WINTER 2015
ISSUE 4

the CEE-GS

Conference on English Education-Graduate Strand

Get Involved

November 19-22 in Minneapolis, Minnesota was a thrilling time for thousands of English teaching professionals. Of course, if you are a new graduate student it can be quite overwhelming. The CEE-GS group is a smaller, more specific group of students and newly minted professors who share a passion and love for English Education coupled with an openness to new faces and new ideas.

If you'd like a way to make conferences like NCTE seem a little smaller and a little more like coming home, consider becoming a campus representative through CEE-GS. Please contact Meghan E. Barnes at meghan824@gmail.com. In your email, please include your school and year in your program.

Included in this issue:

Important Dates

NCTE proposals
January 13, 2016

Due date for the 2016 call.

http://www.ncte.org/annual/call-2016

AERA
April 8-12, 2016

Washington, D.C.

Registration now open!

www.aera.net

YA in Las Vegas
June 13-17, 2016

www.yawednesday.com

Finding Common Ground: Future Professors Learn the Ins and Outs of University Life

By: Shelly Shaffer
Assistant Professor of Literacy
Eastern Washington University

IFTE/CEE 2015-NYC

During July of 2015, Conference on English Education (CEE) members—both faculty and graduate students—and International Federation for the Teaching of English members flocked to Fordham University in Bronx, New York for four days of learning at the CEE/IFTE conference. With the beautiful backdrop of Fordham University's Rose Hill campus, the conference theme "Common Ground, Global Reach: Teaching English and English Education for Global Literacies" addressed issues of importance to English teachers and English teacher educators from the United States and throughout the world. Each day of the conference keynote speeches were delivered by well-known scholars: Ernest Morrell from Teachers College at Columbia University spoke about "New Directions in Teaching English: Reimagining Teaching, Teacher Education, and Research"; Ngaire Hoben from the University of Auckland presented "Minding the Gap: Addressing the Unacceptable"; Mary Kalantzis from the University of Illinois shared her expertise about "New Media, New Literacies"; and Hilary Janks from the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa talked about "The Social Justice Project of Critical Literacy Revisited."

On the last day of the biennial conference (July 9, 2015), CEE-Graduate Strand (GS) members organized a day-long workshop that promoted our mission of supporting graduate students in English education. In response to a survey which asked current graduate students to identify areas of interest, four workshops were planned and carried out. The four workshops were on applying and interviewing for English Education positions, writing for publication, writing grants, and transitioning from doctoral student to faculty member. Faculty members from around the United States agreed to share their time and expertise during these sessions, while CEE-GS members facilitated the sessions.

The first session of the morning, "Applying and Interviewing for English Education Positions," featured professors Beverly Chin, from University of Montana, and Peter Smagorinsky, from the University of Georgia. Smagorinksy and Chin began their presentation with the following advice: "be yourself," "interview them," "enjoy yourself," "don't appear desperate," "pay attention to your body," and "ask, don't tell." They reminded job seekers that while universities interview them, the job seekers also need to make sure the university meets their needs. Both of these seasoned professors advised graduate students to make sure that the university they are applying to fits their own interests and research agenda. They advised finding out as much information as possible about the university and the campus community. Important questions to research include "Does the university focus on research or teaching?"; "Is it a flagship or regional institution?"; and "Is it private or public?" Before going to on-campus interviews, find out who works there--What are their research interests? Where did they come from? Where would you fit? Chin reminded the attendees that the collegiality of the department is important, as well as the caliber of the students and research tradition. Each university may have different expectations for faculty productivity. Activities may include peer reviewed research and/or books, TED talks, conference presentations, or funded grants; additionally, the teaching load varies by location. It is important to know these expectations when making career decisions. Smagorinsky and Chin also advised attendees to attend job talks at their current universities so that they can see how other job candidates present their work and be able to cater their own talk to the applied for position. Most of all, they

said, remember that the entire time you are at an on-campus visit is part of the interview: the job talk, the tour around campus, the lunch or dinner, the real estate tour, the teaching presentation, and any other planned activities.

The second session, "Writing for Publication," featured Anne Elrod Whitney from Pennsylvania State University; Tara Star Johnson from Purdue University, Indiana; and Jayne Lammers from University of Rochester, New York. Tara Star Johnson is an editor for *English Education*, the journal published by CEE. She suggested to attendees to mark out time for writing 3-4 mornings per week. She said that she often balances her time between two different pieces of writing—one at the beginning of the writing process and one at the end. Jayne Lammers, who has published several articles from her dissertation, shared that accountability to others was a big motivator for her. She meets a writing group at a coffee shop regularly, and this accountability helps her to be more productive. Lammers also keeps in touch with a colleague in another state whom she regularly checks in with. Tara Star Johnson said that she tries to not start writing from an empty page. She reveals that she will often write a "fast draft" on the plane home from a conference, providing her with a framework to work from so she is not staring at a blank page.

