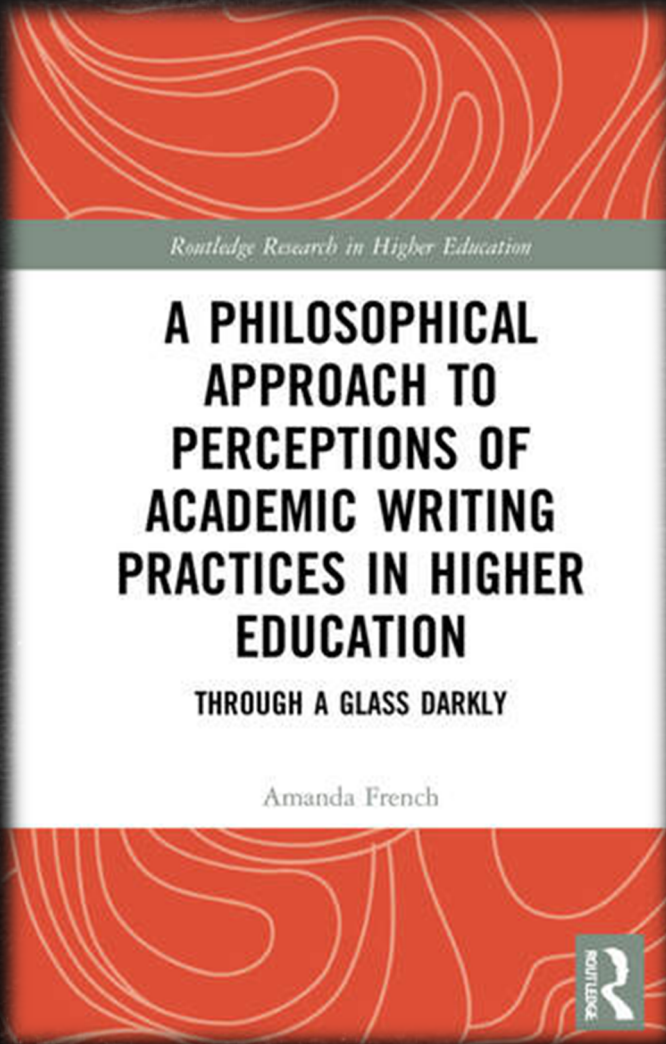


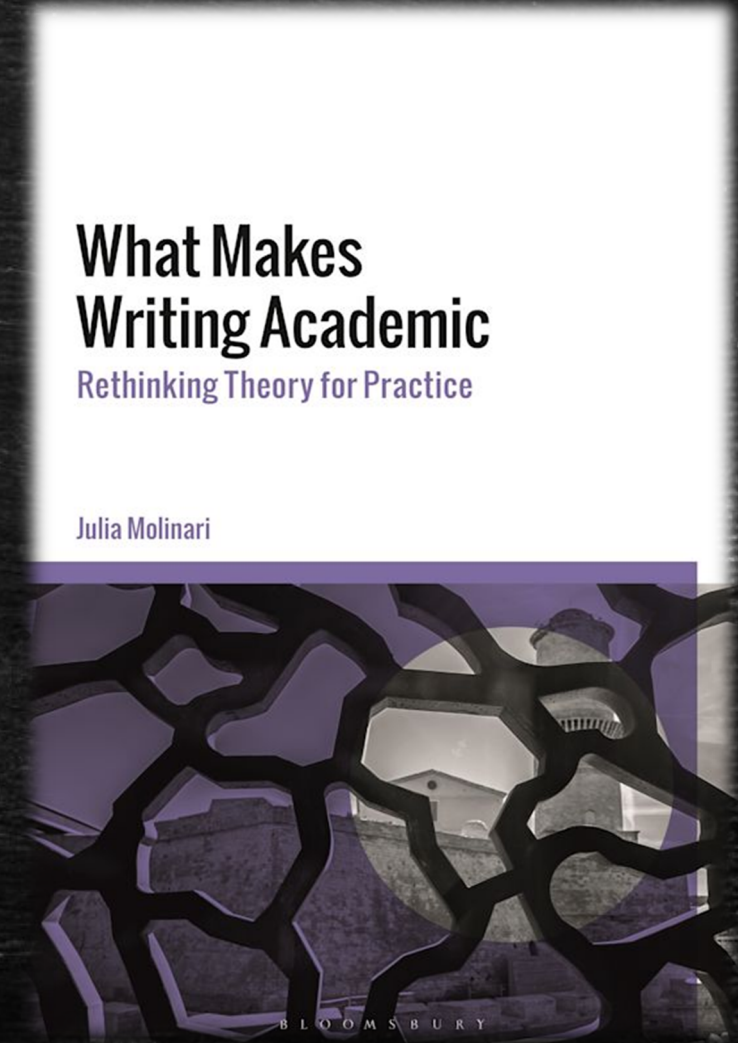
Troubling academic writing in the academy: a conversation about more than writing

with Amanda French and Julia Molinari
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The plan:

