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The "Genreology" of U.S. Army World War I Records: A Relationship between Organizational Communication and War

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The “genreology” of U.S. Army World War I records:
A relationship between organizational communication and war

by

Marcy Leasum Orwig

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Program of Study Committee:
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Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
2012

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DEDICATION

To my Darrek
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ABSTRACT

Scholars in business communication often focus on organizations as research sites. One example is JoAnne Yates (1993) who uses, among others, the well-known business of DuPont as a model. Her central argument, from a historical point of view, is focused on how small, family owned companies grew exponentially in the early twentieth century and how this caused business communication to become more controlled and impersonal (xv). But there is a lack of further significant research on how the organizational changes that affected early twentieth century business communication also influenced the communication in other organizations. My dissertation will argue that the communication in one such organization, the U.S. Army, was affected by the changes of the early twentieth century, as shown through examples of government-released records from the army’s famous First Division in World War I.
Chapter 1: Introduction

The Roots of Inquiry Planted by a Generation in Flux

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2008, I completed an elective graduate seminar on autobiography, memoir, and nonfiction where I read American classics by Frederick Douglass, Gertrude Stein, and Jack Kerouac. The writings of Douglas and Kerouac were familiar to me, but Gertrude Stein’s *The Biography of Alice B. Toklas* was completely new. Its style fascinated me since Stein wrote about her companion, Toklas, but in doing so told her own autobiography. To learn more about the art of writing memoirs, I enrolled the next fall semester in an elective creative writing course centered on nonfiction. I was eager to learn more about the process of writing up one’s “self” or about the act of writing about someone else’s “self.” Through this class, I realized that writing nonfiction is similar to rhetoric in that both emphasize audience, context, and purpose.

The nature of autobiography, with its corresponding audience, context, and purpose, is almost always a mystery. Figuring out where truth leaves off and fiction begins has never been achieved and maybe cannot ever be. For example, as in the case of Gertrude Stein, how much of what she states is completely truthful? Why did she write *The Biography of Alice B. Toklas* primarily to shed more light on her own life? What was the audience, context, purpose of this work? While my dissertation does not focus on answering these questions, it was these questions that led me, on my own, to research Stein further. Through this process,
I realized that many of her contemporaries also wrote autobiographies or memoirs. Stein’s contemporaries are often referred to as The Lost Generation, a term she herself gave to them.

The autobiography (and the autobiographical novel) provided some of the most seminal instances of Lost Generation thought. Who or what was The Lost Generation? In a way, it depended on who was talking about it. Marc Dolan explains in *Modern Lives: A Cultural Re-reading of “The Lost Generation”* that, “At various times and in various mouths and hands, those three bare words referred to: a literal group of coevals (women and men born approximately at the same time); a specific cultural subset of that demographic grouping; a theory of how American arts, letters, and culture evolved in the years following World War I; and a complex of mythic tropes, characters, and settings that enshrined the memory of an early twentieth century that almost certainly never existed” (11). This generation, as literary critic Michael Reynolds notes, was coming of age in T.S. Eliot’s *Waste Land*. The individuals of this generation “temporarily lost hope, abandoned ideals, and discarded dreams” and while these losses were not permanent, they seemed so at the time (22). Scott Fitzgerald even called them “All the sad young men,” and Reynolds notes that these men did not want to think about their
immediate past, “for it [World War I] was most unpleasant. Nor were they particularly fond of their prospective future, for it held no promises other than money, the only value left intact” (22). Some of the Lost Generation’s notables included Ernest Hemingway, Fitzgerald, John Dos Passos, and William Faulkner.

Among this generation, the emphasis on the “discontinuity of generational experience was, ironically, one of the elements of continuity” in their writings. Perhaps Ernest Hemingway, who lived in Paris during the 1920s, had some premonition of this when he insisted in his memoir, *A Moveable Feast*, that “all generations were lost by something and always had been and always would be” (29). Literary critic Robert Wohl, suggests that Hemingway might have added that “all generations are sacrificed by someone and charged by history or fate with a special mission” (41). But, as Wohl suggests, a genre (such as the generational portraiture by The Lost Generation writers) does not arise, nor gain favor with the public unless it fills some need (41).

The recent Woody Allen movie, *Midnight in Paris*, attempts to uncover the generational connections of “The Lost Generation” and the corresponding motivations behind their works. The protagonist, Gil, a disenchanted Hollywood screenwriter played by Owen Wilson, gets to live a time-traveling fantasy as he runs into Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald at an elegant soiree. He gets writing advice from a laconic Hemingway, who persuades Gertrude Stein to read the manuscript of his [Gil’s] novel. Stein, in turn, tells Gil “to not be such a defeatist” in his writings. A *New York Times* film critic, Joseph Berger, explains that Allen’s movie helps explain the nature of “The Lost Generation.” “Reeling from the folly of World War I and so offering fodder for novels and paintings dripping with disillusionment,
Paris was the center of the artistic universe then, and those legends [as portrayed in the movie] really did converge on Paris around the same time.”

**THE LOST GENERATION AND DISILLUSIONMENT**

The conflicted, defeatist nature of Lost Generation writers may seem, at first, to originate in these shared generational experiences related to the horrors of World War I. Yet literary critic Keith Gandal argues that the “quintessential male American modernist novelists were motivated, in their celebrated postwar literary works, not so much, as the usual story goes, by their experiences of the horrors of World War I but rather by their inability in fact to have those experiences” (5). The well-known sense of “woundedness, diminishment, and loss” in these Lost Generation works and “the sense of mourning for fallen worlds . . . stems not principally, from the disillusionment or the alienation from traditional values brought on by the crisis of the Great War or the failure of civilization it represented, but instead from personal rejection from the U.S. Army” (5). Gandal highlights the symbolism in Gatsby’s prewar romantic dream that cannot be retrieved, Jake’s impotence received in combat in *The Sun Also Rises*, and Benjy’s idiocy and Caddy’s loss of innocence in Faulkner’s *The Sound and the Fury*. These three writers, Fitzgerald, Hemingway, and Faulkner were all, for different reasons, deemed unsuitable candidates for military service, and the result was that “they felt themselves ‘emasculated’: again, not because of their encounters with trench warfare in a mechanized army or their consciousness of mass slaughter, but because either they got nowhere near the trenches or because they got to them in ‘trivial’ noncombat roles” (Gandal 5). Furthermore, these writers’ military frustrations
took place in the context of a whole new set of methods employed in the embarkation, or mobilization, of the war effort.

Gandal explains that the U.S. army was transformed into “a meritocratic institution, indifferent to ethnic and class difference (though not racial difference). So, for these writers, the failure to get into [. . .] the army was also a failure to compete successfully in a rising social order and against a new set of people” (5). It is from that social order and from those people and not from “the effects of mobilization, and . . . other effects supposedly produced by mass war and a mechanized army” that the Lost Generation novels “both register and reimagine” (Gandal 5). For example, Reynolds describes how Hemingway’s world of Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises* is “without heroes. The heroes did not return from the trenches of World War I. In hundreds of cemeteries beneath millions of white crosses the heroes of Jake Barnes’s generation are neatly buried. Those who remain alive are the walking wounded” (86). Hemingway’s approach to writing this novel reflects what Dolan explains as “works employed by textual order and narrative determinism to depict a world that seemed ordered rather than chaotic, but ordered in an immoral, amoral, or destructive sense” (29). But we know that life is not ordered and that not everything is immoral or destructive. Dolan points out that many twentieth-century

![Figure 1.2](Hemingway as WWI ambulance driver. Photo from *Hemingway on War*)
natural historians knew that “life is a copiously branching bush…not a ladder of predictable progress,” but our acceptance of this notion does not run deep (186).

Further, Stephen Jay Gould remarks, “we continually make errors inspired by unconscious allegiance to the ladder of progress, even when we explicitly deny such a superannuated view of life” (33). Even the word evolution, according to Dolan, becomes a synonym for progress. He states both evolution and progress are linear, but only the latter is clear and uncluttered. If evolution is a line, it is neither a straight line nor a regularly graded ladder. . . . It is a frustrating meandering squiggle, which may sometimes seem like the longest distance between two points” (186). The same may be said of culture. Gould contends that “life is a copiously branching bush . . . not a ladder of predictable progress” (35). Dolan continues with:

[If human evolution is a] copiously branching bush, then human culture is a veritable thicket of flora, in which it is even harder to trace completely the specific roots of any visible segment of growth. As with history, we would often like to make culture simple—to reduce it to a clear point on a single, valued line of cultural descent; or to yet another battle in a long-fought war between two clear sets of forces; or to a generic resemblance of disparate phenomena that is nebulous enough to contain all comers—but clearly seen culture is always more complicated than that. There are genealogies, conflicts [. . .] a plenty, but the tangle that describes them all is the paramount fact of human culture, and it consistently resists our neat encapsulations. (156)

In Clifford Geertz’s alternative, culture is the “webs [sic] of significance” that we have “spun” and in which we find ourselves “suspended.”
In this view, “each utterance that occurs within a culture, rather than being a straightforward member of one or at most two categories, is its own peculiar confluence of multiple discourses; an accidental junction, so to speak, of the culture’s constitutively webbing strands” (5). When speaking of a complex thing as “a national culture, one can never really be sure; there are too many simultaneous growths that one needs to take into account. But The Lost Generation was history, of a sort. If nothing else, it was evolution” (Dolan 186).

**EVOLUTION IN MILITARY ORGANIZATION DURING WORLD WAR I**

As mentioned before briefly, the U.S. Army in World War I was changing from “a meritocratic institution, indifferent to ethnic and class difference” (Gandal 5). Reginald Pound in *The Lost Generation of 1914* tells how an American Civil treatise, *The Soldier in Battle*, anticipated Darwin’s *Descent of Man* (1874) when it argued that “the voluntary system of recruitment ‘ground up the choicest seed corn of the nation, the young, the patriotic, the intelligent, the generous, the brave, wasting the best moral, social and political elements of the republic, and leaving the cowards, shirkers, egoists and money-makers to stay at home and propagate their kind’” (86). Pound continues to expound that as other world conflicts occurred, another anonymous observer wrote, “Science may tell us that in the struggle for life it is the fittest who survive, but we who have lived through two great wars have seen with our eyes that it is the bravest, the noblest and the best who perish” (86). In fact, Pound explains that on April 23, 1915, Charles Darwin’s grandson, Erasmus was killed in the war at age 34 (136).
The beliefs of science and technology during the early twentieth century are displayed in the National World War I Museum’s first exhibit. This exhibit features a multimedia video presentation called “A World on the Edge.” In this short video, museum visitors witness how the war began in Europe in 1914. The main contributing factors to the war included what the film called the “Industrial Evolution,” where European powers were vying for more and more control of resources. The “Industrial Evolution” was in full swing by 1914, and the crowned heads of Europe wanted to maintain control of their growing respective wealth. The Germans started to believe that Darwin’s “Survival of the Fittest” could be applied to nations. In other words, Darwin’s theory of how the strong survive was linked to the country of Germany and how they would need to be a strong military state to survive in Europe and in their territories around the world. King Wilhem II and the German people began to see the impending war as a biological necessity. In fact, the film quotes the German philosopher Thomas Mann as believing that the, “War would be a purification, a hope.” It is difficult from our vantage point to see how any war could be called a “purification, a hope” but to Germans in the early part of the twentieth century it was part of their belief system to the point where they would die defending it. The timeline of events leading up the world war in 1914 reads like a series of falling dominoes:

- On July 28th Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia
- On July 29th Russia begins to mobilize for war against Austria-Hungary
- July 31st the Germans threaten to declare war on Russia if that country did not demobilize
- France begins mobilizing
- Germany declares war on Russia on August 1st
• France declares war on Germany on August 3rd
• Germany invades Belgium to attack France
• Britain and its colonies declare war on Germany August 4th

Three years later, the United States declares war, on April 6th, 1917 (March).

The many events that led to the start of World War I (and later to America’s involvement in the conflict) demonstrate the enormous scale and magnitude of fighting as never before witnessed throughout history. In World War I, according to Nancy Gentile Ford, America (like Europe) sought to utilize the advances from the machine age (71). The “machine age,” or Industrial Revolution, might have brought progress in the form of new ways of transportation and communication, but Ford explains how these same changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also brought about tragedy.

Ford discusses the widely held understanding that the “machine age” affected not only civilian society, but also the nature of warfare. As the first decade of the new century came to a close, “The extraordinary force of machine power would astonish the world and result in a prolonged World War—a war with unprecedented destruction and a shocking loss of life” (71).

As World War I progressed, soldiers by the millions were sent up against machine guns, artillery, tanks, and poison gases, resulting in mass slaughter. “The Doughboys [American soldiers] never forgot the poison gas. Decades later, nightmares would wake them, choking and sweating, in the night” (Lengel 76). As a result, soldiers quickly learned the devastating consequences of the union between the “machine age” and war. Between 1914 and 1918, the “machine age” contributed to the death of almost fourteen million men and the wounding of twenty-two million more during the conflict (71).
The staggering number of men who were killed or wounded during World War I is significant because it demonstrates the enormous scale of the conflict. What is more, the process of organizing the first modern army in U.S. history was no small matter. For instance, when the United States entered World War I in April 1917, the American Army was quite small, having only about 130,000 men, and many of these were spread around places such as Panama and the Philippines (Evans xx). To put the numbers in perspective, Evans points out that in early 1918 Germany had about 250 divisions on the Western Front, which amounted to more than four million men (xxi). As a result, the United States had to solve not only solve a massive recruitment problem, but also an embarkation problem, quickly.

The massive recruitment and embarkation problem was solved by Congress. Henry J. Reilly, brigadier general and author of the 1936 *Americans All*, explains that the 1917 Congress decided to “raise a war army made up of a greatly expanded regular army, a greatly expanded National Guard in Federal service, and a national army raised by the Federal government along the lines of the U.S. volunteers … but recruited by the draft instead of volunteering” (23). James Hallas in *Doughboy War* describes how, by the end of World War I, the U.S. Army had grown from 130,000 men to five million; the largest fighting force the country had ever seen (1). Such a huge change in overall size obviously affected the way the organization functioned, at many levels. For instance, the army increased the size of companies from 100 men to 250, and regiments from 1000 men to 3700 (Taber 13).
PREVIOUSLY UNCONSIDERED INFLUENCE

How the U.S. Army documented the war was surely chaotic as the organization expanded geometrically, but this chaos leaves the scholar ample room for analysis and discussion. The numerous studies on workplace writing within the field of professional communication cover cultures such as the insurance industry, medical industry, engineering industry, and manufacturing. However, no rhetorical scholar has focused primarily on one of our nation’s longest and most successful workplace cultures: the military. While the lack of research on military communication may suggest that the military is not a workplace worthy of study, I would disagree. Not only is the military notoriously known for transforming individual citizens into an “Army of One,” but the military is also known for their extensive networks of bureaucratic paperwork. The study of organizational communication, within the field of rhetoric, focuses on such job related writing. Lester Faigley, in “Nonacademic Writing: The Social Perspective,” notes that there is a great deal of scholastic interest in the writing that people do as part of their work.

My interest in the organizational communication of the U.S. Army in World War I stems not only from my interest in the Lost Generation writers, but also from my husband’s influence. He is a historian of the conflict, and our home office is belittered with various pictures, primary sources, and material culture from that time period. These historical artifacts made me consider the rhetorical impact of World War I. Furthermore, on our visits to the National World War I Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, we were able to conduct research in the archives. As a rhetorician who studies organizational communication, I am most interested in documents from the archives that demonstrate how military officers were
carrying out the bureaucratic paperwork of the war. For instance, who was the intended audience for such communications as orders, bulletins, and reports? What was the purpose of each document? How did the context of the war help shape the communication? As a result of my initial inquiry, my dissertation will focus on the changing nature of relationships within the U.S. Army during World War I and if there is a connection to how the paperwork was completed. Additionally, I will consider the changing organizational relationships within American business during this same time period and how such a factor might have contributed to the communication of the U.S. Army in World War I. For instance, as early
twentieth century organizations were expanding and changing business relationships, the nature of written communication became more controlled and impersonal in nature. This change in organizational communication during the early twentieth century is potentially important to note for my study since the control of communication revolution was, according to JoAnne Yates, essentially complete by the end of World War I (xix). Yates’s claims about changes in the nature of business communication are supplemented by historians who are interested in American business and reiterate the disillusionment and defeatist attitude written about by the Lost Generation when addressing the Great War.

RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH AND OVERVIEW OF DISSERTATION CHAPTERS

Researching the U.S. Army’s written communications of World War I may not seem useful today. However, I think that such a study may lead to similar studies of other military campaigns. For example, in the future, classified records from the war in Iraq and Afghanistan may be studied. Some records from these conflicts are already available to scholars, thanks to Wikileaks. During the summer of 2010, Wikileaks made the largest collection of classified documents in U.S. history available on their website. Within these thousands of leaked documents, there are certain files named “reports.” These reports are very short (often one sentence) and hardly understandable with various acronyms embedded.
into them. Perhaps one day, with further scholarship, we will understand the genre of these “reports” more fully.

In order to discuss the communication of the U.S. Army in World War I, I will in the next four more chapters illustrate how my original research idea took root with the memoirs of the early twentieth century, grew with the influence of the era’s rapid change in science, technology, and business, and flowered with the realization that a world war’s military communication might yield a tale about a family tree of genre. The next few paragraphs outline the subsequent chapters of my dissertation.

In chapter 2, I will synthesize much of the existing scholarship on genre in order to clarify today’s views of genre theory; to critique the current theories where I see disagreements or insights; and to describe the essential ideas of contemporary genre theory that frame my dissertation research. I do not claim to provide a comprehensive history of scholarship on genre theory. Neither do I provide a detailed account of each addition to our understanding of genre. And while chapter 2 will refer to many of the scholars who have advanced theories of genre, I will not fully examine and consider all their ideas. The reason for not fully examining all these ideas is that I do not have the room or time to complete a comprehensive theory of genre, one that encompasses synchronic as well as diachronic perspectives, literary, as well as rhetorical genres, and individual as well as social views. Instead, I hope to ask new questions rather than try to supply all the answers.

In chapter 3, I present my dissertation’s archival methodology that will uncover the messy, complex ways in which genres were used during the First World War in the U.S. Army’s First Division. I will argue that archival methodology is, in some important ways, similar to ethnographic research; I present the research question(s) for my study; and I
provide a self-aware narrative of my role as an archival researcher. Additionally, I discuss how I will analyze my dissertation’s archival data and how I will write-up the study in accordance with an ethnographic “Impressionist Tale.” I also discuss the significance of my study and emphasize my term, “genreology;” a way to take a genealogical snapshot of the adaptation of genres in archival documents.

In chapter 4, I present the results of my study on the genre(s) of the military in World War I. I have categorized these genre(s) chronologically and include the context of each major military event and the communications dealing with or attached to it. I will analyze each chronological event by noting patterns and making comparisons. The result of my analysis will culminate in an ethnographic “Impressionist Tale” where I will (1) recall the results of my research while allowing the audience to interpret my findings, (2) note the importance and unimportance of certain parts of my research, (3) consider my own “spirit of inquiry” related to my findings (4) and provide the narrative control to my research on how the military genre(s) I studied evolved and changed during a time of flux in the early twentieth century.

In chapter 5, I will draw conclusions from chapter 4’s snapshots of “genreology” in order to present the “re/framed” snapshot of the report genre(s). This chapter will reflect on the primary research questions posed on the evolution of World War I U.S. Army reports in my study and my answers to those questions based on the findings presented in chapter 4. Additionally, I will point to possible future areas of scholarship in the area of military communications.
WORKS CITED


Chapter 2: Literature Review

The “Re/Framing” of Genre

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will synthesize much of the existing scholarship on genre in order to clarify today’s views of genre theory; to critique the current theories where I see disagreements or insights; and to describe the essential ideas of contemporary genre theory to frame my dissertation research. I do not claim to provide a comprehensive history of scholarship on genre theory. Neither do I provide a detailed account of each addition to our understanding of genre. And while my chapter will include many of the scholars that have advanced theories of genre, I will not fully examine and consider all their ideas. The reason for not fully examining all these ideas is that I do not have the room or time to complete a comprehensive theory of genre, one that encompasses synchronic as well as diachronic perspectives, literary, as well as rhetorical genres, and individual as well as social views. Instead, I hope to ask new questions rather than supply all the answers.

THE EVOLUTIONARY METAPHOR OF GENRE

Genres, or written texts, are largely recognized as having socially preferred forms that structure their organization and influence their patterns. The theories that help answer how genres become socially preferred forms and patterns often use an evolutionary metaphor. However, using an evolutionary metaphor can be misleading in genre theory for a number of reasons.
The lack of consensus, amongst rhetoricians, of what the term “evolution” means is one of the major reasons why using an evolutionary metaphor in genre theory may lead to misunderstanding or confusion. For instance, some rhetorical scholars have turned to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* to position genre theory with the emergence of generic thinking. Eugene Garver in “Aristotle on the Kinds of Rhetoric,” explains that Aristotle looked for divisions of rhetoric because he was curious about the natural world. “Aristotle the biologist discovered that substances and natural things came in kinds . . . Since the discovery of natural kinds was so momentous in his eyes, it made sense to look for kinds even among human activities” (2). Additionally, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell argues that the need to classify discourses, to order them by groups, has been a strong impulse in rhetorical criticism because such criticism rests on comparison and contrast. Comparison and contrast are “the processes by which we are able to perceive similarities and differences and to identify forms, strategies, and arguments… Attempting to understand phenomena by comparing them with other phenomena, similar and dissimilar, is a basic human conceptual activity” (Campbell 258).

While some rhetoricians associate “evolution” with groupings, or taxonomy, other scholars have taken the term “evolution” to mean everything from “Survival of the Fittest” to “DNA.” For instance, Shepherd and Watters (1998) illustrate “the taxonomy of the classes of subgenres of the class of cybergenres,” where “the leaf nodes of the tree are examples of these and the dotted lines represent evolutionary paths between the genre” (1). Or, the study by Schryer (2002) on “Genre and Power: A Chronotopic Analysis” where she draws from Bakhtin to suggest that “every genre expresses a particular relation to space and time, and this relationship is always axiological” (84). Such genre studies often take the evolutionary metaphor quite literally and create elaborate meaning of texts. While I think using an
evolutionary metaphor in genre studies is not be avoided, I argue that rhetoricians need to fully consider and explain how they use such a metaphor in their work to eliminate misunderstanding or confusion.

EXPLANATION OF THE EVOLUTIONARY METAPHOR

During the summer of 2011, I participated in the Rhetoric Society of America’s Workshop on Emerging Genres at Colorado University-Boulder. Our session facilitators, Carolyn Miller and Victoria Gallagher, led a discussion about how the evolutionary metaphor often seems vague when used in genre theory. I realized, through the ensuing discussion, that it is not the evolutionary metaphor itself that is not suited for genre studies, but rather the way in which the metaphor is utilized by scholars in genre studies.

One of the main issues in using the evolutionary metaphor of genre is that it makes genre appear to strive for some sort of progressive improvement. Victor J. Vitanza echoes this concern: “Cause-effect must move in only one direction—namely, forward from the point of temporal origin” (76). In the minds of my fellow workshop participants, using the evolutionary metaphor somehow justified a less fitting genre to be discarded, or overlooked.

This discussion resulted in other related questions such as:

- “Why not study genres that are not ‘fittest’?”
- “Are we ignoring certain genres because they were either already wiped out or do we think they are insignificant and will soon be gone?”
- “As a society, are we looking for purification, a kind of pure genre?”

As our workshop discussion continued, Miller helped us recognize that the evolutionary metaphor can be useful if scholars consider genre as social action. Her groundbreaking 1984
article, “Genre as Social Action” helps illuminate her point. Instead of wholeheartedly using the various evolutionary metaphors in genre studies—from taxonomy, “Survival of the Fittest,” or “DNA”—we can instead think of the social action which gives genre its form and structure. Bazerman echoes this call with “Genres are not just forms. Genres are forms of life, ways of being” (1997, 19). Overall, Miller’s approach to genre is pragmatic; she claims that “a classification of discourse will be rhetorically sound if it contributes to an understanding of how genre works—that is, if it reflects the rhetorical experience of people who create and interpret the discourse” (1984, 152).

EXAMPLES OF SOCIOCULTURAL GENRE

Miller argues that “rhetorical criticism has not provided firm guidance on what constitutes a genre” and that a “rhetorically sound definition of genre must be centered not on the substance or the form of discourse but on the action it is used to accomplish” (151). Rethinking genre from Miller’s perspective, a sociocultural one, involves a move away from defining genre primarily as a class or category and instead invites the view of genres as a function to activity structures that continually mutate (Jasinski 275). “Because genres rely on the social practices of a community that grow and fade through time, they are an ‘open class with new members evolving, old ones decaying’” (Miller 1984, 153).

A rhetorical theory of genre, Miller suggests, must look beyond particular classifications (which are only the indicators of genres and change as our purposes change) and forms (which may trace but do not constitute genre). Instead, genre theory must consider other factors, such as societal motives. At the beginning of A Grammar of Motives, Kenneth Burke (1965) wonders: “What is involved, when we say what people are doing and why they
are doing it?” (xv). Burke describes and locates this question of motive in a dramatistic pentad made up of scene (where an action takes place), act (what is taking place), agent (who is performing the action), and purpose (why is the action being carried out). Motive, he explains, does not reside in the agent alone, a romantic concept, but in the relationships among all five terms of the pentad, all of which attempt to define and enact the drama of motive. Similarly, Anis Bawarshi in “The Genre Function” claims that, as recent theory has it, genre entails purposes, participants, and themes, so understanding genre entails understanding a rhetorical situation and its social context (16).

