

JoLLE@UGA[®]

JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

Editor's Introduction:

Doing the Work: Moving Past What We Already Know to Enact Change in Language and Literacy Education

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For the past five weeks, a single word has served as a reverberating echo in our minds: unprecedented. In the myriad emails, news briefings, and tweets we have all received and consumed, this word serves as a reminder of that all of our lives have changed in ways that we could have never imagined. This semester and the latter portion of our editorial tenure was not what any of the Editorial Board or I could have expected. We could all say the same for our teaching experiences, familial relationships, and community activities, as every aspect of our daily lives has been impacted. We are currently living through a pandemic that has created a need to alter business models, practice social distancing, and, most noticeably for educators, close schools.

Teachers and other educational professionals have made national and local headlines for the ways that they have risen to the challenges that this pandemic has presented in unprecedented ways. Weeks-long curriculum had to be created in a matter of hours. New technology had to be chosen and implemented on widespread levels. Meals were delivered to students. The list of impressive feats accomplished by educators is endless. However, I want to challenge the idea that this work is unprecedented. Teachers have been caring for students, mitigating crises, and educating their pupils despite daily insurmountable changes for years, and their feats have often gone unrecognized. They have been doing the work.

This year's conference theme *Doing the Work: Moving Past What We Already Know to Enact Change in Language and Literacy Education* reflects this need to acknowledge the work that educators are doing and will continue to do. The mission of JoLLE's Winter Conference was also to inspire and encourage educators and researchers to continue to strive for justice and equitable education through participatory sessions and collaborative events. As the JoLLE Winter Conference theme promotes, a critical part of moving forward to make change is doing the difficult, engaging, and generative work alongside students and community members. This integral work permeated the conference through the keynote speaker addresses and participant presentations.

JoLLE 2020 Winter Conference and Keynote Speakers

Engaging in this needed transformative work has long been the goal of the Conference Co-Chairs. The JoLLE Winter Conference always seeks highly interactive sessions that make space for collaborating, planning, and

sharing between attendees and presenters. This year's Conference Co-Chairs, Stacia L. Long and Tamara Moten, carried on this legacy by hosting two powerful pre-conference events and two renowned speakers, and facilitating a multitude of paper, poster, and roundtable presentations. The conference theme, *Doing the Work: Moving Past What We Already Know to Enact Change in Language and Literacy Education*, was woven throughout each event, beginning with the Friday Pre-Conference Workshop. The Pre-Conference Workshop featured 12 sessions on topics ranging from picture books, young adult literature, and comics to humanizing research practices and embodied critical literacies. This year, the Conference Co-Chairs, alongside the College of Education's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, also organized a keynote speakers' session for the Friday Pre-Conference Workshop entitled "Mentoring for the Graduate Soul: Belonging, Authenticity, and Thriving as a Graduate Student of Color." This workshop, led by the conference keynote speakers, Dr. April Baker-Bell and Dr. David Stovall, instigated energizing conversations between senior academics and graduate students of color in the field of language and literacy education and beyond.

Powerful discussions continued during the keynote speakers' addresses, as both Dr. Baker-Bell and Dr. Stovall presented ways to learn from the past and move toward an equitable future. Dr. Baker-Bell shared stories from her own personal experiences with injustice and her work with teachers and students. She encouraged attendees to reflect on what has been and what is now in language and literacy education. She highlighted her framework of Anti-Racist Black Language Pedagogy and how theory, research, and practice can collectively operate in pursuit of justice. Dr. Stovall spoke on the ways that literacy has supported a tradition of fugitivity or resistance that focused on the needs of those committed to making change. While acknowledging this history, he shared that researchers, scholars, and educators alike should remain connected to fugitivity and the historical legacy of resisting White supremacy in educational spaces. Together, these keynote presentations invigorated and pushed attendees to move past what we already know to enact change within our communities.

The pieces in each section of this issue continue to carry forth the theme of the conference through explorations of research, teaching practice, and literature. The six academic articles included in this issue feature educators and researchers "doing the work" to push past traditional notions of literacy by creating new theoretical paradigms, promoting equitable ways of learning, and highlighting transformative pedagogies. Together, these pieces consider the ways of knowing prevalent within language and literacy education and implore us to take up and create new practices.

Research Articles

Aligning with the conference theme, the first article, "Identifying Promising Literacy Practices for Black Males in P-12 Classrooms: An Integrative Review," presents an expansive view of existing literacy practices for Black males, an often-underserved group in literacy classrooms in the United States. Through an extensive, integrative review of the literature, Terry Husband and Grace Kang delve into promising instructional strategies that have been implemented across the P-12 educational spectrum and present practical recommendations for educators and directions for future research.