These seasoned writers, editors, and reviewers shared common mistakes made by novice writers. First, writers often submit copies that are not "blind," meaning that no evidence of the author's identity is contained in the document. Second, articles often do not contain a clear focus, so they advised writers to "make sure to make a clear connection" between content in the article. Finally, there is a difference between a dissertation and an article. A dissertation, according to the panel, has more narration of how the researcher arrived at the study; on the other hand, an article is "one argument made afterward—one piece of news." Each agreed that an article should contain all of the things *they* (the audience) need to know to understand your research, no more and no less. Lammers talked about rejections. She said, "Every manuscript has a home." She shared that she already plans ahead of where she will send manuscripts next if they are rejected by one journal. She immediately sends rejected papers back out—without making any changes. It helps to choose the right audience for what you are writing about, and all of the panelists suggested attending "Meet the Editors" sessions at conferences in order to get insights.

"Making the Transition from Graduate Student to Assistant Professor" was the title of the third session. On the panel were four assistant professors in their first years as professors: Nicole Sieben, SUNY College at Old Westbury, New York; Alan Brown, Wake Forest University, North Carolina; Lindy Johnson, The College of William and Mary, Virginia; and Luke Rodesiler, University of South Florida. All of the panelists agreed that the first unexpected experience that each had as new faculty is the limited amount of time each had for their own writing the first year. They also reflected on adjustments to new computer systems and the political landscape at their institutions. Lindy Johnson shared that she often took on too much because she did not know how to say no. She suggested being picky about opportunities; "That sounds like a great opportunity, let me get back to you" is a phrase she suggested. This allows new faculty to check their schedule and see if they have time to commit to a new project.

The final session of the day "Getting Your Grant Written and Funded" was presented by panelists Laura Turchi from the University of Houston and Valerie Kinloch from The Ohio State University. Laura Turchi and Valerie Kinloch are both experts on getting grants funded—both are Fulbright Scholars and both have grants funded totally over a million dollars. Since faculty applications often ask about grant experience, graduate students planning to apply for tenure-track positions need experience in grants. Turchi says identifying grant sources is the first place to start, and she suggests ed.gov as a place to start looking. She also mentions searching grant opportunities, newsletters about grants sent out by your institution, contacting the office of research, or researching people you admire in the field and finding out who's funding them. Once you have identified possible a possible grant source, she says, "study grant language," "study the language of the organization," and "know the foundation and its agenda." Grants, both Kinloch and Turchi said, are a different genre. The voice is more "businessy." She also warns, "Be careful about jargon. The purpose of getting a grant is to make it more accessible to people outside your area."

In terms of grants, the panelists reported that larger grants often are conducted in collaboration with other faculty members or a larger team. The panelists advise graduate students to seek out collaborations of many kinds. When thinking of collaborations, ask yourself the question: “who needs to be at the table?” Think about working with people across disciplines or from the community or school district. Smaller grants, often allow junior faculty members to get funding on a smaller scale.

Overall, the CEE/IFTE Conference 2015 was a hit. Attendees not only were able to connect with offered colleagues from around the world, the workshop sessions sponsored by the CEE-GS contributed to their comprehension of the many facets of being a university faculty member. Overall, the conference was a great event that contributed to the understanding of English education and its many diverse interpretations.

Above: Beverly Chin and Peter Smagorinsky present at CEE

Next CEE Conference: Summer 2017!

NCTE/CEE 2015

By: Meghan Barnes
University of Georgia

Some of the best events at NCTE include the CEE focus sessions. Meghan E. Barnes discusses some specific reasons why CEE is the place to be.

The Future is Now

Alan and Luke have done such a phenomenal job putting together the "Future is Now" round table sessions over the past couple of years at NCTE. This year I listened in as one first-year teacher and three pre-service teachers shared their experiences using visual texts in their classrooms. I think it's all too easy for more experienced teachers to shy away from incorporating new technologies and multimodal texts into their classes, and the ways that these pre-service and novice teachers were fearlessly experimenting with tools like Aurasma with their middle and high school students was really refreshing. I definitely left the session with some ideas to incorporate into my own college-level teaching and with some tools to recommend to my pre-service teachers at UGA. I am already looking forward to next year!