Recent genre theory that connects genre to purposes, participants, and themes derives from the notion of genre as typified response to a recurring rhetorical situation. Campbell traces the idea’s roots to a 1965 discussion of genre by Edwin Black, in which he describes genres as responding to types of situations that recur. Carolyn Miller’s definition, developing out of the body of rhetorical scholarship that followed, defines genres as “typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations” (1984, 159). Much of North American genre scholarship in composition and rhetoric has since followed Miller’s definition. Some examples of genre scholarship from the sociocultural perspective include Orlikowski and Yates (1994), Shepherd and Watters (1998), and Spinuzzi (2003).

First Example: Orlikowski and Yates
Orlikowski and Yates, in their 1994 article “Genre Repertoire: The Structuring of Communicative Practices in Organizations,” examined the communication exchanged by a group of workers in a multiyear, interorganizational project conducted primarily through electronic mail. What they found was that “the genre repertoire of this
community revealed a rich and varied array of communicative practices” and that genre served as an organizing process (541). The sociocultural approach to genre can be seen in this example with the various ways the research community communicated and how such communication changed and adapted the genre to serve the organization.

Second Example: Shepherd and Watters
Shepherd and Watters, in their 1998 article “The Evolution of Cybergenres” focus on the combination of the computer and Internet into the emergence of the cybergenre. Such a cybergenre happens when “an existing genre initially migrates to this [electronic] medium. . . It may then evolve into a variant cybergenre as it incorporates functionality afforded by the computer and Internet” (1). Their article continues to propose a taxonomy of such cybergenres and examines the emergence of new cybergenres within the context of that taxonomy. Here the sociocultural approach demonstrates how new combinations of genres continue to survive in a different (online) environment.

Third Example: Spinuzzi
In his 2003 book, Tracing Genres through Organizations, Spinuzzi proposes a new understanding of technologically mediated work, for information designers in general and particularly for rhetoricians and technical communicators. Part of Spinuzzi’s argument focuses on looking at how related genres are changed by workers. Further, he emphasizes that one way to change a genre is to introduce new genres to mediate
activities differently. For example, Spinuzzi explains that if a table genre was to enter a computer interface then it would have to be displayed using some sort of interface genre (such as spreadsheet cells). The genre of the table must then be combined with an existing interface genre. He calls this union a “hybrid genre” which involves the “history, addressivity, and distinctiveness of its parents” (66). This type of genre would then also retain the interrelationships with other genres that its parents enjoyed and that workers perceive as being more-or-less the “same” so that they can apply habits to it that they have developed for dealing with its parents (66). In Spinuzzi’s book, the sociocultural approach is used explicitly with his discussion of how genres retain some genetic material of the parents while also taking on new features.

STRAINS OF GENRE THEORY

While acknowledging Miller’s influence on genre theory, other scholars delineate with their own related strains of genre theory. For instance, David Russell uses Vygotskian activity theory to define genre as “typified ways of purposefully interacting in and among some activity system(s)” (513). Carol Berkenkotter and Thomas N. Huckin use Giddens’s structuration theory to define genres as “dynamic rhetorical forms that are developed from actors’ responses to recurrent situations and that serve to stabilize experience and give it coherence and meaning” (4). Although these scholars use very different theories to articulate and describe their definitions in important ways, Amy Devitt in Writing Genres argues that they all follow Miller in including some common elements of a genre definition: “that genre is action, that genre is typified action, that typification comes from recurring conditions, and that those conditions involve a social context” (13).
While there are similarities in the definitions of genre among scholars, there is a problem with defining the surrounding conditions of genres, especially when trying to specify what concept of context must include. Sometimes not everything about the surrounding environment is relevant for the language use being considered, but at other times things outside the surrounding environment do prove to be relevant. Carolyn Miller explains: “Situations are social constructs that are the result, not of ‘perception,’ but of ‘definition’” (156). Similarly, Russell elaborates that activity systems are “mutually (re)constructed by participants historically” and as a result they treat “context not as a separate set of variables but as an ongoing, dynamic accomplishment of people acting together with shared tools, including—most powerfully—writing” (510, 508-509). Devitt proposes that “people construct genre through situation and situation through genre; their relationship is reciprocal and dynamic. If genre responds to recurring situation, then a particular text’s reflection of genre reflects that genre’s situation. Thus the act of constructing the genre—of classifying a text as similar to other texts—is also the act of constructing the situation” (21).

Even though situation and genre are mutually constructed and interrelated, they do not capture all of the action. To reintegrate these contexts of situation and to recognize their role in genre action, Devitt proposes adding culture into the mix. She defines culture as a shared set of material contexts and learned behaviors, values, beliefs, and templates which then influences how situation is constructed and how it is seen as recurring in genres. As a result, culture defines what situations and genres are possible or likely. “What I wish to capture by adding the concept of culture to our genre definition are the ways that existing ideological and material contexts, contexts beyond the more immediate context of situation
of a particular genre, partially construct what genres are and are in turn constructed (reproduced) by people performing genre actions” (27).

While adding culture to our understanding of genre’s situation makes sense, Devitt also points that we must consider the influence other genres. She explains that its effects on the identification of situations and cultures may be less readily apparent even though it stems directly from the constructive nature of genre. As noted earlier and by others, one never writes or speaks in a void:

What fills that void is not only cultural context (ideological and material baggage surrounding our every action) and situational context (the people, languages, and purposes involved in every action) but also generic context, the existing genres we have read or written or that others say we should read or write. The “context of genres” that I propose includes all the existing genres in that society, the individual genres and sets of genres, the relatively stagnant and the changing genres, the genres commonly used and those not used. While the existence of other genres has certainly been acknowledged by many others, including context of genres in my definition emphasizes the fact that genres are always already existing, emphasizes the past in the present. Adding a context of genres to genre theory acknowledges that the existence of genres influences people’s uses of genres, that writers and speakers do not create genres in a generic voice, that people’s knowledge and experience of genres in the past shape other experience with any particular discourse and any particular genre at any particular time. (Devitt 15)

In closing, Devitt explains that the context of genres is distinct from her discussion of the theoretical concept of genre because the context of genres “is the existence of particular
genres, the already existing textual classifications and forms already established and being established within a given culture, [and] the set of typified rhetorical actions already constructed by participants in a society” (28).

**THE ORIGIN OF GENRES**

In my discussion thus far, scholars view genre visible in classification and form where relationships and patterns develop when language users identify different tasks as being similar. And, Devitt argues, genre also exists through “people’s individual rhetorical actions at the nexus of the contexts of situation, culture, and genres” (31). But if genres are generic responses to social situations and culture(s), then how do these genres originate in the first place? If there is an exigence (someone telling someone else to do something), then who decides how to frame the response? Campbell gives one explanation in that the complex relationships between form and content are part of the ways in which genres work. “Our ability to understand the form-content relationships created in communal practice are aspects of our social competence, but they also represent communicative potentials” (263). Devitt echoes, “If each writing problem were to require a completely new assessment of how to respond, writing would be slowed considerably, but once a writer recognizes a recurring situation, a situation that others have responded to in the past, the writer’s response to that situation can be guided by past responses. Genre, thus, depends heavily on the intertextuality of discourse” (15). The idea of the intertextuality of discourse mentioned by Devitt connects to Miller’s observation that, “What we learn when we learn a genre is not just a pattern of forms... We learn, more importantly, what ends we have” (1979, 165).
In our 2011 Workshop on Emerging Genres, Miller presented four different ways of thinking about the “ends we have” based on the work of Swales. These four ways include: market, administered, institutional, and vernacular. To highlight each of these remaining categories, the next four paragraphs will highlight their main concepts.

**Market Genres**

Market Genres, are according to Miller, genres that exist in situations with strong distinctions between producer and consumer. Film, television, books, music, and some internet products are all examples of this category. The exigence is commercial and what survives is what sells. There are various examples of scholarship on this category of genre in literary studies.

**Administered Genres**

Administered genres are imposed forms of communication. These genres, according to Miller, exist in corporate, organizational, educational, and government settings. Authorities regulate the social actions of others and provide the exigence. What survives is what suits those in power. One recent example is A.D. Van Nostrand’s *Fundable Knowledge: The Marketing of Defense Technology* (1997). In his study, Van Nostrand takes a journey into the largest knowledge production system in history, one that has funded much of the academic and industrial research in the United States over the last half century. Within the closed world of defense research, directed by government mandates for free competitive bidding, an unusual market has developed. Only those closely involved with this often secret enterprise have had a
detailed sense of how this knowledge market worked. “Fundable knowledge is generated by a large social system that functions by impersonal directives…The system produces knowledge for national defense. Goals are set; they are conveyed by impersonal directives, and most of the people who work in the system do not know who wrote them” (Van Nostrand 1). And, “most of the millions of people who produce knowledge for the system read only a fraction of these directives. Yet everyone understands that a vision of some sort is being distributed among these millions of people, which they are then presumed to assimilate and to implement” (2).

Institutional Genres
Miller explains that these genres exist in social institutions with strong conventions and sanctions developed over time and that the exigence is self-imposed, or internal. What survives serves many complex relationships sustained by the institution. Schryer (2002) might call this category “regulated.” These “regulated” genres originate as agents enact to promote certain forms of order (85). She developed this type of genre from her case study of insurance negative news messages, which included a set of 26 negative letters selected by management as representative of both successful and less successful letters, as well as interviews with some of the assessors. Schryer then analyzed these letters from a number of different perspectives in order to determine strategies that writers were using and to determine the difference between more or less successful letters from the perspective of local standards within the organization. She concludes: “When we examine [such]
genres...[and] regulated strategies that agents enact within fields, it is probably useful to think of genres as actions or verbs. They guide us as we together and ‘on the fly’ mutually negotiate our way from moment to moment and yet provide us with some security” (95).

**Vernacular Genres**

In contrast, vernacular genres exist in situations where users have few institutional or administered constraints. The exigence is discovered and developed communally, especially in regards to new technologies. What survives is what satisfies or pleases those who interact together. Miller has revisited genre within new communication technologies with Dawn Shepherd in “Blogging as Social Action.” In this 2004 article, Miller and Shepherd explain that genre analysis can be applied to the relatively unstructured rhetorical environment of the internet, where constructing knowledge and getting work done are not necessarily the driving exigencies. Their analysis follows in this direction as they claim to apply “genre analysis of the blog . . . to explore the emergent culture of the early 21st century as revealed by the self-organized communities that support blogging, the recurrent rhetorical exigences that arise there, and the rhetorical roles (or subject positions) they support and make possible.” Ultimately, Miller and Shepherd come to see the blog as a genre that addresses a timeless rhetorical exigence in ways that are specific to its time: “In the blog, the potentialities of technology, a set of cultural patterns, rhetorical conventions available in antecedent genres, and the history of the subject have combined to produce a recurrent rhetorical motive that has found a conventional mode of
expression. Bloggers acknowledge that motive in each other and continue enacting it for themselves. The blog-as-genre is a contemporary contribution to the art of the self.”

These four “ways of owning genre” allow us to think about the intertextuality that Devitt mentioned. If we can learn what ends we have, as Miller would say, we can compose genres guided on the responses of the past. But does that mean we must always look to the past in genre studies?

**THE HISTORICAL NATURE OF GENRE STUDIES**

There is something about genre studies, as mentioned above, that lends itself to a progressive timeline, which was one of the initial concerns voiced by my fellow participants at the 2011 Workshop on Emerging Genres. Even in the more recent example study by Van Nostrand, Schryer, and Miller/Shepherd, there is something of a historical nature dwelling within them. For example, what sort of genre is the blog? Does the blog come from an antecedent genre, such as the diary? Also, genre studies cannot predict the future. They merely explain a rhetorical situation that is specific and unique. For instance, Schryer’s study looked at one particular genre within the insurance industry, and from that one study we can generalize but we cannot predict what will happen to that genre five or ten years into the future. As a result, during our workshop, Miller argued that genre studies are inherently historical. Unlike the social sciences, which try to predict future outcomes, the humanities never claim to have a crystal ball.
Even historical genres with formal features can be hard to identify and can prove troublesome since the formal characteristics of genres change over time while the genre label may remain the same (Devitt 11). For instance, Leonardo Mozdzenski’s “The Sociohistorical Constitution of the Genre Legal Booklet: A Critical Approach” investigates the sociohistorical path of the Brazilian legal booklet from the appearance and propagation of those genres that contributed to its formation until the development of current educational booklets that explain law to layman readers. In fulfilling this objective, Mozdenski demonstrates that while the legal booklet may have changed in formal features, over the years the label has remained stable (97).

In keeping with the diverse variants of the evolutionary metaphor, genres have long been seen as having “lives”: being born, growing, and sometimes dying. Gunther Kress argues:

If genre is entirely imbricated in other social processes, it follows that unless we view society itself as static, neither social structures, social processes, nor therefore genres are static. Genres are dynamic, responding to the dynamics of other parts of social systems. Hence genres change historically; hence new genres emerge over time, and hence, too, what appears as “the same” generic form at one level has recognizably distinct forms in differing social groups. (42)

For example, the novel is described as “having risen out of the eighteenth century, birthed from travel narratives, episodic sagas, letter manuals, and other parents; some have forecast the novel’s death” (Devitt 89). While genres may have such lives, what do those individual lives tell us about the collective concept of genre? Some genre scholars, most notably Ralph Cohen and Kathleen Jamieson, have examined connections between genre and history. In
particular, they explore how genres develop historically—how they originate, adapt, and change.

Sometimes, in the field of rhetoric, we even study genres we don’t understand, especially when we don’t know the exigence. This kind of study happens, I think, when we try to go back into time and don’t understand the context or we study very new emerging genres. Devitt echoes this view: “At least as important as recognizing antecedents in the context of genres is recognizing cultural and situational antecedents: the developing changes in ideologies, institutions, and settings that create the circumstances for a new genre” (93). While studying new genres, especially with a technological leaning today, are useful, I enjoy trying to understand the context and exigence of the past as the part of the genre. As part of this process, tracing the history of a genre might lead to other genres. “Where do genres come from?” asks Tzvetan Todorov. He answers, “Quite simply from other genres. A new genre is always the transformation of an earlier one, or of several: by inversion, by displacement, by combination” (15).

Most recently, I have been researching administered forms of genre. The historical nature of describing how imposed government genres are social responses to particular events cultural and ideological circumstances intrigues me. My favorite example of the importance of how social responses happen is by Steven B. Katz (2003) in “The Ethic of Expediency: Classical Rhetoric, Technology, and the Holocaust.” In his article, Katz presents a memo written about the necessity for improvements to vans being used by the Nazi regime in World War II to exterminate Jews, just months before gas chambers and death camps were fully operationalized (184). At one point in the memo, the writer states:
Since December 1941, ninety-seven thousand have been processed by the three vehicles in service, with no major incidents. In the light of observations made so far, however, the following technical changes are needed: The vans’ normal load is usually nine per square yard . . . It must absolutely be reduced by a yard, instead of trying to solve the problem, as hitherto, by reducing the number of pieces loaded. Besides, this extends the operating time, as the empty void must also be filled with carbon monoxide. (183)

The phrases “ninety-seven thousand have been processed” and “number of pieces loaded” are chilling once the reader realizes that the writer is referring to human beings who have been killed by the Nazis. Katz comments, “The writer shows no concern that the purpose of his memo is the modification of vehicles not only to improve efficiency, but also to exterminate people” (185). What would cause someone to write a memo in this way? One obvious reason, as Katz outlines in his article, is the ethical problem associated with Nazi Germany’s belief that science and technology were the basis of a powerful argument for carrying out any program. Katz even takes this a step further to compare such a strong belief in science and technology to America. While he acknowledges that America is not Nazi Germany, Katz still wonders if science and technology have contributed to an ethical dilemma in professional documents (197). Genres most associated with professional communication do often lean towards an objective writing style.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY’S ROLE IN GENRE

Nancy Allen and Deborah Bosley explain that “professional writing developed from the epistemology of scientific objectivity; that is, [it] operates within an ideology that holds
that facts speak for themselves . . . [it] is part of the scientific tradition that focuses attention on objects and what happens to them, and away from the people who operate on objects.” (80). In other words, Allen and Bosley argue that it is the what that matters in traditional professional writing, not the who. Because of this ideology, professional writers are often charged with producing “objective” documents that lack personal or emotional elements, since the writers are asked to deliver the information and leave out a personal voice.

Adherence to an objective perspective is based, according to David N. Dobrin (1989), on the assumption that professional writing is fair-minded, rational, and uninvolved to more likely present the truth (77). This assumption is based on the scientific model purported since the time of Bacon and Descartes. An objective judgment is so because it is “reached by using a method. The reason the judgments are fair-minded and rational is that the method is; they are repeatable and checkable because the method can be followed over and over again” or that “An epistemology of objectivity maintains that we can make judgments that are . . . interchangeable and reliable—as opposed to subjective judgments that are ‘biased, emotional, or involved’” (Dobrin 77). The technical world’s insistence on producing documents devoid of subjective judgment results from an epistemology that posits reality as a fixed, knowable entity and holds that language devoid of human involvement will allow us to perceive and understand that reality (Berlin 1987, Miller 1979). Arguments presented in technical documents ought to be rational; any intrusion of ethos or emotion clouds the issues (Devitt 81). In other words, professional communication often is based on “the assumption that we can know the world in only one way, that we can render the world knowable through the language we use, and that the documents we produce will be knowable in the same way
by all readers. The writer’s primary task is to represent the world as it is by becoming invisible” (Miller 1979, 612).

Many theorists and analysts of professional writing, however, question even the possibility of objectivity in writing. Dobrin believes that the “objectivity expressed in [professional] writing is the objectivity of the group of people who make technological judgments” (81). John W. Coletta (1992) emphasizes, “Every description of a ‘thing’ or ‘object’ is an assertion or ‘proposition’ about that thing; there is no purely objective description” (60). But what does this mean for genre studies?

**CRITICAL GENRE AWARENESS**

If we agree that being objective in professional communication is difficult, if not impossible, perhaps we should answer Devitt’s call to develop critical genre awareness. Devitt argues for a type of rhetorical awareness that others have posited as well. For instance, Charles Bazerman has summarized how rhetorical awareness “is precisely critical: rhetorical perception used as a means to distance ourselves from the everyday practice of the world’s business in order to reveal and evaluate the hidden mechanisms of life” (1992, 62). Such rhetorical awareness leads to greater understanding of our world: “The more precisely we learn how the symbols by which we live have come into place, how they function, whose interests they serve, and how we may exert leverage on them to reform the world, the more we may act meaningfully upon our social desires” (1992, 62). Bazerman notes that action must follow awareness: “Criticism, however, is only the beginning of action. Action is a participation, not a disengagement” (1992, 62).
Cultivating genre awareness seems daunting since “outside the field of genre studies, writers, scholars, and teachers often think of genres as formulaic and constraining. Even within composition, teachers often see the power of genres to inhibit creativity more than the power of genres to reveal constraint” (Devitt 338). While teaching genre can indeed be formulaic and constraining, learning genres can be much more engaging to students if taught with social, or cultural, meaning. Teaching genres can also be enlightening and freeing if genres are taught as part of a larger critical awareness. Part of teaching critical genre awareness is to help students perceive the ideological impact of genre and to make deliberate generic choices (Devitt 337). An outline of the theoretical underpinnings of genre pedagogies, in which Devitt makes no claim to comprehensiveness, include a few insightful and essential points:

- Genres are social and rhetorical actions: they develop their languages and forms out of rhetorical aims and contexts shared by groups of users.
- The spread of a genre creates shared aims and social structures.
- As new users acquire genres, that process reinforces existing aims and structures.
- Existing genres reinforce institutional and cultural norms and ideologies.
- To change genres, individually or historically, is to change shared aims, structures, and norms.

Although she acknowledges that teachers may share these theoretical understandings, specific pedagogies emphasize different components at different levels. In short, each point represents a potential genre pedagogy with significant differences of emphasis:
Focusing on the rhetorically contextualized language and forms of a genre may lead to giving access to particular genres. Focusing on the ways genres develop out of groups’ shared aims may lead to focusing on giving access to those groups. Focusing on existing genres as ideological reinforces may lead to focusing on critiquing genres. And focusing on norms and change may lead to focusing on how individuals might affect hose norms and effect change. (Devitt 343)

Devitt encourages instructors to lead students to see genres as things, with elements that have purposes rather than rules and to allow students (1) to see genres “as created by people to achieve aims, not just as pre-existing and irrevocable constructs into which they must fit” (348). Also, (2) seeing genres as processes which emerge and change is as important as (3) seeing genres as serving the aims of groups, institutions, and cultures (Devitt 348). When combined, these three elements help students to understand genres as created, dynamic, and ideological construct[s]. “When they learn a new, antecedent genre . . . they thereafter learn it with some consciousness of genres’ rhetorical nature and of their potential for adapting to writers’ particular purposes and situations” (Devitt 348). Similarly, Jamieson demonstrates how existing genres constitute antecedent genres when people must construct new genres for new situations and cultural contexts (406).

A TIME OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

If we are to encourage genre awareness in our students, we as scholars must provide our field with examples. An example of a specific time of scientific and technological change, the early twentieth century, has already provided a glimpse into the history and development of different kinds of genres. Even Devitt acknowledges that “The role of new
genres in fulfilling new functions that develop from new cultural and situational contexts is especially apparent in the case of business communication in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” (97). But why? Perhaps Miller can clarify:

Many have made the point that science is the hard case for rhetoric . . . because under its own description science produces truth and not belief. Technology is a hard case of a different kind. It describes itself as producing direct social good in concrete artifacts, without intervening belief, practice, or discourse. This description waves several challenges in the face of the rhetorician: the obscuring of discourse, the presumption of social value, and the denial of susasion. (1998, 288)

Within the United States, as business grew and economies of scale came into play, relationships within organizations changed.

Businesses developed drastically in early nineteenth-century America from business enterprises that were generally small, family affairs to large organizations. The internal operations of these firms were controlled and coordinated through informal, personal communication. Employers and employees, according to JoAnne Yates, would use word of mouth, except when letters were needed to span distance (xv). Yates claims that this transformation of business began with the railroads in the mid-nineteenth century and spread to manufacturing firms, such as DuPont, beginning around 1880: “During the years from 1850 to 1920, a new philosophy of management based on system and efficiency arose, and under its impetus internal communication came to serve as a mechanism for managerial coordination and control of organizations” (xix). Systematic management developed theories and techniques that transcended the individual by relying instead on the system. It had two primary principles: “(1) a reliance on systems mandated by top management rather than on
individuals, and (2) the need for each level of management to monitor and evaluate performance at lower levels” (Yates 10).

Yates’s claims about changes in the nature of business, and as a result organizational communication, are supported by historians who are interested in American business. For instance, Glen Porter (1973) points out that the typical American business establishment of the first part of the nineteenth century was financed by either a single person or by several people bound together in a partnership (9). Since the business was comparatively small, it represented the personal wealth of just a few persons. Similarly, most manufacturing enterprises (with the exception of some textile mills and iron furnaces) were also relatively small, involving little in the way of physical plant or expensive machinery. It was relatively easy to enter business because the initial costs of going into trade or simple manufacturing were within the reach of many citizens. Corporations were rare, and business had a very personal tone. Porter reflects on the history of these business relationships by explaining that such relationships between owner-managers and their workers were quite personal in the early nineteenth century. Since managers saw employees frequently and usually lived with them in the same town, they could at least be expected to know their names, the quality of their work, and perhaps even some things about their personal lives (9).

As large business organizations of the late nineteenth century stitched regional networks together to create national markets, they altered both the form and meaning of local autonomy (Zunz 12). Additionally, the nature of relationships between the labor force and the managers, as well as the highly individual identification of persons with their firms, underwent considerable change in the “big businesses which had evolved by the turn of the century” (Porter 20). The bureaucracy became more impersonalized, as “complex
administrative network[s] created a social and economic gap between men on various levels of . . . hierarchy” (Porter 21). As the operations of a single business grew larger, more involved, and more widely separated, individual employees often had no knowledge of the distant, almost invisible people who controlled and manipulated the business and, to some degree, their lives. Many workers had little or no understanding of their part in the overall operations of the giant organization and work itself, as well as their relations with others in the organization, grew increasingly impersonal (Porter 22).

Historian Thomas Hughes has described the century after 1870 as characterized by the technological and cultural shift to what has been called Fordism by some economic and social analysts. This technology included not only Henry Ford’s famous assembly line (dating from 1913) but also the division of labor and prescription of work behavior that made it possible, practices that were formalized in Federick Winslow Taylor’s system of scientific management developed just a few years earlier. Taylor’s methods, according to Miller, were widely adopted for their:

- enhancement of productivity and efficiency, promoted standardization, planning, and control, profoundly affecting the organization of work and the relations between workers, managers, and technical experts. Fordism goes beyond Taylorism, requiring even greater standardization, coordination, hierarchy, and centralized planning; as a consequence, it involves large investments in early production, which in turn require mass production and thus mass consumption, elaborate distribution systems, and the stimulation of demand. (Miller 1998, 291)

Another way of thinking about scientific and technological changes occurring in the early twentieth century is what historian James R. Beniger calls the “control revolution.”
THE CONTROL REVOLUTION

The “control revolution” was “a series of developments in production, distribution, and consumption focused in the period from 1820 to 1880 but continuing into the late twentieth century” (Beniger 427). In explaining the “control revolution,” Beniger points to new controls over production such as interchangeable parts, integrated factories, modern accounting techniques, professional managers, continuous-process production, Taylor’s scientific management, the assembly line, and statistical quality control. New controls over distribution included developments in the railroads, the postal system, the telegraph, standardized time zones, commodity dealers, the department store, and machine packaging. And, finally, new controls over consumption included the development of the rotary printing press and the subsequent creation of the mass media, the mail-order catalog, broadcasting, market research, and statistical sampling methods (17-20). Bazerman echoes with his study of Thomas Edison and the late eighteenth century: “During Edison’s life, technology was changing America’s way of doing business. [. . .] As the railroads created possibilities of national market, national goods, and national media, businesses grew in size and geographic range. Writing became more important and regularized to provide information, standardized and controlled procedures, and coordination of efforts of many different departments” (1999, 39).

