

Two-Year College Association Pacific Northwest

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TYCA-PNW Annual Conference: Lauded for Content and Conviviality

Keynoter Kathleen Blake Yancey says writing teachers need to move from the head of the classroom to the middle, and act more as resources and less as law-givers. Such pedagogical transformation will encourage students to take more responsibility for their scholarship and allow them to find their own pathway to learning.

Blake Yancey's advice, during the opening session of the TYCA-PNA annual conference at Yakima Valley Community College in October, was appropriate for the occasion. The conference theme was *Abrecaminos: Finding a Way*, and more than 80 teachers, presenters, administrators, students, book vendors, and resource people found their way to Yakima to hear portfolio assessment advocate, past CCCC's chair, and current NCTE Vice President Yancey Blake and to share their ideas during 25 workshops and sessions Oct. 21-22, 2005.

Blake Yancey's presentation, "Technology, Tectonic Change, and Reflective Practice: Literacies in the 21st Century," was among a number of sessions that generated positive comments and praise during the two-day conference, which drew attendees from Washington, Oregon,

Idaho, and Montana.

The 37 session presenters included adjunct faculty, graduate teaching assistants, full-time community college and university faculty, and community college students.

Blake Yancey also noted that what we use to write with, and the space in which we teach and write, make a difference in our work whether we are writers or teachers, or both. Appropriately, YVCC's new Deccio Building, the campus's high-tech higher education center, seemed to make a difference in the tone of the conference, as presenters and attendees complimented the college on its state-of-the-art facilities and attractive campus.

Sessions were predominantly about writing instruction but also included such topics as learning communities, adjunct issues (online courses, finding full-time work, roles in writing programs), literature/literary criticism, writing centers, and integrating popular culture into the curriculum, among others.

Overall, conference evaluations suggested that sessions were very practical and useful. (Lisa Ede's presentation was an oft-



Kathleen Blake Yancey

mentioned highlight.) Some comments: "I liked the variety," "Great topics," "The sessions I attended were well done," "Good stuff this year!" "I liked the blend of practical and theoretical," ("Lots of great ideas and discussion," and "I liked the way technology was incorporated into nearly every session." For a review of conference sessions and descriptions, see <http://tyca-pnw.org/node/47>).

There was, of course, conference business to conduct: During lunch on Saturday, elections were conducted for new TYCA officers. The victors included **Lori Efigenio** and **Laura Read**, Publications Co-Editors; **Eleanor Latham**, Secretary; **Jana Carter**, **Tammy Jabin**, **Risè Quay**, Members at Large;

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My membership includes discounted conference fees at TYCA-PNW'S annual conference.

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Enclosed is my check for US \$20 payable to TYCA-PNW for a one-year membership.

TYCA-PNW 2005-2006 Membership Form

A Note from the Chairs

We owe a profound debt of gratitude to the Yakima Valley Community College workers for the diligence and sparkle that made our October 21-22 conference *Abrecaminos* memorable. Once again, TYCA-PNW hosted a high-energy, fiscally responsible event enriched by keynoter Kathleen Blake Yancey, by stalwarts such as Lisa Ede, visitors such as Marilyn



Marilyn Valentino

Valentino, and by experienced and novice regional presenters. These rich and varied presentations often serve as the trial run, the polished draft that will undergo still further revision for presentation at the NCTE or CCCC annual conventions. Our regional conference affords a unique proving ground so people can tweak their narratives, handouts, and PowerPoints thanks to helpful colleagues offering critical feedback. We encourage those who have ideas for presentations to develop them and submit them for the October 2006 conference at Chemeketa Community College in Oregon.

