Welty, and she admitted that while it is not

expected or often even welcome for authors to submit images with their manuscripts,

occasionally leads on images are appreciated. She also did advise me to heed publishers' advice

regarding image inclusion or exclusion, though, because they consider images part of the

marketing of the book and take them very seriously and thus are often well informed in making

their decisions regarding images.[23] Publishers look for biographies they can market, says Banim,

and literature from Peachtree Publishers, Ltd., reveals that editors carefully consider the

marketability of a manuscript when evaluating a submission ("Guidelines" 4). Sutherland also

says that while editors do want to publish "the best books they can" (9), "manuscripts tend to be

chosen for publication because at least moderate success can be predicted" (14). Particularly

pertinent to my project is a statement regarding marketability from children's literature professor

Rebecca J. Lukens. She states that "[b]iographies of philosophers, poets, or musicians who lived

quietly with little drama or action in their lives are more difficult to make interesting" (265).

Banim seems to agree; she says that in order to make my biography about Welty a viable option

for publishing houses I will have to work hard to make Welty's accomplishments and personality

come through in the book as relevant to today's children.

Aside from researching publishing companies and knowing what they expect regarding

submissions, writers of children's literature also need to know the technical aspects of children's

books and how to go about submitting them to publishers. For example, Peachtree Publishers,

Ltd., considers middle reader books, for children ages nine to twelve, to be 20,000 to 30,000

words, or 100–200 pages, long (Snow). Seuling says books for eight to twelve year olds average

about 25,000 to 30,000 words (112). While the word lengths from these different sources are not

identical, they do provide a length range toward which to strive. As age ranges and document

lengths for books of children are generally similar across publishing houses, I will need to make

only minor adjustments to fit the requirements of each individual house to which I submit my

biography. Information on how to submit manuscripts to publishers can be obtained from The

Children's Book Council (Seuling 24), and most publishers include submission information on

their Web sites—Clarion does, for example ("Welcome"), as do Random House ("Frequently")

and Harcourt ("Getting"). Seuling advises that when submitting a manuscript to a publishing

house an author should never summarize his or her work in the cover letter because "the work

should explain itself" and "[i]f it needs help, it isn't ready to be sent out" (135). Peachtree

Publishers, Ltd., says query letters—letters inquiring about the viability of a children's book

concept or idea, not letters accompanying the full manuscript—should be "extremely thoughtful

and well written, present interesting or intriguing ideas, [or] leave you wanting to read more" (5).

Query letters with these qualities encourage editors to consider taking time to read the full

manuscript. Seuling says that sometimes after reading a manuscript editors write personal

comments to the author, and these comments should be carefully noted by the author, as editors

do not provide comments often and the comments "are not made lightly" (166). I learned this

very information while serving as an editorial intern at Peachtree Publishers, Ltd.: if an editor

who sees dozens of manuscripts in a day takes the time to write encouraging words to an author,

that author truly shows promise. Likewise, if the editor offers suggestions, the author will do

well to heed the advice, as the editor only offers such assistance to writers whose work is worthy

of additional attention.

  While information specific to the world of children's publishing is important, I felt I also

needed to research what those concerned with nonfiction and biographies for children said about

their expectations and to hear what other biographers who had written for children said about

their experiences. It is important for writers new to a genre to hear what others who have gone

before have learned so that the new writers know what to expect and do not repeat others' earlier

mistakes. These experts in the field and biographers for children offer what they've learned over

the years through columns, articles, and interviews. The literature by the scholars and authors

reviewed in this section also serve as sources for the data regarding the characteristics of quality

children's literature, which are discussed in the findings section of part III of this paper. As with the sources of data about children's literature award committees cited in the findings section, the majority of the information from these works consists of direct quotations, as they serve as the raw data collected for inclusion in the data matrix (see appendix B). While information exemplary only of the authors' major points is presented here, all information from each source provides the raw data for the data matrix.

Children's Literature Experts and Authors

As was stated earlier, the sources in this literature review used for the collection of data regarding the essential characteristics of quality literature for children were delimited by publication year (post-1990), a delimitation that ensures that only recent trends in children's literature (nonfiction and biographies specifically) are cited. In *The Children's Writer's Reference*, authors Berthe Amoss, a writer and illustrator of children's books and a teacher of children's literature, and Eric Suben, an author of more than twenty-five children's books and the editor-in-chief of Golden Books for twelve years, offer practical advice for writers of any children's genre and age group. They say the most important aspect of writing for children is—as is to be expected after reading the rhetoric section of this literature review—knowing the children that are the audience for the book (3). Both the subject matter and the format of the book "should be age-appropriate" (59), they say, and one of "[t]he primary book formats for children over age seven or eight" (79)—my intended age group—is the middle-grade book, which is broken into chapters and resembles the novels read by adults (80). Setting is very important in books for this age range, they say, and "[b]y the end of the first several pages of a middle-grade [reader]" the audience should know where and when the story takes place (131–32). Amoss and Suben also say that "[a]tmosphere or ambiance is part of the setting, sometimes

the most important part" (142) and that information used to anchor the setting are place names, details of dress and vehicles, food, language, dates, ceremonies (132), and the "social mores of the time" (141). Descriptions are also needed of people (211), their clothing (214), other objects of importance (215), the weather (209), the landscape (224), facial expressions and body language (218), and of course smells, tastes, sounds, and sensations of touch (224–25). Authors should also "be conscious of using gender-neutral words when describing occupations" (200). Biographies, specifically, tend to include detailed descriptions of significant places, a sense of the historical period, "tangible details of housekeeping, dress, food, etc.," education and religious training, travel (how and where), the subject's most notable accomplishments, whether or not any of the subject's accomplishments are the "first accomplishment in [his or her] field of endeavor," and the historical significance of the subject's accomplishments and life (85). They consider "[v]isual details" very important aspects of children's books (207), providing an example: authors should not state simply that "food was on the table," but should provide a visual image by stating "on the table were oranges, apples, and bananas" (223).

Also regarding language, Amoss and Suben state that a "general rule crucial to good writing for children and young people [is]: One thought per sentence." In other words, "it is best to avoid compound or other complex sentences" (189). They add, however, that "variety can be a hallmark of good prose style, and compound sentences or subordinate clauses may occasionally be desirable or even necessary" (189). They say diction should be "simple and concrete, not lavish and peculiar" (198), as "simple and uncluttered" writing helps "children glean meaning from words" (189). When more advanced vocabulary words are required (when an adult in the story is speaking, for example), they say that authors should "make sure the meaning of the big words is clear from the context" (199). Amoss and Suben also suggest avoiding the word *it*,

using instead more "inventive" language (189) and "good active verbs" (200). They also advise

careful use of adjectives and adverbs, as these can often reveal details less descriptively than

active verbs—especially generic, vague, and subjective adjectives such as "beautiful" (200).

Similarly, they say, "[w]hen writing for children, clichés are best avoided" because children may

not be familiar with the phrases or they may not understand the associations (190). Because

"many metaphors are likely to be lost on … literal young readers," the writing used in children's

books "must be concrete" (192). To avoid metaphors they advise, "focus on describing things as

they appear and not by comparing them with other things" (192).

Amoss and Suben believe that writers should not only know their audience typically

(book format, subject matter, and language) but should also know the interests of the age group

for which they are writing; such interests should be included so that children more readily relate

to the subjects of biographies. Some of the things children aged six to nine are interested in,

according to Amoss and Suben, are organized group activities such as team sports and scouts

(22). Children this age are also coming to understand a sense of responsibility (20) and learning

about standards for what is "cool" and "not cool" and what it feels like to be excluded (22).

Amoss and Suben say that children this age are also being influenced by adults other than their

parents and are "beginning to make up their own minds," which results at times in acts of

rebellion (21). Thus, they "may look for the following qualities in a hero or heroine: exceptional

skill, courage, independence, some juvenile qualities, some rejection of conventional/adult

world, [and] overcoming adversity" (23). Children six to eleven years of age are also adept at

assimilating "abstract learning … they are able to understand facts and concepts without having

direct personal experience of them" and they are coming to better understand that actions have

consequences (20). As writers of biographies inevitably gather more information than they can

use in a book about their subject for children,[24] an understanding of the interests and expectations

of a child audience—or their rhetorical constraints—is necessary to successfully write for them.

Susan Dove Lempke, Head of Children's Services at Niles Public Library and a regular

contributor to *Booklist*, has been cited previously in the rhetoric and visual rhetoric sections of

this literature review. She states that when writing for children authors must "take the time to

select words carefully and find a natural-sounding voice that communicates interest in the

subject by highlighting the most absorbing material" (431), for the author's interest in the subject

will be transmitted to the child audience. She lists the "number one standard" for quality

nonfiction as accuracy (431) and states that nonfiction books for children with "numerous small

errors … can point to an overall attitude of carelessness" (431), which is clearly linked to ethos.

Also related to ethos is her claim that a children's nonfiction writer's authority comes through in

his or her bibliography, notes, and end-of-book material (431). Regarding the end of book

materials, Lempke states that "[a]ll the elements readers need to find their way around the book

should be included: a table of contents, a glossary, a pronunciation guide, a timeline, an index, a

bibliography,… and a further reading list" with "age appropriate suggestions" (431–32). These

elements are similar to those deemed important by Giblin and Bamford and Kristo. Regarding

the rhetorical canon of delivery, Lempke states that the "quality and crispness" of images used

are important elements of a document's presentation, that "[p]hotos that are poorly cropped or

are artificially set against blocks of color are distracting," and that a "thoughtful book designer

creates a page where the eye moves easily and can take in each element in turn" (431).

Ed Sullivan, who worked for the Children's Defense Fund and is a longtime reader of

biographies, was director of the Langston Hughes Library in Tennessee when he wrote an article

for *School Library Journal* regarding the state of biographies in 2001. In his article, he expresses

concern that today's children do not seek out biographies to read as he did when he was a child (38). He acknowledges that some children are reading biographies for enjoyment and that they are reading biographies in classrooms, but he worries that the subjects of the biographies children read on their own time—popular singers, television personalities, athletes, and wrestlers (38)—and the "formulaic series biographies being cranked out by the dozens" with poor quality images and "dry, textbook-like prose" (39) that some teachers are assigning will give children the impression that "biographies are either cheap throwaways on the latest celebrity or fodder for homework assignments, and nothing else" (38). He insists that quality biographies, however, can be powerful, exciting, inspiring, and enjoyable, and that they can "grab readers' attention and spark their imaginations" (38). To assist teachers and librarians in identifying and authors in writing quality biographies, Sullivan offers characteristics that he considers to be "requisites for a quality biography": "outstanding treatment" of the subject, "obvious enthusiasm" of the authors for the subjects, "meticulous research," "narratives that go far beyond just informing their readers," "painstaking attention to detail," and clear "thoughtfulness in deciding which illustrations, photographs, and other artifacts are chosen and how they are used in conjunction with the text" (38). Biographies written with attention to these qualities, says Sullivan, help readers get to know the subjects, not just to know about them; they are biographies that make readers "*want* to read about [the subjects]" (39).

Milton Meltzer is an author of over eighty children's books in the areas of history, biography, and social reform, as well as a five-time nominee for the National Book Award and the winner of the 2001 Laura Ingalls Wilder Medal ("Author"), which is awarded to a children's author or illustrator "whose books … have made, over a period of years, a substantial and lasting contribution to literature for children" ("Laura"). He seems to focus on the rhetorical canon of

invention in the article "If the Fish Stinks…," printed in 1998. He says, "[a]s a biographer I must

work with the mass of facts my research gathers, and use to the full the freedom to select, to

arrange, to depict" (101–02). He believes biographers have a responsibility to present events

honestly, not obscure the truth. It is dishonest, he says, to leave out or gloss over aspects of a

subject's life that are undesirable or that contradict the image of the subject that has so long been

held by society (98–99). He continues, "[b]iographers owe readers the historical truth. And the

truth must include the negative as well as the positive" (102). The subjects of biographies are not

like "saints, or as heroes and heroines without fault" (97) but rather "men and women with

complex motives, displaying contradictory and confusing behavior" (98). Of his own biographies

he says, "I've never skipped over those times in their lives when my subjects have said or done

things that dishonor themselves and injure others…. But I don't think I've ever done that at the

cost of ignoring or neglecting those sides of character and behavior that merit illumination and

praise" (104). As he has said, men and women have complex motives and display conflicting

behavior, and biographers have a responsibility to reveal this truth of duality to their child

readers. Meltzer says one way he does this in his biographies is by pointing out the differences in

his subjects' words and their actions; as an example he says he revealed the inconsistency of

Thomas Jefferson decrying slavery yet owning over 230 slaves (99). Meltzer emphasizes the

importance of a balanced portrayal of the subject, as well, holding in low esteem those

biographers who focus "so intensely … on sexual or other pecadillos that the true nature of the

subject's achievement is obscured or totally lost" (98). Ultimately, for Meltzer, biographies offer

children "delightful and striking resemblances to the human nature they have begun to observe in

the world around them. They can also see, in the ups and downs of another's life, potentials for

personal growth and development that may lift them out of the rut of their perhaps still narrowly

confined world" (98). In other words, children need biographies, and biographers have a responsibility to expand children's worlds by offering balanced portrayals of their subjects.

