

## *EDITORS' COLUMN*

As we wrote to members of the Editorial Board last summer, we feel honored to have been selected as coeditors of *JBW* and approach the task with humility. Fortunately, Lynn Troyka has agreed to remain on the board and give us the benefit of her experience and wisdom. We also benefit greatly from the continuity provided by many of the individuals on the editorial board as well as our Associate and Managing Editor, Ruth Davis, and our Associate Editor, Marilyn Maiz.

Under our editorship, *JBW* will continue to seek and publish provocative articles on theoretical and practical issues, research findings, reports on basic writing and testing programs across the whole range of institutional settings, and descriptions of in-service and degree programs for the preparation of writing teachers. We will continue Lynn Troyka's admirable policy of opening the journal to diverse approaches and methodologies.

With the aim of making *JBW* accessible to a growing community of readers and submitters, we have invited a number of distinguished teachers and scholars to join our Editorial Board: Brenda Greene (Medgar Evers, CUNY); Muriel Harris (Purdue University); Elaine O. Lees (Carlow Hill College, PA); George Otte (Baruch College, CUNY); John Scarry (Hostos College, CUNY); and Steven Tribus (Board of Education, New York City).

The goal of all our efforts is to earn the continued loyalty of our subscribers. We also hope that the friends of *JBW* will help to further strengthen the *Journal* by encouraging colleagues to subscribe and submit manuscripts for consideration.

In future columns we will suggest some new directions we wish to pursue, but for now we will introduce the articles that appear in this issue: Kathleen Dixon questions the applicability of various models of intellectual development, including those of Piaget, Vygotsky, Riegel, and Irigaray, in the light of her students' abiding interest in writing narrative, autobiography, and fiction.

Carlos Yorio argues for the necessity, especially in ESL classes, for teachers to listen to the perceived frustrations, weaknesses, and needs of students and make “principled compromises,” rather than remain pedagogically dogmatic, regardless of one’s teaching strategies.

Linda Stanley has her students write throughout the term in a variety of journal formats: “free,” “focused,” and “epistemic,” to find language to study themselves and life around them. Drawing on the research of Pounds and Bellah, Stanley finds a shift in her students’ writing, from the “language of individualism” rooted in Benjamin Franklin and Walt Whitman, towards a “language of tradition and community,” typified by Jonathan Winthrop and Thomas Jefferson.

George Otte reports on the successful results of using computerized text analysis in a class of the most seriously underprepared basic writers. Using several programs that “read” writing for errors, quantifying their kind and number in percentages and in error-to-word ratio, Otte finds that students can discover a pattern to their errors and achieve significant error reduction in their writing.

Finally, Christopher Gould surveys recent scholarship concerning the uses of literature in basic writing classrooms, classifying articles on the subject appearing since 1974, and calling for greater ethnographic research into the patterns of literacy among various groups of basic writers.

If there is a theme emerging in this issue, it is the respect the authors show for students and their writing, and the intellectual challenges they present.

**Bill Bernhardt and Peter Miller**