

# JoLLE@UGA®

## JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

### Editor's Introduction:

## Breaking Down Walls: Teaching and Learning Through and Across Boundaries

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As the semester and this editorial run come to an end, we've been reflecting on the *Journal of Language and Literacy Education's* (JoLLE) history and trajectory together. Since its founding in 2005 in the College of Education at The University of Georgia (UGA), JoLLE has grown substantially evident in diverse domains such as editorial board membership, manuscript submissions, genres published, conference attendees, citation statistics, and organizational awards. In the past, JoLLE's changes have included launching new features and publishing new kinds of content such as children's and young adult book reviews, Scholars Speak Out essays, fiction, and more.

Although these changes are easy to evaluate, less visible is the impact that it has had on the graduate students who move in and out of the editorial board each year. Through our conversations exploring the journal's past and envisioning its future, I've been struck by how much JoLLE means to its membership, myself included. In addition to publishing two issues a year that feature local, national, and international scholars and readers plus hosting an engaging conference for educators interested in the critical work around language and literacy education, JoLLE is also a graduate student organization. The Editorial Board members are often first and second year doctoral students, and JoLLE serves as an introduction in what it means to be a scholar through the work of our new discipline: academic writing and publishing. In this space of learning, Editorial Board members develop relationships with each other, our faculty advisor, past JoLLE Editorial Board members, contributing authors, and winter conference presenters and attendees. Taken together, these relationships become a unique network that mentors us into becoming critical, engaged, and productive scholars.

This year, our changes have been of a different ilk, and the conference theme *Breaking Down Walls: Teaching and Learning Through and Across Boundaries* reflects how we've grown. In reflecting on how generative and meaningful our own membership in JoLLE has been and is for us, we sought to open that network to others outside the UGA community. This year, we launched our External Review Board that has become a large community of graduate students and early career scholars at universities across the nation and beyond. We have met many members of the External Review Board at conferences such as CTE, LRA, AAAL, and AERA and are thrilled to develop new strong collaborative relationships. We look forward to continuing to build our

relationships with scholars across the fields of language and literacy in universities beyond The University of Georgia

### **JoLLE 2019 Winter Conference and Keynote Speakers**

The JoLLE@UGA conference has become a beloved and engaging opportunity for teachers, students, and researchers to participate in enjoyable, generative, and innovative thinking about issues concerning language and literacy education. Both our 2019 conference and Friday pre-conference workshop organized by Tairan Qiu challenged attendees, presenters, and keynote speakers through her theme *Breaking Down Walls: Teaching and Learning Through and Across Boundaries*. The Friday pre-conference event featured 15 workshops led by faculty from across The University of Georgia's College of Education, Kansas State University, the University of Kentucky, and The University of South Carolina. Enthusiasm for this event was unprecedented, with more than 50 attendees.

Energy and attendance remained high throughout the conference weekend as keynote speakers Dr. Kakali Bhattacharya and Dr. Jerome C. Harste took up the conference theme in playful and powerful talks. In her phenomenal talk, Dr. Bhattacharya explored how absurdity, humor, and playfulness can move inquiries about difficult issues forward in unexpected, critical, and productive ways. In his art-infused presentation, Dr. Harste explored the connections between his work as teacher, literacy researcher, and artist while urging listeners to take risks and “Do something. Do something to that something. Then do something to that something, and soon you will have something.”

The works featured in this issue continue and extend the conversation, practice, and research begun at the JoLLE@UGA 2019 Winter Conference. In particular, the eight research articles in this issue demonstrate ways that these authors engage in “breaking down walls” and working “through and across boundaries” in transformative ways to challenge themselves that lead to new relationships, understandings, and ways of engaging in scholarship.

### **Research Articles**

Expanding on the conference theme, the first two articles share research that explores relationships with students to grow teacher practice. The first article, “Leveraging Digital Spaces for Pre-Service Teachers to Practice Reading and Responding to Student Writing” by Meghan E. Barnes and Caleb Chandler explores how to bridge the divide between a university-based teacher education course and a sixth-grade English classroom with online writing relationships. The two authors show how university-classroom relationships can enrich preservice teacher learning with meaningful conversations and authentic practice in responding to student writing. Next, Charity T. Gordon describes how a university and teacher partnership creates space for educators to listen to high-school students and respond to their insights about critical literacy through unit re-visioning in “Trusting Students’ Voices in Critical English Education.”