CEE Roundtables

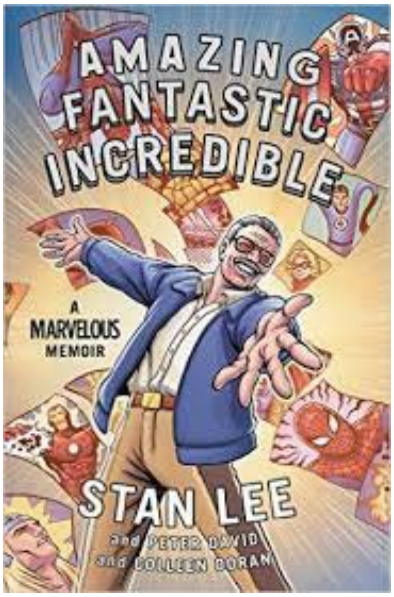
One of the most valuable aspects of NCTE for me over the past couple of years has been the CEE and CEE-GS-related sessions. I've been particularly happy with the CEE-GS round table session that invites graduate students to share an aspect of their work and to receive feedback from a faculty respondent. After participating in this session over the past two years, I've found that going into the session with specific questions that I would like to discuss with the respondent and other round table attendees makes the session much more helpful. It's often challenging to present an entire body of work adequately in a 20-minute window, and having a very specific aspect of my work that I want to focus on and discuss helps make the time much more useful.

Comics Outside the Canon: Recommendations for Adolescents and Pre-Service Teachers

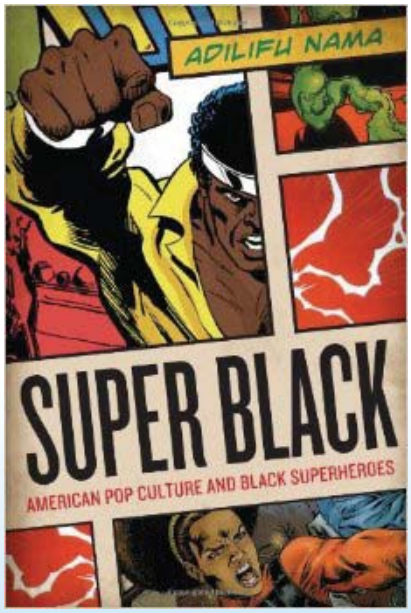
By: Margaret A. Robbins
University of Georgia

Since my colleagues know that I am interested in comics and graphic novels, I frequently get asked to recommend graphica/comic books for classroom use and for adolescents to read for interest. Recently, I have been thinking in particular about comic volumes and graphic novels that have not yet been canonized the way such books as Art Spiegelman's *The Complete Maus* and Marjane Satrapi's *The Complete Persepolis* have. These important graphic novels paved the way for the exploration of comics and graphic novels in classroom settings. However, I am learning about so many other options out there! At some of the NCTE panels and roundtables related to Young Adult Literature and courses for pre-service teachers, I was reminded of how important it is for educators to learn about high interest readings for adolescents, so they can form a literary connection with their students. Therefore, here are a few fresh selections of the comics/graphica form:

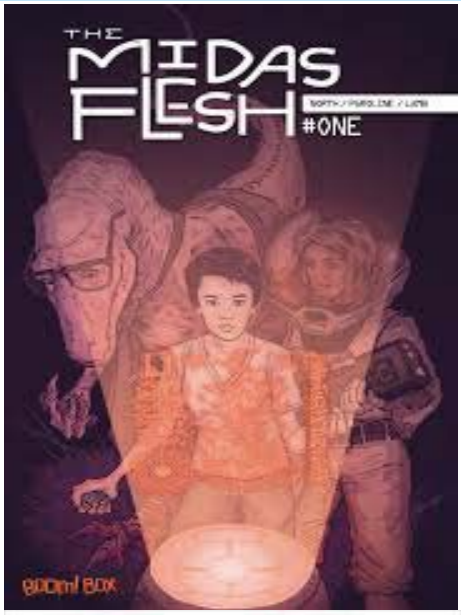
1. *Amazing Fantastic Incredible: A Marvelous Memoir* by Stan Lee, Peter David, and Colleen Doran. This graphic memoir tells the story of Stan Lee's life, from his early days in New York City growing up with a Romanian Jewish immigrant family who struggled during the Great Depression to getting his own star on the walk of fame in Hollywood, California. Lee's story is a true "rags to riches" tale of a person who lived the American Dream and who read a lot and worked hard to make his own way in life. It would be an inspiration to many students, particularly those who are not feeling motivated in school and who do not have a lot of financial opportunities. Additionally, Lee's story is a testament to the power of the immigrant narrative, creativity, imagination, and determination.