Abrecaminos surfaced at least two issues worth long, serious reflection. First, Kathleen Blake Yancey described Red Cup Emporia. In these academic settings, one finds huge spaces filled with many students seated at banks of

computers—spaces in which tutors paid by the hour interact with the students. When students have questions, they raise their red cups to catch a tutor's eye. When she introduced this scene with her slides, a collective gasp filled the room as we recognized that, while technology can, in many contexts, help connect us with students, it can also, ironically, distance us from them. Blake Yancey's example of the red cups illustrated concretely that computer-mediated instruction can push students away, turning the classroom into a production center and rendering educated professionals superfluous. As we explore technology's potential, we may also want to consider what might get lost in the process.

The second issue is unequivocally positive. The association between the Blue Begonia Press and YVCC has created a synergy for writing within and beyond the traditional classroom. It provides a connection to the Yakima Valley area, giving a solid, rooted atmosphere to the college while helping allay that transient feeling students and faculty experience at a commuter campus. Their affiliation extends the campus's boundaries into

the community and invites local educators and just folks to be involved in creative projects.

So in this season when Persephone is underground and darkness falls early, spread the good word: that we are more than an October conference, we are stakeholders in our towns and cities and region; that our professional concerns have everything to do with opening a path for our students; that our personal as well as professional lives are enriched by one another's gifts. And a last word about spreading the word: Samm Erickson does a splendid job maintaining our web site (www.tyca-pnw.org). If you maintain a web site, consider linking to TYCA-PNW. And consider joining us next October in Salem, Oregon. Come and bring a friend!

Tom Gribble, Spokane CC

Alexis Nelson, Spokane Falls CC

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From the Editors: A New Beginning

In this issue, Lori and I want to introduce ourselves to you as your new co-editors of *Pacific View*. Both of us teach writing and literature at Spokane Falls Community College in Spokane, Washington. Lori has taught at SFCC for 16 years, and prior to that, she earned her BAE and MA in English with an emphasis in Composition and Rhetoric from Eastern Washington University. Teaching English and integrating technology in student learning are her passions. I have been teaching at the Falls for seven years and before that

earned a BA in English and French from Gonzaga University and an MFA in Creative Writing from EWU. I am a poet and an essayist, and I like teaching writing because I can share my love of the craft with my students.

I also enjoy being a mom of two young boys, Benjamin who is 6 and Matthew who is 3. Lori has a Matthew too, but hers is a sophomore in college, and she has a daughter, Lea, who is graduating from high school this year. My hob-

bies include running and swimming, but I am generally a very sedentary creature, so I prefer to read or write. Lori spends her free time reading, cooking, knitting and beading, and she also enjoys designing bead patterns with her computer and participating in a variety of area craft shows.

We thought it might be good to share with you a bit about who we are professionally and personally, but we also want to discuss who we are as editors of this newsletter.

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Practical Matters

Grammar Grumps?

By Lucette Wood

One of the challenges writing teachers face is how to incorporate grammar into writing courses without spending too much time teaching it. And one of the challenges I faced when I first started teaching was how to avoid boring myself as well as my students with my grammar mini-lessons. I struggled with how to involve students in the lesson without devoting more time to teaching grammar than I do to teaching writing. I even considered, albeit briefly, not teaching grammar at all. But how could I not teach grammar and still see results? That is when it occurred to me that I was, in fact, carrying more of the load than I should. If I wanted my students to engage with the material and really learn it, what better way than to teach it? As we all know well, until you teach something, you never really learn it.

In my Expository Writing class, I assign group presentations in which students are responsible for preparing a grammar lesson and teaching that lesson to their peers. Thanks to Mina Shaughnessy, we know writers have patterns of error, so I give a grammar diagnostic at the beginning of the course to identify students' individual patterns. I then organize students into groups based on the results of the diagnostic. I put three students per group and assign them the topic and date of their presentation, careful to order presentations in a logical sequence and stretch them throughout the term, one per week. Each group is required

From the Editors

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Lori is very interested in and skilled at using technology, so we're excited about experimenting with the design of the publication. And we are looking forward to publishing faculty and student writing that together examine different themes. The fall issue has a theme as it reports on the fall's conference, but the spring issue is open for us as a community to design. Also, we want to publish work from different campuses, so we hope all of you will send us ideas for themes we can address and eventually pieces that speak to those themes. We'd like to start with a thematic focus in our spring issue, so ideas for topics you'd like to see addressed would be welcome as soon as you have them! So far, our ideas for themes include the use of portfolios in composition instruction, visual rhetoric, and learning communities.

