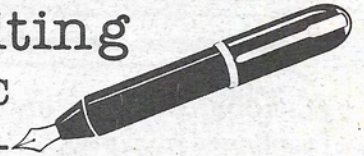


# Newsletter

## Conference on Basic Writing

A special interest group of CCCC



Volume 12, Number 1

Winter 1993

### REPORT ON THE FOURTH NATIONAL BASIC WRITING CONFERENCE:

"Critical Issues in Basic Writing: 1992, 11 October 8-10, 1992," College Park, Maryland

Karen S. Uehling

The Fourth National Basic Writing Conference was held October 8-10, 1992, in College Park, Maryland. The conference, organized by CBW and cosponsored by NCTE and the University of Maryland, was admirably chaired by Eugene Hammond (University of Maryland, College Park) and Carolyn Kirkpatrick (York College/CUNY).

Entitled "Critical Issues in Basic Writing: 1992," the conference asked participants to define critical issues that need to be addressed in the 90s. Two especially important and related issues emerged: (1) Do we need basic writing (BW) as a separate course or should all students enroll directly in freshman composition? (2) How do we keep from marginalizing BW students? Other issues considered at the conference included defining and assessing literacy, the politics of error and the place of grammar, BW connections with ESL, the design of BW programs, and adaptations of the *Facts, Artifacts, Counterfacts* approach of Bartholomae and Petrosky.

Peter Adams opened the dialogue by addressing the first question above: Do we need BW as a separate course any longer? (This concern was also raised at last year's CCCC where BW and first year composition were lumped together into one interest strand.) Adams presented data about the success rate of students who were required to take BW versus those who weren't—or somehow got around the requirement at his institution (Essex Community College, Maryland). His statistics showed that taking the course did not have a great effect on students' success rates. The big question, however, is what constitutes success? Adams defined success as passing freshman

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### Report from the Hinterlands:

#### Teaching Writing in Central China

Linda Stine

You reach Zhengzhou, a city of about 1.2 million in Henan Province, north-central China, after a 23-hour train ride from Canton, or a 17-hour trip from Shanghai, or a 12-hour journey from Beijing. If you rent a bicycle at the Zhengzhou station and head west, you'll pass fields of deep green rice interrupted now and then by small thatched peasant houses clustered around roadside markets displaying everything from pigs' ears to party dresses. After about an hour, you'll arrive at Huanghe University, a small technical university situated a few kilometers from the banks of the Yellow River

#### History of the University

The campus was originally built in the 1950's as a summer retreat—a Chinese Camp David—for Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiao Ping. It saw only limited political use, however, and was later converted into a hotel complex. Then, with much fanfare (including a segment on *Sixty Minutes*), it re-emerged in 1985 as a new "American style" university, emphasizing English and foreign trade. Unfortunately, the monetary support from overseas never reached initial expectations and, after Tienanmen, interest and finances dried up. The graduate program in American Studies was discontinued, and emphasis switched to teaching the practical technical skills, such as engineering and architecture, which were needed in the province. When I arrived in August 1991 to spend a sabbatical year as Visiting Associate Professor of Business Communication, the decision had just been made to merge Huanghe with the larger Zhengzhou University by the end of the academic year. I thus had the rather sad distinction of being the

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### October BW Conference Report continued from page 1.

composition.

Keynote speaker David Bartholomae, in his address, "The Tidy House: BW in the American Curriculum," continued the debate over whether BW should be a separate course. Bartholomae argued that BW stigmatizes students entering the curriculum. Bartholomae characterized BW as a site of struggle and cited the work of linguist Mary Louise Pratt, who calls for a "rhetoric of authenticity." Because faculty and students usually differ so widely in their income, background, and status as insiders or outsiders to the academy, Pratt asserts that the classroom could hardly be termed a "community." Rather, a rhetoric of authenticity suggests that we view BW as "contact zone." The literate and pedagogical arts of the contact zone include autoethnography, transculturation, critique, collaboration, bilingualism, imaginary dialogue, vernacular writing, parody, storytelling, and cultural mediation.

