

Newsletter

Conference on Basic Writing
A special interest group of CCCC



Volume 9, Number 1

Fall 1989

CBW at CCCC: A TWILIGHT DOUBLE HEADER

In reviewing *A Sourcebook for Basic Writing Teachers* last year, Gene Hammond gave the volume high marks in general but noted also that the collection revealed a need for more attention in our profession to such fundamental matters as a "comprehensive theory of error" and reliable techniques for skills development. He pointed out that, aside from one article by Orlando Patterson "about the painful associations that standard English has for many blacks in the United States, . . . that issue, clearly a crucial one for the teaching of basic writing, [came] up nowhere else in this collection."

In planning for CCCC 1990, we've sought to focus attention on some of these issues (*are* they being neglected?), as well as to promote the networking activity that was begun last year. In the last time slot for regular sessions on Thursday afternoon (5:00 to 6:15 in the Adams Room), CBW will sponsor a panel on "Black Students, Standard English, and Basic Writing," with Miriam Chaplin (Rutgers), Gene Hammond (U of Maryland), and Lisa Delpit (Morgan State U) speaking and Geneva Smitherman (Wayne State U) responding.

In the following time slot (6:30 to 7:45) and in the same room (Adams), we hope to provide an opportunity for the kind of conversation among colleagues that David Bartholomae suggested at last year's session. Following a brief business meeting, small table discussions (over wine and cheese) of issues raised by the panel as well as of broader issues will take place. Table leaders will moderate these discussions and will report periodically to the larger group on the gist of their tables' conversations. We hope this format will promote both enlightening conversation and new friendships. □

Review of *Lives on the Boundary*

Mike Rose. *Lives on the Boundary: the Struggles and Achievements of America's Underprepared*, 1989. Free Press, a division of Macmillan, Inc., 866 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022. \$22.95. Order by calling Macmillan at 1-800-257-5755.

At the NCTE Conference in November, *Lives on the Boundary* received the David H. Russell Award for Distinguished Research in the Teaching of English.

The resonant title *Lives on the Boundary*, suggesting both exclusion and trailblazing, seems at once sinister and optimistically adventurous. And Mike Rose's book has all these qualities. It contemplates a wasteland of curtailed opportunities and simultaneously celebrates the power and courage of those who escape and of the educators who empower them in the attempt. The boundaries this book explores are sometimes deep economic and cultural gulfs, sometimes cognitive boundaries encountered by hitherto successful undergraduates straining at the edge of their present abilities. But whatever the nature of the boundaries, Mike Rose's concern is that they be crossed. His *Continued on page 4.*

CBW ANNUAL MEETING AT CCCC in Chicago

Thursday, March 22, 1990
Adams Room, Palmer House

Panel Discussion: 5:00-6:15 p.m.
Miriam Chaplin, Gene Hammond, Lisa Delpit, and
Geneva Smitherman discussing
"Black Students, Standard English, and Basic
Writing"

SIG Meeting & Table Discussions: 6:30-7:45 p.m.
Wine & Cheese

From the Chairs

THE STATE OF CBW

We last saw many of you at the CBW meeting at CCCC last March in Seattle, where at least 175 gathered to hear a distinguished panel address "the state of basic writing." (See Sally Harrold's report on p. 6.) CBW owes a debt of gratitude to David Bartholomae, Theresa Enos, Andrea Lunsford, and Lynn Troyka for both their presentations and their support.

Before the panel, a brief business meeting accepted the proposed CBW by-laws. These provide for two-year terms for chair, associate chair, and a six-member Executive Committee, intended to keep the group healthy, growing, and open to new people and ideas. Enclosed with this newsletter is a ballot listing the first slate of officers, drawn up by CBW's interim officers. (Members of the first Executive Committee will draw lots to see which serve one-year and which two-year terms.) In this slate we have sought to balance a number of factors: geography, diversity of background, institutional type, prior service in CBW (some experienced, some not). Please send back the ballot by return mail—both to confirm the slate and to respond to a brief survey.

While specific "calls" will be made in the newsletter, CBW is always looking for members willing to write for the newsletter or to work on other projects. If you are interested in volunteering, let us know.

The Third Basic Writing Conference at the University of Missouri at St. Louis in September (see Sally Reagan's report on p. 7) has prompted discussion of formalizing the two-year conference rotation established by Sallyanne Fitzgerald; we are currently contemplating a fourth BW conference in September of 1991 somewhere on the East Coast. More about this later.

We hope in the coming year (and especially at our March SIG meeting in Chicago) to continue to define the concerns of this special interest group. Who are we who teach "basic writing"? To whom do we teach it? What problems do we confront that create the need for a professional alliance beyond that provided by CCCC itself? What resources are available to us in this honorable and sometimes honored, often isolated endeavor? Beyond working on these definitions and creating a lively presence and stimulating sessions at each annual meeting of CCCC, what actions can CBW take that will directly benefit its members—benefit you? Send back your survey, join us at CCCC, write to us!

Peter Dow Adams
Carolyn Kirkpatrick

R ♦ E ♦ V ♦ I ♦ E ♦ W ♦ S

Recent Articles on Basic Writing

Student/Teacher Roles

The student/teacher relationship can be especially problematic in the basic writing classroom, where teachers often represent an alien class and culture to their students—students who are not at all certain, in this new environment, just what identity they themselves should claim. Several recent articles examine student and teacher roles, in an effort to make the *affective* side of teaching more *effective*. Their diverse conclusions suggest just how complex this question is.

