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Staying Power

Elizabeth M. Brockman

Central Michigan University, brock1em@cmich.edu

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Staying Power

Cover Page Footnote

I'm grateful to the NWP for introducing me to the concept of a nuanced thesis and to Janet Neyer, Sharon Murchie, and Susan Griffith for their writerly feedback and suggestions.

METHODS

Staying Power

ELIZABETH BROCKMAN

We recently gained insight into revision through an experimental study that involved an entire class of 214 juniors at a southeastern Ohio High School. ... Although our study failed to show that an extra planning period leads to significantly better writing, it did reveal that there are high school students able to employ successfully the revision strategies that Sommers identifies as the hallmarks of “experienced adult writers.” No student was more successful in using such sophisticated strategies of revision than a student named Emily, and what follows is essentially a celebration of her skill and creativity.

—Mary Fuller, Max Morenberg, Janet Ziegler, Gordon Allen, and Donald A. Daiker, “A Rose for Emily: Celebrating the Power of Student Revision,” *Ohio Journal of English Language Arts*

Despite its publication date, an article titled “A Rose for Emily: Celebrating the Power of Student Revision” possesses the staying power to be a solid toolbox addition for new and veteran English teachers alike, most obviously in terms of deepening our understanding of revision. The article, which was published in 1991, is not likely familiar to even veteran LAJM readers because it was written by a team of English professors from Miami University of Ohio (Mary Fuller, Max Morenberg, Janet Ziegler, Gordon Allen, and Donald A. Daiker) and appeared in the *Ohio Journal of English Language Arts* (OJELA), the NCTE state affiliate journal for Ohio. What I hope to demonstrate here is that the authors’ original purpose—to celebrate the highly recursive revision and personal voice of Emily, a high school junior—is still relevant today, nearly thirty years after the fact. Indeed, Emily (who must be nearly 50!) can still vividly model revision strategies and writerly attitudes with the power to enlarge our own students’ writerly horizons, bolster their rhetorical confidence, and accelerate their literacy growth. What I also hope to demonstrate, however, is that English teachers today can do more than value the original purpose of “A Rose for Emily.” In addition, they can broaden and extend

that purpose in new and remarkable directions, particularly in light of an important English Education development: an emerging interest in nuanced thesis statements and arguments (National Writing Project).

With a wide-angle lens spanning three decades, “A Rose for Emily: Celebrating the Power of Student Revision” reminds teachers today that they can use articles/ideas that are touchstones in the field, extending their use and meanings over time and in light of current research and standards in the field. The best teaching tools are flexible and fundamental, as I hope to demonstrate here.

Overview of “A Rose for Emily: Celebrating Student Revision”

The original purpose of “A Rose for Emily: Celebrating Student Revision” was to showcase the highly recursive revision and strong personal voice of a high school junior named Emily. What makes her case noteworthy is her participation in an experimental study designed to determine if additional time on task would improve student writing. To this end, an entire junior class of 214 students was given the same writing prompt. (See Appendix A: Is the American Dream still possible today?) and then divided into two groups, with the first group given one 35-minute period to write and the second group given two 35-minute periods. After the writing was complete, students submitted their final drafts, along with all of their planning materials, and the experimental results showed ... *drum roll, please* ... no difference in writing quality between the two groups of students. Moreover, the subjects’ materials collectively showed little evidence of productive revision work, an important teacherly topic today, as well as in 1991. If students in the study returned to an initial draft, the authors report they were most likely to recopy their work or make minor proofreading or editing changes. In some cases, the writing quality even became weaker (Fuller et al. 21).

Though results may seem disappointing back then and even now, they actually aren’t surprising. As the authors

wisely acknowledge, their study reinforces what Nancy Sommers reported in her landmark CCC article, “Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Writers.” Significantly, Sommers found that student writers and experienced writers revise in dramatically different and noteworthy ways. More specifically, student writers tend to revise at the word and sentence levels by focusing on penmanship, spelling errors, or punctuation matters, while experienced writers tend to focus on richer, complex global considerations, such as purpose, voice, organization, content additions/deletions, and audience. Most importantly of all, though, Sommers found that experienced writers are likely to perceive revision as an act of “discovering meaning” (285). In other words, Sommers found that revision plays a crucial role in the composing processes and products of experienced writers. Not so, though, for student writers. In light of Sommers’ findings (along with, as Fuller et al. note, subsequent studies by Flower and Hayes; Graves; and Harris), LAJM readers can reasonably see why the high school juniors in the study behaved as they did, regardless of whether they were given additional time to write. These student writers must have read the prompt, quickly determined a stance, and set out to prove its validity. None of the rich and complex global elements that might interest and motivate experienced writers during revision were of concern to the high school juniors, with the exception of one student.

