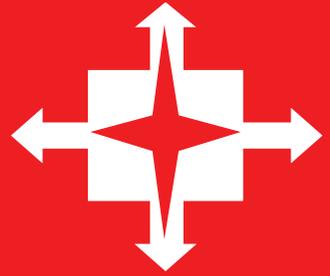


# JAEPL



The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning

**AEPL Keynote: Writing and Time, Time and the Essay, Douglas Hesse**

**The Rainbow Connection: Theorizing the Efficacy of Private Texts, Liz Rohan**

**Writing Yogis: Breathing Our Way to Mindfulness and Balance, Christy I. Wenger**

**Reflections on Accidental Testimonies and Spectacular Witnesses, Lavinia Hirsu**

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**Out(side) of the Box and onto a Dusty Trail, Richard Leo Enos**

**SPECIAL SECTION: Administration, Ethics, and Spirituality**

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**The Communally Focused Writing Center, Tom Truesdell**

**Renovating My Academic Administration, Elizabeth Vander Lei**

**Telling the Truth as WPA, Beth Daniell**

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# JAEPL

*The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning*

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# JAEPL

The Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning (AEPL), an official assembly of the National Council of Teachers of English, is open to all those interested in extending the frontiers of teaching and learning beyond the traditional disciplines and methodologies.

The purposes of AEPL, therefore, are to provide a common ground for theorists, researchers, and practitioners to explore ideas; to participate in relevant programs and projects; to integrate these efforts with others in related disciplines; to keep abreast of activities along these lines of inquiry; and to promote scholarship on and publication of these activities.

The *Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning, JAEPL*, also provides a forum to encourage research, theory, and classroom practices involving expanded concepts of language. It contributes to a sense of community in which scholars and educators from pre-school through the university exchange points of view and cutting-edge approaches to teaching and learning. *JAEPL* is especially interested in helping those teachers who experiment with new strategies for learning to share their practices and confirm their validity through publication in professional journals.

Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
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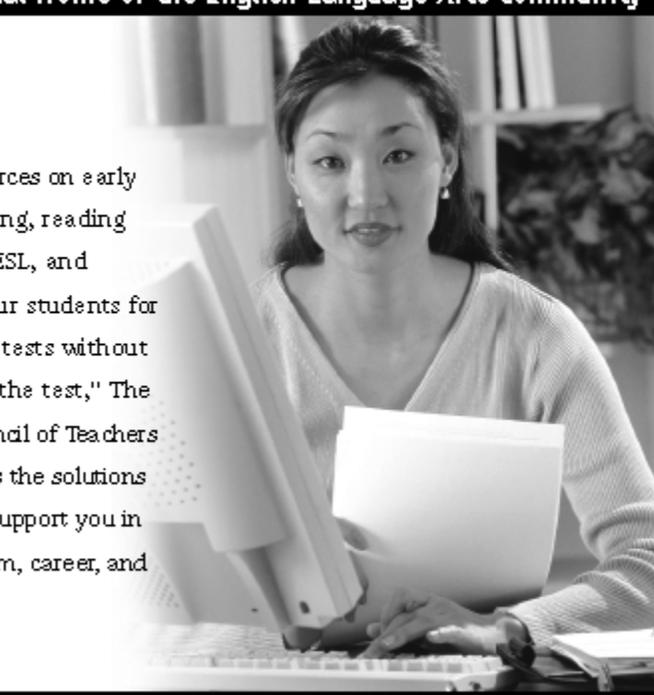
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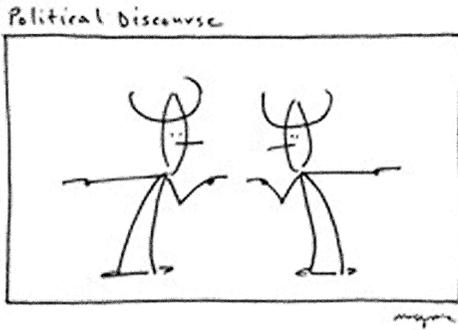
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## EDITORS' MESSAGE

"Mindfulness" served as our key term for the 2012 AEPL Conference in Estes Park, CO. This irony does not escape us in an election year when so much of the political discourse we've heard was influenced by anything but. Fortunately, we have Laurence Musgrove's whimsical cartooning to keep us mindful of what we lose in shoot-'em-up, shut-'em-out debates where neither opponent actually listens, relying instead on an



impoverished script. We wonder how this year would have proceeded, had our congress critters taken time out, as many of us did, to consider ways that mindfulness might change our professional and personal lives for the better.