Perhaps the most celebrated children's biographer today is Russell Freedman, who received the Laura Ingalls Wilder Medal in 1998, the Newbery Award for *Lincoln: A Photobiography* in 1988, Newbery honors for *Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery* in 1994 and *The Wright Brothers: How They Invented the Airplane* in 1992, the Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction for Children in 1991 for *Franklin Delano Roosevelt* and, most recently, the 2005 ALSC/Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award for *The Voice That Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights*, among others. His *Lincoln: A Photobiography* is credited by Giblin as the reason that greater emphasis has been placed on the visual aspects of biographies for children ("Biography" 44). Reviewer Paula T. Connolly praises *Lincoln: A Photobiography* because "[t]he tremendous losses of the Civil War are not only recounted, but shown through photographs that reveal battlefields strewn with dead bodies" (25). Freedman also interweaves the personal and political lives of Lincoln throughout the book (26) and sets Lincoln's life "against the context of his time." Connolly also praises Freedman for "clarifying stereotypes and myths about the president" (25). In all of his books, says Connolly, "Freedman does not … conflate 'leader' with an idealized persona. [His subjects] are people who struggle and have weaknesses and doubts of their own; he shows their struggles, the nuances of their character, and, at times, the prices they pay for their contributions" (27). Freedman himself says that "[b]iographies … appeal to [readers of all ages] because we have an insatiable hunger for stories about other people…. And those biographical subjects who have had to struggle the hardest are the ones who engage our imaginations most deeply." He continues, "[f]or children, especially, a book of history or biography offers the satisfaction of knowing that the people and

events portrayed are 'really real'" ("Wilder" 451). By "really real" Freedman is referring to a

balanced portrayal of humans with all of their accomplishments and failures, strengths and

weaknesses, displayed honestly. He abhors dramatization, or fictionalizing, and advocates strict

adherence to the facts (Giblin, "More" 418). Says Freedman, biographies and books about the

past endure when they "combine a vivid history with a compelling story" ("Wilder" 452), and a

compelling story is related through "concision, selection, judgment, lucidity, unwavering focus,

and the most artful use of language and storytelling techniques" (qtd. in Giblin, "Russell" 458).

James Cross Giblin is also a prolific writer of children's nonfiction, and among the

awards he has won for his biographies are Orbis Pictus honor book selection of *The Amazing Life*

of Benjamin Franklin in 2001 and Jefferson Cup honor book selection of *Charles A. Lindbergh:*

A Human Hero in 1998. Like Freedman, Giblin advocates adherence to "documented evidence."

He says, "the use of excerpts from a subject's letters, diaries, speeches, and interviews can give

young readers a much deeper impression of his or her personality than any invented dialogue

possibly could" and can make nonfiction just as exciting as "the most imaginative fiction"

("More" 418). Related to the use of documented evidence and primary sources, Giblin says that

"[t]here's been much discussion in recent years of the need for better and more complete

information about the author's research sources in all types of children's nonfiction"

("Biography" 44), and now "even the shortest nonfiction picture book is expected to contain not

only an index but a detailed list of sources as well" (44). Giblin also acknowledges that "[w]hile

thorough research and detailed attributions of sources are essential elements in any serious

nonfiction work, they will go for naught if the author fails to employ a lively, well-paced writing

style laced with revealing anecdotes" that offers the source material in a form that "readers will

find manageable"—meaning that the history of the person is complete yet not exhaustingly long

(45). Also, says Giblin, "the finest nonfiction titles" are written about "a topic of interest to young people, explored in depth, and presented with verve and imagination" ("More" 424).

Like Meltzer and Freedman, Giblin believes that biographies for children should "leave them with a full and honest impression of the human being at the center of the book" ("Biography" 45). He advises that biographies be based on "solid research" and hold the attention of their readers through "imaginative insight into their subjects and the storytelling skills required to bring them to life" (45). Giblin also advocates writing so that readers are shown, not told, how the subjects came to be the way they are (44). Of his own biographies, he says he wants his readers to "*feel*" the nature of his subjects and their actions "without [his] having to spell it out" (44, emphasis in original). He also thinks biographies should "provoke discussions" about subjects' actions and attitudes (44). Giblin, who also wrote a young adult biography about Hitler, says that children's biography authors "don't always have to like [their] subjects in order to write about them" (44). However, he warns that writing about a subject whose actions or personality traits you disagree with or do not approve of often leads to "the temptation to resort to labels" (44). He insists that authors must avoid this temptation because relying on labels or stereotypes "doesn't help readers to gain a clearer understanding of how [the subject] got that way," which is what biographies should strive to portray (44). Giblin, who frequently advocates the use of images in nonfiction for children, also advises, "[d]on't pay too much attention to what others say about how a nonfiction book should be written or what it should look like. Let the content determine the form; if it requires a large number of illustrations, do all you can to get them. But if it doesn't, don't be afraid to let the text stand on its own" ("Presidents" 67).

Natalie S. Bober is a biographer of statesmen, painters, and poets. Her *Abigail Adams* was a Jefferson Cup book of special note in 1996 and a Golden Kite honor book and the winner of the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award in 1995. Like Freedman, Bober says biographers must make their subjects appear to the readers as real people (78)—by portraying "the human being behind the great artist or statesman" (79). She suggests biographers can do this by making readers feel as if they are living in the same time period and "moving in the same circle of friends and family" as the subject (79). In order to achieve this feeling Bober says the biographer must understand his or her subject. To understand the subject, the "the biographer must first understand the forces that shaped the life" (80). To understand these forces "the biographer has to live on intimate terms with [the] subject. She has to get under his skin, inside his head *and* his heart, to see and hear and feel what he does" (80). The biographer tries to "reveal the mind of her subject" as she writes, "letting her readers draw some of their own conclusions" (80).

Not only do good biographies give a sense of the subject, she says, but also of the subject's time and place—"a fuller sense … than is available from textbooks" (82). In order to convincingly present a place, the biographer must try to "capture the sights, the sounds, even the smells of a place" (80). Says Bober,

> We have to know what our subjects ate, how they dressed, how they spoke; we have to "see" them surrounded by family and friends, and living in a particular time and place. How did these people and these things influence them? How were their accomplishments an outgrowth of the life they lived? People don't evolve in isolation. Just as time and place are the heart of much good fiction, so they are essential in a good biography. (81)[25]

Biographers also have to understand other influences on their subjects such as their education, economic status, parental guidance, friendships, and social standing. Also, adds Bober, readers should know what their "food, music, architecture, gardening" and leisure activities were like (81). All elements of historical context should be revealed to the reader so that the subjects' difficulties, motives, and actions are understood in relation to their time, not the time of the reader.

However, warns Bober about the rhetorical canons of invention, "[a]s we write, we have to be careful that the biography we are writing doesn't become just a dull list of facts" (86) and we "must not burden [the] reader with useless material" (87). Biographers must read everything (87) and collect facts about the subject (85). Then, says Bober, biographers "choose what is essential to help the reader see the flesh and blood behind the clouds of papers, speeches, and actions" (87). Bober says a "fine biographer" uses the facts she's discovered "to help her reveal the essence of the life she's describing—the traits, the characteristics that make that person unique" (85). The biographer "uses art to shape those facts into a story" (85), says Bober, who strives to write her own biographies so that they read like novels (86). Insists Bober, "[t]he personality of the hero must shine through." And this, she says, "is where the art comes in. Telling the story requires arrangement, composition, planning…. Good writing not only conveys information, but has balance, form, and grace. It becomes a work of art. There should be no need to choose between accuracy and beauty. One should be clothed in the other" (86). Bober adds that although a biographer "may not invent her facts as a novelist does" (85), this is not a drawback of writing biography. "In fact," she says, "biographers have an advantage over novelists. Our characters are the poets, artists, statesmen, scientists who have made a difference in the world. They matter, and therefore they are more interesting" (86). Regarding writing of

artists' lives, Bober says that the biographer should attempt "to illuminate, in some small measure, the mystery and magical process of creation. And here, too," she adds, "a sense of time and place is essential" (82). The story of the person's life and work needs to be "a readable story that makes readers feel as though they were living with her hero or heroine, subject to the same influences that surrounded them, and watching the advent of their poetry, or art … from day to day, as it sprang into being" (85). Bober even suggests that young readers reading about a writer's attempts at finding his or her own voice "may grasp the idea that revisions in their own writing are necessary" (86).

Penny Colman, author of Orbis Pictus honor book *Rosie the Riveter: Women Working on the Home Front in World War II* and other children's fiction and nonfiction as well as numerous articles about children's literature ("Penny Colman Bibliography" and "Penny Colman Biography"), also says that well written "[n]onfiction books can also be used as models for readers' own writing" (221). She also says, "since I have written both fiction and nonfiction, I am acutely aware that in order to write good fiction and good nonfiction it is necessary to employ many of the same literary techniques and to pay close attention to the narrative, structure, point of view, language, syntax, sequence, pace, tone, and voice" (215). Attention to these elements can aid children in using them in their own writing. Like Freedman and Giblin, Colman is not a fan of fictionalizing what is supposed to be nonfiction and points out the hypocrisy of accepting fictionalization in children's literature when it has been "criticized in the world of adult literature" (217). One of Colman's drives when writing nonfiction is to discover "the essence of the story, the emotional insight, the cognitive concept" that she wants to illuminate (221). She encourages the use of nonfiction with children because "[a]s youngsters learn to function in the real world and figure out who and what they will be as adults, nonfiction

books offer so much—adventure, role models, knowledge, insights, inspiration, career possibilities, real-life examples of how to cope an solve problems" (221).

Like Bober and Colman, Betty Carter, who teaches children's literature and is a board member of the Young Adult Library Services Association, feels that "[t]he books youngsters read become literary role models for their own writing and inquiry" (67). Thus, authors of children's nonfiction should include information about their sources, because poor documentation "reflects the antithesis of critical reading skills—never to accept unquestionably what is in print, always to check statistics and sources, and to think independently—that form the core of respected school curricula." Carter also says that source citations teach children "that research happens before writing begins" (66). Although Carter advocates clear citation, she says that "the argument persists that footnotes and bibliographies are off-putting to children, and that young readers will not pick up books that include such features." But, she says, "[t]he problem here is that we simply don't know whether or not this assumption is valid…. Until researchers examine this notion, publishers should err on the side of accuracy by including acknowledgements, bibliographies, and specific citations. If such documentation is appended, then readers may choose to explore or ignore it" (67). Carter also believes that the structure of a book is important for child readers to understand. She says, "[p]atterns such as enumeration, sequence, cause/effect, and compare/contrast not only control subject in a book, but they also provide youngsters with models for organizing information. This is the language of grown-ups" (68). Aside from clear documentation and structure, the other characteristics of quality nonfiction for children according to Carter are "beautifully written prose, definable themes, unifying structure, and stimulating subjects" (59).

Ruth Turk, a prolific author of fiction and nonfiction for adults and children, including

numerous biographies for young readers, offers a great deal of practical advice for writers of

biographies for children. First and foremost, she says, "the subject you choose must be attractive,

not only to you, the writer, but to your young readers" (24), a statement that brings to mind what

Banim and Seuling have also said. Turk also says, "[b]efore you undertake comprehensive

research, be sure to consult Books in Print to find what other books about your subject are

available. There could be a half dozen or more authors who have chosen to write about the same

subject. In that case, if you are still determined to go ahead, you will need to come up with a

different approach, format, or both" (24).[26] Turk also informs that "[t]hough it is comforting and

convenient to have the subject's approval, it is not mandatory to obtain permission to write the

story of someone's life" (24). When the research finally begins, says Turk, it "starts with your

reading everything written about [the subject], including articles in newspapers and other

periodicals, as well as history books concerning the relevant time periods. Reading the work of

other biographers will help to determine your own insights and points of departure" (24). This,

too, is similar to what other authors have suggested. Also similar to others' advice, Turk advises,

"as you conduct your research, keep track of good photographs that you can later recommend to

your publisher's photography department. A publisher seriously considering a manuscript may

appreciate photo sources, but usually the photo staff tracks down their own." She adds, however,

"[d]on't hesitate to go beyond authorship limits if it will enhance the quality of your work" (24).

Turk advises "plan[ning] the number of chapters before you begin to write (ordinarily

from six to twelve, depending on your organization of the material)" (25) and says that when

using quotations, accurate sources and dates are paramount as "your publisher will require you to

include these credits in the finished biography" (24). Important details to include in a biography

are the events that happen to the family members of the subject, "especially when it is a famous family," she says, and especially if some of the family members are still living (25). Writers should also avoid talking down to readers. Explains Turk, "[w]hile your writing must be straightforward and uncomplicated, young readers will resent oversimplification." Similar to Amoss and Suben's advice is Turk's advice to use "lively verbs and adjectives that jump from the page, maintain a brisk pace, and help create glowing visual images in the young mind." As far as advice for engaging a reader in the content, Turk says it is best to "'hook' that juvenile with the opening paragraph, then follow through with the complete biography" (24). Turk emphasizes more than anything that

> [r]esearching and writing a biography for children is not a quick or easy project. It takes time, dedication and discipline. It also means always keeping in mind the young person for whom you are writing. An adult reader may struggle a bit longer with a boring biography before he gives up; ten-year-olds will continue to read only as long as the first page unless you, the author, hook them immediately and hold them for the duration. (25)

Biographers also "write more convincingly," she adds, if they respect their subjects (24).

