

JoLLE 2019 Winter Conference Reflection

by Tairan Qiu, Conference Chair

During the conference weekend, we engaged in thought-provoking, status quo-challenging, and wall-breaking, conversations, movements, and activities. It was truly energizing and revitalizing for many of us. (At least energizing and revitalizing mentally—we were all exhausted physically!)

During our Pre-conference Workshop (co-sponsored by the Language and Literacy Education Graduate Organization), we solicited fifteen distinct workshops led by faculty from the Department of Language and Literacy Education (LLED) and the Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy at the University of Georgia, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Kentucky, the Department of Adult Learning and Leadership at Kansas State University, and the Department of Instruction and Teacher Education at the University of South Carolina. The extensive, diverse, and comprehensive event program attracted approximately 60 attendees from near and far.

During the conference, our keynote speaker, Dr. Kakali Bhattacharya, humored and inspired. She exposed us to the possibilities of playfulness, absurdity, and humor in our research and practice endeavors. Dr. Jerome Harste, also our keynote speaker, illustrated the intersections between art and literacy through his own art and literary processes. He brought us to think deeper into the potentials of risk-taking and to trust our learning process. Additionally, our conference program covered a wide array of topics including usage-based approaches to push theory to practice praxis, self-care for scholars and teachers, transnational literacies and cosmopolitanism, (dis)ability disruption, liberating learning communities, and many, many more. Walking in the hallways of the Tate Student Center, our conference venue, I often hear conference attendees say: “The sessions I went to were all so good!” Positive feedback and satisfaction of our conference attendees are the best rewards that we could ever ask for.

As the 2019 Conference Chair, I’d like to express my deep gratitude to all who were involved in the conference and who made it a stimulating event. I would like to first and foremost thank all attendees for making time for JoLLE and for being in Athens this past weekend, eager to learn and share. I’d like to thank our keynote speakers, for their keynotes that affirmed and inspired. I’d like to give special thanks to Peter Smagorinsky, our faculty advisor, for his continuous guidance, and for always thinking about the bigger picture but also being attentive to every small detail. I’d also like to thank the faculty and students in LLED, for showcasing their work and for their love and generosity in always supporting us in what we do. Lastly and most importantly, I’d like to thank our 2018-2019 Editorial Board members, Stacia L. Long, Alexandra Lampp Berglund, Merida Lang, Lacy D. Brice, Eun Young Yeom, Sharon M. Nuruddin, William Terrell Wright, Caroline Bedingfield, Maverick Y. Zhang, and Kate C. Batson, for their support and encouragement throughout the year of conference preparation, for making sure everything went smoothly during the conference, and for always representing JoLLE so well.

A group of graduate students got together and organized the first JoLLE conference in 2013. Since then, we continued to laugh, sweat, inspire, learn, and share. That's a wrap for JoLLE 2019. We so look forward to future JoLLE conferences that would continue to build on the legacy that JoLLEers have established throughout the years. Thank you and cheers to all!

Here are some videos you don't want to miss:

[Dr. Kakali Bhattacharya's Keynote Video](#)

Laughing Across the Borders: Playful Possibilities in Teaching and Inquiry

Sometimes in the midst of engaging in pedagogy and inquiry, justice work, and being serious about work, we forget that playfulness, absurdity, and humor can be effective approaches to address difficult issues within and outside the classroom. The court jester was often known to be the trickster, deconstructivist, and critically smart advisor. Humor and absurdity allow us to take the fangs out of difficult issues so that we may address them intimately without fear. In this talk, Dr. Bhattacharya will discuss how we might tap into humor, absurdity, and playfulness to engage in border crossing work both in teaching and inquiry.

[Dr. Jerome Harste's Keynote Video](#)

Beautiful Oops!: Some Parallels Between Written and Visual Literacy Learning

As both an artist and a literacy scholar, Dr. Harste will share what he sees as principles operating across literacy learning in both art and written language. These principles involve taking risks, seeing problems as potentials, and trusting the learning process. Using stories from his career as a writer and pieces of art from his career as an artist, Dr. Harste will illustrate each of the points being made via a PowerPoint presentation.

[Conference Photo Gallery](#)

A video of some highlights of this year's wonderful conference.