



**Writing in a Milieu of Utility: The Move to
Technical Communication in American
Engineering Programs, 1850-1950, Second Edition
(ATTW Contemporary Studies in Technical
Communication)**

T. Kynell

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This book traces the pedagogical evolution of technical communication in America as it grew out of Engineering English requirements from roughly the turn of the century to 1950. This study examines specific curricular patterns, texts, and writers on the subjects on technical communication, while also tracing engineering educational patterns as they emerge from the proceedings of the society for the promotion of engineering education. Unique to the second edition of the book is a new preface by ATTW series editor, Jimmie Killingsworth, a new introduction by Elizabeth Tebeaux, and an epilogue by Katherine Staples.

This book concludes that technical writing, as we teach it today, likely found its roots in engineering composition pedagogy, when, at approximately the turn of the century, engineering educators recognized that writing about science and technology not only made sense in an academic milieu that emphasized utility, but that such writing could also contribute to the professional success of engineering students. Existing somewhat tenuously as engineering itself sought academic status, technical communication emerged ultimately as a reconceptualized composition course, after early- to mid-twentieth century calls for English and engineering cooperation made traditional composition offerings less relevant.

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