Yorio, Carlos. "The Other Side of the Looking Glass." *Journal of Basic Writing* 8 (Spring 1989): 32-45. Carlos Yorio begins by suggesting that the basic writing teacher try on the role of Alice, who steps through the looking glass and discovers that the flowers can talk. Like Alice's flowers, he explains, our students "will not always agree with each other and may not always be right or even sensible" (33); nevertheless, we need to hear them. Yorio reports on his analysis of 165 in-class compositions in which adult ESL students described how they would teach an ESL class, as well as an analysis of 17 specific teaching practices mentioned in these compositions that the same students, in a follow-up survey, ranked according to importance. Results from the two tasks were generally contradictory, but a number of our most commonly accepted teaching practices (peer groups, journals, clear feedback on papers) proved

The *CBW Newsletter* is published twice a year, in the fall and spring, by the Conference on Basic Writing, a special interest group of the Conference on College Communication and Composition. The editors are Peter Dow Adams & Carolyn Kirkpatrick. We welcome unsolicited manuscript submissions.

Opinions expressed in these pages are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, the officers of CBW, CBW's Executive Committee, or CCCC.

Membership in the Conference on Basic Writing is \$5 for 1 year, \$9 for 2 years, and \$12 for 3 years. Membership includes a subscription to the *CBW Newsletter*. Address: Peter Dow Adams, English Department, Essex Community College, Baltimore County, Maryland 21237.

to be activities which students found relatively unimportant. (Interestingly, grammar instruction was the only element which students noted as very important in both the composition and the ranking task.) Yorio argues that the issue is not whether the students are right in their evaluation; the point is that they feel many of our practices are not helpful. As teachers, we must "find ways to make our teaching strategies more 'accessible' to our learners either through discussion or through 'principled compromise' or both" (41). If we do not take the time for such "learner training," Yorio feels that students' frustration will continue to prevent them from developing good learning strategies.

Dean, Terry. "Multicultural Classrooms, Monocultural Teachers." *College Composition and Communication* 40 (February 1989): 23-37. Terry Dean takes Yorio's advice one step further. Dean proposes that good teaching strategies are those which not only help students improve writing skills, but also help them reduce the tension between their diverse backgrounds and the academic culture they are entering. In addition, Dean encourages the teacher to assume the role of learner. "With increasing cultural diversity in classrooms, teachers need to structure learning experiences that both help students write their way into the university and help teachers learn their way into student cultures" (23). Dean briefly describes several models for multicultural classrooms (Cummins, Heath, Freire), encouraging teachers to pick and choose from among them anything that seems useful, and then offers some specific teaching practices for dealing with cultural dissonance: culturally oriented topics, language oriented topics, peer response groups, class newsletters, current campus events, and anecdotes.

Mack, Nancy. "Grammar: Site of Class Conflict." *Focus: Teaching English Language Arts* (published by the Southeastern Ohio Council of Teachers of English, Ellis 114A, Ohio University, Athens, OH 45701) XIV (Spring 1988): 34-44. In a thought-provoking article, Nancy Mack suggests that teacher/student roles all too easily become those of oppressor/oppressed in the process of grammar instruction. Quoting Freire as saying we should just call Standard English "upper-class dominating English" and be done with it, she points out that writing teachers often unknowingly oppress their students by

- functioning primarily as sorters, not teachers, spending most of their time and energy separating out people who don't deserve to go any further;

- serving as agents of domination who directly remove working class students from higher education and, in so doing, perpetuate their illiteracy and an unjust system; and
- silencing students by discouraging their use of an authentic voice as well as disenfranchising them by not giving them anything meaningful to write about.

Mack urges us to deal with the grammar problem as an ethical, not a methodological one. One does not need to subscribe fully to her philosophy to find useful material in this article, which ends by listing six specific ways of "teaching Standard English critically to . . . students, inviting them to transform society and the language itself" (40):

- Composition teachers can represent language as the site of conflict between social groups.
- Composition teachers can teach standard dialect critically so that the dominant ideology and the process of reproduction are revealed.
- Composition teachers can revere the language of their students.
- Composition teachers can teach language study in the context of meaningful communication.
- Composition teachers can help their students cope with their false consciousness and the false consciousness of other teachers.
- Composition teachers can teach the uses of language for political praxis.

Murphy, Ann. "Transference and Resistance in the Basic Writing Classroom: Problematics and Praxis." *College Composition and Communication* 40 (May 1989): 175-187. In contrast to Yorio, Dean, and Mack, Ann Murphy looks more to inward transformations, examining the extent to which teachers should and can play the role of analyst. She finds the same forces of transference and resistance in teaching that Freud described in analysis: a beginning filled with hope, followed by over-involvement with teacher, then discouragement and resistance to further development. However, she cautions that a psychoanalytic model of pedagogy could be destructive in a basic writing classroom: "Basic Writing students who enter the university convinced of their own inadequacy, silenced by years of scorn and neglect, and deeply ambivalent about the prospect of mastering a new and alien discourse, may need centering rather than decentering, and cognitive skills rather than (or as compellingly as) self-exploration" (180). Nevertheless, Murphy argues that recognizing the similarities and

Continued on page 11.