Bartholomae also critiqued developmentalism, one reason for his rejection of BW as a separate course. He stated that BW teachers can't see what they've done—they're too tied in to BW classes. Although students receive support in BW courses, it is a support that ultimately separates. Has our sense of sympathy and empowerment produced "the other"? Bartholomae noted that the *Facts, Artifacts, Counterfactuals* course works well and is now used in all freshman composition courses at the University of Pittsburgh, but classifying some students as BWers does *not* work.

Tom Fox (California State University, Chico) opened the first plenary session with his talk, "Negotiating Standards." Fox recommends access and proposes new standards to evaluate student work: Quality writing is writing that integrates, questions institutions, does not fear conflict, critiques institutions' inequities, successfully practices resistance, seeks a wide audience, complexly deals with complexity, and the like.

Jerrie Cobb Scott (Central State University, Ohio), also a plenary speaker, in "Literacies and Deficits Revisited," offered the following definition of literacy as a step toward an unbiased definition: ways of knowing, accessing, and retrieving

information; a process. Scott assumes people are literate, so the question becomes not what to do about illiteracy but what to do about literacies, which are multiple and may be written, oral, or visual. To tap into these literacies, teachers must provide a meaningful context and use interactive and dialogic methods.

Scott submitted the term "uncritical disconsciousness" to describe our inability to account for others and our "deficit pedagogy" with its "fix it" mentality. She suggested we seriously consider the following literacy issues: How and where is literacy embedded in our educational systems? How do our literacy programs advantage the advantaged? For instance, who benefits from Hirsch's cultural literacy, from multiculturalism, from testing and standards, and finally, who benefits from the existence of BW?

### How and where is literacy embedded in our educational systems? How do our literacy programs advantage the advantaged?

Jeanne Gunner (UCLA), also a plenary speaker, in "The Status of BW Teachers within the Profession: Do We Need a Maryland Resolution?" pointed out that resolutions about writing and its teaching have emerged from conferences; there were the Wyoming statement on pay and working conditions, the "NCTE Statement on Writing" which deals with research and tenure, and the Portland Resolution which provides professional self-definition to writing program administrators. BW teachers don't have such a resolution, and existing statements only speak tangentially to us. Gunner called BW teachers the "Peace Corps" of the composition profession and asked if we needed a "Maryland" resolution. As a special interest group, CBW is a minority within the profession with low status; without a resolution we will continue to be marginalized.

The second plenary session was opened by Karen Greenberg (City University of New York) who spoke on "The Politics of Assessment." Greenberg pointed out that most BW courses are still based on a remedial, skill and drill, deficit model; and, unfortunately, most post-secondary writing evaluation is "cripplingly reductive." Greenberg proposed



alternative models for writing assessment, including holistic evaluation, in-basket exercises, writing on computers, both spontaneous and planned writing, and collaborative writing for group evaluation. Greenberg recommended a writing portfolio which offers qualitative, context-rich evaluation, rather than quantitative context-free evaluation. Assessment must begin at the English department and writing program level; we need to ask ourselves questions like the following: What is literacy? What will students need to know in their career? How do you evaluate this? Who benefits from testing? Teachers who commit to assessment help students learn to evaluate each others' and their own writing. According to Greenberg, both the good news and the bad news is that there's going to be assessment. If we don't propose assessments which we approve, legislators will propose assessments which we don't approve.

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Greenberg solidly supported keeping BW as a separate course. She voiced strong concern that BWers would languish in traditional composition courses. She stated that this idea has already been tried (in the pre-BW era), and it failed.

Bill Jones (Rutgers University, New Jersey), also a plenary speaker, entitled his speech "BW: Pushing Against Racism." Jones argued that racism is a feature of American life which situates BW as "Jim Crow writing stations." Jones cited a taxonomy characterizing BWers which parallels racist attitudes in general. Jones pointed out that our definitions of BWers are framed in terms of deficit: The term BW is a euphemism for a minority student, who has also been called "disadvantaged" or "culturally deprived." Americans hold a bedrock conviction that minorities aren't capable of excellence. Historically black colleges have developed methods for teaching BWers successfully. In the program at Rutgers, achievement follows intention and expectation. Instructors use the intuitive linguistic and generative processes already available to double language or dialect speakers and also make use of native cultural wisdom. The focus is on constant acts of

reading and writing. Linking reading and writing is highly effective if a program is based on positive assumptions of minority students' strong abilities. Jones also questioned grammar. In what ways does grammar focus on remediation rather than literacy (reading and writing)? Does grammar hold students hostage until they can handle workbooks? Jones concluded that we need to develop a frame of mind that makes creative remediation (development) possible.

