

2016

Front Matter

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Recommended Citation

(2016) "Front Matter," *The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning*: Vol. 21 , Article 2.

<https://doi.org/10.7290/jaepl2125og>

Available at: <https://trace.tennessee.edu/jaepl/vol21/iss1/2>

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JAEPL



The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning

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Reconsidering Virtue, John M. Duffy

Why Rhetoric and Ethics? Revisiting History/Revising Pedagogy, Lois Agnew

Being There: Mindfulness as Ethical Classroom Practice, Paula Mathieu

Composition as a Spiritual Discipline, Scott Wagar

Buddhism's Pedagogical Contribution to Mindfulness, Erec Smith

'Alas, Not Yours to Have': Problems with Audience in High-Stakes Writing Tests and the Promise of Felt Sense, Peter H. Khost

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Toward a Poetics and Pedagogy of Sound: Students as Production Engineers in the Literature Classroom, Karen Lee Osborne

Out of the Box: My Mom's Letter, Robert M. Randolph

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JAEPL is a non-profit journal published yearly by the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning with support from Emory University, Northern Illinois University, and TRACE at University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Back issues are archived at: <http://trace.tennessee.edu/jaepl/>.

JAEPL gratefully acknowledges this support as well as that of its manuscript readers, including, for this issue:

Lisa Ampleman, <i>Tupelo Quarterly</i> , Cincinnati, OH	Alexandria Peary, Salem St. U, MA
Lois Agnew, Syracuse University, NY	Irene Papoulis, Trinity C, Hartford, CT
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The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning

Co-Editors

Joonna Smitherman Trapp
Emory University

Brad Peters
Northern Illinois University

Book Review Editor

Julie Nichols
Utah Valley University

“Connecting” Editor

Helen Walker
Messiah College

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(ISSN 1085-4630)

An affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English
Member of the NCTE Information Exchange Agreement
Member of the Council of Editors of Learned Journals
Indexed with MLA Bibliography
Website: www.aepl.org

Blog: <https://aeplblog.wordpress.com/>

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Volume 21 • Winter 2015 - 2016

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, 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 innovative 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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- Intuition & felt sense theory
- Meditation & pedagogical uses of silence
- Narration as knowledge
- Reflective teaching
- Spirituality
- New applications of writing & rhetoric
- Memory & transference



Membership in AEPL is \$30. Contact Christy Wenger, AEPL, Membership Chair, email: cwenger@shepherd.edu. Membership includes that year's issue of JAEPL

Send submissions, address changes, and single copy requests to Joonna S. Trapp, Co-Editor, JAEPL, email: joonna.trapp@emory.edu. Address letters to the editor and all other editorial correspondence to Joonna S. Trapp, Co-Editor, JAEPL, email: joonna.trapp@emory.edu or Brad Peters, Co-editor, email: bpeters@niu.edu.

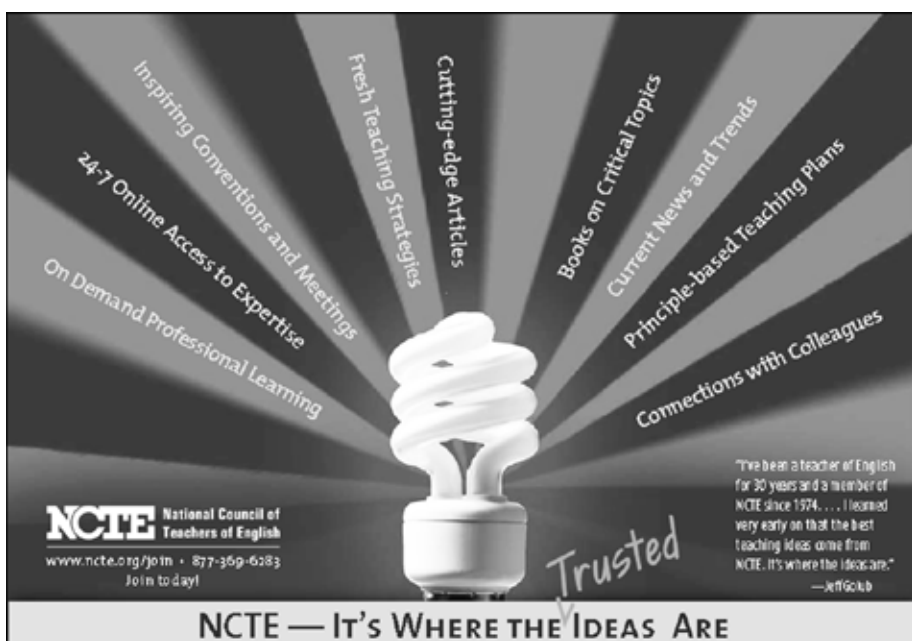
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Back issues of JAEPL: <http://trace.tennessee.edu/jaepl/>