As a result of management’s new way of interacting with employees, organizational communication changed from being informal and primarily oral to a more formal communication system depending heavily on written documents. For example, old communication technologies such as quill pens and bound volumes gave way to typewriters, stencil duplicators, and vertical files that aided in creating and storing documents (Yates xix).
New technologies also affected the function and form of communication within the firm. These new types of communication developed, such as orders, reports, and memoranda to suit managerial goals and technological contexts (Yates xix). In doing so, “The management changes created new rhetors and buried them under layers of bureaucracy, created new interests that in turn produced new exigencies and constraints, and altered the means of persuasion” (Miller 1998, 297).

The particular genres that constituted the genre repertoire changed as the business world’s functions, forums, and relationships changed. Completely new genres (that is, those that may have had antecedents but that appear not to have been perceived generically previously) developed to meet the community’s new needs (Devitt 94). Among the new genres were circular letters or general orders (issuing specific policies or procedures), routine and special reports, various kinds of forms, manuals (describing the company’s systematic procedures), in-house magazines, and managerial meetings. Yates points to possible antecedents for the new genres, confirming our expectation that new genres appear to emerge from other genres. Circular letters, for instance, had three possible antecedents in purpose, form, and audience with military orders first, advertising circulars second, and printed company rules as the third. Although Yates finds such antecedents for various aspects of these new genres, each genre of course differs significantly from its antecedents, as it fulfills some “newly developed purpose for the business community, purposes that emerge from the significant cultural changes of the time” (66).

As the nature of business changes, Devitt argues that genres fill in the gaps of newly developed functions and reflect new roles for participants as well as new situations. “Each new genre adds something a bit different to what exists, each develops out of different
antecedents, even as each develops in a common context. Together, they indicate the complex interaction of genres and functions, of how contextual changes lead to perceived needs that are absorbed by modifying existing genres into newly constructed genres” (97). In many ways, the detailed history of these genres reminds us of the “typical” origin of a genre: gradual development over time by modifying existing genres, responding to gradually emerging cultural and situational changes, especially newly perceived functions and changing relationships among participants (Devitt 97).

As businesses continued to evolve in the early twentieth century, one major means of maintaining centrality was to extend an informational web to regularize the flow of information, largely through the use of forms. The growth of forms in many businesses at this moment of history was part of the communication revolution that accompanied the rise of the modern corporation. According to Bazerman, the required use of forms:

- ensured that subordinates gathered just the information that management wanted, then collected and measured that information in ways consistent with information gathering at other times and places by different collectors. The standard form ensures that information is reported in a format that makes it easily comparable to other information field on the same or related form. As the forms organize and regularize the flow of information upward, they also regularize the work of subordinates.

(Bazerman, 1999, 268)

One intention, according to Allen and Bosley, behind the use of such forms was for professional writers to produce a series of documents that appear to have been written by the same author: “to develop a unified corporate voice that is not undermined by issues of personal style and preference” (84).
One the reasons for maintaining a corporate voice would be to control the style and
the textual variations of style that could result from personal voice and could lead to
confusion. “Close adherence to guidelines also makes chunks of text interchangeable from
one document to another. Corporations assume that by controlling style, writers will produce
documents that have the same voice. This emphasis on documents, not on the writer, means
the documents are more efficient to produce” (Allen and Bosley 84). Further: “The goal of
furthering corporate efficiency contributes to a more indirect control of voice, one that
textbooks on writing and on [professional] communication do not prepare writers to meet”
(93). Even more importantly, when writers are “concealed behind corporate identities and
bylines, a sense of personal responsibility may be more difficult to muster and may even
appear to be inappropriate” (85).

Allen and Bosley emphasize that “in both internal and external technical documents,
corporations control the corporate voice through the mandated use of corporate style
guidelines” (84). These guidelines are sometimes developed through research and usability
testing and sometimes through established custom. In both cases, guidelines are “quite
prescriptive in terms of content to be included and style to be followed for any particular
writing task” (84). For example, most corporations’ style guidelines prescribe matters of
punctuation, diction, and format particular to that company’s idea of appropriateness.

The change to a more controlled and more impersonal nature in American business
communication was, according to Yates, essentially complete by the end of World War I
(xix). In World War I, according to Nancy Gentile Ford, “America, like Europe, sought
progress in the machine age” (71). The “machine age” of the late nineteenth and early
twentieth centuries brought about not only progress, but also tragedy. Ford discusses the widely held understanding that the “machine age” affected not only civilian society, but also the nature of warfare. As the first decade of the new century came to a close, “The extraordinary force of machine power would astonish the world and result in a prolonged World War—a war with unprecedented destruction and a shocking loss of life” (Ford 71).

THE WORLD AT WAR

As World War I progressed, soldiers by the millions were sent up against machine guns, artillery, tanks, and poison gases, resulting in mass slaughter. “The Doughboys [American soldiers] never forgot the poison gas. Decades later, nightmares would wake them, choking and sweating, in the night” (Lengel 76). As a result, soldiers quickly learned the devastating consequences of the union between the “machine age” and war. Between 1914 and 1918, the “machine age” contributed to the death of almost fourteen million men and the wounding of twenty-two million more during the conflict (71).

The staggering number of men killed or wounded during World War I is significant because it demonstrates the enormous scale of the conflict. What is more, the process of organizing the first modern army in U.S. history was no small matter. For instance, when the United States entered World War I in April 1917, the American Army was quite small, having only about 130,000 men, and many of these were spread around places such as Panama and the Philippines (Evans xx). To put the numbers in perspective, Evans points out that in early 1918 Germany had about 250 divisions on the Western Front, which amounted to more than four million men (xxi). As a result, the United States had to solve not only solve a massive recruitment problem, but also an embarkation problem, quickly.
The massive recruitment and embarkation problem was solved by Congress. Henry J. Reilly, Brigadier General and author of the 1936 *Americans All*, explains that the 1917 Congress decided to “raise a war army made up of a greatly expanded regular army, a greatly expanded National Guard in Federal service, and a national army raised by the Federal government along the lines of the U.S. volunteers … but recruited by the draft instead of volunteering” (23). James Hallas, in *Doughboy War*, describes how, by the end of World War I, the U.S. Army had grown from 130,000 men to five million, the largest fighting force the country had ever seen (1). Such a huge change in overall size obviously affected the way the organization functioned, at many levels. For instance, the army increased the size of companies from 100 men to 250, and regiments from 1000 men to 3700 (Taber 13).

**MY DISSERTATION’S “RE/FRAMED” APPROACH TO GENRE**

As relationships were changing in the U.S. Army during World War I, I am most interested in whether or not there is a connection to the way relationships were changing in American business organizations of the early twentieth century. In other words, the focus of my dissertation research is on how the changing relationships of the U.S. Army in World War I affected its organizational communication. As discussed throughout this chapter, contextual changes do not necessarily sweep simultaneously through all situations. Thus, my dissertation will focus on the organizational communication of the U.S. Army in World War I from the beginning of the conflict in 1917 to the end in 1918 in order to consider how military genre(s) might have changed and mutated during the time period.

Some genres are created at a precise moment in time. For example, Yates demonstrates that people in local situations respond to changes in different ways and at
different rates. In the details of the cases Yates considers, genre is influenced not only by the context but of particular individuals’ actions. Just as genres change, so too individuals encourage or inhibit such change. Devitt considers that individuals may not intentionally be affecting genres and they may not even be aware that their actions have any effect. In some cases, she cites that the individuals pursue a philosophy or a system that leads to generic change while at other moments an individual may adapt a genre to suit his or her personality or personal philosophy. Individuals may also popularize social changes that lead to generic changes. In all of these cases, individuals have an identifiable effect on the origin of historical changes in a genre (Devitt 110). Yates’s study of business communication argues for the impact of individual influence, but it also demonstrates that individual influence works only when local situations combine with cultural context and individual initiative.

By definition, according to the scholars highlighted in this chapter, genres are both form and context, and they both shape and are shaped by contexts of situation, culture, and other genres. Socially, genres reflect and reinforce the group but are enacted individually. Historically, genres require both cultural support and individual action in order to change, and they require both stability and flexibility time in order to endure. Genres serve as regularizing standards and as enablers of variation and creativity (Devitt 216). Further, Bazerman states “The forms of writing are historical phenomena—created, recognized, mobilized, and given force within the mind of each writer and reader at specific social-historical moments, but transmitted in the accumulation of texts” (1988, 318).

As a result, my dissertation will use an evolutionary metaphor with the sociocultural approach to genre, as outlined in this chapter, while also “re/framing” the theory with my term: “genreology.” Bazerman explains how genres, when viewed from the sociocultural
approach advocated by Miller, are “frames for social action…Genres shape the thoughts we form and the communications by which we interact” (1997, 19). Thus, my dissertation’s approach to genre will consider what the antecedents, or biological parents, of the military genre(s) were and how the family tree changed during the war. To do so, I will focus on how the reports at the beginning of the war compare to the reports found at the end of the conflict. Such an approach will extend the sociocultural theory, influenced by Miller, to consider how social action influences genre during a specific time period. By the end of my project, then, I hope to map a “genreology” of the U.S. Army records from World War I. That is, I hope to trace the “geneology” of the “genre” of these documents. While such a task may seem complicated, I think that this area of study will show the complex ways in which the records from World War I adapted during a time of conflict and change never before seen by the world.

CONCLUSION

I find the study of genres exciting because, as Devitt says, “Genres pervade lives. People use them, consciously and unconsciously, creatively and formulaically, for social functions and individual purposes, with critical awareness and blind immersion, in the past and yet today” (219). Not only do genres shape our experiences, but our own experiences shape them. As we study and teach these ways of interacting with others, we may be approaching “an understanding not just of genres but of the messy, complex ways that human beings get along in their worlds” (Devitt 219).
WORKS CITED


Chapter 3: Methodology

Ethnography in Archival Research

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present my dissertation’s archival methodology that will uncover the messy, complex ways in which genres were used during the First World War in the U.S. Army’s First Division. I will argue that archival methodology is, in some important ways, similar to ethnographic research; I present the research question(s) for my study; and I provide a self-conscious narrative of my role as an archival researcher. Additionally, I introduce how I will analyze my dissertation’s archival data and how I will write-up the study in accordance with an ethnographic “Impressionist Tale.” I will also discuss the significance of my study and emphasize my term, “genreology;” a way to take a genealogical snapshot of the adaptation of genres in archival documents.

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION AND ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

What makes conducting archival research challenging is that in professional communication, to some extent, scholars cannot agree on how to approach this type of methodology. For instance, one of the most frequently cited articles on historical research is Robert J. Connors “Dreams and Play: Historical Method and Methodology.” But this article is included in Methods and Methodology in Composition Research, which is primarily focused on qualitative research. Similarly, Barbara E. L’Eplattenier writes that she “quickly
came to realize that, with few exceptions, what we were looking for—practical articles to orient and guide people new to archival work, articles that described the methods of historical research—didn’t exist” (67). What, then, are some reasons for the lack of scholarship on historical methodology? L’Eplattenier suggests that “Historians are a small subgroup within rhetoric and composition and tend to research a wide range of time periods and rhetorical activities. We identify ourselves as rhetoric and composition historians rather than historians who research writing practices and discourse during time period X” (68). Due to this, L’Eplattenier claims rhetoric and composition historians are not represented well enough within departments and the field has not yet been able to recognize common research methods or resources in the same way that other types of researchers do. “Additionally, because we don’t yet have canonical historical methods articles, as teachers we may find it difficult to address the topic in our research methods classes” (L’Eplattenier 68). Since L’Eplattenier’s 2009 article, other scholars have begun to build off of the original article by Connors while also addressing the lack of historical methodology scholarship.

Some of the other scholarship that has been extended by Connors’ article while also contributing to the discussion of archival methodology includes a special issue of College English in May 1999 and the Winter 2002 issue of Rhetoric Society Quarterly. In “Reading Typos, Reading Archives,” Steven Mailloux asks how one approaches an archive that is full of fascinating problems. For example, “when does interpreting of a text begin? Before or after one has established a text?” (584). Also in this same College English issue, Linda Ferreira-Buckley ponders what techniques are needed to deal with archival material. She notes the importance of the historian’s traditional tools, which, despite so much progress, basically haven’t changed (582). In Rhetoric Society Quarterly, one noteworthy article is by
Richard Enos: “One of the biggest problems in recovering the lost art of researching the history of rhetoric is an obvious one: so few of us are doing historical research in rhetoric. On the surface, this statement appears ludicrous . . . Yet, much of what is done in our discipline is not basic [or primary] research” (10). In other words, Enos claims that the field should use more primary research such as legal documents, personal diaries, etc. He continues, “Rather, what we presented as historical studies are critiques on secondary scholarship, speculative essays on meta-theory and point/counter-point debates over characterizations of ideologies . . . They do not . . . equate with basic historical research” (10). These recent issues concerning archival methodology are not the only contemporary examples of scholarship on the subject.

*Working in the Archives* (2010), contains a collection of several scholars’ advice about archival methodology. For example, Cheryl Glenn and Jessica Enoch note that “The formulation of the project and concomitant research agenda is most often the first step in historiography and archival research. Rarely do researchers identify an archive and hope to find a research project in it” (13). They claim that scholars “instead begin with a broad research question and then read widely and deeply until they begin to identify an outline of significance or basis of investigation for the project at hand. Once researchers have a handle on the topic, they consider the kind of archival documents that would support, extend, further, and energize the project” (13). By researchers beginning with a broad question followed by deep reading, they are eventually able to make sense of their study. Similarly, Tarez Samra Graban in “Emergent Taxonomies: Using Tension and Forum to Organize Primary Texts” argues that “The best way to understand how certain texts in a collection inform other texts is by letting a new framework for analysis emerge from the texts
themselves” (208). She further claims that the “archival researcher’s project is also often
defined by inquiry rather than by method, and that inquiry sometimes trains against available
methods” (209). While letting inquiry take control of a research project may seem
intimating, it is an important part of any archival research process.

Another recent book, Beyond the Archives (2008), includes an introduction by Gesa
E. Kirsch and Liz Rohan: “In addition to expanding a narrow conception of archives, the
experiences narrated in this volume teach the importance of attending to facets of the
research process that might easily be marginalized and rarely mentioned because they seem
merely intuitive, coincidental, or serendipitous” (4). Additionally, contributors Lisa
Mastrangelo and Barbara L’Eplattenier note that “As we talk with scholars, we find that our
stories—stumbling into archives, fascinated but untrained in historiographical methods—are
not unique” (163). They explain further that most scholars in the humanities are trained in
literary analysis where the full text appears complete before you. “We didn’t know how to
construct historical narratives or read census data or hunt down archival documents. Even
famed rhetoric and composition historian Robert Connors . . . offered the . . . simplistic
advice to approach archival research as a directed ramble, an August mushroom hunt”
(Mastrangelo and L’Eplattenier 163).

While recent publications focused on historical methodology are promising for
scholars interested in researching the history of professional communication, this research
needs to be synthesized better. For example, many scholars acknowledge the article by
Connors as a starting point for thinking about historical research, and they have begun to
build off of his work. Yet the advice that scholars such as Mailloux, Enos, and Kirsch offer
needs to be organized more fully to make a critical mass of historical methodology for archival researchers.

ETHNOGRAPHY IN ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

One way of thinking about the lack of scholarship regarding historical methodology is to consider the similarities to a widely accepted method of inquiry in professional communication: ethnographic research. According to John VanMaanen, “An ethnography is written representation of a culture (or selected aspects of a culture) (2). Archival research is similar in that the researcher also must provide a written representation of some culture. VanMaanen compares culture, in ethnographic studies, to a black hole that allows no light to escape. “The observer knows of culture’s presence not by looking, but only by conjecture, inference, and a great deal of faith” (3). The same comparison of culture can apply to archival research since the researcher can only know so much about the persons, events, and places that they read about in libraries filled with treasures of books, documents, and manuscripts. VanMaanen explains that ethnographic writing requires some understanding of the “language, concepts, categories, practices, rules, beliefs, and so forth, used by members of the written-about group. These are the stuff of culture” (13). The tricky part of ethnography is to “adequately display that culture (or, more commonly, parts of the culture) in a way that is meaningful to readers without great distortion” (VanMaanen 13). Again, there is a similarity to archival research in that the researcher must consider how to adequately reflect the culture, or persons, events, and places, that s/he are surveying in the archives.
The process of surveying culture in the archives is reminiscent of the discipline where ethnography first began: anthropology. Roth explains that anthropology rejected the concept of methodological individualism since the field’s concern is focused on cultures rather than individuals (46). “Open up any introductory textbook in sociocultural anthropology and you will find a section explaining the importance of the concept of holism. The author will typically go on to explain that anthropologists are generally more interested in gaining an understanding how human lives ‘make sense’ within the context in which they live than we are in arriving at universal generalizations of ‘laws’ regarding human behavior” (Fife 2).

The fact that anthropologists are more concerned with understanding how human lives make sense is particularly true of ethnographic researchers, who focus on two key terms: context and pattern. “The goal of ethnographic research is to formulate a pattern of analysis that makes reasonable sense out of human actions within the given context of a specific time and place” (Fife 2). This task of holism may seem simple enough except for when a researcher is confronted with the following two questions: (1) how much context do I have to cover, and (2) how will I recognize a pattern when I see it? “These are other ways of asking how a researcher who follows a qualitative, ethnographic strategy can ever know when a ‘holistic’ understanding has been satisfactorily achieved” (Fife 2). Unfortunately, there are no straightforward answers to these questions. The answers can never be fully determined for the simple reason that ethnographic research occurs, according to Fife, simultaneously as an art form and as a scientific endeavor.

As an art form, ethnography requires the researcher to make an aesthetic judgment about the context that has been presented; such as is it “whole enough?” But ethnography also requires the illustration of a particular pattern of behavior to be complete enough to give
the reader a proper understanding of the words and actions that led to the analysis. At such a
time, empirical evidence must be gathered so that the readers of the ethnographic product can
weigh the evidence and therefore judge the researcher’s analysis of the patterns of human
behavior that s/he delineates in the word (Fife 2).

One way in which ethnographic researchers in anthropology gather their empirical
evidence is through biological data; which often uses an evolutionary lens. “Both
sociocultural and organic evolution are processes by which populations have been formed
and transformed in response to changes in the stores of heritable or transferable information
they possess” (Lenski 43). In other words, anthropologists can use biological data to better
understand how evolution, or change, takes place in the natural world over a certain amount
of time. Rice and Moloney state, “Biological evolution is both simple and complex, Charles
Darwin defined evolution in 1859 as ‘descent with modification,’ with the word descent
referring to time, and modification referring to change. A hundred and fifty years later, a
good short definition of evolution is still ‘biological change through time’” (40).

The change through time that anthropologists focus on depends on the study. “In
organic evolution, it is the entire population of living things, human and nonhuman alike, that
has been formed and transformed; in sociocultural evolution, it is the human population
alone. Thus, both organic and sociocultural evolution may be defined as the culmination of
heritable or transferable information within populations and its attendant consequences”
(Lenski). The term “information,” as used today by evolutionists in both the biological and
social sciences, refers to “a record of experience that is stored in memory systems and
subsequently influences the actions of individuals and populations. Information systems are
important because they are the ultimate mechanisms of adaptation” (Lenski 43).
In the field of rhetoric, researchers focus on communication in their studies and how the “information” influences or influenced the actions of individuals and populations. Within such studies, evolution is inherent since the actions of individuals and populations account for the means of adaptation. Important as the emergence of evolutionary theory has been to a variety of disciplines, including studies in genre, the amount of interest in evolutionary theory in the social sciences might have not occurred if we lived in a more tranquil or more stable era. The twentieth century, of course, was anything but tranquil or stable. On the contrary, “the social and cultural change of that period was more rapid, more pervasive, and more critical than in any previous century” (Lenski 9). As we will see in the rest of this chapter, ethnography in archival research will prove useful for my dissertation’s study of the genres associated with the tumultuous events of the early twentieth century.

DISPLAYING CULTURE

The process of adequately displaying a holistic culture to readers in ethnographic research, according to John W. Creswell, includes “locating a site or an individual, gaining access and making rapport, sampling purposefully, collecting data, recording information, exploring field issues, and storing data” (117). This process can be adapted from Creswell’s guidelines to archival research rather easily: first, the researcher must locate the archival research, gain access to it by making rapport with the archivist or librarians, and then must collect the data in a systematic manner before finally storing the data for analysis.

While conducting archival research involves such steps, Miles and Huberman emphasize the importance of “triangulation” as a method of confirming the findings in their landmark textbook on qualitative research. “Stripped to its basics, triangulation is supposed
to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or, at least, do not contradict it” (268). The goal is to pick triangulation sources that have different biases or different strengths so they can complement each other, because any given preliminary conclusion is always based on certain data. “Maybe we should use what some historians have employed: capta. There are events in the real world, from which we ‘capture’ only a partial record….Some of these data [points] are ‘better’ than others” (Miles and Huberman 268). But why are some data better than others? There is a very large range of answers to this question, but essentially the issue is one of validity, more specifically, descriptive and interpretative validity. “First data from some informants are better…Second, the circumstances of the data collection may have strengthened (or weakened) the quality of the data. Third, data quality may be stronger because of a [researcher’s] validation efforts” (Miles and Huberman 268). Again, these same steps can be applied to archival research since, like the hypothetical historian mentioned by Miles and Huberman, the researcher can only capture a partial record of what is left of the persons, events, and places being studied. As a result, the researcher needs to choose her or his research data with care. Valerie J. Janesick echoes this idea: “The qualitative researcher is most like a historian in that special access to sources is critical” (106).

Historical research differs from qualitative research in that it relies on many possible sources of data and uses a variety of methods in the process. Some of these sources of data and variety of methods includes, but is not limited to, observation, participant observation, or interviews. The archival researcher, though, cannot complete such tasks as observation, participant observation, or interviews if the people in their study have already died. But, something that archival researchers can learn from this part of qualitative research is to be
direct in terms of identifying biases, ideology, stance, and intent. “It is usually the case that the qualitative researcher wants to understand the situation under study and must decide if the stance is taken from the inside or outside, as participant or observer, or some combination and to varying degrees of both, and whether or not the researcher will approach the project holistically” (Janesick 106). So, like the historian, “the qualitative researcher must choose a point of view, either as an apologist for what occurs as the intimate insider, standing back looking at the whole and explaining each part of the puzzle” (Janesick 106). These are the crucial issues that need to be considered before entering the research field. “Just like a historian, then, the qualitative researcher uses primary sources either as an insider and participant or as an outsider” (Janesick 106).

RECREATING HISTORY AS ARCHIVAL METHODOLOGY

In order for the archival researcher to decide how to view her or his own position as an insider or outsider, s/he need to consider how this same concept applies to history. For instance, Victor Vitanza in “Historiographies of Rhetorics” describes the different positions in which histories are written by first explaining what he terms as “the traditional disciplinary protocol of History Writing.” This first type of history falls into two major categories:

The first kind of writing has as its major topos “time” (chrono-logic) and, therefore, emphasizes “narrative events,” “periodization,” and clearly demarked “beginnings, middles, and ends,” whether they be informed by linear, cyclical, or predominantly casual logics. The second kind does not emphasize “time” as a major category, nor does it even (in its extreme form) either emphasize or necessarily have “man as the agent of history.” Though divided into these two categories, the two forms are alike
in that they range from a naïve, unselfconscious practice to a more popular, highly-conscious, positivistic practice of History Writing. (86)

Vitanza continues to explain the labels often attached to both categories of traditional history as the (a) “the documentary model of historical understanding,” (b) “the archival model,” or (c) “the objectivist model of knowledge.” All are based on documents (wills, diaries, testimonies, newspapers, bureaucratic reports, anthropological artifacts, etc.), whose use is guided by the principles of hypothesis-formation, testing, and explanation. The authors of these accounts often document and catalog data at great length. “They write ‘as if’ the data are representations of manifest reality. They write ‘as if’ from an omniscient point of view. They think of history ‘as if’ it is constructed at the level of ‘writing degree zero,’ that is, ‘as if’ it is relatively value neutral and without any ‘rhetorical’ dimensions” (Vitanza 86). This traditional view of history, no matter what subcategory it may be, is most common. In order to realize what position the archival researcher will take, either as an insider or outsider, depends on how s/he will recreate the historical situation. Vitanza writes, “The historical imagination, though almost never acceptable, is limited only (wittingly or unwittingly) to filling in the lacunae between and among known facts” (86).

But how does an archival researcher recreate a historical situation? “If rhetorician-archivists have their dreams of newly discovering ancient or modern sources, they also have their common/sensical, traditional assumptions of what it is ‘to do history’ with these sources” (Vitanza 90). While historians can discuss having made the trip to libraries where they gathered their documents or artifacts, “these traditional historians never, or seldom ever, in their talks or papers give a self-conscious moment to the very task of how they ‘interpret’
these documents as artifacts” (90). Instead, they assume that texts and artifacts are “manifest” (91).

As an alternative to traditional histories, Vitanza lists two forms of “revisionary” histories. The first he calls “revisionary history as full disclosure”; the second, “revisionary history as self-conscious critical practices.” The first “revisionary” form of history has “a hermeneutical understanding that ranges from a quasi-traditional view of history to an ideological self-awareness of History Writing” (95). As quasi-traditional, according to Vitanza, “it addresses a ‘wrong’ interpretation of the facts, or it accommodates previously undisclosed facts. What is meant by ‘wrong’ interpretation in some instances is either the result of a fallacious use of ‘inaccurate perception’ of the manifest ‘reality’ of what are still conceived of as objective ‘archival facts’” (95). But, more importantly, what is meant by “accommodating previously undisclosed facts” is that either new significant “archival facts” have been “discovered” and, therefore, simply added in order to support or to argue against it a commonly held view (95). The second form of revisionary history, by contrast, begins with an understanding that all writing (thinking) is a form of self-deception. Said in another way, there is not only a distrust in “surface” or “manifest” reality but especially a distrust in naïve, “conscious” explanation and understanding (95).

