

Guest Editors' Note

Kathy Evertz and Renata Fitzpatrick

In the November/December 2015 *WLN*, Daniel Lawson identified “the need for more empirical work and more nuanced examinations of affect and emotion in the writing center” (26). We are delighted to feature in this special issue the work of six authors who foreground how emotions can influence what happens—or doesn’t happen—in writing consultations.

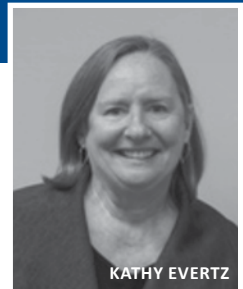
Mike Haen deploys Conversation Analysis, a method for studying the talk occurring in social interactions, to examine consultant-writer collaboration. Haen challenges the assumption that sympathetic expressions, or affiliation, are the best way to support writers and argues that writers’ negative stances can open space for them to think critically about their choices.

Claire Kervin and Heather Barrett challenge another assumption: the view that laziness or poor time management causes procrastination. Citing psychological research that looks at procrastination as a way writers cope with negative emotions, the authors discuss how mindfulness can encourage procrastinating writers’ self-awareness and self-regulation. They also offer accessible strategies tutors can use to help such writers move forward.

Stephanie Rollag Yoon and Erin Stutelberg vividly reconstruct two consultations with an adolescent, Rose, in a secondary school writing center. By offering Rose a space for navigating her emotions within the rigid structure of a high school, the authors help her develop her agency as a writer. The authors encourage more honoring of writers’ affective needs and remind us why secondary writing centers matter.

In the Tutors’ Column, Sacha-Rose Phillips points out the hazard of assuming that people who share aspects of their identities also share similar feelings about writing. Through the story of her own mistaken assumptions, she highlights why tutors should attend to writers’ expressed needs.

Co-editing this special issue has reminded us of the affective dimension of collaboration. We are grateful to Kim Ballard for her straight talk, energy, and optimism in bringing this issue to fruition.



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