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Follow the MLA Annual Convention on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/mlaconvention](http://www.twitter.com/mlaconvention).
As I write this introduction to our November 2012 issue of *College English*, I am reminded that in my first editor’s introduction in the September issue, I failed to mention something that readers by now surely will have noticed: the absence of the proverbial blue-and-white colors of the journal, which have long characterized our cover art. When I took over as editor, the publications staff presented me with a wide array of cover options, and told me that although blue and white had always been the colors for *CE*, I was free to make a change. So, in the spirit of the new, and as a reminder to myself that taking risks and making changes can be a productive thing to do—since I’m what you might otherwise call a risk-averse person—I present to you our new (if not improved) “look” for the journal. Now, we are green (and white). I welcome your feedback on this stylistic choice.

As you enjoy our new look, and before you turn to the excellent scholarship showcased in this issue, I want to put in a plea for submissions in a few areas that I feel have been lacking in our pool of manuscripts over these past nine months or so (a situation that may be completely different by the time this issue is published; such is the way—I’ll take the risk). As an editor seeking to represent in the journal the wide range of concerns that characterize our field, and our readers’ interests, I would like to see more submissions in any or all of the following areas:

• The pedagogy of literary studies qua literary studies (*not* of individual works or authors)
• Critical studies of marginalized populations in English classrooms (whether classified by language, ethnicity, dialect, dis/ability, sexualities, social formations, or other means)
• The profession (labor practices, case studies, conceptual frameworks, historical examinations, graduate student issues or concerns)
• The relationship(s) between secondary and postsecondary teaching (of rhetoric, of expository or creative writing, of literature, of the humanities)

I also hasten to add two things: First, I am not saying that reader-authors should send me work *only* on these subjects, nor that I am interested in these topics at the
exclusion of all others. I still want your manuscripts on any or all of those areas listed in the journal’s front matter. Second, these areas of scholarship are purposely left broad here, because I do not want to dictate what shape, format, or material focus authors might choose in addressing these topics. In doing so, I remind readers that our What Is College English? feature—which appears for the first time in this issue—can theoretically accommodate any of these areas of scholarship, insofar as each might serve to question how or why “college English” is itself constructed.

*****

This issue offers a set of articles that revolve around issues of literacy, and the ways in which scholars investigate how learning—of all kinds—happens, both inside and outside the classroom, through traditional as well as more innovative means. I think you will find a productive constellation of ideas on this subject from different theoretical and pedagogical angles, as well as from different scholarly areas within English studies. Jerry Stinnett, our Emerging Voices author for this issue, provides a close examination of theories of ethnography in his article “Resituating Expertise: An Activity Theory Perspective on Representation in Critical Ethnography.” Stinnett encourages us to examine the “ethical crisis of representation” that is endemic to ethnographers through the lenses of activity theory, specifically arguing that “seeing the ethnographic research process itself as an activity system can more clearly reveal to researchers the nature of the ethical contradictions they face in their research, and how efforts to resolve these contradictions themselves allow critical ethnography and critical pedagogy to converge” (131). Stinnett uses David Seitz’s study *Who Can Afford Critical Consciousness?* as a central illustration of the potential role of activity theory in ethnographic practice, noting that “[v]iewing Seitz’s ethnography as his participation in an activity system reveals that the form that [. . .] ‘overestimation’ of researcher importance takes is tied to how the goals of critical ethnographic research are often established” (138). Ultimately, Stinnett argues that the use of activity theory in ethnographic research “challenges the application of a transcendental ethical standard for representation” (144).

In “Cultivating Critical Emotional Literacy: Cognitive and Contemplative Approaches to Engaging Difference,” Amy Winans provides another take on literacy practices—specifically, those that engage emotional literacy—as she illustrates through her study of an American literature course at an “overwhelmingly white, private liberal arts college in the Northeast” (152), more specifically via the analysis of one (white) student’s responses to the short stories of Junot Díaz. Winans argues that emotional literacy involves “nurturing an engaged, ongoing critical inquiry regarding emotions, an inquiry that allows us to attend effectively to difference and identity. It requires exploring how emotions and emotional rules operate, especially in terms of informing identities and social norms, and in terms of guiding patterns
of attention” (152). In doing so, she asserts that issues of identity formation and “individualistic norms” (166) common to literature classrooms require greater and more immediate attention to critical emotional literacy in both our teaching and our scholarship about teaching.