Like Turk, Rebecca J. Lukens, who has been teaching children's literature since 1964 and has been in the Children's Literature Association since its inception, says an uncomplicated writing style is best for a child audience. She explains, "[s]ince their experiences are more limited, children may not understand the same complexity of ideas. Since their understanding is more limited, the expression of ideas must be simpler—both in language and in form" (8–9). She adds that "[r]elated to the necessity for simplicity in the expression of ideas are vocabulary and attention span. Stories [for children] are more directly told, with fewer digressions and more

obvious relationships between characters and actions, or between characters themselves" (9).

Lukens says that despite these changes necessary when writing for children as opposed to adults, "[t]he child wants what most adults want in literature: action, happenings, questions that need answers, answers that fit questions, glimpses of happy and unhappy outcomes, discovery of how events grow and turn" (97). "In an adult novel," Lukens says, "action may occur anywhere.... However, the story for children almost always occurs in a time and place described in some detail" (147). This is similar to what Bober and others have said regarding setting. Lukens adds a warning, though: "[t]oo much factual detail … makes the page dense with dates, events, and the capital letters of names and places; the appearance is that of an encyclopedia" (264). Thus, she says, biographers, "facing the need to arouse and hold the reader's interest, may be tempted to create sympathy for the subject and to make a tearjerker out of early trials" (269–70). Biographers should resist this temptation to sensationalize, however, for "too much dramatization or inclusion of probable dialogue prompts the response, 'What can I really believe?'" Lukens insists that "[i]t is possible to stick to the facts and to write an interesting book. But if the writer does dramatize," she adds, "these inventions should be historically true to the times and not merely possible, but probable" (264). A "conscientious" biographer, however, does not "presume to know the mind of the subject, but limits the information to verifiable matters and to emotions, fantasies, or thoughts the subject has spoken of or recorded" (262).

Aside from accuracy, Lukens says the other "essential qualities" of a biography are that it gives an "authentic picture of [a] period," that it concerns a "subject worthy of attention," and that it provides sources (34). She also seems to believe that good children's literature both instructs and delights (9) but warns against preaching, stating that "having a reason to choose a subject for biography does not give the writer license" to use such phrases as "[w]e must

remember" (270). Instead, she says, "the storyteller we especially value is someone whose stories awaken us to awareness of new meaning—of the inconsistency of people or the mixed joys of family living, or the pain of social exclusion, for example" (129). Biographers should therefore strive to reveal individuals, not stereotypes, should not ignore subjects' negative qualities, and should focus not only on the events of the subject's life but also on the subject's nature (34). Says Lukens, "[w]e often have the superior notion that children are too immature to recognize what makes a whole human being, or to see how people can be one thing at one time and become something else with the passage of time or events" (75), but the goal of biographers is to show to children this "believable human being, complete with such flaws as occasional self-interest, irritability, or faulty judgment." Unlike other authors such as Giblin, however, Lukens says "writers usually ignore socially disapproved behavior" (263).

On the other hand, Zena Sutherland, a "children's literature pioneer" who is an "internationally recognized reviewer of children's literature" and "among the world's most influential and prolific scholars of young people's literature" ("Zena"), says that "[d]espite the criticism from some adults, children have welcomed the candor that is evident in trends in contemporary publishing." This is because "[t]he children of the 1990s who watch television by the hour are familiar with the mores and the conflicts of the rest of the world, as well as with those of their own country" (7). Children know that people act differently and that some acts are not acceptable in every society, and since they understand this concept they do not appreciate the attempt to hide such information from them—they want to see the whole person. Says Sutherland, "[o]ne of the best methods of ensuring that the whole person is presented in a biography is to include arresting details." Sutherland explains that this is because without such personal details "[f]ew of us, whether children or adults, can easily identify with people who

have changed history … and these human details help us know that great feats in life are accomplished by human beings and not by paragons" (423). As others have stated, biographers must show that their subjects are real people, and again like others have stated, Sutherland says biographers "must always be sure that they are not sensationalizing any events of a person's life. They must be able to point out if a particular fact in their subject's life was very important to that individual, or if it was an idiosyncrasy" (423). Sutherland adds that when writing a biography of a literary figure an "internal analysis of their writings is essential regardless of how much we know about their public and private lives" (420).

Sutherland lists the three "essential ingredients of good biography" as "history, the person, and literary artistry." She explains, in a good biography "[f]acts should be authentic and verifiable; the subject should be considered as an individual rather than as a paragon or type; and the writing should be a conscious work of art" (420). Regarding historical accuracy Sutherland says that "[t]he best biographers are aware of their own biases and take special care to be sure they do not interfere with the search for whatever degree of truth can be found" (421)—as all researchers should do (Connors 15).[27] Continues Sutherland, "[g]ood biographers know they are not free to offer personal opinions as fact or to present an interpretation for which there is no evidence." Instead, "the [subjects'] deeds speak for themselves." However, "[i]f the behavior of the subject seems ambiguous, the author may speculate about the contradictory evidence, but not take sides to tell the reader what to think. "It also follows," says Sutherland, like so many other authors, "that the biographer may report only those words and thoughts which were recorded," or, when there is no recorded information available, state that the conjecture of what the subject thought or said is indeed a conjecture (421). "No liberties may be taken" with the documented facts on which biographies are based (424). Sutherland also says that while "[b]iographies for

children will never approach the level of documentation that is found in the scholarly adult biographies" (426), "[f]or many people, two of the most important tests of a good biography are the accuracy and thoroughness of its documentation" (421).

Related to the rhetorical canon of style is Sutherland's statement that "[i]f biography is to be judged as literature, it must also have a pleasing style…. The prose must be good to read, and it must be appropriate to the subject matter and to the mood of the story" (425). Related to the canon of arrangement she says it should also be "a consciously planned composition. It has a subject, a theme, unity attained through that theme, style, a pattern of the whole, and a pattern of the parts." Sutherland states that biographers notice themes as they read through all the documents and look at all the evidence, and it is the theme that "makes a fundamental statement about the person's life." "Biographers fail," says Sutherland, "if they approach the research process with a theme in mind, for then, despite all good intentions, they will make the data fit their preconceptions." Once found, often the theme is reflected in the title of the book to encourage children to pick it up (424). As Sutherland states, the set of characteristics of quality biographies put forth by her and other experts "not only defines the genre, but suggests the standards by which it can be judged" (420). This is my aim in gathering such criteria; the information collected for the data matrix in appendix B should serve not only as a guide for writing a children's biography but also as a tool of evaluation of my own biography of Welty once it is completed.

Carl M. Tomlinson and Carol Lynch-Brown, teachers of children's literature and authors of additional titles on children's literature, devote much of their discussion to audience and the rhetorical canons, albeit without always using those exact terms. Regarding audience they say that for children "[d]epth and complexity of subject treatment must be appropriate" (182); to

know what is appropriate the writer has to know the characteristics of his or her audience. My intended audience, as I've said, is children aged nine to twelve. Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown say that nine to twelve year olds can handle more complicated plots than younger children, can understand books that incorporate the use of flashback and symbolism, and can manage "[l]anguage devices such as speech patterns and dialects of earlier or different cultures" (18).[28] They also say "stories that present alternative points of view, non-traditional characters, and moral dilemmas are well-suited to young people whose moral development allows them to recognize the legitimacy of opinions, mores, and lifestyles different from their own" and that children at this age "are particularly interested in reading about young people who, like themselves, are growing up, asserting and using their new-found skills, moving toward independence, and experiencing growth through meeting challenges" (18). Thus, in my biography about Welty, I will not need to fret over quoting documents in which dialect is used and I will need to emphasize the choices she made as a child and portray viewpoints other than her own.

In the vein of invention, Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown state that authentic biography makes use of only documented, factual information when possible. However, they state, in order for the stories will be "lively and appealing and worth the children's time to read" some allowances are made such as that for paraphrasing and "interpretation of known actions to determine probable motives." However, such allowances may be made only when they do not alter the truth, they stress (186). They believe quality nonfiction should "distinguish between fact, theory, and opinion. When not clearly stated as such, theories or opinions are flagged in good nonfiction by carefully placed phrases such as 'may be,' 'is believed to be,' or 'perhaps'" (182). Also, they state that personification "is to be avoided" in nonfiction "because the

implication is factually inaccurate." The placing of labels and stereotyping must also be avoided, and they believe that "[t]he best nonfiction goes beyond mere avoidance of sexist or racist language and stereotyped images in text and illustrations. It also shows positive images of cultural diversity" (182). Discussing content they state, "[*q*]*uality in writing* is never easy to define, but it has to do with originality and importance of ideas, imaginative use of language, and beauty of literary and artistic style that enable a work to remain fresh, interesting, and meaningful for years and years" (3, emphasis in original). Nonfiction for children "must be written in a clear, direct, easily understandable style" and the authors state that "[i]n recent years, a tight, compressed, but conversational, writing style has come to be favored in nonfictional text. Such stylistic devices as questions and the second-person pronoun you … stimulate readers' interest and involvement" (181). Content should be presented to children in "known to unknown, general to specific, or simple to more complex" patterns in order to "aid conceptual understanding and encourage analytical thinking" (182). Nonfiction authors must also include "[r]eference aids such as tables of contents, indexes, pronunciation guides, glossaries, maps, charts, and tables" when necessary to "make information in books easier to find and retrieve, more comprehensible, and more complete" (182), an idea which is linked to the rhetorical canon of arrangement. Related to the canon of arrangement as well as to that of delivery, or presentation, is the authors' statement that "[f]ormatting and artistic medium should be appropriate to the content. The exactness, clarity, and precision of photography, for example, make this medium useful to authors whose purpose is to present the world as it is. Sometimes, however, a drawing is preferable to a photograph when an illustrator wishes to highlight a specific feature by omitting irrelevant details." Delivery is also discussed when the authors state, "[w]orks of nonfiction must be attractive to the child. An intriguing cover, impressive

illustrations, and balance of text and illustrations make books look interesting to a child. Dense text that fills up each page and dull, infrequent illustrations can make a book unattractive to young readers" (182).

As many of the authors reviewed have stated, accuracy is one very important element of writing biographies for children. Judith V. Lechner, a professor of children's literature with a degree in Library and Information Sciences ("Judith"), says that while she encourages striving toward the goal of accuracy, she knows that "threats to accuracy in biographies arise from many, and sometimes unexpected, sources. In fact, inaccuracy may be an inherent quality of the genre," she says, because it is difficult to assess the accuracy of facts in a biography. She says that as a teacher and a reviewer trying to "ascertain the accuracy of facts and the fairness of judgments in children's biographies" she is often "struck by the distortions still prevalent in many of them" (230). Yet accuracy is very important in biographies for children because although children can differentiate fact and "make-believe" by the second grade, "[b]ecause of their limited world knowledge … children have little basis for weighing the facts or for questioning claims" and therefore "often accept what they are told or what they read as truth" (239). Thus, biographers have a responsibility to present the facts accurately to children, and Lechner insists that biographers take great care in the collection and presentation of their facts.

Lechner hopes to aid biographers in avoiding inaccuracies by discussing in her article the four categories of threats to accuracy: "(1) carelessness and oversimplification; (2) inadequate data; (3) unreliable sources; and (4) social mores and taboos" (230). By carelessness Lechner means that some writers do not adequately research for sources to verify information they have found (231) or, in other words, they do not rely on triangulation to ensure that their facts are reliable. She lists as an example of oversimplification the closing sentences of Lucille R.

Penner's *The True Story of Pocahontas*: "Pocahontas stayed in England for the rest of her life. But the people of America will always remember her" (qtd. in Lechner 231). This sentence is oversimplified and thus inaccurate because the truth is that Pocahontas spent only one year in England and died "on the eve of her homeward journey" (231). Penner's sentence is technically correct—Pocahontas *did* stay in England for the rest of her life—but it is factually inaccurate because it does not reveal to readers that Pocahontas died at age twenty-two or that she fully intended to return to her homeland. Inaccuracy is also likely to occur, says Lechner, when there is sparse data on a subject or event, such as the unverified account of Pocahontas's saving John Smith's life (232). Inaccuracy due to inadequate data is especially likely when the information that is available is not documented but instead lore or legend. Often, after hearing that certain events occurred over and over in our own childhood, we come to believe that they really happened and thus we report them as facts although they are not verifiable. One way of dealing with the prevalence of lore is to incorporate the lore into the biography, admitting that it is indeed lore, not fact. She says such honesty on the part of the author "respects both the biography's subject and its audience" (239). Another source of inaccuracy that Lechner says writers may not be able to avoid even in their attempts to report only verifiable facts is that of unreliable sources—even primary sources from the hands of the subjects themselves (233). Lechner seems to suggest that one way of handling untrustworthy or conflicting sources is to provide all documented versions of the event or situation and then leave it to the readers to decide which version to believe (235). The fourth threat to accuracy is social taboos. As Lechner explains, biographies always "are affected by the norms and perspectives of the times in which they are written" (238). In past centuries, as has been stated, it was socially acceptable, even expected, that the flaws and failures of subjects were to be excluded from biographies for

children. While it might be assumed that writers are allowed more freedom of speech in today's

society, Lechner is simply reminding authors that every society has its mores and taboos, and it

is important to recognize that these will affect their writings.