While the revisionary category of history, with its subcategories, is, according to Vitanza, “still very much committed to archival facts,” there is, at times, a conscious understanding that texts are interpreted in certain ways and that archival facts themselves on occasion are subject to distortion (96). The view of revisionary history, when compared to the traditional view of history, demonstrates the different ways that the self-consciousness of the researcher is displayed. While both adhere to archival documents as data, traditional
history does not account for the self-reflection of the researcher’s position, as either insider or outsider according to Janesick, like the revisionary view of history. So, in order to recreate a historical situation as the researcher is looking at archival documents, the researcher must take into account their own position to the data. What does the researcher know about the archival data? Does the researcher just want to provide the “facts” or does the researcher realize that “facts” can never be completely objective? How does the researcher become self-conscious of their own position as either an insider or outsider of the peoples, persons, or events being studied?

SELF-CONSCIOUS METHODOLOGICAL NARRATIVE

In order to reflect on my position to the archive, I now present a narrative of how I found my dissertation research. This narrative chronicles a period of roughly two years. I will share how I discovered my study’s selected archive, what I know about the archival data, and how my position as an outsider researching the peoples, persons, and events of World War I both limits and helps my research.

Figure 3.1: Darrek and Marcy at the National World War I Museum in Kansas City, MO.
During the summer of 2010, my husband (Darrek) and I drove to Kansas City, Missouri, to visit the National World War I Museum. Over the past few years, Darrek has been invited to interpret World War I, from the perspective of the doughboy, on Memorial Day at the museum since he is a historian of the conflict. Our home office is belittered with various pictures, primary sources, and material culture from that time period and these historical artifacts always made me consider the rhetorical impact of World War I. Darrek always wanted me to see the National World War I Museum and since I was interested in the war from a rhetorical point of view, we decided to visit. During our visit I not only saw the awe-inspiring exhibits, but I was also able to conduct some research in the museum’s archive.

In the archive, my husband asked to see the government-released *Official Records of the First Division* belonging to the A.E.F. (American Expeditionary Forces). He wanted to see how the campaigns were documented so he could learn more about the U.S. Army’s maneuvers during the conflict. These records included documents such as general orders, bulletins, and reports. Though these records were bound in volumes, they have never officially been published for wide distribution to research libraries.

My husband was interested in The First Division of the A.E.F. because it is often considered by historians as a representative example of the U.S. Army because it was the first already-standing army unit to be sent “over there” to France. For instance, the *History of the First Division during the World War: 1917-1919* states that, “The Division was truly representative of America. Among its original members and among the dead at the end of its campaigns and battles were the sons of the following States, Territories and Possessions” (13):
As my husband was going through the First Division documents for the kind of historical information he was seeking, I began to focus on the records from the perspective of organizational communication. The volumes were organized as follows:

### STATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alabama</th>
<th>Idaho</th>
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<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
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<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
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<td>California</td>
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<td>Colorado</td>
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<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>Maine</td>
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<td>New York</td>
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<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>Washington</td>
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<td>North Dakota</td>
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<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>Utah</td>
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</tbody>
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### TERRITORIES

| Alaska | Hawaii |

### POSSESSIONS

<p>| Guam | Panama Canal Zone |
| Philippine Islands | Puerto Rico |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vol. 1:</th>
<th>Field Orders</th>
<th>Vol. 14:</th>
<th>Operations Reports (Numerous Units)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vol. 2:</td>
<td>Field Orders</td>
<td>Vol. 15:</td>
<td>Operations Reports (Numerous Units)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Vol. 3:</td>
<td>Field Orders</td>
<td>Vol. 16:</td>
<td>War Diaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vol. 4:</td>
<td>Summaries of Intelligence (Dec. 25, 1917-Nov. 30, '18)</td>
<td>Vol. 17:</td>
<td>War Diaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vol. 5:</td>
<td>Summaries of Intelligence (Dec. 1918-Conclusion)</td>
<td>Vol. 18:</td>
<td>War Diaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vol. 6:</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Memoranda</td>
<td>Vol. 19:</td>
<td>War Diaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vol. 7:</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Memoranda</td>
<td>Vol. 20:</td>
<td>Training Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vol. 8:</td>
<td>Field Orders</td>
<td>Vol. 21:</td>
<td>Training Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vol. 9:</td>
<td>Operations Orders</td>
<td>Vol. 22:</td>
<td>Index to Citations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vol. 10:</td>
<td>Field Orders</td>
<td>Vol. 23:</td>
<td>Index to Citations</td>
</tr>
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<td>Vol. 11:</td>
<td>Field Orders</td>
<td>Vol. 24:</td>
<td>French Citations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vol. 12:</strong></td>
<td>Operations Reports (To Sept. 1918)</td>
<td>Vol. 25:</td>
<td>French Documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vol. 13:</strong></td>
<td>Operations Reports (Sept. 1918-Conclusion)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.1: Official Records of the First Division in World War I.**

I decided to focus, due to the amount of information, on Volumes 12 and 13 since they were the operations reports during the war. These reports, generally speaking, would have provided the chain of command specific information on the day to day maneuverings and the official reports of battles of the First Division in France. These records cover all of the First Division’s involvement in World War I, which includes the following battles:

- The Merle Hay Incident: Nov. 3, 1917
- Cantigny: Spring 1918
- Soissons: Summer 1918
- St. Mihiel Salient: Sept. 11-14, 1918
- Meuse-Argonne: Autumn 1918

These battles and the corresponding records will be discussed later in Chapter 4.

As I was going through these documents, I began to learn more about the First Division’s role in each battle. But I also was learning that the ways in which the U.S. Army communicated through written reports was very messy and seemed complex. For instance, the documentation surrounding the Merle Hay Incident was lengthy and full of personal accounts of what happened. But as the war waged on, the other battles did not have as much documentation and included no personal accounts. As I pondered this pattern, I started to hypothesize whether or not the time period had something to do with it.

Charles Bazerman’s *The Languages of Edison’s Light* explains the time period just before World War I and how the social systems of the nineteenth century were still relatively small and local, with much work done face-to-face. But in the early twentieth century, “more extensive systems grew and began to leave substantial documentary trials. The rise of professions brought specialized literatures and training documents. The development of government bureaucracies meant burgeoning files.
Broad investment in financial markets made financial news a valuable commodity. Big
corporations left increasing numbers of letters, reports, memos, and forms” (5). During this
period, Bazerman points out, “actions were carried out on paper that we can examine the
documents not just as fragmentary remains of activities (like potsherds of ancient
civilizations), or as documentary records of non-literary events (like medieval chronicles of
royal doings) but as the actual media of social action. An exchange of letters was indeed the
interaction itself” (5).

The interaction of written communication was becoming more evident as I pored over
the dusty pages of the U.S. Army’s First Division reports. While many of the documents I
looked at demonstrated clear signs of careful forethought and strategic planning, others seem
spontaneous and more the result of momentary circumstances than of design. Bazerman
suggests “That is the way with all communication and presentation. We communicate
responsibly and reactively. Even
when we write with planning and
reflection, our range of conscious
attention is limited and our writing
is directed toward a
communicative landscape we have
only partially articulated” (5).
Certainly this type of
communication was becoming
evident to me as I sat in the dimly
lighted archive of the National World War I Museum. But was there more to the story?
My position relative to the material was that of an outsider since I was not alive during World War I nor am I in any way connected to the military. But even as an outsider, I saw a scholarly potential to survey not only primary documents that demonstrated careful planning or haphazard organization, but also to bring the dynamics of communication to consciousness. In other words, the careful planning and haphazard nature of the reports will provide a snapshot into how the military communication of the U.S. Army’s First Division in World War I evolved and how such an evolution might have been influenced by contemporary civilian organizational communication. I will not always try to discern what the soldiers and officers thought they were doing, or whether they knew what they were doing (or had just done) since they are now gone. Instead, I will keep my attention focused on what the texts accomplished in the environment where they were used.

By focusing on just the reports, Volumes 12 and 13, I have chosen representative texts that reveal the rhetorical activity of the discourse. Creswell would refer to this as sampling, which allows researchers to engaging in large and otherwise rather unmanageable scholarly efforts (55). Sampling surveys are a valuable research tool, because they enable the investigator to obtain descriptive information about readily observed or recalled behavior of very large populations (Creswell 56).

To sample the data I uncovered in the National World War I archives during my initial visit in 2010, I went back a second and third time in 2011 to scan Volumes 12 and 13. These research trips were made possible by the C.R. Anderson Research Grant through the Association for Business Communication. With my high-resolution handheld scanner, I was able to replicate over 2,000 pages of records. I will analyze these 2,000 pages of records according to the research questions and framework presented in the next few paragraphs.
RESEARCH QUESTION(S) AND DATA ANALYSIS

As a result of my research, the overarching research questions I have about my initial encounter with the government-released “Official Records of the First Division” is:

1. Did or did not the records systematically change during the course of the war?
2. If the records did systematically change, what caused this development? More specifically, to what extent did the changing relationships within the U.S. Army, as it grew geometrically during the conflict, play in the organizational communication of the First Division?

Additionally, I plan to use the following questions that focus specifically on genre and which complement the overarching questions already posed:

3. What are the formats of the various kinds of documents included in the official records of the First Division? For instance, do they “look” like reports or memos? Or do they take some other format?
4. What is the verbal style of the documents included in the official records? For instance, is there an objective voice used to record information, or is there more of a narrative-like quality?
5. How does each document fit into the dynamic structure of the entire official records of the First Division? In other words, how do the various documents connect to create a composite picture of the division’s records?
My study will benefit from asking questions not only related to the dynamic structure of the reports, but also asking about the sociocultural aspects of the communication event. Michael Leff in “Things Made by Words: Reflections on Textual Criticism,” carries out an analysis about the continuing debate between choosing textual criticism (or close reading) over critical rhetoric (or ideological criticism). Throughout his article, Leff discusses and clarifies what kinds of theories are used to analyze what he refers to as “things made by words.” Broadly speaking, Leff defines textual criticism as an effort to interpret the intentional dynamics of a text, whereas critical rhetoric studies the social and political force of a text (223). However, Leff is troubled by both approaches: "What other scholars emphasize is that close reading encourages an overly formalist, aestheticized approach to the rhetorical text; in short, close reading promotes a type of 'rhetoric for rhetoric's sake.'” He believes that when the text becomes an object for reflection and contemplation, rhetorical critics lose sight of the text's relationship to history (its situatedness) and its role in the perpetuation of the dominant social order (228).

Leff’s analysis ends with a call for an adjustment in how scholars approach the integrity of the text while also remaining sensitive to the social and historical dimensions of rhetorical practice. He argues that this adjustment must attend to a unit beyond the single text and explains how other areas of study are seeking to do this. One such area of study is genre, as described in Chapter 2: “Genre studies . . . seek to identify the stylistic and argumentative features common to a body of texts, and this focus ‘reduces the significance of any single speech’” (229). Leff mentions genre again towards the end of his article as he explains all the different ways of analyzing a text. He suggests that textual criticism does not need to isolate texts from larger ideological and discursive formations. According to Leff,
such textual analysis should exist in a “cooperative relationship with all critical practices that
deal in interpretative understanding … if it achieves the proper balance, textual criticism can
offer a theoretically sound and practically useful base for the one activity shared in common
by all other interpretative projects—the rhetorical reading of texts” (230). The rhetorical
reading of texts, that is using textual criticism and critical rhetoric in a coexisting manner
within genre studies, will form the theoretical foundation for my dissertation.

Janice Laurer and J. William Asher explain the theoretical process of the rhetorician
conducting research further. “Rhetorical inquiry, then, entails several acts: (1) identifying a
motivating concern, (2) posing questions (3) engaging in heuristic search (which composition
studies has often occurred by probing other fields), (4) creating a new theory or hypotheses,
and (5) justifying the theory [or hypotheses] (5). Also, Robert J. Connors suggests that in the
field of professional communication, we can borrow from the field of history, as Vitanza has
already demonstrated. Connors lists his own process in archival research as follows: external
criticism, internal criticism, and synthesis of materials. In external criticism, scholars must
choose what to read. The next step, internal criticism, scholars must examine the claims that
they are trying to make. Finally, in synthesis of materials, scholars then structure the
“scattered and disparate sources [they have] located and compared, bringing into play ideas
of cause and effect, inductive generalizations, patterns of influence, taxonomic groupings,
and all of the other various systems of connection by which we make sense of the world”
(28). As my self-conscious narrative explains, I have completed what Connors’ calls
external criticism, internal criticism, and synthesis of materials. But, I believe, such steps are
only the beginning of archival data analysis.
While Connors’ historical methodology is useful, Vitanza argues, “If Connors’ readers become either exclusively or overly concerned with documents and the methodologies of searching for them, they can then think that they have done ‘their job’ and thereby easily forget—the insidious ideology of common sense will ever invite them to forget—that the archives, the textual ‘evidence,’ has to be (self-consciously’) interpreted” (93). Though the archives may be held in our hands, they are not manifest and not self-evident. Researchers are always already interpreting texts from any archive with some sort of method. The problem arises when researchers are not conscious of those methods and fall pretty to perhaps a form of ideological neglect. Vitanza emphasizes “To say in passing that we, of course, cannot interpret the archives in a ‘quasi-scientific’ manner or that we cannot be objective or neutral in respect to the archives is not assurance enough that we (ourselves) will not finally fall prey to thinking in these terms” (93).

What, then, is an archival researcher to do? If borrowing from ethnography, Creswell would suggest a type of data analysis which consists of “preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion” (148).

Similarly, “Data analysis is not off-the-shelf; rather, it is custom-built, revised, and ‘choreographed’ (Miles and Huberman 50). The processes of data collection, data analysis, and report writing are not distinct steps in the process—they are interrelated and often go on simultaneously in a research project. Qualitative researchers often “learn by doing data analysis” (Dey 1993, 6). This leads critics to claim that “qualitative research is largely intuitive, soft, and relativistic or that qualitative data analysts fall back on the three ‘I’s’—insight, institution, and impression” (Dey, 1995, 78). While qualitative researchers do
preserve the unusual and serendipitous, and writers craft each story differently, using analytic procedures conforms to a general contour. “The contour is best represented in a spiral image, a data analysis spiral...to analyze qualitative data, the researcher engages in the process of moving in analytic circles rather than using a fixed linear approach. One enters with data...and exists with an account or a narrative” (Creswell 150).

Three approaches to analyzing data, according to Miles and Huberman, include:

*Noting Patterns, Themes*

When you’re working with text or less well organized displays, you often note recurring patterns, themes, or “gestalts,” which pull together many separate pieces of data. Something ‘jumps out’ at you, suddenly makes sense. What kinds of patterns can there be? As usual, we can expect patterns of variables involving similarities and differences among categories, and patterns of processes in involving connections in time and space within a context. Pattern finding can be very productive when the number of cases and/or the data overload is severe. (246)

*Clustering*

In daily life, we’re constantly clumping things into classes, categories, bins: Things that do not move around but grow are called “plants,” things that move around and have babies are called “animals,” things that move around, have four wheels, have an engine run by fossil fuels, and carry people are called “automobiles.” We can see from these examples that “clustering” is a general name given to the process of
inductively forming categories, and the iterative sorting of things…into those categories. (249)

*Making Contrasts/Comparisons*

Although comparisons are supposedly odious, they are what we do naturally and quickly when faced with any life experience. How does X differ from Y? Comparison is a time-honored, classic way to test a conclusion; we draw a contrast or make a comparison between two sets of things that are known to differ in some other important respect. This is the “method of differences,” which goes back to Aristotle, if not further. (254)

I will use these three approaches by Miles and Huberman as I analyze my dissertation’s data while also keeping in mind my self-conscious reflection of how I encountered the information. Once I go through the 2,000 pages of scanned reports using my outlined methodology, I will need to describe the world I have studied in the archive. “The ethnography as author must represent the particular world he has studied (or some slice or quality of it) for readers who lack direct acquaintance with it….Rather than composing a tightly organized analytic argument in which each idea leads logically and exclusively to the next, we advocate writing ethnographies as narrative tales (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 169).

**WRITING THE TALE**

Like historical research, a qualitative researcher tells stories “not in the sense that they are fictional but in that the writer uses standard literary conventions to ‘construct’ from
[data] a narrative that will interest an outside audience. Such tales weave specific analyses of discrete pieces of ... data into an overall story. This story is analytically thematized, but often in relatively loose ways; it is also [data] centered, that is, constructed out of a series of thematically organized units of [data] excerpts and analytic commentary” (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 170). The type of tale that I will use as I write-up the results to my study is what VanMaanen refers to as an “Impressionist Tale.”

The term “Impressionist Tale” originates from art historians who regard impressionist painting as “a novel representational form emerging in the West during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Impressionist painting sets out to capture a worldly scene in a special instant or moment of time. The work is figurative, although it conveys a highly personalized perspective. What a painter sees, given an apparent position in time and space, is what the viewer sees” (VanMaanen 101). Ethnographers can adopt, or borrow, such a perspective then for their own tales. The “Impressionist Tale” that VanMaanen refers to is usually written-up to “highlight the episodic, complex, and ambivalent realities that are frozen and perhaps made too . . . ordered [by other types of ethnographic tales]. Impressionist tales, with their silent disavowal of grand theorizing, their radical grasping for the particular, eventful, contextual, and unusual, contain an important message” (VanMaanen 119). This message that VanMaanen refers to is the concept that such tales “can stand alone with or without elaborate framing devices or extensive commentary. There are in the telling of tales many opportunities, of course, for the fieldworker-author to slip out of the story and make an analytic point or two. . . [But] Tellers of impressionist tales, once they begin, must keep the narrative rolling or risk losing continuity with it their audience” (103). There are at
four conventions, according to VanMaanen, that mark a tale as impressionist and set off the work as a distinct product:

*Textual Identity*

The form of an impressionist tale is dramatic recall. Events are recounted roughly in the order in which they are said to have occurred and carry with them all the odds and ends that are associated with the remembered events. The idea is to draw an audience into an unfamiliar story world and allow it, as far as possible, to see, hear, and feel as the fieldworkers saw, heard, and felt. Such tales seek to imaginatively place the audience in the fieldwork situation. . . . By holding back on interpretation and sticking to the story, impressionists are saying, in effect, “here is the world, make of it what you will.” (103).

*Fragmented Knowledge*

A learning process is suggested by the impressionist tale. Certain unremarkable features of the beginnings of a tale become crucial by its end. Or similarly, certain features seemingly vital in the beginnings of the tale prove unimportant to the eventual turn of events. The audience cannot know in advance what matters will prove instructive, and thus by trying to hang on to the little details of the tale, they experience something akin to what the fieldworker might have experienced during the narrated events. (104).
Characterization

Fieldworkers are certainly not indifferent to their own images in their tales of the field. We can be certain that they wish to be judged as charitably by their audience as they judge themselves. Individuality is expressed by such poses as befuddlement, mixed emotions, moral anguish, heightened sensitivity, compassion, enchantment, skepticism, or an apparent eager-beaver spirit of inquiry. A stance must be chosen to help shape the [tale]. (104).

Dramatic Control

Impressionist tales move their authors back in time to events that might have later given rise to understanding (or confusion). But in the storyworld, it is the fieldworker’s reading of those events at the time they occurred that matters. Organizing such an illusion requires skill. Recall is sometimes put in the present tense to give the tale a “you-are-there” feel. The author must not give away the ending before it is time. A degree of tension must be allowed to build and then be released. Contextual descriptions must be condensed yet rich enough to carry the reader along. Artistic nerve is required of the teller. (105).

My archival research will be written-up as an “Impressionist Tale” where I will (1) recall the results of my research while allowing the audience to interpret my findings, (2) note the importance and unimportance of certain parts of my research, (3) consider my own “spirit of inquiry” related to my findings (4) and provide the narrative control to my research on how
the military genre I studied adapted and changed during a time of flux in the early twentieth century.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF DISSERTATION RESEARCH**

But why are such historical insights useful? The answer, in part, lies in W. Tracy Dillon’s “The New Historicism and Studies in the History of Business and Technical Writing.” He explains new historicism as “what is old about historicism is the belief that one can understand the past by analyzing its artifacts and the behaviors of its players. The new historicism seeks instead to understand the present and in doing so to foreground the self-constituting nature of any act of textual historical analysis” (65). So, historical studies in professional communication, such as my dissertation, help us see parallels from history to today. Connors also echoes the call for such historical research to make meaning for today. He asks his readers to consider the following two questions as they think about their historical research: (1) Does this interpretation of the historical data seem coherent, reliable, interesting, useful? and (2) What can this interpretation of the past show us about the present and the future? (30). Questions like these by Connors, should be kept in mind for any scholar researching a historical time period if they want to keep their studies relevant to today’s field.

By the end of my project I hope to map a “genreology” of the First Division records from World War I. That is, I hope to trace the “geneology” of the “genre” of these documents. While such a task may seem complicated, I think that this area of study will show the complex ways in which the records from World War I evolved during a time of conflict and change never before seen by the world.
By tracing the “genreology” of World War I First Division records, I will act as a communication anthropologist surveying the nature of the genre. I will consider what the antecedents, or biological parents, of the genre were and how the family tree changed during the war. To do so, I will focus on how the reports at the beginning of the war compare to the reports found at the end of the conflict. It is important to remember that these reports were not only a way of communicating, through writing, the day-to-day actions of the war but also were intended to provide future military students insight into what was thought to be the war to end all wars. Perhaps these same documents can help us see how genres change during a time of flux and how we might apply what we will learn to communication happening in the military today.

CONCLUSION

In the following chapter, I will present my data. It will be organized chronologically according to the battles that the U.S. Army’s First Division encountered “over there.” In addition to the data itself, my chapter will also include the context of each battle. Such context will include where the battle was fought, how the battle was waged, and what the ultimate outcome was to the war effort. By including the historical context, the documents will regain their vibrancy and become reminders of how genre plays an important part in the adaptation of communication.
WORKS CITED


Chapter 4: Results

A Snapshot of “Genreology”

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present the results of my study on the reports of the First Division in World War I. I have categorized these reports chronologically and have included the context of each event in which the Division fought. As discussed in the previous chapter, I will analyze the communications associated with each chronological event by noting patterns and making comparisons. My analysis will culminate in an ethnographic “Impressionist Tale” where I will (1) recall the results of my research while allowing the audience to interpret my findings; (2) note the importance and unimportance of certain parts of my research; (3) consider my own “spirit of inquiry” related to my findings; (4) and provide the narrative control to my research on how the military genre I studied evolved and changed during a time of flux in the early twentieth century.

EMBARKATION: SUMMER 1917

The United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917, and shortly thereafter a French Mission headed by Marshal Joffre arrived in America and urged that a military force be sent quickly to France. Accordingly, “the units composing an Infantry Division under the Provisional Tables of Organization, 1917, were selected by General Pershing, as far as they could be provided from the Regular Army, and prepared for shipment overseas. The force was designated as the First Expeditionary Division, with Headquarters in New York City”
(History 1). An official First Division memo states: “It is well known that this Expedition was gotten off hurriedly and that the arrangements made were not all that could be desired for the orderly and expeditious embarkation and sailing of the convoy. However, as far as my personal knowledge of the facts permits me to judge, it would seem that the Commanding Officer at the Port of Embarkation and the Depot Quartermaster at New York City, did everything possible to facilitate the expeditious departure of the Division.” While the U.S. Army commended the quick departure of the Division, Americans commended the soldiers for their service. The following tribute to the First Division from the Chicago Tribune of June 9, 1917 states: “These soldiers are the consecration of America to a cause, its pledge of duty, its token of good faith and determination, of fortitude, resolve, and courage.”

Once the First Division docked in France, the ships were initially received by the French with little enthusiasm, which surprised the troops. Later, however, enthusiasm at the sight of the Americans overtook the little French port. The troops were welcomed by the populace of the town, and while the French bands played the stirring music of France, the American bands responded with the national air. “The Mayor issued a proclamation in which he extended to the Americans the hospitality of France and expressed his country’s gratitude for the help and the hope that they were bringing. The regiments at once marched to Camp No. 1, which was situated about three miles from the town” (7). Here, barracks had been quickly constructed by German prisoners of war, but the buildings were inadequate. “None of the comforts and conveniences that later divisions found…or experienced in the modern camps in the homeland existed for this pioneer band of American soldiers” (7). As soon as the camp was in order, the men began their first training on French soil.
The embarkation of the First Division during World War I was done quickly. As explained in previous chapters, during World War I, the U.S. Army grew from 130,000 men to five million, the largest fighting force the country had ever seen (Hallas 1). Such a huge change in overall size obviously affected the way the entire organization functioned, at all levels.

General Pershing was the General and Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Army, but the extensive organization of the First Division Headquarters is shown in Table 4.1. At the

![Diagram of First Division Headquarters Flowchart](image)

**Table 4.1**
First Division Headquarters Flowchart.
Source: *Official Records of the First Division in WWI*
very top of the organizational chart for Division Headquarters are the Commanding General and Chief of Staff. Throughout the Great War, there would be three different Commanding Generals:

- Lieutenant General Robert L. Bullard (Dec. 14, 1917-July 17, 1918)
- Major General Charles P. Summerall (July 17, 1918-Oct. 11, 1918)
- Brigadier General Frank Parker (Oct. 19, 1918-Nov. 20, 1918)

Underneath the Chief of Staff are five separate staff sections: Operation Section, Intelligence Section, Administrative Staff, Artillery Officer, and Engineer Officer. Even further down the chart, underneath the previously mentioned four offices, are eleven additional offices: Adjutant’s Office, Inspector, Judge Advocate, Quartermaster, Surgeon, Ordinance Officer, Signal Officer, Gas Officer, Headquarters’ Troop, [Wagon] Trains, and Provost Marshall.