- overview of our books
- a set of provocations
- facilitated conversations
- where does this leave us?



An overview of our books

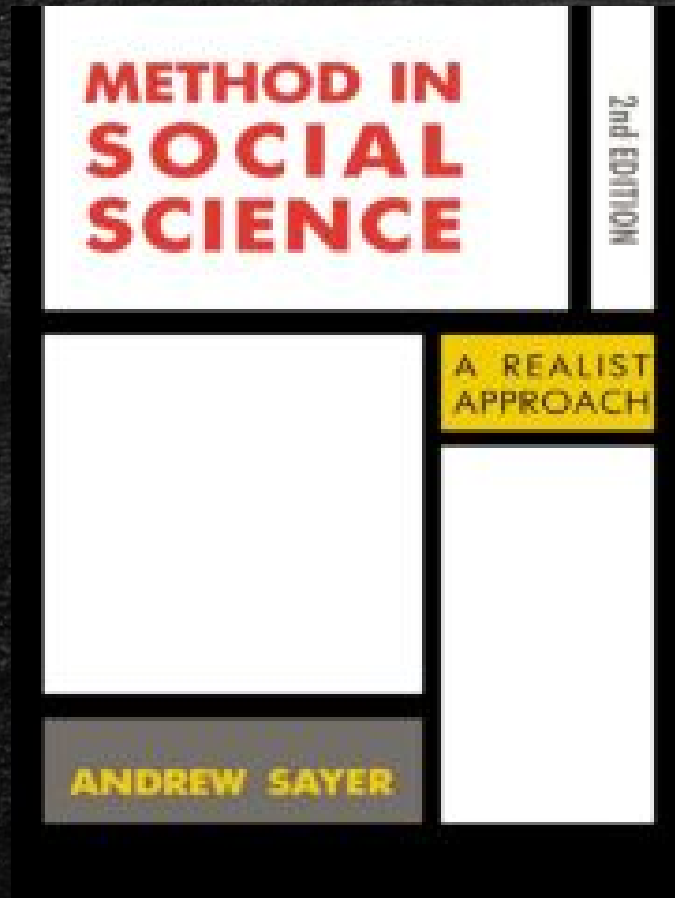
- Julia Molinari on

What Makes Writing Academic: Rethinking Theory for Practice, Bloomsbury, 2022

- Amanda French on

A Philosophical Approach to Perceptions of Academic Writing Practices in Higher Education: Through a Glass Darkly, Routledge, 2022

Andrew Sayer in *Method in Social Science*, 1992: 258



social scientists have paid surprisingly little attention to the fact that their knowledge is invariably presented in the form of text. [...].

this underestimates the significance of the fact that academic knowledge takes this textual form, which textual form may have a largely hidden influence on how we re-present knowledge and how it is read.

Standardised forms require abstracts, introductions, main bodies and conclusions. They are also predominantly monolingual and monomodal. **One troubling shortcoming of this kind of standardisation is that it can narrow, distort or flatten epistemic representation. A related shortcoming is that standardisation is exclusionary and this can lead to a range of epistemic losses and gains (p. 3)**

