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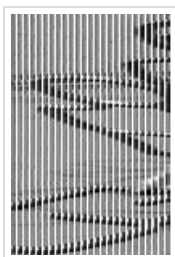
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Dangerous Writing: Understanding and Political Economy of Composition

[Tony Scott](#)



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Abstract

Building on recent work in rhetoric and composition that takes an historical materialist approach, *Dangerous Writing* outlines a political economic theory of composition. In addition to work by others, Tony Scott also draws from two of his own studies--a classroom ethnography of an upper division writing class that was focused on labor and institutionality, and a qualitative study of the function of textbooks within a writing program. The book connects pedagogical practices in writing classes to their broader political economic contexts, and argues that the power of students' writing is prevented from reaching its potential by pressures within the academy and without that tend to wed higher education with the productive logics of "fast-capitalism." Scott argues that the political economy has changed dramatically over the past three decades, and though some scholars have addressed those changes, the field as a whole has not developed an adequately rigorous discussion of what they have meant to our work as teachers, scholars and administrators. The majority of postsecondary students are also already workers in an economy that has become less secure, more hostile to worker's rights, and more unequal in terms of wealth and power. Higher education has been subject to the same economic trends as the larger economy, and universities increasingly operate according to efficiency models that have led to, among other outcomes, increases in the use of contingent teaching labor and a corresponding standardization of curriculums. Within writing programs, pragmatist responses to institutional and economic pressures create contradictions between the appearance and aims of writing education in scholarship and the material practice of teaching and writing in the classroom. Managerial tactics push practices in the field toward more easily commodified and administered pedagogies and away from the immediate, the creative, and the politically meaningful (and perhaps dangerous). While previous work has described the exploitation of contingent labor in writing education, *Dangerous Writing* connects the problem with specific aspects of scholarship and pedagogical practice. By focusing on the structures of labor and of institutions that enforce those structures, Scott finds teachers and administrators are too easily swept along with the inertia of a hyper-commodified society in which students--especially working class students--are often positioned as commodities, themselves. *Dangerous Writing*, then, is a critique of how productive labor is shaped in writing programs as much as it is a critique of capitalism. Ultimately, Scott's eye is on the institution and its structures, and it is these that he finds most in need of transformation.

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Save for Later Save Dangerous Writing: Understanding the Political Economy of Composition For Later. Create a List. Download to App. Share. Book Information. From this conviction develops a commitment to teach writing with an emphasis on analyzing the social and political dimensions of rhetoric. Ironically, though a leftist himself, Tony Scott's analysis finds the academic left complicit with the forces in American culture that tend, in his view, to compromise education. By focusing on the structures of labor and of institutions that enforce those structures, Scott finds teachers and administrators are too easily swept along with the inertia of a hyper-commodified society in which students---especially working class students---are often positioned Fundamentals of Political Economy. Item Preview. remove-circle. Fundamentals of Political Economy. by. Communist Party of China. Topics. Maoist, textbook, economics, maoism, mao zedong, tse tung, marxism, communism Be the first one to write a review. 4,243 Views. 2 Favorites. Tony Scott quote; Dangerous Writing: Understanding the Political Economy of Composition quote; Publisher: Utah State University Press; 1 edition (10 Mar 2009) | 216 Pages | ISBN: 0874217342 | File type: PDF | 1.6 mb Building on recent work in rhetoric and composition that takes an historical materialist approach, Dangerous Writing outlines a political economic theory of composition. Since the 1980s and the social turn in composition studies and other disciplines, scholars in this field have conceived writing in college as explicitly embedded in socio-rhetorical situations beyond the classroom. From this conviction develops a commitment to teach writing with an emphasis on analyzing the social and political dimensions of rhetoric.