About Mike Rose

Until the appearance of *Lives on the Boundary*, Mike Rose was probably best known as the author of *Writer's Block: The Cognitive Dimension* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1984, for the CCC series Studies in Writing and Rhetoric) and as editor of *When a Writer Can't Write* (Guilford Press, 1985). Recent theoretical articles include "Remedial Writing Courses: A Critique and a Proposal" (*College English* 45, Feb. 83, pp. 109-28; also collected in *A Sourcebook for Basic Writing Teachers*, ed. Theresa Enos, Random House, 1987) and "Narrowing the Mind and the Page: Remedial Writers and Cognitive Reductionism" (*College Composition and Communication* 39, Oct. 88, pp. 267-302); see Linda Stine's review in the *CBW Newsletter* 8 (Spring 1989) p. 7.

Rose is currently associate director of UCLA Writing Programs. His formal training is in psychology as well as writing and literature, but after reading the present book, one suspects that the experiences that have ultimately proved most valuable to him are his own early education and the wide range of untraditional academic jobs he has held.

As Rose writes in the preface to *Lives on the Boundary*, "I've worked for twenty years with children and adults deemed slow or remedial or underprepared. And at one time in my own educational life, I was so labeled. But I was lucky. I managed to get redefined. The people I've tutored and taught and the people whose lives I've studied—working class children, poorly educated Vietnam veterans, underprepared college students, adults in a literacy program—they, for the most part, hadn't been so fortunate. They lived for many of their years in an educational underclass. In trying to present the cognitive and social reality of such a life—the brains as well as the heart of it—I have written a personal book. The stories of my work with literacy interweave with the story of my own engagement with language. *Lives on the Boundary* is both vignette and commentary, reflection and analysis. I didn't know how else to get it right."

Lives on the Boundary

continued from page 1.

book is essential reading for anyone concerned with education in the deepest and best sense.

Reading almost like a novel, the book reveals the genesis of many of Rose's educational theories, and its sheer narrative force, aided by succinct commentary, ultimately speaks more eloquently for these theories than any purely theoretical work could do. It is difficult in a brief review to convey the quality of this book, in which narrative often takes on poetic power and certain recurring motifs assume an archetypal quality. As Rose observes, "the images that surround us as we grow up . . . give shape to our deepest needs and longings" (44). The images that dominate the period of Rose's youth center on paralysis, entrapment, and physical disability, culminating in the overwhelming experience of his father's becoming bedridden. The father never recovers, but as Rose's own opportunities widen, images of disability begin to be replaced by motifs of release and prowess. Finally, both sets of motifs come together and are transcended when Rose hears a lecture by Gabriel Marcel, the French philosopher and playwright. Watching this elderly, crippled man speak, Rose realizes that "an aged person need not be a 'paltry thing'—that a life of the mind can bring with it at least momentary deliverance, an athletics of the spirit" (62-3).

This is a book full of engrossing characters, both students and teachers, and in following their struggles and achievements, witnessing what works for them and what does not, we become partisans of Rose's educational methods. But first Rose makes us understand the subjectivity of despair and powerlessness. Particularly compelling is his depiction of the nether world in which he grew up and in which so many exist. We see how people with no sense of opportunity defend themselves by somnambulism and how often this defense is summoned in the classroom.

Rose shows how this distanced daydreaming operated in his own early life, and he provides vivid portraits of the teachers who woke him up. There is Jack MacFarland, whose abundant energy, brilliant teaching, and hard work earned the respect of his disaffected high school students, revived Rose's early interest in literature, gave him a sense of belonging to a literary and intellectual fellowship, and made college seem possible. Later there would be Ted Erlandson, who recognized Rose's tangled sentences as part of a necessary stage in his growth, and without focusing crushingly on error, "got in there with his pencil and worked on my style"

From *Lives on the Boundary*:

"The American educational system is an extraordinary achievement. Secondary and higher education is not systematically regulated—as in many other countries—by examination or quota, and even if you're poor, there are schools you can afford. We have provided elementary education for virtually all American children for some time now, and we fret more than many societies do about meeting the diverse needs of these young people. We test them and assess them—even kindergartners are given an array of readiness measures—in order to determine what they know and don't know, can and can't do. The supreme irony, though, is that the very means we use to determine those needs—and the various remedial procedures that derive from them—can wreak profound harm on our children, usually, but by no means only, those who are already behind the economic and political eight ball." (p. 127)

"He wore a leather pilot's jacket and kept his arms folded tightly across his chest. I noticed the arms. Pilot's jackets are big, loose things, and this man's upper arms filled out the sleeves, the leather stretching firmly over his shoulders and biceps. . . . At the end of the fourth class, he walked slowly up to the podium, waiting his turn behind the three or four men who were asking about their assignment. I kept talking, half hoping they wouldn't leave. But they did. Then Willie took a step forward and began speaking, pounding his fist on the podium in slow pace with each deliberate word: 'You,' he said. 'You—are—' and here he looked up from his fist and into my eyes. 'You—are—teaching—the—fuck—outta—me!'" (p. 146)

(55). There is the philosopher Don Johnson, refuting E. D. Hirsch and theories of cultural literacy before they were formulated by demonstrating that the meaning of an obscure passage stuffed with incomprehensible allusions can be gleaned by painstaking attention to the text itself.