The rest of the hierarchy of the First Division is shown in Table 4.2. For instance, the First Division had two brigades and each of those brigades had four regiments. The four regiments had three battalions each and those battalions each had twelve companies (referred to as A-M, with no “J” being used since it could be mistaken for an “I”). The twelve companies then had four platoons each and those platoons each had four sections. These four sections then had two squads each with a varying number of privates. The commanding rank at each level is also shown in Table 4.2:
## First Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>1\textsuperscript{st} Infantry Brigade</th>
<th>2\textsuperscript{nd} Infantry Brigade</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regiment</td>
<td>16\textsuperscript{th} Infantry</td>
<td>18\textsuperscript{th} Infantry</td>
<td>26\textsuperscript{th} Infantry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battalion</td>
<td>3 battalions per regiment</td>
<td>3 battalions per regiment</td>
<td>3 battalions per regiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>12 companies per battalion</td>
<td>12 companies per battalion</td>
<td>12 companies per battalion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platoon</td>
<td>4 platoons per company</td>
<td>4 platoons per company</td>
<td>4 platoons per company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>4 sections per platoon</td>
<td>4 sections per platoon</td>
<td>4 sections per platoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squad</td>
<td>2 squads per section</td>
<td>4 sections per platoon</td>
<td>4 sections per platoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privates</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4.2
First Division hierarchy.

Source: Collected from *U.S. Army in the World War*

For more information on how many privates were attached to squads, please refer to Table 4.3, which shows each level in more detail. As is evident, the First Division in World War I was an immense organization and had increased in size from the ground up. For instance, the U.S. Army increased the size of companies from 100 men to 250, and regiments from 1000 men to 3700 (Taber 13). Such an increase is shown in Table 4.3:
PRODUCTION AND CIRCULATION OF REPORTS

With the embarkation of the First Division, which is part of the American Expeditionary Forces (A.E.F.), a problem soon emerged and persisted in until the end of the war: the shortage of platoon leaders. At the beginning of the war, the A.E.F. only had 5,791 regular officers (Grotelueschen 11). Kenneth Hamburger explains the A.E.F. first thought"
that they would only need about 6,000 replacement officers; however, officer losses—especially of platoon leaders—in the first engagements were heavier than expected. As result, the A.E.F. quickly assembled an officer’s candidate school that started in the U.S. and other locations were developed overseas. By the time of the Armistice, this school was graduating a staggering 5,000 infantry officers per month. Artillery, engineer, and signal officer courses were graduating another 1,400 monthly. “Transforming a young enlisted man into an infantry platoon leader is a daunting task in the best of circumstances even in peacetime; doing it in a few weeks in wartime is almost impossible” (Hamburger 20). By the fall of 1918, the problem of finding qualified officer candidates was threatening the program, and it is questionable whether the level could have continued through the winter had the Armistice not intervened.

Lieutenant Colonel Harold B. Fiske was the A.E.F.’s training officer. “Forty-six years old, Fiske had graduated in the middle of the West Point class of 1897. He was a quiet man of morose disposition who kept his own counsel and ran roughshod over the opinions of others. His piercing gaze through wire-rimmed glasses and the hard line of his mouth curving down at the corners made him appear critical of all he surveyed” (Hambuger 10). Hamburger notes that Fiske surmised after the war that by September 1918 the A.E.F. had experienced “the practical disappearance of suitable officer material from the ranks of the divisions.” Enlisted men in the United States had been classified by their civilian backgrounds, and virtually all “above the grade of unskilled laborer” had been routed into various military occupational specialties. As a result, “the men of courage, intelligence, energy, education, and general capacity so desperately needed to lead infantry platoons were behind desks or mending roads or otherwise engaged” in areas of less need (20).
As a result of needing to train new officers, Hamburger explains that the A.E.F. quickly built up a large system of their own “corps schools” where they fashioned curricula of four to five weeks. About a third of a division’s officers and noncommissioned officers attended such classes prior to the arrival of their divisions in Europe. Although selected graduates went on to attend the “Army School” or the General Staff College of the A.E.F. at Langres (France) most returned to their units to train them as they arrived. Pershing described the importance of the schools after the war:

A school system would have been desirable in the best of armies, but it was indispensable in an army which had to be created almost wholly from raw material.

The training of troops for combat was, of course, the primary objective, and schools for instructors were merely a means to that end. (10)

Since the A.E.F. needed to expand their existing standing army at the beginning of the war, it makes sense that they had to invent new ways of educating these new enlisted men to the tactics of war.

As a parallel to the A.E.F.’s expansion and need for officers, I would argue that the First Division also needed to learn quickly how to make communication flow easily among the different levels of the organization as it grew. As Hamburger has noted, many of the more intelligent enlisted men served behind the front lines, and transforming a young man into a military officer is no small task, especially when making sure that the young officer remembers what to do under fire. Certainly, the First Division wanted their officers to be able to report on what was happening on the front lines so that other officers (at headquarters) could make sense of what was happening in specific areas near or on the front
lines. But the process of figuring out how to make that communication happen continually evolved during the course of the war; as this chapter will illustrate.

Military organizations have long been required to report in some detail on their operations. Hamburger explains that these reports sometimes served merely to ensure that a contemporary record existed for historical purposes. “More often, however, the reports were expected to serve the same use as that stated in General Orders (GO) 21 of the American Expeditionary Forces, which mandated ‘reports on each operation (engagement, movement of troops, construction, installation of a depot, etc.).’ The order elaborated: ‘These reports will show any errors made and how they may be avoided in the future, possible general improvements, failure of any material and its cause, etc., and also note any scheme or material which gave exceptionally good results’” (20). A.E.F. headquarters reinforced these after-action reporting requirements through 1918.

The reports would have been composed either on a typewriter or by hand. A First Division memo dated Oct. 8, 1917 (during the embarkation) states:

Before leaving the states, division headquarters should be completely organized as to officers, non-commissioned officers and clerks; also as to offices, field desks, manuals. They should bring with them on deck the following: Typewriters; mimeograph; stationery; office supplies; regulations; blank forms; and the latest pamphlets on publications on modern warfare. All schedules of instruction and training to be carried out on shipboard should be prepared and issued at the mobilization or concentration camp.

As mentioned by Hamburger above, as the A.E.F. expanded, the more intelligent or better educated enlisted men would have been behind the front lines doing such work as writing
reports based on observations from the field; perhaps these observations from the field would have been simply handwritten. To understand the different ranks and groups that made up a U.S. Army division, please refer back to Tables 4.1 and 4.2. For instance, reports written by platoon leaders (say at the rank of lieutenant) would work their way up the division’s chain of command (company, battalion, regiment, brigade) to help officers make decisions and to act as records. How these reports were handled would be dictated by the scenario, as this chapter will illustrate.

It was not until after the Armistice that the reports were standardized in a consistent format. Hamburger notes: “GO 196, dated 5 November 1918, outlined new reporting requirements, replacing the more modest ones in place since the end of 1917. Its purpose was ‘to standardize the whole question of operation orders and reports, and to make clear exactly what operation orders and reports G.H.Q. requires’” (20). Subordinate headquarters “down to regimental or brigade size were further required to submit any training or tactical instructions they issued. And after ‘any important period of operations,’ each division and corps headquarters had to submit a special report with appropriate maps. The latter document was clearly seen as an opportunity to capture lessons” (Hamburger 21). The order also specified:

Great care will be exercised in its compilation because of its military and historical value. . . . It should be a succinct account covering brief of orders issued and the general maneuver plan of the commander for each phase of the engagement, followed by an epitome of events compiled by G–3 from messages and reports received during and after the action. (21)
So, not only did the reports serve a purpose during the war, but they also would serve as a historical records of the operations of the A.E.F.

Indeed, after the war, as the *Official Records* were being compiled, General Summerall writes that these reports are included in the publication:

The publication of the World War Records of the First Division commences with this volume. Each transcript has been proofread by an officer and is an exact true copy of the original. Typographical errors in the original text have been reproduced. Errors in the spelling of proper names have been indicated in foot notes. Beginning with the War Department telegrams dealing with the organization of the First Division, the documents have been classified according to the sources from which they emanated and these classifications then arranged chronologically. This serial treatment, together with the tabulation of the engagements and outstanding events in the annals of the Divisions, which will appear in each volume, obviates further indexing. All maps to which reference is made, will be bound in a separate book, with such sketches as could not readily be reproduced with the mimeograph. The Map Atlas thus constituted will contain a cross index to the documents and a notation of any maps and sketches which have been referred to in the text but not found. The absence of certain records is an indication of the historian of the kind of loss which may be expected in the future through the exigencies of active service. Months of effort have been spent in assembling these records, missing documents have been sought by correspondence and travel and every effort has been made to produce a complete and accurate compilation. —C. P. Summerall, March 6, 1928.

The reports of the First Division are included in Volumes 12 and 13 of the *Official Records* publication. Major Ransom, in the preface specific to Volumes 12 and 13, explains:

This volume contains the daily operations reports and special reports on the operations of the First Division…The file of daily reports is complete for the periods of sector occupation by the Division as a whole. Operations reports issued by French units for the periods during which elements of the First Division served under the tactical control of a French division will be published in the volume of French documents. Field Orders, maps. Etc., referred to as enclosures to daily operations reports are not included in this volume. Reports of work mentioned as enclosures to several of the divisional daily reports have not been found. —P. L. Ransom, Major, Infantry.
As we will see later, these missing divisional daily reports are key to understanding the “genreology” of the documents.

CONTINUING EMBARKATION: SUMMER 1917

By early September 1917, the Division, with the exception of its artillery brigade, was concentrated in the Gondrecourt Area, which had been selected for training purposes. “All France knew now that the Americans had come. The businesslike manner in which everyone set about the performance of his duties showed unmistakably that the United States was in the war, with all the keenness and strength of youth and with all the determination that accompanies a fixed purpose” (History 14). The History of First Division continues to explain that even though the troops were basically trained in the fundamentals of the soldier and were full of enthusiasm and vigor, “it was essential that these qualities should be employed scientifically if they were to produce the best results. Tactics had changed entirely during the war and were continually undergoing further changes, due to the employment of new weapons and new formations and to the stabilized conditions of the Armies in long lines of trenches with no flanks” (19). Therefore, it was necessary that the Division should be instructed in the style of fighting that the Allied Nations had found to be the most effective after three years of experience:

So desperate and cruel was the struggle that ignorant troops would have been sacrificed without accomplishing any useful results. . . . The plan of training prescribed by General Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, allowed a division one month for acclimatization and instruction in small units from battalions down. The battalions were then required to serve on month with the French battalions in the trenches in contact with the enemy, and thus learn by experience the application of the methods that had been taught them without being entirely responsible for the defense of the sector. Upon being taken out of the trenches, a third month was devoted to the training of the combined Division in the tactics of
open warfare. The Division was then ready to take over and defend a sector in the line. (History 19)

By October 14th, orders were issued for the First Division’s movement to the Sommerville Sector (Please refer to Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1
Map of First Division fighting areas.
5. Ansauville Sector; 6. Sommerville Sector

Source: The Western Front in 1918 in The West Point Atlas of World War I

The Sommerville Sector on the Lorraine front was chosen as the most suitable place for the Americans to have their first experience with the German methods of warfare. “It lay between Lunéville and Nancy…It covered a rolling and attractive country traversed by the
Rhine-Marne Canal. The surrounding country was suitable for the maneuver of large armies, and for years it had been regarded as the probable battleground upon which any war between France and Germany would be fought” (History 28). On October 20, 1917, the 1st Battalion of each infantry regiment left the Gondrecourt Area, and, on the night of October 21st, these four battalions entered the sector and occupied the trenches of the French position. There were no French, however, in the portions of the trenches held by the Americans, who occupied the strong points, the centers of resistance, the observation posts, and all other elements of the defense, under the French. The guns of the artillery were laid so as to superimpose their barrage fire upon that of the French batteries. “Thus, while sharing in the defense, the responsibility in case of a hostile attack rested upon the French. The highest American command in the sector was a company. Regimental and higher commanders were afforded every opportunity to visit their troops and were extended every courtesy. In spite of these carefully laid plans, the Division was destined here to have a real taste of the war and to realize the need for all the skill that could be acquired” (History 28).

THE SOMMERVILLE SECTOR: FALL 1917

The real taste of war came when, according to the First Division History, “The 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry, occupied the portion of the line in front of Bathelémont along the rim of a bald hill that jutted out toward the Rhine-Marne Canal” (32). With the exception of a rifle shot here and there, the stillness of the black night was unbroken and the men were tense with the novelty and the sense of danger. On November 3rd, 1917: “Suddenly, about 3:00 o’clock in the morning, there was a blinding flash and a crash and a roar that seemed to upset
and to blot out the very earth itself. The German artillery fire descended with a suddenness and a violence that was like a great convulsion of nature” (32).

The doomed men, who were at the point selected by the enemy, tried to react to the box-barrage, which effectually enclosed a platoon of the 16th Infantry, and not only cut off any possibility of defense for the Americans, but also prevented the arrival of reinforcements. The enemy’s raiding party crept forward behind their artillery fire and blew gaps in the protecting wire with explosives. They then rushed upon the platoon, and the first evidence of their presence was the explosion of hand grenades thrown among the men in the trenches. With pistols, trench knives and bayonets they attacked the men along the trench. The event lasted only a few minutes, after which the raiders disappeared and the fire ceased. A sergeant and twelve men were carried away as prisoners, some of them being wounded. “Thus, for the first time in the great conflict, American soldiers laid down their lives for their country and for civilization. In this first sacrificial offering were Corporal James B. Gresham, Private Thomas F. Enright and Private Merle D. Hay” (32).

Figure 4.2
Captured First Division soldiers of first trench raid.
Source: Personal Collection
The first report written about the trench raid is dated November 3, 1917. It states [sic included]:

Einville, November 3, 1917
2:30 PM

From: Major G.C. Marshall, jr., General; Staff.
To: Chief of Staff, 1st Division, A.E.F.
Subject: German raid on sector held by 2d. Bn. 16th Infantry.

1. At 7:30 A.M. today I learnt at Division Headquarters that there had been a very heavy hostile bombardment of the front line trenches from Aero to the south and that two soldiers of the 16th Infantry had been killed and two more of the same regiment wounded. This information was telephoned by Lieut. Hugo and myself to Colonel King at [Condrecourt]. I started out with General Bordeaux about 9:00 A.M.] and went to Infantry Headquarters at Einville. There we heard that one French soldier had been killed, in addition to the two Americans. We went on to Regimental Headquarters but learnt nothing new there. On our way to the Artois Post of Command at Gypse we met an Artillery major who had heard that some Americans were missing, but that there were no traces of a raid, it was thought that these men had been lost in the taking over of the sector that night. At the Battalion P.C. we met the French Battalion Commander and Major Burnett, 16th Infantry. There we were told that three Americans had been killed and five wounded by the bombardment, etc., and that they [we] still investigating the absence of fifteen men, but had not yet [located] them. We went forward and located the Commanding Officer, Co. F. 16th Infantry, Lieut. Comfort, whose company occupied the Artois Strong Point. He was still somewhat dazed by the shell shock of the bombardment. He connected us forward. After reaching the doubling trench we [saw] a French lieutenant who said that there had been a [raid] as they had found a German helmet and a German rifle. [We] continued on up to Lieut. McLoughlin’s platoon and found him slightly wounded in the face, his helmet bent by a shell fragment and he himself very much shaken by the bombardment he had experienced. The trenches had been badly knocked about, the communication trenches almost destroyed in several places. The general facts of the affair were still in much doubt, but a short investigation quickly cleared things up. The following is about what happened.

2. About 2:50 A.M., Nov. 3d, a heavy bombardment was delivered by the enemy on our line from Aero to the south, including Bures. In the vicinity of the Artois salient it was extremely violent. It lasted about fifty minutes. Apparently the tip of the salient was only lightly bombarded [with] 77 mms., as it was only slightly damaged. The men generally sought shelter in their dugouts. Lieut. McLoughlin, commanding the platoon holding the salient, sought to [bring] his men back to the doubling trench but the latter was under the heaviest bombardment and he was knocked down several times by shell
blasts. During this bombardment the enemy exploded long, gas pipe dynamite charges under the [tire] in front of each face of the tip of the salient. When the bombardment lifted on the front trench about forty or fifty Germans rushed in from the two sides, killed or drove off the one or two soldiers who had come out of their dugouts, and carried off twelve of our men. Three soldiers of Co. F, 16th Infantry were killed. One had his throat cut; one had been shot by a revolver as he stepped to the door of his dugout; and the third had his head crushed in—whether by a club or piece of shell fragment I do not know. One man was wounded by a bullet from a rifle or revolver. The man with the cut throat was found, I understand, on top of the parapet. I have not yet had an opportunity to question the wounded and I know understand that a German was wounded by the German barrage and has come in to our lines, stating that the raid was planned in August and 250 volunteers called for, and fifty participated in the raid. Everything regarding the German—prisoner is new to me and as yet unchecked. Practically all the other details I found out for myself.

3. In order to get this off by the courier [I] have written it the moment I reached Einville and it is therefore disconnected and hurried. I will make a rough sketch* to enclose. I am sending with this the list of names of killed, wounded and missing. Also the orders*1 for that center of resistance, etc; The company had just taken over the sector about ten o’clock last night and only a few of the non-commissioned officers had ever seen the trenches in day light. -(Initialed) G.C.M.

(Stamped) G. C. Marshall, Jr.,
Major, General Staff

*Sketch cannot be found.
*1 Orders cannot be found.

P.L.R.

The nature of this first report seems chaotic and, indeed, Major Marshall admits that “In order to get this off by the courier [I] have written it the moment I reached Einville and it is therefore disconnected and hurried.” More specifically, the writing style of Major Marshall begins with an almost diary-like manner. He explains what time he first learned of the trench raid and continues with his visit to the site. However, in the second section, Major Marshall switches to an objective tone as he describes the details of the trench raid and how many men were killed. At the end of the report, he returns to a much more conversational tone again as
he describes what he is sending with the report to the Chief of Staff. This first report can be used as a starting point for documents to follow.

The November 3 trench raid was totally unexpected, and the chaos that ensued is illustrated in Figure 4.2. In this figure, the sergeant and some of the men carried away as prisoners are shown in a photograph later found on a German Prisoner of War. The names of the soldiers who were killed, wounded, and missing are shown in Figure 4.3, which is the enclosure Marshall refers to in his communication.

![Figure 4.3](image)

**Figure 4.3**

Report of men killed, wounded, and missing from the first trench raid on Nov. 3, 1917.
Based on Major Marshall’s disconnected writing and the corresponding enclosure, there is a sense of chaos and unpreparedness in communicating what happened during the November 3 trench raid. Certainly such chaos is to be expected in war, but I find it interesting that they did not have a standardized way of communicating such events. Instead, Major Marshall mixes personal voice with passive voice, as described above. At times you can tell he is trying to be objective, yet in other phrases his writing reads like a diary or journal. What is the rhetorician to make of this communication? Perhaps another example is needed in order to show how other communications surrounding the first trench raid tried to keep a consistent voice and form. For such an example, we look at a piece of communication from the event in Figure 4.4.
The report in Figure 4.4 certainly seems more objective and formulaic than previous examples because it sounds much less conversational. Note that it is labeled a “Daily Report” and that it contrasts significantly with other communication about this trench raid yet

**Figure 4.4**

*Report from Nov. 3, 1917.*
to come. As shown below [sic included], here is a report from Lieut. Erickson, an eye-

witnss to the trench raid:

(Report of Lieut. Erickson, Co. F, 16th Infantry, on Raid night of Nov. 2-3, 1917)
From: 1st Lieut Erickson
Nov. 5-17

On the night of Nov. 2-3, about 12:30 A.M. I inspected listening Post No. 6, and shortly after, No. 5. While I was at No. 5, we heard someone cough in a Northeast direction from the Post, and 2 or 3 min. later, we were fired upon from same direction. The A.Rifle returned the fire towards the Flash, by my orders. I left there about 10 min later during which time we heard nothing more. When back in the trenches again, I fired 2 lighting rockets with an interval of trenches again, I fired 2 lighting rockets with an interval of 1-1/2 hours, but nothing was seen. About 3:15 A.M. the German Art. Started a heavy bombardment on the trenches and I ordered the men in my vicinity into the dugouts. 10 min. after the German Art. Fire started, I fired an alert rocket for our Art. 5 min later a red rocket for barrage and 10 min later another red rocket, but received none. It was about 40 min after the German Art. Opened up before our [t.] answered. The discipline and conduct of the men were splendid. As soon as the barrage lifted enough to make it possible to get out of the dugouts, I ordered them out and not one hesitated, but everyone ran out and took his post [at] the firing step ready to repulse an attack. My listening [sts], one in charge of Cpl. Sullivan and the other in charge of Cpt. Blassingame stuck it out at their posts with little or no shelter. 2 V.B.s, Pvt. Henderson and Reeves rested about 10 yards to the left front of the M.G. did the same thing. Sgt. Roberts who was with me kept very cool and was of great assistance in getting the men out of the dugouts promptly. Lieut. Comfort’s conduct deserves recognition.

[He] made his way up to the first line trenches during the heaviest part of the bombardment and found Pvt. Oer who was wounded and partly buried by the exploding of a shell, and [had] to dig him out. The German Art. Fire on my sector lasted 45 min. I had two men wounded slightly by shell fire. When the barrage lifted and my Platoon all fixed to repel an attack I got into communication with the Platoon on my right. Lieut. Comfort was already there reorganizing the Platoon.

(Signed) Edward T. Erickson,
1st Lieut., 16th Infantry.

Here we have another example of personal pronouns mixed in with an objective tone. For instance, Lieut. Erickson almost narrates to us in journalistic form the events of Nov. 3, 1917.
Yet Erickson seems, like Major Marshall, to be searching for an objective way to communicate the trench raid, as he leaves out personal emotions or feelings.

In Figure 4.5 is another report from the 16th Infantry regarding the events of Nov. 3, 1917, written by Lieutenant Comfort, F Company Commander:

REPORT OF LIEUTENANT COMFORT, Commanding Co. F, 16th Infantry, on Field Night of Nov. 3, 1917.

1. The relocated 16th Co. 17th French Inf. finishing at 9:30 P.M. Nov. 2, 1917. I went around to Engineer's back to Rcur 16th Co. and then to 16th. Getting back about 1:30 P.M. about 12:30 A.M. I went back towards our front line trench by Joyce Oph. There was some rifle firing. Went out to trenches to turn it to Buyan Ward then down Buyan Ward to P.O. All needed until Lieut. Erickson reported to me that his listening group had been fired on. Gone to P.O. about ten o'clock. Remained there till about three o'clock when the barrage started. Went to head of Pois to see that man, then sent down to telephone to take the French telephone operators under control. Wanted to call for a barrage, went up there and went down to Buyan Ward, where there was a barrage on at the time. Went down to Lt. Erickson. Platoon he had already sent up a red rocket, then men were collected and moved. Most of them in the dugout. Went down to French. Lt. sent several men to dig out did not see Lt. No Lechlin. Returned to P.O. Telephone circuit was broken. Lt. Patterson had already tried to call for barrage by a red rocket out the French it on duty, had not let him. I got one man was going to send it up - then he stopped me. Saying it was just a hangar drum. Thought he knew his business. Returned in Fabre Trench. Bombardment Blackened down about 1:45 A.M. and I went back to French Trench. A wave French Baurupe [Bourgeois] then after. Found Lt. McAlachi in and had been in trench all night. Went on to work reorganizing platoon. Found Private Drexler and me [Dreutzer] and found him down. Bombardment went off - went back to P.O. received word from Lt. McAlachi that seventeen were missing. Later check showed fourteen were killed. Corps were taken under control. [Cut off here.]

The support from the artillery was very poor — Lt. Erickson sent up two red rockets in fifteen minutes after barrage started and soon after a red very flare. The French Officer in charge here prevented both Lt. Patterson and myself from sending rockets. The rockets sent were seen in Sarlomet [Sarlemont] by Lt. Davis French Artillery, was about thirty or forty miles in moving up. and then was very excellent. French Major of Artillery was up next day said he was very sorry. But he knew that the Germans could not capture the position, so he only put on a petite barrage. Neither the French, MG, or American guns at Antremont were opened fire, if they had opened up, as soon as barrage started the raid could have been prevented.

I wish to commend the discipline of the men shown by the 16th Platoon and Lt. Erickson, the listening posts during the bombardment and the other men were not disturbed and under control. In the first Platoon the men were dispersed and by the barrage to a large extent and were spread over quite a little ground and in some cases got excited and beyond control. In one dugout, the men were not awakened, during bombardment. Next, Grenade was on duty as sentry as dugout, he reported he woke up Wynn and sent him to make up sentry. Wynn did not wake up and says he was not told; this dugout was in trench. Wynn and one not reached. Private Mitchell, Oifliths,
Lieutenant Comfort’s report is similar to Lieutenant Erickson’s in terms of personal pronouns mixed with objectivity. Besides the testimony from these two company-level officers, there is also a report summarizing the evidence of enlisted men, Co. F, 16th Infantry shown in Figure 4.6.
SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF ENLISTED MEN, Co. F, 16th Inf. on BALKAN NIGHT of Nov. 2-3, 1917.

Pvt. Wade—was at his post at Art Rifle when Barrage started. Lieut. Mclachlan came along and ordered the crew to the dugout. They went along Raffin's trench together and got in dugout. Gresham was sentry at door. Three men that they thought were Americans, passed along—Gresham called don't shoot I am an American. The man replied in English that is the man I am looking for—and shot him. Lieut. Mc Lachlan sprung out calling Halt, when a high explosive shell came he made him unconscious for a minute or two, when he recovered he went with the men back up Raffin's Trench, found no Germans.

Private Culp—when Culp ran up C.T. and got in shed blown up—got out and back to second Platoon, 20 minutes after Barrage started, met a German took him for an American and passed him. He opened fire when at twenty feet, and then threw Grenades—They fired on him and then stepped around travis.

Private Hurd—Cpl. Knowles, Pvt. Messa, Hurd, Koch, & Thomas. Barrage came on them and they got shelter heard the Germans cutting wire. Opened fire. Cpl. Knowles was knocked back by concussion of shell. Barrage was strong that could not continue fire, this Group might have done some damage to Germans but Cpl. Knowles was dazed by the shell that knocked him over and the others but me.