Sandra Schroeder and Dodie Forrest, the co-editors emeritus, have given us guidance as we begin this project, and we are grateful. They have also set a wonderful example with the newsletters they've produced. As we start our term, we look forward to receiving your submissions so we can produce a quality publication.

Laura Read and Lori Efigenio

Spokane Falls CC

to teach a mini-lesson on their assigned grammatical principle. I emphasize they are not to relay rules but teach a concept. They must define terms in their own words and apply concepts in the contexts they create.

I grade groups on the effectiveness of their delivery, the clarity of their definitions (using their own words to explain any concept or term they present), and the strength of their explanation and examples. Students are given creative reign as long as their classmates reach the big "Ah,ha" by the end of their presentation. In addition, each group must administer a quiz to the class and submit a handout. The quiz allows them to test for comprehension and opens the class to questions. The handout must be turned in to me for review before the date of their presentation, and then I make

Students are given creative reign as long as their classmates reach the big "Ah,ha" ...

copies for the class. The idea is for students to make their own handbook, in their words and with their own examples, by the end of the term.

When I released control and placed responsibility on students' shoulders, I saw results. I have students in my office or at the writing center who are motivated to really understand and overcome their patterns. Students have to understand the concept enough to develop an interactive activity, field questions, and create a quiz. They go well beyond identifying a problem; they have to learn terms, translate concepts so they are accessible, and walk their peers through a problem-solving process they are invested in. They substitute my dry lectures with their own humorous anecdotes and implicit testimonials. While the presentation may be review for the rest of the class, the presenters have the opportunity to excavate and overcome a personal stumbling block, and the presentation requirement gives them the accountability and motivation to do so. They take the show, and I sit back and watch it happen—with a smile on my face.

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We would also like to recognize the valuable TYCA members that hosted the 2005 TYCA Conference at Yakima Valley Community College in Yakima, Washington.

Program Co-Chairs: Carolyn Calhoon-Dillahunt, ccalhoon@yvcc.edu and Mark Fuzie, mufuzie@yvcc.edu

Local Arrangements Chair: Gordon Koestler, gkoestler@yvcc.edu and Mary Dahlin, mdahlin@yvcc.edu



Session Highlights continued from page 4

Nelson and I also shared our biases as we screened applications. The biggest waste of time for both the applicants and the screening committee are the "McApplications," those mass-produced, one-size-fits all documents that are clearly not tailored for a particular job or a particular school. So do your research. Get to know the colleges you're applying to. Explain how you will fit in well with the programs and initiatives they already have in place. A red flag appeared when writing errors, even stylistic weaknesses, found their way into the text. It's a must for college English teachers to show their skills in the texts they present.

Abrecaminos: A Chat with Kathleen Blake -Yancey

By Bradley Bleck, Spokane Falls CC

Every conference has a session that makes the day, and often the conference, worthwhile. For this attendee, that session was the roundtable with the keynote speaker, Kathleen Blake Yancey. Yancey began the discussion by asking the roughly 10 participants what they had on their minds. I asked for her thoughts regarding Ed White's recent article in CCC, "The Scoring of Writing Portfolios: Phase 2," in which he argues that we can dispense with the reading of an entire student portfolio and instead focus on the accompanying meta-cognitive letter, referring to the "actual" student writing only to be sure it matches the writer's conceptions. Yancey challenged this claim by pointing out that White failed to acknowledge a large body of scholarship in coming to his conclusions. Another participant asked Yancey to speak to electronic portfolios, and in response, she suggested a need for "common tools," software other than the corporatized course management systems, which students can use beyond the classroom and of their own volition for their own needs.