One very prominent expert in the field of children's literature is Myra Zarnowski, a

professor of Elementary and Early Childhood Education and former elementary and middle

school teacher. Two of her publications concern biographies—*History Makers* and *Learning

about Biographies* are both pedagogical tools for teachers having their students read, evaluate,

and write biographies. Although these books address the use of biographies in classrooms, they

also provide valuable information for any would-be biography writer. In *History Makers*

Zarnowski offers several questions biographers writing for children should ask: "What issues in

a life story do I find most interesting? What issues seem relevant in today's world? ... What do

children want to know? What background information do they need to know?" (107). These

questions address the rhetorical constraints of the audience and provide guides as to the kind of

information to include in the biography. Zarnowski says that other information that should be

included is "'terrific specifics' and anecdotes—those unusual or vivid details and stories that

stick in a reader's mind and generate interest" (30). Anecdotes are essential because they cause

children to "pause and think" and because they are "the details that make a writer's work

distinctive, original, and memorable" (*Learning* 25). Good biographies also offer "a strong

melding" of words and pictures where "[b]oth work together to provide information" (*History*

69). In addition, "[f]eatures like sidebars and other innovative graphics are changing the look of

current biographies and the way we read them," says Zarnowski, making them more

"interactive" (69). By "interactive" Zarnowski means that readers do not have to "always read in

a linear way from the front to the back of a book" but can "approach a book by examining the

pictures first, by reading the sidebars, or by sampling a bit of each" before diving into the main

text (70).[29] Zarnowski says that some authors also use these tools such as sidebars, captions, and

timelines to present the less important information, leaving the main information or major events

of the subject's life for the text (70). Authors' notes, she says, often include why the subject is

important to the author, how the author found out about the subject, and why the author decided

to write about the subject (88).

Zarnowski also speaks about problems that biographers face such as "*hindsight bias*," or

the belief that "one event simply led to another." She says this "is a flawed way of understanding

the complexity of historical cause and effect" (*History* 8, emphasis in original). Another

"difficult pitfall to avoid" is presentism, which Zarnowski defines as "judg[ing] people from the

past by our own standards of conduct or morality" (9). A biographer needs to be aware of the

subject's time and place and view the subject's actions in the context of that time and place, not

in the context of his or her own time and place. Zarnowski also says that biographers have a

"responsibility to treat the subject fairly and honestly" (*Learning* 19), "telling about the subject's

shortcomings as well as his or her achievements" (24). Zarnowski says such balance produces

"believable portraits" that "show the complexity of human character." She adds, however, that

"[b]alance does not imply debunking or going to great lengths to show negative qualities and

false ambitions. It implies that the author tries to give a complete picture, one that makes the

subject come alive" (24–25). While some biographers "ultimately make the decision to include

disturbing material" (*Learning* 21), Zarnowski says the decision is always left up to the

individual biographer and the individual situation or material. "Biographers are active decision

makers," she says, "deciding what to include and what to omit, what to highlight and what to

place in the background, and what to claim as truth and what to suggest as informed speculation"

(9). While biographers are allowed these decisions, Zarnowski says nonetheless "they are expected to tell *the truth*" (19, emphasis in original). She insists, "[w]hen biographers write, they combine their concern for accuracy with their concern for pursuing an original interpretation. When selecting material, a biographer will ask two questions: Is it true? Is it important to my understanding? The answers to these questions form the basis of all biography" (*Learning* 26).

Another problem biographers face is related to the responsibility of telling the truth: "the urge to create" (*Learning* 22). This urge crops up most often when there is no information available about a particular time in the subject's life. "In the past," Zarnowski says, "many biographers writing for children felt free to fill in these gaps by creating dialogue and events that seemed plausible, even if they never actually occurred" (*History* 53). Today, however, biographers prefer to reveal such gaps to their readers (53), using words like "*perhaps*, *no one knows when … some say*," and '*probably*, *some people think*, or *we assume*' to highlight uncertainty" (54, emphasis in original). Zarnowski also notes that when faced with conflicting data (such as multiple dates reported as a birthday), some authors choose which bits to present as fact while others reveal the conflict (52). She encourages the revelation of gaps in data, the use of words that reveal uncertainty, and the explication of conflicting data because they teach children about "the role of interpretation in nonfiction writing" (*Learning* 6). Also informative to children are the authors who "leave tracks their readers can follow" in "notes, postscripts, and appendixes" (23). In addition to serving as models for student writers, says Zarnowski, "[b]iographers who tell their readers about their research make their writing more credible" (25). She also encourages sharing skepticism about the validity of sources with readers (*History* 32). Such critical thinking about sources not only teaches children to question sources but also teaches about the drive for truth in nonfiction.

Zarnowski does not want children's nonfiction authors to think that a desire to tell the truth should prevent them from writing "artful, well-crafted prose," however (*History* 31). Biographers should "strive to make their books both interesting and informative" and "work hard to pique the reader's interest" (28). She paraphrases noted biographer Leon Edel, who believes that biographers do not have to be confined by "strict chronology" but "should be free to use the same narrative techniques as the novelist, including flashbacks, flash-forwards, summaries, and retrospectives" (*Learning* 53). "Such techniques," says Zarnowski, "help writers develop the underlying themes and patterns they discover in their material." In addition, "beginning a biography at the peak of a person's career instead of at the moment of birth … enables children to deal with some of their most pressing questions" about the person (53). Biographers should also, says Zarnowski, "try to set their scenes descriptively, develop their characters completely, and give us the impression of life unfolding" (6) as well as teach about "historical context" and how "people are influenced by their times" (*History* 9). Biographies reveal a great deal to children:

> As a life story, a biography tells readers how a person navigates the extremes of success or failure, riches or poverty, happiness or sadness, innovative change or stagnant sameness, determination or aimlessness. But biographies do more than deal with specific, personal stories. They also provide readers with an entryway to the larger issues of history. Anyone who reads a biography learns about the time and place in which the subject lived—the larger social, political, and economic factors of the time. Biographies raise questions that affect the larger society— issues of war and peace, change, citizenship, human rights, use of resources and technology, and more. (*History* 5)

Zarnowski's previously mentioned "*questioning approach*" to history allows biographers to "raise questions about historical context, perspective, cause and effect, and significance" (117, emphasis in original). Zarnowski says one way biographers can question history for child readers is to ask "what if?"—revealing that if certain choices or life events had been different for the subject, then history might have taken a different turn (7). Biographers can also ask what the turning points are and share those with the readers (10).

Adult Biography Authors

In my research on authors of biographies for children, I discovered some first-person accounts from authors of biographies for adults. While I understand that writing for a child audience is different from writing for an adult audience, the experience of biographers writing for adults is not altogether unlike that of biographers writing for children. As Sutherland says, there are actually very few differences between juvenile biography and adult biography (426). Thus, the advice and insight offered by these adult biographers are important for any novice writer of biographies. Regardless of the amount of information they provide, however, these sources have not been used for the collection of data for the data matrix, as the criteria in the data matrix are criteria for children's biographies only.

Valerie Boyd's experiences as a biographer are particularly pertinent to my situation, as Boyd's biography has as its subject a female literary figure, Zora Neale Hurston. Boyd says she wanted to know more about "the person behind the book" after reading Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. To begin her research, Boyd says she read everything by and about her subject. Archived documents, photographs, and interviews with acquaintances of Hurston turned out to be important aspects of discovering Hurston's story, says Boyd. She says she wanted to "dive into every aspect" of Hurston's life, not just cover the superficial details of Hurston's

career or the events that had previously been covered in the news or other books; she wanted to include Hurston's peers and rivals, her partnerships and the ends of those partnerships, feuds with her and anecdotes about her. She wanted to reveal the "behind the scenes" stories, the stories that hadn't been told; she wanted to note Hurston's various jobs, influences, tensions, and the people who inspired the characters she had written about. Boyd was encouraged to collect even the minutest details of Hurston's life by a letter from Alice Walker to Hurston's previous biographer in which Walker said she wanted to know all the mundane details that made Hurston an individual, such as her favorite color, her favorite flower, her favorite thing to cook and why. These things, says Boyd, make Hurston "more human … more real to readers." They reveal Hurston as an individual rather than as an elevated figure, and it was revealing the individual Hurston that was Boyd's goal. The image chosen for the cover of the biography reflects the image of Hurston as an individual that Boyd holds. The photograph (not found in the archives but taken and retained by one of Hurston's students, whom Boyd interviewed) reveals visually how Boyd sees Hurston: among the people yet standing out from the people, too. In the image, Hurston is the only person standing amidst a crowd of seated spectators. Boyd (or the book jacket designer) enunciated Hurston's standing out-ness by adding color to Hurston and leaving the others in black and white. The contrast between the lightness of Hurston's dress and the dark surroundings of the wooden background and the shadowed spectators aid in separating Hurston from the crowd, and the multiple colors surrounding Hurston reference Boyd's title, *Wrapped in Rainbows: The Life of Zora Neale Hurston*.

In her approach to writing the biography, Boyd vowed that although she believes all biographers have a point of view, being human, she would not judge Hurston. She said she might *disagree* with Hurston's actions or beliefs but that she would still try to *understand* Hurston's

actions and beliefs. Nothing that was important to the subject should be left out of an account of his or her life, says Boyd. She says all biographers must evaluate their work at the end of the journey and ask, "Have you said everything you need to say?" The gathering of data for the journey, though, can pose one of the greatest threats to the completion of the biography, reveals Boyd. She says that research "can be very seductive" because "it's fascinating to immerse yourself in someone else's life," and once you have delved in you never want to stop learning. Boyd said she knew she had researched and studied Hurston enough, though, when she felt she could predict how Hurston would have reacted to letters Boyd found or events that had occurred in Hurston's life. After the research period (four and a half years, for Boyd), Boyd admits that writing the biography's opening was her hardest task. Ultimately, Boyd decided that starting with the mundane facts of Hurston's birth felt "wrong" and "boring." She instead began the biography with a scene from Hurston's childhood that Boyd feels is "symbolic of the woman [Hurston] would become," for Boyd wanted to capture Hurston's *spirit* in the opening paragraph. While Boyd's opening paragraph does include such facts as the number of Hurston's sisters and brothers, it includes this information as part of the narrative, not as a list of facts. The opening is also descriptive (including colors, detailed appearances of objects, and smells) and quotations from Hurston's journals. The quotations are also worked into the narrative: Boyd writes "Zora remembered…" instead of "Zora said, 'such and such.'" Boyd also practiced many of the things that previously cited children's literature experts have suggested: throughout the writing process Boyd used the tools of fiction such as dialogue, setting, and drama. She says one of her greatest compliments is that the biography "reads like a novel." Like children's biography authors, Boyd, too, insists that even though a biographer uses the tools of fiction he or she has to "tell the truth."

Gary Scharnhorst, like Boyd, writes about literary figures. He admits that being a literary

biographer is a difficult task, as "many writers over the years have regarded literary biography as

a contemptible form of voyeurism" because of the privacy invasion and gossiping that often

accompany biographies. Scharnhorst says that some writers "forbade [their] heirs from

cooperating with biographers," prohibited the publishing of their personal letters, and even

burned correspondence to avoid what they regarded as sensationalist biographers (236).

Although he does not condone the misrepresentation of facts, Scharnhorst admits that some

biographers have been known to invent so-called facts that support the stereotypes held about

their subjects and says that it is unfortunate that readers, without access to the actual documents,

have accepted such false stories as truth (237). However, Scharnhorst still argues for the

continuation of literary biography, for, he says, "[i]n teasing out the story of a life from the traces

it has left, I firmly believe, the literary biographer plumbs the most basic, most elemental sources

of scholarship and tries to make sense, in literature as in life, of the personal and possessed past"

(249). Scharnhorst also says that while it is commonplace for biographers to avoid making

inferences about the subject's life from the subject's work, he suggests that such inferences may

be able to provide insightful information about the subject. He provides an example of how

studying the subject's work has revealed information about the subject's life. He says that an

obscure reference prompted him to suspect that Bret Harte had a third son no previous

biographer had mentioned. He used Harte's story "The Luck of Roaring Camp" to guesstimate a

time period in which this third son might have been born and died and, by searching newspapers

around this time period, discovered an obituary that confirmed his suspicions (244).

Shirley A. Leckie also argues for the continuing necessity and relevance of biographies.

She says "[b]iography matters because we need it for inspiration, consolation, and

companionship, which we derive when … we feel that we actually know another human being more intimately than we know many of the individuals with whom we interact daily" (13). Biographies also provide readers with information about "how others have made the difficult choices that confront all of us as human beings and how they lived with the often-unintended consequences of those choices" and offer readers a means of achieving "a deeper understanding of ourselves through others" (13). Echoing what some of the children's literature experts have said, Leckie says biography also teaches about history and "the extent to which history molds individuals and, in turn, is influenced by individuals" (13). Leckie says that the biographies of the Greeks and the Victorian era also provided readers with "moral inspiration" (2). In 1918, however, biographer Lytton Strachey avoided moral lessons and instead relied on Sigmund Freud's theories of the subconscious motivators for individuals' actions (2–3). Thus, after Strachey, the readers of biographies have come to expect insight into the motivations and behaviors of the subjects instead of moral guidelines, says Leckie (3).