The portraits of Rose's own students—children in grade school, Spanish-speaking adults, veterans, undergraduates at UCLA—speak with equal eloquence of enormous potential in unlikely places and remind us never to abandon trust and optimism and always to teach the whole person. There is Carlos, working for months with a badly translated automobile manual, scribbling notes in the margin, in order to own the only Saab in El Monte. There is veteran Willie Oates, an ex-convict in a leather pilot's jacket, reader of Jane Austen and George Eliot, in whose notebook "working-class experience fused with the language of teapots and Victorian gardens" (147). The portraits accumulate and convince us of what Rose has urged in earlier work: As educators we must never succumb to cognitive reductionism, never concentrate on the purely cognitive dimension to the exclusion of social and affective factors.

Insisting most forcefully that people never be defined by their apparent limitations is the case of the timid fifth grader Harold Morton, subjected to endless scrutiny by a string of doctors, neurologists, speech therapists, and ophthalmologists, always with negative results: The final entry in his file concludes, "The problem is psychological" (125). Rose demonstrates that Har-

old's real tragedy is that a succession of teachers chose to see his difficulties as beyond their help and thrust him away to the scrutiny of "experts." What Harold really needed, Rose points out, was "a guide sitting down on the steps by him and building a relationship through the words on a printed page" (125). At this point the reader is perhaps made aware, as I was so often in reading this book, of Rose's own rare good fortune in this respect. There always seemed to be a mentor willing to go to bat for him at a crucial time. Rose is too modest to say so, but clearly he was such a mentor for Harold at one point in his life. One hopes that Harold met others.

Usually Rose lets these stories speak for themselves, but Harold Morton moves him to passionate analysis and commentary, as do the topics of his two final chapters, "The Politics of Remediation" and "Crossing Boundaries." Rose points out that both in the academy and in the nation at large "our educational ideals far outstrip our economic and political priorities" (188). As he makes clear by careful analysis, there really never was a golden age of educational excellence from which we have declined; rather, we are attempting far more than we have done before. Instead of giving way to despair or its other face, elitism, we should accept the challenge of enabling our whole population, in all its rich diversity, to reach its full potential.

Kay Puttock
Mankato State University
Mankato, Minnesota

Reports from Three Gatherings of Interest

Stellar CBW SIG Meeting Held in Seattle

First, some CBW business from Peter Adams and Carolyn Kirkpatrick, co-chairs:

- The new editors of the *Journal of Basic Writing*, Bill Bernhardt and Peter Miller, were introduced; they encouraged submissions to the journal.
- The by-laws for CBW were approved.
- Our future plans, including the third national basic writing conference in September 1989 in St. Louis were reviewed (see report opposite).
- Members of the audience raised their hands in response to a series of questions about their schools, programs, and interests.

Then, our star-studded panel, a reminder (if ever we needed one) of the significance of basic writing to the profession as a whole. The messages from Troyka, Bartholomae, Enos, and Lunsford were variations on a theme: we've come a long way; we've a long way yet to go, exciting work yet to do.

Troyka: What is a basic writer? Answer: it varies. Different people define basic writers differently. Therefore, we need to look carefully at the population on which research or theory is based as we decide whether either applies to the students we consider basic writers at our schools.

Bartholomae: We need to look at Shaughnessy's work not just as an object of veneration but as a text to analyze and critique. We need to explore the language in which we frame our questions, the metaphors we use to describe our relationship to our students.

Enos: Her review of textbooks indicates how singular an achievement Bartholomae and Petrosky's *Facts, Artifacts, and Counterfacts* is. Most textbook publishers are not publishing books that reflect current theory in the field. All too many "skills" books continue to shape basic writing instruction.

Lunsford: Her visits to different programs across the nation indicate that many are still mired—either from administrative pressures or from lack of knowledge—in skills approaches that do not integrate reading and writing. We have work to do in implementing current theory in programs across the nation.

During the discussion following the presentations, David Bartholomae observed that what CBW can best provide is not more formal speakers, but a place for conversation, an opportunity for those of us working in the field to talk with each other.

And we agreed. Agreed that we need more time to talk, to get to know each other, to share concerns, to pool knowledge, to find ways to alter the shape of basic writing instruction so it reflects current theory. [See the page 1 report on the upcoming CBW meeting in Chicago for an outline of how we hope to realize these agreements at this year's SIG meeting.]

Sally Harrold
Loyola University of Chicago

Florida in January

The CCCC Winter Workshop

If you receive this newsletter, chances are good that you belong to CCCC and have received a yearly flyer about the Winter Workshop, but I want to add to the official information a view from the inside. I was lucky enough last year to join close to two hundred of our colleagues at the Sheraton Sand Key Resort to work closely with several recognized experts in our field, among them Vivian Davis and David Bartholomae, both past chairs of CCCC, Kris Gutierrez, post-doctoral scholar at UCLA, and Jackie Jones-Royster, secretary of CCCC and editor of *Sage*. With them were two experts on testing, Sybil Carlson, author of *Creative Classroom Testing* and Mimi Levin, head of the Literature and Writing Group at the Educational Testing Service.

