

Looking back on #LRA15 I feel a tremendous sense of pride to be counted among the literacy researchers who have brought forward so many important theoretical, pedagogical, and methodological innovations over the past sixty five years. The conference drew more than 1300 attenders, who attended more than 400 sessions, joined 24 study groups, and developed collaborative approaches to policy writing in the new Briefing Room.

I look forward to imagining #LRA16 with you.

Conference Features

We witnessed a surge of energy related to public policy questions. My thanks to Dr. Anne McGill-Franzen who organized the Briefing Room and who will continue to work online and during the conference to coordinate topics and talks related to policy work in schools, communities, and state and national forums.

The STAR Program welcomed new awardees: Lamar Johnson, April Baker-Bell, Maneka Brooks, Theda Gibbs, Bonnie Farrier, and Bong Gee Jang. Congratulations! Working with STAR Director, Marcelle Haddix, Becky Rogers and I invited students from Carlsbad High School's award-winning CHSTV program to film and edit a short video about the STAR program. We hope to see this video on the LRA website in a few months.

The Town Hall Meeting drew 200+ attendees with interests and questions ranging from 'Where's the beer?' to 'When will we seriously address racism?' If LRA members want and need a space for addressing urgent issues we will need to agree on a format. One approach would be to submit questions prior to the THM. In any case, I am very grateful to Lara Handsfield and Millie Gort who managed multiple moments of 'reflective silence' while also tracking the emerging questions among attendees.

Six Bilingual sessions representing multiple Areas included Spanish and English languages to represent presenters' and their participants' meanings. These sessions, in addition to LRA's Spanish language Call for Proposals/Convocatoria de Propuestas, open important new spaces for multilingual knowledge production.

Newcomers and Graduate Students enjoyed breakfast and Vital Issues events, including a Pechakucha hosted by the Field Council, Ian O'Byrne and Jud Laughter. Thank you!

In collaboration with Corrine Wickens, chair of the Gender and Sexualities ICG, and KWMG staff, we arranged for signage on all bathrooms that requested trust and respect for people choosing the bathroom that aligned with their gender identity. Thank you to all attendees for your respect and thoughtfulness.

LRA Strategic Planning

As Janice Almasi has described in a previous newsletter (Fall 2015), the Board has been engaged in Strategic Planning, with a focus on five areas of growth: (a) communications, (b) diversity, (c) governance, (d) mentoring and energy, and (e) policy and advocacy. During upcoming meetings, the Board will continue to define the purpose, actions, and evaluation plans for each of these growth areas. We have also invited Past Presidents to become involved in deliberations over the content and actions outlined in the Strategic Planning documents.

LRA Website

The new Technology Committee Chair, Jayne Lammers, and e-Editors Greg McVerry, Ian O'Byrne, and Michael Manderino and their committee members will continue to review changes to the website as we prepare for a Spring 2016 launch. (Yes, corks will be flying.)

Publications

Publications Committee Chair Rachel Karchmer-Klein worked tirelessly with Janice Almasi to finalize the contracts with Sage for JLR and the online (former *Yearbook*) *Literacy Research: Theory, Method and Practice*. I look forward to working with the new JLR editorial team, who began their work Dec 4, 2015: Misty Sailors, Dennis Davis and Miriam Martinez and Associate editors Logan Manning, Arlette Willis, and Virginia Goatley.

Welcoming New Board of Directors Members

We welcomed Elizabeth Dutro, Carmen Medina, and David O'Brien to the Board of Directors and encourage all members to cast their votes for the 2016 election of three new Board of Directors and LRA Vice President-Elect.

LRA 2016 Conference

I am especially excited to invite everyone to the 66th LRA Conference, co-chaired by Rebecca Rogers and Gay Ivey, with the theme, "Mobilizing Literacy Research for Social Transformation." The 2016 Conference will be held November 29-December 3 at the Omni Nashville Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee.

PRESIDENT-ELECT'S REPORT

Rebecca Rogers

University of Missouri-St. Louis

This year, LRA's Conference will be held November 30 - December 3 in Nashville, Tennessee, at the Omni-Nashville. The theme, Mobilizing Literacy Research for Social Transformation, invites us to consider the metaphors of mobility, materiality, movement and transformation in our research epistemologies, methodologies, and literacy areas. We encourage sessions that take a critical look at the research methods we employ, the complexity of interpretation and the implications for policy, particularly where historically underserved communities are concerned.

We invite you to submit proposals for papers, alternative sessions, roundtable presentations, and study groups (1500 word limit). The Call for Proposals is posted on the LRA website and in All Academic. It includes a detailed description of each of the session types and a list of Areas where you may submit your conference proposal. Proposals must be submitted in All Academic by March 1 (PST). Co-chair Gay Ivey and I will be working with Area Chairs to ensure a fair and rigorous review process. At the conference this year, we will continue with the Briefing Room and will have topics and facilitators announced in the program. Based on feedback from the membership, we are rethinking our Town Hall meeting to make it a more meaningful space to deliberate literacy research in relation to public sphere issues.

The Call for Proposals/Covocatoria de Propuestas can be found on the LRA website. A special thank you to Dra. Angela M. Lopez-

Velasquez, of Southern Connecticut State University, for her translation. The Spanish version is available on the All Academic homepage and on the LRA website. We hope to welcome colleagues from Mexico and the Américas as part of LRA 2016 as we consider mobility, mobilization, and transformation in our literacy research.

We think LRA members will enjoy the urban setting of downtown Nashville for this year's conference. The conference hotel is new and has excellent meeting space and flow. It is located just a block or two from many restaurants, shops, cultural attractions, a growing arts scene, and music venues. Hatch Show Print, a letterpress printing shop founded in 1879, is located in the hotel. The Nashville Public Library is also close with an outstanding civil rights collection. We will be working with our colleagues in the Nashville area to enrich and extend our conference experience by connecting with the local community. LRA's Executive Committee will meet at the conference site later in February with a full agenda. We will start to imagine LRA members in the space — sharing research, networking, and contributing in small and large ways to our field and the diverse communities in which we live and work.

I am pleased to announce some of the plenary speakers for LRA 2016.

DR. PATRICIA ENCISO, President of LRA, will deliver the Presidential Address on Wednesday, November 30, from 4:45 - 6:00 pm. The Presidential Reception will be held immediately after the address. Everyone is invited to join Dr. Enciso in celebrating her Presidency.

DR. FREDDIE HIEBERT will deliver the Oscar Causey Address on Thursday, December 1, from 10:30 am - 12:00 pm.

DR. H. RICHARD MILNER IV, Professor of Education at the University of Pittsburgh and Dr. Helen S. Faison Chair in Urban Education, will deliver the plenary address on Thursday, December 1. Dr. Milner is a noted education scholar in the areas of educational policy, African American literature, and the sociology of education. Milner is a policy fellow of the National Education Policy Center. His focus on concerns related to policy, critical race theory and urban education will be of great interest to the Literacy Research Association.

DR. BARBARA COMBER will deliver the plenary address on Friday, December 2. Dr. Comber is a Research Professor in the Faculty of Education at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia. Dr. Comber is internationally recognized for her collaborative action research with teachers working in high poverty and culturally diverse communities. Her research demonstrates how theories of space and place within literacy studies can underpin the design of culturally inclusive curriculum for diverse student communities and provide teachers with ideas on how to design enabling pedagogical practices that extend students' literate repertoires.

The other plenary speakers will be announced in the fall newsletter.

Cristina Griffin, at LRA Headquarters, and I are in communication every week: updating All Academic, creating and hosting web seminars for Area Chairs, recruiting reviewers and, soon, beginning the review process. If you have questions about All Academic, please contact Cristina at cgriffin@kmgnet.com.

We have an excellent slate of candidates for the LRA Board of Directors and Vice President-Elect. Please remember to vote!

Finally, contact me (rogersrl@umsl.edu), or anyone on the LRA Executive Committee if you are interested in deepening your involvement with LRA.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Gay Ivey

University of Wisconsin-Madison

First, let me say that I am humbled and grateful for the opportunity to serve this organization. Thanks to the membership for granting me your trust. I am very mindful of its commitment—per LRA's Mission Statement—to the promotion and dissemination of ethical, rigorous, methodologically sound, and socially responsible research toward the creation of useful theories and sensible practice and policies. Second, I deeply appreciate the mentoring I have received from members of the Executive Committee following last spring's election as I prepared to assume this role.

One of my responsibilities as Vice President is to convene and chair the Nominations Committee for the purpose of electing a new Vice President and new members of the Board of Directors. This committee consists of the Vice President, President-Elect, Past President, and four representatives from the LRA membership who are not on the Board of Directors. Members of the Nominating Committee are required to be members in good standing with records of service and leadership to LRA.