Leckie admits that "[n]either historians nor biographers are usually trained professionals in the behavioral sciences," but she still believes that well-written biographies can provide insight into how "personalities and characters are shaped by our consciousness of our race and gender, environmental influences such as the class we belong to, our early education, indoctrination, and the choices we make" (3). She also says that biographers should not strive to write definitive books on their subjects but to present complete portraits of these individuals— portraits that will inspire others to undertake their own research into the life of the subject (19). Like Boyd, Leckie wants to convey the personality of the subject to her readers (3), and like Scharnhorst, she emphasizes the importance of connecting both the personal and professional lives of subjects instead of concentrating on only one (4). She also advocates, as did Zarnowski,

that biographers should "place their subjects securely within the historical context of their times" (12). Leckie says that according to biographer Leon Edel, a biographer's most difficult problem is being a participant-observer, as these roles are contradictory (9). Leckie explains, the biographer must strive to view the world as his or her subject saw it while at the same time remaining detached in order to recognize fact from fiction (9). Leckie also notes that biographies are all partially autobiographical because in order to commit years of his or her life to a subject the themes discovered must resonate with the author's own life (2). Biographies are also autobiographical because they are created with and reflect the authors' personal interpretations of the information about the subject (18).

Although Nell Irvin Painter criticizes adult feminist biographies in her review "Writing Biographies of Women," her complaints are important for any biographer to heed, even one writing for children. For example, Painter criticizes the biographers she's reviewing for "reduc[ing] the subject … to a bundle of more or less precise sociological categories ranging from gender … to race, age, class,… health, and sexual orientation" ("Writing" 162). Painter says that while she does not deny that such aspects influence all individuals, she feels that by limiting the discussion of an individual to these sociological categories biographers squelch the individuality of their subjects (162). Instead of relying only on these societal categories she says biographers should relate these aspects of the subjects' lives *and* "the individual consciousness that makes each person unique" (162), for, Painter insists, readers want to understand the subject as an individual not merely as "the woman," or "the black woman," or even as "a woman, lesbian, light-skinned Chicana" (163). The premise of biography, Painter believes, is the desire and responsibility to reveal the qualities of the subject that make his or her "life worth reading" (162); therefore, "[i]f biographers … fail to show the singularity of a life, they fail as life writers,

and their readers complain that their subjects do not come alive. Without the idiosyncratic stories and peculiar details that flesh out individual experience, life writing flattens into sociology" (162). As adult biographers need to remember this so too do biographers for children. When writing my biography about Welty I must resist the trap of making her a symbol—the *first woman* to do something; the *woman* who struggled to do something as opposed to the *person* who struggled. Painter says, like Boyd, that in order to make their subjects' individuality understood, biographers need to make use of the skills of fiction writers (163); "facts alone do not forge a credible character," she says—biographers must present the character using their literary skills (162). Biographies that read as narratives and present intriguing characters are especially successful with children, as the children's literature experts have revealed.

Painter begins a 2001 article by stating, "I urge biographers … to break their methodological habits and make full use of pictures" ("*Ut Pictura Poesis*" 103), not use "visual source material uncritically, as mere illustrations" (105).[30] She says that since Roland Barthes revealed the cultural implications of images in the 1950s and 1960s (105) biographers should use such images to reveal their subjects' environments (104), for "[i]mages contain a wealth of meaning about biographical subjects and about the cultural and historical conventions" that mold identities (103). According to Painter, images help biographers to gather more information and to more fully understand their subjects' historical contexts (106), thus biographers who neglect images as sources of information deny both themselves and readers of a better understanding of the subject (105). She says there are "two ways in which the analysis of images enriches biography: mimetically—by helping biographers more thoroughly portray nature—and semiotically—by helping them unpack the cultural meanings that images contain and convey" (106). As has been discussed in the visual rhetoric section of the literature review, I intend to use

images in my biography to show how Welty and those of her time lived and to explain cultural

and historical contexts for readers.

Robert D. Richardson claims in a 2004 essay that anyone can write a biography

regardless of credentials because even though this is "an age of biography" academia does not

recognize biography as a valuable or scholarly field. In fact, some in academia have regarded

biographies as disguised fiction, and others such as Stanley Fish and Sigmund Freud have

dismissed biographies as untruths, he says (253). With such distrust and antagonism surrounding

biography, Richardson advises that

> [a]nyone who is thinking of committing biography would be well-advised not to
>
> begin with the five 'hindrances' of Buddhism—lust, ill-will, torpor, worry, and
>
> skeptical doubt—but to concentrate on the six needful qualities (for the writer)
>
> Italo Calvino proposed for his 1985–86 Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard:
>
> lightness, quickness, exactitude, visibility, multiplicity, and consistency. (255)

He also advises that "[s]trict adherence to a narrow ideology does not produce great biography,"

thus the only ideology a biographer should hold is that of individualism (255). Richardson favors

the use of anecdotes and idiosyncrasies in biographies, as they reveal character and individuality

(255–56). The best biographies, he says, "find a way to suggest the interiority, the catch the

person at work, to pay attention to the path as well as to the goal" (256). Also, regardless of the

opposition from some in academia and the absence of a required set of credentials for

biographers, quality biographers will be revealed by their acceptance of the responsibility to

"play by the historian's rules of evidence while trying to write with the skills of a novelist." He

advises writers of biography not to get weighted down by evidence and accuracy so much that

the importance of narrative is forgotten, for "[n]arrative is crucial, central, primary. Once you

commit yourself to describe and present, rather than to explain and analyze, other things follow"
(255).

Like Leckie, Richardson says that while persuading the reader to accept his or her vision
of the subject as fact, a biographer also has to "accept the subjectivity of his account …
admitting that it is, in every word, only his personal vision." Biographers also have to accept, he
says, the uncertainty of predicting causes and effects, settling at times for simply an
understanding of what followed what (257), advice that recalls Zarnowski's explanation of
hindsight bias. Richardson adds that biographers should neither ignore the surface of events or
surroundings nor refer perpetually to the future writer that the subject was to become, for such a
biographer lets slip the serendipity and unexpectedness that mark the subject's, and indeed any
individual's, entire life (257). In other words, the biographer that focuses on only the events that
he or she can link directly to the subject's professional life fails to present the subject as an
individual with idiosyncrasies and quirks. Richardson offers this final advice for biographers:

> Here are the six points … I keep posted on the wall over my work table. They are
> not original; they represent the best advice I have collected over the past twenty-
> five years. 1) Look at all the pictures you can, especially photographs. 2) Buy all
> the books. 3) Keep the writing in the senses…. 4) Write in short takes; people are
> busy. 5) 'The best part of a writer's biography is the biography of his style'
> (Nabokov). 6) 'The life if finally to be understood only through the writing.' Not
> the other way round. Explaining the writing by the life invites reductionism;
> explaining the life by the writing gives the writing the priority it deserves because
> it was the writing that attracted the biographer's attention in the first place. (256)

This advice is valuable to any new writer in the genre of biography, including one writing for

children.

Gail Levin is a scholar and biographer of artists and says that biographies of artists not

only should "tell life stories in ways at once revealing, moving, and instructive" but also should

"complete the life story from the art that was its focus and make the life illuminate the art so as

to engage and enlighten readers" (121). She is referring to biographies of painters, but her

statement stands for biographies of writers, too. Levin complains that often biographers organize

their information into separate chapters—some for the person's life and others for their art.

Instead, she says, there should be an interweaving of the life and the art throughout the biography

(121). She also notes, like Scharnhorst, that in the cases of some realist artists their works can

reveal information about occurrences in their lives (122–23). She is not referring to direct

statements from artists or their surviving diaries but support for inferences from letters and the

time periods of the paintings,[31] and she advises that biographers draw on not only the artists'

works and the literature they read (123) but also their childhood drawings, which she says may

provide "valuable insights into [their] earliest attitudes about art, literature, politics, religion,

ethnicity, and class" (124).[32] Like other experts have said, Levin says that all sources should be

scrutinized and facts should be verified through triangulation (133), and she insists that

biographers should not be tempted to invent details or story simply for the sake of the narrative

(121). Like Leckie and Richardson, Levin says that biographers need to recognize the

subjectivity of their accounts, but she does not feel biographers' subjectivity is negative. Leckie

believes that the biographer's personal point of view can engage readers (134).

In a similar vein, Karl Orend, another literary biographer, says, that while the premise of

biography is that the accounts of subjects' lives are objective, this premise is only imagined (17);

the process of biography, including style of writing and frame of reference, is actually "culturally determined" (18–19). The cultural influences of a writer's subjectivity exist for both the writer of the biography and the literary subject of the biography. Says Orend, "if we are to comprehend the life of a writer, we must understand his origins, environment, and the uniqueness of his personal and spiritual vocabulary" (19). But a biographer should also "approach his subject with compassion, a degree of admiration, and accurate historical and cultural context for his achievement." Like Levin, Orend believes that the life and works of the subject should not necessarily be separated (18). He also says that "[t]o presume that because a person is well-known for one thing that dominates his life and psyche is a sometimes fatal simplification for a biographer" (31), meaning that *all* aspects of the subjects' life should be explored and revealed. Such comments from Orend and Scharnhorst and others encourage my belief that Welty's photographs are as deserving of mention as her fiction and nonfiction, for not only are they a part of her history but they also reveal information about how she viewed the world and interacted with others, as well as information regarding her writing style. Welty's photography was not separate from her writing, just as her writing was not separate from her personal life. Another challenge of writing about literary figures, says Orend, is that often readers assume that they already know all about the subject's work and life (35)—which is nearly always incorrect to assume. If I were writing about Welty for adults my readers' assumptions would concern me (many I know envision her as a simple, ordinary, elderly woman), but many children have little or no reference point for Welty. Far from discouraging the need of a biography for children about Welty, this fact reinforces the need: my biography can introduce children to the real Welty, multifaceted activist that she was, before they hear the ordinary and simple references later in life.

Orend also believes that biographers should not judge or degrade their subjects but "treat the lives of our subjects with respect" (31). Neither should a biographer "belittle or trivialize" his subject or "be blinded by his admiration for his subject," says Orend, or "he will come short of any real lasting insight" (18). Besides compassion and respect, Orend also stresses the need for humility in a biographer—humility before the subject and the subject's art. Biographers should also not assume that any one biography may be definitive, that they are the sole experts on their subjects, or that there is only one method for researching and writing biographies (20). According to Orend, "[t]he worst sin a biographer can commit, outside of lack of compassion, lying, or distorting events, is to be intellectually unprepared for his subject or inattentive to his audience" (18). By "unprepared" Orend is referring to the obstacles of biography writing: that biographers are always limited by their "financial resources and the cooperation of librarians and others who have information," including uncooperative relatives of the subject (31). Orend also says that biographers need to be prepared to gather data that will remain unused, for "[i]t is not usually the quantity of material available that determines the quality of a biography, but one's use of it" (20). This statement is reminiscent of children's literature experts' advice to selectively choose the facts to be included. Also as these experts have done, Orend warns against judging subjects' actions in terms of the biographers' own place and time because such thinking is "unjust" (25). He adds, too, that biographies will inevitably contain errors of both fact and interpretation because of the continual discovery of new evidence, contextual understandings, and primary sources (21). As others, Orend also advises that biographers need to be wary of the truth of their sources. He says that not only autobiographical writings but also first-hand tales about the subject should be considered possible fabrications (32)—after all, humans are humans and thus fallible and capable of falling victim to poor or revisionist memories.

Aside from offering practical advice, Orend also attempts to trace the path of a literary biographer:

> The writer of fiction, drama and poetry often uses his experience and observations to create a literature that has its origin in real events. They are thus transmuted into art. The biographer is picking up the threads of both the art and the life and trying to relate both to a greater whole. He aims to trace both the germ of this creativity and the context of its expression, its personal and social cost to the author, and its repercussions for everybody. If this succeeds, the result will be in and of itself a work of art. (20)

Orend may espouse a lofty ideal, but it is nonetheless a goal toward which to strive. Many of the adult biographers expressed similar notions of the ideal biography, and accuracy, historical context, vivid details, and artful prose are all recurring characteristics of quality biographies among those writing for adults, as they are among those writing for children (see appendix B).

V. Significance, Suggestions for Further Research, and Conclusions

As Thomas Newkirk espouses, the case study's strength lies not in its generalizability but in its ability to offer "detailed and individuated accounts of writers writing" (132). My findings are significant to the field of rhetoric because they offer specific, qualitative data regarding an academic writer's process of using her available skills to write in an unfamiliar genre (biography) for an unfamiliar audience (children) and make that work rhetorically effective for that audience. For example, the findings show that while writers learning to write in any new genre face much research and the challenge of adapting their writing styles and methods of presentation to fit the needs of their new audiences, academic writers do not need to alter their invention methods (or research skills) to write biographies for children, as accuracy, citations,

and reliable sources recurred as characteristics of quality biographies again and again during the collection of the criteria for quality children's literature.

Not only the case study but also the data matrix of collected and triangulated criteria offer insight to those in the field of rhetoric: rhetoricians can understand the process of composing for a specific audience of children from this information provided by editors and publishers of children's books, children's literature award committees, scholars in the field of children's literature, and children's authors. Conversely, those concerned with quality literature for children can learn from the field of rhetoric the benefits of a rhetorical analysis of a document for elements essential to specific genres and specific audiences. This research also offers a novice children's writer guidelines and advice he or she can follow in the writing of his or her biography for children. Although a listing of essential criteria may seem limiting, writers composing with these criteria in mind benefit from not only an understanding of their specific genre and audience but also the possibilities for enhanced creativity that such a list offers. Rules do not have to be restricting—set boundaries can allow writers to be more creative and imaginative. Not just for writers for children, the criteria list also provides information for teachers, parents, editors, and award committee members concerned with children's literature, as these criteria can be used to evaluate and select quality books for children.