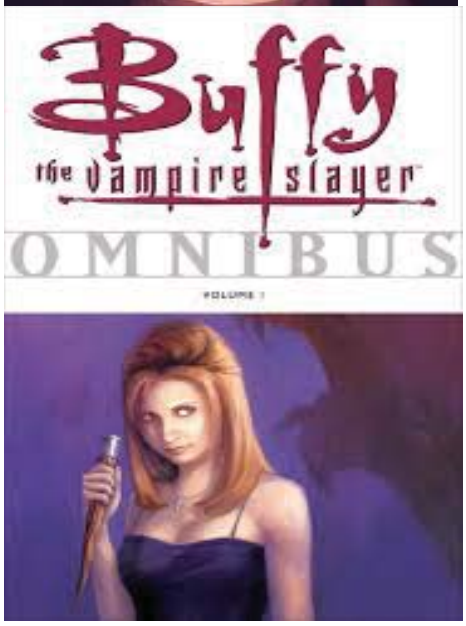
2. *Super Black: American Pop Culture and Black Superheroes* by Adilifu Nama: Currently, there are not a lot of books devoted to the scholarship of African-American characters in comic books, but this is a very well-written one. As a current reader, I am finding it accessible and also informative. In particular, I am intrigued to learn about the *Black Panther* comics, the emergence of Storm, and the *Cloak and Dagger* series. I am learning about fascinating comics with important history that I would not have learned about before, and how comics and pop culture truly tell the narrative of American history. Many comics and films Nama discusses would make for intriguing and critical class discussions.



3. *The Midas Flesh* Volumes 1 and 2, by Ryan North, Shelli Paroline, and Braden Lamb: This two-volume comic is a fascinating mix of science fiction and mythology. In an imagined universe, King Midas turned the planet Earth entirely into gold, and beings from other planets are dealing with the aftermath. This book is a gripping adventure stories with strong female characters who defy gender norms and who want to fight for the greater good, even if they do not always agree on the courses of action. I loved the different representations of race and creed of the characters, and it does not tell a single narrative. The pacing is perfect, and the conclusion at the end raises important questions about materialism versus knowledge. Adolescent and college students alike will love these books.



4. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer Omnibus* Volume 1: This book will particularly resonate with fans of the film and the television show, but even those who do not have a past background in Buffy's story will enjoy this and other volumes of this series. Volume 1 tells more of Buffy's back-story, and we learn more about her life between the film and the start of the television show. In addition, readers learn more about the history of key characters Spike and Drusilla. Since Buffy helped pave the way for other female superheroes, this book would be interesting to study for cultural implications, in addition to being enjoyable to read.



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Lee, S., David, P., & Doran, C. (2015). *Amazing fantastic incredible: A marvelous memoir*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Nama, A. (2011). *Super black: American pop culture and black superheroes.* Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

North, R., Paroline, S., & Lamb, B. (2014). *The midas flesh volume one.* Los Angeles, CA: Boom! Studios.

North, R., Paroline, S., & Lamb, B. (2014). *The midas flesh volume two.* Los Angeles, CA: Boom! Studios.

Satrapi, M. (2007). *The complete persepolis.* New York: Pantheon Books

Spiegelman, A. (1996). *The complete maus.* New York: Pantheon.

Whedon, J., Bennett, J., Brereton, D., Golden, C., Gomez, H. Lee, P., Richards, C. (2007). *Buffy the vampire slayer omnibus volume 1.* Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Books.

What are our future teachers doing?

The Future is Now Reflection

By: Alice Hays
Arizona State University

As mentioned previously, this amazing roundtable session was a fantastic place to get new and creative ideas about all things teaching. This section highlights three novice and pre-service teachers and the work they presented at the session. I definitely learned a lot and I am excited to share these concepts with my own pre-service teachers.

Lindsay Schneider, Wake Forest University

Lindsay studied the use of introversion/extroversion self-tests (who doesn't love those?) and how she might use those results in order to stimulate better classroom discussion. This explicit instruction including students' innate preferences lead to positive results in her class. You can contact her at schneilf@wfu.edu for more information on her study results as well as how you might implement this learning in your own classrooms.

Alexandra Harker, Brigham Young University

Alex talked about the ways in which she uses the FishBowl, Socratic Seminars, Silent Discussion and Character Panels within her classroom. The big takeaway she had in her study was that scaffolding was critical. Additionally, allowing students to control the conversation was incredibly difficult, but a necessary component to the eventual success of her plan. She emphasized facilitating rather than leading in her class. You may contact Alex at afharker@gmail.com for more information.

Sarah Duncan, Miami University

Sarah focused on Improvisation Activities for Deeper Literature Learning. These activities are inspired by her work in Drama, and help students become comfortable at speaking in front of class as well as with examining literature in a more in-depth manner. The three activities she shared were creating Shakespearean Skits out of modern issues that connect to a piece of literature about to be read; to transport students into the year and culture of the text. Her example was to have students use Puritan mores to judge contemporary behavior. Finally, she utilized Classroom Confessionals where students created video confessionals from certain scenes in the literature. You can contact Sarah at Duncans2@miamioh.edu for more information.