Enter Emily.

Unlike her 213 classmates, Emily’s composing process closely resembled those of the experienced writers in the Sommers study, so she understandably caught the attention of Fuller et al. and filled them with awe, wonder, and even delight. Though it’s not clear if Emily had one or two periods to write, her materials show she didn’t begin the writing process by quickly taking a firm “yes or no” stand and then providing supporting evidence, as her classmates did. Instead of being linear in her writing process, then, Emily was recursive. To put it another way, she didn’t use her writing time to move from Point A to Point B in the fastest, most direct way possible. Instead, Emily took the scenic route, rhetorically speaking. She used her writing time to puzzle through with integrity and curiosity what her stance might be on the topic at hand, which she didn’t know before she started to write. For this reason, Fuller et al. characterize Emily’s initial writing as an *interior monologue* because she was essentially writing to herself: asking questions, teasing out and weighing options, and constantly taking stock of her position. In fact, Fuller et al. note that Emily’s materials

are punctuated with what appear to be “taking stock” moments when she writes, “CUT. What is my position on this? (19), suggesting that Emily was literally pausing in the middle of writing to be recursive: to reread what she had informally written; to review, reconsider, and reevaluate her thinking thus far; and to redirect or refine her position as it slowly and thoughtfully emerged via her informal writing—an “act of discovery” (Sommers 285) in the truest sense of the phrase.

Once Emily determined her position, she continued using writing as a means of exploration, this time on how best to prove her point to her audience, whom she knew to be English professors at Miami University of Ohio. Eventually, Emily decided that a single extended example is what her audience would value most, and that, further, her mother’s failed attempt to become an artist would best illustrate her point, even though Emily reported she would need to embellish her story to make it fit her purpose. Interestingly and as I later explain in more depth, Emily argues in her essay that the American Dream is possible; however, her mother, who wanted to be an artist, didn’t understand the sacrifices that such a career would require (see Appendix B).

Fuller et al. most obviously celebrate Emily’s recursive writing processes: “In contrast to her classmates whose first drafts suggest that they sought meaning before they began writing, Emily used writing to discover her meaning” (19); however, they also connect Emily’s sophisticated revision strategies to her strong personal voice because many of the key stylistic elements in the final draft were originally embedded in the interior monologue:

Just as impressive [is] Emily’s strongly defined voice ... obvious in her authorial interjections ... and in rhetorical questions [she initially embedded in her interior monologue] ... Many politicians could learn from her rhetorical savvy and self-assurance, as they could learn from her highly rhythmic sense of language. Notice, for instance, Emily’s use of repetition and her gift of understated emphasis. In fact, Emily’s elegance— how she glides from ideas requiring stress to those more concise and exact, how she juggles long graceful sentences with short, terse questions—is the hallmark of a professional style that any writer could appreciate. (20)

Weeks after the experimental study was completed, the authors interviewed Emily and discovered she defined herself as a writer, which they wisely claimed

accounted for her sophisticated writing style and personal voice. However, they also learned during the interview that Emily participated in a university-sponsored writing contest the previous year, which I contend merits a closer examination to help account for Emily's strong personal writing style and voice that Fuller et al. so appreciated. After all, we now know—thanks to Sommers and Saltz's report of a four-year longitudinal study of student writers at Harvard—that a less sophisticated writer would have viewed the writing contest during Emily's sophomore year and the experimental study during her junior year as silo experiences: separate, disconnected, and substantially unrelated to each other. However, Emily clearly did not see the two writing episodes in such simplistic terms. In fact, she reported the writing contest demonstrated to her what "English professor types" appreciate in prose, which she characterized as a "a creative writing approach" (Fuller et al. 21). Certainly, Emily's rhetorical questions, embedded interjections, and sophisticated use of repetition found in her essay originated in her interior monologue, as Fuller et al. suggest. However, those same stylistic elements could, arguably, be traced back to what Emily learned in the writing contest—further evidence of her writerly sophistication.

A Rose for Emily: Take I

My basic premise is that new and veteran English teachers alike can make excellent use of "A Rose for Emily: In Celebration of Student Revision" in their teaching toolboxes, nearly thirty years after its publication date. To this end, I have provided an overview of the article in the previous section, so I now highlight in this section the strategies I implemented as a newly minted high school English teacher that LAJM readers could still employ today.