What did we all do while in Florida last January? The format of the Winter Workshop allowed participants to attend a general meeting each day, then each of three small-group sessions on related topics. Because these smaller sessions were repeated, participants did not have to face the disappointment of choosing one yet missing two other equally appealing discussions. In addition, because of the three-strand arrangement of topics, the Workshop allowed us to focus our attention for a sustained period. On the first day, we explored issues of multicultural education; on the second, managing the writing process; and on the last, evaluating writing. All of these (plus the setting) conspired to reduce the frustrations many of us feel at similar professional gatherings—too much to do, too little time, too much fragmentation, too little focus.

Because I work in a university where cultural and ethnic diversity are classroom issues, I went to the Winter Workshop especially for one strand: "Adapting to Diversity in the Composition Classroom." The other

two, "Managing the Writing Process" and "Evaluating Writing in Composition Classrooms," sounded to me as if they might only rehash matters I was already familiar with. But I went anyway, in part because of the appeal of the setting. (I wasn't alone in that seemingly non-professional motivation: a CCCC survey indicates that Florida in January motivates most of the Workshop participants.)

So what happened? Did I spend one day in meetings and the other two on the beach, and then come away feeling guilty for mispending my university's funds? No, I came away humbled by how much I can still learn—and should learn—about things I think I already know a great deal about. Jackie Jones-Royster packed my head full of ideas about teaching, and Mimi Levin gave me a historical perspective on testing that helped me understand some of its current problems.

So, consider the CCCC Winter Workshop in Florida. You'll be among a diverse group of colleagues. Participants represent, nearly equally, two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and universities. They come from all teaching ranks, from teaching assistants to full professors. And men and women attend in about equal numbers and come from various places in the country, half having traveled a distance of one to two thousand miles. So think about Florida. This year, the three strands will be "Literacy and Cross-Cultural Traditions," "Meeting the Literacy Challenge," and "Evaluating Writing in Contemporary Contexts," themes that make me wish I could be there.

Suellynn Duffey
Ohio State University

1989 Basic Writing Conference in St. Louis

When participants arrived at the University of Missouri at St. Louis for this year's Basic Writing Conference, they didn't know whether to feel amused or alarmed: The J.C. Penny Building, site of the conference, was surrounded by soldiers dressed for combat. Not to worry. They were only ROTC students who happened to be using the campus for maneuvers that morning.

The September 30 conference, the largest thus far with 232 participants from twenty-four states, featured a keynote speaker, three sessions of concurrent panels, and a buffet luncheon. In her keynote address, Glynda Hull, project director at the Center for the Study of

Writing and Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of California, Berkeley, discussed the necessity of recognizing the social as well as the cognitive needs of basic writers. She illustrated these social needs by drawing upon transcripts from a case study developed during her research in community college basic writing classrooms. Her presentation made the audience aware of yet another facet of the challenge of teaching basic writers, demonstrating how a student's social skills can affect an instructor's attitude to the extent that cognitive needs and/or growth may be ignored.

Concurrent sessions followed raising further issues we need to grapple with. One morning session, entitled "The Politics of Composition," stirred up the greatest controversy, to judge by participants' conversations over lunch. The position of this panel (Lynn Casmier-Paz, St. Louis CC at Forest Park and Jeffery Skoblow, Lisa Langstraat, Donna Singleton, and Richard Slepicka, all from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville) was that basic writers should be more or less "mainstreamed." Basic writing classes should be eliminated or at least made optional, and basic writers should be allowed the opportunity to "sink or swim" in regular composition courses. After lunch, a new controversy was raised in two separate panels on grammar: "Thinking Again About Grammar" and "Studying Error." These panels' suggestions for dealing with error, which took issue in various ways with the widely held view that teaching grammar does no good, generated considerable, and animated, discussion.

Because of the amount of interest in basic writing, conference director Sally Fitzgerald was able to provide twenty-two sessions with presenters from across the country. In addition to grammar and politics, panels also dealt with basic writers' special needs, the varieties of basic writers, teaching techniques, and critical thinking. Surprisingly missing were presentations on black students, on ESL, and on writing centers.

In addition to the standard formal papers, participants were also treated to variations such as one speaker (Gary Doby) who lay on the floor, and another (CBW co-chair Carolyn Kirkpatrick) who, because a freak foot injury kept her away, spoke through surrogate Cassandra Canada. All of this packed into one short day.

Sally Barr Reagan
University of Missouri at St. Louis

BULLETIN BOARD

The deadline for applications for **grants to support research related to the teaching of English** sponsored by the NCTE Research Foundation is February 15. Write Project Director, NCTE Research Foundation, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801.

The National Conference on Research in English and the NCTE Assembly for Research will host a conference entitled **Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Literacy Research** on February 16-18 in Chicago, Illinois. Write to Richard Beach, 350 Peik Hall, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455 or call (612) 625-3893.

The **Southeast Regional Conference on English in the Two-Year College** will take place in St. Petersburg, Florida, February 22-24. Write to Ben Wiley, St. Petersburg Junior College, 2465 Drew St., Clearwater, FL 33571.

The annual conference of the **National Association for Developmental Education** will be held in Boston on March 1-3. Contact Barbara Blaha, Ellen Reed House, Plymouth State College, Plymouth, NH 03264 or call (603) 536-6000.