You might also begin to consider potential nominees for the 2017 elections for the office of Vice President and for Board of Directors. Candidates should (a) have a record of leadership in the organization, (b) understand the value of research in the organization, (c) understand, support, and respect diversity in the organization, and (d) be a member in good standing. All nominations for members of the Nominations Committee and for the office of Vice President and Board of Directors should be sent to me at gayivey@wisc.edu and should be accompanied by a current curriculum vita. Peer nominations and self-nominations are welcomed.

Looking ahead, I will also have the opportunity to appoint new Area Chairs, as some current chairs will see the ending of their terms. If you are interested in serving, please let me know. In the meantime, I am excited to co-chair the 2016 conference with President-Elect Becky Rogers, and I look forward to a terrific program in Nashville.

Speaking of conferences, if you missed the Annual Business Meeting in Carlsbad, you might not know that in an effort to lock in lower costs and increase the possibility of securing desirable locations, the Executive Committee and KWMG worked hard last year to pin down contracts for not just one, but three future conference sites. Our 2017 and 2019 conferences will be held at the Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel & Marina, with room rates at \$160 (2017) and \$170 (2019). This is a terrific site that will have newly renovated guest rooms in 2017 and newly renovated meeting spaces by 2019. The hotel is situated in a very walkable neighborhood with restaurants nearby, as well as additional hotels. The 2018 conference will be held at the Renaissance Indian Wells Resort & Spa in Palm Springs,

California, with a room rate of \$170. This site has abundant guest rooms and fantastic meeting space that lends itself to innovative activities and small group informal events. Also, the property itself is very compact (no long walks between guest rooms and meeting spaces and no golf carts!). Special thanks go to Becky Rogers for her work in securing the 2017 and 2019 sites and to Arlette Willis for the 2018 site. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to travel with them and learn from them as I begin the search for our LRA 2020 site.

I am aware that many members have questions about decisions we have made regarding conference site selections. Please feel free to contact me (gay.ivey@wisc.edu) if you have suggestions, concerns, or you just want to learn more about the processes. I have learned a lot about this in the past year and would be really happy to share and to hear from you.

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Janice F. Almasi

University of Kentucky

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the organization over the past three years as the Vice President, President-Elect, and President. I have had the great fortune to work with many incredibly talented and dedicated individuals on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors these past three years, and I am looking forward to my final year of service as Past President.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Pat Enciso and Rebecca Rogers for planning and organizing an exceptional 2015 Annual Conference. As well, I would like to thank all of the area chairs, and all of the reviewers for rigorously reviewing the overwhelming number of proposals. Finally, I extend my sincere thanks to Lynn Hupp and the talented staff of Kautter Wenhold Management Group for their extraordinary support and assistance throughout the past year.

Many of the day-to-day tasks of leading the organization last year revolved around governance, including appointing a treasurer and committee chairs. To that end it was my pleasure to reappoint Gwen McMillon to serve another 3-year term as Treasurer and to appoint Detra Price-Dennis as Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism Chair; Anne McGill-Franzen as Policy and Legislative Chair; Rachel Karchmer-Klein as Publications Chair; Lara Handsfield and Judith Lysaker as Research Committee Co-chairs; and Jayne Lammers as Technology Chair.

As well, many contracts were negotiated and signed including: extending the All Academic contract through December of 2017; extending the contract with SAGE to publish the *Journal of Literacy Research and Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice* through December of 2019; and securing contracts for conference sites from 2016 through 2019. It is hoped that, by searching for conference sites four years in advance of the conference, that LRA will be better positioned to locate and secure suitable sites for our conference each year. Thanks are extended to Pat Enciso, Becky Rogers, Arlette Willis, Gay Ivey and the talented staff at KWMMG for all of the countless hours spent searching for, visiting, and evaluating numerous cities and hotel properties.

One of the primary goals I had as President involved initiating a strategic planning process to plan for the future of our organization. The data gathered from a Needs Assessment Survey sent to all LRA members was used to inform our strategic planning process. The goal for strategic planning was to enhance organizational growth and enable the Board of Directors to set directions and priorities that aligned with our mission and vision and the needs identified from the Needs Assessment Survey. Our analysis of the data from the Needs Assessment Survey was used to identify LRA's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This analysis was used to identify 5 areas for growth: (a) communications, (b) diversity, (c) governance, (d) mentoring and energy, and (e) policy and advocacy. The Executive Committee and the Board of Directors then developed goals, action plans and timelines for each of the 5 areas for growth. In December of 2015 a draft of the strategic plan was presented to the Board of Directors for review and comment. As well, the draft of the strategic plan was shared with the Past Presidents at their annual luncheon at the conference and the general membership at the Annual Business meeting.

Throughout 2015, efforts were also made to continue the work that Arlette Willis began by further aligning our Policies and Procedures and Bylaws and making sure that there was consistency in all of our administrative documents. Another goal was to alter the manner in which board meetings were conducted. First, efforts were made to streamline the operation of meetings by implementing the use of a consent agenda. Second, efforts were made to conduct as much business as possible throughout the year using electronic voting so that issues that required board votes were taken care of immediately rather than waiting until a face-to-face board meeting. Third, the time saved by using the consent agenda and conducting many votes electronically was used to provide space during board meetings for discussion of issues related to race and racialization within the organization and for strategic planning.

The tasks that I will work on during my last year of service as Past President are largely defined by LRA Bylaws and our Policy and Procedure Handbook. Those tasks include chairing the Management Relations Committee, which is tasked with conducting an annual review of the performance of the Executive Director and the Headquarters staff.

Another task is to chair the Financial Advisory Committee, which is tasked with supporting and providing strategic advice to the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors regarding the financial well being of the organization, audits, budgeting, investments, and development.

As Past President, I will also serve as a member of the Nominations Committee, which is tasked with soliciting nominees and developing a slate of candidates for each position on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors for the 2017 election.

One final task is to solicit nominations for, and make appointments to, all standing and awards committees and to appoint chairs of all awards committees. In preparation for this task, this winter I will work with our Executive Director, Lynn Hupp, to design a volunteer survey that will be sent to all members. The data gathered from this survey will be used to inform committee appointments. To become more actively involved in the organization, please look for this survey in the coming weeks and be sure to complete it.

As we move forward in strategically planning the future of our organization, we look to President Pat Enciso to be a wise steward of our organization. As well, we look forward to what President-Elect Becky Rogers has planned for Conference 2016, and we are fortunate to have Vice President Gay Ivey's attention to detail and energy as she conducts the search for sites for Conference 2020 and chairs the Nominations Committee. Our leadership team is fortunate to have the financial expertise of our Treasurer, Gwen McMillon, who has made great strides in making our organization more financially stable. Our Secretary, Lynn Shanahan's careful documentation of the discussions are critical, and our Parliamentarian, Patriann Smith's expertise in drafting and interpreting our bylaws and policies and procedures ensure that we are in good hands moving forward.

VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Eurydice Bauer

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

LRA has been my academic home since 1993. I have served on the Executive Board of Directors, as a STAR mentor, an Area Chair, and Co-Chair of the Multilingual/Transcultural Literacies Innovative Community Group.

My dedication to the organization reflects my deep interest and concern with ongoing dialogue about the cultural and linguistic diversity of the world we live in, the ways in which the schools where we carry out our research function, and the role of the organization itself. I consider the range of voices that makes up the organization vital to the continuation of dialogue about these issues. As Vice President, I would foster the inviting climate that has made this discussion productive for up-and-coming scholars as well as those of us, like me, who have been members for decades. I would also seek ways to expand the diversity of our membership, in recognition that whether we are producing white papers or collaborating with other organizations to address key issues that transcend our organization, new ideas are the lifeblood of our effort. I would therefore aim to start a dialogue with fellow LRA—members about collaborations across and outside educational organizations that might support our continued growth as scholars and the organization's continued relevance in the field.

My faculty appointment is in language and literacy within a department of curriculum and instruction. I teach courses on culture and diversity. My research focuses on the literacy and biliteracy development of linguistically diverse students, addressing such topics as the ways in which home and school environments shape the students in a context of racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. I am a collaborator on an NSF grant—awarded to Penn State—and my extensive work in school settings supports my contribution to an international investigation of bilingualism across the lifespan. I believe LRA can continue to grow and to benefit by using a global lens as we continue to reshape ourselves for the future. I hope to work with my colleagues at LRA to explore the possible benefits of 1) finding ways to support large-scale collaborations that link our interests in providing quality literacy to students in different countries around the world, and 2) designing means to collaborate across research institutions in the United States to address ongoing issues related to students in our public schools.