Most importantly, I assigned "A Rose for Emily" as required reading to my own high school juniors, even though they were, obviously, not the intended audience of an OJELA article, and then I invited them to experiment with interior monologues, to define pre-writing/planning as intentional, strategic, and conversational (and not synonymous with solely freewriting), and to embed stylistic flourishes, such as interjections and rhetorical questions, in their own writing. In addition, I proposed that my students do a "close reading" of Emily's writing process by analyzing it in light of their own writing behaviors, attitudes, and practices. Did students determine their thesis statements before they began to write? Would they consider prewriting strategies that fostered recursiveness by including "taking stock" moments, such as "Cut. What is my position on this?" Did they consider how

previous writing assignments and opportunities might inform and enhance current writing projects? To put it another way, I invited my students to define Emily's writing process as "text" in the broadest sense of that word, so her writing process, in turn, became a kind of "mentor text," as we define that term today. Thirty years later, I still highly recommend a similar "mentor text" approach for LAJM readers who would like to bolster their own students' writing processes and help them become more self-aware as writers; however, that's not all. Thanks to Emily, LAJM readers and their students can discuss other robust and relevant writerly concepts. For example, my students and I debated and ultimately reveled in Emily's decision to embellish her mother's story so it aligned with the stance she was arguing, and that specific strategy later enlivened students' personal experience essays (what we now call narrative nonfiction). We also discussed the value of a single extended example to prove a point, as opposed to three smaller, less developed examples that might, arguably, merely skim the surface of the topic at hand. And it's possible my students were the only teenagers across the state of Ohio to know about inexperienced writers' tendency to revise at the word and sentence levels, per Nancy Sommers, but I still believe they were rhetorically richer and more self-aware for the information. And the same could be true for any student today!

After leaving my Ohio teaching position, I brought "A Rose for Emily" to my new position at Central Michigan University, where I was assigned a composition methods course that I still love teaching to this day. Like my former high school students, the pre-service teachers I mentored benefited from reading "A Rose for Emily" because it provided models of experienced and inexperienced composing processes, ones my students repeatedly saw play out among the middle and high school writers in their field experiences in local/area schools. However, we also extended the dialogue beyond what my former high school students discussed by exploring potential limitations in the research design of the experimental study that might have impacted results: the writing prompt, the setting of the 35- or 70-minute writing periods, and the rationale students (other than Emily) might have reasonably chosen not to engage. For these reasons and more, I encouraged my pre-service English teachers, as I am here encouraging LAJM readers, to add "A Rose for Emily: Celebrating Student Revision" to their teaching toolboxes because, in short, the original purpose of the article still stands: Emily's sophisticated revision strategies are worthy of celebration and emulation. Moreover, the larger experimental study—its research design, writing

prompt, and overall results—can foster productive discussion regarding effective writing assignments, adolescent writers, and programmatic assessment, which are all still relevant today.

A Rose for Emily: Take II

As long as English teachers focus on their students' composing processes and products, the original purpose of "A Rose for Emily: In Celebration of Student Revision" has staying power. However, we can reexamine the article, even repurpose it (to use trending eco-friendly parlance), in light of current research and new pedagogical developments in the field, particularly an emerging interest in nuanced thesis statements and arguments (NWP). Though Fuller et al. could never have predicted it, "A Rose for Emily" has staying power in the current pedagogical moment because Emily made a nuanced argument, a rhetorical phenomenon LAJM readers and their students can study and emulate today.

Enter Emily—again.

As a participant in the experimental study, Emily was instructed that the stance she chose was not as important as the supporting evidence she provided; however, Emily's planning materials demonstrated she believed the substance of her stance was crucial, and she didn't restrict her perspective to an either/or position, arguing as her classmates did that the American Dream is or isn't possible. As Appendix B suggests, she crafted a more complex argument, one that is debatable, defensible, and nuanced (NWP). Here is a summarized paraphrase of her stance: *Yes, Emily does believe the American Dream is possible; however, her mother and people like her may not understand or be willing to make the personal sacrifices necessary to achieve their dreams, in this case, the dream of becoming an artist. She also speculates if the same tendency may be becoming increasingly prevalent for people in Emily's generation.* Emily's argument is nuanced because she is not arguing for or against one side of a pro/con, all-or-nothing debate: The American Dream is or is not possible. Period. Instead, Emily embedded alternate perspectives and qualifications and/or limitations as the basis of her position.