The final plenary speaker was Mary Jo Berger (Randolph-Macon college, Virginia), speaking on "Funding and Support of BW Programs: Why Don't We Have Any?" Berger asserted that BW occupies the spare room of the university, specifically the closet, suggesting that teaching BW is somehow shameful. As BW teachers, we need to know about other rooms in our academic institutions. She cited researchers Cohen and Marks who contend that academic institutions function as "organized anarchy," based on these principles: inactivity rather than activity; fluid decision making; natural conflict; the importance of allies; overloading—that there are more decisions to be made than there is time; and political rather than rational budgeting. Berger urged us to study power structures, to publicize what we do, to organize for action, to not believe anyone who says there is no money, and to talk—for instance, encourage psychologists and biologists to read *Lives on the Boundary*, by Mike Rose.

A particularly interesting session which I attended was one in honor of Mina Shaughnessy, called "Rereading Shaughnessy." Min-zhan Lu (Drake University, Iowa) in "Reading Errors and Expectations from the Borderlands," asserted that education is a process of repositioning. The conflict of education both beckons and threatens. Yet when Shaughnessy offers formal instruction, such as her pedagogy for prefixes and suffixes, she presents her material without reminding students that it might wipe out their earlier culture. Shaughnessy treats language as sets of rules or codes to which students must *accommodate*. Students are often not made aware of the contradictions in such accommodation. Residents of the borderlands must cope with these contradictions. Lu argued that we need ways to foreground conflict and struggle in the classroom,

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both in the content of writing and in the formal characteristics of language. We need more narratives from the borderlands.

Patricia Laurence (City College, CUNY) spoke on "The Way It Was: The Politics of *Errors and Expectations*." Laurence recommended that we reread Shaughnessy to understand the political unconscious of the time from the politics of place and the metaphor of error. Laurence described the landscape of place of NYC of the 70s. Open admissions, which Laurence labels "a naive experiment," began five years earlier than planned at City College because of student protest and created a new academic culture. The ethnic diversity of the students represented a politically submerged and powerful group. There were no studies, guides, or textbooks available for teachers. Teachers working with Shaughnessy met on Monday nights to read new research and discuss it. Journals and essays were used as texts and desktop publishing was common. The area of contest was error, a code word for resistance to institutional change. The emphasis was not just on error but on the social consequences of linguistic choice. Laurence asserted that Shaughnessy's book was based on knowing the audience at the time; E&E could be entitled *Confessions of a Director of Writing*.

The final speaker on the Shaughnessy panel, Pamela Gay (SUNY/Binghamton), entitled her talk "Rereading Shaughnessy from a Postcolonial Perspective." Gay argued that we must rid ourselves of our tendency to colonize BWers, but not to the extent that we risk losing difference among cultures, or do not develop differences. Gay referred to Shaughnessy's

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essay "Diving In" which offers a four-stage metaphor for the development of teachers; the fourth stage is "diving in," and Gay suggested that that concept was useful. Gay then evaluated several

terms which speak to difference and critiqued each. "Culture" is a cognate of "colonize"; "border crossing" is too militaristic; "contact zone" is also a war metaphor; "frontier" is too colonial; perhaps Maxine Green's term "a space of dialogue" or Bakhtin's "dialogicspace" would be useful. In ensuing discussion, it was pointed out that Shaughnessy's "diving in" is not bias-free, because when teachers dive in, the implication is that they have no problems; only the students do.

In summary, the conference centered around whether BW should be separate from freshman composition and how we as teachers can keep from colonizing our students. What is it we should be doing in class—"touching"? "contacting"? "offering space"? Perhaps we should simply offer all students (BWers and "regular" freshman composition students) the same literacy experiences. If BW is

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eliminated, I hope that what we have learned from teaching BWers will be offered to all students—as occurred at the University of Pittsburgh. I fear, however, that traditional freshman composition methods, often not especially student-centered, will be the rule. These were the issues that seemed critical to me. Look for a special issue of the *Journal of Basic Writing* in the near future which will contain the full text (perhaps revised) of many of the papers described here.

