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Biography:

Mary McVee PhD., is Professor of Literacy Education and Director of CLaRI (Center for Literacy and Reading Instruction) in the Graduate School of Education University at Buffalo, SUNY. Her scholarly interests include positioning theory, digital literacies, embodiment, and multimodality; narrative discourse analysis, diversity of language, literacy, and culture; and disciplinary literacy and engineering education. Her recent funded research explores how children and teachers use disciplinary literacies to learn the engineering design process in elementary settings. Her publications have appeared in *Review of Educational Research*, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *Visual Communication*, *Pedagogies*, and other journals. In 2014 Professor McVee received the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Division K Mid-Career Award in was recognized her for scholarly work in literacy education, a commitment to equity, and mentoring of graduate students. Some of her books include: *Sociocultural positioning in literacy: Exploring culture, discourse, narrative, and power in diverse educational contexts* (McVee, Brock, & Glazier, Eds., 2011); *Exploring diversity through multimodality, narrative, and dialogue: A framework for teacher reflection* (McVee & Boyd, 2016); *Video pedagogy in action: Critical reflective inquiry using the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model* (McVee, Shanahan, Hayden, Boyd, & Pearson). Her recent publications include a chapter on Positioning Theory in literacy published in the *Theoretical Processes and Models of Literacy* (7th ed.).

Candidate Statement:

It is an honor to be nominated to serve on the LRA Board of Directors among this distinguished slate of candidates; it is quite humbling.

I am currently a Professor of Literacy Education in the Department of Learning and Instruction at the University of Buffalo, SUNY where I am also Director of the Center for Literacy and Reading Instruction (CLaRI). Through CLaRI I have had opportunities to work closely with school partners, faculty, and Literacy Specialists providing reading and writing instruction for children and families in need. I also serve as the literacy program director for literacy-related certification programs and doctoral students.

My research interests are situated in the use of mediational tools for literacy learning. One strand of my research focuses on the positions that teachers take up, construct, and represent, particularly through narratives of language, literacy, and culture. I am also interested in how literacy teachers engage in multimodal composition using digital tools and how they apply these tools within their own classrooms through multimodal composition. More recently, I have been working with colleagues to explore literacies in the context of engineering design to consider multimodal and embodied literacies with attention to the disciplinary domains for students who are linguistically, racially, ethnically, and economically diverse. This research work is particularly exciting to me as it allows me to draw upon my own prior teaching experience as a classroom ESL teacher.



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A throughline in my work has also been attention to particular theories or models and their role in research. (My first, admittedly underdeveloped, attempt at a review of schema theory were presented first at LRA, and only much later published in *Review of Educational Research*). Over the decades, I have continued to write and develop work in relation to positioning theory, publishing in *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *NRC Yearbook*, *Theoretical Models and Processes of Literacy*, and elsewhere. Over the past few years, I have collaborated with colleagues on two books using the Gradual Release of Responsibility framework in literacy research and practice.

I attended my first National Reading Conference (now LRA) in 1994 as a doctoral student. I have attended every year but one since, presenting at nearly every conference. From the beginning, LRA has been my intellectual home and a welcoming community. At LRA I found many mentors-- discussants who pushed my thinking, senior scholars who talked with me but also who critiqued my work. I will always be grateful to those LRA members who have contributed their time in service of the organization because I have benefitted immensely from the existence of LRA as an organization and a community, and my own work has been shaped and strengthened by this. It would be a joy to nurture the legacy of this organization.

At LRA I have served many roles from proposal reviewer to discussant. I have reviewed numerous manuscripts for *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice* (formerly known as *The NRC Yearbook*). Having previously served as a committee member, I now serve as Chair of the Oscar Causey Committee. I currently serve as Co-chair for Area 1 (Preservice Teacher Education) and have also served as Co-Chair for Area 8 (Literacy in Multicultural/Multilingual settings). From 2001-2004 and again from 2013 to the present, I have served as a member of the *Journal of Literacy Research* editorial board, and over the decades, I have continually reviewed for *JLR*.

Over the past few years, I have returned to this quote by Jerome Bruner from *Acts of Meaning*: "I take open-mindedness to be a willingness to construe knowledge and values from multiple perspectives without loss of commitment to one's own values. Open-mindedness is the keystone of what we call a democratic culture. We have learned, with much pain, that democratic culture is neither divinely ordained nor is it to be taken for granted as perennially durable." To me this is applicable not only to many national contexts but also globally, and even to groups such as LRA. For example, LRA has policies and procedures, by-laws, ethics statements, and a governing structure which I respect and will continue to be informed by if elected. But it is critical that while adhering to such structures for foundational support that we attempt to include all voices, practicing what Bruner refers to as "open-mindedness." If elected, I will practice such open-mindedness to the best of my ability on the board, and also seek ways to foster dialogic engagement related to open-mindedness with LRA members across a wide range of issues. This is the first area that I would target as a board member.

A second area that I would hope to promote is strength through research pluralism. LRA has clearly changed over the past few decades, but the world of higher education, teacher education, research, and the socio-political contexts of education globally have changed as well. This merits some ideological and epistemological stocktaking for us as LRA members. For example, as a researcher whose work is grounded in narrative, discourse, and multimodality, I have been intrigued with the



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pendulum swing at LRA away from the dominance of quantitative studies when I first joined the organization toward qualitative approaches. In envisioning a future for LRA, I would work to promote initiatives that help work toward methodological plurality and acceptance of varied research approaches through specific initiatives such as reaching out to other organizations and advocating for sessions that bring in new methodological perspectives of all kinds. This focus also intersects with other ongoing and needed discussions around race, equity, and access that are at the center of research valued and conducted by LRA membership across diverse contexts. This requires input from LRA's international membership, a continuum of scholars spanning doctoral students to senior scholars, STAR fellows, and other LRA members.

It would be a pleasure to serve on the LRA Board of Directors and to give back to LRA and its membership.