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## Contributors

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### Jennifer Budenski Behnke

Over the past fifteen years, Jennifer has taught in high school, in China, in prison, in college, online, and at an alternative school on the second floor of an ice arena. This fall, she's forging into the new frontier of seventh grade and continues to document her teaching on her blog at <http://jenbudenski.vox.com/>. Jen earned her BA in English at Carleton College in 1994, her MFA at Hamline University in 2003, and her Certificate in Teaching Writing and Critical Literacy at the University of Minnesota in 2008. Her research on literacy instruction has been published previously in the *Minnesota English Journal*, and she's worked as a teacher consultant for the Minnesota Writing Project. Her poetry has appeared in *Poetry East*, *The Saranac Review*, *Front Range Review*, *Marginalia*, and other journals. She loves her two children, her husband, food, teaching, writing, reading, her garden, her home, cheesy movies, jogging on forested paths, visiting new places, listening to news radio, and being pleasantly surprised by small things.

### Kathryn Campbell

Kathryn teaches US English and Journalism (grades 10-12) at St. Paul Academy and Summit School in St. Paul, Minnesota where she advises the award-winning student newspaper, *The Rubicon*. She also facilitates graduate learning communities (MAEd) at Hamline University in the School of Education. Campbell has been trained in discussion techniques at the Exeter Humanities Institute and through professional development. Discussion is a graded component in her courses and, on the best days in class, she doesn't talk much. Currently, she is reading Jasper Fforde and Terry Pratchett novels and is experimenting with their "literate/academic-meets-sci-fi" style in her own writing.

### Paul Carney

Paul began teaching English at Minnesota State Community and Technical College - Fergus Falls in 1988. During his tenure at MSCTC, he has taught courses in composition, literature, humanities, men's studies, criminology, and creative writing. Carney has served as President of the Minnesota Council of Teachers of English (1994-1995, 2008-2009). He is a former fellow and board member of The Minnesota Writing Project, the state affiliate of The National Writing Project. In 2004, he joined the Minnesota Department of Education's Quality Teaching Network in Language Arts, a statewide K-16 network of English teachers. His research interests include assessment, college readiness standards alignment, and student self-assessment. He is the developer and coordinator of Ready or Not Writing ([readyornotwriting.org](http://readyornotwriting.org)), an online "drop box" to which high school students submit essays to college English instructors for diagnostic college-readiness ratings and feedback. In 2008, he created the Roadside Poetry Project, a celebration of poetic verse posted along rural roads ([www.roadsidepoetry.org](http://www.roadsidepoetry.org)). He collects old radios and enjoys planting trees, listening to jazz, and watching The Andy Griffith Show. He lives on an 8-acre hobby farm in Underwood, MN (pop. 361), where his lifelong quest for Mayberry has ended.

**Corinne Ehrfurth**

Corinne is currently on sabbatical in order to experience teaching college-level composition and to complete her M.A. in English at Minnesota State University, Mankato. For the past seven years, she has worked at Rochester Mayo High School and has taught a variety of composition and literature-based courses, including a college-prep and team-taught interdisciplinary American Studies course. Although she enjoyed the challenge of searching out endearing qualities in all the frantic behaviors of tenth graders, she found a calming balance in the junior and senior electives of comparative religion and philosophy. These electives inspired the topic of her present project: researching and writing a thesis on tenets of Hinduism embedded in contemporary Indian novels. Past professional duties include coaching high school volleyball, facilitating Link Crew's freshman transition intervention, serving as the chair of Mayo's English Department, and working in a Small learning Communities Grant position that provided time to collaborate with Rochester Community and Technical College instructors and to participate in the Rochester chapter of Paul Carney's MN College-Readiness Writing project. She values efforts that try to increase articulation between high school and college expectations.

**Peder Engebretson**

Peder works for Anoka Hennepin at Compass Programs, an alternative school for middle school and ninth-grade students. A 1985 graduate of St. Olaf College, he earned a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction from St. Thomas in 1991. In his 19th year of teaching, Peder's current licensure is K-12 English/Language Arts and Social Studies. He is currently enrolled in the Master of Fine Arts in fiction writing program at Hamline University and has published three articles in the last two years. Peder serves as the Middle School chair on the MCTE Board. He will be teaching a Nature Writing class at Silverwood Park (Three Rivers Park District) this spring.

