

Editors' Introduction to Issue 4.1

Issue 4.1 of *Literacy in Composition Studies* presents scholarship emphasizing new perspectives and new methodologies. Whether attending to methods the field must develop to analyze digital literacy practices more fully, looking at new archives to challenge how Black students have been represented in the open admissions movement of the 1960s and 1970s, or suggesting we apply a contact zones framework to analyze the systems of power at play in our research, this issue's three articles point toward the possibilities of deepening or shifting our methods to better study, analyze, and represent literate acts.

In "Methodological Changes to Researching Composing Processes in a New Literacy Context," Pamela Takayoshi draws on her extensive experience leading and directing digital literacy and digital writing research projects to explore the unique challenges that come with analyzing electronically mediated textual experiences. Focusing on how researchers of composition "have the potential to expand NLS [New Literacy Studies] scholarship in a significantly meaningful way," Takayoshi's article argues that researching literate practices in digital environments requires an attention to the composing processes that characterize fine-grained and systematic methodologies from Composition Studies (2). After briefly reviewing methodological challenges to digital literacy practices research, Takayoshi provides a much-needed overview of data collection and data analysis of digital literacy practices before taking on the ethical dimensions of research in digital environments. Using a Facebook study to illustrate her methods and orientations, Takayoshi's article expands both Composition Studies and Literacy Studies scholars' methodological knowledge by highlighting how to study writing in social, networked digital spaces.

In "Beyond Basic Reading and Writing: The People's House and the Political Literacy Education of the Student-Activists of the Black Liberation Front International, 1968-1975," Joy Karega complicates representations of Black students during this era that emphasize open admissions policies and basic writing instruction at the expense of acknowledging the complex political literacy practices that Black student activists undertook in extracurricular settings. Using archival research and oral history interview data, Karega outlines the rhetorical strategies, critical reading practices, and translingual production deployed by members of the Black Liberation Front International activists, acts which positioned The People's House "as a site of literacy education that often rivaled the university contexts where they were engaging literacy for academic purposes" (34). Karega argues that alternative academic sites provided Black students a training ground where they could "negotiate, define, and enact their political identities and practice literacy for political aims" (45).

In "Literacy Contact Zones: A Framework for Research," Nora McCook proposes that the concept of contact zones, which has been so generative for linguistics and composition, can function as a framework for conducting research on literacy. In a review of literacy studies research and the ways contact zones frameworks have been deployed in composition studies, McCook suggests that a model from one field can fill a gap in the other. A contact zones framework, McCook argues, makes language difference, orality, history, and power dynamics equally important to researchers; rather than enforcing binaries or tending toward reduction, "contact zones enable the complexities and

interrelations between these components of literacy to be visible” (67).

Alice Horning’s Symposium essay, “Contingent Labor and the Impact on Teaching: Thoughts about the Indianapolis Resolution,” articulates her support for and thinking about the Resolution. Horning argues that all faculty, including contingent and part-time instructors, should engage in compensated professional development to improve student learning through the teaching of reading.

Finally, in his review of Deborah Brandt’s *The Rise of Writing: Redefining Mass Literacy*, Ryan Dippre responds to Brandt’s analysis of how recent social, economic, and technological developments have given rise to mass writing. Dippre argues that Brandt’s book is useful for teachers, researchers, and “individuals looking to examine their own development retrospectively as literate participants in society, as the shifts in mass literacy that Brandt describes are nothing less than tectonic and have shaped...the literate activity of the readers of [her] text” (78).

These authors expand how we understand theory, method, and representation in literacy and composition studies. We hope you find their contributions as valuable as we do.

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