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Authors

Kelly-Riley, Diane
Whithaus, Carl

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Editors Introduction, Volume 14 Issue 1

by Diane Kelly-Riley and Carl Whithaus

The last 18 months have been challenging around the globe because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Universities and colleges moved to remote instruction, and faculty and students' lives were disrupted in all sorts of ways. For a year, major flagship conferences related to writing assessment and the teaching of writing, such as NCTE, CCCC, and AERA moved to only online formats. In short, the usual patterns of research into the teaching of writing and writing assessment practices were, like all of our lives, dramatically disrupted. The *Journal of Writing Assessment (JWA)* has continued to receive and review outstanding work; however, the speed of the review process as well as authors' abilities to revise works-in-progress has certainly been impacted by the pandemic. At the same time, *JWA* changed web platforms--an update which we'll describe below--and we are excited about the ways in which this will continue to support and evolve our publication and connection to the community. This change also altered our production schedule. Given the constraints of the pandemic and the challenges of shifting publishing platforms, we are enormously pleased to be able to publish this issue to coincide with NCTE 2021.

While NCTE 2021 remains an entirely virtual conference this November, NCTE President-Elect and 2021 NCTE Annual Convention Program Chair, Valerie Kinloch, has called for conference attendees "to think deeply about equity, justice, and antiracist teaching" and "to reimagine learning goals and objectives through culturally relevant and sustaining frameworks." We believe that Andrew Moos's "The Injustice of Opportunity: Clarence DeWitt Thorpe, Articulation, and the Inter-Institutional Ecology of Writing Assessment" and Jeff Pruchnic, Ellen Barton, Thomas Trimble, Sarah Primeau, Hillary Weiss, Nicole Guinot Varty, and Tanina Foster Moore's "The Effects of Student-Fashioning and Teacher-Pleasing in the Assessment of First-Year Writing Reflective Essays" do exactly that. These two essays engage with questions about equity, justice, and antiracist teaching and do so in ways that push our thinking about writing assessments and classroom practices into new territories. Both articles coincidentally address topics contextualized in the state of Michigan--a place with a rich history of writing assessment scholarship related to race--see Geneva Smitherman and John Baugh's (2002) work on the Ann Arbor court case supporting students' right to their own language and Arnetha Ball's (1997) work advocating for the inclusion of cultural considerations in the assessment of writing.

In "The Injustice of Opportunity: Clarence DeWitt Thorpe, Articulation, and the Inter-Institutional Ecology of Writing Assessment," Moos extends the scholarship on justice and writing assessment ecologies and explores the ways in which such systems have consequences related to opportunities for certain students. He explores the work from 1935 by faculty at the University of Michigan to articulate standards between high schools and postsecondary institutions related to first-year writing. Moos provides an important historical review of what is meant by opportunity and for whom.

Pruchnic, Barton, Trimble, Primeau, Weiss, Varty, and Moore were members of the 2017-2018 Composition Research Committee in the English Department of Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. Their article emerges from extensive collaborative work and conversations about the direct assessment of reflective essays as part of first-year writing courses. The substance of the

article is fascinating--and vital for our field to consider--but the essay also deserves acknowledgment for the ways in which it emphasizes collaborative approaches to research in writing assessment and writing pedagogy. Their work examines ways to account for factors that might influence raters' perceptions of student performance in newer genres that are widely used, like reflective essays.

In addition to considering the insights from these two articles, our seasoned readers will note we have changed web platforms--moving from our longtime web hosting site through 26LLC to the University of California's eScholarship platform. This change positions the next generation of the *Journal of Writing Assessment* in key ways. eScholarship is an open access publishing platform subsidized by the University of California and is managed by the California Digital Library. This partnership continues *JWA's* commitment to free, open-access publications about writing assessment made easily available to researchers, teachers, administrators, policy makers, and other stakeholders with vested interest in writing assessment issues. All of *JWA's* archived issues are available on this new platform--one thing that readers will note is that metrics on each article's access and download are available on the site. Authors who submit their work and reviewers will also notice a streamlined and improved workflow. We're grateful for the many years of financial support from the University of Idaho--specifically the Department of English and the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences--making the scholarship available to readers at no cost. The move to eScholarship allows us to preserve researchers' continued ability to publish their work at no cost--a move that other publishing houses have not maintained. Open-access publishing has largely evolved into pay to publish enterprises. That is, journals and publishing houses are shifting the cost of publishing scholarship to individual scholars and/or their institutions. However, our institutions recognize our important work for the journal, and no author is required to pay to publish in *JWA* nor are readers required to pay to read the scholarship. *JWA* remains an independent journal that publishes scholarship by and for teachers and scholars of writing assessment. In addition, the University Writing Program of the University of California, Davis provides support for our *JWA Reading List*, which presents brief reviews of recent writing assessment publications of interest.