Working on committees has deepened my commitment to LRA. In addition to serving on the editorial boards for the *Journal of Literacy Research* and *The National Reading Conference Yearbook*, I have served as a member of the Multicultural and Diversity Issues Committee (now called Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism) and the International Innovation Community Group, as Chair of Area XI: Literacy and Language Diversity (now areas seven and eight), and as Parliamentarian on the Executive Board of Directors, working with eight successive presidents. I have learned that the success of any LRA leader lies in the ability to set an agenda that simultaneously moves the organization forward and addresses the needs of all its members. As Parliamentarian, I provided input to each president in a fashion that honored the preferred style of interaction, level of dedication to the organization, and the individual and collective goals that brought the group together in the first place. Many challenges arise when running an organization, and it is the Executive Committee's and Board members' diligent work that enables the organization to ensure smooth sailing. Given my experience on the Executive Committee over the last seven years, I fully understand the challenges and rewards of leadership that the position of Vice President would afford me.

Positions

Attention to diversity in membership, the organization's international presence, and transparent organization policy must continue to play a major role in LRA's advancement.

Addressing diversity requires becoming more diverse as an organization and honoring diverse voices within our organization. I study the adoption of enrichment bilingual programs mostly found in upper middle class schools in U.S. schools that serve culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. I am committed to identifying ways to improve education of diverse student populations. As Vice President of LRA, I will work to mobilize the organization to be, as it has always been, the space where people recharge and remobilize to return to their institution. I also look forward to continuing to support LRA's mission of being a linguistically, culturally, ethnically, and dialectically diverse place that addresses the globalized literacy issues of the future. LRA's impact must be understood, celebrated, and documented. By taking on the question as to how to measure this impact, we can fulfill our mission to mentor and support future generations of literacy scholars, who must be as diverse as our population of learners. One program I would propose would be new awards that recognize members who have published collaborative research that increases awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity issues.

As LRA's identity has evolved beyond research for its own sake, we have begun to make a difference in education worldwide by examining how we deal with literacy issues broadly. In the future I hope we will identify the pathways to making literacy a worldwide human right, mobilizing resources within and outside of our organization. As Vice President I look forward to being a part of this effort, as well as being a part of the leadership team as we address positions on mandates from federal and state governments; devise means to include more groups from more contexts of diverse students, teachers, communities, and schools; and find ways to communicate beyond our group.

If elected Vice President, I will work diligently to provide a voice for all members, support our collective efforts to strengthen our role on the national and world stage, and continue to build alliances and create policy with other like-minded organizations.

Marcelle M. Haddix

Syracuse University

Professional Background:

I am Dean's Associate Professor and Department Chair of Reading and Language Arts at Syracuse University. I teach undergraduate and graduate courses in secondary English methods, adolescent literacy, children's and adolescent literature, and 21st century composing processes. In addition to my teaching and administrative responsibilities, I direct two youth-centered literacy projects: Writing Our Lives which involves programming to support the writing practices of urban youth within and beyond school contexts and Dark Girls, an out-of-school space for Black adolescent girls that encourages their positive self-awareness, activism, and empowerment through writing, literature, and the arts. As a community-engaged teacher educator and scholar, an essential part of my work is preparing literacy educators to work with/in urban schools and communities.

My research draws on qualitative methods and critical theories to interrupt dominant discourse about the experiences of people of color in teaching and teacher education in the field of literacy research. My research focuses on three main areas: 1) increasing racial and linguistic diversity in literacy teacher education; 2) preparing the current teacher force to work effectively with and within diverse school communities; and 3) creating in and out of school spaces that support the literacy practices of urban youth. My book, *Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me*, deals extensively with the intersections of these foci and highlights findings from my research with preservice teachers of color. Additionally, I have published several research articles across these areas, including in *Research in the Teaching of English*, *English Education*, *Linguistics and Education*, *Urban Education*, and *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. My research has been funded by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the Conference on English Education. I have received national award recognition for my scholarly achievements from the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and from NCTE, including several early career awards and the NCTE Janet Emig Award for exemplary scholarship published in *English Education*. I also serve as a trustee for the NCTE Research Foundation and as chair of the Affirmation Action Committee for AERA Division K Teaching and Teacher Education.

In 2009, I was selected to be a fellow in the inaugural cohort of the STAR (Scholars of color Transitioning into Academic Research institutions) mentoring program. LRA established the STAR program to increase the number of scholars of color who are mentored by our organization and to build their capacity to become productive leaders within the organization. True to the goals of the program, my experiences as a STAR fellow shaped my leadership trajectory within the organization. Currently, I am the director of the STAR program, which is now in its fifth cycle. I served as a Field Council Representative and as chair of the Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism Committee. I am also a member of the Multilingual/Transcultural Literacies ICG. As ERM chair, I worked with the Board of Directors to develop language for ongoing support for the STAR program in the LRA Policy and Procedures Handbook (PPH). I also worked with members of the ERM committee to organize three to four conference panels on issues of equity and social justice each year; utilized social media and technology to conduct outreach to

increase diversity among the LRA membership; and led initiatives to provide travel support for underrepresented scholars of color. Most recently, I spearheaded efforts to develop a statement that is under advisement with the Executive Committee and Board of Directors on racism, racial violence, and literacy research, responding to the concerns of the LRA membership about our collective responsibility to address and speak out against policies and practices that threaten the literacy vitality of communities of color.

Position Statement:

It is a tremendous honor to be nominated to serve LRA as Vice President-Elect. With deepest respect for the long and rich history of the scholarly contributions of this organization to literacy research and practice, I believe that we are witnessing a renewed commitment to change, innovation, and public engagement. In my time as a member, membership and conference attendance have increased, especially among literacy scholars of color, international scholars, and graduate students. There has been increased interest and support for the use of digital tools and literacies not only in our research but also in the ways that we communicate and collaborate as colleagues (i.e., the LRA Research to Practice YouTube channel; archiving listserv threads). The use of diverse methodologies and theories for creative and groundbreaking research is steadily expanding. Discussions at town hall meetings and topics of plenary lectures in recent years have inspired us to grapple with what it means to be literacy scholars in the context of the Black Lives Matter movement, education for immigrant and undocumented youth and English language learners, and increasing standardization and high stakes testing. The organization is reexamining and reimagining why and how literacy research matters and why our work is relevant and essential in this moment.

If elected, I would sustain this momentum to shape an LRA responsive to the current national and global contexts. I would ask the membership to critically examine what and whose literacies and voices are valued within dominant research discourse, and one way to do that is to create spaces at our annual meetings that are inclusive of policy makers, local educators, school board members, journalists, bloggers, and community activists. I would work with study groups, ICGs, and other interest groups to locate opportunities for collaboration by developing jointly sponsored sessions and think tanks that highlight shared goals and interests that can move forward and strengthen the work and impact of the organization. I would build on initiatives to disseminate our work through diverse media platforms, policy briefs, and public forums. Finally, I would ask the membership to continue to address the intersections of race, language, class, gender and sexuality in pursuing an educationally and socially just research agenda that requires our individual and collective methodological and theoretical contributions. This is an important time for the organization, and I would consider it an honor to serve as Vice President-Elect.

BOARD CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Maren Aukerman

Stanford University

The work and play and power of literacy are inevitably bound up in our histories, identities, and practices. I begin, then, with a bit about who I am:

I was the welfare child, the free lunch kid, the girl who spoke the wrong language (German) at home. I have eaten food I scavenged from dumpsters and it tasted good. I found myself in books and in writing, but most of all in stories and songs in my head that were not written down.

Though critical literacy was not a term I knew yet, I stumbled into it as an adolescent; I harnessed my hope, love and anger with a five-page letter to the principal when I saw kids being unjustly punished. My letters of protest still get me into trouble these many years later.

I taught and learned from children who posed hard questions, fourth through sixth graders in Arizona. I was a Spanish/English bilingual teacher in a school where almost no one, including the principal, wanted the bilingual program to exist. I wrote more letters.

I also fell in love with teaching literacy. All of it. But I figured out how much I did not know, and that spurred me to attend graduate school at UC Berkeley.

A wise mentor brought me along to NRC (as it was called then); I was awestruck by the intellectual generosity and vibrancy of many of our senior scholars. NRC/LRA has been my professional dwelling place ever since, and over time I have started to learn to call it home. Going on two decades, I have attended nearly every conference – as learner, presenter, discussant, or plenary panel speaker. I have reviewed for both the conference and *The Journal of Literacy Research*. And things have come full circle: one of my favorite parts of attending the conference is inviting doctoral students to join me as well.

Which brings me to now: I am an assistant professor of curriculum and teacher education at the Graduate School of Education at Stanford University, where I mentor students and teach courses in literacy, classroom discourse, and qualitative research methodology, and where my teaching has been recognized with the Faculty Teaching Award.

My scholarly aims are to develop socially just theories of literacy pedagogy and development that treat children's diverse meaning-making practices, even those that differ substantially from those of their teachers, as a resource rather than a liability; and to study how and what children learn in classroom settings where the meaning of text is treated as unsettled, emergent, and contested.