The 2006 conference will be held in
Salem, Oregon, at Chemeketa
Community College

News from National

Once again, going to the national NCTE conference proved enriching and well worth the investment of time and effort. From the opening banquet featuring Isabel Allendé, who is as delightful and clever at speaking as she is at writing, to the all day TYCA National meeting, the experience was splendid.

A vignette from Allendé's irreverent and delightful evening talk created a thread of expert vs. education for me at the conference. She recounted a conversation that had taken place at a San Francisco cocktail party. A dentist, knowing she was a published author, informed her in that casual way people do that he would write when he retired. Her reply to him was that she planned on doing root canals when she retired. Allendé went on to explain why she is so irked by people who think that writing just happens. Her point was that people often don't think about the vast space that exists between expert, seasoned writers and retired dentists. (Not that some retired dentists don't have a story to tell.) That same thread about people thinking that being an expert in one area might translate to another area reappeared in Frank McCourt's talk during the opening session. McCourt's quick wit and years of public school teaching quickly won over the room—his statement that every politician considers himself or herself an expert in teaching got warm applause from the cavernous room filled with English teachers. McCourt asked us to imagine how stupefying it would be if a politician were to come into an operating room and say, "Listen, I know how to leave no spleen behind—step aside and let me show you how this is done."

The NCTE conference reminded me that we English teachers are professionals with vast knowledge in our subject area and have innovative and creative ways to share that knowledge with our students. While restricted fiscal resources plague many of our colleges, the good teaching that goes on in classrooms continues. Going to a national conference is energizing—it also has the efficacy of comparing the wheels we are inventing on our campus to those being invented across the country. So often in the breakout sessions, I learned a way to tweak the good work already taking place on our campus.

Eva Payne, Associate Chair TYCA National

Chemeketa CC

Conference Highlights

Of course, we must begin, as the conference did, with the wine. On Friday night, YVCC American Federation of Teachers and Bedford/St. Martin's sponsored a Wine Tasting/Social, featuring donations from Yakima Valley wineries. Approximately 45 folks participated in the education portion, led by Sandy Saffel, a member of the local enological society. Saffel and company discussed how to "taste" wine, which involves more than just one's taste buds. "The wine tasting/social was not just fun; it was an opportunity to learn!" said one participant. "I had no idea wine had legs." Door prizes included wine, wine paraphernalia, and chestnuts and a chestnut roster.

Afterwards, enlightened wine-tasting "students" enjoyed sampling wines donated from local wineries. (The list is available at <http://tyca-pnw.org/node/20> for those who attended, or for those who want to find out what they missed.) While nibbling on goodies, such as Washington State University Creamery cheeses - Cougar Gold was a hit - local apples, and local dips, patrons listened to a YVCC jazz ensemble. Once again, the evaluation sheets runneth'd over:

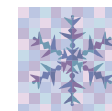
Lauded for Content and Conviviality (continued from cover)

and Kelly Peterson, Tammy Jabin, Jill Rupert, 2006 Conference Organizers. Also at lunch, the Lisa S. Ede Outstanding Teacher Awards (presented by Lisa Ede herself) were announced: Outstanding Adjunct Teacher award plus \$500 to Lucette Wood, Linn Benton Community College; Outstanding Full-time Teacher award plus \$500 to Sheri Winans, Whatcom Community College.

Carolyn Calhoon-Dillahunt

Gordon Koestler

-Yakima Valley CC



"Super classy." "Fantastic activities!" "Great icebreaker!" "Friday was so much fun, set a great tone, and showed the pride of the college and community." One reveler added that "The space for informal and unstructured interaction was crucial (and fun)!" and finally, "Excellent reward for coming a day early!" Which was followed by a big surprise: Bedford-St. Martin's graciously invited all attendees to dinner at the Barrel House winery-restaurant.