The greatest advantage of case study research is that it identifies variables and areas for future study; further research in this specific area (an academic learning to write biographies for children) might involve more information from award-winning authors, criteria lists of international award committees, information on the qualities of the highest-selling biographies for children, and reading the award-winning biographies.[33] The award-winning biographies for children could be analyzed to determine how many of this study's stated criteria each contains;

such an analysis would have implications for not only writers of future biographies but also teachers and children's literature award committees, as the findings may reveal a prevalence of additional criteria not found by this researcher or not yet recognized by children's literature experts. Research involving how not just an academic but how any writer learns to write for children could include similar information, and research regarding writers of specific genres learning to write for children could be gathered for future studies, as well. Studies can also be conducted regarding other genres within children's literature—writing fiction for children would surely lead to a different set of criteria than that for quality children's nonfiction.

As far as the biography itself, I anticipate much more time before the project is completed. When I began this research I did not accurately gauge the amount of time required to research not only writing biographies for children but also Eudora Welty's life. During my research I have discovered how long it took other academics learning to write in new genres and formats to complete their projects—Burgess, Hamming, and Markley spent four years creating their interactive DVD-ROM (61), Strain and VanHoosier-Carey required four years for their interactive CD-ROM (258), and Anstey reveals her virtual reality story was "time-consuming" (290)—and how long it took other biographers to complete their subjects' life stories—Boyd needed a total of six years to write her biography of Zora Neale Hurston (four and a half solely for research) and Painter needed seven years to write her biography of Sojourner Truth ("Writing" 154). While these academics were not writing in the same genre and these biographers were not writing for children, their processes of researching, working, learning, creating, and reevaluating will be similar to my own process as I develop my biography. Additionally, information provided by some of the sources in the literature review has revealed that in order to undertake such a time-consuming task, support of an interested publisher is wise

to have; thus, I must research publishing companies and submit proposals and queries before I even begin writing the facts of Welty's life.[34] Aside from much more research into publishing companies and several query letters, many other things are ahead of me—research into twentieth-century Mississippi, research into the world events of Welty's lifetime, and research into Welty's particular life, for starters. As Colman says, "[c]reating a high quality nonfiction book is not for the faint-hearted because it is a challenging, complex, time-consuming, and intense experience" (221). As an academic I am not unaccustomed to challenging, complex, time-consuming, and intense projects; I do, however, want to be well prepared before attempting to write in a new genre for a new audience (and a new subsidiary audience).

I want my biography to be the best it can be for my primary audience. I want to live up to the ideals espoused by the children's literature scholars and authors and the other biographers: Turk says, "[c]hildren's biographies do more than record facts. As the author, you are documenting creative human goals and achievements that young people will remember long after they grow into busy and sophisticated adults" (25). Rochman says, "[b]orders shut us in…. The best books can help break down that apartheid. They surprise us—whether they are set close to home or abroad. They extend that phrase 'like me' to include what we thought was strange and foreign. And they change our view of ourselves" (146). Rochman also says, "[w]hen you get lost in a story, when you get to care about a character, you find yourself in a new world that makes you look at yourself in a new way. You think about things you took for granted. You imagine other people's lives—and that makes you discover your own" (147). I want my biography to inspire children, to be so memorable that they carry its insight with them as they grow. I want to change children's views of themselves and others. As an academic who enjoys reading children's literature, edits children's literature, studies the works of Eudora Welty, and serves as the

Associate Editor of the *Eudora Welty Newsletter*, I also hope to offer children a rhetorically

effective biography about Welty, introducing them to Welty's life and works and thereby

increasing the readership of Welty among children.

I cannot do any of these things if I am unprepared as a writer of children's biographies. I

may be able to use the skills already at my disposal as a researcher, but this study provides

additional information valuable to an academic learning to write in a new genre for a new

audience. With the information regarding the rhetorical situation, the audience, the pisteis, the

five canons of rhetoric, the practical tools for choosing and including photographs and the

practical tools for designing effective layouts, the information from children's literature editors,

publishers, award committee members, scholars, and authors, and the first-hand accounts of adult

biographers, this new writer has an understanding of both her new genre and her new audience

and thus is prepared to begin researching and writing, without anxiety, a rhetorically effective

biography of Eudora Welty for children.

Endnotes

[1] Information on forthcoming books mentioned throughout this paper comes from the database Books in Print.

[2] For the purpose of this paper, "quality" is defined as being held in high regard by children's book editors and publishing companies, children's literature award committees and their members, children's literature scholars, and authors of children's literature.

[3] Triangulation will also play a part in researching the facts of Welty's life, as biography writers must strive to present the most accurate information to their readers.

[4] Part of my research also includes, of course, gathering facts about Welty's life and the times in which she lived. To do this, I will be using an altered version of Myra Zarnowski's "time line format for a life-and-times biography" offered for classroom use (*Learning* 65, Figure 19)—see appendix A for my Timeline Template.

[5] A regular data matrix, or an n by K data matrix, lists the variables across the top and the sample units or subjects down the side (Lauer and Asher 68; 113). For this project, the variables have been listed down the side and the sources have been listed across the top; this is for ease and for legibility of the variables, which for my purpose are more important than the sources.

[6] Validity of a measurement system is defined by Lauer and Asher as the system's "ability to measure whatever it is intended to assess" (140). My system assesses the variables the sources list as essential criteria of quality children's literature.

[7] Kerper is describing remediation, which Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin discuss in *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. These authors state that new forms of digital media "honor, rival, and revise linear-perspective painting, photography, film, television, and print" (15); thus, "[o]lder electronic and print media are seeking to reaffirm their status within our culture as digital media challenge that status" (5). In order to maintain their status in society, print media are adopting aspects of these newer media (55) such as interconnectedness throughout a text and the reader's ability to choose his own path through the text (Bolter, *Writing Space* 3). The sidebars and other marginal materials to which Kerper refers are evidence of this adaptation; children's literature is clearly taking an active role in remediation, using elements from technologies such as the World Wide Web and DVD menus to revamp the traditional, linear, and text-centric form of the book.

[8] Although the reliability of this study lies in the triangulation of the multiple sources, as Grant-Davie says, "[t]he notion that data can ever be entirely raw or uncoded—that is, free of the researcher's interpretive influence—is problematic because data collection is a selective process and therefore involves interpretation or coding" (274). Some of the criteria listed by the award committees—such as "excellence" and "quality"—are necessarily subjective; what one deems "quality" might not be what another so deems. Expectedly, then, there were more than 208 separately phrased criteria collected from the sources; whenever sources' phrases indicated similar criteria, these sources' comments were grouped together, resulting in a final total of 208 criteria. It is at this grouping level that the coding enters into this project.

[9] Some of the phrases used in the data matrix, such as this one, are phrases adopted from the various sources; they have not been cited separately for this section or the data matrix.

[10] One additional method of data collection and analysis that will be applied to my completed biography of Welty is a questionnaire for readers of the manuscript prior to its submission to publishing houses. Feedback from the questionnaire will provide information on areas of the biography that need clarification, additional work, etc.; I can then address these concerns and rework the biography, ensuring rhetorical effectiveness for both my audience. This evaluation of a work in progress is similar to the evaluations used by Helen Burgess, Jeanne Hamming, and Robert Markley and by Josephine Anstey. Burgess, Hamming, and Markley say they presented their project, "the first scholarly-educational DVD-ROM authored from the ground up to be published by a major university press" (61), to classes and institutes as they worked on it. They say they worked hard to incorporate the "responses, questions, and informal suggestions from these audiences" into "ongoing redesigns of the project" (62). Anstey insists that for her "[t]he creation of a successful [product] depended on testing [it] with a variety of users" (299). Burgess, Hamming, and Markley and Anstey all presented their works in progress to their intended audiences. Children's author Ruth Turk offers similar advice to writers for children:

> When the first draft of your manuscript is completed, try reading parts of it to a few willing
> listeners, preferably those at the age level for whom you're writing—but do not include close
> friends or relatives! Most young people will be objective and will react quickly and honestly,
> which is what you want…. Another way to receive valuable feedback is to arrange visits to
> elementary school classes. Many teachers will welcome a local writer willing to read her work to

children and then discuss it with them. Insights and reactions from unbiased young listeners are

usually constructive and gratifying. (25)

While I intend to gain access to local children's librarians as well as classes of children between the ages of nine and twelve (my intended audience), I already have a list of peers, professors, other adult readers of children's literature, readers of Eudora Welty, and a children's book editor who have agreed to read the manuscript and offer feedback and critiques. These readers are Pearl A. McHaney (professor of Eudora Welty studies and children's literature, mother), Lisa Banim (editor and writer of children's books, mother), Beth Godbee (children's literature scholar, tutor of elementary school children and college students), Elizabeth Sanders Lopez (professor of editing and rhetoric, mother), Mary E. Hocks (professor of visual rhetoric), Jody McNeese Keene (avid reader, writer, children's literature enthusiast, mother), and Darren Michaels (musician, artist). Other readers who have not yet agreed to read the biography but whom I intend to contact regarding this request are Heather Medlock (editor, mother), Casey Marsalis (avid reader, mother), Tom McHaney (professor of Southern literature), Jody Brooks (fiction writer), Tanya Cochran (rhetoric and composition student), Jim Shimkus (student of Welty's works), Eva Welch (reader of biographies and autobiographies), John Bayne (reader and collector of Welty's works), Patti Carr Black (Welty scholar), Suzanne Marrs (Welty scholar), and Kailey Sheffield (my niece, who is within the age range for which I am writing).

Child readers will be asked for open-ended feedback; adult readers will answer specific questions regarding their opinions about the biography's ability to meet the criteria from the data matrix. The questions will be presented in the form of a post-product questionnaire, an instrument of my creation with questions provided by the sources used for the literature review. The questions, arranged by criteria category (from the data matrix of criteria for quality children's literature—see appendix B), with sources from which they are paraphrased when necessary, are provided in appendix D. Gathering feedback using these questions from so many adults requires that I keep in mind Peter Hunt's assertion that adults must read children's books in four different ways all at the same time: as an adult, for a child, critically, and as a child (4–5). I may want my post-product questionnaire readers to read as children, but I also need them to evaluate my biography for the criteria that other adults—those who decide to publish children's books, specifically—deem important. Creating the questions for the questionnaire based off of the data matrix ensures that all of my audience's potential concerns will be addressed.

[11] Hunt continues: "[t]hese [descriptors] … commonly give rise to a sort of schizophrenia in 'children's book people' … for 'literature' is seen as not being 'suitable' for children" (7). He says that the idea is usually that "children must necessarily have something not only different, but lesser" (9), and the schizophrenia in children's literature experts arises from this erroneous assumption. As is revealed by this study, children's literature is important to a child's development and as such is held to high standards of both accuracy and literary merit—literature for children is in no way "lesser" literature.

[12] A multitude of books about Eudora Welty will be studied to glean information about her life and to choose photographs for inclusion in the biography. Books that will serve as sources include Noel Polk's *Eudora Welty: A Bibliography*, Michael Kreyling's *Author and Agent*, Ann Waldron's *Eudora Welty: A Life*, Suzanne Marrs's forthcoming *Eudora Welty: A Biography*, numerous issues of the *Eudora Welty Newsletter*, Peggy Whitman Prenshaw's *Conversations with Eudora Welty* and *More Conversations with Eudora Welty*, and Patti Carr Black's museum program *Eudora* and her forthcoming *Early Escapades*, as well as the photograph collections *One Time One Place: Mississippi in the Depression: A Snapshot Album* and *Photographs*. Numerous books by Welty will also be researched in order to provide for the child readers details of her life and her personal feelings. Samples of the titles to be studied are *The Eye of the Story: Selected Essays and Reviews* and *A Writer's Eye: Collected Book Reviews*; I have already studied some of Welty's writings, such as the short stories and novels found in *Stories, Essays, & Memoir* and *Complete Novels*, and of course her autobiography, *One Writer's Beginnings*.

[13] Say Covino and Jolliffe:

> traditional rhetorical theory has conceived a text's audience as some individual or collective "other" whom the rhetor must identify, analyze in psychological and emotional terms, and then, by means of the text, "change" in some way so that they will adhere to the rhetor's central idea or thesis. This traditional view has three drawbacks. First, it largely limits attention to the primary, immediate auditors in a rhetorical situation, and generally ignores any subsidiary, mediated audiences. Second, the traditional view tends to assume an antagonistic relation between the rhetor and the audience; it tacitly posits that there is some ideological, emotional, or psychological condition that must be changed within the auditors before they can accept the rhetor's ideas. Third, the traditional view ignores the shared, dialectical nature of communication by characterizing the rhetorical interaction as moving in one direction, from the rhetor to the auditor. (13)

As my audience is so broad—children with individual likes and dislikes, curiosities to satisfy, and reasons for choosing a biography about a writer of whom they may have never heard—the traditional theory of an audience as a specific namable, identifiable, and analyzable "other" to contend with does not apply.