*Thanks to Christine Olson Davis, my colleague at Boise State University, who generously shared her conference notes with me. This report is based on my notes (and Davis's); I did not have each speaker's paper against which to check the accuracy of my notes.*

*Karen Uehling's composition textbook Starting Our or Starting Over: A Guide for Writing has recently been published by HarperCollins.*



## Hinterlands Report

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last "foreign expert" to teach at Huanghe.

### Duties and Expectations

My official teaching load was quite light. I taught six hours of Business Correspondence (three double periods a week) and four hours of Business English (two periods) to thirty-six third-year foreign trade majors. Unofficial teaching duties, however, extended far beyond the classroom. Outside of class, I was asked to be an expert on all things American, presenting formal lectures on such topics as American

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geography, literature and etiquette; helping a local artist revise his publicity brochure into a more correct English (without, of course, any knowledge of the original Chinese), editing articles on birth control for a newsletter that the provincial family planning unit was putting together for a visiting Planned Parenthood group from Oregon, and just being around for any visitors or students who wanted to drop in and chat with "the Foreign Guest."

In class, I found myself expected to be expert in the language of international trade, language which, according to a typical business letter in the assigned Chinese/English textbook I taught from, apparently reads something like this: "We are glad to note from your letter of 1st September that, as exporters of Chinese Cotton Piece Goods, you are desirous of entering into direct business relations with us; this happens to coincide with our desire." Most of the textbook models seemed to center around ordering shipments of walnut meat and establishing irrevocable letters of credit, activities to which I could not bring much personal experience. Furthermore, despite the standardized curriculum all schools follow and the eight years of English they had taken, my students demonstrated a wide range of English fluency, ranging from near-native to barely understandable. The thought of designing learning activities they all might profit from was daunting.

### Teaching Conditions

Classroom conditions were a bit daunting, too, at first: a blackboard, rows of small wooden desks and stools, and four dim fluorescent lights. The students, who took all their classes in the same room, were responsible for janitorial duties, a responsibility some fulfilled and some neglected. When a mouse which had been living peacefully in the small pile of trash in the corner of the classroom began getting friskier and decided to run across my desk one day just as I reached down to pick up a piece of chalk, I did suggest that perhaps the person with custodial duty that day would want to address this situation. (On a positive note, it gave a perfect opportunity to review irregular verbs: a mouse has *chosen* to come to class; a mouse has *run* across my desk, etc.)

Teaching in such a radically different environment presented a number of challenges. The physical adjustments were easiest to make. Having been warned that classrooms would not be heated, I came prepared with expedition-weight thermals. (I made a mental note to send a thank-you note to my local Arctic Outfitters when I glanced down at my little keychain thermometer which was lying on the desk one day in December and noticed with some surprise that the temperature inside the classroom registered 32 degrees.) I had also been told that "administrative support" was an oxymoron in most Chinese universities, and indeed such basics as class lists, semester calendars, exam schedules, room assignments, and book orders, not to mention computers, overheads and copy machines, soon faded to dim but treasured memories. Administrative staff were unfailingly polite and, as an honored foreign guest, I always received positive answers to my requests. Rarely were those assurances followed by a positive action, however, and I learned to downgrade a "yes" answer to a "maybe" and a "maybe" to "not in this lifetime."

### Re-thinking Teaching Methods

Pedagogical adjustments were much harder to make. The typical teacher, to judge from the physical layout of the classrooms and my observations of other professors, stands at the front of the room, on a raised platform, and lectures on The Truth, the style Sharon Crowley would call "full frontal teaching." One day early in the first semester, after I had spent most of the class period out in student territory, walk

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### Hinterlands Report

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ing up and down the aisles asking questions, one of the students came up to me and asked politely if he could carry along a stool for me to use while I was teaching. He had heard my breathing, he explained, and thought I might be tired. And I wondered if he had ever heard a teacher "breathing" in the classroom before.

