

Editor's Note

Muriel Harris

How do the articles in this issue of *WLN* fit together, and what do they offer us?

My answer would be that there are various paths to change and growth, and the outcome often involves acknowledging difference. When Mike Mattison and Kaitlyn Zebell wondered about ways that tutors evolve, they analyzed the audio files of five tutors' conversations in their sophomore and then senior years. How is tutorial talk different after several years of tutoring? Mattison and Zebell conclude that such experience leads tutors to be more confident and more direct in their conversations with students.



For Joseph Franklin, his description of starting a writing center in a British university is an account of mistakes made and lessons learned. The negative situations, while familiar to many of us, illustrate Franklin's recommendation that "we need to tell more stories" of messy situations in which we weren't always at our best. We should reflect on them because ruminating on mistakes is a valuable way to learn. In Franklin's case, it was a matter of learning about transnational differences.

Mark Latta argues against the deficit thinking inherent in Stephen North's influential "Idea" and the unintended consequences of adhering to that view, namely that it perpetuates asymmetrical power relationships. He offers instead his writing center's "Critical Collaborative Writing Process" model. Amanda McDowell's Tutors' Column recounts how she learned to recognize differences across cultures through a clash of views with a student from another culture. As she explains, sharing identity labels does not mean sharing experiences, and acknowledging this idea allows us to acknowledge differences. For McDowell, conflict can provide opportunities for growth.

And a question for you: Should a writing center director's job be a staff position or a faculty one? Please see page 29 for how to respond.