Save the date!
2015 NCTE Annual Convention

Responsibility, Creativity, and the Arts of Language

November 19–22
Minneapolis, MN
Workshops:
November 19, 22–24

For more information, visit www.ncte.org/annual
Call for Nominations

The **CCCC Stonewall Service Award** is presented annually and seeks to recognize members of CCCC/NCTE who have consistently worked to improve the experiences of sexual and gender minorities within the organization and the profession. Nominations should include a letter of nomination, 3–5 letters of recommendation, and a full curriculum vitae. Please send nominations to cccc@ncte.org by **November 1, 2015**. Please visit http://www.ncte.org/cccc/awards/stonewall for further details.

****CCCC Tribal College Faculty Fellowship****

The **CCCC Tribal College Faculty Fellowship** offers financial aid to selected faculty members currently working at tribally controlled colleges to attend the annual Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) Convention, April 6–9, 2016, in Houston. We are offering two Tribal College Faculty Fellowships in the amount of $1,250 each.

Featuring more than 500 sessions focusing on teaching practices, writing and literacy programs, language research, history, theory, information technologies, and professional and technical communication, the annual CCCC Convention provides a forum for thinking, learning, networking, and presenting research on the teaching and learning of writing. With this fellowship, CCCC hopes to create new opportunities for tribal college faculty members to become involved in CCCC and for CCCC to carry out its mission of serving as a truly representative national advocate for language and literacy education.

**How to Apply:** By **November 15, 2015**, please submit an application letter (on institutional letterhead) describing who you are as a teacher and what you teach at your tribal college; what your research interests are; and what you hope to gain from the experience of attending CCCC (how it could help you in your teaching or research).

Send your application letter to the CCCC Administrative Liaison at cccc@ncte.org.

**Selection Criteria:** A selection committee will review applications for the Tribal College Faculty Fellowship and award the fellowships based on overall quality of the application letter. You do not need to be a presenter at CCCC in order to qualify for this award.
Don’t Miss These CEE Events at the NCTE Annual Convention, November 19–22, 2015, Minneapolis, Minnesota!

CEE Opening Roundtables: Challenges and Possibilities
Friday, 9:30–10:45 a.m.

Britton, Emig, and Moffett Awards Session
Friday, 11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

CEE Luncheon featuring Valerie Strauss, reporter from the Washington Post
Friday, 12:30–2:30 p.m.

CEE Commission Meetings
Friday, 2:30–3:45 p.m., and Saturday, 2:45–4:00 p.m.

CEE General Membership Meeting and Social
Friday, 4:00–5:15 p.m.

CEE Research Initiative
Saturday, 4:15–5:30 p.m.

All events will be held in the Minneapolis Convention Center.

www.ncte.org/cee
In this, our final editorial, we reflect back on the goals outlined in our first editorial (October 2010) and what we accomplished in the past five years. Our vision for *English Education* was “to continue the solid reputation for both excellence and collegiality that has been built over the last four decades” (p. 6). We hope that you, the reader, feel we were successful in meeting this vision.

We also wanted the journal “to be seen as a venue for publishing qualitative, quantitative, and multiple-methods studies . . . and we wanted to encourage researchers to think about the many ways we can answer the perennial, and new, questions about English education and how diverse methodological approaches can add to these discussions” (p. 6). We hoped that we would get more of a balance among these types of methodologies in the research published in *English Education*. Although this goal didn’t come to fruition, we did see some interesting articles published in the Research/Theory section of the journal, articles that took our thinking—and that of our readers—in unanticipated directions.

One example of this change in perspective came in Brian White’s 2011 article, “The Vulnerable Population of Teacher-Researchers; Or, ‘Why I Can’t Name My Coauthors.’” Describing the colleagues of teachers who publish as potential “sharks,” White describes attacks on these teachers from their colleagues, who may envy or resent their accomplishments. We were particularly struck by the notion of those teachers who publish as “tall poppies”—standing out in some way from the crowd—and who are under potential attack from those who think that the high achiever’s accomplishments are not deserved. White suggests that university-based researchers acknowledge this potential problem to co-researchers in classrooms and cultivate networks of teacher-researchers so that individuals do not feel that they are standing alone.
Another example of research that moved our thinking in interesting directions is an article by Emily R. Smith, Betsy A. Bowen, and Faith A. Dohm, “Contradictory and Missing Voices in English Education: An Invitation to English Faculty” (2014). In this mixed-methods study, the authors set out to understand why some English teacher candidates in their NCATE-approved English teacher education program did not pass the Praxis II test; they undertook a quantitative analysis of candidates’ Praxis II scores in relation to candidates’ GPA in English, overall undergraduate GPA, and SAT scores. To follow up, these researchers interviewed both English and education faculty members to examine their understanding of writing and literary analysis and to compare their perspectives with those in the Praxis II exam. Their findings led the authors to call for the inclusion of English faculty members in “discussions and decisions about English teacher preparation and assessment” (p. 133). Specific suggestions for including English faculty include supporting English teacher candidates to reflect on their beliefs about teaching and learning, involvement of English faculty as analysts of the Praxis exam requirements, serving as readers and consultants on English teacher candidates’ curriculum development work, and making their own pedagogy explicit for English teacher candidates.