My problems revolved around reconciling the way I wanted to teach with the way these students knew how to learn. Doing so provided a wonderful opportunity to re-examine and re-evaluate my pedagogical practices and assumptions. I found, for instance, that I was concentrating much harder on giving positive, motivational feedback on student papers at Huanghe than I do with my basic writers back home. I also found myself much more willing to overlook surface errors and work to unlock the meaning trapped behind confused syntax.

In addition, I re-learned the importance—and difficulty—of structuring clear and relevant writing assignments when students and teacher do not share a common frame of reference. One early assignment

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I designed, for instance, asked the students to write a letter persuading a hypothetical alumnus of the college who was now a successful businessperson to come back for a semester and teach, even though this would necessitate the person accepting a substantially lower salary. Without giving it too much thought, I set the salary at 500 yuan (about \$100) a month, basing the figure on the 425 yuan/month amount I was earning as a foreign expert. Before writing a first draft, we spent several class periods brainstorming all the non-financial incentives students might include in their letters and talking about the psychology involved in persuasion. Then I read one student's draft which asked, "How can you want more than 500 yuan? No one's work is worth that much." And I realized that the problem did not lie in her misunderstanding techniques of persuasion as much as in my inability to set up a realistic situation in which she could practice

them. I made a mental note to take a hard look at my writing situations back home to determine whether any of the scenarios might seem similarly unreal to my students.

### Questioning Assumptions

I gradually became aware of many other cultural differences that affected the way students wrote and reacted in class. How does one handle the problem of cheating and plagiarism, for example, in a country whose tradition says that a borrowed word is better than an invented one and where Mao once asked why, if one person knows the answer, everyone else should not know it too? How does one teach the need for conciseness, for getting straight to the point, in a country where courtesy is prized more highly than honesty and indirectness is more valuable, not to mention safer, than directness? The difficulties of

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getting students to function effectively in peer response groups also stood out clearly against the backdrop of a foreign culture. My naive assumption that students in a socialist county would naturally work well in groups and indeed insist on sharing authority soon vanished: in the Chinese classroom, the teacher is the one and only authority, and students who have spent the last twelve years of school passively taking in knowledge must be taught the techniques—and the value—of actively creating it.

### Successes and Failures

As the year went along, with much trial and many errors, I gained a bit of understanding of this complex culture. Eventually too, students came to understand, and even like, some of my foreign ideas. One successful activity was a project in which they formed corporations and wrote proposals competing for a limited amount of foreign investment money. I had hesitated setting up such a competition initially, since at home my goal is to get students to compete



with themselves, not with others, but I thought foreign trade majors should perhaps get a little exposure to the realities of the competitive marketplace. In his report on the process, one student summed up the experience from his perspective: "Sometimes, you organize some competition in our class, let us introduce ourself, discuss, dispute and compete for the foreign investment...it is the first time we so brave to talk, dispute, even laugh, you make us thought with you, we are exciting in the class. I like it." After much initial resistance to the very concept of individual student/teacher conferences to critique first drafts, students also grew to appreciate this opportunity. As one student wrote in her end-of-the-semester assessment, "I feel I prefer the individual conferences to the others. Through this form I can get your help and direction in kind and warm air and at the same time give you my piont [sic] of view directly and conveniently." What I valued most in this response was her underlying realization that the student, not just the teacher, had a point of view that was important and that should be expressed.

On the other hand, many things failed dismally, such as the unit on advertising when I made the mistake of bringing in a *New Yorker* Maidenform ad, quite tame by American standards, for student analysis. The women blushed, the men giggled, and I decided I could at least be grateful that I didn't bring the Jim Palmer Jockey underwear ad I had been considering! Since I had attended several student parties

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by this time at which I watched these nineteen- and twenty-year-old students happily and enthusiastically playing Musical Chairs and Simon Says, I should have known better. Once again, I found myself wondering what cultural boundaries I might unconsciously trespass against back in my American classroom.

