

Asilomar 36



Glimpses of Truth

Asilomar Conference Grounds
Pacific Grove

September 26-28, 1986

Curriculum Study Commission
Central California Council of Teachers of English



Asilomar 36

Glimpses of Truth

"My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you see. If I succeed, you shall find there according to your deserts: encouragement, consolation, fear, charm—all you demand—and, perhaps, also that glimpse of truth for which you have forgotten to ask."

Joseph Conrad, Preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus*

"He [the writer] must teach himself that the basest of all things is to be afraid; and, teaching himself that, forget it forever, leaving no room in his workshop for anything but the old verities and truths of the heart, the old universal truths lacking which any story is ephemeral and doomed—love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice."

William Faulkner, Speech upon receiving the Nobel Prize

Truth and education have long been linked. Colleges and universities choose mottoes about truth. The ability to see truth, to recognize truth for what it is, marks the educated person.

Teachers of English, of Language Arts, understand the complex, shifting nature of truth. We observe the changes in language's truth and strive to instill in our students the ability to render their own truth through their own language. We believe deeply that literature's truth arms the individual with powerful weapons. We work to create the atmosphere of truth in our classrooms.

Here at Asilomar, our profession's multi-faceted truth becomes clear as nowhere else. Various as the weekend group topics always are, each delves deeply into an important component of the art of teaching today. Asilomar provides us with evidence of how difficult it is to know truth, how important it is to continue to seek it.

Each of us comes to Asilomar as a seeker of truth, truth for which we have *not* forgotten to ask. And for each one of us, Asilomar offers a different truth, a valid and personal truth, something we can connect with the "love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice" that make up our daily work of teaching and the literature we love.

At Asilomar 36, may each of us find all that we demand and those truths of the heart to encourage us for the year ahead.

For additional information or extra copies of this brochure, please write:

Elaine Johnson
235 Vista Grande
Greenbrae, CA 94904

Ernie Karsten
1364 Grizzly Peak Blvd.
Berkeley, CA 94708

The Asilomar conference is sponsored by the Curriculum Study Commission of the Central California Council of Teachers of English, an affiliate of the California Association of Teachers of English and the National Council of Teachers of English.



Program September 26-28, 1986

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

REGISTRATION (3:00-6 and 7:00-9 p.m.)

RECEPTION HOSTED BY THE CCCTE EXECUTIVE BOARD
(4:30-6 p.m.)

DINNER (6:00-7 p.m.)

GENERAL SESSION I (7:30-9 p.m.)

GROUP SESSION I (9:15-10 p.m.)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

GROUP SESSIONS II and III (9 a.m.-noon)

GROUP SESSION IV (1:30-3 p.m.)

RECEPTION HOSTED BY THE CURRICULUM STUDY
COMMISSION (4:30-6 p.m.)

WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE (7:30-8:30 p.m.)

AROUND THE HEARTH (8:30-10 p.m.)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

GROUP SESSION V (9:00-10 a.m.)

GENERAL SESSION II (10:30-noon)

Note: Suggested reading books will be available at the conference bookstore and, prior to the conference, at the three locations of

A CLEAN WELL-LIGHTED PLACE FOR BOOKS

At the Oaks
21271 Stevens Creek Blvd.
Cupertino, CA 95014
(408) 255-7600

At Opera Plaza
601 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 441-6670

At Larkspur Landing
2417 Larkspur Landing Circle
Larkspur, CA 94939
(415) 461-0171

AROUND THE HEARTH

Focusing on issues and ideas of current importance, these informal groups will allow conference participants to discuss a topic outside the range of their weekend groups. Participants at the conference may choose from

Teaching Journalism: Plums and Problems
New Teachers' Concerns: Now and in the next decade
Defining the Mentor Teacher Program
State issues: politics and professionalism
Readers' Theater

and others to be announced.

