

## To Our Readers:

It's a challenge and a pleasure to begin my assignment as editor of the Minnesota English Journal. Thanks to the help of John Schifsky, the outgoing editor, I have much useful advice, several hefty boxes of files, and the steady encouragement of the advisory board.

This issue has seven stimulating articles, all focused on the ways we and our students use language—as writers of journals and essays, as poets and readers of poetry, as job seekers and employees, and even as identifiable members of a cultural group.

For future issues of the MEJ, I hope to find two additional kinds of contributions:

- **Best Brief Strategies:** Quick descriptions of specific teaching techniques or tricks that have succeeded in stimulating your students' enthusiasm and excellence in language and literature. What's that scheme you've worked out with note cards, desktop publishing, or Tootsie Rolls? What concrete teaching advice would you offer to a brand new teacher as she or he moves into the classroom next to yours?

Mail me a 50 to 200-word description of a technique that works, and include the grade level, the nature of the class or teaching unit, and your own name and telephone number. Or fax it, or e-mail it to me. Or just call me up and describe it, or leave a message on my voice mail. I hope to make space in the MEJ for a network of practical teaching suggestions.

- **To Air is Human:** Humorous or thought-provoking examples of misspellings or unexpected language use from student and faculty papers—perhaps including your own. Alan Powers, whose comic editorial concludes this issue, writes elsewhere of one student who earnestly wrote "Eliza Doolittle goes to the garden party disgusting as a duchess" and another who insisted "Lady Chatterley listens to her conscience." We all enjoy sharing innocent linguistic slips and unintended puns. Send them to me with the grade level and anything else I need to create a context.

Of course, I hope to continue the MEJ's tradition of publishing excellent, thought-provoking articles of conventional length—10 to 25 pages in typescript.