Covino and Jolliffe also state that many rhetoricians prefer *discourse community* (13), a term developed by Martin Nystrand and expanded by John Swales (13). Porter is one of the theorists who has come to use this term and advocates the idea of an audience as a discourse community (xii). Covino and Jolliffe say that, according to Nystrand, *discourse community* refers to people who may never speak or write to each other but who could, as they know the language used by others in their group (13). While *discourse community* in this sense could be applied to child readers, as they are indeed all of the same group (children) and therefore theoretically all know how to speak to others in the group, this term is in fact not applicable to the audience for my project. Considering any group a discourse community implies, as Swales says, that the group discusses the texts amongst themselves, has an agreed-upon set of goals, and speaks their own jargon (Covino and Jolliffe 13). While children may indeed discuss the books they read amongst themselves, children as a whole cannot be considered a discourse community because they do not rally around a universal set of goals or work to further those goals; neither do they share a jargon that every member of the community understands. If children have shared goals or a shared language at all, then children from different parts of the world, even different parts of a country, share the goals and a language common to their region or city, school or family—not goals and a language common to children regardless of location or background. Children are not a discourse community like scholars of rhetoric and composition are a discourse community; children do not hold conferences to discuss recent theories or argue about traditional theories. While the children of a specific classroom in a specific grade in a specific school could be considered a discourse community, as they jointly discuss the books they read in class, are all working together toward the same goals, and all share the same language, the child readers who are my audience—children from no specific classroom, grade, or school, nor even a specific background or nationality—cannot be considered a discourse community.

[14] Burgess, Hamming, and Markley say in their self-reflective case study that "the production of *Red Planet* broke down conventional barriers between 'authors' and 'designers,' between content and form" (68). Although these authors are discussing designing for computers and my project is a traditional book, like them, I am not approaching my project as a work of written information that I will then pass along to someone else to design. Say Burgess, Hamming, and Markley, "the division between textual labor (writing) and design labor (making it look

good on the screen) reinforces divisions apparent elsewhere throughout the university and society as a whole between intellectual and manual work" and such means of creation "not only reinscribe a division of labor but reinforce conventional divisions between form and content, media and message, hired help and 'authors'" (69). I intend for my biography to be a work in which the content and form are indeed not separate but united parts of a whole. I understand that what I have learned in my research about visual rhetoric will not necessarily be used in the actual creation of the finished biography, as publishers normally control this aspect of a book's creation. Yet I am addressing visual rhetoric in this paper because a writer learning to write in a new genre and for a new audience needs to understand the rhetorical aspects of the genre's design and its implications for the audience just as much as he or she needs to understand the rhetorical aspects of the genre's text.

[15] Wiley admits that the difference in the findings between the scientific text study and the historical text study may be due not to subject matter but to difficulty levels. It is possible that the scientific concepts presented might have been more difficult to understand, she says, which subjected the scientific text to increased competition from the images. It is also possible that whereas understanding the historical concept does not require a visual model but understanding the scientific concept does, the emotionally charged and irrelevant images accompanying the scientific text were more distracting than they would have been if the scientific text had not required a visual model to be understood (210). However, she also suggests that a possible explanation for the recorded difference is that "emotionally interesting photographs of people do motivate readers to learn more about the people they see, which may in fact prompt them to develop a better understanding of historical context" (210).

[16] Drawing on an analogy from Barbara Rogoff and J. V. Wertsch, Thompson says:

> adults serve young children much as tour guides assist travellers in a foreign land. We plan itineraries, call attention to certain landmarks, and steer our charges clear of others. We translate unfamiliar phrases, explain local customs, and convert the currency children bring with them to other, more common and negotiable coins. We stand between children and their destinations, doing what we can to ensure that their journeys are enjoyable and enlightening, comfortable and yet challenging. (4)

Thompson is most likely referring specifically to teachers and other adults who interact with children on a direct and daily basis, yet cannot the same be said of adult authors who interact indirectly with children through their texts? Through their books they call attention to certain lands and warn of certain occurrences, introduce foreign customs

and languages—whether they be from faraway countries or past periods of time—and try to provide enjoyable, enlightening, non-threatening, and intellectually challenging journeys. All adult authors of children's books are likewise, then, tour guides for young travelers exploring foreign lands. With my biography of Welty I too can serve as a guide, informing my child audience about Welty's life, her time period, her region of the country, her writing, and her photographs, as well as the process and appreciation of writing and the process and appreciation of photography.

[17] Another important reminder about choosing images to use in the biography comes from Muth and Kitalong. They say, "[w]hen using an image to illustrate a point, either alone or in connection with text, a writer must make sure that the illustration serves the overall purpose of the document" (40). As a photographer it is very difficult for me to narrow down the images of Welty and by Welty that I wish to include; I will therefore need to use these questions to help me eliminate photographs that I like but that are not imperative to the understanding of Welty, her time, or her place.

[18] An example of such an analysis using Welty's photographs is *Jackson/ 1930s* (image number 82 from her *Photographs*). Using Muth and Kitalong's and Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters's suggestions and questions for analyzing images, determining the historical significance of this photograph begins with an examination of its big picture, characteristics, and meaning (Muth and Kitalong 34). The big picture of this photograph is that Welty was the photographer, taking quick "snapshots" as she traveled throughout Mississippi in hopes that she would become a photographer for the Works Progress Administration (McHaney, Class lecture). Her intended audience was herself and the head of the Works Progress Administration photographers. Tied for the most prominent element of the image, the image's focal point, are the male, African American figure in the image and the sign above him that reads "Colored Entrance." The characteristics of the image are that it tells the story of the man approaching the (designated) entrance; he is fully visible and centered, but the legs and backs of what appear to be Caucasian ladies are also in the frame, exiting to the right, and they reveal motion, movement. The sign for the entrance is so large that it dominates the figures; its placement (higher than the figures) and color (lighter and brighter than the figures) also attract viewers' attention. The meaning of the image lies in its mood: the separation of the races in this time period and region.

Answering additional questions by Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters, I note that Welty had no national agenda for her photographs—she did not set out to take photographs that would shock American viewers or provoke

discussions about racial equality in the south; yet, this image does reveal the cultural values of its time and place. Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters state that viewers should ask whether the visual reinforces these values or questions them, what emotions the image invokes, and whether it evokes positive or negative feelings about individuals, scenes, or ideas (258). While during Welty's time viewers might have considered the image to neither reinforce nor question the cultural values but simply show them as they were, today's viewers may consider the barely included Caucasian ladies and their relation to the African American man in this image to signify a questioning of the cultural values of the 1930s: the image questions segregation by visually portraying the Caucasian women's indifference to the African American man—the movement implied by the portion of the ladies that is showing and their blurriness hints that the ladies are quickly passing by the man, paying no attention to his having to enter by a separate door and showing no concern for his oppressed status. Today the image may invoke sadness, anger, empathy, or compassion; it asks viewers to reflect on the African American man's situation in the 1930s in Mississippi and prompts viewers to address their own feelings toward segregation.

This analysis has been superficial; a more in-depth analysis would be provided for children in the biography. This particular image is just one of Welty's photographs that can be used as a historical document to teach children about the history of race relations in the United States and to raise questions about the connections between race relations in the past and the present. Clearly, the suggestions and questions offered by Muth and Kitalong and Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters are useful for prompting readers' thoughts about images and what the images convey about the past. These questions also aid me, the biographer, in suggesting to child readers what the image reveals or in assisting them to understand the cultural and historical significance of the image.

[19] Of the 237 photographs reprinted in *Photographs*, only one of Welty's images shows Caucasians actively acknowledging their African American brothers' kinship, to paraphrase Reynolds Price from the book's foreword (ix). The one that does is from Mardi Gras in New Orleans (image number 146). There are three images in which people of both races are together but separate: one shows African Americans on a parade float and Caucasians watching in the distance (image 80), one shows two sets of women—one Caucasian and one African American—crossing paths as they walk in opposite directions on railroad tracks (image 63), and one shows an African American man approaching the "colored entrance" for a performance as the legs of what appear to be two Caucasian women exit the frame to the right (image 82). There are four photographs in which people of both races are possibly mixed, but the photographs are all of groups of people and it is difficult to tell for certain if there really are both African

Americans and Caucasians in three of the photographs (images 62, 130, and *The unemployed near Union Square, New York City*, which is included only in the introduction [xvii]); the one of the four that is clearly of African Americans and Caucasians together shows a large group of people waiting for an approaching train (image 129).

[20] An example of an aesthetic and compositional analysis of an image using Bang's structural principles is an analysis of Welty's photograph *Tomato-packers' recess/ Copiah County/ 1936* (image number 31 from *Photographs*). This photograph is filled from edge to edge with human figures: males of varying ages are gathered closely together, with one man and his guitar serving as the focal point. There are no dominating horizontal or vertical elements in the image, but there is repetition of a diagonal—the guitar neck and the wooden base of their gathering-place both angle slightly from the lower left corner of the image to the upper right corner. As Bang has said, diagonal lines can serve many purposes in an image. In this image, there is no one protagonist and not enough of an incline to the line to imply movement or create tension; instead, these diagonal lines lead viewers into the picture and invite them to browse the image.

Bang also says that the center of an image is its most effective center of attention (88); Welty has skillfully made the center of her image the center of attention by placing the guitar there. Many figures inhabit the photograph, and their abundance and placement, like the diagonal line, invite viewers to browse the image. As the figures practically radiate from the center of the image, none draw attention to positions of triumph (the upper half of the image) or threat (the lower half). Similarly, since the image is filled with figures, no tension is created by any one element being singled out and placed near the edge of the picture. Also, as no one figure is exceptionally larger or smaller than the others, none of the men are presented as stronger or more vulnerable than the others. No figure appears vulnerable because he is isolated from the others by space, either. This lack of tension created by placement and size is increased by the absence of pointy shapes, which Bang says make viewers feel scared; instead, this photograph has an abundance of round or curved shapes, which Bang says make viewers feel secure and comforted (98). Although the boys and men in this image are sitting with bent legs or standing with arms akimbo, their rounded shoulders, heads, and hats dominate the image, evoking in the viewer feelings of comfortableness.

Bang says that pictures evoke emotions because viewers consider them to be extensions of reality (54). While the title of this image reveals that these boys and men are at "recess" and the guitar supports the relaxed feel of a recess, without the title and guitar this image would nevertheless evoke in most viewers feelings of comfort, not threat or danger, because of its structural elements. This image will be included in my biography of Welty to show

not only how farm workers in Mississippi during the 1930s looked and relaxed, but also to reveal Welty's compositional skill and to prompt reflection on the aesthetic and compositional elements of photographs and what role these elements play in causing viewers to feel specific emotions or to have specific reactions.

[21] Although children's book editors Lisa Banim and Barbara Seuling (139) both say that publishers discourage authors from sending artwork with manuscripts submitted for publication, I am inclined to disagree with them despite their experience and therefore am discussing the practical considerations of page layout for my new genre and audience. My reasons for the inclination to disagree with Banim and Seuling are the award-winning books *Lincoln: A Photobiography* by Russell Freedman and *Ben Franklin's Almanac* by Candace Fleming. Both of these books include numerous photographs and illustrations (Fleming's, the more recent, has one or more on each page), and the layout of these manuscripts would not have been easily envisioned if they had been submitted only as text. (As Freedman and Fleming were both published authors before they wrote and designed these books, it is very likely that they submitted more than just the textual material for these books, as their editors were on familiar terms with them.) While the case of an experienced writer for children is different from my case, in which I am new to the genre, these two books nevertheless provide encouragement that publishers might more readily appreciate and accept a manuscript whose pages have already been laid out or include photographs if the manuscript might be better understood with such visual elements or if the absence of the envisioned page layout or intended photographs might be detrimental to the manuscript. It will most certainly be detrimental to exclude photographs from a biography about Eudora Welty that discusses her photography and her writing with equal emphasis.

[22] Zarnowski's statement signifies, as did previous statements by Kerper, the remediation of children's books.

[23] See note 19 for additional discussion.

[24] Seuling says that in collecting research for nonfiction books writers "need at least three times as much material as [they] will use anyway." Having "a big cushion of additional information" is important so that "you can continually select intelligently what you put in your book," she says (111).

[25] Eudora Welty is known for her discussion of the importance of place in fiction (*Three*); I conjecture that she would likely agree that place is also important in nonfiction.

[26] Books in Print records no biographies about Eudora Welty for children as of March 2005.

[27] Robert J. Connors refers to recognizing one's biases as "realization of prejudice" (15). He says "[n]o historian is free from prejudiced ideas, but no historian wishes to try for anything less than fair presentation of her findings. So the only way of dealing with our always already being prejudiced is to study the prejudice" (21). I'll admit that long before I began researching Welty's life I feared that I would find no sensational events in her life— events that made her experience one of turmoil or obstacles—but as I read what Sutherland and others have written I realized that since I know very little of Welty I should read everything I can and let the important events of her life speak to me instead of search for specific types of events. Although my research into Welty's life has only just begun, already I have found that there will be no need to sensationalize the life of this writer, photographer, and political campaigner.

[28] Rochman says that idiomatic language should not be avoided just because writers assume children will not understand it and therefore not continue reading. She says usually meaning can be gleaned from context, and whenever there is doubt a glossary can be included. Idiomatic expressions are draws, says Rochman, not barriers, because differing cultural expressions are what "makes a world" (144). Rochman feels a 1977 quotation from writer Isaac Bashevis Singer is still relevant: "A child will not throw away a book because there are a few words that he doesn't understand…. A child will throw away a book only if … it … is boring" (qtd. in Rochman 143).

[29] Such interactivity is more evidence of remediation: these features have been altered from their previous, linear forms to resemble the World Wide Web and television, among other forms of media.