Nominations for CCCC officers and members of Executive Committee and Nominating Committee should be submitted by March 2 to David Bartholomae, Chair of CCCC Nominating Committee, CCCC, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801.

The **Conference on College Composition and Communication** meets this year in Chicago, Illinois, on March 22-24. Write CCCC Convention Information, NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801 or call (217) 328-3870.

The **Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking** will conduct two-day workshops on "Teaching Writing and Thinking," "Writing to Learn," and "Narrative Thinking: Fact or Fiction?" on March 30-April 1 at Bard College. Write Paul Connolly, Director, Institute for Writing and Thinking, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York 12504 or call (914) 758-7431. Weekend workshops will also be held May 4-6.

The **Second Annual Conference of the Mid-Atlantic Writing Centers Association** focusing on the theme **Writing Centers: Teaching, Technology, and Research** will take place on April 7 at Widener University, Chester, Pennsylvania. One-page proposals for 20 or 45 minute papers addressing the concerns of writing centers should be submitted by January 15. Contact Sandra Gamble, Writing Center, Widener University, Chester, PA 19013 or call (215) 499-4332.

The **Third Annual Conference on Teaching Reading, Writing, and Thinking** will focus on **Critical Literacy: The Pedagogy of Critical Thinking** on April 18-21 in Chicago. Speakers include Robert Sternberg, Andrea Lunsford, Ralph Johnson, Harvey Daniels, and Craig Nelson. Write Bill Taylor, Oakton Community College, 1600 E. Golf Road, Des Plaines, IL 60016 or call (312) 635-1910.

The **East Central Writing Centers Association** holds its 12th annual conference on April 20-21 at Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana. Write Corky Dahl, the Writing Center, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN 70809.

The **New York Learning Skills Association's Thirteenth Annual Symposium on Developmental Education** will be held April 22-24 in Ellenville, New York. Contact Kathleen Schatzberg-Smith, Assistant Dean of Instruction, Rockland Community College, 145 College Road, Suffern, NY 10901 or call (914) 356-4650 X210.

The **Sixth Annual Conference on Computers & Writing** will take place at the U of Texas at Austin on May 17-20. Write John Slatin, Director, Computer Research Lab, Department of English, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712 or call (512) 471-8743 or bitnet EIEB360@UTA3081.

The **Wyoming Conference on English** will take place on June 25-29 at the U of Wyoming in Laramie. Speakers include Henry Gates, Sandra Gilbert, Susan Gubar, Gerald Graff, Jasper Neel, Richard Sterling, and Marcie Wolfe. Write Tilly Warnock, Conference Director, Wyoming Conference on English, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY 82071.

CBW MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

At last year's SIG meeting at CCCC, those present were asked to raise their hands in response to a series of questions such as "How many of you are directors of writing programs?" "How many include ESL in your basic writing programs?" and "How many teach basic writing in programs not under the control of the English department?" What this exercise lacked in scientific rigor, it made up for in spontaneity and instant gratification of curiosity. In fact, people enjoyed it so much that we will repeat it this year in Chicago.

In the same spirit, we're attempting some informal information gathering by means of this survey. The results, if we receive enough response to justify it, will be reported at CCCC and published in the next issue. We've kept it brief to encourage response, but elaboration or comments are welcome.

1. Do you teach in a two-year school four-year school other _____

2. In the program in which you teach, how many levels of basic writing (pre-freshman, not ESL) courses are offered?



3. Which of the following is the most accurate description of your highest-level basic writing course? (Answer here if you offer only one level.)

- a grammar/skills course with some writing
- about equal emphasis on grammar/skills and writing
- a writing course with some emphasis on grammar/skills
- a writing course with little or no emphasis on grammar/skills
- other _____

4. Which of the following is the most accurate description of your lowest-level basic writing (not ESL) course?

- a grammar/skills course with some writing
- about equal emphasis on grammar/skills and writing
- a writing course with some emphasis on grammar/skills
- a writing course with little or no emphasis on grammar/skills
- other _____

5. Which kinds of writing are emphasized in your highest-level or only basic writing (not ESL) course? Number those applicable in order of importance, with 1 indicating the greatest emphasis.

- ___ writing impromptu essays
- ___ essay writing with emphasis on "process"/revision
- ___ essay writing based on rhetorical modes
- ___ paragraph writing
- ___ other _____
- ___ there is little or no writing in this course

6. Which kinds of writing are emphasized in your lowest-level basic writing (not ESL) course? Number those applicable in order of importance, with 1 indicating the greatest emphasis.

- ___ writing impromptu essays
- ___ essay writing with emphasis on "process"/revision
- ___ essay writing based on rhetorical modes
- ___ paragraph writing
- ___ other _____
- ___ there is little or no writing in this course

Conference on Basic Writing

This insert includes two important pieces of business: a ballot for the election of CBW officers and an informal survey. Please take a few minutes to complete these right now. (We all know that a response delayed sinks to the bottom of the heap.) You can fold and tape this sheet to return it to the address below, but we do need your stamp.