Reflections on

Future is Now

By: Crystal Beach
University of Georgia

I had the pleasure of facilitating a roundtable with three pre-service students whose talks renewed those in attendance with their stories to remind us all why a session like this is so important --- to create and engage with a support community from early on in one's career to year's down the road.

Topics ranged from incorporating young adult literature in the classroom (Lauren Alexander, Kennesaw State University) and developing professional mentorships (Katie Heltne, University of Wisconsin -- Eau Claire) to prospectives on the teaching profession from post-baccalaureate teacher candidates (Tyler Feucht, Tennessee Tech University).

Alexander's talk created opportunities for the table to talk about how and why one should push back --- even gently --- against limitations to focus on what works best for the students. The possibilities are endless when one keeps an open mind for creating and sustaining meaningful curriculum, specifically with YA literature, that still meets states' standards.

Then Heltne's talk reminded the group that mentorships for all are an important part in the classroom, specifically between students and student mentors. Everyone agreed that we all need to keep in mind how important strong mentors are in developing ideas and skills, but especially for encouragement when one can often feel run down by increasing demands (typically associated with testing).

Finally Faucet's talk proved to be very thought provoking when thinking about building and sustaining the teaching profession where many leave after only five years. His research was eye-opening in trying to better understand what we might do to continue to help in the development of teachers and the profession as a whole.

Using "Bins" to Organize the Scholarly Literature

By: Audrey Amrein-Beardsley, PhD
Associate Professor
Arizona State University

As per (Miles & Huberman, 1994), in social science research "bins" can be used to facilitate the collection and analysis of qualitative data. More specifically, "bins" can be used as a means for data storage, data coding, and data retrieval, whereby data can be entered into "bins" (e.g., while reading the research literature on any topic), and then organized and coded, after which the contents of the "bins" can be retrieved for analytical and compositional purposes. For purposes of this entry, I discuss "bins" as the key approach to organize any literature base, for what can be an indefinite period of time.

Think of a bin as a basket into which an emerging-to-expert scholar puts data from the literature as (s)he reads it. Every time a scholar, especially one who is developing or enhancing his/her expertise, reads pretty much anything that pertains to the research topic of interest, and the researcher finds insightful, interesting, and potentially useful, the actual text from the article is placed into the researcher's related set of "bins," and of course formatted (e.g., as per the *6*th edition of the American Psychological Association Manual), accordingly. This includes putting the cut/pasted text into quotation marks as a direct quote (although the direct quote will likely never be used, unless profoundly pertinent down the road), with the authors of the article/quote appropriately attributed credit, with the year of the publication and the page number(s) appropriately marked. (See example below.)

Ultimately, and over time, these "bins" help to make clear not only what is important to know on the topic, as in the case when one develops "themes" or "findings" in qualitative research, but these "bins" also help to archive everything any scholar has ever read on the topic. The first condition is that the researcher is diligent and meticulous when attending to his/her "bins," from the point at which the researcher begins reading the literature for any research project until the point the researcher ends. Sometimes, the research may never end such as when an expert is developing their expertise over a long period of time Important here is that the researchers stays on top of managing that which (s)he reads, as (s)he reads it, using an appropriate set of "bins."

Attending to said "bins" also requires occasional cleaning, whereby when one refines and narrows the focus of your study, for a potential publication. At that point, the researcher should also "clean" the bins as (s)he is organizing his/her newly refined thinking. A full reading of one's "bins" might be required to not only organize a literature review, but draw from the bins to substantiate each section of the literature review in terms of (1) what "we" know from the literature review and who has evidenced or substantiated this knowledge, (2) what "we" do not know, and (3) where there might be points of disagreement, whereby others have evidenced counterevidence or substantiated counterpoints to the literature substantiated by the author. For any academic writer, this is what makes any literature review academic, although it is also important to note that the use of "bins" also helps, immensely, when required to resituate one's own findings back within the relevant literature.

Let's turn to how to actually do this. Say I conduct research on value-added models (VAMs), which I do and which I have done for over a decade. When I first started my scholarly work in this area, I searched the literature and began to read everything I could, as published on the topic in peer-reviewed journals (although "bins" do not have to be limited to any type of publication). As I read, I gained more references from these authors' reference lists, after which I searched for and read more and more references. Every time I read an article, starting with article number one, I inserted the most important parts (again, as direct quotes and as appropriately cited and credited) into a working Microsoft Word document file that I literally titled my "Value-Added Bins." On that note, I have tried other file management systems, and I find Word to be most user-friendly and most capable of holding large amounts of text.

