

**TWO-YEAR
COLLEGE
ENGLISH
ASSOCIATION**

**—
SOUTHWEST
REGION**

**SPRING 2019
CONTENT:**

Letter from the
TYCA-SW Chair
D. Brian Anderson

On Behalf of the
Editorial Team

Welcome Letter from
the Conference Chairs

Behind the Pine
Curtain: Greater
Houston's Literary
History

Going Public: What
We're Reading and
Learning

TYCA-SW Archivist
Report

About TYCA-SW

TYCA-SW
Leadership 2019

A Welcome Letter from the Chair of TYCA—Southwest

Dear Friends & Colleagues,

I would like to welcome you all to this year's TYCA-SW conference at Lone Star College-Montgomery in Conroe, Texas. The theme of this year's conference, *Reinvigorating the Public Sphere*, speaks to many of the current tensions and paradoxes in our public discourse, and it serves as a call for college English teachers to accept a greater responsibility in encouraging civic engagement in students. It's a well-considered conference theme that comes at a fortuitous moment, and I know that our membership will do it justice through a carefully curated program of presentations, panels, and invited talks, including Professor of Writing and Rhetoric Christina Cedillo and award-winning novelist and essayist Sarah Bird. I thank and commend the chairs of this year's conference, Bruce Martin and Allison Laubach Wright of Lone Star College-North Harris and Haley Stoner and Cliff Hudder of Lone Star College-Montgomery, for their passionate and hard work in putting together this year's program and in overseeing the logistical efforts needed to make sure the conference is a success. While many of us attend conferences for a variety of professional reasons, I am reminded through my work every year with TYCA-SW associates and conference organizers how vibrant and dynamic professional development can be when participants are particularly committed to the discipline and to each other. I hope to meet and converse with each and every one of you at this year's conference, and I especially look forward to meeting those attending TYCA-SW for the first time. I trust that you will find it as valuable as I have over the past 15 years. From here, we continue to move forward on a journey of reflective discovery and continued improvement, within a worldview in which student success translates to improvements for us all.



D. Brian Anderson
Chair, TYCA-SW

On Behalf of the Editorial Team

Sarah R. Fish, Professor of English, and Toni McMillen, Professor of English, Collin College McKinney Campus

In Spring 2018, the TYCA-SW newsletter editorial team expanded and began to think about new ways to connect with our members, reflect on where we've been, and publish more conversations about teaching and learning in the two-year college system. Our previous two issues show this commitment, even bringing forward two articles written by students, and we know we can keep moving forward.

The editorial team would like to invite you—and your students—to submit material for newsletter consideration. Our emerging trend has been to focus on a teaching concern for the spring issue (Spring 2019's focus was co-requisite teaching) and our learning and the conference for the fall issue. We welcome editorial style pieces of no more than 500 words and creative works of no more than 800 words. Ideally, all sourced material needs to be hyperlinked, but otherwise the newsletter team adheres to MLA 8 standards.

As our current conference theme asks how we engage with the public sphere and even how we define the spheres we inhabit, the editorial team continues to ask how we might broaden members' spheres by cultivating our public presence online and in print. If you have something to say or know someone who does, send them our way.

We're ready to learn from our members and their institutional contexts. We're ready to listen to our students' concerns and the results of their learning. And we're ready to attend to the ways language adapts, changes, and presents new possibilities.

Interested authors should email sfish@collin.edu.



Check Out Recent Newsletter Publications:

[Spring 2017 Newsletter](#)

[Fall 2018 Newsletter](#)

[Spring 2019 Newsletter](#)



Welcome to the TYCA-SW 2019 Conference

Haley Stoner, Associate Professor of English at Lone Star College-Montgomery

When Cliff Hudder walked into my office to announce the possibility of our campus hosting the next TYCA-SW conference, my eyes lit up. Teaching is my primary passion, but I love to plan events, and I am enlivened by new ventures. Attending last year's conference in Galveston was inspirational for me as I got to see fellow two-year college instructors discussing our field and committing to the exploration of best practices. Personally, this commitment means a great deal. As we know, students deserve excellence in education, regardless of the institution, and there are so many issues for us to navigate today as instructors. I am thankful for TYCA, a place for us to belong and to share, to recognize the challenges we face, and to value each other as professionals.

