

Editors' Introduction to the Third Issue

This March 2014 issue of *LiCS* marks the journal's one-year anniversary. We started the journal out of a desire to foster connections among scholars working on concomitant questions, across national borders, and between data or fieldwork and theory. Appropriately, the need for connections and the problems of disconnections run throughout this current issue. The articles in this issue all respond in some way to the question Janine Solberg asks in "Taking Shorthand for Literacy": "why do we value some literacies more than others?" The ways the writers in this issue answer this question suggest new sites for literacy research and new possibilities for composition teaching.

In the lead article, Solberg takes seriously the literate work of a group of women writers who have been overlooked by literacy historians: stenographers. Solberg explains how composition's master narratives about systems management and Taylorism function as "deskilling narratives" that divorce hand from head. In her analysis of instructional material for the "business girl," Solberg reveals the ways stenographers act as literacy workers who were "encouraged to think of content, context, and purpose, and to use [their] position as a means of learning about the business and its language" (19). Her article challenges us to recognize that such narratives have obscured the ways stenographers might operate "as literate subjects or active participants in larger flows of information" (13). Solberg's essay is a corrective to the bias in our field against work deemed mechanical or not progressive enough in its politics--a bias that is, as Solberg points out, itself mechanical.

In our second article, "'Like signposts on the road': The Function of Literacy in Constructing Black Queer Ancestors," Eric Darnell Pritchard works with multiple facets of connection and disconnection to investigate the ways Black LGBTQ people have used literacy to connect with ancestors to "engender Black queer identity formation and affirmation, create genealogical links, and preserve cultural traditions" (5). Pritchard works with data collected from sixty Black LGBTQ interview subjects. By working at the intersections of race and sexuality/gender, Pritchard explores how these individuals developed literacy practices allowing them to transcend the "historical erasure" of people who are both racialized and queered others. Pritchard asks us to imagine how we might revise our approach to teaching writing by attending to the "relationships between literacy, ancestors, and the relics of history" (35).

In our third article, "Literacy Brokers and the Emotional Work of Mediation," Ligia Ana Mihut also challenges us to recognize the ways people use literacy to create significant emotional connections outside institutional sites. In her ethnographic study of the role of literacy brokers working with Romanian immigrants to the United States, Mihut uncovers what she calls "literacy as affinity—a discursive repertoire comprised of language or empathy, personal experiences, and even social relations embedded in the literate experience" (2). Mihut's essay demonstrates the usefulness of studying the concept of the literacy broker as distinct from the well-worn category of the literacy sponsor. Because literacy brokers "work across difference in languages, cultures, and socio-political

systems and structures,” analyzing the “concept of the literacy broker affords a significant analytical lens into questions of access and communication across borders, engaging differentially situated subjects” (29). Mihut demonstrates that the literacy brokers she studies develop a bi-institutional perspective that allows them to negotiate and critique institutions. This dual perspective reflects and reinforces the emotional labor brokers undertake as part of their literacy work.

Two book reviews round out this issue. Connie Kendall Theado reviews Scott Wible’s 2014 CCCC Advancement of Knowledge Award-winning monograph, *Shaping Language Policy in the U.S.: The Role of Composition Studies*, arguing that its analysis of policy demonstrates how the fields of composition and literacy studies can productively engage with one another. Gwen Gorzelsky also considers how composition shapes literacy learning in her review of *New Literacy Narratives from an Urban University: Analyzing Stories About Reading, Writing, and Changing Technologies*, authored by Sally Chandler and five student co-authors: Angela Castillo, Maureen Kadash, Molly D. Kenner, Lorena Ramirez, and Ryan J. Valdez. In documenting how each student co-author contributes to the volume via participatory action research, Gorzelsky suggests the book enacts the complex literacy pedagogies called for in *LiCS*’s opening issue symposium.

At our one-year mark, we are excited to present this rich array of scholarship to our readers. This milestone reminds us of the debt of gratitude we owe to our writers, our readers, our Editorial Board, and our Editorial Associates. We appreciate this continued engagement, and as always we hope readers will continue the conversation by contributing to our ongoing Symposium.

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