The first large handful of articles that I read, though, I found myself cutting/pasting a lot into my "bins," given this was a new area of research for me and I was learning pretty much everything about this new scholarly topic, but over time, I cut/pasted much less as I continued to develop my expertise. One year or so into this process, I had enough literature from which I could write some solid articles, although I did not hit a point of "saturation" – having exhausted most of the literature, the research findings, and the findings' sub-findings – until a few years later. When I hit this level of expertise, my bins supported the authorship of an entire book that I was able to sole-author, thanks to my "bins" and my years working at and attending to them at the same time.

But let us not get ahead of ourselves. Here is how they look. In the figure below you can see two, non-adjacent pages from what are now 560 pages of text taken from all of the articles I have ever read about VAMs. The page on the left, as you can see, came from an article I read within the last few months, as an indicator of currency. The page on the right, as you can see, came from two articles I read in 2013, as an indicator of how little I now include in my bins now given my much more advanced knowledge, now versus in the beginning. On each of the pages, you can see that the title of each article is formatted as per APA, and in bold, so that I can tell the articles apart from the quotes selected. You can also see that each quote includes the full list of the authors, the year of publication, and the page number(s) from which the quote came. This, of course, is for future use but also to avoid any sort of accidental plagiarism.

AERA Council. (2015). AERA statement on use of value-added models (VAM) for the evaluation of educators and educator preparation programs. *Educational Researcher, X*(Y), 1-5. doi:10.3102/0013189X15618385 Retrieved from http://edr.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/11/10/0013189X15618385.full.pdf+html

CONCLUSION "The purpose of this statement is to inform those using or considering the use of value-added models (VAM) about their scientific and technical limitations in the evaluation of educators and programs that prepare teachers…The statement concludes by stressing the importance of any educator evaluation system meeting the highest standards of practice in statistics and measurement. It calls for substantial investment in research on VAM and alternative methods and models, and cautions against VAM being used to have a high-stakes, dispositive weight in evaluations" (AERA Council, 2015, p. 1).

CONCLUSION "the statement goes beyond a consideration of challenges and limitations by specifying eight technical requirements that must be met for the use of VAM to be accurate, reliable, and valid" (AERA Council, 2015, p. 1).

ENOUGH "Although VAM may be superior to status models, it does not mean that they are ready for use in educator or program evaluation" (AERA Council, 2015, p. 2).

STAKES "Teachers and leaders, for example, with low VAM scores can experience loss of advancement, lost compensation, and even termination. Also, when large numbers of teachers and leaders are misidentified, then resources may be misdirected, and the educational system as a whole can be degraded" (AERA Council, 2015, p. 2).

TEST "Standardized tests, however, vary in the degree to which they fully capture the target constructs, as well as in their levels of precision across the range of reported scores. In addition, current state tests, by federal requirement, measure only grade-level standards without including items needed to measure growth for students who perform well below or well above grade level. Therefore, caution about the psychometric quality of the assessment should be exercised if VAM are being considered for purposes of teacher evaluations" (AERA Council, 2015, p. 2).

ATTRIBUTION "Existing VAM estimates have not been shown to isolate sufficiently the effectiveness of teachers, principals, or other non-teaching professional staff" (AERA Council, 2015, p. 2).

TEACHERED "The limitations of using VAM to isolate the relative effectiveness of teachers and leaders are further compounded when used to compare the effectiveness of educator preparation programs. There is very little evidence that value-added models can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of educator preparation programs based on the aggregation of graduates' performance as teachers or leaders" (AERA Council, 2015, p. 2).

RATIONALE "Perhaps the most important result for which consistent evidence has emerged in research is that students in K-12 schools stand to gain substantially from policies that incorporate information about value-added into personnel decisions for teachers (Boyd et al., 2011; Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2014b; Condie, Lefgren, & Sims, 2014; Dee & Wyckoff, 2013; Glazerman, 2013; Goldhaber, Cowan, & Walch, 2013; Goldhaber & Theobald, 2013; Hanushek, 2009, 2011; Rothstein, 2015; Winters & Cowen, 2013)" (Koedel, Mihaly, & Rockoff, 2015, p. 192).