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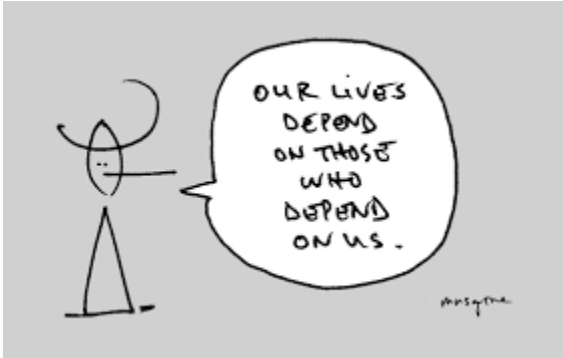
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EDITORS' MESSAGE

This issue features a five-essay special-topic section on rhetoric and ethics, inspired by a panel of AEPL friends who presented at the 2015 Conference of College Composition and Communication. Presenter Paula Mathieu specifically connected rhetoric and ethics to the research that Christy Wenger and other AEPL members in the Writing and Mindfulness Network have been doing. The topic recurred in several presentations at our 2015 summer AEPL Conference in Estes Park, CO, with its commemorative discussions of James Moffett's influence upon how we teach.



As usual, Laurence Musgrove's inimical Tex sums up the basic premise of our section topic with laconic precision: the inevitability of human interdependence. This premise seems particularly compelling as the ongoing presidential campaign strains the outmost limits of rhetoric and ethics alike.

Appropriately, John Duffy leads with a strong call

for writing pedagogues to recover the ancient rhetorical concept of *arête*—virtue—which found its most widely received articulation in Quintilian's assertion that rhetoric must exemplify the good person speaking well. *JAEPL* readers have long espoused this ideal with their insistence that we cannot separate language instruction from our values or from the human spirit that seeks a common good for all. We know you will find Duffy's call inspiring as well as affirming.

Lois Agnew, longtime reviewer for *JAEPL* manuscripts, follows with an examination of how an academic program might not only center upon rhetoric—as many composition programs in the nation do—but how such a program might place ethical training at the center of its mission as well. Ever a pragmatic idealist, Agnew reveals the fine quality of administrative thinking that must go into such a project.

Paula Mathieu, another composition program administrator, argues for the role that mindfulness plays in sustaining the connection between rhetoric and ethics, especially in the task of training new teaching assistants. She expands upon the same clear connections among mindfulness, spiritual writing, and neuroscience that many *JAEPL* contributors have done as she maps out her philosophy of writing pedagogy.

Taking up this philosophical thread, Scott Wagar weaves it into an argument for claiming composition studies as a spiritual discipline. He invites the kinds of reflection, compassion, and connectedness that even agnostics or secularists won't dismiss because of the sensible ties his claims make to humanistic ethical systems of belief. Erec Smith's fascinating work with the second chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* takes Wagar's argument beyond the realm of Western thinking, creating another link to the East-West dialog that AEPL has fostered from its beginnings. Smith sees a striking similitude between the

rhetorical concept of *Kairos* and the carefully delineated analysis that “The True Aspect of All Phenomena” conducts in its explanation of how the key concept of “interbeing” functions.

Peter Khost’s complex and incisive critique of how standardized testing truncates young writers’ perceptions of audience takes the progression of articles in this issue back again to era of the classics, but with a contemporary spin. Khost argues for a new application of “felt sense.” He illustrates that application through a new interpretation of the Orpheus myth that will have *JAEPL* readers revisiting his discussion again and again to study the pedagogical interventions he suggests.

This issue moves only a few short steps from rhetoric and ethics to teaching and learning, with a focus on audience that also distinguishes Sheri Rysdam’s and Lisa Johnson-Shull’s writing-center(ed) research on instructors’ response to students’ drafts. The insights they offer require us to consider how much of our response written to students is past-centric rather than forward-oriented in our efforts to help young writers develop.