**Kim Gaffney**

Kim is an instructor at Century College in White Bear Lake, MN. At Century, Kim teaches developmental writing, composition, and composition and literature. Her primary research interests include comparative literature, writing across the curriculum, writing center pedagogy, and diversity in the English classroom.

**Benjamin Hamborg**

Benjamin recently completed a Masters Degree in Literature at Minnesota State University, Mankato, where his course work and research primarily involved postcolonial world literature, with emphasis on Latin American literature. He currently lives in Mankato with his wife Andrea and their newborn baby girl Kaia. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Ben makes an arduous trek over to Marshall, MN, where he teaches two sections of Freshman English at Southwest Minnesota State University. This semester he is attempting to use the short fiction of Gabriel Garcia Marquez in his ENG 102 classroom for the first time; he is cautiously optimistic.

**Sandy Hayes**

With her passion for young adult literature and her delight in working with kids on technology projects, Sandy has never really left eighth grade. She teaches at Becker Middle School in Becker, MN. She is MCTE's web editor and organizes the MCTE fall workshop. She is also on the NCTE Middle Level Steering Committee and recently served on NCTE's Executive Committee.

**Angie Iserman**

Angie teaches English at Owatonna High School. She spends most of her day working with ninth graders but also teaches electives for upper-classmen, such as Creative Writing and College Composition. When she is not buried under a mountain of papers, she listens to speeches for members of the Owatonna High School Speech Team. As if she is not busy enough as a

third year teacher, Angie is working toward her Master's degree in English Studies at Minnesota State University, Mankato. As she pursues her degree, her focus is on multicultural literature and adolescent literature. Currently, she is writing her alternate plan paper, which will develop a pedagogy for Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief*. Whenever she has a free moment, moment being the key word, Angie likes to cook with her husband or nap with her dog.

### Alison Konkol

I am proud to be in my twentieth year of teaching English to at-risk youth in various alternative high schools. I can't even begin to describe the adventure that this career has taken me on and the profound impact that colleagues and students have had on my life.

I am currently teaching English 9 and 10 at Crossroads Alternative High School in Anoka-Hennepin ISD #11. My academic passion is learning how to infuse the Arts into my English classes and providing students with opportunities to experience great theatre around the Twin Cities. Creative hands-on activities and artistic self-expression are powerful tools in helping students, especially at-risk youth, become excited about and invested in their education. In addition, it is my aim to create adventurous trip opportunities for students, and I am currently planning a BWCA voyage for June 2010. I am motivated to do this because experiencing venues and challenges outside the realm of their every day lives can have a tremendous positive impact on the lives of young people.

In my spare time, I have an insatiable appetite for books, and I devour teen novels so I can make recommendations to students.

### Sherri Larson

Sherri teaches English 10, Public Speaking, and Creative Writing at St. Michael-Albertville High School. She's interested in multi-genre writing, classic poetic forms, contemporary poetry, and alternative ways of presenting writing so that it appeals to high school students. She admits to a disinterest in following

prescribed lesson plans but loves collecting the best "gems" from a variety of sources in order to keep her students interested and active. Sherri hopes she can offer a gem or two to her colleagues. She serves on the MCTE board and on the governing board of the Minnesota Writing project. That involvement allows her to stay connected with fellow professionals who consider it an honor and privilege to be charged with helping young people discover a love for writing and reading. Sherri would like to thank Scott, Mary, and the Twin Cities Bicycling Club for many miles of inspiration.

### Brian C. Lewis

Brian teaches at Century College in White Bear Lake MN. At Century, he teaches composition, American Literature courses, and Introduction to GLBT Studies. He also coordinates the Online Writing Center at Century. His primary teaching and research interests include gender and sexuality issues, American Literature before the Civil War, composing in digital environments, and writing center pedagogy. He is also the two-year college chair of MCTE and the recent recipient of an Honorable Mention for the 2009 Diana Hacker Award for his innovative work with community-building in Century College's Online Writing Center. During the 2010-11 academic year, he will take a sabbatical to complete a series of articles on the role of technology in community college composition classrooms.