[30] As was revealed in the discussion of the history of children's nonfiction and biographies, children's biographies have been including abundant photographs since Freedman's Newbery-winning *Lincoln: A Photobiography* in 1987 (the biographies before Freedman's utilized photographs, of course, but not always as anything more than decorative additions). Adult biographies, then, are lagging behind children's biographies in this respect.

[31] Levin states that the problem for biographers of artists from the late twentieth century is that the telephone replaced letter writing (123), but I, luckily, will not face this problem, as Welty was a letter-writer throughout her life (*Writers*).

[32] As has been stated previously, some scholars have investigated Welty's early works, and the forthcoming book in this area of study by Patti Carr Black, *Early Escapades*, will be invaluable to me as a writer of a biography about Welty for children.

[33] Reading children's biographies is research that any new biographer for children needs to complete before writing his or her own biography, according to Seuling (21). For my own future research, I plan to collect information on the biographies that have won awards and read those biographies that have been recognized more than once first, followed by the other award winners. Preliminary research has already begun: Freedman's *The Wright Brothers: How They Invented the Airplane*, *The Life and Death of Crazy Horse*, and *Franklin Delano Roosevelt* are all biographies that have been recognized by more than one award committee.

[34] Some research into the subject's life is necessary in order to entice the publishers, however. I have already begun to gather information about Welty from primary and secondary sources, but I have discovered during the course of this project that two forthcoming books for Welty's adult readers will provide valuable insight into Welty's childhood and later life—a family-authorized biography by Suzanne Marrs, *Eudora Welty: A Biography*, and Patti Carr Black's *Early Escapades*, both previously mentioned in this study. While I will certainly not be copying these books or even their interpretation of Welty's life, both will provide access to materials I would otherwise be unable to obtain. To write a biography of Welty before these books are published would be to ignore valuable material.

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Appendices

Appendix A—*Timeline Template*

1923

Welty's age _____

Events in Welty's life

Events in History

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B—*Data Matrix of Criteria for Quality Children's Literature*

		Publ.		Authors					Experts													Awards						Awds - children judge	
		Banim	PPL	Freedman	Giblin	Meltzer	Bober	Turk	Coleman	Zarnowski	Lempke	Carter	Sullivan	Sutherland	Tomlinson & Lynch-Brown	Lukens	Amoss & Suben	Seuling	Lechner	Bamford & Kristo	Newbery	Orbis Pictus	Sibert	Boston Globe-Horn Book	Golden Kite	Jefferson Cup	William Allen White	Young Readers' Choice
invention	emphasize accompl. of subj.	x													x		x											
	dialogue & quot. from prim. sourc.	x		x						x					x	x						x						
	author's speculation noted	x								x					x	x			x			x						
	accuracy	x		x			x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x	x
	candor (neg. & pos. traits)	x			x	x				x					x		x		x			x						x
	anecdotes	x		x	x					x								x				x						
	teaches history	x								x																x		
	adhere to facts/ tell the truth			x	x	x		x		x					x	x												
	documented evidence			x	x										x	x	x					x	x					
	answers questions about subj.				x		x		x																			
	informative														x							x				x		
	thorough research				x			x	x	x				x					x			x				x		
	author's research explained				x					x										x								
	not a laundry list of facts						x			x					x	x						x						
	selective data given						x			x					x		x											
	sources cited				x			x		x					x		x					x	x			x		
	credible sources used									x		x							x			x						
	about "somebody like me"	x					x							x														
	"really real"			x		x	x			x				x		x												
	provokes discussions				x					x												x						
	shows insight				x			x	x	x					x	x						x						
	readers shown not told	x			x									x														
	avoids sensationalizing				x	x								x		x												
	copious details						x			x				x				x				x						
	historical context clear						x	x		x			x	x					x			x				x		
	avoids fictionalizing						x			x				x		x		x			x							
	subject brought to life	x					x			x				x								x	x					
	time period brought to life	x		x			x							x		x	x					x				x		
arrangement	straightforward presentation	x						x						x			x	x										
	back matter included	x			x				x	x				x	x				x	x	x	x						
	unifying structure											x		x								x						
	arrangement/organization						x							x			x			x	x	x	x		x			
	sidebars, addt'l textual material									x									x			x						
	theme/concept clear (patterns)								x	x		x		x		x					x	x						
style	simple, easy to read, short sent.	x														x	x											
	language appropriate for age		x											x								x						x
	high literary merit		x											x							x	x		x				
	excellently written		x		x	x				x		x		x							x	x			x			
	artful language			x					x	x		x			x				x		x	x						
	clarity																				x		x		x	x		
	attention to literary style				x									x	x						x	x	x					
	lively, well-paced writing				x			x						x					x						x			
delivery	photographs used	x			x									x														
	good presentation		x																		x	x	x					
	photos & text work well together			x					x					x							x							
	apropriate format				x									x		x	x				x	x						
	inviting layout/design				x							x									x	x						
	relevant photos/illustr. used								x				x	x				x			x			x				
	quality photographs used											x	x									x						
overall	subject relevant to kids today	x							x													x				x		
	want to keep reading/ holds attn.		x	x																		x						
	avoids stereotypes				x								x	x	x	x					x	x	x		x			
	excellence in quality																				x	x	x		x			
	"distinguished contr. to literature"																				x	x	x					
	marked by "distinction"																				x		x	x				
	both informs & entertains				x				x				x	x	x	x					x						x
	author knows/respects audience						x	x									x			x		x				x		
	passion of author comes through						x							x		x	x	x			x	x						
	models for students' writing						x		x	x		x										x						
	piques readers' interest									x				x							x	x						
	reads like a story (narrative)	x					x															x						
	story is interesting to kids/good	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x			x	x							x			x			x
	unusual approach/fresh persp.	x	x		x					x				x							x						x	
	well-developed characters		x											x							x							
	storytelling techniques/ tools			x	x				x	x												x						
	imagination				x																	x					x	x
	drama				x								x	x								x						
	a work of art						x							x								x						

Appendix C—Interview Questions for Lisa Banim, Children's Book Editor

General questions about children's biographies:
What do you see as the significance/importance of biographies for children?
Do you know of an award that's specifically for biographies written for children? Are any other
      awards given to children's biographies?
Do you know the characteristics the judges look for when awarding medals/honors to
      biographies?
What do *publishers* look for in biographies written for children? What makes a biography for
      kids publishable, marketable?
What do you personally think makes a good children's biography?
Do you recommend any specific biographies for me to read as examples of good ones?
Do you recommend any journals on writing biographies for children or children's literature in
      general? Any other resources for me?

Specific content questions:
What elements of a person's life are most important to include for kids? Ex: childhood
      experiences, world events, etc.
Do you advocate *excluding* any elements of a person's life? What types (drug use, affairs, etc.)
      and how do you justify the exclusion?
Do you emphasize the personal aspect of the person's life more than the professional?
Is a straightforward approach to the facts preferred, or a fictionalized account of the facts? How
      much does the writer assume/interpret, etc?
Should the facts/events be presented in chronological order?
How much time do you spend on explaining how the history/time period was? Do you put this
      before other text or work it in?
Do you concentrate MORE on her childhood than on her later years?
Should certain traits (buzzwords like loyal, kind, etc.) of the subject be emphasized?
How much description of the physical attributes?
What kinds of events do you highlight to show that she was a person, not a legend? In other
      words, how do you make kids relate?
Do you consider the inclusion of photos important for children? Photos of the subject mostly, or
      of other material? Do you think biographies require more photos than fiction?
Do you advocate gearing the biography to a certain type of reader (e.g., specifically kids who
      want to be writers)? A certain gender or race? And how do you make a book appealing to
      all/ not exclusionary for anyone?

Technical questions:
What point of view should the narrator take? Should the narrator be a distinct character ("I") or
      try to present things objectively?
Do you break biographies into chapters or do they read straight through? If chapters, are they
      broken based off of years, eras, events?
How complex should the syntax, sentence length, vocabulary, etc. be?
Would you include a glossary even though it's not technical material (example entry: Pulitzer
      Prize) OR do you just include the explanation in the text?

Do you quote often, or try not to quote at all? Are dialog sequences
acceptable/preferred/shunned?
How much reference material do you provide? (e.g., list of works by Welty, my sources,
photograph permissions, Web sites for more info, etc.) As chapters/ sections of the book,
or as back matter?
What lengths for the various age ranges? In other words: how long before you lose the kids'
attention?

Questions I assume all writers face:
How do you make it a gateway book so readers want to learn more about your subject? How do
you keep it interesting? How much humor do you include?
How do you create the hook—what keeps kids reading biographies?
How do you reach kids who don't like to read nonfiction or who don't like to read at all?

Personal Experience questions:
Are there any specific problems you encountered while editing the Ben Franklin or John Glenn
biographies?
Were your kids ever required to read Eudora Welty in school? What age/grade were they?
Anything I left out?

Appendix D—*Post-product Questionnaire for Readers*

All questions cited "Zarnowski, *History* 36" are adapted form Myra Zarnowski's copyrighted Questions for Discussing Powerful Pairs, Triplets, and Quads, which that she uses with her students to critique and "prompt discussion" about biographies (34). If children should be looking for such information when they read biographies, then writers should be including such information when writing biographies for children.

Invention
What are the main characteristics of Welty that you feel come through in the book?
What evidence do you see of Welty's strengths? Her weaknesses? Her struggles?
Does the author reveal different sources? (Zarnowski, *History* 116)
Does the author reveal and resolve any conflicting accounts of events? (Zarnowski,
	History 116)
Is there evidence of the author's research? (Zarnowski, *History* 36)
What sources did the author use? (Zarnowski, *History* 36)
Are primary sources used? Is the author convinced that they are reliable? Are you? (Zarnowski,
	History 36)
Are there quotes cited from primary sources (i.e., are quotes documented as Welty's or others'
	own words)?
Do the author's facts contradict each other at any point?
Is the information presented as an exhaustively long list of factual data, or does it seem that only
	details pertinent to the story have been included?
Are sources cited?
Does Welty come across as a real human being, an ordinary person?
Do you feel (and is there evidence) that the author spent time thinking about this material before
	presenting it?
Are the times and places in which Welty lived brought to life with details?
Is Welty's personality brought to life with details and anecdotes?
Does any of the information seem unbelievable or appear to be invented by the author?

Arrangement
What is the theme that is used to organize the facts? (Zarnowski, *History* 36)
What additional information is provided at the end of the book? (Zarnowski, *History* 36)
Does the author discuss the process of choosing photographs or the research involved in
	choosing them in her author's note or any end matter? (Zarnowski, *History* 36)
Does the author discuss the research process in her author's note or any end matter? (Zarnowski,
	History 36)
Does the author discuss his or her personal interest in this topic in her author's note? (Zarnowski,
	History 36)
Are the details and events presented in a straightforward manner?
Is the organization of the facts clear and easy to understand?

Style
Are the sentences clear? Easy to understand?
Is the writing imaginative, memorable, and thought-provoking? (Zarnowski, *History* 36)
Did the author use different types of sentences and interesting word choices? (Zarnowski,
	History 36)

Does the author use artful language anywhere?

Is the biography well written?

Are the vocabulary words used appropriate for the age group (nine to twelve year olds)?

Is the writing lively? Well paced for the audience?

Delivery

Are the visuals that are used appropriate or distracting?

Do you feel there should be more or fewer visuals used?

Is there something for which you think a visual should be included that wasn't?

Is there something for which you think the visual supplied is unnecessary?

Is the document design (images, layout, etc.) appropriate for the intended audience? (Muth and Kitalong 4)

Does the document design assist in relaying the information that is the purpose for creating the document? (Muth and Kitalong 4)

Do the illustrations extend the text by providing additional information and interesting details? (Zarnowski, *History* 36)

Are captions included that provide additional information and focus the reader's attention on information and details? (Zarnowski, *History* 36)

Is the layout/design of the book confusing?

Does the document's layout/design help emphasize the author's key points and demonstrate clear organization? (Muth and Kitalong 30)

Does the author use appropriate fonts (typefaces)? (Muth and Kitalong 30)

Are bold and italic type used sparingly, for emphasis only? (Muth and Kitalong 30)

Does the author use displayed lists when appropriate to call out information? (Muth and Kitalong 30)

Does the white space in the document work to call attention to or link certain portions of text or does it create gaps between textual elements? (Muth and Kitalong 30)

Do the headings, subheadings, and alignment provide clear and purposeful navigational cues? (Muth and Kitalong 31)

Are repeated elements such as running headers or footers used to increase visual coherence? (Muth and Kitalong 31)

Does the layout integrate the visuals using appropriate placement, sizing, and alignment? (Muth and Kitalong 31)

Is the source of each visual credited? (Muth and Kitalong 31)

Overall

Is the story interesting?

Does the author provide an overall meaning in the subject's life story? (Zarnowski, *History* 116)

Does the author connect the past and the present? (Zarnowski, *History* 116)

Who are the readers that the document invites into the text, and who are those that it may exclude?" (Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz, and Walters 44).

Does the author resort to stereotypes in introducing or discussing any characters?

Does the biography seem both informative and entertaining at the same time? Do you think it leans more toward one or the other? If so, where?

Do you feel like the author respects her audience, or does she seem to be talking down to her

readers?
Does the author seem to be passionate about the material/subject?
Is the material presented in a new or inventive way?
Would this biography be a good model for children's own writing?
Does the author use the techniques of fiction writers such as flashbacks and retrospectives?