The next two pieces—“Issues of Validity, Subjectivity, and Reflexivity in Multimodal Literacy Research and Analysis” by David E. Low and Jessica Zacher Pandya; and “‘I Feel Normal Here’: The Social Functions of a Book Club in a Residential Recovery Program” by Laurie MacGillivray, Amy Lassiter Ardell, Margaret Saucedo Curwen, and Samuel Wiggin—challenge traditional understandings of concepts in literacy research: multimodal analysis

and book clubs respectively. Low and Pandya explore the complications of engaging in multimodal analysis of student work using hybrid approaches. By returning to their own work with multimodal texts, the authors identify tensions in their analysis that led to their recommendations that researchers who also engage in this kind of work amplify their attention to their own positionality, collaborate with other researchers and the multimodal creators throughout analysis, and develop new ways of making sense of multimodal texts. MacGillivray, Ardell, Curwen, and Wiggin look at a book club in a women's residential recovery program. In exploring this reading structure in a community outside of traditional PreK-16 educational spaces, the authors expand understandings of the social functions of book clubs and reveal how these literacy communities support members' identities within and beyond the book club meetings.

In our final two pieces in this section, readers are treated to scholars engaging in critical content analysis of young adult literature with powerful theoretical frameworks. Nicole Ann Amato's "'I'm fat. It's not a cuss word.': A Critical Content Analysis of Young Adult Literature Featuring Fat Female Protagonists" critically examines the portrayals of fat female protagonists in and across two prose novels and two graphic novels to understand how these underrepresented characters are constructed by the author. Her article challenges teachers to consider how their classroom libraries include diverse characters and how they can invite students to take up critical stances toward the representations of fatness in texts. In "Breaking Binaries: #BlackGirlMagic and the Black Ratchet Imagination," S.R. Toliver analyzes Afrofuturist young adult literature through the framework of the Black Ratchet Imagination to explore how Black girls are constructed in Nnedi Okorafor's novels. Her analysis challenges the binary traits of respectability and ratchetness and emphasizes multifaceted, "both, and" identities of Black girls on and off the page.

### **Voices from the Field**

Both articles in this issue's Voices from the Field section explore the magic of collaboration with other educators to expand student learning. "Loud and Clear: Using the Graphic Novel to Challenge the Status Quo in Content Area Literacy" by Rick Marlatt and Ashley K. Dallacqua describes how Marlatt invited Dellacqua to guest teach about nonfiction comics with preservice teachers in a content area literacy course. This lesson challenged preservice teachers' understandings of literacy and how literacy instruction can occur across disciplines. Lauren Zucker and Audrey A. Fisch also describe a collaboration in "Play and Learning with KAHOOT!: Enhancing Collaboration and Engagement in Grades 9-16 through Digital Games." These two educators recount a relationship begun online that led to sharing resources virtually and challenging their students through games. Their piece encourages readers to take risks, to reach out to other educators who are doing inspiring work, and to seek fun and play in topics that initially appear dry.

### **Academic Book Reviews**

Academic Book Review Editor Lacy D. Brice has gathered a number of diverse book reviews in this issue of *JoLLE*. The academic texts reviewed in this issue include *Educating for Empathy: Literacy Learning and Civic Engagement* (Mirra, 2018) reviewed by Meghan E. Barnes, *Visual Phenomenology: Encountering the Sublime Through Images* (Goble, 2016) reviewed by Alexandra Lampp Berglund, *Teach Like Yourself: How Authentic Teaching Transforms Our Students and Ourselves* (Goldberg, 2018) reviewed by Lou Tolosa-Casadont, *Shifting Lenses: Multilanguaging, Decolonisation and Education in the Global South* (Makalela, 2018) reviewed by Lourdes Cardozo-Gaibisso, *Not Light, But Fire: How to Lead Meaningful Race Conversations in the Classroom* (Kay, 2018) reviewed by Amanda

Rigell, *Transnational Writing Education: Theory, History and Practice* (You, 2018) reviewed by Karissa Wojcik, and *Social Justice Literacies in the English Classroom: Teaching Practice in Action* (Boyd, 2017) reviewed by Katie Loomis, Lauren Martin, and Jemimah L. Young.