The next two pieces explore readers' responses to texts and how they vary based on myriad factors. Both Stephanie F. Reid and Sarah Fischer discuss well known theories of literacy but challenge us to think deeply and critically about what we already know and urge us to forge onward toward new understandings. Reid, in "Playful Images and Truthful Words: Eight-Graders Respond to Shaun Tan's *Stick Figures*," presents research that

examines how eighth-grade students responded to a multimodal short story. Specifically, she includes the different ways that students voiced their views on word image relations and how discussions like these highlight the need for more alignment with critical literacy pedagogy. This vital integration of critical literacy can foster students' ability to question and challenge texts that promote varying modal combinations. Fischer deconstructs reader response theoretically, in *Placemaking and the Child Reader: Toward a Place-Conscious Framework for Reader Response Research and Pedagogy*," and focuses on the concept of placemaking and the view that all children are placemakers. Through the use of this lens and an examination of preexisting literature, she promotes a place-conscious framework for future reader response theory work. With this place-conscious framework, researchers can take up this expanded view of the reading process of children, the ways that texts function, and the sociocultural contexts of reading.

The last article, "Black Female Teachers are our School Parents!!": Academic Othermothering Depicted in Multicultural Young Adult Texts," by Delicia Tiera Greene, critically examines the ways that fictional Black female teachers, featured in two young adult novels, enact their othermother identity in support of Black female students' needs. Building upon the framework of Black Feminist Thought, Greene showcases the complex identities and relationships of Black female teachers and their Black female students. She further provides pedagogical strategies, infused with ethics of care, designed to support teachers working with Black girls. Her work represents the need to disrupt the dominant and normative literacy practices enacted in classrooms and create new and innovative strategies to facilitate our students' success.

Voices from the Field

The two Voices from the Field pieces included in this issue both address ways to thoughtfully engage with students in our teaching practices. In "Seeing and Nurturing Young Children's Reading Identities," Christopher J. Wagner describes multiple approaches of reading instruction that take into consideration and center children's own ideas about reading and who they are as readers. Alongside vignettes of his own experiences in a prekindergarten classroom, Wagner guides readers through ways to assess and support readers that take into account early reading identities. Alecia Beymer, Mary L. Neville, Renee Wilmot, and Vaughn W. M. Watson in their piece, "How Do I Teach With Hope?: Enacting Poetry Reading and Writing as a Form of Critical Hope in Classroom Spaces," share how reading and writing can be a vital form of critical hope within secondary English Education teacher education courses. By presenting their own experiences as educators, the four authors elucidate key moments in their own pasts where they welcomed critical hope into their classrooms through a deeper engagement with the relational and the poetic.

Academic Books Reviews

Academic Book Review Editor Yixuan Wang has collected numerous relevant and engaging book reviews in this issue of *JoLLE*. The academic texts reviewed in this issue include *Unsettling Education: Searching for Ethical Footing in a Time of Reform* (Charest & Sjostrom, 2019) reviewed by Brandie Bohney, *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Education: Designing Networks that Transform Schools* (Scanlan, Hunter, & Howard, 2019) reviewed by Jessica Campbell, *Pre-K Stories: Playing with Authorship and Integrating Curriculum in Early Childhood* (Bentley & Souto-Manning, 2019) reviewed by Peijuan Cao, *The Vulnerable Heart of Literacy: Centering Trauma as Powerful Pedagogy* (Dutro, 2019) reviewed by Stacia L. Long, *Personalized Learning in the Middle Grades: A Guide for Classroom Teachers and School Leaders* (Bishop, Downes, & Farber, 2019) reviewed by Jimmy McLean,

The Dark Fantastic: Race and the Imagination from Harry Potter to The Hunger Games (Thomas, 2019) reviewed by T. Hunter Strickland, *Letting Go of Literary Whiteness: Antiracist Literature Instruction for White Students* (Borsheim-Black, 2019) reviewed by Chea L. Parton, *Teaching the History of the English Language* (Moore & Palmer, 2019) reviewed by Jacqueline Saindon, and *Negotiating Place and Space through Digital Literacies: Research and Practice* (Pyles, Rish, & Warner, 2019) reviewed by Kerry Alexander.