We initiated a new section in the journal called “Extending the Conversation” that attempted to include a variety of nontraditional pieces. We hoped to rotate among four types: dialogue with policymakers, connection to research, classroom research, and first-person accounts. The Extending the Conversation section proved to be popular, and at times we filled these sections close to two years in advance. Although we did not receive submissions under all four umbrella topics, we were able to publish a wide variety of interesting articles.

One such example is Elizabeth Dutro’s “Writing Wounded: Trauma, Testimony, and Critical Witness in Literacy Classrooms,” published in the January 2011 issue. Opening with her own “hard stuff of life” (p. 193), Dutro writes that “the weight of hard life experiences, particularly in the lives of students, is hard to bear. Yet, those stories are part and parcel of classroom life” (p. 195). As educators, then, we need “to pay attention to how those experiences function for us and our students” (p. 208). What should we do? Dutro suggests that we “participate as both witnesses to student experience and testifiers to their own” (p. 198). In a time when teachers are often distanced from students by outside policies, we need to remember that students come to school with and from a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances, and seeing us as humans—with our own stories to tell—bonds us to them.
Opening the Conversation

On the heels of our last editorial (April 2015), we cannot help but reflect back on Peter Smagorinsky’s article (“Authentic Teacher Evaluation: A Two-Tiered Proposal for Formative and Summative Assessment”) from January 2014 in which he proposes an alternative to the current system—using standardized test scores, whether the teacher is responsible for teaching that subject and/or students—widely in place. Smagorinsky writes that “for a teacher evaluation system to be legitimate” (p. 166) it needs to have validity, reliability, and utility. Moreover, it must “support the development of better teachers” and be implemented respectfully (p. 166). Evaluating teachers’ worth and impact cannot be based on test scores alone, and, further, Peter’s article supports Elizabeth Dutro’s claims about considering our students’ lives. He writes, “Making no effort to assess how teachers work toward the creation of supportive and inclusive social and learning environments ensures that it [feeling emotionally safe in school] will remain a low priority” (p. 179).

A third Extending the Conversation piece that we want to comment on appeared in the April 2012 issue and was coauthored by English educators from New Zealand, England, and the United States. In “The State of English Education: Considering Possibilities in Troubled Times” we asked our colleagues (Shaun Hawthorne, Andy Goodwyn, Marshall George, Louann Reid, and Melanie Shoffner) to “reflect on the state of English education in their countries” (p. 288). What did we learn? Sean Hawthorne argued that in his country, and around the world, the “overarching challenge for English teachers is how to foster both a love of English language and literature, and competence in a rapidly expanding number of modes of literacy in English” (p. 290). Andy Goodwyn offered a review of educational policies that had taken place in England, a country that “has seen wave after wave of major ‘reforms,’ all introduced as the solution to some politically perceived problem, such as falling reading standards” (p. 293). What resonated with us is how what has been happening in England is similar to reform movements here in the United States. The closing “trialogue” among Marshall, Louann, and Melanie returns to the theme of testing and evaluation and its impact on current and future English teachers. As Melanie so eloquently points out, “An element of schadenfreude may drive our interest in an accomplished chef’s meltdown during a culinary competition, but what drives our interest in placing teachers (and students) in an environment defined by standardized test scores, annual yearly progress, and pay-for-performance?” (p. 305).
Important Issues

In that initial editorial, we outlined some key issues that we felt the field must continue to talk about: “issues of equity and diversity in recruiting, training, and retaining teachers of color; in providing equitable access and exposure for all students; and in working against words and actions that marginalize students and teachers” (p. 5). We noted, “In educational settings that are increasingly defined by narrow silos, we must look for how best to work with, between, and among the various groups that prepare English/language arts/literacy/reading teachers and to examine how changing definitions of literacy affect the profession” (p. 5).

As described above, Smith et al.’s (2014) work is an excellent example of analysis of existing perspectives among English faculty and English education faculty—one that provided specific and thoughtful recommendations on how we might work together more closely to support our English teacher candidates toward excellence. An article by Janet Johnson, “‘A Rainforest in Front of a Bulldozer’: The Literacy Practices of Teacher Candidates Committed to Social Justice” (2012) presented two cases of English teacher candidates who used literacy to enact social justice. Vivid and compelling, these descriptive cases serve to further the work of social justice education and literacy education, along with the tensions and barriers experienced by these committed and passionate English teacher candidates.

“Who’s the Teacher? What Tony Danza Taught Us about English Education” (Bach & Weinstein, 2014), along with several other articles we could mention here (e.g., Dutro, 2011; Mayher, 2012; Thomas, 2011; Yagelski, 2012), helped us to redefine and rethink what English teacher education might include. Bach and Weinstein’s examination of the reality show Teach and their English teacher candidates’ responses to it served to extend the lens of English teacher education to include popular culture and specifically reality television in its portrayal of a celebrity turned short-term English teacher.