AEPL keynote speaker, Doug Hesse, has explored how writing requires us to be alert to the fortuitous insights that time and timeliness—*kairos*—can give us.

Hesse tells us that no technology can vie with the mindfulness of which we're capable as writers, as teachers, as human beings. Be prepared for musical interludes and a hopefully mellow note from his trombone.

Liz Rohan continues the theme, theorizing how the impromptu, private texts we and our students scribble on the fly can gain real value, even if they never retain the "immediately communicative" qualities we try to give them. As a diarist, she explains that such writing, seen mindfully through Bakhtin's concept of "great time," adds up to "personal literacy inventories" which teach us who we were and who we've become, interwoven with the written worlds of others.

Moving from theory to technique, Christy Wenger shares with us the ways she brings students to mindfulness in her composition classroom—conjoining breath with invention, leading young writers to transformative effects. Certainly, the same rings true if we heed Lavinia Hirsu's call to develop a pedagogy that responds to student testimonies we don't always know how to witness, unexpected testimonies that force us to hear other's perspectives mindfully. Heather Trahan's essay goes on to teach us how the classroom application of activity theory can help us cope with the surprises that occur when we *do* remain mindful of students' different perspectives, but our good intentions don't put us on the path we want to take.

Are you interested, on the other hand, in seeing what could happen if our colleges and universities opened the doors to the community, inviting them in to reinvent themselves in writing? Shelly Sanders and B. Cole Bennett did that very thing and discovered wonderful new uses for writing center space that promise to reinvent their university's creative writing program as well. Mindfulness about space and place helps us remember that everything we have is borrowed and ought to be shared in as many good ways as we can imagine.

Mindfulness can also prompt us to reinvent where we do research—and how we do

it. Richard Enos gives us an all-too-brief glimpse of what happened when he discovered that rhetorical scholarship combines quite agreeably with archaeology. His Out of the Box column will make you hanker after your own artifacts.

In this issue, too, we wanted to experiment with asking contributors to focus mindfully upon the ethics and spirituality they bring to leadership. Many of us have answered the call to serve in administrative positions, taking heart in what AEPL founder, James Moffett, said: “The spiritual approach to problems is to examine oneself along with the situation” (222). The four who contribute to this theme know they need self-examination to “enter another’s point of view” and find empathy—above all for those who choose to criticize, dispute, or even bully rather than work toward a common good (222). As Moffett would put it, stories such as the ones you will read can help us see more readily what administration really should be “because storying serves to induce understanding, to raise consciousness” (183).

For instance, Paul Puccio provides a surprising slant with his belief that we will have a direct impact upon shaping the kinds of leaders we want—and deserve—if we approach hierarchy with the intent to collaborate mindfully. While Puccio’s essay aptly frames our special section, Tom Truesdell follows him up with his claim that student tutors, in their own way, can become change agents, if their directors help them see their potential as advocates for and negotiators of new relationships with faculty. Truesdell stands what it means to administrate on its head by questioning the assumptions we make about student-centered learning vis-à-vis communal learning.

Perhaps the most moving and powerful essays in this issue come from Elizabeth Vander Lei’s and Beth Daniell’s respective views on how administrators must sustain mindfulness in the midst of intensely challenging responsibilities. Vander Lei draws deep from her upbringing in a Dutch Reformed community, crafting an administrative philosophy that remains under constant renovation even while it stands firmly on the two pillars of “peaceableness” and love. Daniell takes instruction from her ongoing commitment to truth-telling in the relationships she develops with students and faculty—a commitment that never allows her to appease or flatter but demands that she always conduct herself in “ways that are clear and kind.”

We hope, as always, that you will then turn to our book review section, where Judith Halden-Sullivan has collected savvy critiques on four new, useful texts that will refresh your mid-year perspectives on teaching and learning. And as you also turn to the classroom stories and poetry that Helen Walker has gathered from our colleagues, we hope they will inspire you to submit a tale or reflection that comes from your own mindful response to the work that we all do together.

Enjoy this issue, and by all means, lend it to a friend or two. Be mindful that AEPL members such as you are the best means we have of growing our assembly!

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