Children and Young Adult Literature (CYAL) Reviews

Children and Young Adult Literature (CYAL) Review Editor Wisnu Agung Pradana has taken care to feature texts from diverse perspectives and collect reviews from educators and readers from around the world. The picturebooks reviewed in this issue include *Superhero Levi* (Cordero, 2018) reviewed by Charlie Neal and Katie Wester-Neal, *The Weaver* (Shi, 2018) reviewed by Aiden and William and Evi Tri Prastyaningih, *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag* (Sanders & Salerno, 2018) reviewed by Avantika Das and Christiani Dwi Putri, *Finding Kindess* (Underwood & Chan, 2019) reviewed by Avonlie Michael and Dustin Michael, and *Between Us and Abuela* (Perkins & Palacios, 2019) reviewed by Cristal De La Cruz and Eliada N. Falcon. The young adult texts reviewed in this feature are *All of Me* (Baron, 2019) reviewed by Aura Vaysha Sasadara and Ahmad Zubaidi Amrullah, *The Secret Commonwealth (The Book of Dust Vol. 2)* (Pullman, 2019) reviewed by Jiankun Peng and Sisilia Novena Kusumaningsih, *Sincerely, Harriet* (Searle, 2019) reviewed by Ashton Morrison and Brandy N. Pass, *Somewhere Only We Know* (Goo, 2019) reviewed by Andrew Park and Ji Hyun Hong, *Best Friends* (Hale & Pham, 2019) reviewed by Ayla Jaganjac and Micah Davis and Jennifer Frasier, *Last of the Name* (Parry, 2019) reviewed by Megan Serfontein and Chloe Grimes, *Landscape with Invisible Hand* (Anderson, 2019) reviewed by Yoanna Nisa Novitasari and Bernadeta Siska Indriyana, *Honor Code* (Burkhart, 2018) reviewed by Akmal Faisal Zulkarnaen and Reza Taufik Maulana, *The Navigator* (Sky & Brown, 2019) reviewed by Caroline Davis and Margaret Robbins.

Poetry, Fiction, and Visual Arts

William Terrell Wright, the Poetry, Fiction, and Visual Arts Editor, has curated a collection of four poems and six pieces of visual art that speak to past, present, and future imaginings of language and literacy learning. The poems featured in this issue include “I Noticed” by Jason D. DeHart, “Muse” and “Ode to Camp” by Christina Pulzone, and “The Duality of Education and the complexity of Being Literate” by Chanequa Cameron. The visual art pieces presented are “Counter-Narrative” and “Shelter in Place” by Jerome Harste, and a collection of student work featured in the Idiom Artwork Project compiled by Krista Dean, including “Barking Up the Wrong Tree” by Mzée, “Playing with Fire” by Crews, “Cool as a Cucumber” by Ruby, and “Steal One’s Thunder” by Drew.

Thanks and Recognition

The creation of JoLLE is a collaborative effort, as we all work together in our separate roles for our distinct sections that inform and build upon one another to create a cohesive and meaningful issue. It has been my pleasure work alongside the brilliant and inspiring scholars who served on the Editorial Board during the 2019-2020 academic year. I would like to take the time and space to thank this amazing group of individuals who have given so much of their own time to make this issue possible: Merida Lang, Managing Editor; Bhairvi M. Trivedi, Production Editor; Stacia L. Long, Conference Co-Chair; Tamara Moten, Conference Co-Chair; Yixuan Wang, Academic Book Review Editor; Wisnu Agung Pradana, Children and Young Adult Literature Editor; William Terrell Wright, Poetry, Fiction, and Visual Arts Editor; Maverick Y. Zhang, Communications Editor; and

Andressa Cristina Molinari, Scholars Speak Out Editor. I would also like to thank Dr. Peter Smagorinsky, JoLLE's Faculty Advisor, who has served as a constant source of support, knowledge, and humor.

In addition to the Editorial Board, I owe my gratitude to the 2019-2020 JoLLE External Review Board. With your expertise and insight, we have been able to continue to provide timely and helpful feedback to all that submit their work to *JoLLE*. Your careful consideration and eye for detail were invaluable to me and the Editorial Board, as we worked to select the work featured in this issue. If you would like to be part of next year's External Review Board as a new or returning member, please view our [Review for JoLLE](#) page on the JoLLE website and look for our call for external reviewers that will be shared on various social media platforms at the start of the 2020-2021 academic year.

To end, the JoLLE Editorial Board would like to thank both the authors and readers who support *JoLLE* in various and impactful ways. We continue to grow and flourish with your encouragement and service. We would also like to invite you to further your support *JoLLE* by submitting your own work for consideration in a future issue. To learn more about the submission and review process, please see the [JoLLE Submissions](#) page on the JoLLE website or contact our Managing Editor at jolle.submissions@gmail.com. In addition to consideration in our Fall and Spring issues, we invite you to read and submit short op-ed style essays to our Scholars Speak Out (SSO) feature published in our newsletters that are distributed on a monthly basis. To learn more about the SSO feature, please contact our Scholars Speak Out Editor at jolle.scholarsspeakout@gmail.com. To subscribe to our newsletter, please contact our Communications Editor at jolle.communicate@gmail.com. We also invite you to follow JoLLE on Facebook and Twitter ([@JoLLE_UGA](#)).

As you read this issue, we hope that you continue to do your own important work—the work of educators, of researchers, of students—and move past what you already know to enact much needed change in language and literacy education.

Sincerely,

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Principal Editor, 2019-2020

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