Thomas—P 3, opened fire; fired about 40 rounds. Was driven to cover by German Barrage and hand Grenades, they could not get back to dugout through Barrage.


Stitworth—In East 1 Trench, Barrage started. Sgt. Harris, ordered him to dugout. Stayed in only two or three minutes. Some one hollered "You can't stay in there", came out of dugout. Germans coming over top. Mitchell came out of dugout. Both opened fire with Automatic Pistols. Stitworth says he got one and later Mitchell got one.

Harris—Was on Post when Barrage Started. F 3 Gresham in charge went to trench didn't see Germans.

Private Edwards—Was posted south end of Tranchee East. Barrage started, went into shelter near post. Then went to dugout. Lieut. Mclachlin, Gresham, & Wade were in dugout. Someone came by. Gresham called out, "Don't shoot, I am American", and threw up his hands. The German said, I am shooting all Americans & shot him with automatic. Lieut. Mclachlin was knocked unconscious by a high explosive shell. When he recovered he led the group up Pin trench to Boyeau Sud.
The figures from 4.3 to 4.6 provide a starting point when studying the reports of the First Division. From Major Marshall’s initial communication to the reports by the lieutenants, the
rhetorician can see communication in flux. As shown in Figure 4.7, not only did these writers want to explain events, but they were required to do so.

![Figure 4.7](image)

**Figure 4.7**

Report on the conduct of men during the first trench raid, dated Nov. 9, 1917.
In the report shown in Figure 4.7, Major Burnett alludes to instructions from Division Headquarters to report on the conduct of the officers and enlisted men during the trench raid. He then goes on to cite the actions of Lieutenants Erickson and Comfort as well as the enlisted men. Here Major Burnett is following orders to that request for communication while also appearing to make up the form as he goes along. For instance, he states that he is complying with orders but writes the communication in a letter format. There appears to be no standard form or official way as yet to format the communication.

The final report made on the trench raid was written on Nov. 26, 1917. In the memo accompanying it, Adjutant General Robert C. Davis writes:

HEADQUARTERS AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES.

France, November 26, 1917.

From: The Adjutant General, The Commanding General, 1st Division.

Subject: Report on Trench Raid.

There is forwarded herewith for your information, thirteen copies of an approved report made by a board of selected officers on the trench raid made by the Germans on our forces on the night of November 2-3, 1917.

By command of General Pershing:
SIGNED: ROBERT C. DAVIS, Adjutant General.
Encls.

Here, again, we have the Adjutant General mentioning that a report was needed describing the events of the trench raid and that the documents shown in Figures 4.7–4.12 communicate such events. However, the Adjutant General also mentions that the report has been approved by a board of selected officers. To the rhetorician, such a comment is important because it
signals a group of army writers has decided that the following report fulfills the communications needs of the military regarding this particular event.

Figure 4.8
Report on first trench raid that occurred on Nov. 2-3, 1917.
In Figure 4.8, we see a very formal title page that mimics a contemporary business report. For instance, we see a title, a date, and what group of individuals wrote it. Since the first page of the report is so formal, we might expect the rest of it to be formal as well. Figure 4.9, below, shows the first part of the report.

GERMAN RAID

Night November 2-3, 1917.
Report by Brig. General James N. McAndrew
Army Schools.
Lieut. Colonel Willard Meinhard, Operations Section.
In accordance with paragraph 15, 180. 146.
A.E.F., November 5, 1917.

1. The facts are about as follows:
2. THE ENEMY.

PREPARATIONS. The Germans began preparations for the raid several weeks, perhaps three months, before it took place. Its purpose seems to have been to determine definitely when and where American troops had gone into the line. The participants were carefully selected attack troops, four-fifths volunteers. Their numbers were between 210 and 250 men, with five officers. The Germans prepared model trenches like those to be raided, and carefully and repeatedly rehearsed the operation. It was postponed from time to time until German observers had twice reported the appearance of Americans on heights back of the French lines. (These are said to have been mounted parties of artillerymen). German patrols made themselves entirely familiar with the ground to be traversed. The night of the raid, the hostile patrols worked close to the American wire on both sides of the Artois salient without disturbance from the garrison beyond a little ineffective fire from our advance posts. These patrols placed sections of pipe, filled with explosive, under the north, east, and south wire, apparently to be fired later during the bombardment. One of these
Figure 4.9
First part of report on trench raid covering enemy actions.
In Figure 4.9, we do see some formal characteristics. At the very beginning we read that the report is composed by the following board members: Brig. General James W. McAndrew, Lieutenant Colonel Stuart Heintze, and Lieutenant Colonel H.B. Fiske. Further, such a report is said to be in compliance with orders from the American Expeditionary Forces Headquarters (above even Division Headquarters). The report is dated November 14, 1917, a bit less than two weeks after the trench raid. The first part of the report then proceeds to describe the enemy actions. But the way in which it describes them is very passive yet also very detailed. This tone continues into Figure 4.10.
In Figure 4.10, there is again a formal and objective tone to the report. We read where the American troops were located to how they completed reconnaissance a day before the trench...

**Figure 4.10**
Continuing report on trench raid covering American actions.

In Figure 4.10, there is again a formal and objective tone to the report. We read where the American troops were located to how they completed reconnaissance a day before the trench...
raid. As we will see in Figure 4.11, the actual incidents of the trench raid are described in detail.
Figure 4.11
Continuing report on trench raid covering weather of the night.

In Figure 4.11, the incidents of the trench raid are well-detailed from the American perspective. But, unlike the passive and objective nature at the beginning of the report, we see more of a narrative emerge. For instance, specific names are listed, and the whole adrenaline pumping chain of events is told. It is almost as if we are actually sitting with a veteran of the war as he retells the events. The report continues in Figure 4.12 with how the American troops involved recovered themselves and the position.
DEFENSIVE BARRAGE. Fearing a raid, Lieutenant Com-
fort, on the opening of the bombardment, tried to get the
French operators to telephone a request to the French ar-
tillery for help, but was persuaded against this action by
the French lieutenant on duty at the Company Post of Com-
mand.

Lieutenant Patterson, a short time later, tried to send up
a rocket signal for barrage but was dissuaded from so doing
by the French lieutenant. Lieutenant Erickson, commanding
the second platoon, made the rocket signal for a barrage
about fifteen minutes after the bombardment began and re-
peated this call ten minutes later. The French artillery
saw the signal but did not respond. Major Burnett early
suggested to the French major that he call for barrage but
the French officer did not believe a raid was coming and
decided to call. The French major began to telephone for
a barrage about the time the Germans were lifting their
own. By that time, the wires were broken. A light def-
ensive barrage was finally obtained about 3:45 a.m.

CONDUCT OF OFFICERS. Lieutenant Comfort, commanding
the company, Lieutenant McHughlin, 1st Platoon, Lieuten-
ant Erickson, 2nd Platoon, and Lieutenant Patterson, the
liaison officer from Company E, were all out in the Boisau
Ford during the height of the bombardment endeavoring to
retain command and control of their widely scattered groups.
Lieutenant Comfort visited East trench after the bombard-
ment began and before the Germans came in; Major Burnett
went up to Company F as soon as the firing ceased. Working
over badly battered trenches and in the dark, rain and mud,
great difficulty was experienced in checking up the many
small groups and in determining what had occurred. Not
until daylight was it evident that the Germans had raided
and cleaned up East trench.

(The foregoing statements are based upon the visit of
the investigating officers November 7 to the scene of the
raid, examination of the terrain, questioning on the spot
of many of the participants; conversations with the French
investigating officer from Headquarters 5th Army, with the
Chief of Intelligence, 9th A.G., Commander 18th Division,
In Figure 4.12, we see the familiar names of Lieutenants Erickson and Comfort mentioned and they, with others, tried to communicate that they were under attack. Not until the next morning did the army officers realize that a whole trench had been taken out by the enemy. Further, we know that these officers learned of such events from the testimony of Lieutenants Erickson and Comfort as well as by visiting the trench site a few days later, on Nov. 7th.

4. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.
(a) Such a raid, elaborately prepared, made by picked troops and supported by heavy and accurately placed artillery fire, will almost certainly succeed in obtaining some prisoners.
(b) In general, the behavior of the American officers and men was very good. Considering all the circumstances, Lieuts. Comfort, McLoughlin, Erickson, and Patterson, under the most difficult conditions, displayed great courage and an earnest desire to do their full duty.
(c) The preliminary reconnaissance of the position to be occupied by Company F was not made in sufficient detail, nor were enough men in the first line platoon made familiar during daylight with the posts they were to occupy and defend.
(d) To avoid hostile observation, the relief was made at night. It would have been better for the relieving company to cross the exposed ground so as to arrive in the trenches at daybreak and so give the men the whole day to become familiar with their surroundings and rehearse their action in case of a night attack. In any case, non-commissioned officers should have been sent during the afternoon to take over all trench equipment.
(e) As will usually be the case, the division of authority in the battalion sector between French and American officers led to conflicting ideas and indecisive action. Witness the delay in calling for a defensive barrage.

(f) Telephone switchboards and operators were French, speaking a language not understood by most of the American officers using this means of communication. Misunderstandings and confusion necessarily resulted. (This difficulty, of course, is simply incident to the conditions under which the battalion was getting its training, and must be borne).

(g) No patrols were sent to the front. The ground between the opposing trenches was distinctly German ground. Our troops must make no man's land distinctly American land. The long presence of Germans about our wire and deliberate preparations for the raid would hardly have been possible if the American troops had done any patrolling. And certainly when their presence became evident, strong patrols should have been sent to drive them off instead of resting content with a little firing. (The excuses offered are not sufficient; i.e., that the French have laid many traps in front, that the difference in language would lead to the French firing into our patrols, and that the experience of previous battalions shows our patrols are likely to suffer from our own fire). The Battalion is now under orders from higher authority to send out strong patrols, each of an officer and 25 men. These patrols are too large to be easily concealed, and they offer a great mark for any hostile party to ambush.
(h) Extreme dispersion of units made command and coordinate action at night an impossibility. The Artola salient, in reality, is entirely too large for a stubborn defense by one company. The deployment for the daytime into widely separated groups minimizes losses under artillery fire and still permits a strong flanking and direct fire to be brought over the open ground in front. It is, therefore, well adapted for the daytime defense of this extensive position. But at night the main portions of the garrison should each be concentrated. To disperse at night into these widely separated, small groups is simply to invite capture in detail by any moderately strong raiding party. Likewise, to remain below ground in dugouts or even in the trenches upon the approach of the hostile party renders each group almost helpless before an enemy who keeps the bulk of his men above ground. An attack at night above ground can best be met with the defenders above ground. Each platoon should, therefore, have been concentrated in the center of its section. Small parties, each of some three men only, should have covered the front and flanks, and these should have given warning by flare as well as by runner of the enemy's approach. While the German barrage was on Em trench, the main body of the platoon, must of course, remain in deep dugouts, but with every arrangement for prompt exit therefrom. This means sentries at the head of each stairway, at least half of the men lined up in double column of files on the steps, prepared to rush out at the first warning, and the others alert and ready to follow. The platoon leader should be at the head of the stairs carefully observing the barrage. The instant it lifted, he should give the word; his men should sprint
up the stairs and out of the fire trench to the ground above and, in the case of question, behind the trench. Once there the platoon would be able to act as a whole under the command of its officer, and could use the rifle, pistol, bayonet and grenade upon somewhat equal terms with its enemy. Even when so greatly outnumbered as in the present case, the platoon assembled on top of the ground would have a much better chance of driving off its opponent, of causing him to pay dearly for any prisoners taken, and of a successful retreat if compelled thereto.

To facilitate rapid exit, hand ropes should be placed on both sides of the dugout steps, the trenches themselves should be provided with steps or ramps, and the whole procedure drilled until every man knows exactly what he is to do.

It is, of course, true that the relief of the French company at night, followed almost immediately by the German raid, and preceded by an inadequate preliminary reconnaissance of the ground made these rather elaborate arrangements impracticable. But such elaborate arrangements must be made if raids of the sort in question are to be defeated.

(i) The security detachments in front, P₁, P₂, P₃, were unnecessarily strong as they were required only to give warning. Two posts located at P₁ and P₃ would have been sufficient in this case and the strength of each could well have been reduced to three men. The men so gained should have been added to the platoon’s main body, which should do the fighting.

(ii) The German artillery appears to have registered on the Artois trenches some days previously. The supporting artillery observers should have noted what the
Germans were doing and warned the infantry of what to expect.

(k) Artillery assigned the duty of defensive barrage must have no discretion as to opening fire. When called for by the infantry, the barrage must be put down immediately. The responsibility for an unnecessary barrage must rest with the infantry.

(1) On the morning of November 7, groups of several men each were found in position near the stations of the machine guns and automatic rifles. A total of four or five observation stations for the whole Artois salient would have been sufficient to give warning of any hostile movement. The men so gained should have been added to those engaged in cleaning, repairing, and draining the battered trenches. The breaches in the wire needed further repairs. A number of unused trenches should have been wired and entangled so as to forbid their use to the enemy. Ammunition, rocket, and sandbag dumps required cleaning and an orderly arrangement of contents. Details from the reserve company should have been brought up to assist in this work of repair. Dugouts should be drained, cleaned, lighted and made as comfortable as possible. While the experienced soldier endures necessary discomfort uncomplainingly, he manifests his experience by making himself comfortable under circumstances that discourage the inexperienced. Under great discomfort, the morale of troops will always be better for a reasonable amount of labor in making arrangements which tend to lessen their discomfort and to produce an air of order and discipline. Psychologically also, soldiers are much more likely to hold strongly defences which they have worked hard to place in order and which they therefore unconsciously come to regard as their own, than those in which this personal interest is lacking.
(m) Before this raid the sector had been very quiet for a long period. Everyone concerned had fallen into a sense of false security and the disbelief that the Germans had any intention of strenuous action. This tendency to become careless in quiet sectors in the measures for defense must be continually combatted.

(n) There was a lack of intelligence or discipline on the part of some artillery observers, who themselves, suffered none of the evil consequences of their exposure, but who precipitated a raid on the trenches that, postponed a little, might have been better met.

Headquarters American Expeditionary Forces, Nov. 14, 1917 —
APPROVED.

By command of General Pershing:

ROBERT C. DAVIS,
Adjutant General.

Copies to:
Commandant, Army Schools,
First Corps Schools,
Sections C.S., these HQ.,
6 copies for file.

Correct spelling:

* BAFFIN.
*S Bathelemon.

P. L. R.
In Figure 4.13, several observations and conclusions are made. Some of these are related to
the trench raid itself while others apply what happened the night of Nov. 3, 1917 to
recommendations for future reference. For instance, it is noted that the soldiers should drain,
clean, and make the trenches as comfortable as possible, which is important for the soldiers’
morale. Further, the report mentions that soldiers are more psychologically likely to hold a
strong defense which they have worked hard to place in order. Also, a lack of discipline is
directed toward the artillery observers who did not suffer any casualties. If these observers
had noticed signs of an upcoming raid the soldiers might have been better prepared for the
assault, even if by a few minutes.

ANSAUVILLE SECTOR: WINTER 1918

Several weeks after the first trench raid, according to the History of First Division, the
First Division began to march from the Gondrecourt Area on January 15th, 1918 to the
Ansauville Sector. By the night of March 3rd –4th, all conditions were favorable for an
American raid on the Germans. The watches of the artillery and the raiding parties were
accurately synchronized so that every movement should be executed simultaneously.

The raiding elements of the First Division took their places for jumping off and at
1:00 o’clock all the artillery and machine guns began their schedules of fire, which had been
precisely calculated and tabulated. After several minutes, a telephone message from the 18th
Infantry reported that the raid was canceled and asked that the artillery fire cease. In a short
while, a similar message came from the 16th Infantry. The mystery was solved when it was
reported that the sections of Bangalore torpedoes to be used by the engineers in blowing open
the wire were too long to pass through the turnings of the communicating trenches and,
therefore, they could not be placed in position for the raid. There was, however, no thought of abandoning the plan altogether.

It was decided to put it into execution again on March 11th, with the modifications that the wire was to be cut in advance by artillery fire and that the raid of the 18th Infantry should be made just before daylight, while that of the 16th Infantry should be made just before dark. The separate raids involved separate plans for the employment of all the artillery and machine guns, thus giving increased protection to the raiding parties (58).

The operations report for March 2nd to March 3rd was composed by Lt. Colonel Marshall and is shown in Figure 4.14.
Figure 4.14
Figure 4.14 is referred to as an operations report, but it reads almost like the daily report we saw in Figure 4.4 following the trench raid. In other words, we see a specific time period (from noon March 3 to noon March 4) and the general characteristics of the day. Additionally, it is very objective and form-like in nature.

This next report in Figure 4.15 explains why the trench raids planned for March 3rd to March 4th failed.

Headquarters First Division, American Expeditionary Forces, France, March 5, 1918

From: Commanding General, 1st Division.
To: Commanding General, 3rd Army Corps.

Subject: Report on failure of raids planned for March 3-4th.

1. The raids planned to be carried out by a detachment of the 16th Infantry on the essential flank of the AVRO- G007R salient and by a detachment of the 18th Infantry on the salient opposite the northwestern corner of the Bois d'Enghien, both failed for approximately the same reasons, namely: the failure of the Engineer Pioneer detachments to arrive at their designated places in time to place their long torpedo charges in the enemy's trench. The failure was due to the extreme darkness of the night, the difficulty experienced in carrying the long torpedo charges forward from Position 1 bis to the jumping off trench. It is apparent now that the torpedo charges should have been joined together after the afternoon at points in advance of Position 1 bis, REICHSHOF and P.O. of Center H, for example.

2. (a) 16th Infantry:

Engineer Pioneer detachments arrived forward from HAMECHURT a few minutes after 7 P.M. with two Bangalore torpedoes, each 15 meters long. Difficulty was experienced in carrying the torpedoes. After reaching the P.O. of Center H progress was very slow and the Engineer officer in charge found it hard to keep to the right route to HAMECHURT. Enroute one Bangalore torpedo broke in two and was discarded. The joints in the remaining torpedo were also discarded.

The party finally reached the jumping off point at 9:20 P.M. The connections to the torpedo were not completed until 10:30 P.M., at which time the raiding party was in position to depart from our lines.

The Commander of the Raiding Party with the Engineer Pioneer group started forward with the torpedo in hopes that possibly they could walk near enough the hostile positions to place it under the enemy's wire before 8 hour (1 A.M.). This was found to be impossible, and at 10:30 A.M., the Commander of the Raiding Party suspended the operation.

German fire in reply to our barrage was slight and delayed.

(b) 18th Infantry:

Engineer Pioneer detachment started forward from HAMECHURT at 9:40 P.M., with torpedoes, 24 meters long. A delay had been experienced in getting started from HAMECHURT owing to a complication regarding an infantry carrying party for the torpedoes.
We know that the Commanding General of the First Division on this date, Bullard, wrote the report in Figure 4.15, and that it outlines how each regiment responded to the planned attacks. As shown in Figure 4.16 we see that individual eye-witness accounts from officers of the First Division are included.
In Figure 4.16 it is important to note that personal pronouns are still used and the events are in a narrative. But, the same objectivity as shown in the first trench raid reports is mixed into Figure 4.17, which shows the failures of the proposed attacks.

*This report shows the following weaknesses:
(a) Failure to rehearse beforehand the carrying of the torpedoed at night over the terrain in question to insure its success.
(b) A tie up in truck movements due to the fault of someone.
(c) A lamentable lack of initiative on the part of Lt. in waiting around at Emmanuel.
(d) A lamentable lack of initiative in Captain in waiting around Le Rehanne when he could have telephoned Col. Parker & at least borrowed a side car.
(Signed) King
*These penciled notes are appended to the file copy of the report.
P.L.R.
Also, as shown in Figure 4.18, names are omitted for the first time:
After the failed attack, according to the *First Division History*, “While the Division was absorbed in the defense of the sector, the great German offensive, commencing March 21, 1918, broke upon the allied line with a violence that shook the entire battle front” (64). Reports of the German advance came with alarming details and it was realized that every effort would be required to save the situation. “In the midst of these anxieties, the news came that the American Commander-in-Chief had offered the Allied High Command all the American forces for such dispositions as were deemed most advantageous to the cause. The result was an order to the First Division to be relieved [. . .] and to proceed to Picardy, where the battle was raging” (64). At the end of the defense, the Ansauville Sector losses had
amounted to: 6 officers, 137 men killed or died of wounds; 19 officers, 384 men wounded; 3 men captured or missing. Total casualties: 25 officers, 524 men.

**CANTIGNY SECTOR: SPRING 1918**

After the winter of 1918, according to the *First Division History*, the entire Division was put in motion over the various roads leading to the Cantigny sector. The columns advanced without interference and in accordance with the carefully prepared marching tables issued by the staff. “A journey of four days brought the elements into their billets in the rear area of the sector…The sector extended from just north of Cantigny to just south of Mesnil-St. Georges, a distance of about four kilometers, at the point of the salient established by the German offensive in March” (69).

The primary mission of the Division was to hold its sector. The sector received fire from more than ninety German battery positions, and surprise fire would descend simultaneously on several hundred yards of a road, or the entire distance between two towns would be covered for several minutes. Woods and ravines were made untenable by mustard gas and the guns were often driven from emplacements prepared with much labor and completely camouflaged.

Indeed, on the night of May 3rd-4th, it was estimated that “not less than fifteen thousand high explosive and mustard gas shells fell on a battalion of the 18th Infantry in the Villers-Tournelle in the space of three and one-half hours” (History 74). While the sector appeared empty during the day, “every road and trail sprang to life as dark approached to hide them from the ever watchful balloons that loomed along the front” (History 75). “On May 5th, the 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery, entered the sector and occupied positions in
front of Recquencourt…On May 9th, the 6th Field Artillery supported the French Division on the left in a brilliant assault and capture of the Park of Grivesnes. This was the first participation in an offensive action” (History 76). In order to meet the expected renewal of the German offensive, the Allied High Command had planned a counteroffensive from the Montdidier front. A secret order was sent to the First Division to guide it in preparing for its part and during the latter part of May it was decided to put the operation into execution (History 77).

Figure 4.19
Memo calling for daily operations reports, dated April 26, 1918.
Before the First Division was immersed into the fight for the Cantigny sector, the Commanding General’s Chief of Staff, Campbell King, sent out a memo outlining how to communicate events in a standard form (see Figure 4.19). The previous communications surrounding the first trench raid and the failure of attacks on the Germans must have solidified the need for a standard way of documenting future events.

Figure 4.19 clearly shows that daily reports are to be written to cover the events of the day from 10:00 AM to 10:00 AM the next day. Further, these written daily reports were due to Division Headquarters every day at 1:00 PM. At the very end of the memo, the exigence for such communication states, “The importance of the prompt dispatch of these reports is evident. In the present military situation delays might cause serious result.” Figure 4.20 is the model of daily written reports mentioned in Figure 4.19:

**Figure 4.20**
Continuing part of memo showing model daily operations report.
The model daily written report as shown in Figure 4.20, clearly outlines what all daily reports should include. For instance, they start with the general characteristics of the day and end with miscellaneous data. Such a format is reminiscent of earlier daily reports seen with the first trench raid and the later failed trench raid. However, the model in Figure 4.20 is different in the information requested and demonstrates a standard way of communicating in a very formal way. As we will see in Figure 4.21, such a model will be used in future communications within the First Division.

The actual battle for Cantigny, according to the *First Division History*, was fixed to start at 5:45 A.M., May 28th. The town of Cantigny stood on a rise of ground in the center of the salient in the German line west of Montdidier. Its possession by the Americans would afford them all the advantages of the position and would correspondingly inconvenience the enemy. “Though not an extensive operation when measured by the great battles of the war, Cantigny was of far more importance than its magnitude might suggest. Like many other small actions in warfare, it marked a turning point in the psychological, if not in the military, influence upon the war, and it will live in history as an achievement to which the American people will ever point with pride” (81). Conscious of the consequences that success or failure might have upon the course of the war and of the solemn responsibility that devolved upon those who organized, as well as upon those who executed, the attack, the staff of the First Division proceeded to prepare the plan for the employment of the troops (History 78).

On the nights of May 26th-27th and 27th-28th, the 28th Infantry re-entered the line and relieved the 18th Infantry. This change, however, was not without incident. “At 4:30 A.M., May 27th, the enemy put down a terrific artillery preparation fire on the entire line. At 6:00 A.M. the fire changed to a box-barrage and a strong raiding party endeavored to penetrate the
sub-sectors of both the 26th Infantry and the 28th Infantry. The troops replied with such vigor and effect that the affair ended shortly with the Americans in portions of the enemy’s trenches” (81).

During the hours preceding the assault there was little sleep or rest for anyone in the Division, as those “who were not employed were equally intense in their interest in the impending drama. The night of May 27th-28th was clear, but the early morning hours brought the usual haze” (83). At 4:45 A.M., May 28th, all guns to be employed in the action began to verify their adjustments, each battery firing a few shots at the time prescribed for it in the firing schedule. At 5:45, the preparation for the attack began. “With suddenness, every gun was directed upon its prescribed target at the given rate of fire. By noon, the artillery and machine gun fire upon the salient became intense and continued for forty-eight hours…Not yet reconciled to his defeat, at 5:30 A.M., May 30th, the enemy made his final effort to retake the coveted ground”(86). But the sleepless American artillery, the machine gunners and the brave defenders of the conquered ground swept the Germans back before the position was reached and the purpose for which the Cantigny operation had been undertaken was fully accomplished. “As the first American offensive, it inspired the confidence of the Allies and had a correspondingly depressing effect upon the enemy” (86).

The daily report for May 11th to May 12th, just days before the battle for Cantigny, is shown in Figure 4.21. The report follows the model in Figure 4.19 very closely as evidenced in the type of information listed. For instance, the daily report adheres to the time frame of 10:00 AM to 10:00 AM for the days mentioned. All of the headings follow the model as well, from the general characteristics of the day to aeronautics. The one heading missing is miscellaneous, which may have occurred if there was nothing to report on specific to that
section. Even more noteworthy is the editor’s note that there were two copies of this daily report and that both differ widely. Here, we see the work of “genereology” in progress. While the report in Figure 4.21 is the only one included in the Records of the First Division, perhaps the other missing report would show more allegiance with previous reports which included personal pronouns and were narrative in form.