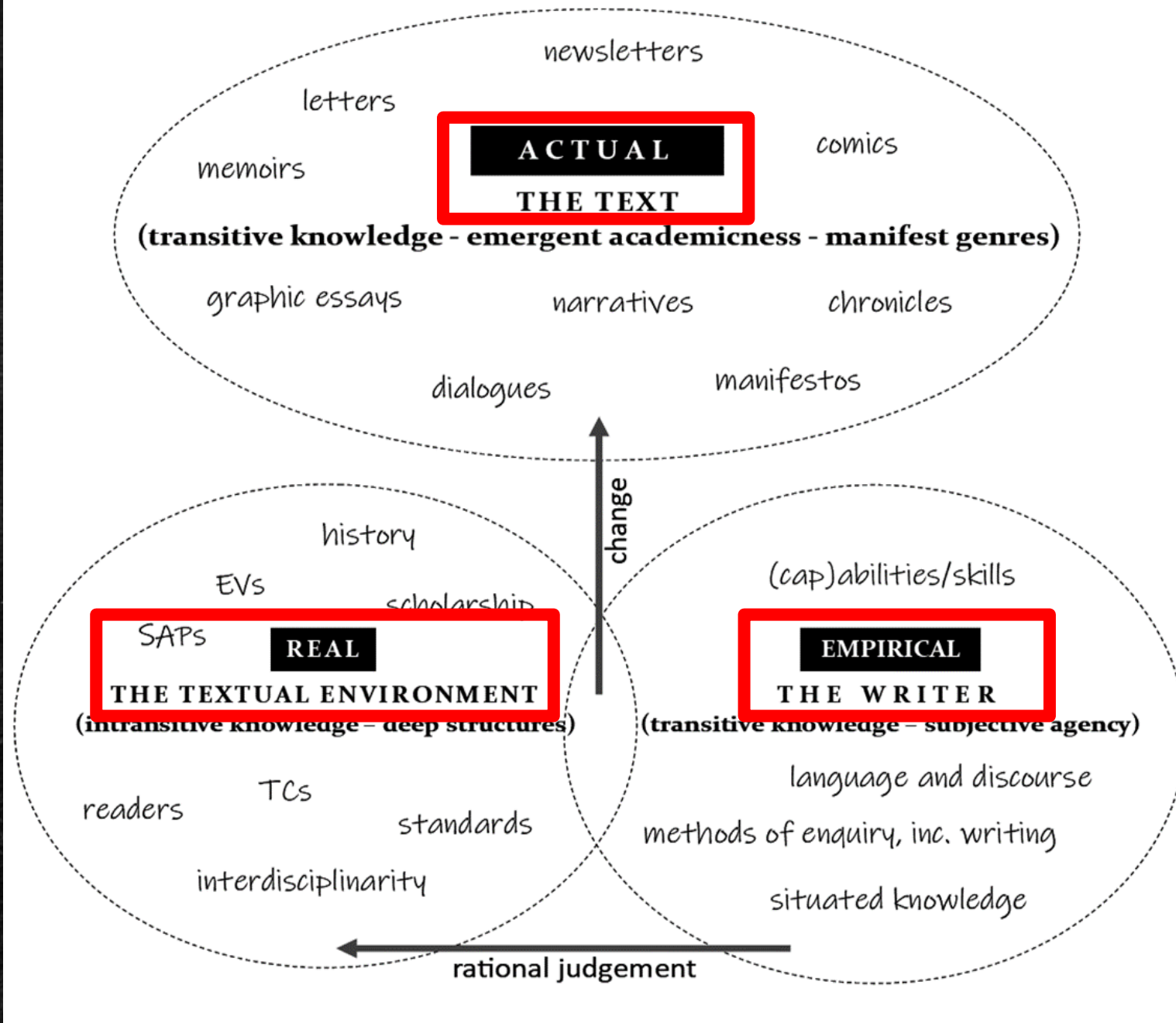
Standardisation [of academic writing] based on contingent and outdated norms becomes at best disingenuous and at worst exclusionary because it ignores the diverse identities of writers. **Epistemically, it is also self-defeating, since knowledge is best arrived at via multiple representations (p. 37)**