### **Children and Young Adult Literature (CYAL) Book Reviews**

Eun Young Yeom, the Spring 2019 Children and Young Adult Literature (CYAL) Book Reviews Editor, continues the feature's purpose of sharing literature from diverse perspectives and hearing from both educators and young readers. This section begins with a spotlight by Hyewon Yum, an acclaimed picturebook author and illustrator who talks about navigating the world of picturebook publishing as a Korean-American. The books reviewed in this issue include *Boy* (Cummings & Devires, 2018) reviewed by Merida Lang, Frankie Simmons, Alex Winninghoff, and Lincoln; *The Stone Bird* (McCarthy & Benson, 2017) reviewed by Chu Lee and Sera Lee; *Blood, Water, Paint* (McCullough, 2018) reviewed by Caroline Bedingfield and Savannah Friend; *Poet X* (Acevedo, 2018) reviewed by Madison Jones and Maria Vargas Gottschalk; *Love, Hate, and Other Filters* (Ahmed, 2019) reviewed by Amanda Brady Deaton and Juliana Stinnett.

### **Poetry, Fiction, and Visual Arts**

William Terrell Wright, the Spring 2019 Poetry, Fiction, and Visual Arts Editor, organized a collection five poems, one piece of fiction, and one piece of visual art that inspire generative thinking about issues in language and literacy education. The poems published in this issue include "After reading *Number the Stars*" by Stephanie Abraham, "Twenty-Six Letters" and "Fear of Writing" by Csaba Osvath, "Our Priorities are Backwards" by Liz Garcia, and "Fresh Snow" by Elaine O'Quinn. The fiction contribution is entitled "Lotus Flower" by Anju Kanwar. Finally, Jerome C. Harste's "A Readerly Life" serves as our issue's cover.

### **Thanks and Recognition**

JoLLE is a journal that is run by a wonderful Editorial Board, which grew by three members this semester. These new members, alongside those from Fall 2018, collaborated to continue and expand the work of JoLLE. I want to offer my sincere appreciation to those who served on our editorial board for the Spring 2019 semester: Alexandra Lampp Berglund, Managing Editor; Merida Lang, Production Editor; Tairan Qiu, Conference Chair; Lacy D. Brice, Academic Book Review Editor; William Terrell Wright, Poetry, Fiction & Visual Arts Editor; Eun Young Yeom, Children and Young Adult Literature Book Review Editor; Maverick Y. Zhang, Communications Editor; and Kate Batson, Scholars Speak Out Editor. In particular, I'd like to recognize Tairan Qiu, party planner extraordinaire who put together an amazing pre-conference workshop and an invigorating conference with fantastic keynote speakers and presenters. I also want to thank Dr. Peter Smagorinsky who serves as Faculty Advisor and keeper of our institutional memory. You have taught us the "ins and outs" of publishing, how to write critical and helpful reviews, and countless strategies for developing high quality scholarly writing.

In addition to our Editorial Board, I also want to thank the inaugural 2018-2019 External Review Board. Your reviews and support enabled us to review and return manuscript to authors in a timely manner. We appreciate your carefully considered, high quality, and thorough reviews. If you are among those who would like to be a part of the 2019-2020 External Review Board either as a new or returning member, please look at our [Review for JoLLE](#) page and look for our call, shared on social media in August.

Lastly, the JoLLE Editorial Board would like to express our deep gratitude to the authors and readers who sustain our work. We appreciate your continued friendship and support of our journal. We'd also like to invite you to continue your support of JoLLE by submitting your manuscripts for consideration! To learn more about the submission process, please refer to [JoLLE Submissions](#) page or contact our Managing Editor at [jolle.submissions@gmail.com](mailto:jolle.submissions@gmail.com). In addition to our Fall and Spring issues, JoLLE invites you to read and submit shorter op-ed essays to our Scholars Speak Out (SSO) feature published in our monthly newsletters. To learn more about the SSO feature, please contact our Scholars Speak Out Editor at [jolle.scholarsspeakout@gmail.com](mailto:jolle.scholarsspeakout@gmail.com). We also invite you to follow JoLLE on both Facebook and Twitter (@JoLLE\_UGA).

We hope that as you read this issue, you will consider *Breaking Down Walls: Teaching and Learning Through and Across Boundaries* with us and in your own practice.

Warmly and sincerely,

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