Headquarters First Division, American Expeditionary Forces, France, May 10, 1918.

Operations Report
from 10 A.M. May 11 to 10 A.M. May 12,

1. General Characteristics of the Day:

Quiet.

2. American Activity:

(a) Infantry:

Patrol of 1 officer, 1 N.C.O., and 17 men left reserve at 06.05 at 10 P.M. They moved 200 yds towards the enemy lines and took up an ambuscade position. No sign of the enemy. No casualties.

Another patrol of 1 officer and 30 men left 23.31 at 10 P.M. and took up a position in front of this point near the enemy lines. No signs of the enemy. No casualties.

A patrol of 1 officer and 27 men left 17.15 and worked towards the enemy lines in the direction of CAIGNY. When within 75 or 100 yds of the outskirts of the town, the patrol was fired upon with grenades from the front and flanks. Five Germans were seen in a shallow trench (about 3 ft. deep). The enemy sent up rockets continuously and much shelling was heard. A machine gun opened fire on the patrol from the direction of CAIGNY. Our patrol retired to our lines.

Patrol of 1 officer and 6 men left 15.17. It proceeded to 18.17 where a machine gun was discovered in a small clump of bushes. A large enemy working party, estimated to be 75 men, were seen in the neighborhood of the machine gun emplacement. When near point 17.21 an enemy patrol, estimated to be 50 men, was discovered. Our patrol engaged the enemy with pistols and hand grenades for several minutes and then returned to our lines. Our machine guns opened up on the enemy who retreated.

A patrol from 16th Inf. discovered a machine gun which seems to be located in CAIGNY south of the sugar beet mound (Further details of this patrol are lacking).

Indirect fire by H.Q. batteries:

Harassing 1176:

No. of Rounds: 1st Co. Div. M.G. 8

35,000 30.09, 38.08, 39.06, 39.04, 30.03, 38.99.

39.15, 37.19, 21.15, 27.11, 22.24, 22.15.

39.12, 32.15, 22.13, 29.16, 28.17.

(b) Artillery:

Kind of fire Cal. Rounds Objectives:

Interruption 75 9532 Table 1 الفرنسي، Table 2 Beaus

Harassing 75 2661 Woods E. of FONTAINES, Traîté

Harassing 2661 3000, 2694, point 2694, 2694, traite 2694, Cantigny.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of Fire</th>
<th>Cal.</th>
<th>Rounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas Concentration</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrage</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdiction</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassing</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjust.</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surprise</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives:**
- Trenches in front of Esplugue, Cruzans, 771 Battery, 3981 Battery, 3981 Battery, 3917, 4117, 4519, 4510, 4519, 4517, 4519.
- Behind main line of Domblain group, point 3806.
- точки 3806, 4510, 3910.
- Trenches: 3910, point 3615, 3613, 3709, 4301.
- House at Cantigny, Chateau dans Nain, Base point 2802.
- 2802, 4161, 4160.
- Trenches: 3918, 3914, 3000, 4404.

**Rocket shells by battery observer:**
- Table 1, page 3, Table 2, page 3.
As we see in Figure 4.22 changing, or standardizing, communication is not a straightforward or uncluttered process.
REPORT ON OPERATIONS AGAINST CIAPLON.


I was put in command of the detachment to furnish guides and make reconnaissance for the 'Jumping Off' trench. This detail left MAISONVILLE in the evening of May 24. The detail entered the sector without any casualties and began work at once. The enemy made a raid on the morning of the 25th of May at which time the entire sector was subjected to a heavy bombardment. During the bombardment Corporal EGGERS was killed in the front line, by a shell having in the parapet. He was evacuated in a short while after the raid was over. He was severely shell shocked and drowned.

A certain report to me that the enemy had penetrated our line beyond the support position. There were many scattered soldiers around Bala d'Azio. I immediately assembled about three platoons and formed them in a skirmish line behind a ridge in front of the Bois de Glengar. I then found a company of Engineers and ordered them to go in support of the three platoons.

I reported my operation to a Major of the 16th Inf. and turned over the detachment to him. With his permission I went up on a patrol to see how far the enemy had advanced and found that they had made a good raid on our front line. After everything quieted down I assembled my detail and completed the work in the 'Jumping Off' trench. Later in the day Pvt. McDonald (Mac) was wounded in the leg, supposedly by an aeroplane bullet. Nothing further of importance happened during the day.

The guides led the company into position without a hitch on the night of May 27/28. No casualties during the bombardment before the attack. At zero hour the platoon 'Jumped Off' and quickly established the attack formation.

I lost one or two men wounded in the advance by machine gun fire. The platoon captured one machine gun with a quantity of ammunition. I turned the gun over to a Machine gun Sergeant attached to my platoon, ordered him to reverse it and lay it in to action. The platoon captured several prisoners and sent them to the rear. At least twelve men were dead in the advance many of the enemy were killed. On reaching the objective, outposts were immediately forward and the platoon began to dig. Just as the digging began a machine gun barrage was put down and this caused no casuality in my platoon. Things went well until 4 o'clock in the afternoon when the enemy began bombing our position. About six o'clock it became much heavier and word was passed down the trench that Lieut Ward was or some such man ordered us to evacuate at once. Not knowing who Lieut Ward was or with what authority he gave such an order, I ordered my men to stand fast, and stand guard for an advance of the enemy. I immediately passed word down the trench asking who Lieut Ward was, and with what authority he had issued the order. I received no reply, whereupon I went myself to the right of the Company sector to find Lieut Ward, but no one had authority to issue the order. I found no Lieut Ward, but was told by some man that a Lieut had retreated to the rear with a number of men immediately on the right of the sector. I found Lieut Morrisey on the right of our sector. I consulted him, and we decided to remain in position until something more serious
In Figure 4.22, we see the messiness of the daily report evolution. While Figure 4.21 provides a model example, this latest figure presents, once again, personal testimony from Lieutenant Parker on the operations against Cantigny. In this report, personal pronouns are used and it is very narrative-esque. In a time of changing relationships within the army and the corresponding communication we will have to wait to see how future operations of the First Division in World War I are communicated.

**SOISSONS: SUMMER 1918**

Following Cantigny, the First Division was ordered on July 11th to the area of Dammartin-en-Goele, northeast of Paris. “At 4:35 A.M., [July 18th] while it was yet dark, there came a great roar, the clouds burst into flame, and the artillery barrage dropped with deadly effect just where it was expected to fall in front of the infantry line” (History 112). At 5:30 A.M. the first objective was reached on scheduled time and “everyone was buoyed by the success” (History 113). But the rest of the day was a hard fight. “Hard as had been the
fighting, the day was rich in its trophies of victory—prisoners and guns. The total captures by the Division included fifteen hundred prisoners, thirty guns and howitzers and many machine guns” (121).

Shortly before midnight, Division Headquarters received orders to renew the assault at 4:00 A.M., July 19th. “The objective was the line from Berzy-le-Sec to Buzancy…Thus, the result of the morning’s fighting was to advance the right of the Division a little more than a kilometer and the left not more than half that distance” (History 127). With this aim in view, Division Headquarters issued orders to renew the assault at 5:30 P.M. The hour was fixed so as to allow time for the operation to be completed before dark and to permit the troops to dig in during the night, without being located by the enemy’s artillery. “On the night of July 19th the 2d American Division was relieved” (History 127). The Division came out depleted beyond any former standards, but it was still a fighting unit and was destined to become stronger than before. The casualties amounted to: 77 officers, 1637 men killed or died of wounds; 157 officers, 5335 men wounded; 76 men missing; 35 men taken prisoner. Total casualties were 234 officers, 7083 men. The First Division History states that the “Battle of Soissons was the turning point of the war. As such, it must take its place in history as one of the world’s great, decisive battles” (142). The reports included in the Official Records of the First Division for Soissons continue to demonstrate the messiness of the changing genre.
headquarters First Division,
American Expeditionary Forces,
France, August 20, 1918.

To: Chief of Staff - First Division, American E.F.

Subject: Report on loss of automatic weapons in 501st OBS Operation.

Pursuant to instructions contained in General Orders No. 17, Headquarters First Division, American E.F., Appendix "A", and the endorsement dated Headquarters First Division, American E.F., August 4th, 1918, Appendix "B", the following report is submitted herewith.

1. Each Infantry and Machine Gun Company in the Division, which took part in the 501st OBS Operation, was visited and each officer or non-commissioned officer who had any knowledge of the loss of these weapons in his particular unit. A brief summary of the statements of such men is given in Appendix "C", a tabulation showing the number of guns and men in each company at the start of the operation, the name for each company at the conclusion of the operation, together with the number of guns lost due to each of certain causes as far as can be determined in given in Appendix "B".

2. The losses classified as due to:
   (a) Gun destroyed by hostile fire;
   (b) Abandoned for lack of men;
   (c) Abandoned for lack of ammunition;
   (d) Abandoned account of jam;
   (e) Turned in for salvage;
   (f) Missing: no definite information;

In my opinion, be traced more or less indirectly to faulty use of the automatic weapons in such an operation as this now developed into.

I. A certain percentage of guns will always be destroyed by hostile fire, particularly when set up in position. However many guns were hit while being carried near the infantry by fire evidently intended for the infantry. Ammunition, attempting to use the automatic rifle and machine gun from positions near the front against hostile machine gun nests, etc., which had temporarily checked the line, these weapons came under machine gun fire from other hostile positions which quickly put them out.

II. The lack of men comes from two causes:
   (a) Casualties
   (b) Loss of men due to their dropping behind from exhaustion or becoming separated from their gunner by being scattered by fire.
The load carried by members of automatic crews is of necessity heavy. An attempt to keep close contact with an enemy line which at times maneuvers rapidly in all directions soon exhausts the men and results in scattering of the crews. Such close contact also leads to losses and scattering of the crews due to hostile fire.

III. The lack of ammunition was brought about by:
(a) Loss of carriers due to casualties among carriers
(b) Defective or damaged ammunition clips
(c) Lack of a certain system of replenishment of ammunition.

IV. The most common jams were:
(a) Dirt in mechanism
(b) Faulty clips.

The ground over which the advances was made was in part dry which resulted in their being a great deal of dust. Men in throwing themselves on the ground or in holes to avoid hostile fire could not avoid getting dirt into the gun which was almost without exception, without a gun cover, main whenever a shell hit near a gun it invariably threw dirt or lime dirt on the gun. Both of these causes eventually chocked the gun in two ways: viz.;
- particles accumulating between barrel and sleeve eventually preventing the recoil.
- An accumulation of dirt in the chamber which prevents either the automatic extraction or seating of the cartridges.

The trouble with the clips were:
- Weak spring resulting in failure to lift the cartridge high enough.
- Bent or otherwise damaged clips causing the same trouble.
- Dirt in clips causing undue friction.
- Men who attempted to strip the gun to clean it during the action were not successful.

Those classed in "Turned in to Salvage" include all guns which were turned into a dump or left under charge of some unit by order or for other authorized reasons.

Those classed as "Missing" include those, about which no certain information can be obtained as to their final dispositions. It includes those of which the entire crew is missing or those crews which became separated by hostile fire or otherwise and the gun with the gun still aboard due to his being a casualty or other causes.

It is thought that corresponding losses will be incurred in similar operations unless the automatic weapons are handled differently. Undoubtedly these weapons were too far forward during the advance. The following general plan is recommended: one which may obviate such heavy losses and insure the automatic weapons and their crew being available to function when required.
Automatic Rifles:

Except for emergency uses, two or three automatic rifles only be advanced with the leading elements of a battalion. That the remaining automatic rifle teams advance is rear of the leading waves under control of non-commissioned officers whose duty it should be to keep the squad together and advancing in such a manner that all or any part of them can be brought into action when needed and from the most advantageous position. Due to its limited range the automatic rifle should not be pitted against the German light guns at ranges beyond 500 yards particularly if prolonged fire action is to be expected.

Care must be taken not to fire too long bursts as the gun is apt to become over heated and stick. The gun should be kept covered until the moment of using to keep it free from dirt. Clips should have been inspected and cleaned thoroughly prior to action and any doubtful ones discarded and replaced. Clips bags should be kept close as far as possible and protected from rough usage. Particularly they should not be used as seats or back rests. A suitable brush for cleaning the chamber should be carried. Members of the gun crew must be impressed with the necessity for some members of the team carrying the gun forward in event of the man carrying it being hit although he has no ammunition at the moment. Also that in event of a crew being depleted survivors should join another team and help get some guns or ammunition forward.

This chauchat is a short range defensive weapon and its use must be limited to such purposes. In exceptional cases suitable targets such as bodies of retreating enemy within effective range might be seen but these should be taken under fire by the two or three chauchats in front. The remaining chauchat should be reserved to use to assist in breaking up counter attacks, etc.

The use of the Machine Guns should be similar. Normally the guns assigned to battalions should follow in rear of the battalion to which assigned. They should be under command of a Machine Gun Officer who should keep them well in mind and advance them by bounds taking advantage of cover and the shortest and safest routes when practical and keeping far enough to the rear to avoid becoming involved in fire directed at the battalion yet close enough that all or a portion of the guns may be available for use within a few minutes. The Commanding Officer of the Machine Gun Detachment should be with the Infantry Battalion Commander. Well towards the front of the battalion should be a Machine Gun reconnaissance party composed of a Machine Gun Officer and such number of enlisted men as are necessary, whose duty it should be to decide on the number of guns required, the positions from which they can best be used and the best means of reaching same in order to carry out any mission which the infantry battalion commander may call upon the Machine Guns to execute.
Figure 4.23 shows a report on the loss of automatic weapons during the fighting in the Soissons operation, and it is rather formal and businesslike. However, it doesn’t fit the mold of a daily operations report. Why does there appear to be no daily reports for the time of the division’s stay in the Soissons area? Again, as genre changes, there are often instances of different routes taken by writers. For example, Lieutenant Bowen, in this case, was requested by Division Headquarters to report on the loss of weapons. As a result, the rest of
the report outlines why the losses occurred and the trouble with some of the guns. Perhaps there was no need for a daily report during this operation? Figure 4.24 below further complicates the situation.

Figure 4.24
Report on testimony from enlisted men during Soissons.
Figure 4.24 provides an example of eye-witness testimony describing the weapons loss to Company A of the 16th Infantry of the First Division. There are other companies listed in the original records, but from this one example we can see the trend of going back to eye-witness accounts in a narrative form as seen in the first trench raid and the failed trench raids. This may seem backward to the evolution of the genre. But, again, to the rhetorician we see another important consideration of how the reports of the First Division were evolving during a time of change. One last comment on the reports of Soissons is to consider Table 4.4.

![Image of Table 4.4]

**Table 4.4**

**Number of guns lost during Soissons.**

In Table 4.4, we see how at the end of the eye-witness accounts, there is a very businesslike table listing out the number of guns lost and specific to each company of the 16th Infantry.
Perhaps, based on this table, there are still signs of the report genre evolving towards standardization, especially with the apparent emergence of the special report.

**ST. MIHIEL SALIENT: SEPT. 11-14, 1918**

The St. Mihiel Salient, according to the *First Division History*, constituted one of the most prominent features of the western front. In the early part of August, the First Division received orders to prepare for its employment against the salient (153). "When the accurately synchronized watches ticked the second of 1:00 o’clock on the morning of September 12th, the darkness was turned into a quivering light by which one might see to read. A thundering crash that shook the earth broke the stillness and a whirlwind of bursting shell spread over the enemy’s positions” (161). Such warfare continued for another day.

During the operations four days of operations in the St. Mihiel salient, the Division advanced “fourteen kilometers in nineteen hours. Small elements advanced nineteen kilometers in thirty-two hours. These remarkable gains were made over a country which was dotted with marshes, traversed by small but difficult streams, cut up by dense woods and organized for determined resistance with masses of wire and a network of trenches that were the result of four years’ labor” (History 161). In the end, the troops maintained perfect formation and all resistance was quickly overcome that “gave proof of the high morale that prevailed…The Division captured five officers and eleven hundred and ninety men, thirty field guns and howitzers, fifty machine guns and large quantities of ammunition, small arms, stores and equipment, including locomotives, trucks, wagons, horses, forage and artillery carriages” (161). The losses were: 3 officers, 90 men killed or died of wounds; 10 officers,
Reports on operations against St. Mihiel Salient, dated Sept. 15, 1918.

Figure 4.25
Reports on operations against St. Mihiel Salient, dated Sept. 15, 1918.
Figure 4.25 outlines how, in order to confirm with orders, specific reports will be written regarding the actions of St. Mihiel. For example, the second section of the memo asks for a statement of operations for units concerned with the organization and holding of conquered ground.
The infantry passed through the wire in small columns at the rate of 100 meters in 2 minutes.

The infantry is quite certain of the wire encountered, which in many cases was crossed without cutting, by climbing over it or walking on top of it. This should not lead to false security, no better, higher wire, better protected must be cut. Efficient wire cutters are essential, and Bengalite torpedoes are added precaution.

c) INFANTRY ADVANCE

As the enemy did not offer strong resistance the infantry had no trouble in reaching its objectives scheduled.

d) ARTILLERY ADVANCE

A battery of 75 m/m guns was attached to each infantry regiment, with the mission of following the infantry as closely as possible. These batteries were to advance a piece at a time.

All artillery experienced difficulty in advancing. This was due not only to the broken terrain but also to the obstacles presented by congested roads, from our own and the enemy trench systems and the HUPT de MALP. The engineers showed a lack of experience in bridge building and the military police a lack of training in handling traffic.

However, artillery advanced at H plus 4 hours and occupied positions in advance of the jumping off trench in order to participate in the barrage to cover the attack on the HUPT de MALP and to support the infantry before the roads choked.

b) TANKS

The character of the terrain and the lack of violent enemy resistance dictated against the most complete employment of tanks. Only a few tanks got off with the first infantry and accompanied them throughout. As soon however as the tanks got through the difficult ground of the trench systems they made excellent time and were invaluable in assisting the infantry to advance against machine gun fire. Their use saved many casualties.

i) SIGNALLING

Telephonic communication between the division and brigades was almost uninterrupted. Infantry regimental commanders were in telephonic liaison with their front line battalion commanders most of the time.

T.D.R. — Communication between units of the division was unsatisfactory. For some reason not to be determined, T.D.R. liaison between the division and artillery failed to function properly.

T.F.R. — Functioned when required. In open warfare it might be well to attach T.F.R. personnel to the telephone section of the Signal Corps to carry wire.

Pigeons — A complete failure.

Druze units and Arab units — Each infantry platoon was given two Bengal flares and each rifleman carried a panel. The marking out of the line by panels was successful. The marking out of the line in the woods on the 3rd Objective by Bengal flares was not successful.
The report shown in Figure 4.26 complies, somewhat, with what the memo in Figure 4.25 requested. For instance, the nature of the terrain is covered. Additionally, the report appears to be businesslike since it covers specific information requested and does not read like a narrative or journal. Despite the hint of standardization again, the rhetorician still wonders why there are no daily operations reports from the St. Mihiel Salient. The *First Division History* states that “With ripe experience, superb morale and hardened bodies, the First Division was at the height of human efficiency” (171). In the next section, we see if the human efficiency of fighting a war also translates to efficiency of communicating the actions of the First Division in the war.

**MEUSE-ARGONNE: AUTUMN 1918**

While the success that had been achieved on the western front had encouraged the Allies, experience had shown that unless a final blow could be struck the lines would
stabilize and there would be another winter in the trenches during which the Germans might recover the advantage that they had lost. Without waiting for the blow at St. Mihiel, the Army Staff prepared plans for this new offensive and scarcely had the last shots been fired in the reduction of the salient before batteries and troops began moving to the new theater of operations. “On September 19th, [the Division was placed in reserve]. . . Early on the morning of September 26th the roar of the preliminary bombardment reached the ears of the men of the Division, who, for the first time, were not waiting in the front line trenches to follow the barrage. All day the battle raged and the numerous reports told of the progress of the splendid divisions that were making the fight” (History 174).

On the night of September 27th, the Division proceeded to relieve the 35th Division on the night of September 30th. The relief was to be completed by 5:00 A.M., October 1st.” (176). The warfare continued for another eight days. In the end, the Division advanced seven kilometers and defeated elements of eight enemy divisions, some of whom chose to defend their positions to the last. “The enemy’s losses in killed were very great owing to his stubborn defense. The material captured included thirteen field guns, ten trench mortars and quantities of machine guns, rifles, ammunition and stores” (176). The casualties in the Division were as follows: Killed or died of wounds: 68 officers, 1526 men; Wounded: 128 officers, 5706 men; Missing: 59 men; Prisoners: 33 men, with a Total: 196 officers, 7324 men.

One of the most interesting reports to surface in the records of the First Division is shown in Figure 4.27. This report shows the return of the daily operations report missing since Cantigny. As readers look at this report, the familiar time frame surfaces except that it is from noon to noon instead of 10:00 AM to 10:00 AM.
Figure 4.27
After this daily report, a special report on the Meuse-Argonne follows in Figure 4.28:

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2. THE ATTACK.

(a) Field Order No. 3, 1st Division, based upon 1st A. O. C. order, directed the relief of the 35th Division (less artillery and sanitary trains) and a part of the 37th Infantry, 82nd Division, relief to be completed not later than 5:00 hrs., Oct. 1st. This order further directed the passing through of the above units, anticipating that an attack would be ordered. Later orders, however, were received to relieve these units, to establish liaison with adjoining divisions and to gain contact with the enemy. No attack to be made on this date. F.O. No. 3 was therefore annulled.

(b) The 1st Division was designated by 1st A.O. orders as the right division, on its right (west) was the 31st Division (5th A.O.C.); on its left (east) was the 28th Division. The formation for the attack was as follows: 1st Inf. Regt., on the left; 2nd Inf. Regt., on the right. The 82nd Inf. Division was to be in reserve. One battalion of each regiment was designated as front line battalions; one battalion as support battalion and the remaining battalion the reserve. Exterior third line battalions to be divisional reserve and interior third line battalions to be brigade reserve.

One machine gun company was detailed to accompany each infantry battalion of the first and second lines. The 1st Machine Gun Battalion (divisional) was held in divisional reserve.

For interior limits between brigades and regiments see attached sketch.
(c) On the night of October 1st - 2nd the divisional artillery (less two batteries) moved into position. The Artillery Brigade of the 39th Division was retained in compliance with lst A. O. orders and directed to continue its normal missions. During the intermission the artillery was able to continue to maintain fire on the enemy's front line. The enemy's front line was definitely located. Regiments took advantage of this opportunity to improve their positions against artillery fire. The enemy was using much harassing fire against our front line troops. The enemy southwest of QUERVAY was continuously shelled with mustard gas. The company of the 10th Infantry, while engaged in digging themselves in suffered heavily from gas, the ground being infiltrated by enemy's previous shelling. Artillery activity on both sides during this intermission was very pronounced.

(d) Oct. 2nd - 3rd - the 60th F. A. Brigade was relieved in compliance with orders lst A. O. The lst Engineers, having been relieved from duty with the 3rd Corps, moved in the divisional sector and took position with divisional reserve about one kilometer southeast of VERY.

(e) In conformity to F. C. #7 the division attacked at 6:30 a.m., October 4th, with the following units attached:

- 2nd F. A. (French)
- 3rd F. A. (French)
- 2 guns Zulu
- 3 troops Cavalry (2nd Prov. Squadron)
- Observation Squadron No. 1
- Balloon Company No. 9
- Company 'O', 1st Gas Regiment

As per schedule the troops jumped off at 5:45 a.m., following a barrage which started 200 meters in front of the jumping off line. This barrage advanced at the rate of 100 meters in 4 minutes. Considerable resistance was encountered from machine gun nests in the BOIS de BOUTHERAY and along the road running N. E. of LA NEUVILLES. The enemy was very strongly entrenched, with wired positions, in the woods north of Hill 212. The lst Brig. reached the lst Objective at approximately 7:00 a.m., lst's regiment, 2nd Brig., 10 minutes later. The right regiment was delayed by fire from the wood N.E. of LA NEUVILLES - LE COMPTERIE, and from the flank. At 13:00 hrs. the lst Inf. had reached the 2nd Objective; 16th Inf. was delayed on the southern slopes of Hill 240. The 2nd Brig. was delayed due to strong resistance from well prepared positions of machine gun nests and heavy artillery fire, both from the front and flanks. At the end of the day the line was in indicated in accompanying sketch. During this day's attack elements of four enemy divisions were identified as opposing our advance.

(f) Night October 4th - 5th - in compliance with instructions lst A. O. the 2nd Brig. and 16th Inf. were ordered to advance at H Hour to lst Objective, then to 2nd Objective. For the protection of the right flank two companies of the 26th Inf. were ordered to advance and hold DOE de MONTAY. These troops were assisted in the advance by tanks and the necessary artillery and machine gun barrage. During the advance, a halt was made on the lst and 2nd Objectives, the
artillery put down heavy concentrations in the zone in front of these objectives. After the taking of the 2nd Objective the infantry was ordered to advance to the 3rd Objective (from Objective), there to reorganize and await further instructions. 26th Inf. captured Fm d'Artois, meeting with serious resistance. 26th Inf. advanced in company with 56th Inf. Front line at end of day as indicated on attached sketch.

The enemy was very active over the entire sector with his aeroplanes, reconnoitering during the day and bombing our front areas at night.

On our right, the 32nd Division relieved the 41st Division.

(c) October 6th - in conformity with lst C.A. orders troops remained on the line reached yesterday, pushing out patrols to the front and flanks. One of our patrols reached Hill 263 on our right, in the sector of an adjoining division, after being reinforced organized and held same until relieved by two companies of the adjoining division. During the day the 26th Inf. advanced its line by pushing out patrols to the southern slope of Hill R.W. of d'Artois Fm. By the 2nd of the day the line was as indicated on the attached sketch.