Reflecting on Past Conversations

One of our goals as editors was “to remember the past conversations and open new ones in the hope that we can move closer to consensus” (pp. 4–5). To accomplish this we endeavored “to include a range of voices, viewpoints, and methodologies emerging from a range of stakeholders—from the undergraduate prospective teacher to emeritus faculty” (p. 5). We are quite proud of the fact that we accomplished this goal, inviting a range of “English” and “literacy” colleagues at numerous levels to write with us.
Opening the Conversation

For example, in the issues in Volume 45 (2012–2013), we invited classroom teachers and doctoral students to collaborate with us on editorials. It is exciting for us to see some of these coauthors now as faculty members, some in their second year as English educators.

In our opening editorial we noted the editors who came before us (Oscar Haugh, Ben Nelms, Allen Berger, Gordon Pradl and Mary K. Healy, Patricia Lambert Stock, David Schaafsma and Ruth Vinz, Cathy Fleischer and Dana Fox, and Michael Moore), and one of the highlights of our tenure was collaborating on a series of editorials with several of these gems of the English teacher education discipline. Throughout the calendar year 2011, we wrote about a variety of topics with these amazing thinkers and writers of our field, and we found such joy in the connections that we were able to make with them.

With Ben Nelms and Michael Moore, we wrote and thought about what the hot topics in English Education have been and what they should be in the future; with Cathy Fleischer we wrote and thought about the broad field that makes up English education and how this journal might support them; with Allen Berger and Gordon Pradl we wrote and thought about the troublesome nature of this field of English and the political realities being encountered by English teachers and English teacher educators; with Patricia Lambert Stock, Ruth Vinz, and David Schaafsma, we wrote and thought about how the preparation and renewal of English educators might be improved. It was such a pleasure to hear from and to write with these important individuals and to hear their voices on the topic of English teacher education, writ broadly.

A Final “Thank You”

As we finish out our term as coeditors we must give some heartfelt thank yous to many people. We do not have the space to name them all.

To Michael Moore: Thank you for the easy editorial transition. You were always there to answer our questions and address any concerns.

To Rona Smith and Theresa Kay: We could not have written and published any issue without you. Your many close readings are appreciated.

To the CEE EC: Thank you for financially supporting our trips to the NCTE Annual Convention and including us in your discussions.

To Kent Williamson: Thank you for your leadership to the organization and profession.

To our institutions: Miguel Mantero and James McLean at the University of Alabama and Linda Hutchison and Kay Persichitte at the University of
Wyoming. Thank you for supporting our application to serve as the editorial team and offering the institutional support needed.

To our reviewers: Every issue is yours. We were often stopped at conferences by authors we published in the journal, thanking us for supporting them in the publication process. In all honesty, the thanks go to you. A peer-reviewed journal is just that. We thank you for your diligence and thoroughness in the review process.

To our colleagues who we informally interacted with, over popcorn, wine, or hors d’oeuvres. To the NCTE members who informally thanked us over the years . . . we say thank you. It has been our honor to serve you and the profession in this capacity.

Finally, thank you to Sheridan Blau and Peter Smagorinsky. We can’t tell you why in this issue, but we promise to the next time we see you in person.

As we hand over the reins to the new editorial team, we wish them luck and hope that they are just as enriched by the experience as we have been.

In This Issue of English Education

In this issue we feature articles by Allison Skerrett, Alina Adonyi Pruitt, and Amber S. Warrington and Luke Rodesiler and Barbara G. Pace.

The article provided by Allison Skerrett, Alina Adonyi Pruitt, and Amber S. Warrington, “Racial and Related Forms of Specialist Knowledge on English Education Blogs” examines the blog writing of preservice teachers about diversity and inequality, exploring what these issues mean in the teaching of English. In addition, this important research examines these preservice teachers’ peers’ responses to the blogs. Among other findings, these authors note that both preservice teachers were able to conceptualize English education as a means through which they could redress social inequities, although these issues also ran the risk of being ignored in the conversation around their blogs: “As instructors and researchers, we continue to believe in the potential of CMCs such as blogs to provide preservice teachers platforms for individual as well as community thinking and learning. . . . Although a forum for building and exploring diverse knowledge about, and perspectives on, English education, blogging must also be understood as another space of English teacher education where alternative voices and perspectives are placed at risk of marginalization and silencing” (p. 342).

Luke Rodesiler and Barbara Pace, in their article, “English Teachers’ Online Participation as Professional Development: A Narrative Study,” present findings from a study of English teachers’ online participation in a variety
of professional learning experiences. Examination of the data provided in narrative form explores these English teachers’ experiences with blogging, Twitter, participation in online communities, and other informal professional development. Ultimately, the authors found that multiple benefits exist for teachers who participate in these forms of professional development: “Because of the positive experiences of these teachers and the benefits that emerged in the themes from their narratives, we suggest that online professional development may also offer a lifeline to novice teachers who face issues of isolation, a need for a supportive professional community, and a paucity of opportunities for face-to-face professional development focused on literacy and the English language arts. Yet, if prospective teachers are to make the most of participating online to support their professional aims—both while preparing for and living the life of a practicing English teacher—they must learn how to use the Web not just for teaching students but also for deepening their craft” (p. 375).

References