Yeh, S. S. (2013). A re-analysis of the effects of teacher replacement using value-added modeling. *Teachers College Record, 115*(12), 1-35. Retrieved from http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentID=16934

RELIABILITY "The question of stability [reliability/consistency] is not a question about whether average teacher performance rises, declines, or remains flat over time. The issue that concerns critics of VAM is whether individual teacher performance fluctuates over time in a way that invalidates inferences that an individual teacher is "low-" or "high-" performing. This distinction is crucial because VAM is increasingly being applied such that individual teachers who are identified as low-performing are to be terminated. From the perspective of individual teachers, it is inappropriate and invalid to fire a teacher whose performance is low this year but high the next year, and it is inappropriate to retain a teacher whose performance is high this year but low next year. Even if average teacher performance remains stable over time, individual teacher performance may fluctuate wildly from year to year" (Yeh, 2013, p. 7).

"VAM is less reliable than flipping a coin for the purpose of categorizing high- and low-performing teachers" (p. 19). More specifically, VAMs have an estimated, overall error rate of 59% (see Endnote 2, page 26 for further explanation)" (Yeh, 2013, p. 7).

RELIABILITY Prior estimates that using VAMs to identify teachers is no different than the flip of a coin may actually be an underestimate given current reliability estimates (Yeh, 2013, Table 2, p. 19; see also p. 25, 26).

Schochet, P. Z., & Chiang, H. S. (2013). What are error rates for classifying teacher and school performance using value-added models? *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics, 38*, 142-171. doi:10.3102/1076998611432174

RELIABILITY "Using a realistic performance measurement system scheme based on hypothesis testing, the authors develop error rate formulas based on ordinary least squares and Empirical Bayes estimators. Empirical results suggest that value-added estimates are likely to be noisy using the amount of data that are typically used in practice. Type I and II error rates for comparing a teacher's performance to the average are likely to be about 25% with 3 years of data and 35% with 1 year of data. Corresponding error rates for overall false positive and negative errors are 10% and 20%, respectively. Lower error rates can be achieved if schools are the performance unit" (Schochet & Chiang; 2013).

What you will also see is a set of words, at the beginning of each quote, in all CAPS. These are what I use as my set of literature codes. In other words, anytime I read something that adds to my knowledge about VAM-based reliability (i.e., the extent to which teacher-level value-added estimates are consistent, or not, over time), I mark the quote with the code "RELIABILITY." Anytime I find that might have implications for "our" general notions or conclusions about VAMs and VAM use, I mark the quote with the code "CONCLUSION." Anytime an author is making an argument that VAMs, while currently imperfect are much better than the assessment measures used in the past, or rather "good enough," I mark the quote with the code "ENOUGH," and so on. See the next figure to see the list of codes I have at the top of this set of "Value-Added Bins."

ASSUMPTION; ATTRIBUTION; BENEFIT; BIAS; CEILING; CGM; CHARTER; COMPLEXITY; CONCLUSION; CONFLATION; CONTEXT; CORE; COST; CRONY; DATA; DEFINITION; ECONOMICS; ELL; ENOUGH; ERROR; EVAAS/Sanders; FAIRNESS; FIGURE; FINDING; FORMATIVE; FRACTION; FRAMEWORK; GENDER; GIFTED; GRADE; HISTORY; HOME; INTERNATIONAL; LAW; MIDDLE; MISSING; MULTIPLE; NCLB; OPINION; PARTISAN; PEER; PROMOTION; PURPOSE; QUOTE; RANDOM; RATIONALE; REGRESSION; RESIDUAL; SIZE; SOLUTION; SPED; STAKES; STUDENT; SUBJECT; SUMMER; TEACHERED; TEST; TRANSPARENCY; UNINTENDED; VARC

There are three rules regarding codes in this binning process.
1.) Each quote gets at least one code, or I might delete the quote, and each quote can certainly get two, three, or more codes if they apply.
2.) No codes are to be added until at least an intermediate level of expertise has been achieved, so that any researcher can know what the working themes are, as generated via reading the literature, that can ultimately be turned into codes.
3.) Always reference the current list of codes before arbitrarily adding a new code; when a new code is added it requires a full read of the quotes included to make sure other quotes do not also apply.
Hence, and again, it is important to understand that the process of coding should not really being until any researcher believes (s)he is ready with a good understanding of what codes are to be used.

The great news, though, is that in the end, and if done well, articles can literally be written about one or two codes within the bins via simple searches for particular codes. Or books, as mentioned, can literally be written using the bins in their entirety. Bins, therefore, not only help to organize the literature, but they more importantly help make scholarly writers' research-based statements more clear, straightforward, and powerful, as situated in the representative literature.

Hence, of all resources I have ever given my graduate students, this is the one that gives, and keeps on giving, especially to those who continue to venture into the world of academia, and those who need to manage their literatures as they, too, become authorities in their scholarly area(s) of expertise.

