
FROM THE EDITORS

This, our Fall 2004 edition, marks the first time that *The Minnesota English Journal* will appear on-line. An increasing number of professional journals—including some prestigious national scholarly journals—have decided to go on-line, and this issue of *MEJ* is our commitment to an engagement with that technology.

What will the use of that technology enable us to do? First of all, it allows us to produce a work that is instantly and universally usable. If you have access to a computer, a connection to the internet, and a functioning printer, you'll be able to read the *MEJ*, download a copy for yourself, and send your students to our site for information that you feel is timely and important for them and for your instruction of them. For us, it means that the material that we print electronically is instantly and infinitely editable. We believe that we produce a solid professional product. However, should we become aware of errors, or should we want to inform those who visit MCTE's web site that there are particular concerns we'd like you to engage with in one or more of our articles, an issue perhaps that we'd like you to carry on an electronic conversation about, or an emphasis concerning pedagogy that we'd like you to chip in alternative ways of thinking about, we can do it with the cooperation of our webmaster, Sandy Hayes. In other words, an important change here is that *MEJ* has become a living organism, with no time lag between the time we

print it and the time you receive it, with the capacity to breathe interactively with its readers. We love that prospect and challenge.

But, perhaps the most significant benefit that will accrue from publishing the journal on-line is that we will reach a much larger audience. Concurrent with the enlivening of our *MEJ* site on the MCTE web page, we have sent a letter to all schools—public and private; elementary, middle, and high school; technical and community college; members of the state university system—to inform language arts and English departments of our decision, to transmit to them the precise location of *MEJ*, and to encourage teachers and students alike to interact with it and with us. We hope the result of this invitation will be a wider circulation of the materials that we're publishing and encouragement to those that may use those materials not just to join conversations with us on our website but also to submit their ideas, teaching strategies, attempts to address problems related to their English and language arts curriculum, and successful applications of pedagogy, theory, praxis, and research in order to share them with a considerably larger audience.

For a number of years, MCTE has understood the importance of *MEJ* for our membership. But going on-line enunciates our commitment to the philosophy that what is developed in the classroom or in our research should be available to as many as we can reach, regardless of whether or not those readers are current members of MCTE. We most certainly hope that the greater availability of *MEJ* will bring in more members to our organization and swell the attendance and participation at our fall and spring conferences, and we believe that the higher quality and inclusiveness that will result from our going on-line will bring that to pass. But ideas about what, why, and how we teach, and how we actively involve and motivate our student audiences, are much too important to keep among a relatively small audience. The editors of *MEJ* understand that, the more teacher/scholars who read the journal and interact with it, the greater and more diverse the pool of submissions on timely subjects will be flowing towards us; such an eventuality can only enhance the quality of the journal and the role it

can play as a facilitator of the on-going discussion about language, composition, literature, and teaching among ourselves on the various levels of instruction in which it's practiced.

To demonstrate that we value the growth of those discussions of theory and praxis in our language arts, composition, and literature classrooms, the editors have determined to offer a prize for what we consider to be the best article submitted for each issue. The \$250 prize, not a great amount indeed but symbolically significant in our view, will not be available to members of the MCTE board or the editorial staff of *MEJ*; those of us from the board whose work you see represented in this issue have written for the love of "the game" and because we believe we have something to say. The prize will be offered beginning with the next issue, and the winner's piece will be identified within its pages.

We hope you are as energized as we are about the changes in *MEJ*. We look forward to reading your responses and suggestions to what we hope will continue to be a changing and constantly improving enterprise.

Respectfully,



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