

Editors' Column

This is our last issue as editors of the *Journal of Basic Writing*. Although we have greatly enjoyed our six years at *JBW*, it has always been our view that a journal which seeks to stay current with its field must change editors frequently. However, we leave with a sense of regret that we will no longer be working closely with a wonderful group of total professionals: Lynn Troyka, our predecessor as editor of *JBW*, the members of *JBW*'s far-flung Editorial Board; colleagues and friends in the Office of Academic Affairs at CUNY; and, above all, our managing editor, Ruth Davis. Thanks to you all; without your constant help and advice, we could never have edited *JBW*.

We would also like to express our appreciation to all those who submitted manuscripts to the *Journal* during our editorship. Thanks for your confidence in *JBW* and its editorial process, in particular your patience in awaiting decisions which sometimes took longer than we expected.

If there is one accomplishment during our tenure that we are especially happy about, it is the extent to which we were able to give encouragement and support to authors without extensive previous publication. We feel very proud that *JBW* has continued to publish the work of established scholars in the field of basic writing, but even more so to have introduced many newcomers during these six years.

During the summer of 1993, when we informed University Dean Elsa Nuñez-Wormack of our decision to step down at the conclusion of our second three-year term, she convened a Search Committee (on which we served) to select a successor. By unanimous decision, the Committee chose Professors Karen Greenberg and Trudy Smoke, both of the English Department at Hunter College, as new co-editors of *JBW*.

Professor Greenberg will already be well-known to most *JBW* readers for her many publications as well as her spirited advocacy for basic writing and basic writers at many professional conferences and through the National Testing Network in Writing. Less well-known is the fact that Karen has been one of our most active members of the Editorial Board during our tenure and perhaps the record holder for quick turnaround on manu-

scripts. Professor Smoke has also published widely and been very active in professional associations in the fields of composition and ESL. We welcome Karen and Trudy as editors of *JBW*, confident that the *Journal* will prosper under their direction.

We turn now to a brief introduction of the articles in the Fall '94 issue. Their variety and eclectic nature confirm that the field of basic writing is alive and well in the '90s, as it absorbs, reflects, and debates some of the recent pedagogic shifts in the profession.

In the first article, Sally Fitzgerald examines the implications of computerized scoring of placement essays on the theory and practice of writing assessment and writing instruction. She argues that the very feature that makes computerized scoring inexpensive—its universality—undermines its validity.

Carol Severino looks at the relation between error and creativity in the writing of ESL students. She shows how syntactic and lexical constraints combined with students' cultural and aesthetic preferences produce remarkable poetic effects in their writing.

Hope Parisi demonstrates that students who attempt graphically to represent their own writing process increase their involvement and self-awareness while validating their new writing behaviors. Through this metacognitive intervention, students come to understand their role in managing the unique complexities of their own composing process.

Akua Duku Anokye argues that teachers today face broad cultural and racial differences between themselves and their students which negate some of the old assumptions about teaching and learning. In this context, a pedagogy based on narrative and storytelling encourages students to appreciate cultural and racial diversity as it helps them become active participants in the broader conversation of a literate community.

In the final article, Kelly Belanger looks at the basic writing course described in Bartholomae and Petrosky's *Facts, Artifacts and Counterfacts* from the perspective of four gender-typed categories: "masculinist," "feminist," "androgynous," and "undifferentiated." Interview data suggests that teachers define themselves, give shape to their pedagogy, and emphasize certain aspects of the course around these categories.

A Cumulative Index of articles appearing in the *Journal of Basic Writing* over the past three years concludes the issue.

—Bill Bernhardt and Peter Miller