Featured Presentations

WILLIAM S. ANDERSON

Professor Anderson has been teaching the whole range of Latin literature at UC Berkeley since 1960. Educated at Yale and Cambridge, he has also been professor at the Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome in 1966-67 and has been recipient of a Prix de Rome at the American Academy in Rome, a More Fellowship, a National Endowment for the Humanities Senior Fellowship, and a Research Fellowship at the University of Melbourne. He has special concern for the poetic genres of drama, epic, satire and elegy. His interest in satire from Republican Rome to 18th century England has led to his teaching also within the Department of Comparative Literature at Berkeley. More recent is his interest in comedy from Aristophanes to the 20th century. His publications include a text edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, one of Books 6-10 for Oklahoma University Press and one of all 15 books for Teubner in Germany; Princeton University has published his collected essays on satire as *Studies on Roman Satire*. An earlier work, *The Art of the Aeneid*, is an important contribution to the continuing study of that great work. Somehow, he finds time for squash, tennis, and stamp collecting.

MARIE PONSOT & ROSEMARY DEEN

Ponsot & Deen! No, not a vaudeville juggling or tapdancing act! Marie Ponsot is a translator and poet whose work has been published by City Lights and Knopf; Rosemary Deen is poetry editor of *Commonweal* magazine. Both teach literature and, by choice, composition in the English department at Queens College, New York. As a performing team, they discuss the arts of composing and of teaching composition in entertaining and mind-opening ways. They have collaborated on two books that are becoming more and more popular among teachers: *Beat Not the Poor Desk*, about what to teach, how to teach it, and why; and *The Common Sense*, about what to write, how to write it, and why. Both books are published by Boynton/Cook.

DAVID WEIR, Writer-in-Residence

David Weir's professional life is based on the search for truth. He co-founded the Center for Investigative Reporting, and serves as its executive director and as director of its Natural Resources project. He teaches investigative reporting at the Graduate School of Journalism, UC Berkeley, and lectures frequently at universities, high schools and conferences. He served as panelist at the American Writers Congress in New York (1981), and at international conferences in both hemispheres. Weir's most recent book, *The Bhopal Syndrome: Pesticide Manufacturing and the Third World*, follows *Circle of Poison: Pesticides and People in a Hungry World* (1981), both focusing on the intricate relationship between chemicals and world-wide food supply. Other titles to his credit include *Raising Hell: How the Center for Investigative Reporting Gets the Story* (1983) and many articles in such publications as *Rolling Stone*, *The Nation*, *New Times*, *New York*, *Mother Jones*, *New West*. He has won or shared eleven journalism awards in the past seven years, and his writing has been anthologized. To balance the research involved in investigative reporting, David Weir writes feature film scripts for Paramount, Warner Brothers, and 20th Century Fox.

Weekend Study Groups

The strength, the wonder, the uniqueness of the Asilomar conference derive from the Curriculum Study Commission's belief in the value of group process as developed by Hilda Taba. The essence of group process is continuous participation by all group members as they become part of something greater than themselves. Although most study groups have a designated chairperson and often a resource person, it is the group members who are the ultimate resource persons, sharing individual knowledge and experience, as they strive for glimpses of truth within their particular subject matter. IT IS CRUCIAL, THEREFORE, THAT YOU STAY WITH YOUR GROUP FOR THE ENTIRE WEEKEND.

All groups have a maximum registration of 25. You need to indicate both a FIRST and SECOND CHOICE of groups that reflect your interests whether for personal enrichment, classroom application, or professional concern. Letters following titles indicate workshops that have a grade-level focus; those without letter are of general interest:

- E Elementary
- M Middle/Jr. High
- S Secondary
- C College

1. Building Pupil Response to Literature

Successful programs in literature require skillful attention. In classrooms, from the elementary grades through college, instruction in literature is moving away from teaching a body of knowledge toward cultivating pupil *response*. The importance of response in the early grades, when children are in their unreluctant years, cannot be overemphasized; response in the secondary and college years depends upon new ways of handling student discussion. This group will focus on ways to foster response, whether for children, adolescents, or young adults, and ways that response to literature differs from response to non-literary materials. Suggested readings: Louise Rosenblatt, *Literature as Exploration*; Roberts Probst, "Three Relationships in The Teaching of Literature," *English Journal* (January, 1986)

2. State-ments

What is meant by all the new State documents: What is the thrust of the proposed curriculum change they represent? Who has been involved in their development? What force of authority do they have? Are they all philosophically aligned, or should they be? How can we use them to our advantage? This group will grapple with these questions as they deal with the Standards, Guides, Handbooks, Frameworks, and other recent documents, K-12, distributed by the State Department of Education in recent months. Writers of some of the documents and a representative of the Department will be present for comments and questions.