My fellow co-chairs, Bruce Martin, Cliff Hudder, and Allison Laubach Wright, are excited along with me for this year's conference! Lone Star College-Montgomery will serve as a beautiful campus location, nestled by pine trees. We have one of the largest community colleges in Texas, so there will be plenty to explore. Our campus is located near The Woodlands, just a thirty minute drive from Houston, one of the most culturally diverse cities in the country. This year's conference will begin with a fun and relaxing happy hour event at Local Pour in Hughes Landing for mingling and registration.

Friday and Saturday, we will convene for our sessions, panels, and luncheons. This year's conference theme is Reinvigorating the Public Sphere. We are looking to celebrate our profession's capacity to generate student success in the public spheres of career and community. The current environment makes the ability to think critically and express ideas so vital to social progress, and our students often come to us without the skills they need to be heard. We are very fortunate to have two fantastic keynote speakers. Dr. Christina V. Cedillo, Assistant Professor of Writing at University of Houston Clear Lake, is co-chair for the Latinx Caucus and is involved in many academic activism efforts. Sarah Bird, award winning novelist and activist, will also be here to inspire us.

All that to say, welcome to this year's conference! We are working hard to create a memorable and productive event for you. It has been a wonderful experience!





Behind the Pine Curtain: Greater Houston's Literary History

Cliff Hudder, Associate Professor of English at Lone Star College—Montgomery

While the Greater Houston region has proven an inspiration for authors such as Larry McMurtry, Rosellen Brown and David Lindsey, and serves as base of operations for institutions like the University of Houston's highly regarded Creative Writing Program and the city's Inprint Reading Series, 40 miles north, the pine-shaded region surrounding Lone Star College-Montgomery is home to its own rich, diverse and intriguing literary legacy.

In the late 1940's, for example, in nearby New Waverly, William S. Burroughs played host to visitors such as Allen Ginsberg and Neal Cassady on his 99-acre farm, an enterprise he did not succeed in converting into a thriving marijuana plantation. Burroughs is still recalled by county residents and authorities, mainly owing to charges of public indecency and driving while intoxicated. This sojourn in East Texas is immortalized in *Naked Lunch*. ("The inhabitants of this town and the surrounding area of swamps and heavy timber are people of . . . great stupidity and barbarous practices.")

Burroughs' son, William Jr., was born in Conroe, a municipality labeled "The Miracle City" by William Goyen in his first novel, the modernist masterpiece *The House of Breath* (1950), set in and inspired by his youth in nearby Trinity, Texas. (The miracle has to do with a discovery of oil reserves and the ensuing economic boom.)

Also associated with the city is Conroe High School graduate Annette Gordon-Reed, who, after stints in both Dartmouth and Harvard, in 2009 won the National Book Award for her biographical study of Thomas Jefferson's "second family," *The Hemingses of Monticello*.

In fact, Montgomery County has been until recently the home to two Texas State Poets Laureate. Paul Ruffin, resident of Willis, served many years as a professor of Creative Writing at Sam Houston State University, where he was also chair and founder of the *Texas Review* journal and the chief editorial hand at the influential *Texas Review Press*. A much-anthologized poet, Paul was in addition master of the short story form, a terrific storyteller, and his passing in 2016 deprived the region of a beloved and energetic supporter of the literary arts.

A second writer named by the legislature as Texas Poet Laureate, David Parsons, is the author of five volumes of verse, including *Feathering Deep* and *Color of Mourning*.

Continued on the next page.

Along with Annette Gordon-Reed, Dave has been immortalized in bronze in Conroe's Founder's Square, his likeness often a subject of festive decoration during the holiday season.

The community immediately to the South of our campus, The Woodlands, is home to several authors, including Kathryn Lane, creator of the popular *Nikki Garcia Thriller* series and a highly regarded story collection, *The Backyard Volcano*. Woodlands resident Dede Fox serves as the current Poet Laureate of Montgomery County, and is the author of such works as *Postcards Home* and *Confessions of a Jewish Texan*. And in 1981, a group of writers met in the Woodlands vowing to expand their careers, holding the first conference of what has now become the *Romance Writers of America*, a nonprofit organization currently boasting 10,000 members.

LSC-Montgomery is itself an influential force in literary arts behind the Pine Curtain. Together with the nonprofit Montgomery County Literary Arts Council, the school hosts a reading series, *Writers in Performance*, which has over its 25-year history showcased important established and emerging literary voices on campus each month, in addition to hosting yearly celebrations of the birthdays of both Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman. The school is in addition home to two student publications, *SWIRL* and *Writing Across the Curriculum in the Disciplines and in the Workplace*, and offers regular workshop classes in the writing of fiction, poetry, non-fiction and memoir. Many now-published authors got their start in those classes and had their work first appear on those pages. LSC-Montgomery faculty includes published poets, novelists, YA authors, and two members of the Texas Institute of Letters.