### Scattered Impressions

The year passed quickly, filled with such experiences, challenges met and unmet, and treasured new friendships, especially with students. Each

evening I would record the day's events, observations and questions in my diary, promising myself that I would make sense of them later, find the common denominator. And perhaps someday I'll be able to; it just hasn't happened yet. I'll end with a random sampling from my journal, though, for you to try your hand at. I know there's a thesis in there somewhere.

\* After one of our weekly English Corners (an informal opportunity for anyone interested in speaking English to get some practice), I noticed that I had written the following words on the board: mafia, Socrates, Gautama Buddha, Ku Klux Klan, rhythmic gymnastics;

\* What picture of Western life would a Chinese student take away after browsing through the English section of the library which was filled with a wonderfully eclectic (and uncatalogued) collection of books: *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* beside *Das Kapital* beside *Slouching toward Bethlehem* beside *Adam Bede* beside *Letting Go* beside *Cancer Ward* beside *The Age of Innocence*...;

**A student who had been reading a book of essays on his own to improve his English came up after class to ask me to explain the phrase "pen-lancing the boils of pomposity"**

\* What to say to the student who had been reading a book of essays on his own to improve his English and came up after class to ask me to explain the phrase "pen-lancing the boils of pomposity";

\* Despair at the complexity of teaching English prepositions, verb endings and idioms, as I was adding to my collection of favorite student sentences: "Mr. Goodwin was on the nearby table with a man; Mr. Parker falls ill because he has not been eaten properly; Mr. Parker was not a good dancer; he thought he had a left and a right leg" (read: two left feet);

\* Another example of how far away I am from ever truly understanding the Chinese world view: the TV announcer who, in the course of a discussion about the Chinese tradition of landscape painting, began one observation with the casual words, "But it wasn't until 1400 years ago that..."

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## R•E•V•I•E•W•S

### Recent Articles on Basic Writing

Sally Harrold

The reviews this month focus on two articles that assert the need to examine the assumptions that inform our relationships with our students and our teaching. Both call for radical change; both are written by experienced and respected teacher/scholars.

The first article is Janice Neuleib's "The Friendly Stranger: Twenty-five Years as 'Other'" (CCC 43.2, May 1992: 231-43). Neulieb argues that for most teachers in academia basic writing students are "others" who differ from us, "... almost in the same way that natives in distant cultures differ from investigators of those cultures" (231). Of concern to Neulieb are the ways in which both our cultural isolation and our stance as teachers within the academy keep us from understanding the differences between us and our students and insulate us from the change that our students should and could work upon us. The alternative response she advocates is that of observing, not helping, students. Through such naturalistic observation, we can learn what our students want in terms of help, change, and political power. Such a stance means that we, the teachers, will risk "sharing authority, authorship and . . . authenticity with [our students]" (241). We also open ourselves to the possibility of our students' changing us.

The second article is Andrea Lunsford's "Intellectual Property, Concepts of Selfhood, and the Teaching of Writing" in the *Journal of Basic Writing* 11.2 (Fall 1992): 61-73. Lunsford asserts that the history of writing instruction reveals three basic approaches: that of acolyte to great literature; source of inner truths; and showing forth of cognitive processes. These positions have three common elements: they are all masculinist; they all view writing as both individual and property; they each promote uncritical assimilation into a status quo. Lunsford then calls on us to posit a new stance

toward writing, one that does not perpetuate the hierarchical model of the academy, one that does see writing as "the very way we socially constitute, know, and transform our world" (67). In this stance, writing would be truly collaborative, with power residing not with the teacher but with the group. Writing also would become truly cross-disciplinary, challenge boundaries among genres, media, and speaking, listening, writing, and reading. That this new view of writing necessitates radical change is clear, and Lunsford articulates some of those possible changes, as well as the consequences of maintaining the status quo. She concludes with a brief description of a course at Ohio State that operates from this new stance and calls upon us to think of other such alternatives, to see them all as "the hard work of freedom" (72).

*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, please send a copy to Sally Harrold, Department of English, Southwestern Oregon Community College, Coos Bay, OR 97420, for possible reviews.*

The CBW Newsletter is published twice a year, in the fall/winter and spring/summer, by the Conference on Basic Writing, a special interest group of the Conference on College Communication and Composition. The editor is Kay Puttock of Mankato State University. Opinions expressed in these pages are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, 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 and includes a subscription to the CBW Newsletter. Address: Sally Fitzgerald, Div. of Language Arts, Chabot College, 25555 Hesperian, Hayward CA 94545.