References

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Surviving the First Year as a PhD Student

by Alice Hays
Arizona State University

If you are anything like me, you entered your PhD program fresh faced and excited about all the great work you'd be able to do as an expert in your field. And if you were able to stop working full time as a teacher, you may have been under the impression that it wouldn't be so difficult since you'd be able to dedicate all of your time to scholarly work. Then, you got your first assignment. You may have had any number of reactions, but one thing is fairly certain--you may have been feeling a bit out of your comfort zone. How can you possibly join a conversation with these scholars when you don't have the language or the knowledge necessary to do this work? What is even worse is when your peers speak up in class and they sound like they totally "get it" and you are still trying to process the vocabulary that is being used. The number of times that I felt like the biggest idiot in the room was fairly significant in my first year of the program. This thinking ultimately resulted in a case of shingles (brought on solely by stress) and the need to really re-evaluate my attitude toward this PhD program.

As someone who has survived up through the middle of the third year, here is what I have learned. 1.) I am not the only one who feels this way. If you look up "Imposter Syndrome", you'll find multiple articles and research focused on this concept. Sometimes, it just helps to know that you aren't alone.

2.) Join organizations in your field. The fastest way to find people who are in the same space as you and can make you feel better about your early scholarly navigation is to participate with organizations that focus in the same areas of interest you have. It has been my experience that it is pretty easy to get involved in graduate organizations both on campus and off campus. It gives you a connection beyond the classroom that is helpful to both find like-minded researchers and teachers as well as to protect your sanity.

3.) Talk to your professors and mentors. I know that I always felt awkward going in to see someone without a specific question they could help me with, but everything felt too overwhelming to identify specific needs. I often found myself living in my own world, convinced that I was a failure. In hindsight, this isolation contributed to my inferior feelings. Every single time I did make myself talk to a professor, I walked away with a wealth of knowledge, support and information. I still struggle to reach out to professors, but I now know that I don't have to have a specific need that must be filled by that particular professor. Sometimes, just stopping by to say hello and to find out what sorts of projects they might be doing can be incredibly illuminating and useful.

4.) Don't give up! This is the most important one. You will start to feel like maybe you do know what you're talking about. Then, you'll feel like you don't all over again. Then, the knowledgeable feeling comes back. Intellectually, as a doctoral student in the field of education, we should know that learning is an ongoing process, and therefore cyclical. Of course, this is easier understood as it applies to others as opposed to our own growth. Whatever you do, no matter how stressed you get, try to see the light on the other side of the darkness. It exists! Don't assume you have to know everything. As a wise person once told me, there is a reason you can't get a PhD at Circle K (or the convenience store of your choosing)! This does take work, but you are capable of doing it, or else they wouldn't have accepted you!

I certainly don't have all the answers, but finally, after three years of being out of the classroom, and in a PhD program, I am okay with that. My job is not to be the single bearer of knowledge but to ultimately contribute to an ever-expanding field of knowledge. My experiences are leading me towards that contribution, slowly (it feels) but surely. It is an exciting road, albeit difficult, but certainly well worth every minute of stress.

Summer Newsletter Call

Are you interested in writing for the Conference on English Education-Graduate Strand?
Please plan to submit to:
Alice Hays at alice.hays@asu.edu or
Shelly Shaffer at Shellylshaffer2015@gmail.com
by **July 1st.**
There is no word minimum or maximum. The format may be changed as necessary to fit the newsletter parameters, although the content will remain the same.

Do you know anything about an upcoming event? Share it with us here!

We are looking for reflections...

If you have reflections or thoughts about any conference you have attended, we want to hear about it! If you found a conference that was thought provoking and generative, then please let us know about it! Some ideas might include reflections of AERA and LRA for example.

Best practices for methods courses!
Favorite activity?
Most effective activity?

Book Reviews are always welcome!

What are YOU presenting at your next conference? Send us your abstract! We'd love to hear what your research interests include, and what you are developing through your process!

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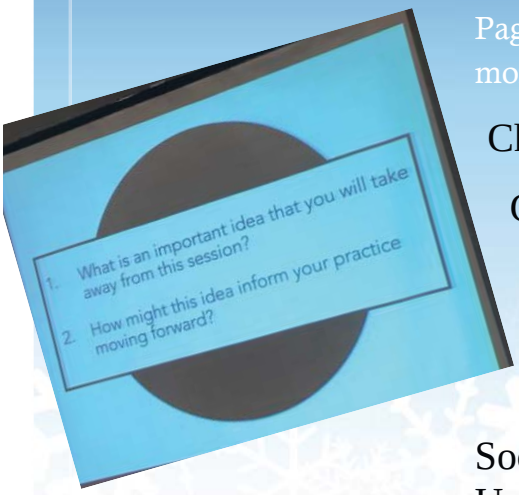

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