3. Developing Thinking Skills

Greater attention is being given to the importance of high level thinking skills throughout the curriculum and to the variety of such skills. Group members will share successful

9. Non-Linear Processes: The Other Half of Critical Thinking (S)

Participants will review the current research on the ways that the right and left hemispheres process information and explore the implications of that research for English teachers to teach critical thinking skills. Group members will be asked to share practical teaching techniques which draw upon the non-linear processes of the right hemisphere. Suggested reading: Linda Verlee Williams, *Teaching the Two-Sided Mind*.

10. Rethinking "Remedial" (M,S)

Group members will explore strategies that go beyond worksheets and tests to achieve response from and interaction with underachieving students. Instead of skills and rewards and punishments for each activity in order to achieve classroom "control" and measure "learning," other experiences can lead to a love of learning and writing and can create independent learners. Group members should be prepared to share strategies they have developed to move students from reluctant to responsive, responsible learners. Suggested reading: Robert Probst, *Adolescent Literature: Response and Analysis*.

11. Reading a Modern Novel

How can we deepen our understanding of modern fiction by exploring and sharing our own responses to a work? What kinds of approaches engage our imaginative energies? Participants will read in advance *Flaubert's Parrot*, a short novel by Julian Barnes. This audacious, innovative novel offers a compelling weave of fiction, biography, and history for a weekend of spirited discussion and self-reflective examination of literary response. Participants will also consider implications of these methods for inducing willing, active, collaborative reading in classrooms.

12. Investigative Reporting for the Classroom (S)

Focusing on David Weir's investigative reports, the group will discuss the processes of writing and editing, vision and revision. What are the problems in arriving at truth? How does the thoughtful writer shape materials to connect with the reader without distorting reality? Group members will also write from primary sources and discuss the problems of the composing process. Suggested readings: David Weir, *Circle of Poison, Raising Hell, The Bhopal Syndrome: Pesticide Manufacturing and the Third World*; Jessica Mitford, *Poison Penmanship*.

13. Building a K-8 Literature Program That Works (E,M)

With national and state emphasis on literature, many districts, departments, and teachers find themselves faced with the task of selecting literature and developing a program which incorporates critical thinking, integrates the curriculum, meets the needs of the students, and satisfies SIP requirements. Group participants will investigate available

19. Exploring the Nature of Teaching

This session invites veteran teachers and colleagues new to the profession to spend the weekend collaborating, delving, and making metaphors with one another as ways to explore the process of teaching. We will examine the choices we make when committing to the life of a teacher, and explore the deeper connections that transcend the teaching of subject matter. Please bring a journal.

20. Making Connections Between Writing and Literature

Assigning writing that asks students to connect books and poems with their lives and with other literary work allows teachers to help students think about and richly experience literature. This group will consider literary titles, teaching methods, and sequences of writing tasks that make such connections possible. Group members should bring samples of assignments and the student work such assignments elicited. Suggested readings: James Moffett, *Active Voice and A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-13*; Kenneth McCrorie, *Writing to be Read*.

21. The Female Sleuth in Fiction

Group members will investigate the role women have played in the history of the detective novel and examine the image of women that has been projected in representative novels with female detectives. A list of readings for further investigation will be compiled by participants sharing their special favorites. Suggested readings: Dorothy Sayer, *Gaudy Nights*; Susan Dunlap, *Not Exactly a Brahmin*; P.D. James, *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman*; Agatha Christie, *The Body in the Library*.

22. G.A.T.E.-Ways to Literature (M,S)

The group will share ideas about what works and what does not work when it comes to asking talented young people to read literature, write about it, discuss it, listen to what others have to say about it, and view it on film or in live performance. The goal of using literature of high quality in G.A.T.E. classes is to teach students how to make the intimate classroom connections: literature to other literature and literature to life. Group participants should give some thought to what characters in fiction have served as life models—both positive and negative—for them.