Bump Halbritter and Julie Lindquist move the discussion of literacy from the traditional classroom and groups of students to extracurricular locations focusing on individual subjects in their article “Time, Lives, and Videotape: Operationalizing Discovery in Scenes of Literacy Sponsorship.” They question whether the definition of literacy sponsorship—as coined by Deborah Brandt and employed widely in English studies scholarship—might be expanded by a new approach to data collection in literacy research. They challenge the primacy of the literacy narrative as a measurement of literacy practices when they ask, “What if we suspect that collecting the literacy narratives we most need to hear, for some at least, may take more than one sitting? What if we imagine, also, as Kenneth Burke suggests, that the scene of narrative—its telling and collecting—may be vitally important to the act of narrative?” (173). Halbritter and Lindquist posit that video can function “as both a tool and an actor” for inquiry into literacy sponsorship (173), and they use materials from their LiteracyCorps Michigan project to exemplify how this might work in practice. Halbritter and Lindquist’s study argues that filmed “scenes” of literacy and other footage that is then collaboratively constructed with the interviewee can help researchers to see that “[v]ideo footage can be approached as data in several ways: as an audiovisual record of places, events, or conversations; as a piece of narrative text; [or] as a record of choices made within a particular kind of rhetorical work” (175), and can provide subjects of study with greater ownership over their own stories.

In our first What Is College English? feature, Mariolina Rizzi Salvatori and Patricia Donahue chronicle the history and possible future of scholarship in reading, particularly as represented by the CCCC programs. In their introduction to “Stories about Reading: Appearance, Disappearance, Morphing, and Revival,” Salvatori and Donahue ask, “What has made reading’s ‘invisibility’ newly noticeable? What possibilities for the study of reading in the field at large might this revival point to and open up?” (200). Salvatori and Donahue then use these guiding questions to explore the recent literature on reading, including the “Tate and Lindemann Debate,” and then move to a look at the ways in which one representative intellectual artifact of rhetoric and composition studies—the CCCC program—has addressed reading (or not) in its annual content. Salvatori and Donahue conclude that the revived interest in reading “can be read as an acknowledgment of the multifarious complexity of reading, its irreducible difficulty to be temporarily fixed in order to be recaptured, assessed, explored, and accounted for through writing; and the difficulty it sets up for teachers of writing to reflect on, to make manifest, and to remain consistent
with and responsible to the ways of reading that determine their comments on and interventions in their students’ writing” (213).

This issue concludes with a review essay by Shirley Rose that examines three recent titles on writing program administration by Linda Adler-Kassner, Donna Strickland, and the authorial team of Colin Charlton, Jonikka Charlton, Tarez Samra Graban, Kathleen J. Ryan, and Amy Ferdinandt Stolley. Rose writes from the perspective of a seasoned writing program administrator (WPA), but in her review she also articulates in what ways these three very different books can provide new perspectives on administrative work, and its importance to the intellectual and pedagogical mission(s) of rhetoric and composition studies as a whole. As Rose notes in the close of her review, “[T]hese three books demonstrate that all of us in the field of rhetoric and composition studies must understand our scholarly role as organizers employing strategic rhetoric to engage our institutions and communities in effecting change and to reflect on our actions, energized by one another and sustained by hope” (230).

I hope you enjoy this issue, and thanks for reading.

* * *

Erratum: We apologize for an error in citation in our September issue of College English. In Lisa Mastrangelo and Wendy Sharer’s review essay, Steve Lamos’s book, Interests and Opportunities, was noted as being published by Southern Illinois University Press. This book was in fact published by the University of Pittsburgh Press.