(b) October 7th - the entire line was advanced by pushing out patrols to the front and building up the line gained. As result of the taking of Gates 244, 283, and 160 and GRAVY GRAND by the 22nd Division on our right, (they having relieved the 26th Division) the fire lessened and greatly relieved the pressure on the 16th Inf. This regiment suffered severely from shelling fire, both during the advance and while holding the gained objectives. The 61st Inf. (2nd Brigade), 41st Division was placed under orders of the C.G. 1st Division, by 5th A.O. The sector of the 1st Division was extended to the line - Cote 263, La Tilly Fm. 1st Division was temporarily attached to 5th A.O. by orders from 1st Army.

(i) October 8th - No change.

(j) October 9th - 5th A.O. orders directed that the 1st Division, with 25th Inf. Brig. assigned, on the left division of the 5th A.O. to strongly force its front north of Hill 263 and to attack in the direction of Hill 261 and the Le PETIT BOIS, also to occupy the 26th Division, on the right, in clearing up the Le PETIT BOIS and the BOIS de ROMAGNE north of Hill 263. This necessitates an extension of front and a reinforcement from the Divisional Reserve, of front line units. Consequently the reserve battalion of the 16th Infantry was placed under the orders of the C.G. 1st Inf. Brig. The 1st N.M., 1st Engrs. and one machine gun company, lst M. C. Bn. was placed under orders C.G., 2nd Brig.

The 26th Inf., 2nd Br, 1st Engrs. and one battalion 25th Inf. formed the divisional reserve. Due to the extension of front and the shortage of artillery the attack was ordered in three operations, thus permitting a barrage of sufficiency for each operation. The 61st Inf. was ordered to hold the extension of the line between Hills 259 and 263.

The attack was made in accordance with the requirements of F. 349 and succeeded in reaching the line as shown on
attacked outflank, with patrols pushed out as far as Hill 263,
the enemy's resistance was at first very stubborn; a coun-
ter-attack against the 1st Emr, 1st Emr, was resisted. One
battalion, 33rd Inf. (Divisional Reserve) was ordered in
the line between 1st Emr, 1st Emr, and the Rifle line. As a
precaution against further counter-attacks, during the day
the fighting was severe, the resistance gradually lessened
and the End Objective as reached.

(2) October 10th - 5th A.G. orders directed the Division
to exploit the advance to the line ROYANNE - GIVERNY. The
Exploitation was made by sending strong patrols to the front
and flanks, seizing and holding for reorganization all ground
gained. It was ascertained that the enemy's resistance has
gradually lessened and during the day patrols reached the
greater part of the designated exploitation line.

(1) October 11th - very little advance was made. No or-
ganized attack was ordered. The troops were exhausted and
very depleted in numbers.
5th A.G. orders directed the relief of 1st Division
(less artillery) by the 42nd Division. Relief to be com-
pleted night October 11th - 12th. Command to pass to G. G.
42nd Division at 6.00 hr. Oct. 12th. Relief was made with
no delay and completed without complications. G. G., 1st
Division (Major General Somerville) was relieved from command
1st Division and ordered to assume command 5th A.G.
Orders directed upon arrival of the division in staging
area, west of RANFORD, it would come to the command of G. G.,
1st A.G.
1st Army orders directed the 1st A. Brigade to be attach-
ed to 42nd Div. for further duty.

1st Army orders directed the 1st A. Brigade to be attach-
ed to 42nd Div. for further duty.

3. RENFORD 150TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, TIME OUT PLACE.

Oct. 4th - daybreak - units in line West to East:

(3rd Guard Grenadiers
5th Guard Division (80th Infantry
(3rd Guard Zu Fuss

2nd Landser Division
(113th Infantry
52nd Division (170th Infantry
(107th Infantry

Units in support -
1st Guard Division - 4th Guard Zu Fuss

Units in reserve -
(181st Infantry
37th Division (170th Infantry
(167th Infantry

200 F.1. 150th and 151st Infantry regiments, 37th Divi-
sion were moved from reserve into line between MontmirailRUS
The report in Figure 4.28 differs from the special report from St. Mihiel in Figure 4.27 since it is much more journalistic in nature. For instance, it uses a day-by-day format to explain actions taken by the First Division whereas the special report from St. Mihiel used specific headings, such as terrain of the ground, to comply with specified information. Also, what is important to note is that Figure 4.28 is written after the Armistice on November 24, 1918 in Luxembourg. But, the last part of the report, in Figure 4.29, lists the summary and conclusions from the Meuse-Argonne offensive. Such summaries and conclusions are

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### Figure 4.28

**Special Operations Report from Meuse-Argonne, dated Nov. 24, 1918.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 6th</td>
<td>Daybreak. 147th Inf., 37th Div. moved from support to east of sector held by 37th Div. and was engaged during night of October 6th - 7th. In addition, 1st battalion 13th Regt., 46th Div., reinforced 10th Inf. Except as noted above no change during day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 7th</td>
<td>No change. No new units identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 8th</td>
<td>The 161st Inf. moved during night to the vicinity of MAUVILLERS, the 100th was placed east of that. The 111th Inf. was moved from the vicinity of Hill 272 to a position east of that Hill, between the 100th Inf. and the 185th Inf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9th</td>
<td>Daybreak. 4:00 A.M. one battalion of the 106th Inf. (16th Div.) counterattacked and took Hill 264, but later lost it. This battalion was then withdrawn and later engaged with the remainder of the 10th Inf. to the east (out of sector of 1st Div.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11:00 A.M. The 15th and 146th Regts. of the 1st Div. were moved from Corps reserve to check the advance of the Americans towards SUMMERANCE.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Note: This table is a representation of the text in the figure.*
reminiscent of the earlier report from the first trench raid that tried to learn from mistakes as well as successes.
OCCUPATION: NOVEMBER 1918 FORWARD

As noted with Figures 4.28-4.29, the Armistice was signed on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of November in 1918. So Figures 4.28-4.29 were written after the armistice, as were other reports shown in the upcoming Figures 4.30-4.31.

Figure 4.30
Memo about lost reports, dated April 20, 1919.
This memo, which dated a few months after the end of the war in April 1919, states that there are original reports missing from the records of the First Division. Figure 4.31 lists what original reports are still missing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Instructions No. 14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Change in Situation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Instructions to B. E. D.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tartigny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Army Order on disposition of</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Troops</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Liaison</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Composition of 2d Position</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>by 18th Div.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Art. 3 Lt. Liaison</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Fire on Position of</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Resistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Special Fire for June 13-19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Report on Reconnaissance</td>
<td>June 16</td>
<td>Tartigny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Report of Intelligence for 6-3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Special Fire for June 30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Field Letter</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Orders</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Plan of Liaison Code</td>
<td>July 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Letter of G. A. re Liaison</td>
<td>June 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>with 34 D. I.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Inspection Liaison Posts</td>
<td>July 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Report on Artiz</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1st Base of Pond Bridges</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Amendment to Chap. III and</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Art. 3 Lt.</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Annexation to Table II</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Toxido Blaue</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Date for C. of S. to 166th Div.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Orders Code Word</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Rivillers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Date of available materials</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Station List</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mortfontaines</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Move of Artillery Containment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dammatin-au-Bois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Move</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Itinerary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>35</td>
<td>Date of Command</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mortfontaines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Message to 1st Brigade</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Memo to C. of S.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Division Artillery</td>
<td>17</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Move of Division Staff</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Dammatin-au-Bois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Barracks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Machine Gun Model, 1907</td>
<td>Aug. 5</td>
<td>Gondreville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Suggestion of 3-1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Memo to C. of S.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Inspection by 1st Brigade</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Officer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Liaison Balloon</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Saizy</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Letter of Transmission P. C.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>G. M. E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Maps out of Sector</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Map Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Report of Inspection of 14th</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Fournoulies</td>
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<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Infantry</td>
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<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Responsibility of Staff</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>54</td>
<td>Officers in 1st Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Manoeuvre Instruction</td>
<td>3 Sept</td>
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<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Division List</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Passy-sur-Moncey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The missing reports listed in Figure 4.31 are only the reports mentioned. What if other reports are missing, such as some of the missing daily operations reports? Perhaps the missing reports from Soissons or St. Mihiel are among the uncounted? Regardless of the
missing reports, we see real change in the genre of both daily operations reports and special operations reports of the First Division in World War I. The observations and conclusions we can take away from these documents will be listed in Chapter 5.

CONCLUSION

As I started my research for this project, I knew that the process would leave me with many snapshots of “genreology” from the communications of the U.S. Army’s First Division in World War I. In the next chapter, I will synthesize these snapshots to present the “re/framed” picture of the various report genre(s). This final chapter will reflect on my research questions regarding the evolution of World War I U.S. Army reports in my study and will provide my conclusions based on the findings presented here in Chapter 4.
WORKS CITED


Chapter 5: Conclusions

Pasting Together the Pieces of the Snapshot

INTRODUCTION

As I started my research for this project, I knew that the process would leave me with many snapshots of “genreology” from the communications of the U.S. Army’s First Division in World War I. I will now synthesize these snapshots to present the “re/framed” picture of the various report genre(s) while providing answers to my primary and secondary research questions. Additionally, I will suggest future areas of research regarding these and other forms of military communications.

PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The overarching research questions I posed about the government-released “Official Records of the First Division” were:

1. Did or did not the records systematically change during the course of the war?

2. If the records did systematically change, what caused this development? More specifically, to what extent did the changing relationships within the U.S. Army, as it grew geometrically during the conflict, play in the organizational communication of the First Division?
Additionally, I decided to address the follow-up questions that focused specifically on genre and which complemented the overarching questions already posed:

3. What are the formats of the various kinds of documents included in the official records of the First Division? For instance, do they “look” like reports or memos? Or do they take some other format?

4. What is the verbal style of the documents included in the official records? For instance, is there an objective voice used to record information, or is there more of a narrative-like quality?

5. How does each document fit into the dynamic structure of the entire official records of the First Division? In other words, how do the various reports connect to create a composite picture of the division’s records?

These questions were influenced by extant scholarship on how the growth of corporations in the early twentieth century influenced the written communication within organizations. My answers to these questions are based on the snapshots of “genreology” covered in Chapter 4 and will be discussed in the next section.

CONCLUSIONS

My findings show that the written records of the First Division in World War I did systematically change during the course of the war. What might have caused these transformations? As mentioned in Chapter 4, the U.S. Army grew geometrically during the conflict, and I argue that this unprecedented growth at an unprecedented rate is the primary
contribution to the systematic transformation of the written records. Just as Yates’ scholarship claims that civilian corporations of the time period were using written communications as a form of control with large numbers of employees, I extend this claim to argue that the written communications of the First Division in World War I also were used as a form of control within the hierarchy of the Army as it grew in size. In order to provide evidence to my claim, I explain how the snapshots of “genreology” from Chapter 4 answer my secondary set of research questions with the following topics: format evolution, personal narrative vs. objectivity, and composite picture of the First Division’s WWI records.

Format Evolution

The first place to look at how the formats of the records of the First Division evolved is with the documents surrounding the Sommerville Sector trench raid (November 2\textsuperscript{nd}-3\textsuperscript{rd}, 1917). It was the first combat event for the First Division, and it resulted in the first three American deaths in the war. Throughout this series of reports, there is absolutely no consistency in format. This first set of documents, therefore, presents the starting point—as well as a point of comparison—for future events that appear in the records of the First Division.

After the first trench raid, the First Division headed west along the front to fight in various small-scale actions and to hold the front lines (trenches) over the winter of 1918 in the Ansauville Sector. As the Americans participated in this trench warfare, the corresponding reports appear to gravitate towards some kind of format standardization. For example, there is a memo from the Commanding General,
Robert Lee Bullard, calling for daily operations reports (dated April 26th, 1918). Not only does the memo call for daily operations reports, but it also provides a model for how the information should be communicated. The reports are to cover events of the day from 10:00 AM to 10:00 AM of the next day (note that modern military time is not yet used), and they are due at Division Headquarters by 1:00 PM. At the very end of the memo, the rhetorical exigency for such communication is stated: “The importance of the prompt dispatch of these reports is evident. In the present military situation delays might cause serious result.” The information included within the reports, as the models, were to start with the general characteristics of the day and end with “miscellaneous data.” Here, when compared to the potpourri of reports following the first trench raid, we see evolution of format along with the emerging genre of the daily operations report.

The next step of format evolution within the records of the First Division comes from the documents surrounding the combat around Soissons. This fighting occurred during the summer of 1918, in July, and First Division losses totaled more than 1,000 dead and over 5,000 wounded. The daily operations report, as it was developed during the division’s time in the Ansauville Sector, would not appear in the reports from Soissons. Instead, special operations reports appear to surface, such as one on the subject of the loss of automatic weapons. Such a change in what kinds of reports are being used begs the question: Why does there appear to be no daily operations reports for the First Division’s actions in the Soissons area? Given the earlier push for format standardization in daily operations reports, the rhetorician might assume
that there would appear to be at least a few such reports in addition to the emergence of the new special operations report. However, as genre changes, there are often instances of different routes taken by writers. For instance, the lieutenant who wrote the special operations report on Soissons was requested by Division Headquarters to specifically report on the loss of weapons. Perhaps there was no need for daily operations reports during this operation? Or was the scale of warfare at this point the cause for developing the format of the special operations report?

From my perspective, I think that the First Division realized that they needed a way to systematically format and organize the communication of events as the army increased in size. A move toward format standardization, in the Division’s case, was a matter of necessity as they tried to learn how to expedite actions, movements, and policies during the hostilities. If the reports were not standardized then the officers would not be able to find the information they needed at a glance.

For instance, after the first trench raid, the first few reports were not standardized and the reader would have to sift through the documents to find the information they might need—such as what individuals were involved, who died, and how the attack happened. If these bits of information are scattered throughout various documents, then finding this information efficiently would be difficult. The rhetorician can see that in the final report from this first trench raid that the First Division was trying to make finding information easier with their use of bullets and headings. As discussed in Chapter 4, in this final report from the trench raid, there is a section where there is
a list of lessons to be learned from the incident, such as keeping the trenches better maintained. By moving toward a standardized format of reports, the First Division in later events would be able to learn and glean information from a variety of officers who would write the two emerging reports: the daily operations report and the special operations report. More specifically, the daily operations report model would call for sections covering visibility, artillery activity, aerial activity, and losses. On the other hand, the special operations report model would call for sections on characteristics of terrain, artillery support, and data about conquered ground. Since these two emerging reports had clear models, with their corresponding sections, officers would know where to look within the document for the specific information they might need.

Further, perhaps the apparent lack of consistent reports (i.e. daily operations reports not always present) is caused by the chaos of war since the division did state, during the occupation, that they were missing reports.

*Personal Narrative vs. Objectivity*

The reports following the first trench raid tried to encapsulate the action and the reasons for the American losses with personal testimony from officers and enlisted men who had witnessed the skirmish. These reports had a personal narrative quality when compared to the final report of the event. That final report tried to look objectively at the trench raid and did not appear to use the qualities of personal narrative. For instance, the final report covers material such as specific time frames of action and also calls for lessons to be learned from what went wrong.
The next noteworthy example of personal narrative vs. objectivity in the reports of the First Division come from the action surrounding Cantigny, which was their first major battle. The division staved off a German counterattack on May 28th, 1918, and the American casualties were over 1,000 dead and more than 4,000 wounded. The reports from this period of time illustrate how the model of a daily operations report from the Ansauville Sector influenced the communications during and after the Cantigny battle. For instance, there are daily operations reports that share the general characteristics of the day to miscellaneous data in a very objective way. Genre change, however, is never a straightforward or uncluttered process. From this same period of time, we also see personal testimony from a lieutenant on the operations against Cantigny. This report uses personal pronouns and is very narrative-esque. In a time of exponential growth within the army and the corresponding communication, we see that the reports of the First Division in World War I are in flux.

Towards the end of the war, with the fighting moved near St. Mhiel Salient east of Paris in September 1918, the reports of the First Division appear to have become fully objective in tone. During the action surrounding the St. Mhiel Salient, the First Division eradicated the German position at the cost of only 93 American deaths and 441 wounded. The reports from this event showcase how special operations reports are now being fully used. For instance, the special operations report from St. Mhiel explains the overall operations in a very objective tone. Why was this tone being used? Perhaps the rhetorician could say that the objective tone from these documents stems from the point in the war when so many men were dying. But, on the other
hand, during the action surrounding the St. Mihiel Salient, only 93 men were killed. Perhaps at this point in the war use of an objective tone had already become the norm and so a personal narrative was not favored? Whatever the cause, the special operations report seems to have fully emerged at the time of this event yet there appears to be no daily operations reports, just as in the time period of the combat near Soissons.

The rhetorician has to wonder why there are no daily operations reports from St. Mihiel, which would have used an objective tone, since the special operations report obviously uses similar qualities of objectivity. Oftentimes, scholars in our field like to argue that using an objective voice is done on purpose; as discussed in Chapter 2. Yet, I believe my study illustrates that sometimes there is a larger exigency and purpose when using an objective tone. In my study’s case, not only was the war itself a huge exigency since it was a very chaotic period of time, but there was also another exigency with the larger purpose of pushing for standardization within the reports which served to expedite actions, movements, and policies during the hostilities.

In order to communicate these actions, movements, and policies, the First Division needed a way to objectively communicate events so that a consistent tone would be present within all the documents. For instance, if an officer wrote a daily operations report in an objective voice, like during Cantigny, then that information might be more understandable to other officers when compared to writing in a conversational way. Additionally, if officers wanted to write another document regarding the actions
during Cantigny, they would be able to pull together these various written reports easily and efficiently. As discussed in Chapter 2, businesses of the early twentieth century developed a “corporate voice” in their documents and I would argue that the First Division was developing their own “Army voice” during World War I. The rhetorician can imagine the usefulness of the interchangeable features of an “Army voice” during a time of conflict and pressure.

Composite Picture

After the St. Mihiel Salient, the First Division participated in the last event before the Armistice on November 11, 1918. This last battle, the Meuse-Argonne, was one of the bloodiest in American history. The First Division alone suffered over 1,500 dead and nearly 6,000 wounded. The reports following this event definitely demonstrate how the communication of the First Division in World War I adapted and changed. For the first time since Cantigny, daily the operations report surfaces again. As readers look at this type of report from the Meuse-Argonne period, they will see the familiar time frame surface except that it is framed from noon to noon instead of 10:00 AM to 10:00 AM.

After the daily operations report, a special operations report on the Meuse-Argonne follows in the records of the First Division. It is important to note that this report was written after the Armistice, on November 24, 1918 in Luxembourg. But the last part of it nonetheless lists the summary and conclusions from the offensive. Why? Perhaps the army realized that such a special operations report would be useful for
future reference. The fact that the documents dealing with the action from the Meuse-Argonne utilize both the daily operations report and special operations report, in their corresponding format and tone, highlight the composite picture of the records during the last major battle of World War I.

After the war was over, there was a memo issued that called for finding missing documents in order to complete the records of the First Division. Perhaps the division realized that the missing reports served not only to expedite actions, movements, and policies during the hostilities, but could also serve as records of the war for future generations. For instance, the publication of the World War Records of the First Division was released on March 6, 1928 (approximately ten years after the Armistice). There were limited copies of these records available since they were mainly used by officers training at the war colleges of the Army. One complete set now, of course, resides in the archives of the National World War I Museum for those interested in them today. By looking at these reports and noting that the First Division commented on how some of these reports are missing, my dissertation findings illustrate that the messiness of genre change resulted in both daily operations reports and special operations reports of the First Division during the course of World War I as the army expanded in size.

Through these three topics, the rhetorician can see how the First Division was using communication to control the format, tone, and overall picture of World War I records. Yates would suggest that these controls were enacted by both “downward” and “upward”
communication (6). In my study’s case, the “downward” communication served the purpose of dictating information to others within the organization. For instance, the memo from General Bullard that outlines how daily operations reports should be written is a prime example of such “downward” communication. On the other hand, “upward” communication is enacted by the lieutenants and other officers who wrote the daily operations reports and special operations reports for Division Headquarters. Through my study, the rhetorician can see the sorts of actions that the U.S. Army was attempting to control through changes in the communication.

LESSONS LEARNED

What are the lessons that the rhetorician can then take away from the findings of my study? I think the rhetorician can learn that family snapshots of genre may appear messy in the archive or elsewhere, but the complex relationships involved with how the genre was changing provide an opportunity for us to learn about “genreology.” It is in that messiness that scholars can find interesting and useful things to say, such as:

1. How military reports evolved to become standardized during World War I.

In our field, military communications is an overlooked area of research. The connection between war and business during World War I, therefore, presents new insight into how changes in communication occurred during the early twentieth century. As discussed earlier, the influence of civilian business communication is well documented; especially by Yates. Yet, the connection to the communication of war does not seem to appear until my study focused on it. I think that such a
connection is very important. For instance, The Independent from Sept. 15, 1917, includes an article titled “Is the War Your Business?” This article reports the results of a survey given to members of The Efficiency Society as related to the war needs of the nation, from the point of view of manufactures, dealers and professional men. Such a variety of trades involved in the war effort is not questioned, but what my dissertation did question is the influence of such business and its corresponding communication on the reports of World War I. The resulting answer is that the trend in civilian business communication to become more standardized (as business expanded exponentially) also occurred within the reports of the First Division over the course of the war.

2. *How interested scholars can learn how genre changes over a certain time period.*

Researchers interested in genre are curious about how genre changes and adapts to social action. My study used an evolutionary metaphor with the sociocultural approach to genre, as outlined in Chapter 2, while also “re/framing” the theory with my term: “genreology.” To do so, I focused on how the reports at the beginning of the war compare to the reports found at the end of the conflict. Such an approach will extend the sociocultural theory, influenced by Miller, to consider how social action influences genre during a specific time period. I hope, through my research, that I have mapped a “genreology” of the U.S. Army records from World War I. While such a task seemed complicated, I think that this area of study has illustrated the complex ways in which the records from World War I adapted during a time of conflict and change never before seen by the world.
3. **How we communicate within organizations today.**

Another aspect of genre research is to use what we learn from scholarship to better understand the way in which we communicate today. As mentioned in Chapter 1, queries into the way the U.S. Army has communicated in the past might help initiate future studies on the classified records from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. While military communication is important to study, I also think that considering other historical areas of professional communication would equally lend itself to a study of “genreology.” I think that more examples on the roots and development of professional communication will help enrich both the classroom and the field.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF MY RESEARCH AND FUTURE SCHOLARSHIP**

Why are historical insights on the topic of organizational communication useful? The answer, in part, lies in W. Tracy Dillon’s “The New Historicism and Studies in the History of Business and Technical Writing” as described in Chapter 2. He explains new historicism as “what is old about historicism is the belief that one can understand the past by analyzing its artifacts and the behaviors of its players. The new historicism seeks instead to understand the present and in doing so to foreground the self-constituting nature of any act of textual historical analysis” (65). So, historical studies in professional communication, such as my dissertation, help us see parallels from history to today.

As I finished my dissertation, I realized that I could have covered other topics related to my study. For instance, I might have considered the following:
1. *Foreign influence on American military communication.*

I might have considered the influence of the French and their existing military communication on American reports. Or, perhaps, even German military communications. The archive at the National World War I Museum includes documents written in French as well as captured German intelligence. Given more time and resources, perhaps I could delve into these records as well.

2. *Measure effectiveness of the evolving communication.*

Also, I could have tried to measure the effectiveness of the evolving communication. Such a measurement might be undertaken by going through the content of each event’s report(s) and then looking at the following event’s report(s). As a result of going through this information, I could see if the documentation influenced these later events’ actions and corresponding outcomes. For instance, the report on the first trench raid lists failures and suggestions; such as maintaining the trenches in a specific way. It would interesting to know if, the following winter when the First Division was involved in various trench warfare, whether or not the trenches were better maintained by the troops.

3. *Influence of earlier and later reports from the American army.*

I might have considered the influence of earlier reports from the American Civil War or later reports from World War II. In particular, do the reports from the Civil War use a narrative-esque, or diary, format since most soldiers were from the same state as they served and would have known each other well?
Additionally, do the reports from World War II show a continued use of standardized forms that emerged from World War I?

4. **Consider other influences on the reports of World War I.**

Through the course of my dissertation research, I might have considered other influences on the reports of World War I. For instance, I could have compared and contrasted the reports in my study to police reports of the early twentieth-century since police reports would probably be very similar to the style and nature of military reports. With further time and support, I may investigate other influences on the reports of World War I in the future.

5. **Look at other types of reports from the First Division in World War I.**

While my study focused on the operations reports from the First Division in World War I, I might have considered other types of reports from the First Division archive. For instance, what were field orders like? Perhaps, these other types of documents, that were written from other vantage points during the war, reflected a different kind of format and tone? The rhetorician might consider if there is a connection between different types of reports from the First Division and the amount of action seen by the writers of the documents.

I may consider these questions in the future with additional scholarship and resources. Or, perhaps another scholar will take up these topics.
Any additional scholarship that I (or others) may complete should, as I hope my dissertation does, make meaning for today. Connors, as explained earlier in Chapter 2, asks his readers to consider the following questions as they think about their historical research: (1) Does this interpretation of the historical data seem coherent, reliable, interesting, useful? and (2) What can this interpretation of the past show us about the present and the future? (30). Questions like these should be kept in mind for any scholar researching a historical time period if they want to keep their studies relevant to today’s field.

While future areas of historical research on genre may include forays into other kinds of military communication, I think that using “genreology” as a framework for other areas of historical study may be equally interesting; as noted earlier. By using “genreology” a scholar may discover a limited archival sample which shows a change, or evolution, over time. Such a sample may not be military related at all and may instead stem from other major areas of interest to the rhetorician like political speeches or scientific documents. Whatever the content, I would like to see more studies using “genreology” as such studies would help illuminate why we use genres the way we do today and how we might learn from how they changed over a specific period of time.
WORKS CITED