In taking this position, however, Emily chose not to articulate a thesis statement (a crucially important topic addressed momentarily), but what she does do is persuasively demonstrate throughout the entire essay why becoming an artist required greater sacrifice than her mother was willing or able to make, despite strong desire, innate talent, and clear opportunity—the kinds of elements people often associate with achieving the American Dream. Again, the qualifications and limitations are central to Emily's stance,

and they bring to mind important advice for all college-bound students and their teachers, offered by Joseph Harris, author of *Rewriting: How to Do Things with Texts*:

[A]cademics seldom write in an all or nothing mode, trying to convince readers to take one side or another of an argument. Instead, their work assumes that any perspective on an issue (and there are often more than two) will have moments of insight and blindness ... **This is more complex and interesting work than simply taking sides in a debate.** (my emphasis) (24-25)

Harris's claims shed new light in 2020 on Emily's essay. More specifically, her essay is, arguably, more "complex and interesting work" in comparison to her classmates' essays because she didn't "write in an all or nothing mode, trying to convince readers to take one side or another of an argument." Yes, Emily's writing process was highly recursive and discovery oriented—both worthy of celebration, as Fuller et al. indicate in their 1991 article; however, content matters, and Harris's claims ring true, providing support for the value in teaching students to write nuanced arguments.

To provide more information for LAJM readers about nuanced claims and arguments, I invoke the National Writing Project's new source-based argument writing program called the College, Career, and Community Writers Program (C3WP). This innovative program has a proven track record of accelerating students' literacy skills associated with source-based argumentative writing (Arshan et al. and Gallagher et al.), and it rewards students for writing thesis statements that are debatable, defensible, and nuanced—arguably, a new and cutting edge rhetorical concept for most English teachers, myself included. After all, we all know what it means to write a thesis statement that is debatable and defensible, but how do writers bring nuance to the writing table? And, significantly, won't a nuanced thesis statement make students appear evasive, ambivalent, or even wishy-washy? According to the NWP, the answer is no; a nuanced claim can be just as firmly held, hotly contested, and deeply defended as an all-or-nothing stance, as Emily's position makes clear. Unlike the all-or-nothing proponents, however, student writers who bring nuance to an argument are, possibly, more informed about and respectful of the complexities and competing perspectives beyond the pro/con of the topic at hand, so much so that they tend to embed in their claims an alternate perspective and/or identify a limitation or qualification regarding particular situations or audiences, just as Emily did. In other words, their arguments, as a whole, are dependent upon an alternate perspective and/or qualification essential to their perspective (NWP;

Brockman).

Like all NWP programs, the C3WP has foundational underpinnings in social justice theories that aim to empower all students, so nuance is a concept not solely for confident and skilled writers, like Emily, but also for students living in economically disadvantaged communities, attending “high needs” schools, and lacking rhetorical confidence and skill. Even so, *LAJM* readers may be interested to learn that the newly revised AP curriculum does reflect the C3WP concept of nuance, which is further evidence that “nuance” is a new development in our field worthy of *LAJM* readers’ notice. The AP term is “sophistication,” but the following excerpt demonstrates the overlap between the two concepts. For example, students earn the highest number of points for AP essays demonstrating “sophistication, including “crafting a thesis that demands nuanced consideration of the textual evidence ... or as **“part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference”** (my emphasis) (College Board).

But now let’s return again to Emily, this time addressing her decision not to articulate a thesis. Interestingly, Fuller et al. do not identify this omission in 1991, but the newly revised AP rubric provides helpful commentary on the topic that is relevant for all English teachers, regardless of the grade or ability/confidence level of their students:

A thesis is the main, overarching claim a writer is seeking to defend or prove ...

A writer’s thesis is not necessarily a single sentence or an explicit statement and may require a thorough reading of the text to identify, but when a thesis is directly expressed, it is called a thesis statement. Note: While the texts [teachers] assign [to their] students may not always contain obvious thesis statements, they should each have a thesis. It can be a good practice for students to write a thesis statement for such texts. On the AP Exam, a clear communication of the thesis is required in the student’s essays.