Share in our offbeat creative vibe under the pines the Fall! You may not be able to see the horizon, but you can definitely get a glimpse of the stars at LSC-Montgomery.

**TYCA-SW seeks ongoing submissions for publication in the TYCA-SW Newsletter.
Articles should be no longer than 500 words, and creative works should be no longer than 800 words.**

Submissions can be sent to Sarah Fish at sfish@collin.edu or Toni McMillen at tmcmillen@collin.edu .

Going Public: What We're Reading and Learning

To celebrate our conference theme and encourage our conversations about teaching across institutions, disciplines, and states, the TYCA-SW newsletter editorial team asked ourselves how we might dedicate a space to learning from each other. We asked members to recall something they have read that has impacted their teaching and then share those experiences here.

We hope these ideas inspire our members to pick up a new article or book, idea, or conversation—and then pay it forward with their own contribution to a future column like this. Let us bring forward—make public, as it were—what we are learning and inspired by. The editorial team would like to thank the authors included here for their willingness to share and go public.

Erin Beaver

**Colorado Mountain
College Spring Valley**

In 2010, I was struggling to impress upon my students that physical class presence alone would not lead to success. In order to pass the course and *learn*, students needed to engage in the learning process throughout every week of the term. It was then that I stumbled upon Holly Hassel and Jessica Lourey's essay in *College English* (vol. 53, no. 1) "The Dea(r)th of Student Responsibility."

Hassel and Lourey address a perceived shift in student accountability. They conclude that "[c]hange in student accountability and performance begins with the instructors We need to tell our students what is expected of them, create a valuable learning environment, tie grades to achievement, and hold all of our students to the same standards. . . . We need to embrace high standards, stick to them, and impart this to our students" (8). The appendix to their essay includes a model "student accountability survey." Since the start of my higher education career, I had been using a survey at the start of my courses to get to know my students; however, Hassel and Lourey's research provided a new framework for utilizing an introductory survey as a means not only to get to know my students but also to begin a dialogue with them about the high expectations of college writing courses. I have been using a version of their "student accountability survey" ever since. It has impacted my teaching practice for the better.

Allison Laubach Wright

Lone Star College
North Harris

Sara Goldrick-Rab's 2016 book, *Paying the Price*, is an important read for solid research and analysis about the way that financial aid programs are no longer working for students at any level who view college not as "a choice or a luxury" but as "the only available next step and, indeed, the only hope." Pell Grants, she notes, currently cover only about one-third the total cost of

attending a four year college and not even two-thirds the cost of a two-year college. And most faculty who have spent any time with students looking at FAFSA are more than aware of the problems students face when their families can't meet the "Expected Family Contribution" because of a calculation method focused on a single year of income and not an understanding of real-world family expenses. The result is students struggling to meet basic needs while they attend college.

This semester, I've taken a few pages from Goldrick-Rab's playbook, beginning with an open statement of "Student Basic Needs" on my syllabus, which acknowledges the fact that education simply cannot happen when students are not having their basic needs met. It's an important reminder that students are people first, and like most people, they really do want to do their best. In the five weeks of the semester so far, I've worked with more students experiencing difficult life situations — from sickness to overwork to food insecurity to just needing a tampon — than I've seen in the past. Time will only tell if that's going to have a significant impact on student persistence this semester and into next, but I do think it's an important conversation — and an important framing of a conversation — that we as educators need to keep coming back to.

Eric Reyes

Wharton County
Junior College

A few years ago, I attended a workshop hosted by Dr. John O' Hara, a faculty member at Stockton University. The workshop sounded great in theory; a professor of critical thinking hoping to disrupt our understanding of critical thinking and how to actually incorporate it in a composition course. As a former high school English instructor, I went in thinking "I can't possibly learn

anything from a professor of critical thinking." After engaging in his workshop activities, such as discussing whether or not I would eat dog meat or the differences between the Flying Spaghetti Monster and Jesus Christ, I realized that I was guilty of not thinking critically prior to this workshop. In two books he co-authored, *Current Issues and Enduring Questions* and *From Critical Thinking to Argument*, you can find a variety of adaptable activities and prompts to challenge your students. By taking the teeth out of the definition of "critical thinking" and providing adaptable assignments/checklists, these two texts have given me and my students the room to think and discuss, while allowing composition and rhetoric to naturally fall in place.