What Makes Writing Academic

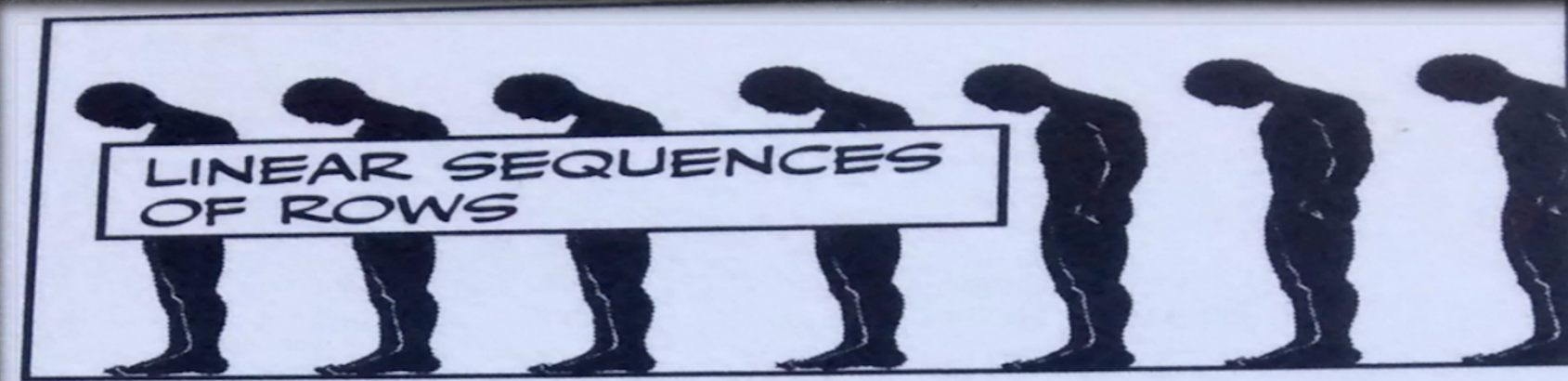
Rethinking Theory for Practice

Julia Molinari





A critical realist conception of academic writing, Molinari, 2022: 105



Thinking otherwise about academic writing

Traditional conceptualisation of academic writing

Autonomous

Objective

Technicist skills set

Universal

Functional

Performative

Fixed

Problematised conceptualisation of academic writing

Ideological

Subjective

Social practice

Situated

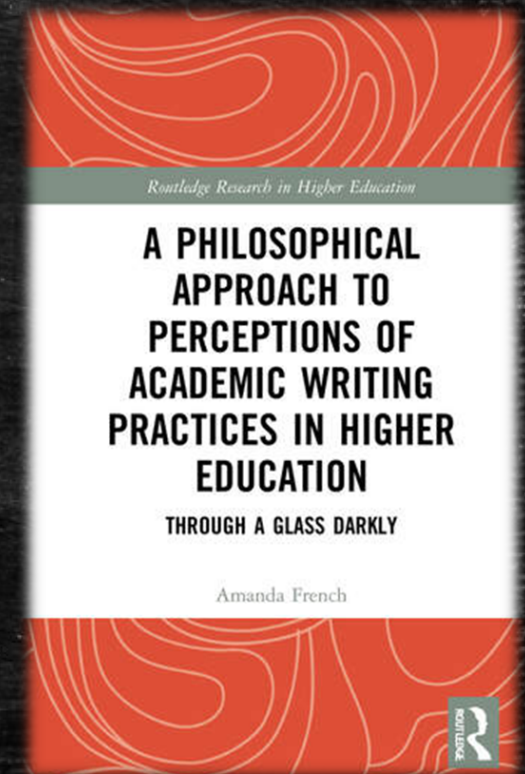
Creative

Developmental

Fluid

Throughout the book I treat lecturers, academic writing practices and their associated artefacts and events in higher education as part of a generative rhizomic configuration of entangled (Barad, 2007) intra-actions, experiences and discourses, existing within what Donald called the 'muddle of education' (1985, p. 242).

...a queered philosophical practice imaginary for academic writing in higher education defines itself in opposition to the dominant, institutional, linear, hierarchical ways that lecturers are currently encouraged to think (or not think) about their own and their students' academic writing practices and products in higher education.





An affirmative politics of difference for academic writing

- The diversity that characterizes university students and that universities boast of in their promotional literatures as hallmarks of their inclusive provision rarely manifests itself as diversity in academic writing practices (Molinari, 2022, p.4)
- Higher education needs to take seriously forms of academic writing development for lecturers and students in higher education that contribute to debates around diversity, inclusion, equality and belonging. It can do so by linking how academic writing has the capacity to acknowledge different ways of being, different ontologies, experiences and knowledges that reflect diversity and difference in higher education.
- The proposed 'new queered academic writing aesthetic' is messy, dialogical and critically reflexive, blurring boundaries between conventional/dominant discourses around academic writing artefacts and bodies and entangling them productively in different spaces and settings.

5 provocations



- Students will benefit from the idea that academic writing is a troubled and troubling concept
- Teachers currently have little agency/incentive/understanding to shape written forms of knowledge
- The 'powers that be' need educating about what makes writing academic
- We're all colluding by defaulting to the status quo
- The machines have been fed on standardised #AcWri



Where does this leave us?