## BULLETIN BOARD

*NWSA Journal*, a publication of the NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION, is planning a series of articles on the following topics: (1) the reproductive rights debate; (2) sexual harassment; (3) diversity, multiculturalism, and "political correctness"; (4) the politics of health care; and (5) the philosophical, political, and cultural implications of an ethic of care. Articles should be 25-35 pages long, and conform to the *MLA Manual of Style* (1985). Each article must be accompanied by an abstract and submitted in duplicate to: Patrocino P. Schweickart, Editor, *NWSA Journal*, English Department, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824. Tel. (603) 862-0019.

Proposals are solicited for a collection of essays, *Teaching the New Canon: Students, Teachers, and Texts in the Multicultural Classroom*. The editors seek essays on course design, classroom management, the pedagogy of teaching individual texts recently included in introductory literature courses, and careful descriptions or case studies of the social dynamics of the cross-cultural classroom. Inquiries and proposals should be sent to Bruce Goebel and James Hall, English Department, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59715.

The publisher of the second anthology of Kids Pick the Funniest Poems seeks submissions of HUMOROUS POETRY FOR CHILDREN ages 6-12. Prized of \$500, \$300, and \$200 are offered for the best long poems, and fees of \$50 for short poems (up to 8 lines) to \$100 for long poems (more than 25 lines) will be paid. Send submissions with SASE to Bruce Lansky, Meadowbrook Publishing, 18318 Minnetonka Blvd., Deephaven, MN 55391. Tel. 612-473-5400, 800-338-2232.

March 18, 19, and 20: The New York Branch of the Orton Dyslexia Society will hold its 20th Annual Conference, "Language and Medical Symposia on DYSLEXIA," at the New York Sheraton Hotel, 7th Avenue and 52nd Street, New York City. Eighty prominent professionals will make presentations that will include recent medical and educational research findings; successful remediation and teaching methods; and the psychological and social aspects of dyslexia. An important feature will be a six-hour medical research symposium. Contact: Amy Bailin, Chair, Program Committee, NY Branch of the Orton Dyslexia Society, 71 West 23 Street, Suite 1500, NY, NY 10010. 212-691-1930.

March 28-30: The 16th Annual New York College Learning Skills Association Symposium will be held at the Marriott in Albany, NY. Keynote speakers will be John Gardner and Joyce Anisman-Saltman. Also scheduled is a day-long workshop "Up from Failure," by Anisman-Saltman; and a pre-symposium in

tutoring, program assessment, and writing/publishing. Contact: JoAnn Branch, President-elect, NY College Learning Skills Ass'n., North Country Community College, Saranac Lake, NY 12983, 518-891-2915.

July 7-10: The 12th Annual Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition will be held in State College, PA. Plenary speakers will be Michael Leff, Donald Bialostosky, and Henry Giroux. Other featured speakers will include Debra Journet, Dave Kaufer, Martin Nystrand, and Nan Johnson. Proposals are invited for papers, demonstrations, or workshops in any relevant topic-rhetorical history or theory, the composing process, basic writing, writing in academic and nonacademic contexts, advanced composition, the rhetoric of science, writing across the curriculum, rhetorical criticism, writing pedagogy, computers and writing, technical and business writing, and so on. One-page proposals will be accepted through April 5. For conference information and proposal submissions, contact Davida Charney, Dept. of English, Penn State University, University Park, PA 16802. (E-Mail: IRJ at PSUVM.P-SU.EDU)

October 8-10, 1993: The Council of Writing Program Administrators, the U of Connecticut, and Miami U will sponsor a conference on "Composition in the 21st Century: Crisis and Change," at the Marcum Conference Center of Miami U. The conference is organized around three-hour sessions that encourage full audience participation and discussion. Each of seven sessions will address a major question about the future of composition. (For more specifics, inquire of contact below.) Speakers include David Bartholomae, Peter Elbow, Linda Flower, Anne Gere, and Andrea Lunsford. Conference directors are Lynn Bloom, Donald Daiker, and Edward White. Conference Registration is limited to 400. Contact: Donald Daiker, English Dept., Miami U, Oxford, OH 45056.

