



Conversations Among Partners in Learning

ENGLISH TEACHERS FROM THE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES IN DIALOGUE

Sponsored by the English Department of the College of Arts and Sciences, Georgia State University and the Georgia Humanities Council

TWELFTH CONVERSATION:

Expanding the Curriculum: Using Non-Fiction and Cultural Studies to Enhance English Instruction"

March 18, 2005

9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Georgia State University

Troy Moore Library, 939 General Classroom Building

Registration and Coffee/Danish

8:30 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.

Opening the Conversation

9:00 A.M. – 9:15 A.M.

Keynote Address

9:15 A.M. – 10:15 A.M.

“Real Life Storytelling: Enriching the Classroom Experience with Non-Fiction”

Keynote Speaker: Melissa Faye Greene

Melissa Faye Greene is the author of Last Man Out: The Story of the Springhill Mine Disaster, The Temple Bombing, and Praying for Sheetrock

Breakout Sessions

Workshop #1: 10:20 A.M. – 11:20 A.M.; Workshop #2: 11:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.; Workshop #3: 1:30 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.

Participants choose three of the following six sessions:

- 1) **“Using Non-Fiction, Courtroom Drama, and Classic Rhetoric in Writing Classrooms”** *Beth Burmester* (Georgia State)
This workshop will acquaint participants with Aristotle's theories of persuasion, give a brief overview of how Ancient Athenians created trials and forensic rhetoric, and demonstrate how to use popular texts and films with students that will engage them in argumentative writing strategies and cultural criticism.
- 2) **“Composition and Popular Music”** *Wayne Erickson* (Georgia State)
Popular music, the most ubiquitous and prolific contemporary art form, provides a ready generator of discussion and essay topics in the composition classroom. Students all have favorite songs, about which they're relatively well informed, and discussion of these songs—words, music, artists, and kinds—invites written analyses of significant topics: the evolution and cultures of popular music; pop as genre, product, self-expression, and poetry; ways of talking about value in art; and interpretation of texts. We'll talk about putting this wealth of material to work in the classroom.
- 3) **“Teaching with Film: Snips and Clips, Notes and Quotes”** *Tom McHaney* (Georgia State)
Resources on the internet and in libraries make it possible to bring "authorities" into the classroom, share discovery with our students, and by example teach them to listen, to take notes, and to search out these resources on their own for research and enlightenment. What we teach is out there: myth and literary texts, cultural history, biography, philosophy, literary theory and commentary, effective writing strategies, and more.

4) **“A Hope in the Unseen: Using Biography to Aid Discussion and Composition”** *LeeAnn Richardson* (Georgia State)

How can teachers engage students’ personal experiences while also encouraging critical thinking and writing? Ron Suskind’s biography of Cedric Jennings—a young man from inner-city Washington, D.C. who dreams of attending an Ivy League college—allows classroom discussion of friendships, family relations, and the journey through high school to college, along with the contemporary social issues that Jennings confronts: poverty, welfare, single-parenthood, high-achieving students in underfunded public schools, admissions and testing, and affirmative action. This book can spur several kinds of accessible and adaptable writing assignments, from memoir and biography to opinion essay and research paper.

5) **"Sometimes The Truth Isn't Exciting: Crafting Interesting Nonfiction from Not-Always-Thrilling Life"** *Josh Russell* (Georgia State)

Everybody loves to tell stories about themselves, especially young people, but sometimes the stories we tell do not excite those we tell them to as much as we wish they would. Using Leonard Michael's story-essay "In the Fifties" as an example, we will discuss the ways in which students can craft nonfiction narratives based on anecdotes and details from their lives, narratives that allow them to share their personal experiences in a way that is both unique, and interesting to others.

6) **“Teaching the Essay: Focusing on Arnold and Carlyle”** *Paul Schmidt* (Georgia State)

Looking at Carlyle and Arnold as examples, we will consider Victorian prose as an art form and we will also look at some of the theoretical implications of some of their works. Special attention will be given to Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* and Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*.

Lunch Break

12:30 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.

As with the morning coffee and refreshments, lunch will be provided free of charge.

Wrap Up – Exploring the Implications

2:30P.M. –3:00 P.M.

Cost:

Through the co-sponsorship of GSU’s English department and the Georgia Council for the Humanities, this program is free of charge for all teachers.

Continuing Education Credits:

.6 CEU credits are available for this program. These credits are free of charge, though there is a \$10.00 fee if you want a transcript from GSU indicating the credit earned.

Directions:

The Troy Moore is located on the 9th floor of the General Classroom Building, at the corner of Decatur Street and Peachtree Center Avenue. Parking will be available for \$5 in the G Deck, which may be entered from Collins Street off Decatur Street or from Central Avenue. (Visit www.gsu.edu, Campus Life – Campus Maps – Campus Map Gif for a map.) Call 404-651-2900, or email Pearl McHaney (pmchaney@gsu.edu) or Renée Schatteman (schatteman@gsu.edu) for more information.

Registration:

Please register online (www.gsu.edu/~wwweng/services/program.html) or by mail, indicating your preferences for break-out sessions.

CONVERSATION REGISTRATION FORM: PLEASE RESPOND BY MARCH 10TH

PLEASE RATE THE FOLLOWING SESSIONS IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE:

- Name:** _____ “Using Non-Fiction, Courtroom Drama, and Classic Rhetoric in Writing Classrooms”
- School:** _____ “Composition and Popular Music”
- Telephone:** _____ “Teaching with Film: Snips and Clips, Notes and Quotes”
- E-mail Address:** _____ “A Hope in the Unseen: Using Biography to Aid Discussion and Composition”
- School Address:** _____ “Sometimes The Truth Isn't Exciting: Crafting Interesting Nonfiction from Not-Always-Thrilling Life”
- Home Address:** _____ “Teaching the Essay: Focusing on Arnold and Carlyle”

Please tear along the dotted line and mail to Pearl McHaney, English Department, P.O. Box 3970, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA 30302-3970 or register for the Conversation on-line at www.gsu.edu/~wwweng/services/program.html.