### Lynn Ludwig

Lynn earned an A.A. in Liberal Arts from Cottey College in Nevada, Missouri, a B.A. in English from the University of New Mexico, her M.A. in Technical and Professional Communication from New Mexico State University, and her Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. She spent 8 years working in education and training departments in corporate America, with her latest role as an IBM manager in the Software Group, leading teams worldwide in the creation and delivery of education on the latest IBM software products. Over the years, she has been a consultant for numerous

companies nationwide and continues to do so in the field of Technical and Professional Communication. She is currently an assistant professor in the English Department at St. Cloud State University where she teaches all levels of composition and writing in the professions. Her research interests include the use of emerging technologies in the writing classroom and seeking out opportunities to bridge college students to local communities and businesses through service-learning projects and internships. She enjoys traveling and spending time with her father and living the good life in rural Minnesota with her husband.

### Karen Morrill-Bryan

Karen is taking this year off from teaching to get her Masters Degree in Liberal Studies from Hamline where she is a full-time student. She wrote "No Time to Pee" in the 2007-08 school year when she literally had no time to pee. Karen worked at Breck high school for thirteen years, until 2005, teaching tenth grade English, creative writing, and advanced composition. She worked as the curriculum coordinator and high school English teacher at the newly formed Twin Cities Academy High School in St. Paul for the past two years. Karen has had several letters published in the *Star Tribune*, mostly about education. She is planning on using her Masters in Liberal Studies to help her write and publish a book making a case for teacher-driven school transformation. (She hates the word reform and thinks it no longer has much meaning.) Along with teaching for most of the past twenty years, Karen is a working artist. She has shown her art in cafes and galleries. Her next slated art exhibit is at the Yogallery in Duluth. As an artist, Karen has led several public art projects with urban youth. If you go to her website: [www.renescape.net](http://www.renescape.net), you can see the murals they painted. Karen and her husband, a St. Paul Principal, have three teen-age children ranging from eighth grade to freshman in college. In her "spare" time, Karen reads; revises her unpublished murder mysteries set in the fictional town of Sagawa, Minnesota; posts on her blog, [ladyofluella.blogspot.com](http://ladyofluella.blogspot.com); watches "Glee" and "Law and

Order"; camps, and home schools her dog.

### Gordon Pueschner

Gordon teaches at Century College in White Bear Lake, MN, and at Hennepin Technical College in Brooklyn Park, MN., where he teaches composition and developmental reading classes. His primary research interests include online teaching and bringing digital writing into the college classroom. He also recently presented with a panel at CCCC in a March 2009 discussion collaboration through digital writing assignments in the community college composition classroom. He recently had a sports book, *The Story of the Jacksonville Jaguars*, published by the Creative Company in Mankato, MN, in June 2009.

### Martin Warren

Martin is an associate professor of English at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, where he has taught for 11 years. He is a medievalist who, besides teaching medieval literature, enjoys teaching speculative fiction, introductory linguistics, and literary theory. He is the author of *Asceticism in the Christian Transformation of Self in Margery Kempe, William Thorpe, and John Rogers*, which is published by Edwin Mellen Press. An example of his scholarship in speculative fiction is: "Is God in Charge?: Mary Doria Russell's *The Sparrow*, Deconstruction, and Theodicy," published in the *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*. At present, he is researching mysticism as a voice of rebellion within Christianity. The first part of that research will be published in fall 2009 in the form of an article which addresses: "The Quakers as Parrhesiasts: Frank Speech and Plain Speaking as the Fruits of Silence."

### Chris Weyandt

Chris teaches at Century College in White Bear Lake, MN. His primary teaching and research interests include developmental reading and writing, introductory literature, using technology in the classroom, cross cultural issues in rhetoric and writing and survey courses in short fiction and creative literary nonfiction.

His most recent workshop explores using smart phones (Iphones and Blackberries) and Kindles in the classroom for student success.