Proposals are solicited for a collection of essays, *Teaching the New Canon: Students, Teachers, and Texts in the Multicultural Classroom*. The editors seek essays on course design, classroom management, the pedagogy of teaching individual texts recently included in introductory literature courses, and careful descriptions or case studies of the social dynamics of the cross-cultural classroom. Inquiries and proposals should be sent to Bruce Goebel and James Hall, English Dept., Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59715.



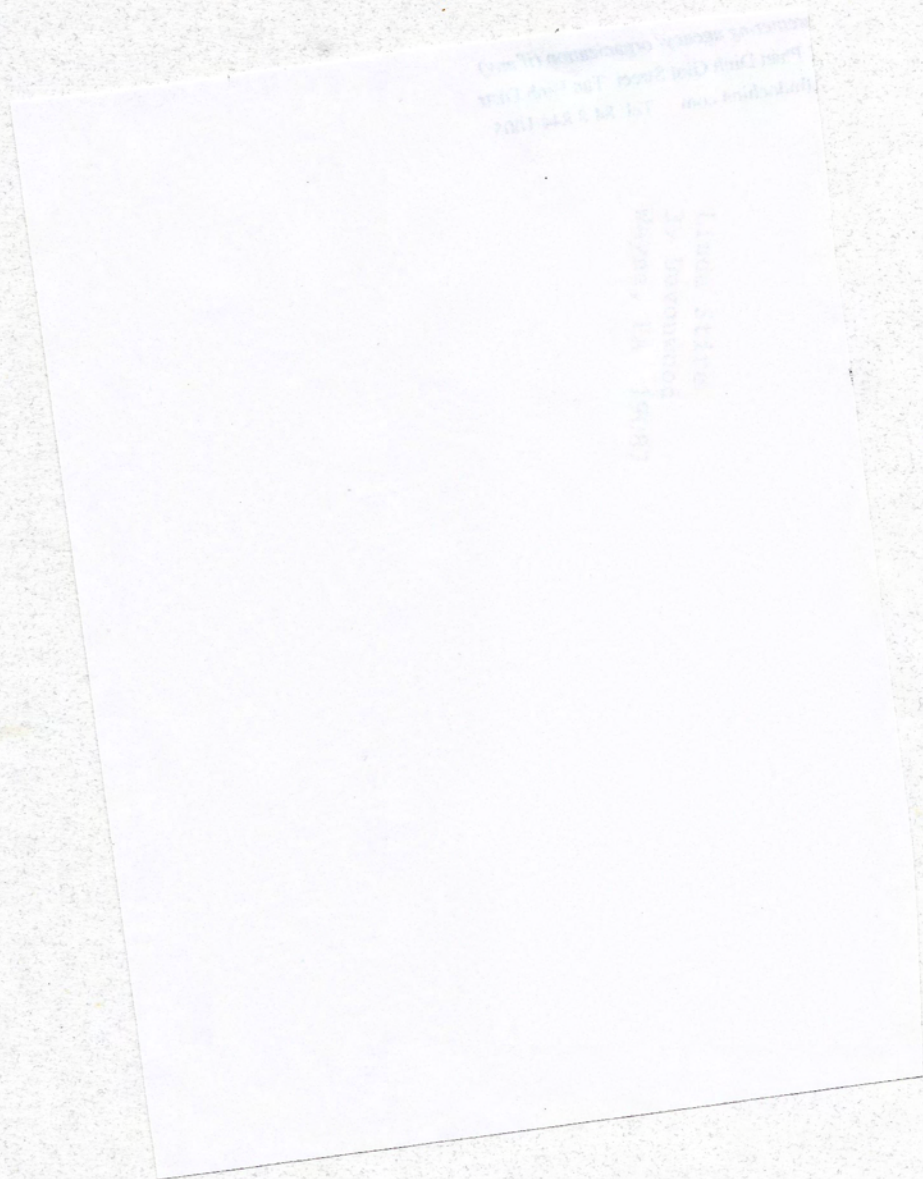
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