A thesis statement may preview the line of reasoning of an argument. This is not to say that a thesis statement must list the points of an argument, aspects to be analyzed, or specific evidence to be used in an argument. (College Board)

Again, this explanation provides useful information for all teachers (and not solely AP teachers) who place “A Rose for Emily: In Celebration of Student Revision” in their teaching toolboxes. First, the explanation distinguishes between a writer’s “thesis” and “thesis statement” as two

overlapping, but ultimately different, rhetorical features; however, an explicitly articulated thesis statement is required for any student taking the AP Exam and/or participating in the C3WP—a point that can’t be overemphasized. Indeed, Emily’s essay would not have earned the highest number of points possible for the AP Exam or the C3WP because it doesn’t include an explicitly articulated thesis statement. Second, the AP commentary grants that a thesis statement may be more than a single sentence, and it need not exhibit the traditional roadmap approach in which the student writer embeds a three-part forecast of paragraphs to come—standard fare in five-paragraph essays. Finally, the explanation suggests a pedagogical strategy that dovetails perfectly with Emily’s essay:

It’s good practice for teachers to assign essays with a thesis, but not a thesis statement, and then invite students to analyze the essays so closely that they, themselves, can articulate a thesis statement. (College Board)

In a 35-year career spanning ELA teaching experiences and classroom observations in grades 6 - College, I have consistently observed teachers invite students of all ability and confidence levels to read texts for the purpose of finding and paraphrasing an author’s thesis statement. It’s a very common practice, indeed. A less common practice, however, is to invite students to read a nuanced essay without an articulated thesis statement and then to try to articulate it, themselves. In keeping with this less common pedagogical approach, I propose that *LAJM* readers consider assigning “A Rose for Emily: In Celebration of Student Revision” in their classes, lead students in a close reading, and then invite them to write nuanced thesis statements for Emily. With that plan in mind, here are three clarifying examples of sample thesis statements for Emily:

My mother showed artistic talent at an early age, and she demonstrated not only a strong desire for, but also the opportunity and ability to work towards, her goals. So what happened in this land of opportunity that kept my mother from achieving her dreams? Although the American Dream is still possible, my mother didn’t understand the personal sacrifices she would have to make to become an artist.

Although the American Dream is still possible, it may be harder to achieve than most people realize because of the required personal sacrifices. The story of my own mother, who had the desire, talent, and opportunity

to become an artist, illustrates how easily dreams are thwarted in this land of opportunity.

Is the American Dream possible? The answer is yes, especially if the person has the desire, talent, and opportunity. Even then, however, people must still be willing and able to make personal sacrifices to achieve their dreams; otherwise, those dreams won't come true, as my mother's story illustrates.

In keeping with the C3WP (along with the new AP standards), each of these sample thesis statements is more than a single sentence, and none of them forecasts a list of points, items, or evidence to be analyzed, one by one, each in its own paragraph, as the five-paragraph format requires. However, each one does demonstrate nuance because they all identify alternative perspectives or qualifications/limitations as an intricate part of the position.

So what does this concept of nuance mean for *LAJM* readers? As a starting point, the first way to promote nuance in our classrooms is to value it ourselves. Remember, a nuanced thesis or argument must also be debatable and defensible, just as Emily's argument was. In other words, nuanced thesis statements and arguments are not evasive or wishy washy, if they are also debatable and defensible. One of Emily's classmates, for example, might have argued with nuance that the American Dream is not likely possible, except for those citizens born with white privilege and family connections—a stance that could be hotly debated and staunchly defended. For a student to be rewarded for such a stance, however, the classroom teacher must value the concept of nuance. Second, let's look carefully at how our writing prompts and discussion questions are phrased. For example, the writing prompt in the experimental study (Appendix A) asks students to take a position on whether they believe the American Dream is possible. Thirty years later, that question is still hotly debated and culturally relevant. However, rather than asking students IF the American Dream is possible, which is a yes/no question likely to yield an "all or nothing" argument, the writing prompt might have been refined in this way: To what extent is the American Dream possible? This seemingly small change implies from the outset that the question at hand is potentially complex enough to warrant some thinking before the writing begins and then a response with the rhetorical room for nuance (Brockman).

Conclusion

In proposing "A Rose for Emily: In Celebration of Student Revision" as a viable teaching toolbox item more than thirty years after publication, I have neatly divided its pedagogical relevance in two: between the authors' original purpose (celebrating the recursive revision and personal voice of a single writer) with a newer purpose (demonstrating the nuance, or sophistication, in a single student essay). The most obvious benefit of this approach is clarity and accessibility in explaining my stance, which I also hope will encourage *LAJM* readers, myself included, to revisit articles, chapters, and even books published in previous decades to determine if authors' original purposes are still relevant today and, especially, if trending English Education developments have prompted new purposes. However, an unintended consequence of this approach, at least in Emily's case, is that the neat division between 1991 and 2020 may oversimplify complexities by implying two mutually exclusive pedagogical benefits, when nothing could be further from the truth. After all, it's unlikely that Emily would have arrived at her nuanced stance had it not been for her recursive revision, in the first place. In other words, Emily could not likely have sat down cold during her allotted writing time and crafted the content of the essay that she did, without first being recursive via her interior monologue.