In my more conceptual work, I have argued for shifting the primary pedagogical focus during teaching from pursuit of comprehension-as-outcome (aimed at securing "right" answers for tests and teachers) toward deeper, more culturally responsive pedagogies centered on what I call comprehension-as-sensemaking (decision-making about what textual meaning is persuasive to the reader, regardless of

"rightness"). In my more empirical work, I examine how children interact, think, and evolve as readers during dialogically organized text discussions. Much of this work has taken place in bilingual classrooms and other educational contexts serving linguistically diverse students. I have explored how children experience instruction that does (and does not) invite their textual perspectives into the mix; how they change across time in their talk about the multimodal dimensions of texts; and how language, peers and power shape the learning experiences of young readers.

I have shared my scholarship in places such as *The Journal of Literacy Research*, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, *English Education*, *Language Arts*, and *The Reading Teacher*, as well as in LRA's Research to Practice Show, a Voice of Literacy podcast, and as keynote speaker for AERA's Literature SIG. I have been a Spencer Foundation/NAE postdoctoral scholar, and have received IRA's Albert J. Harris Award for my research.

I come to LRA to listen, think with others, share my ideas, and find myself challenged. The Board of Directors nomination is not only an honor but also another challenge. I am asked: what can I contribute? Upon reflection, I believe I can contribute in at least four areas where we are strong but ought to grow:

LRA nurtures new ideas and emerging scholars. We have a responsibility not to simply replicate ourselves, collectively or individually. I commit to promoting dialogue that invites new and differing voices to engage with and alongside more established ones. I want to look for ways that LRA might further open our doors to scholars of color; graduate students; international scholars; and others who historically have not always seen a place for themselves at the table.

LRA is political. We have a responsibility to be a key player in the national debate on literacy learning and assessment; I want to continue to sharpen our organizational focus on reshaping public understandings about what counts. For example, I might work to bring intensive seminars to the conference focused on multimodal storytelling with a policy thrust and/or on high-quality editorial writing (e.g., drawing upon the Op Ed Project).

LRA is a space for methodological diversity, soundness and innovation. We have a responsibility to think together not only about interesting findings but also about the how of research – and this not just for the junior scholars among us. I would like us to develop a new proposal submission category: research design/data analysis proposals, in which we can submit pending design and analysis questions to be discussed with colleagues.

LRA works in the service of literacy that is meaningful. We have a responsibility to foster scholarship that builds toward a world in which children, adolescents, and adults can create and engage with texts in ways that matter to them. How we undertake that scholarship, and even what it means for literacy to be meaningful to those we serve, may be areas where we differ. But we need to gauge our successes and challenge one another on these terms, and I will lend my voice to that dialogue in the years to come.

Hilary Janks

The Wits School of Education, South Africa

In 2010 I was privileged to be invited as a keynote speaker to the first LRA conference in Fort Worth Texas. That was a momentous year for the organisation as it marked the 60th anniversary of the National Reading Conference (NRC) as well as the year that the NRC changed its name to the Literacy Research Association. I immediately recognised this conference as the most interesting in the field and the best space to meet and get to know both established and up-and-coming scholars. I decided then to attend whenever I could. Unfortunately other commitments, the cost of travel, and the timing of the conference kept me away until 2014, in Florida. I was back again in 2015 and now that I have reached mandatory retirement age at my University and have sufficient research funding, expect to see me every year. With only three LRA conferences to my name, I was both surprised and honoured to be nominated to stand for the LRA Board. The nomination has also come at a stage in my career when I have the time to do the work that election to the Board would entail.

I believe that LRA is the premier conference in the field of literacy research for a number of reasons. First is the high level of participation of graduate students and early career researchers whose work tends to be particularly fresh and innovative. Advisers who accompany them are able to network them with more established researchers and the students are also able to establish links with others in their cohort. Second is the culture of real discussion that is respectful while simultaneously critical enough to push our work forward. This is made possible by the practice of having discussants and allowing enough time in sessions for the participants to engage with the presenters. Third is that the conference is inclusive of different and competing paradigms in literacy research. Fourth, the conference is relatively small, and researchers in the field attend regularly. This makes it easy to catch up with both friends and acquaintances as well as to meet new people. The venues appear to be chosen so as to facilitate social interaction that is as often about ideas as it is about networking and friendship. Finally, what I believe makes the LRA conference special is the care that is taken with the selection of keynote speakers who challenge and inspire us, the thought that goes into the overall conference programming, and the work that is being done to make the organisation and the program more inclusive.

I believe I have much to contribute to LRA. I come with a sense of humour and 38 years of experience in the field as a professor in a South African University. I have taught courses in pre- and in-service English teacher education as well as courses in language, literacy, discourse analysis and research methods to graduate students in five different countries. I have acted as an adviser to over 30 postgraduate students since 1995, when I completed my own PhD at the University of Lancaster in the UK. My work has been recognised at home with a B1 research rating by the National Research Foundation, the Medal of Honour from the Education Association of South Africa for achievements in the field of education, and election to the Academy of Science of South Africa. In the US, I have been honoured by election to the Reading Hall of Fame and as an AERA Fellow. I have delivered over 30 national and international keynote addresses, published 60 peer reviewed articles and book chapters, and written two books. My research is based in poor schools with multilingual, largely African students who are

taught through the medium of English. I believe that I am best known for my work in critical literacy.

Were I elected to the Board I would hope to add an international perspective that is underpinned by experience of living under apartheid and through both the liberation struggle and the current ongoing struggle to address continuing poverty and inequity, particularly with regard to education. I would like to contribute to the work being done to insure that LRA is an organisation that remains committed to social justice in language and literacy education and in the organisation itself. I would like in the future to see even greater diversity in the participants who come to LRA conferences and would like to imagine ways of making LRA accessible to more scholars from the political South, particularly scholars of colour. I would also like to see more cross-cutting conversations across paradigms, perhaps panels that present different positions on the same issue or different answers to the same question. I like to work as part of a team and to share a laugh while finding creative solutions to sticky problems collaboratively. I am also happy to fetch or make the tea and coffee.

Carmen M. Martínez-Roldán

Teachers College, Columbia University

It is an honor to be nominated to the Board of Directors of the Literacy Research Association. I am an Associate Professor in Bilingual Bicultural Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. Originally from Puerto Rico, I moved to the states after completing a M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Puerto Rico. I received my Ph.D. in Language, Reading, and Culture in 2000 from the University of Arizona and held a two-year post-doctoral appointment at The University of Iowa, where I was a member of the Language and Literacy graduate program. As part of my socialization into academia, during my doctoral and post-doctoral studies, I became aware of the importance of not only joining but supporting through our service and leadership the professional organizations that move the literacy field and education forward through sound scholarship. I have been fortunate to see closely the commitment to LRA from many literacy scholars I have met over my academic career. Their work and service have inspired me to steadily serve the professional community as a member and in various leadership roles at LRA and at other professional organizations for the last 16 years.

My professional career as a bilingual literacy researcher and teacher educator reflects my strong commitment to increasing knowledge that addresses educational issues affecting marginalized social groups, particularly young Latina/o students, the fastest growing group in U.S. schools. My specific contribution to this goal has been to advance both the theory and practice related to young bilingual children's literacy development by investigating bilingual children's literate thinking--the various ways children construct meanings from texts in English and Spanish and the contexts that mediate their interpretive processes and Discourses. Language minoritized students are too often perceived through a deficit lens that hinders both their learning and their potential. My work contributes to understanding the ways in which this group's linguistic and literacy repertoires serve as resources not only for meaning making and learning but for supporting their academic identities. My research also contributes to supporting teachers as they work to understand and address both the particular literacy strengths and needs of bilingual students.

My research has been disseminated nationally and internationally through conferences and publications in journals such as *Research in the Teaching of English*, *Language Arts*, *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies: An International Journal*, and the *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*. Most recently, I co-authored (with Evelyn Arizpe and Teresa Colomer) the book *Visual Journeys through Wordless Narrative: An International Inquiry with Immigrant Children and The Arrival*, which was the recipient of the 2015 Edward B. Fry Book Award. What I have learned through these years is that these scholarly accomplishments are not the product of one solitary scholar. What makes these accomplishments possible is the support of our professional communities, the sharing of ideas with other colleagues, which push and nurture our emergent ideas until they come to fruition. It is this conviction that has led me to serve, not only the LRA community but NCTE and AERA in various leadership roles with the goal of supporting their efforts to promote robust literacy and biliteracy contexts for minoritized children and their teachers.

In the year 2000, I served for the first time as Co-Chair of the Children's and Young Adolescent's Literature Area of what at the time was the National Reading Conference. In 2012, I served for the second time as Co-Chair, on what is now Area 9, Text Analysis/Children's, Young Adult and Adult Literature of LRA. In between those two periods, I served as Program Chair and Chair of the Research Strand of the Programs Committee, National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, 2007-2009), Program Chair and Chair of the Literature SIG of the American Educational Research Association (AERA, 2011-2013), and more recently, Chair of the Elementary Section Nominating Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, 2015-2016).