Food and drink continued to be a highlight on Saturday. Lunch was catered by Tequila's, a Yakima Mexican restaurant, and included arroz con pollo, veggie burritos, tamales, beans, rice, chips, salsa, and assorted Mexican sodas and fruit drinks (as well as Coke and Pepsi for the faint of stomach). Sponsored by Bedford/St. Martin's, the lunch, too, drew raves on conference evaluations: "The food was uniformly incredible!" and "Best meal I've ever had at a conference!" In general, conferees seemed to appreciate the local flavor of the theme and the various foods and wines incorporated throughout the

weekend.

We did do more than eat and drink however. On Friday, the conference opened with interactive sessions: YVCC's Gail Pearlman presided over a session on stopping hate on campus; Beth Camp from Linn Benton Community College shared slides and discussed her sabbatical in Turkey; Yakima teacher, writer, and publisher Jim Bodeen and YVCC faculty member and writer Dan Peters discussed the interaction between a local small press (Blue Begonia) and the classroom; and TYCA-National representative Marilyn Valentino shared ideas about responding to student self-disclosure in her workshop, "Mad, Bad, and Dangerous to Teach."

Exhibitors included Bedford/St. Martin's, Prentice Hall, Kendall/Hunt, Thomson, McGraw-Hill, and local press, Blue Begonia. We appreciated their contribution toward the conference - both financially and by making themselves available to two-year college English teachers who often cannot afford to attend national conferences.

Jean Raabe, Yakima Valley CC



Session Highlights

Abrecaminos: Finding Ways to Enact Feminist Pedagogy in the Classroom

By Laura Read, Spokane Falls CC

In this presentation, Lisa Ede discussed how feminist teaching can create a space in the classroom for students' own individual concerns and needs and the role affect plays in learning. She shared an assignment she uses in her literature classes called "Reaction Charts," which is one method she employs to be more affective. In these reaction charts, students have an opportunity to reflect on their emotional responses to the literature they read by sharing what they like and don't like about it and by asking questions. They also identify an important passage in the text and say why they think that



particular passage is worthy of attention. Finally, they compose a thoughtful question for class discussion. This assignment asks students to engage with the text both analytically and emotionally, so, in Ede's experience, students feel more invested in their learning because more of them is at stake. Ede collects the reaction charts at the beginning of class, glancing over them quickly to alert her to issues the students are having about that day's reading, and she is then able to let the students' thoughts and feelings about the literature guide that day's discussion.

Ede also increases students' emotional investment in her class by asking them to participate in a blog she has named "The Presence of Others," a phrase taken from a quote by Hannah Arendt that reads: "For excellence, the presence of others is always required." This blog serves as a place students can continue to relate with each other and with the literature beyond the time and space constraints of the classroom. Ede has found that blogs also give students a chance for meta-cognition, and she provided us with examples of comments students have made on the blog.

This presentation was very effective because Lisa Ede explained briefly what feminist pedagogy means theoretically and offered concrete examples of how she has applied it in her classroom, giving us ideas for how we can in turn apply it in ours. Also, this was my first opportunity to hear Lisa Ede speak, and she herself embodies feminist pedagogy, humbly and kindly sharing

her own intelligence and increasing all of our excellence with her presence.

Abrecaminos: Finding a Way to (Full-Time) Work

By Connie Wasem, Spokane Falls CC

Desirous of a full-time English position at an innovative community college in the Northwest? You're in good company—at least a hundred other recent grad school grads and experienced adjuncts reach for the gold ring of full-time employment with each job opening in the region.

To help prospective job-seekers succeed, Alexis Nelson, Laura Read, and I presented "Finding a Way to Full-Time Work" at the recent TYCA conference in Yakima. Our main message: the key to success lies in the texts that you write. We based our advice on our recent experience hiring two full-time English positions at SFCC. Nelson and I shared the rubric we used to assess the 129 applications we received. Among these applications, we saw many creative and energetic teachers who unfortunately didn't score well because they didn't address the published qualifications.

Here's the gem our attendees took away: Each of the "Desired Qualifications" as published in the job announcement was given a place and allotted points on the rubric.