BALLOT

The following slate was prepared by the interim co-chairs with the advice of the interim steering committee in accordance with the By-Laws of the Conference on Basic Writing. Please indicate your approval or disapproval of the slate by marking the appropriate box below. According to the By-Laws, the terms of office are for two years. Half of the initial Executive Committee, selected by drawing lots, will serve for one year so that, beginning next year, three members will be elected each year. Upon completion of a two-year term, the Associate Chair will become Chair, and a new Associate Chair will be elected.

Chair: Peter Adams, Essex Community College (Maryland)

Associate Chair: Carolyn Kirkpatrick, York College/CUNY

Executive Committee: Cassandra Canada, Purdue University (Indiana)
Suellynn Duffey, Ohio State University
Sallyanne Fitzgerald, University of Missouri at St. Louis
Pamela Gay, SUNY/Binghamton
Jeanne Gunner, UCLA
Bob Roth, Middlesex County College (New Jersey)

I approve of the slate as listed.

I disapprove of the slate as listed.

Comments/Suggestions: _____

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TO: Peter Adams
English Department
Essex Community College
Baltimore, MD 21237

BULLETIN BOARD, cont.

Northeastern University's **Martha's Vineyard Summer Workshops** will hold two sessions this summer: July 2-13 and 16-29. Topics at the first session include "Designing the Integrated Curriculum" and "Reading/Writing/Responding"; the second session includes presentations on "Gender and Writing," "Literacy in a Multi-Cultural Society," and "Case Study Design/Analysis." Contact Edward Jossens, Martha's Vineyard Summer Workshops, 406 Holmes Hall, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115 or call (617) 437-3637.

The **Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking** will conduct week-long workshops (Mon. through Fri.) on "Teaching Writing and Thinking," "Writing to Learn," "Reading and Writing," and "Narrative Thinking: Fact or Fiction?" from July 9-13 at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York. Write Paul Connolly, Director, Institute for Writing and Thinking, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York 12504 or call (914) 758-7431.

The **Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition** is scheduled for July 11-14. One-page paper proposals will be accepted through April 15. To submit or to request information write John Harwood, Department of English, Pennsylvania State Univ., University Park, PA 16802.

Responsibilities for Literacy, a conference sponsored by the **Modern Language Association** will take place at the U of Pittsburgh from September 13-16. Attendance will be limited to 600 people from communities, schools, and work places. Contact David Laurence, MLA, 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003-6981.

The NCTE Executive Committee is seeking **information** (published and unpublished research, work in progress, expert opinion, etc.) **on the subject of how familial substance abuse affects language acquisition and development of children and of adults.** Contact Karen Smith, Chair, Subcommittee on Substance Abuse and Language Learning, NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801.

The *Journal of Basic Writing* invites submissions related to all aspects of basic writing. Of particular interest are accounts of teaching under unusual or difficult

circumstances, cross-cultural reports, experiences with the new technologies, and articles taking a fresh approach to their topic. Write editors Peter Miller and Bill Bernhardt, *Journal of Basic Writing*, 535 East 80th Street, New York, NY 10021.

The *Writing Lab Newsletter* is an informal means of exchanging information among those who work in writing labs and language skills centers. Brief articles describing labs, their instructional methods and materials, goals, programs, budgets, staffing, services, etc. are invited. Those wishing to subscribe are requested to make a donation of \$7.50 per year, checks payable to Purdue University. Submissions and memberships should be sent to Muriel Harris, Editor, *Writing Lab Newsletter*, Department of English, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907.

The Council of **Writing Program Administrators (WPA)** is a nationwide organization that fosters communication and community among writing program administrators. It provides colleges and universities with consultant-evaluators to assess writing programs, and it sponsors a wide variety of professional activities to assist new and experienced writing program administrators and to bring together writing administrators from all parts of the country. For membership information write Don Daiker, Department of English, Miami University, Oxford, OH 45056.

The **Part-Time Faculty Forum of CCCC** is pleased to announce the publication of its newsletter, *Forum*. Dedicated to issues related to part-time teachers of composition, the editors seek articles, stories, research, news items, pertinent data, and announcements about part-time working conditions in your college. Submissions should be 500-1250 words (double-spaced). Send an original plus two copies with your name, title, institution, home and institutional addresses and phone numbers. Send items or subscribe by writing to Professor Teresa Purvis, 12-Communication Department, Lansing Community College, P.O. Box 40010, Lansing, MI 48901-7210.

CBW Newsletter is happy to print in the "Bulletin Board" announcements that are likely to be of interest to its readers. Send such announcements to the editors by April 1 for the spring issue. □

CCCC SESSIONS OF INTEREST

The following sessions, scheduled for the CCCC in Chicago on March 22-24, 1990, may be of interest to teachers, researchers, and administrators working with basic writers.