If elected, I would like to contribute to LRA's efforts to nurture a welcoming community: a) for new and young scholars, b) for scholars of color, and c) for international researchers. There has been progress since my first presentation at LRA 16 years ago to this day but we need to continue moving this inclusive agenda forward. The STAR (Scholars of Color Transitioning into Academic Research Institutions) initiative over the last years and the decision to accept presentations in Spanish this past year represent both strong statements about the organization's commitment to diversity; however, I want to join others in thinking how can we open up these invitations to include even more voices and how can we sustain a sense of community. These are some of the issues I would like to contribute. If elected, it will be my pleasure to join the LRA Board's efforts to support a strong, vibrant, and welcoming literacy scholarly community and represent the LRA membership.

Allison Skerrett

The University of Texas at Austin

Like all schooled writers exploring a new genre, I studied, pen in hand, the statements of my colleagues who have previously accepted this important nomination for LRA's Board of Directors. The paradox with studying a strong mentor text, of course, is that the reader/writer wishes to emulate the elements she admires and has learned are expected components, while keeping that genre and herself malleable to her own ideas and identity. Thus my modest spin to where I must, and sincerely wish, to begin: I count it a great privilege to be nominated for LRA's Board of Directors. Let me also bravely share a [lesser-recommended] journey into LRA. Unlike several colleagues who wrote of becoming part of the LRA community

during their doctoral studies, my introduction to LRA occurred at a search committee meeting with the literacy faculty at The University of Texas at Austin. My now colleagues of almost nine years kindly but pointedly asked me over breakfast tacos to explain the absence of LRA on a vita that demonstrated active involvement in AERA while a doctoral student in the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. It would redeem this confession to say that I joined LRA in my hotel room that night before heading back to Boston to complete my dissertation—and perhaps I did. The closer truth, though, is that I have been “all in” since 2007, the year that I also joined the literacy faculty at UT Austin where I am now an Associate Professor. I was honored to receive LRA's Early Career Achievement Award in 2013. My research and teaching center on adolescents' literacy practices in school and outside-school contexts and secondary English education in culturally and linguistically diverse settings. I am particularly proud to oversee the secondary English urban teacher education program at UT Austin and of a signature course I developed and regularly teach entitled *Research on Adolescent Literacy In and Out of School*. These foci reflect my biography as an adolescent Caribbean immigrant in Boston Public Schools who returned to that district to teach secondary English equipped with a Bachelor's in English and the typical year's worth of teacher education. After years of urban teaching and a subsequent Master's in English, I recognized that the questions my students, colleagues, and I grappled with about race, culture, language, and inequity in literacy education demanded scholarly inquiry beyond the discipline of English. I am grateful for the spaces I have found, including at LRA, to investigate these enduringly important questions.

I present annually at LRA and have published in its yearbook and *Journal of Literacy Research*. My work also appears in *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, *Urban Education*, and the *American Educational Research Journal*. My new book, *Teaching transnational youth: Literacy and education in a changing world* (2015), is published by Teachers College Press.

My service to LRA has rewarded me with insights into the mission, achievements, and potential of our organization. I have served on the Student Outstanding Research Award Committee (2008-2011) and as a faculty mentor in the STAR (Scholars of color Transitioning into Academic Research) program (2013-2015). I currently serve on the Publications Committee, and am a regular reviewer for LRA's yearbook (now LRTMP), the *Journal of Literacy Research*, and conference proposal submissions to Areas 6: Adolescent, College and Adult Literacy Processes and 7: Social, Cultural, and Political Issues of Literacy Practices in and out of School. My service to related organizations include Editorial Board memberships in *Research in the Teaching of English* and *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. I was a member of IRA's 2010 Standards for Reading Professionals revision committee and collaborated on a newly released online professional development course for teachers, “Reading and Writing across the Disciplines,” sponsored by WGBH and Annenberg Foundations. I currently serve on NCTE/ILA's task force on characteristics of highly effective teacher preparation programs. My contributions across all these projects involve the role of diversity in literacy education. I am active in AERA, serving most recently as Program Chair for the Educational Change SIG (2009-2012) and maintaining membership in Division G, Social Contexts of Education.

My service and experiences in LRA and other professional communities points me to some key areas in which we can enhance our community and impact. Although we are growing our membership,

there are many literacy-focused faculty and doctoral students from a range of institutions that are unaware of LRA or how powerful a scholarly home it would be for them. As a board member, I would explore growth strategies with Field Council such as encouraging our membership to further promote LRA across our varied professional networks and increasing LRA's visibility within large organizations like AERA—perhaps through creating new literacy-focused SIGS and more actively partnering with existing ones. Creating (and retaining) a more diverse membership is critical. Scholars of color must recognize and experience LRA as a community invested in research and practice that contributes to educational and social justice for marginalized groups. I would work with the Ethnicity, Race and Multilingualism committee and the Multicultural/Transcultural ICG to highlight and increase conference sessions pertaining to these issues. We have recognized, particularly across the 2014 and 2015 conferences, that becoming a more diverse community requires critical and collegial discourse about race, racism, and other forms of diversity and injustice. We could augment community-wide conference conversations with small-group conference gatherings and in digital spaces across the year such as blogs, discussion forums, and panel discussions similar to our R2P innovations.

Finally, as a board member I would draw upon my experiences and networks in other professional organizations that are bringing research to policymakers and teachers in forms they can value and use. The new Briefing Room at this past LRA for supporting each other with the genre of policy writing is a promising approach that we could pursue. Many other useful ideas are being generated on our Listserv that I would explore with our Policy and Legislative committee and membership.

Karen Wohlwend

Indiana University, Bloomington

I am honored to be nominated for the LRA Board of Directors and humbled to be included among the excellent scholars and researchers on this year's slate of nominees. In my current position as Associate Professor in Literacy, Culture, and Language Education at Indiana University, I conduct literacy research in early childhood settings, tracking multimodal aspects of children's play literacies with new technologies and popular media, and peer cultures. Through this work, I hope to illuminate how literacy education might expand for contemporary times to better match the diverse ways young children read, write, design, and play in modern childhoods within a changing educational landscape. For example, I study play as a literacy that children use to collaboratively imagine other worlds—whether in a pretend scene from a Disney movie, a child-produced iPad animation, a video game, or a virtual world. In this reconceptualization, play is also a tactic that allows players to "imagine otherwise," that is, to imagine alternative cultural contexts, rewrite confining scripts, assume new identities, upend power relations, and strategically position themselves and others in school and peer cultures. This research has been recognized by IRA's Dissertation of the Year Award (2008) and AERA's Language and Social Processes SIG Emerging Scholar Award (2006) as well as finalist honors for LRA's Student Research Award (2006) and NCTE's Promising Researcher Award (2010). Publications include 3 scholarly books and over 50 publications including chapters in the *Handbook of Research in the Teaching of English Language Arts* and the *Handbook of Literacy Studies* and articles in literacy journals such as *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *Language Arts*, and *The Reading Teacher*.

I currently serve on editorial boards for international journals such as the *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, *Language Arts*, and *Jeneusse* and advisory boards on early childhood literacies and technologies projects for IRA and NAMLE. Local service relevant to LRA includes chairing the Early Childhood and Elementary Literacy program area in our teacher education program and serving on the faculty board for the IU Center of Excellence for Women in Technology. At IU, I teach doctoral courses on literacy research methodologies and learning sciences seminars, reading certification courses for reading specialists, and literacy methods for early childhood and elementary education students. Prior to doctoral studies in Language, Literacy, and Culture at the University of Iowa, I taught in Iowa public schools as an elementary classroom teacher, Title I reading teacher, and K-6 reading and language arts facilitator. This history informs my perspective on literacy issues and gives me a deep appreciation of the complexities and realities that K-12 teachers and reading specialists face. As an organization of literacy researchers and teacher educators, many of us face the challenges of preparing future reading teachers and reading specialists to work responsively with linguistically and culturally diverse populations within a reformist policy environment. How can we address the disconnect between contemporary literacy research and retrograde policies, such as high-stakes reading tests that trigger mandatory 3rd grade retention?