## Call for Papers for *MEJ*'s Next Issue

As we did at the end of the last issue, John Banschbach and I *want to encourage all of you who are reading the Fall 2009 number of MEJ* to consider yourselves part of our continuing dialogue with language, literature, reading, and composition—dialogue that engages and shares and enriches *your* pedagogy and research. But this time, in honor of the organization's 50th year of operation in serving and supporting Minnesota teachers of English, writing, and language arts from the middle school to the university, the theme for the Spring Conference that will convene in Duluth is "50 years of Continuity and Change." And it's difficult to imagine that all of you are not doing work that touches directly on that theme. To aid you in expressing and shaping *your* interests in and concerns about the materials you bring to the classroom, the students you bring them to, and your invention of strategies for engaging those students in those materials, we would like you to consider one of the topics listed below as your focus. Please understand that these topics are merely suggestions. Should your teaching context or circumstances cause you to identify a topic not on our brief list, we invite you to pursue it and send us the results. We want to read and interact with your work, whether that work has sprung from a teaching context in the elementary, middle,

or high school, either public or private; community college; technical college; public university; or private college. As you peruse the list, do not hesitate to contact us for clarification on any of the topics or for advice about responding to an item we haven't listed that you would like to respond to. We welcome the opportunity to work with you. Please think about **June 1, 2010** as a deadline, and think about the **2010 Spring MCTE Spring Conference** as a venue for presenting it.

### Topics:

1. *Young adult literature* (multicultural, American, and/or British—traditionally structured or non-linear)
2. *Teaching and representing Shakespeare* for high school and college students
3. *World literatures* (Anglophone/commonwealth; African; Caribbean; Latin American; Chicano; Native American; Asian/American; East Indian)
4. *Assessment* at any level (we're not just thinking about rubrics that work, but the kinds of anonymous interventions that can be used to determine whether our students are learning what we intend for them to learn)
5. *Literature of the Americas* (any kind of literature to any number of audiences, related to Canada, the U.S., the Caribbean, and Mexico through Tierra del Fuego)
6. *Un-banning the banned books* (experiences and methodologies related to teaching them)
7. *Assignment packages that work* (i.e., prompts and materials situated around the development of an important assignment tied to a particular course and an audience for that course; a "tool box" of materials and rubrics and writing assists and prompts and strategies that will assist members of that audience with their struggle to complete successfully that assignment; and an assessment strategy that will enable some effective testing of whether the goals and objectives connected to the assignment have been reached—this is for teachers

at any level)

**8. *Writing across the curriculum***, issues and strategies

**9. *Writing-intensive courses*** (definitions, challenges, approaches)

**10. *Electronic distance learning and pedagogy*** (dealing with audience problems, delivery issues)

**11. *The “capstone” experience***, from portfolio to research paper (problems of mentoring and assessing are connected here)

**12. *Teaching the world***: Humanities at any teaching level

**13. *Collaborative learning***: assignments and teaching strategies that work

**14. *Technology*** in the English/language arts classroom

**15. *The relevance of the Western Canon*** (expanding/re-envisioning the canon)

**16. *Standardized testing*** and its impact on English/language arts curriculum

**17. *The world wide web*** and research paper writing

**18. *Poetry*** and its relevance

**19. *English language learners***: how can we best serve their needs in the reading and composition classroom

**20. *Grammar*** and its place in today’s English classes

**21. *Feedback*** on student writing and issues pertaining to responding

**22. *Practices*** in the teaching of English language arts

**23. *Research*** in and out of the classroom

**24. *“Audience”*** related issues

**25. *Teaching tips***

**26. *Issues of diversity*** (representing race and gender)

We look forward to hearing from you.

Don't wait for the  
Spring Conference  
to renew your  
membership!

MCTE membership runs  
from October to  
October of each year,  
so new and renewing  
members should send in  
the attached form and  
payment today.

Don't miss a single issue  
of MCTE News!

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envelope to:

Jessica Dockter,  
Executive Secretary  
MCTE  
Minnesota Humanities Center  
987 East Ivy Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55106

Renew  
today!



Yes! I want to join my colleagues in supporting our shared professional interests.

DUES:

- regular membership \$30
- current MRA member \$10
- undergraduate student \$10
- full-time grad student \$10

TEACHING LEVEL:

- elementary
- middle/junior high
- high school
- two-year college
- four-year college

Name:

Mailing  
address:

School  
name,  
city: