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## Memories of Wendy

by Donald McAndrew

Finally, on this snowy Sunday morning, there is time to write about Wendy. The hub-bub of the end of the fall semester and the end of a book are behind. So, then, what to write? I could tell of the first time I saw Wendy, a brand new doctoral student sitting next to a window thrown open to catch the fatigued breezes that are summer sessions at IUP. She was the only one to ask a question as I explained qualitative analysis, guesting in Pat Hartwell's Intro to Research Methods class. I could tell of our walking the streets at Minneapolis CCCC arguing about the nature of bias in her dissertation. Or I could tell of her sharing the letters her father wrote her mother during his military service. All these memories re-create Wendy; she becomes now again. So memories are certainly what to write about. But which memories? The choices will create Wendy this morning. No small sculpting.

I choose two memories to make my Wendy this December Sunday. The first is Wendy and I sitting in my kitchen, sipping wine, while my wife, Marge, cooks dinner and laughs. Why this fit of three people? The three of us meet only every few years, but our fit is 10W-30 slick, like a well-cared-for engine, we hum and warm. Marge is very selective and has chosen Wendy from among many other doctoral students. Later that night, as we clear the table, Marge explains, "With Wendy, it's always like we just talked to each other yesterday."

I also choose another memory. Wendy, Sharon Wieland and I are having dinner at NCTE's spring convention at the Broadmoor in Colorado Springs. The three of us planned to come in a day early so that we would have time to play together. We toured Garden of the Gods and saw the Sangre de Cristo mountains in the distance. At dinner, our talk is of families and teaching and writing, as usual. Wendy and Sharon work hard to teach me about what it's like to be a woman who wants to be the best mother, the best teacher and the best writer and scholar. They talk of juggling children, spouses, colleagues, administrators and publishers. Their words are heavy with soreness and

### About the Author

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disappointments. Finally, I interrupt, and attempt to soothe by saying that maybe trying to be the best mother, wife and writer is self-defeating; maybe you just can't have it all. Wendy throws her hair back and says, "But, Don, we want it all!" Years later, she had published many books and was a leader in CCCC, and I received a wedding photo of Wendy, her husband, Dean, and their children. Wendy's kids, whom I knew from infancy, were children no more. Her husband smiled proudly. I recalled Wendy's comment at NCTE Colorado Springs and thought that Wendy, indeed, had done it—she got it all.