

WANDAH

0:00 Lisa Gerrard

“So I started just learning what I could about computers. I mean this was about 1978 and I knew nothing. So I just tried to educate myself. Then I was hired by a writing programs at UCLA in 1980 to help them develop a computer based curriculum. And there wasn’t such a thing, but Richard Lennon, who was the director of the program, he had a kind of vision- and I don’t know that many people in my career who have had that- but he just thought that technology was an exciting possibility for writing instruction. So there were no computers and writing in 1980, apart from a few programs that had been written to automate grammar instruction in K through 12, but nothing today that we would recognize as computers in writing. So, that was really how I started, so 1980 I started teaching at UCLA and I began to develop with a group of people, there were four of us, and we began to develop a program called WANDAH. It was designed to help students sort of develop a workable writing process, having an invention section and we developed a word processor from scratch. Because the word processors at the time in 1980 to 1982, were really designed for secretaries and not writers and so they were cumbersome. And then it had a revising section so it had those three sections. And so that was how I got started, and then there was a conference- the University of Minnesota had a conference in 1983 that my colleagues on this WANDAH project went to. There were only ten people there, they invited ten people who were developing software for writing. That wasn’t the first computers in writing conference but it was by invitation only and it was a very informal meeting and then the following year they had a full scale conference. I went to that one, it was the first computers in writing conference on the model that we have now, and it was in April of 1984.”