Bedford Service & Support
We’re here for you.

The Bedford Promise
Visit us online to explore all the things we deliver for teachers—including classroom, pedagogical, and technical support. Explore bedfordstmartins.com/support.

The Bedford Test Drive
You’re a crucial part of what we do. Visit us online to test-drive our media and sign up to get e-mail updates and invitations to review the books and media we have in the pipeline. Sign up bedfordstmartins.com/englishupdates.

Your Bedford Account
With a Bedford Instructor Account, you can download and request copies of Instructor Manuals, test banks, PowerPoint presentations, Bedford Coursepacks, and more. Sign up bedfordstmartins.com/myaccount.
What’s new in readers?
Because teaching is central to composition, Bedford/St. Martin’s is committed to supporting the work that teachers do. Visit TeachingCentral for a complete list of free print and online professional resources for instructors. bedfordstmartins.com/teachingcentral

Writing Together
Collaboration in Theory and Practice
Andrea A. Lunsford
Stanford University
Lisa Ede
Oregan State University

The Bedford Bibliography for Teachers of Writing
Seventh Edition
Nedra Reynolds
University of Rhode Island
Jay Dolmage
University of Waterloo
Patricia Bizzell
College of the Holy Cross
Bruce Herzberg
Bentley College
From the Editor

Tracing Intersections

Colleagues and Friends ~~
As you’ll see in this month's issue, our articles, symposium contributions, and review essay use the tracing of intersections to inquire into how students learn and practice; into how we might design composition programs; into how difference might be differently conceptualized; into how our own practices of peer review have historically developed and are still in the process of change; and into how we conceptualize and respond to the public sphere. Here I’ll introduce each of these contributions; then I’ll think aloud about three items—our forthcoming issue on The Profession; this moment in higher education in the context of the election of 2012; and the departure of John Schilb as editor of College English and of Joe Harris as the editor of SWR.

In our first article, Doug Brent takes up an issue that has focused the attention of many in the composition community, especially those of us who work with first-year writers: the transfer of knowledge and practice. In his case, Brent
approaches the “transfer question” from the perspective of the intersection between college and the workplace. In “Crossing Boundaries: Co-op Students Relearning to Write,” Brent first reviews the literature on transfer before focusing on the experiences of six students participating in very different co-op experiences. The students, according to Brent, report that while there was very little specific application from college writing situations to those of the workplace, most students brought “to their workplace environment a flexible rhetorical knowledge that can be traced to much more general features of the academic environment than to any particular course in which they were ‘taught’ it.” Such rhetorical knowledge, Brent claims, includes an ability to discern genre features, to call upon genre knowledge for purposes of interpretation, and to consider any writing task in the context of a given audience.

Our second article, Matthew Newcomb’s “Sustainability as a Design Principle for Composition: Situational Creativity as a Habit of Mind,” conceptualizes design in newly capacious ways, linking it to an intersection of both sustainability and ethics. More specifically, the approach Newcomb advocates, sustainable composition, “pays attention to the health of relationships with human and nonhuman others for the long term, rather than just focusing on the immediate response.” Viewed from this perspective, responding to a rhetorical situation requires thinking about both the immediate task and about the relationships that can be encouraged or fostered through completing the task. Moreover, Newcomb suggests, because of the multiplicity inherent in a sustainable composition, the creativity that is part of composing is emphasized.

Stephanie L. Kerschbaum’s “Avoiding the Difference Fixation: Identity Categories, Markers of Difference, and the Teaching of Writing,” our third article, revisits difference in order to theorize it anew. Using the concept of “markers of difference,” Kerschbaum argues that our categories tend to make difference a static entity and that thinking instead of difference as it surfaces through rhetorical cues allows us to explore how difference becomes salient to individuals intersecting and interacting: differences in perception become “material for negotiation.” In addition, Kerschbaum includes practical suggestions for teachers assisting students in inquiring into difference.

Our next two articles make up a Symposium on Peer Review. As I explained in the December 2011 issue of College Composition and Communication, this symposium is motivated by two factors: one, that none of the proposals for the special issue on methodologies included peer review, which seemed an oddity
given that peer review is at the heart of epistemological and scholarly practice; and two, that I expected some attention to peer review given recent “experiments” in peer review, such as the one staged by Shakespeare Quarterly and those conducted under the auspices of the Institute of the Book. Fortunately, Irwin Weiser, and Cynthia Selfe and Gail Hawisher accepted my invitation to help us think about these issues.

Weiser, in “Peer Review in the Tenure and Promotion Process,” begins by providing a welcome historical perspective on peer review and then outlining practices associated with peer review, assumptions underlying it, and some issues surrounding it, all of which can vary by institutional type, as he shows. In this historical trajectory, we see that although peer review is a relatively new practice, it has grown “out of a much older practice of scholarly peer review and [is] dependent upon the introduction of academic ranks and of tenure, all of which have matured over the past seventy or so years.” Weiser notes as well the dynamic nature of peer review and the need for it to be responsive to new conceptions of scholarship, new ways of representing it, and new ways of valuing and assessing it, especially now. His central claim is that despite peer review’s imperfect nature, through adopting a best practices approach, attuned to critical review and revision, we assume a responsibility congruent with and supportive of faculty rights.

