When fog prevents a small-boat sailor from seeing the buoy marking the course he wants, he turns his boat rapidly in small circles. . . . By making waves, he finds where his course lies . . . [and shows] a willingness to take a few risks, to “make a few waves.” A boat that stays in the harbor never encounters dangers—but it also never gets anywhere.

Richard Armstrong, *Sea Change*

Welcome to San Francisco as we celebrate our 60th anniversary in a city known for its waves—waves of immigrants, waves of writers, waves of activists, and now waves of compositionists! In the next three days we’ll be “Making Waves” by examining significant rhetorical events in the city’s history and by contextualizing our own field’s research, theory, and pedagogy in a time of change. The 600+ sessions reflect both our strength and our resilience, with metaphors of ripples, tsunamis, wiki waves, even crashing waves of social justice. Thriving in this precarious economic climate, we need more than ever to join together in panel and workshop discussions, at meetings, and in the hallways to consider how legislative and institutional policies may affect our writing programs, assessment methods, adjunct faculty, intellectual property rights, and other issues so that we may better advocate for our discipline and for our students’ educational futures.

This year’s Opening Session will begin with a visual retrospective of our historic journey so far. Featured sessions in the program will also capture some of our past, beginning with “Sixty Years of CCCC History.” We’ll also revisit controversial times and controversial writing in San Francisco from the early 1900s verse of Chinese detainees at Angel Island to the 1950s activist poetry of the Beats at City Lights Bookstore to the 1960s protests by American Indians at Alcatraz. And what more significant time than the present to understand the complexities of “Writing of War, Writing of Peace”? Dave Eggers will share his experience of writing about wartime conflict and survival as will six veterans from three wars.

Other featured sessions focus on current social and public thought and insights gained from other disciplines and other countries. Mike Rose will reflect on the lessons he has learned from twenty years of writing for broader publics. Ronald T. Kellogg will explain how students’ brain waves affect their advanced writing skills. Christian Weisser and Sidney Dobrin will examine the dynamic relationship between writing and place. Paul Longmore will speak on the rhetorics shaping our perceptions of people with disabilities. More than 50 international presenters are attending this year, including a Saturday feature on “Literacy in Higher Education in Mexico.”

In response to your feedback from last year’s Town Hall meeting, we are spot-
lighting more CCCC member panels on topics, such as “Teacher Response and Best Practices,” “Voice in Written Discourse and Implications for Multilingual Writers,” and “Multigenerational, Intersectional, Pan-Ethnic People of Color Coalitions.” Some format innovations we’ve introduced into the 2009 program are:

- Camp CCCC Childcare facilities offered in the hotel
- More technology-equipped rooms, with a larger area for Computer Connections
- Poster Sessions: “Digital Interventions in Composition” and Scholars for the Dream Reception
- A large, interactive room with better spatial design for discussion
- More hallway tables to visit with colleagues or just to read or write
- A Qigong session Friday morning to help you regain your balance
- CCCC Story Booth and Digital Archive (DALN) in the exhibit area

The Story Booth above, sponsored by CCCC and the Newcomers Committee, is one way you can become part of the wave of members sharing their stories about reading and composing that will be preserved online. Of course, we can’t forget special traditional events to which you are invited, like the Newcomers’ Coffee Hour, the annual TYCA Talks, Humor Night (with music), The Poetry Forum, the Friday night Rock ‘n’ Roll party, and the Saturday Jim Berlin Memorial Run/Walk/Pub Crawl.

Michael Larkin from U.C. Berkeley and the local committee are at the registration area to tell you about favorite tourist sites, local neighborhoods, museums, and restaurants. You might want to join a literary tour of places frequented by Steinbeck, Capote, and Kerouac. Or, if you’d rather shop or tempt your palate, you need not go far. Within four blocks of the Hilton are more than 80 restaurants and the famous Union Square. After the convention, leave time to wander outside the city to Muir Woods, Napa and Sonoma Valleys, and Yosemite. Then again, you might just want to sit and watch the waves at the Cliff House. San Francisco is a great place to discover on foot, day or night, but as with all big cities, there are some parts where you may need to be more cautious. When you leave the Hilton lobby, I recommend taking the O’Farrell exit toward Union Square, and remember to ask for directions at the desk.

We couldn’t have put such a comprehensive convention together without the Stage I and II reviewers, the presenters and chairs, my assistant Tara Broeckel, and Michael Larkin and his enthusiastic local committee. My sincere thanks also go to the dedicated NCTE staff, especially to Eileen Maley, NCTE Convention Manager, and Jacqui Joseph-Biddle, NCTE Convention Director, whose expert guidance and careful attention have made the program such an exciting one. Again, welcome to all newcomers and old timers, local and international colleagues, presenters and participants. Wave on!

Marilyn J. Valentino
Acknowledgments

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Rene Betz
Betsy Ervin