I believe part of the answer lies in continuing the work to make our research more accessible, in both mode and format. Our collective scholarship and research is a powerful force, mobilized through digital technologies and social media that offer new outlets for outreach. LRA's recent decision to move the annual yearbook to a journal with a global publisher provides more visibility and better search capability. However in scholarly publications, we often depend on readers to actively look for and find our research, hoping that our articles and chapters aren't then viewed as "tl;dr" (i.e., too long; didn't read). The limited reach of scholarly journals contrasts sharply with other information that flows freely to mobile phones through push notifications or news bites on social media. What if we imagine an LRA channel that could share literacy research updates not only with researchers, but also with teachers, policymakers, and the public? The Voice of Literacy, which provides short podcasts on articles published in LRA's *Journal of Literacy Research*, provides a wonderful model of how we might shape our research findings into news-you-can-use formats such as podcasts, videos, or graphics that might then be delivered to readers, rather than searched for. The LRA membership already has wide-ranging expertise in this area that could be tapped to locate further possibilities, and in fact, one study group is already exploring alternative publications to better understand their impact.

Since first attending LRA as a doctoral student 12 years ago, I have valued the conference for its rich opportunities to participate in energizing discussions with colleagues who consistently stretch my thinking. Key LRA service commitments include terms as Co-Chair for Program Area 3 Literacy Instruction and Literacy Learning, on the nominating committee for the Executive Board of Directors, and on the Editorial Board for the *Yearbook*. Other service to LRA includes regularly reviewing annual conference proposals as well as manuscripts for the *Journal of Literacy Research*. Some of my most memorable and valuable experiences have come from opportunities to learn and connect with colleagues in study groups around cutting-edge issues and trends. I've been honored to receive invitations to facilitate sessions for LRA study groups such as Living the Writerly Life in Academia, Approaches to Discourse Analysis, Doctoral

Students Innovative Community Study Group, and Early Authoring as Multimodal Embodied Practice.

Expanding literacies and global networks make this an exciting time for literacy research and for LRA, reflected in the growing attendance and scope of research at the annual conference. LRA brings together committed scholars with deep understanding and diverse perspectives on the challenges and opportunities in the field of literacy, evident in the extensive conversations that pop up on the listserv in response to members' questions and concerns. If given the opportunity to serve as a member of the board, I would seek to grow opportunities for sharing our research with one another in productive and inclusive conversations and for extending the reach and impact of literacy research on critical issues.

Bogum Yoon

The State University of New York at Binghamton

It is an honor and privilege to be considered for a position on the LRA Board of Directors. My scholarship over my academic career has been expanded through the positive experiences with LRA. LRA is very special to me since my doctoral study at the University at Buffalo and my first faculty position at Texas Woman's University. I have consistently presented my studies since 2003 and participated in numerous study groups such as Critical Race Theory. LRA's clear mission and thoughtful mentoring system helped me grow as a researcher and scholar. As an active LRA member for more than a decade, I have served on various committees including the standing committee of Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism and the nominations committee. I have also assumed diverse roles as a co-chair of Area 2 In-service Teacher Education/Professional Development in Literacy, proposal reviewer for the annual LRA conference, and editorial reviewer for the LRA *Yearbook (Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice)*. Currently, I serve on the committees, Edward B. Fry Book Award and Oscar S. Casey Award.

These broad experiences with LRA helped me shape who I am as a professor, researcher, and scholar. I am currently Associate Professor of Literacy Education in the Graduate School of Education at the State University of New York at Binghamton. The courses that I teach are related to critical literacy, literacy theory and practice, and English language learners. My identities are intricately embedded in my teaching and research. For the purpose of continuing my study in a culturally and linguistically diverse country, I chose to come to the United States in 2000 after an extensive teaching experience both in private and public schools (i.e., elementary, middle, high school, & higher ed.) in South Korea. My academic degrees are related to education with a focus on language and literacy, including the doctoral studies from the University at Buffalo and the master's studies from the State University of New York at Potsdam.

Most of my work addresses several vital theoretical perspectives in relation to teachers' roles: a) critical literacy theory that centers on teachers' roles to support students to read texts beyond a literal level to understand the issues of power, inequality, and injustice in human societies; b) sociocultural theory that focuses on teachers' role as a co-constructor of meaning for students' literacy learning which is closely related to their cultural and social identities; and c) positioning theory that provides insights on how teachers' positioning of students might influence students' engagement and participation in literacy learning. These major theories capture my philosophy of literacy education. All of these theories embody the expanded teacher's role to meet the students' cultural and social needs and to develop their identities for literacy learning.

My research themes within this philosophical frame are to transform complex literacy theories into applicable practice for teachers, and to reframe literacy teaching and learning with cultural pluralism. Under these themes, my research topics come from the existing issues that I find while working with pre-service and in-service teachers, by listening to their challenges, and by observing their instructions in the classroom. As a teacher educator, understanding school and classroom contexts is fundamental to effectively work with current and future teachers. Therefore, it has been my on-going practice to be out in the field as a researcher to capture the complexity and the nuance of the classroom.

The studies that I have conducted have been grounded in an interdisciplinary approach to language, literacy, and identity, with emphasis on critical sociocultural approaches to literacy teaching and learning. This interdisciplinary approach based on critical perspectives is particularly shown in my edited books (Yoon & Kim, 2012; Yoon & Sharif, 2015). My recent authored book (Yoon, 2016) also discusses this approach through the concept of critical global literacy, which offers an additional way to think about critical literacy through the lens of global education. The interdisciplinary approach is shown through book chapters and articles as well. These articles have been published in *American Educational Research Journal*, *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *Middle Grades Research Journal*, and *The Reading Teacher* among others.

My involvement with LRA through serving on the different committees that I described earlier has provided me with outstanding opportunities to interact with numerous LRA colleagues. Through these experiences, I have seen both depth and breadth in LRA activities. These positive experiences stimulated my desire to work together with the new and existing members for the organization's goals. One of the LRA's mission statements is that it aims to promote "research that enriches the knowledge, understanding, and development of lifespan literacies in a multicultural and multilingual world." This mission is aligned with my current research that focuses on cultural pluralism and critical global literacy. If elected to be a member of Board of Directors, I would devote myself to continue the dialogue for global perspectives through research collaboration among the scholars in the United States and other countries.

Furthermore, I would work with LRA colleagues to focus more on mentoring programs. LRA has implemented excellent mentoring programs such as STAR (Scholars of color Transitioning into Academic Research Institutions). As I stated earlier, LRA has greatly contributed to my scholarship. It has been a valuable experience and I would like to support other young scholars including doctoral students to have similar positive experiences that I have had. Along with established scholars, doctoral students and young scholars will play a significant role for the development of literacy education. By offering more sessions to young and emerging scholars, these groups of scholars will have more opportunities to engage in developing theories, "informed practices," and "sound policies." I also understand the need for LRA to continue to be the voice for literacy professionals as policies and practices continuously influence our profession. I would take an active role to support LRA's efforts to ensure that LRA is both a resource and a voice for decision makers. It is exciting and humble to envision myself to work diligently with LRA colleagues toward these possible goals.

AWARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Albert J. Kingston Award Committee

Jill Castek, Chair

Portland State University

Congratulations to Dr. Kathleen Hinchman - 2015 Albert J. Kingston Award Winner

The LRA community congratulates the 2015 Albert J. Kingston award winner Dr. Kathy Hinchman for her exemplary service to LRA. Dr. Hinchman, from Syracuse University, is the associate dean for academic affairs in the School of Education and professor in the Reading and Language Arts Center. Dr. Hinchman's deep and lasting commitment to LRA is personified through her enduring contributions to LRA. She served on the LRA Board of Directors from 2003-2005, as vice president in 2008, and president in 2009. In addition, she has been a reviewer and co-editor for the annual LRA Yearbook and the Journal of Literacy Research. During her presidential term, she was instrumental in helping to establish the Scholars of Color Transitioning into Academic Research Institutions (STAR) mentoring program. Dr. Hinchman continues to serve LRA as a committee member, reviewer and mentor for STAR.

Kathy has also expanded the reach and impact of literacy research by presenting her research at the LRA Annual Conference. Not a year has gone by that she has not presented one or more papers at the conference. Most often, these papers have been presented with students or beginning scholars who she mentors into the LRA family. A true leader, Kathy's mentees have gone on to make their own substantial contributions to LRA and to the field.



Kathy Hinchman, center, receives the 2015 Albert J. Kingston Award. With her are David Reinking, the 2014 Albert J. Kingston Award winner from Clemson University and Jill Castek, chairperson of the Kingston awards committee.

Please nominate a deserving colleague for the Albert J. Kingston award. The purpose of this award is to honor an LRA member for distinguished contributions of service to LRA. Recipients of the Kingston Award, which has been presented annually since 1985, receive a plaque and a lifetime membership.

To submit a nomination, send one copy of the nominee's updated curriculum vitae and a letter that describes the nominee's service

contributions to LRA. Nominees must have belonged to LRA for at least five years. Any LRA member may nominate deserving individuals for recognition of their service to LRA. Nomination materials should be submitted via e-mail to the Kingston Award Committee Chair, Jill Castek (jcastek@pdx.edu), by August 15, 2016. More information about the Kingston Award, including its history, criteria used in the review process, and a listing of past recipients, is also available on the LRA website (see <http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org/index.php/component/content/article?id=82>).