TYCA-SW Archivist Report: A Look Back to 1999 and 2009

Jill Gos, Composition Coordinator, Instructor of English & Humanities,
Lee College

	1999
Date	October 14-16
Location	Adam's Mark Hotel-Tulsa, OK
Theme	<i>Constance Amidst Change</i>
Conference Chair(s)	Rhonda Bainum and Pam Stinson, Northern Oklahoma College
Featured Speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheridan Blau • Santi Buscemi • Nancy Wood
Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Lewis Poetry Reading • Jewell Parker Rhodes Fiction Reading • Flash Terry Blues Music • Chautauqua-Susan King and Theodore Kachel appearing as Eleanor Roosevelt and Winston Churchill
Session Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision, Sentence Structure, Portfolio Assessment, Collaborative Learning, Peer Review, Student-as-Customer (not!), Creativity & Civility in the Classroom & Community
Treasury Balance	\$7,667.49
Registration Fee	\$85 (included membership)
Membership Fee	\$10
Chair	Terry Stewart
Membership Chair	Gwen Gresham
Secretary	Terri Reno
Treasurer	Linda Hatchel
Noteworthy Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lewis was a Pulitzer Prize nominee. • Rhodes was a National Endowment of the Arts Award winner. • Hotel Rates: Single-\$90, Double-\$110, Triple/Quadruple-\$115 • Awards cost: app. \$165 • Newsletter cost: app. \$1,500

2009

Date	October 29-31
Location	Little Rock Hilton-Little Rock, AR
Theme	<i>Bridging the Gaps for Student Success</i>
Conference Chair(s)	Amy Baldwin, Pulaski Technical College
Featured Speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Panel: Trevette Brown, Verna Collins, and Toby Daughtery• Kevin Brockmeier
Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• River Market District• Halloween party at a dean's house
Session Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revision, Grammar, Faculty Caring Behaviors, Deconstructing Student Empowerment, Developing Student Ownership, Teaching Chicana/o Literature, Expectations, First-Year College Experience, ESL, Developmental English, Group Projects, Student Responsibility, Motivation, Sequencing Writing Assignments, Using Technology, Journaling
Treasury Balance	\$14, 633.75
Registration Fee	Unknown
Membership Fee	\$20
Chair	Irma Luna
Membership Chair	Toni McMillen
Secretary	Unknown
Treasurer	Toni McMillen
Noteworthy Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hot Topic: Position Statement on Concurrent Enrollment

About TYCA-SW

In 1966, the founding members of the Southwest Regional Conference on English in the Two-Year College (SRCE), the original name of TYCA-SW, met in San Antonio, Texas.

Since then, the Conference has met yearly in each one of the six states making up the Southwest Region: in Denver, Little Rock, Bossier City, Hobbs, Oklahoma City, and in various cities in Texas, including Amarillo, Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Fort Worth, Galveston, Laredo, and Waco.

Members enjoy not only the professional growth of attending the annual conferences but also the personal interaction with old and new friends that sparks enthusiasm, confidence, and solidarity.

Programs feature speakers of regional and national reputation. Host colleges traditionally schedule recreational activities that showcase their cities, such as a walk around the San Antonio Riverwalk or a hiking trail through the mountains and scenic routes of Colorado.

Visit TYCASW.ORG for more information.

SHOW APPRECIATION

NOMINATE A COLLEAGUE FOR TYCA-SW AWARDS 2020

Susan Faulkner Excellence in Teaching Award

The Susan Faulkner Excellence in Teaching Award is presented at the annual TYCA-SW conference. It honors the memory of Susan Faulkner, professor and coordinator of the English Department at Cedar Valley College in the Dallas County Community College District in Texas. Susan loved teaching, learning, the English language, TYCA-SW, and her grandchildren most of all. We urge you to nominate a friend or colleague who merits special recognition for his or her hard work and inspired teaching. Send your nominee's name and a brief description of his or her outstanding work. In addition, you may include brief comments from this individual's students and peers, if possible.

Nominees must be paid members of TYCA-SW.

Robert W. Wylie Service Award

Each year TYCA-SW honors one person for outstanding contributions made to the profession through long-term service. The Wylie Award is our highest distinction. To nominate a colleague for this award, send the nominee's name and a description of his or her contributions to the profession. You may include comments from others in your nomination as well. Include the information listed below on this form along with any supporting documents.

Go to tycasw.org to nominate a colleague for the Robert W. Wylie Service Award and Susan Faulkner Excellence in Teaching Award.

TYCA-Southwest Leadership Team 2019

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