23. Global Eduation: Japanese Responses to a Changing World

Japanese writers have reflected "the river of time" by looking inward, obsessed with how a changing world has affected their own psyches. Through their images, we can see how change has been the catalyst for such introspection as well as for new forms of expressing it in story, poetry, diaries, film, and comics. Group members will examine Japanese writers' responses to a changing world in order to gain new perspectives on their own reactions to a world in change,

Conference Fees**Registration****Early Registration (by July 1)**

Participants will receive a \$5 reduction by paying all conference fees (registration, lodging and meals) by July 1, 1986.

Regular Registration (by September 12)

Because a predetermined number of rooms on the Asilomar grounds have been reserved for this conference, registrations are processed in the order they are received until all spaces are filled. To be assured of accommodations, participants must register by paying all fees by September 12, 1986.

Refunds

For cancellations, a refund, minus a \$15 processing fee, will be granted if requested by September 12. No refunds will be granted after September 12, 1986.

Late Registration (after September 12)

The Asilomar management's more strict procedures now make it impossible to guarantee on-grounds accommodations for late registrants. Participants interested in registering after September 12 must call Elaine Johnson, (415) 461-7778, or Ernie Karsten, (415) 841-6593, to determine whether rooms are still available on the conference grounds.

Lodging and Meals

The accommodation fee includes two nights' lodging and six (6) meals, Friday dinner, served from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m., through Sunday lunch.

Please note: Only a limited number of single rooms are available. Recent renovations have increased the fee for previously cheaper accommodations. All room assignments are on a first-come, first-served basis.

Monterey peninsula residents may register for the conference on a nonresidential basis by paying the off-grounds fee of \$15. Meals are not included; however, individual meal tickets may be purchased at the Asilomar office.

Saturday Reception

For an additional \$5, participants may attend the reception on Saturday afternoon. Both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages will be available.

We hope all of the registration procedures are self-explanatory; however

if you have questions . . .

About registration or lodgings:

Write to Sister Katharine Emery, O.P.,
3693 High St., Oakland, CA 94619

teaching behaviors and techniques that promote thinking. Participants will investigate whole brain thinking, the realms of creativity, and different discovery methods that can be applied across the curriculum.

4. Paule Marshall

Group members will discuss Paule Marshall's art in creating striking characters in settings so memorable that they seem to create their people. The stories show her development as a writer both in themes and in style. *The New Yorker* characterized her novel of adolescent initiation as having a style "remarkable for its courage, its color, and its natural control." Suggested readings: *Reena and other Stories*; *Brown Girl, Brownstones*; *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People*; *Praisesong for the Widow*; *Soul Clap Hands and Sing*.

5. Technology to Support Your English Program

Offering hands-on experience and demonstrations, this group will explore possibilities for using the computer to strengthen writing programs. Wordprocessing, other software, and video equipment can add to the effectiveness of the English language arts program with emphasis on literature. Information from the Technology in Curriculum Center and local TEC Centers will be available. Participants should come with ideas to share.

6. Maurice Sendak: An Artist for All Ages (E)

Maurice Sendak, often called the most important children's book illustrator of our time, is credited with being the first artist to deal openly with the feelings of young children, revealing truths previously considered beyond the realm of the genre. His award-winning work has not been without controversy in its appeal for both children and adults. Group members will closely examine a variety of Sendak's works, discussing the merit and influence of his art and comparing it with other contemporary fantasists such as Chris Van Allsburg. Participants should read and bring with them *Where the Wild Things Are*, *In the Night Kitchen*, *Outside Over There*; and Chris Van Allsburg, *The Garden of Abdul Gasazi* and others by him.

7. Making Reading and Writing a Schoolwide Reality (S)

English teachers and department chairpersons may seek emphasis on the development of reading and writing in all subject matters, but unless committed administrators support this goal, a program to enhance reading and writing across the curriculum usually remains so much heady talk. A principal, a department chairperson, and a reading consultant will engage group members in a discussion of strategies for making a focus upon reading and writing a reality in every department.