Edward B. Fry Book Award

Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz, Chair

Teachers College, Columbia University

Please consider nominating a book for the Edward B. Fry Book Award. The award, established by Dr. Fry, recognizes an outstanding book on literacy research and practice. Eligibility for the award is limited to current members of LRA who have written or have been one of several authors of a book. The book must have a copyright date within five years of the date of the award being given. Nominated books should:

- Advance knowledge about literacy
- Display inquiry into literacy
- Show responsible intellectual risk taking

Letters of nomination, along with a copy of the nominated book, should be sent to the committee chair before the deadline of May 15, 2016. Nomination letters must directly address the ways in which the nominated book meets the criteria outlined above. Letters cannot simply reiterate the endorsements or summaries designed to promote the text. Self-nominated books are accepted, although committee members cannot nominate a book they have authored. A book may be re-nominated if it has been previously nominated but did not win the award. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz at sealeyruiz@tc.edu.

We also wish to acknowledge the 2015 Edward B. Fry Book Award winners, **Evelyn Arizpe** from the University of Glasgow, **Teresa Colomer** from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, and Carmen Martínez-Roldán from Teachers College, Columbia University, for their book *Visual Journeys Through Wordless Narratives: An International Inquiry with Immigrant Children and The Arrival*. The book grew out of a project exploring the responses of very young immigrants to a wordless picture book, *The Arrival*, by author/illustrator Shaun Tan, in which a man arrives from afar in a new country.

Oscar S. Causey Award

Laurie Henry, Chair

University of Kentucky

The Oscar S. Causey Award is given each year for outstanding contributions to reading research.

Please consider nominating an LRA colleague for the Oscar S. Causey Award. Any LRA member may nominate an individual for this prestigious award. When assessing nominees, Causey Award committee members address the following criteria:

This individual:

- has published substantial research in literacy;
- has published significant research in literacy;
- has published original research in literacy;
- has generated new knowledge through literacy research; and
- is a recognized leader in the conduct and promotion of literacy research.

Consideration will be given to whether the literacy research of Oscar S. Causey Award nominees is aligned with the mission statement of LRA.

If you wish to nominate a candidate for this year's award, please e-mail a letter of nomination and a current and complete/full version of the candidate's curriculum vitae. The letter of nomination should address in detail the candidate's qualifications using each of the criteria listed above. The CV should not be an abbreviated version or a compilation of newer activities. A full version is necessary because the award is based on the nominee's scholarship—in its entirety—over the career span.

The deadline for nominations is August 15, 2016. Please e-mail all materials to: Laurie Henry at lauriehenry@uky.edu. Thank you.

STUDENT OUTSTANDING RESEARCH AWARD

Doris Walker Dalhouse, Chair

Marquette University

Are you a graduate student who is already looking forward to next year's LRA Conference? Are you conceptualizing a promising paper based on your research? Consider applying for the LRA 2016 Student Outstanding Research Award. The Student Outstanding Research Award is awarded annually to honor a student member of LRA in recognition of an outstanding research paper presented at the Annual Conference.

This year's awardee was **Dr. Beth Buchholz**. Her winning paper was titled "Dangling Literate Identities in Imagined Futures: Reading, Time, and Development in a K-6 Classroom." Beth is an Assistant Professor at Appalachian State University and a graduate of Indiana State University. Her advisor was Karen Wohlwend at Indiana University.

Plan to apply for next year's award. Please note the following: the author must hold student status and the research must be conducted by the student.

The paper must be written solely by the student or co-authored with students, and cannot be co-authored or co-presented with a faculty member.

The proposed paper must have been accepted by the Annual Conference Committee for presentation at the 2016 Conference. Papers representing various forms and genres of research (including conceptual papers) are welcome. More information can be found soon at <http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org/index.php/component/content/article?id=88>

To be considered, application materials must be received by Doris Walker-Dalhouse by August 15, 2016.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Jayne Lammers, Chair

University of Rochester

To begin, the Technology Committee would like to thank past Chair, Erica Boling, for all of her dedicated service to the organization! We also welcome our newest appointed members - Vaughn Watson, Sonia Kline, and Peggy Albers - and the other LRA members who contribute to our continued efforts supporting the technology needs of LRA. Through the hard work of the e-editors and other dedicated LRA members, the Technology Committee continues to produce LRA's Research to Practice (LRA R2P) Show and support the Board's efforts at launching the new website.

Through a recent partnership, the LRA R2P Show continues to highlight the work published in LRA's *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice (LR:TMP)* in its monthly episodes. By featuring the authors of one piece from *LR:TMP*, each show's panel examines literacy research and theoretical perspectives included in that piece. The panel then discusses implications of their work for classroom practice. Scheduled for early 2016 are episodes featuring Lori Assaf's work with a service learning project in field-based teacher education (January 28 at 12 pm Eastern) and Beth Maloch's piece on the appropriation of a coaching with care model with preservice teachers (February 3 at 12 pm Eastern).

Watch for notifications on our listserv and on Twitter (#LRAShow) as new episodes are announced. And, as always, the full archive of the LRA R2P is available on our LRA YouTube Channel.

INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY GROUPS

Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group

Colleen Whittingham, Chair

University of Illinois at Chicago

We would like to extend our gratitude for the continued support from the LRA community. The Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group (DSICG) continues to encourage doctoral students' participation in LRA, meet the unique needs of doctoral students, support doctoral students' professional growth, and create a collaborative community of scholars. The 2015 LRA Conference in Carlsbad was a wonderful opportunity for our members to connect, and we are very excited for what 2016 has in store.

At the 2015 LRA conference, the DSICG continued to grow in large numbers and we are pleased to have such a variety of research interests, universities, and backgrounds represented within our ICG. Our primary goal for the coming year is to continue to operate as a resource to doctoral students by increasing our digital presence and connecting members through social media outlets.

We had a record turnout at the annual Sara Bruce McCraw Doctoral Student Networking Session on Wednesday morning, where we

informally shared our research and engaged in a networking activity that much resembled academic speed-dating! In response to our 2015 Membership Survey, our daily study groups sought to meet the needs of doctoral students at the earlier phases of their program. These sessions on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoon offered tips for preparing conference presentations, navigating the IRB process, and turning conference papers into publications in LRA's Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice. We were honored to host Drs. Baker, Cartwright, Chandler-Olcott, Compton-Lilly, Gardiner, Franzak, Ruetuzel, and Tracey to speak on these topics. We learned much from their presentations. Moreover, our Thursday night Happy Hour provided our doctoral student membership the opportunity to network and socialize with each other. As we strive to meet the needs of our growing membership, we have prepared and distributed our annual survey to provide us with feedback regarding how to continue improve our LRA conference events and DSICG resources.

At our annual business meeting on Friday, December 6, we elected a new leadership team using a QR code to link our membership to an electronic ballot. We are proud to announce the 2016 DSICG Leadership Team: Colleen Whittingham and Tiffany Nyachae (Co-Chairs), Melanie Obitz-Bukartek (Assistant Co-Chair), Kate Brodeur (Alumni Liaison), Megan McDonald Van Deventer and Kristen Pratt (Membership Secretaries), Emily Brown Hoffman and Amy Croel-Perrien (Treasurers); Cassie Brownell, Tia Lee Frahm, Alison Papke & Sarah Fleming (Technology Committee), Maria Goff (Historian), Emily Machado and Dani Kachorsky (Newsletter Editors); Lyudmyla Ivanyuk and Hannah Graham (Conference Coordinator), Priscilla Alvarado, Dorian Harrison, and Ryan Schaefer (Newsletter Writers).

The DSICG is pleased to continue our established, successful initiatives. In 2015, we again published three newsletters to assist our members in learning more about topics of interest to graduate students, including tips for the LRA conference. We solicited article topics and pieces from our membership and were pleased with the diversity of newsletter articles this past year. In terms of staying in contact with our membership, we maintain a current listserv, Facebook page, website, and Twitter account to promote networking among doctoral students. In addition, we facilitated our fifth annual Academia 101 at the LRA conference, an alternative session focused on providing students with information about the transition from graduate school to academia and the professional world. Organized by our 2015 Alumni Liaison (and past Senior Co-Chair) Jennifer Smith, a panel of newly graduated PhDs, representing a range of positions, answered questions and shared their experiences with doctoral students. Dr. Joseph Rumenapp weighed the pros and cons of accepting a post-doc position; Dr. Gholdneccsar Muhammad offered suggestions for preparing for the job search; Dr. Marla Robertson offered tips on how to complete the dissertation in a timely manner; Dr. Lorien Chambers-Schuldt described the act of balancing family and career responsibilities; and Dr. Mandy Stewart shared her approach to balancing career responsibilities of research, teaching and service. We are grateful for their unique perspective based on their recent doctoral student experience.