In the end, then, what is Emily's most valuable lessons to *LAJM* readers? I believe it's the understanding that "staying power" stems from two overlapping sources. Most obviously, it stems from the substance and flexibility the teaching materials were initially granted in the first place, at the time of publication. However, staying power stems equally from current and future scholars and teachers. In short, staying power stems from us. After all, even the most innovative research and teaching strategies will remain stubbornly archived on the shelf, until someone is inspired to take them down, dust them off, and hold them up to the light of (to)day. Only then can we determine if staying power exists--or not. Perhaps Emily's primary lesson, then, is to remind *LAJM* readers to nurture the teacherly instincts that foster recursiveness and--yes!--nuance in our professional lives: our reading, our teaching, and our understanding of the field.

Author's Note:

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Author Biography



Elizabeth Brockman is an English professor at CMU, where she teaches composition and composition methods courses. She is co-director of the Chippewa River Writing Project and column editor for

Pedagogy: Critical Approaches to Teaching Literature, Language, Composition, and Culture.

Appendix A: Writing Prompt

Some people believe that, an America, anybody can become whatever he or she wants to become. These people believe that anyone can become a doctor, lawyer, corporation president, movie star, president of the United States—so long as she or he wants it enough and is willing to work long and hard enough to get it. What do you think?

Please write a paper in response to this topic. What position you take on the question is less important than how persuasive you are in defending your position. Try to write a paper with (1) ideas that are original, insightful, and clear; (2) supporting details that are specific, appropriate, and striking; (3) unity and strong organization; and (4) language that is used creatively, correctly, and effectively. (Fuller et al. 18)

Appendix B: Emily's Essay

"I always wanted to be an artist!" wailed my mother. "What happened? Why am I growing babies and doing laundry?"

"Why indeed," I thought inside my head. If America is the fabled land of opportunity, what foiled my mother's opportunity to become an artist? It is said that, in America, you can become whatever you want to become. What stopped my mother from becoming whatever she wanted to become?"

My mother, born the second daughter of a lawyer in New Jersey in the early 40's, showed artistic talent at an early age. Throughout her Junior High and High school years, she toyed with the idea of becoming an artist. What happened? She was not, seemingly, limited by her birth; she was an American, she had money, talent, desire—she had an ability to work too, an ability that demonstrated itself over and over in the raising of her children, and she was not forbidden by her parents or discouraged by the school system. These are all obstacles that can be found in America—and can be, with good luck and a certain degree of ingenuity, overcome in the "Land of Opportunity." So what—what was it?

Let us go back to two key phrases that I skimmed over in my listing of her advantages: Desire and an ability to work. I said she had desire—she did seem to want to be an artist, to her friends at least back in high school. I said she had an ability to work—as demonstrated, now, in the raising of her children. But what does this mean?

She had a desire, I said, to become an artist. Art was her favorite class. When asked, she always said "I want to be an artist when I grow up." She wore artsy clothes and planned an artsy future. "I'm going to be a painter, and live in Greenwich Village." This certainly sounds like desire.

But when the crucial time came, it turned out maybe she didn't really want to be an artist. Nobody ever told her that being an artist was hard work—unreliable, stressful, competitive, lonely. You can't have kids and be an artist too, at least not while the kids are young. It's hard even to get married—art takes so much time and energy you don't have any left to be a wife. "I always wanted to be an artist" she said. But she forgot to add that wanting to do something involves making sacrifices in order to do it. It's easy to forget. It's something we're not often taught in the Land of Opportunity where kids are encouraged to major in two or even three areas, told to keep their options open til the last possible minute.

I said she had an ability to work, too, as demonstrated now. Now, I said. But what did it take to bring that ability out? Four struggling years in college when she discovered that in order to pass you must work long, hard hours; little, constant, every day hours; always always, even on vacations. A terrible first year as a wife when everything needed to be done and there was only one person to do it—her. Work is another thing we are not well taught in America. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" ... Yes, America may be the "Land of Opportunity." But are many Americans taught how to take advantage of these opportunities? Perhaps it is telling that the portion of the population most often successful in their chosen fields of endeavor is the immigrants-foreigners and children of foreigners. Is American really a land of opportunity for all people? (Fuller et al. 19-20).