Meanwhile, Mark Noe’s project in autoethnography in a university at the Mexico-Texas border shows why we should give students a genuine audience for their writing and how we can guide them toward joining greater cultural debates. His own autoethnography about informing himself of the pedagogies that enable his students to examine where their lives merge with critical texts mirrors what he achieves in his classroom. At the same time, Noe points to the question that Irene Lietz asks in her Midwestern American classroom: What are the potential long-term effects of a critical pedagogy that asks students to go beyond their cultural comfort zones? The answers that Lietz’s case study offers us will give us pause over the political debates the media are heightening at this political moment in our nation.

Next, underscoring a method that teaches students to forge interdependencies in her literature classroom, Karen Osborne’s thoughtful experiment enhances the powers of reading poetry. She asks students to record their oral interpretation of a poem they choose. Then she asks them to pair up with partners to become sound-production editors who aim to enhance each other’s readings. The result gently illustrates what students can achieve by collaborating rather than competing—a life lesson that does not get lost in the context of this issue’s foregoing essays.

We urge you as well to turn to our regularly featured sections. Robert Randolph’s “out of the Box” reflection on the inspiration a letter from his mother provided him speaks to anyone whose language background differs from the academic discourse we practice daily. New book-review editor Julie Nichols brings together a collection of volumes that invite “ethical reading.” And Helen Walker, in her final editorship of “Connecting,” rewards us with glimpses into the professional moments that sustain us.

Don’t forget also to inform yourself about this summer’s fast-approaching AEPL Conference at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, June 23-26. Organizers are hard at work planning another memorable experience, shaped by the theme of “Deep Reading: Reinventing Identity through Imagination.” We hope to see you there!



FOND FAREWELLS

Judith Halden-Sullivan and Helen Walker: Section Editors and Friends

People move on. We live with this simple fact. However, we cannot let our two friends—Judith Halden-Sullivan and Helen Walker—slip away too quietly. Neither our readers nor we would allow it, without expressing our heartfelt appreciation for their years of fine work.



Judith Halden-Sullivan

Judith Halden-Sullivan first appeared as book editor in Vol. 11 of *JAEPL*, taking over for Keith Rhodes. Since 2006, her discerning eye and thoughtful guidance have provided readers and reviewers alike with an assortment of texts that kept us informed of the kindred minds who further the scholarship we value so highly. Judy also brought to light many of our own colleagues' book-length publications, so we could discover how the shorter work that we have read earlier in these pages came to full fruition.

Judy continues as Professor of English at Millersville University of Pennsylvania, where she teaches courses in undergraduate composition, as well as seminars in rhetoric and contemporary American poetry. As she returns to her research with Gadamer, Heidegger, and Bakhtin—and her passions for gardening, film, and art history—we hope she will maintain her ties with *JAEPL*. We boldly suggest that she may even favor us with a manuscript, some of her poetry, or dare we say, even a book review or two.

Judy wrapped up her final duties as book editor in Vol. 20, but not before she played an instrumental role in bringing our new book editor, Julie Nichols, to Vol. 21.



Helen Walker

Meanwhile, Helen Walker pioneered *JAEPL*'s "Connecting" section back in 2002, with Vol. 7. When incoming editors Linda Calendrillo and Kristie Fleckenstein responded to readers' keen interest in stories and poetic vignettes from the life of teaching and learning, Helen was the natural choice as collector-in-chief. She always added her own gifts as raconteur to the section, and her voice has become synonymous with "Connecting."

Rumor has it that Helen is retiring from her rich and varied career as Professor of English at Messiah College in Mechanicsburg, PA. Since Helen started the rumor herself, it may prove true. But she will hardly idle away her time. She has taught environmental literature as well as academic, creative, and dramatic writing—and most likely, she will go on holding writing retreats at her home in the woods near East Berlin. She remains deeply committed to her work with young women of inner-city Harrisburg. And *JAEPL* readers know that Helen won't surrender her research with teachers and special-needs orphans in Kenya. Retired indeed.

Helen turns the “Connecting” editorship over to Christy Wenger, who also volunteers her leadership in AEPL as newly elected treasurer.

We will truly miss Judy and Helen, but we thank them for their long dedication to the journal and to AEPL. Their contributions and their friendship have enriched our lives, and they will go on to touch the lives of others. At the same time, if we ever grow lonesome for them, all we need do is get on the Web at <http://trace.tennessee.edu/jaepl/>, where we can visit the volumes they so generously helped bring into print.

Thank you, Judy and Helen. And best of luck in your next ventures!