Our second article, Cindy Selfe and Gail Hawisher’s “Methodologies of Peer and Editorial Review: Changing Practices,” considers the peer review practices contributing to the publication of books and journals. They too begin with a historical approach that sets the stage for current issues at the heart of editorial peer review, then carefully walk us through these issues, aided in the process by the invited insights of editors of both book series and journals: WAC Clearinghouse, Parlor Press, Computers and Composition Digital Press/Utah State University Press, Kairos, CCC Online, Computers and Composition Online, and ATD: Across the Disciplines. Noting the influence of digital technologies on the practices of peer review, Selfe and Hawisher observe that in some venues, the practice of peer review is expanding to include a form of collaborative mentoring only possible when anonymous peer review becomes a signed practice; the anonymity of peer review, they say, is the most debated aspect of the practice. As we go forward, they expect these tensions to motivate “hybrid systems of review that allow for more openness in communication and information exchange.”

And last but certainly not least is Nancy Welch’s review essay, “The Point Is to Change It: Problems and Prospects for Public Rhetors.” Here she addresses
four volumes focusing on the public sphere: the Adler-Kassner and O’Neill *Reframing Writing Assessment to Improve Teaching and Learning*; the Rose and Weiser *Going Public: What Writing Programs Learn from Engagement*; the Ackerman and Coogan *The Public Work of Rhetoric: Citizen-Scholars and Civic Engagement*; and the Kahn and Lee *Activism and Rhetoric: Theories and Contexts for Political Engagement*. In providing this review, Welch adeptly demonstrates our shared commitment to the public at the same time that she differentiates among the four volumes, particularly given their focus of attention, be it assessment, writing program, the relevance of our theories of rhetorical public spheres, and “the project of building democratic movements for broad-based change.”

We then close our issue with a poster page on rhetorical invention and our annual listing of reviewers and contents.

Two not-quite afterthoughts.

One: I’m very pleased to report that our special issue on The Profession, which will be the theme of the September 2013 issue of *CCC*, received the highest number of submissions thus far: over 140, divided into 100 for proposed articles and 42 vignettes. Making space in this issue for vignettes, which we asked to be a thousand words and complete at the time of submission, felt a bit risky, and not all the Editorial Board members were, in fact, on board. My own sense was that if colleagues did respond to the invitation by submitting vignettes, we’d have them reviewed; said reviewers would help us see their value. As the vignettes began arriving, however, I could literally see what they contribute. They aren’t articles, to be sure, but both individually and collectively, these small-scope narratives provide something else, a glimpse into the individual and collective lived experience of many different kinds of composition faculty, an experience that all too often is invisible and thus unavailable. I was delighted that so many responded to the call. And we go forward: the reviews for both vignettes and proposals are due shortly, and I’m eager to see how we make a special issue out of so much good work.

Two: As I compose this introduction in the late winter of an almost winterless 2012, there are several trends in postsecondary education that might focus our attention, especially in the context of a national election.

- One is a continuing sense (one might even say drumbeat) that education is broken or in crisis; we see this in multiple venues, from articles
on students who fail to graduate college, in the national media and reports on Academically Adrift in the Chronicle of Higher Education and Inside Higher Education to Barack Obama’s State-of-the-Union announced campaign against rising college costs. Do we see it as broken? If so, do we have practices that make it whole? What avenues do we have for sharing these practices?

• Two is an effort to replace so-called seat time, which can be perceived as the basic metric for college, with an outcomes- or competency-based curricular approach; the national organization leading this effort is the Lumina Foundation, although it is working closely with the Association of American Colleges and Universities. As Inside Higher Ed reported this week, the American Historical Association is working with Lumina to determine the competencies graduates of history departments should have developed. Modeled after European “tuning” efforts, Lumina’s Degree Qualifications Profile provides both a process and a structure for undertaking this work. More specifically, this effort describing history graduates will “define what an associate, bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degree in history should mean.” According to the report, the “history effort is coming from a disciplinary association, and the key decision makers will all be scholars,” the theory and argument here being that with faculty ownership of the process, genuine curricular reform is possible. Interestingly, this project is not unlike the process of creating the WPA Outcomes, but applied much more broadly. Is this a process those of us in departments and programs of writing would want to take up, and if so, why and to what effect?

• Three is the formation of the New Faculty Majority, whose intent is to make visible the realities of faculty working conditions across multiple disciplines and institutional types. What’s interesting here is twofold: First, the size and extent of this group of faculty are receiving considerable emphasis, which may work against the perception that their numbers are small, their locations limited, their contributions insignificant. Second, this group seems poised to develop both attention and action. There is an awareness, at least on the part of some, that this formation is linked to the items above—to the (over)production of history doctorates (and doctorates in other fields) and to the “crisis” in education.
A room-with-a-view question: how do these three issues look from the view of writing studies programs and departments?

And as I close this issue, I’m sorry to say goodbye to John Schilb, editor of College English, and Joe Harris, editor of the SWR book program—and happy of course to welcome Kelly Ritter and Victor Villanueva to the editorial circuit. Like many previous editors of CCC, John and Joe have been very helpful to me as I assumed the editorship of CCC, and now and again I have returned to them with a question or concern, finding their responses always instructive and generous. I will miss their wise counsel.

Kathleen Blake Yancey
Florida State University