Now in its sixth year, our LRA DSICG conference Proposal Mentoring Program continues to support doctoral students who are proposing to present their own research at the 2016 LRA conference. Again this year; we have had overwhelming support from the LRA community to serve as our faculty mentors and we are in the process of pairing established faculty with doctoral students to mentor them as they submit their proposals. As a way of expressing our appreciation and

connecting doctoral student mentees and faculty mentors paired together for the 2015 Proposal Mentoring Project, we hosted a breakfast for all participants prior to our business meeting on Friday in Carlsbad. We are extremely grateful to the more than twenty faculty members who have volunteered their time and expertise to support the doctoral students of LRA and hope to continue to offer this breakfast as a token of our appreciation.

In the coming year, we plan to maintain our mission to seek out ways to support the professional growth of doctoral students within LRA and will continue to use our Membership Survey to help us provide new opportunities for students. We are also always seeking new members and encourage those of you working with doctoral students to pass on our information. Please encourage your students to join the DSICG by contacting Kristen Pratt and Megan McDonald Van Deventer at lra.dsicg@gmail.com to be added to the Doctoral Student ICG listserv.

Thank you for all that you continue to do to support doctoral students and our DSICG.

Best Wishes for the Coming Year,

Colleen E. Whittingham, Senior Co-Chair
cwhitt2@uic.edu

Formative and Design-Based Experiment Innovative Community Group

Marc Nachowitz, Chair

Miami University, Ohio

The inaugural year of the Formative and Design-Based Experiment ICG was an exciting and productive one. We developed a clear mission statement at the business meeting that was unanimously adopted and established an action plan to promote this research methodology both within the literacy research community and without. Members of the ICG presented over a dozen papers on design-based research at the LRA annual conference as well as developing a symposium bringing together proponents of this research paradigm to present research and discuss ways to address rigor and validity.

The priority for 2016 is to strengthen awareness for FDB in the greater research community and provide ample opportunities for members to share their work. Members of the board of directors will develop partnerships with members of the Learning Sciences community and the American Association of Educational Research as well as liaise with AREA 11 (our LRA research focus group) to facilitate future projects. To facilitate the publication of this research methodology in literacy research journals, our board members will contact journals and volunteer our services as manuscript reviewers. We also plan to implement several marketing initiatives to encourage membership in work groups, presentation opportunities for graduate students, and the publication of recruitment material for the 2016 annual conference. Finally, we would like to work with conference chairs to recruit FDB scholars for key addresses at the annual conference.

Gender and Sexuality Innovative Community Group

Corrinne M. Wickens, Chair

Northern Illinois University

Props from the Gender & Sexualities ICG! Thanks and appreciation goes out to Pat Enciso for her commitment to increased inclusiveness by reaching out to the ICG for input to create bathroom signage that would be respectful of all individuals and their gender identities, even as those identities might vary from outward appearance.

The Gender and Sexualities ICG had its first Mentoring and Feedback Roundtable at the annual meeting in Carlsbad. In addition to being mentored by renowned scholars from across the nation in the area of gender and sexualities, unique to this mentoring opportunity was the common time established at LRA's annual meeting. The pre-established time allowed for many of the doctoral students and mentors to meet and then come back together to discuss broader and more general concerns related to doctoral coursework, dissertations, job market, and academia. Look for more information to come about round #2 of the Mentoring Roundtable to be held at the annual meeting this December in Nashville.

The Gender and Sexualities has a new Facebook page! You can find us in the FB search bar for the heading "LRA Gender & Sexualities ICG."

The ICG is also busy at work on a number of other initiatives to create new collaborations and new policy briefs and/or resolutions related to issues around gender and sexualities. If you're interested in getting involved, contact Corrine Wickens @ cwickens@niu.edu

International Innovative Community Group

Patience Sowa, Chair

Zayed University

Katina Zammit, Co-Chair

University of Western Sydney

Poonam Arya, Co-Chair

Wayne State University

The International ICG membership spans the globe. Although a majority of our members work in the U.S., their research interests are transnational and international. At the same time, a sizeable number live and work in Chile, Australia, Canada, China, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, UK, Ukraine, and Venezuela. We are proud of our global reach because it enhances visibility and helps preserve international scholarly networking in literacy learning and instruction.

The International ICG is unique to most other innovative community groups because we vote in three co-chairs. Every year, the co-chair who has served three years "retires" and a new co-chair is nominated. This system ensures a continuity of work and fresh leadership.

We want to thank Lori Assaf for her leadership for the past three years and welcome Poonam Arya as our new appointed co-chair. This year Patience Sowa moves up to first co-chair, Katina Zammit as second co-chair, and Poonam Arya as third co-chair. We also welcomed three new members to the International ICG Steering

Committee; Lori Assaf, Chinwe Ikpeze, Lijun Jin. We would like to thank Misty Sailors our previous Board liaison representative for her support.

For the past six years, the International ICG has hosted an alternative format poster session during the LRA Annual Conference. This year, 16 different research projects were shared as part of the session around the theme: Language Literacy, Equity, and Imagination in Global Contexts. Research topics included: language and identity; studies in English language learning; cross-cultural studies in literacy; and globalization and educational policy. We want to thank our session organizer Zaline Roy-Campbell for her commitment and effort in organizing this thoughtful and interesting session. If you are interested in submitting an international research proposal for our poster session for the 2016 LRA Conference, please contact Xiaoming Liu at xliu@towson.edu or Lijun Jin X at LJIN@towson.edu.

Members of the International ICG also ensured that our research and interests were even more visible at the 2015 LRA Conference through the presentation of a Pechu Kucha alternative session organized by Wendy Crocker and Jiening Ruan. Wendy, wcrocker@uwo.ca, and Jiening, jruan@ou.ed, will again be submitting a Pecha Kucha proposal on behalf of the International ICG for the 2016 LRA Conference, please contact them if you are interested in being part of this exciting alternative session.

In addition, the International ICG also ran a Study Group entitled International Research on Literacy Teaching and Teacher Education Study Group. We thank the session organizer Lori Assaf for her guidance and organization of a very stimulating study group where we connected with other's research and to all who assisted in the proposal and contributed to the study group sessions. We will be submitting a proposal for another study group for the 2016 LRA Conference, to be organized by Patience Sowa and Lori Assaf.

The International ICG awards travel grants each year. The primary goal of this grant is to help defray the cost of attending the annual meeting for members living outside the U.S. Priority is given to applicants who are doctoral students or junior faculty members, applicants attending the annual meeting for the first time, those who are from countries with limited research infrastructure and funding, and applicants who have not been recipients of the grant within the past three years.

This year we were fortunate enough to support four academics, including an up-and-coming research student. We allocated \$1,800 to Zhenyou Yu from China Women's University in Beijing, China, who presented a poster in the International ICG alternative format poster session. We allocated \$1,200 to Jennifer Curwood from Australia who is from the University of Sydney, Australia who presented work on literacy in online spaces in collaboration with colleagues in a number of sessions at LRA. We allocated \$950 to Claudia Finkbeiner from the University of Kassel, Germany who presented her work on the Implementation of the ABCs of Cultural Understanding and Communication. We allocated \$950 to Megan Bowmer an undergraduate honors degree student from the University of Sydney, Australia who was presenting the first time this year on romantic poetry and popular culture.

In order to support our members' research publication endeavors, this year we will continue the mentoring program to help scholars publish their work in the LRA Yearbook and support them in submitting a proposal. If you would like a mentor please contact

Patience Sowa, patiencesowa95@gmail.com or Katina Zammit, kzammit@westernsydney.edu.au

Thank you so much for your enthusiasm and continued support for this ICG. Keep the conversations on international literacy research going! If you would like to share ideas and suggestions with other members, the ICG listserv is LRAInternationalICG@list.literacyresearchassociation.org

Multilingual/Transcultural Literacies Innovative Community Group

Aria Razfar, Co-Chair

University of Illinois at Chicago

Iliana Reyes, Co-Chair

University of Arizona, Tucson

The Multilingual/Transcultural Literacies Innovative Community Group is happy to report that our membership has grown to 70 members. The group continues to be active in discussions and exchanges through our [Facebook page](#). At this past meeting in San

Diego we had great participation as part of our 3 days of Study Group meetings. The study groups were facilitated by Mikel Cole, Aria Razfar, and myself. Our attendance averaged about 20 people.

During the San Diego meeting we also had our breakfast with plenary speakers Norma González and Michelle Fine. About 25 members attended the breakfast meeting, and we plan to continue having this space for dialogue in future Conference meetings.

Mikel Cole was elected as Co-Chair at last year's meeting and will be assuming Chair role in 2016. We are currently planning to submit a couple of symposia sessions with special topics, and continue our study group sessions for next conference meeting at Tennessee.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Best,
Iliana and Aria