Finally, we would like to note the many individuals and institutions that support our work. We are grateful for the generosity and expertise of our reviewers over this past year.

Bob Broad, Illinois State University
Angela Clark-Oates, Sacramento State University
Michelle Cowan, Texas Tech University
Norbert Elliot, University of Southern Florida
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Richard Haswell, University of Texas Corpus Christi
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Peggy O'Neill, Loyola University Maryland
Les Perleman, MIT
Kristina Reardon, Amherst College
Christie Toth, University of Utah
Sarah Cushing Weigle, Georgia State University
Edward White, University of Arizona

Emily Wierszewski, Seton Hill University
Shane Wood, University of Southern Mississippi
Vershawn Young, University of Waterloo

We also are grateful to the continued contributions of our regular editorial team. We could not publish the *Journal of Writing Assessment* or the [Journal of Writing Assessment Reading List](#) without their dedication and support.

Tialitha Macklin, Associate Editor and *JWA Reading List* Editor, Boise State University
Mathew Gomes, Associate Editor and Indexer and Social Media Coordinator, Santa Clara University
Gita DasBender, Assistant Editor, New York University
Katherine Kirkpatrick, Assistant Editor, Copyediting, Clarkson College
Stephen McElroy, Assistant Editor, Production, Babson College
Lizbett Tinoco, *JWA* Assistant Editor, Reviews, Texas A&M University-San Antonio
Chris Blankenship, *JWA Reading List* Co-Editor, Salt Lake City Community College
Stacy Wittstock, *JWA Reading List* Co-Editor, University of California, Davis
Skyler Meeks, *JWA Reading List* Assistant Editor, Utah Valley University

This year, the *JWA* editorial team has several changes. We have people who are transitioning out of roles, people who are transitioning to assume new roles within *JWA*, and two new additions to our team! We particularly want to thank Ti Macklin and Gita DasBender who are cycling off our editorial team. Ti Macklin has worked with *JWA* for many years in a variety of roles. She began working with the journal as a PhD student at Washington State University in 2012, and we worked with her for nearly a decade in many capacities--Editorial Assistant, Associate Editor, and *JWA Reading List* Editor. She has collaborated with the editorial team on many of *JWA*'s special issues. We have appreciated her generosity and thoughtful, intelligent contributions to our editorial team meetings and to the journal. We're grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Ti so closely for so many years, and we wish her the best in her new ventures! Additionally, we are thankful to have worked with Gita DasBender who has graciously and tirelessly contacted potential reviewers and facilitated the important process of peer review for scholarship submitted to *JWA*. Gita has been a long time scholar, researcher, and practitioner of writing assessment, and we greatly benefitted from her expertise and efforts.

To that end, we're excited to move several of our *JWA* editorial team into new roles. First we welcome Matt Gomes to the role of Associate Editor. Matt has been *JWA*'s Indexer and Social Media Coordinator, and we're excited to welcome him to the editorial team. Stacy Wittstock, PhD Candidate at University of California Davis, will assume the role of Co-Editor of our *JWA Reading List*, and Skyler Meeks, Utah Valley University, will serve as Assistant Editor of the *JWA Reading List*. We also pleased to welcome two new editorial team members to *JWA*: Lizbett Tinoco, Assistant Professor of English at Texas A&M University-San Antonio, will be our Assistant Editor of Reviews; and Chris Blankenship, Associate Professor of English at Salt Lake Community College, will be Co-Editor of the *JWA Reading List*.

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