time	session	topic	time	session	topic
Thursday, March 22			Friday, March 23		
10:15 am	A13	Masks of Politeness, Faces of Otherness	8:30 am	F1	Meeting the Issue of Race Head-On in the Writing Classroom
10:15 am	A17	Multicultural Issues and the Teaching of Writing	8:30 am	F7	Technology and Literacy Education: Coping with Diversity and Change in English Classrooms
10:15 am	A26	Student Interaction in the ESL Classroom	8:30 am	F22	Against All Odds: Ethnographics of Non-Mainstream Literacy Communities
noon	B5	Dialogue and Difference: Rethinking Marginality	8:30 am	F24	New Models of Reading: Research and Theory
noon	B8	Undergraduate Development: Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Writers	10:15 am	G8	Creating Effective Assignments for Basic Writers
noon	B12	The Place of Sentence Combining in the Current Writing Agenda	noon	H9	Toward Building a Stronger Academic Community: Dealing with Issues of Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in the Writing Center and Beyond
noon	B13	Confronting Hegemony in the Academy: Voices of the Minority	noon	H11	Literacy and Literature: Eliminating Boundaries
noon	B18	Growth vs. Conflict: Two Views of the Basic Writing Class	noon	H23	Literacy's Others: "Exclusionary Practices, Rhetorics of Diversity"
noon	B19	Creating and Improving Writing Assessment Tasks	1:45 pm	I4	A Critical Examination of the Discourse Features of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Student Writers
noon	B21	Tutoring, Collaborative Learning, and the Social Nature of Authorship	1:45 pm	I20	Reconceiving Remediation: Discussion and Demonstration
1:45 pm	C4	Challenging the Status Quo: Issues in Writing Center Methodology, Research, and Theory	3:25 pm	J8	Writing Centers: Pedagogies for Change
1:45 pm	C7	Ethnic Writers, Ethnic Readers	3:25 pm	J19	Discursive Practices: Basic Writers and Their Educators
1:45 pm	C15	Basic Writers: The Findings of Recent Research	3:25 pm	J22	Ideology, Rhetoric, and the ESL Student
3:25 pm	D4	Writing Assessment at Historically Black Colleges	3:25 pm	J22	Ideology, Rhetoric, and the ESL Student
3:25 pm	D5	Shaping Courses for Basic Writers	5:00 pm	K2	Influence of Personality Type on Teaching and Researching Basic Writing
3:25 pm	D13	Re-Examining the Processes and the Products: Another Look at Context and Conflict in the Writing Center	5:00 pm	K24	Widening the Scope of Assessment: The Literacy Profile vs. Standardized Tests
3:25 pm	D20	Minority Voices, Minority Silences	6:30 pm		Hispanic Caucus SIG meeting
5:00 pm	E3	Black Students, Standard English, and Basic Writing	6:30 pm		Black Caucus SIG meeting
6:30 pm		National Writing Centers Association SIG meeting			
6:30 pm		Conference on Basic Writing SIG meeting			

CCCC SESSIONS, continued

time	session	topic
Saturday, March 24		
10:00 am	L4	The Writing Center as Research Center: Issues and Directions
10:00 am	L15	Expanding Cultural Literacy: Caribbean Literature in the Basic Writing Classroom
10:00 am	L23	Basic Writing: Views Toward Error

PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS OF INTEREST

time	session	topic
Wednesday, March 21		
9:00-5:00	W1	Using the Diversity of the "Urban Culture" to Teach Reflective Essay Writing Skills to Developmental and Remedial Students
9:00-5:00	W2	Essential Skills and Knowledge for Teaching ESL Student Writers
9:00-5:00	W7	Writing Assessment: Problem-Solving Strategies for Meeting Your Purpose
9:00-5:00	W12	Impacts of Writing Assessment in Two-Year Colleges
9:00-12:30	W14	Computers and Composition: Exemplary Strategies for Transforming the Writing Environment
1:30-5:00	W15	Repeat of W14.

POSTCONFERENCE WORKSHOPS OF INTEREST

time	session	topic
Saturday, March 24		
1:30-5:00	SW2	What Happens When We Treat Basic Readers and Writers Like Graduate Students (Examining the Facts behind <i>Facts, Artifacts, and Counter-facts</i>)
1:30-5:00	SW8	Adult Learning: From Literacy to the Baccalaureate Degree

Reviews

continued from page 3.

differences among the three related fields of teaching, analysis, and government (power) can lead us to a better understanding of student reactions (both to us and to the educational process) and can help us redefine our teaching goals.

Minot, Walter. "Personality and Persona: Developing the Self." *Rhetoric Review* 7 (Spring 1989): 352-363. Finally, Walter Minot recommends that basic writing teachers encourage student role playing through writing assignments designed to emphasize persona and thus improve students' self esteem. He draws theoretical support from rhetoric, psychology, and persuasion theory, and concludes that "the relationship between belief and action is not a simple matter of belief causing action. Rather, there is a complex relationship in which action often helps support belief" (355).

Minot then describes a model for such writing assignments, including guidelines and examples. He stresses that these assignments must have legitimate academic goals and also that the emphasis should be on behavior, not on self analysis—that is, the assignments should ask students to behave a certain way on paper, not to engage in introspection. I was glad to see Minot raise some ethical questions about the use of this model: Do teachers have a right to manipulate the personalities of their students? Even if they do, might they be tempted to venture beyond their competence? And finally, if it should prove that this model can indeed improve students' self esteem but not necessarily their writing, is the writing teacher justified in adopting it? Whether or not you agree with Minot's answers, his article raises some provocative issues.

Linda Stine
Lincoln University

This is a regular column discussing recent journal articles of interest to teachers and researchers working with basic writers. If you've recently written or read an article of interest to basic writing teachers, please send a copy to Linda Stine, Master of Human Services Program, Lincoln University, PA 19352 for review.

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