In short, if you want to score points, address the very details published in the announcement. We invited for interviews the top 6 people with the highest number of points based on our rubric. Read shared the texts she composed that opened the door to an interview for her: the letter, résumé, and parts of the required "separate statement" that addressed each of the duties outlined in the job announcement.

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Guest Spotlight

In this issue, we focus our spotlight on the two 2005 recipients of the annual Lisa S. Ede TYCA-PNW Awards, Lucette Wood who won the Outstanding Adjunct Award, and Sherri Winans, winner of the Outstanding Faculty Award.

Lucette Wood

Lucette Wood grew up in the Willamette Valley on a small farm in Coburg, just north of Eugene. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from George Fox University, majoring in writing and literature, and her Master of Arts from Idaho State University, majoring in Composition and Rhetoric, where she also taught as an adjunct in the English Department. Lucette returned to the Willamette Valley and lives in Springfield with her husband and two sons (born in 1999 and 2002). With grace and poise, Lucette balances her professional life with family. Lucette's colleagues at LBCC describe her as generous and joyful.

In Lucette's Philosophy of Teaching, she quotes a Native American proverb that says, "Tell me, and I'll forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I'll understand." She applies this philosophy in her classroom by engaging students in "discovery learning." She wants them to enjoy their classroom experience, so she uses methods such as playing *Family Feud* to teach symbolism or *Jeopardy* to review grammar rules and competing in Haiku contests. She also uses visual and multi-media presentations, believing that integrating technology in the classroom is important for students in their college experiences and in preparation for their future careers.

In service to her department, Lucette has collaborated with other faculty to develop new course outcomes, she has actively supported the LBCC Writing Center, tutoring students individually and serving on the Writing Desk committee, and she has developed and constructed web pages



that orient students to the center's services and provide writing, grammar, and documentation support. Also, she enjoys developing curriculum, and has done so for her many different classes, including a variety of composition courses, Introduction to Poetry, and Latin American Literature.

Sherri Winans

One of Sherri Winans' colleagues, Brian Paterson, wrote a biographical sketch of Sherri and a summary of her teaching philosophy when he nominated her for this award. In these pieces, he describes her thusly:

"Sherri believes that everyone has something to say, something important that needs to be heard. She believes that writing and learning to develop one's writing, and really doing whatever it is one is doing, should be fun, exciting, transforming. She is committed to adventure, to the happy accident, to listening wholeheartedly to her students and her colleagues. This way of living in the world informs her teaching.

Sherri has accomplished so much since she began her career at Whatcom Community College. She was the first full-time Composition instructor at the school, brought what is now the English department into being, and served as the first department chair. She has been continually committed to diversity and equality and to celebrating the strengths of both students and faculty. Over the years, she has worked for part-time equity, serving on the union to increase part-time instructors' recognition and benefits. She's taken over the Writing Center at Whatcom and transformed it, taking on a leadership position in the regional Writing Center association in the process. She created the website for the Writing Center and in doing so connected the English department to cyberspace. She works intensely with her students, interacting with them in the classroom and online, and often continues to interact with them after they've gone on to other classes and other

Guest Spotlight

schools. A group of students in one of her Advanced Composition classes continued to meet regularly more than a year after the class was over.

Sherri Winans is an articulate, passionate, thoughtful advocate for part-time equity in the two-year colleges, for equity and collaboration between the two-year colleges and the four-year colleges, for teaching in general as an occupation, for writing as a transformative experience, and for communities of all kinds as the places where we might make the world a better place. She is the rock of our department and a grounding presence on our campus, always eager to move into the future, but ever mindful of the past and the lessons we can learn from what and who has come before us. She has furthered her causes here and in the larger community and throughout the academic world of Composition. She is, to put it simply, a credit to our profession."

Congratulations to both Lucette and Sherri on winning this year's awards. And thank you both for providing us with your examples of exceptional teaching and leadership.