8. Heart of Conrad (S,C)

Group members will consider Conradian themes as found in *Heart of Darkness* and *Chance* and other Conrad works introduced by participants. They will learn to apply the critical techniques of "deconstruction" as the basis for reading and for discussion. The ideas of Robert Scholes' *Textual Power* will serve as an approach to reading as a basis for composition.

requirements. Group participants will investigate available resources, a process for developing a literature list, sample units, staff development, and methodologies, all designed to accomplish that task. Participants should bring materials and ideas to enhance the discussion.

14. What the New CAP Writing Assessment Can Mean For the Teaching of Composition in California (E,M,S)

The new CAP Writing Assessment, piloted at the 8th and 12th grades in response to the profession's insistence that we test writing by evaluating writing, involves teachers at all levels in the construction and evaluation of the test. Group members will share the results of the tests' piloted versions and explore their implications for the improvement of the teaching of composition.

15. In Search of the Goddess (S,C)

This group will explore ways to approach the roles of women in literature and history, focusing especially on stereotypes and goddess archetypes. Practical applications to the classroom of the mythic roots of the goddess will be discussed. Participants should bring materials they have used in teaching women's studies. Suggested readings: Jean Shinoda Bolen, *Goddesses in Every Woman*; Christine Downing, *The Goddess*.

16. Poetry Writing Workshop

For beginning as well as experienced poets, this group will concentrate on poetry that develops from an aspect of the environment—an object, a quality of weather, a bird or animal—to make a personal or philosophical statement. Some workshop time will be devoted to writing; the rest will be spent in discussing and critiquing each other's poems.

17. Critical Thinking and Composition

Participants will consider the impact of critical thinking skills on expository and argumentative writing and the necessity of teaching such skills in a composition course. Participants will also be asked to discuss the larger relationship between critical thinking and matters of ethical controversy, an issue for all grade levels. Group members are encouraged to bring ideas and materials to share; other materials will be provided. Suggested reading: Paulo Freire, *The Politics of Education*.

18. Glimpses from South Africa

Recent political, economic, and social unrest in South Africa have made many of us more aware of how little we know of its views of itself in its literature. This group will examine and discuss South African writers, their works, and their country as revealed in short stories, poetry, imaginary novels, and biography. Suggested readings: Nadine Gordimer, *Selected Short Stories*; J.M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians*; Ezekiel Mphahlele, *Down Second Avenue*; Dennis Brutus, *Sirens, Knuckles and Boots* or other poetry collections; Winnie Mandela, *Part of My Soul Went With Him*.

looking at the world with new eyes. Suggested readings: Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince*; Lady Shikibu Murasaki, *The Tale of Genji* (Arthur Waley's is the classic translation, but any one will do).

24. Is There a Discipline of English?

Asked what we teach, we tend to respond, "I teach English," a safer response than, "I teach the discipline of English." Is what we teach reflective of what we are learning about the human mind? Or is it more a potpourri of tradition and folklore and an accommodation to recent public demand? This group will explore the theories of mind, the nature of "the discipline," and whether it is feasible to seek consensus on "the discipline of English." Short readings will be sent to early registrants, and all are urged to become familiar with Howard Gardner's *Frames of Mind: A Theory of Multiple Intelligence*.

25. Writing and Experience

How can we encourage writing across the curriculum? Group members will consider topics, time, survival in discussing ways to use writing in different curriculum areas. Participants will visit the Monterey aquarium on Saturday morning as a catalyst for doing their own writing, from the imaginative to the scientific, for later sharing and discussion about modes of writing and the uses of common experience to foster them. Suggested reading: James Britton, *Language and Experience*.

Membership Fees

Members of CCCTE or any other regional affiliate of the California Association of Teachers of English (CATE) pay the reduced registration fee.

Those who pay the non-member fee automatically receive a one-year membership (\$30.00) in CATE, effective October 1, 1986, which entitles them to reduced rates at other conferences, including the annual CATE convention, and a one-year subscription to *California English*. Current CATE members or those whose membership has expired recently may renew their membership at the Asilomar conference registration desk.

Extension Credit

Conference participants may earn one unit of credit in English through the Office of Extended Education, California State University, Stanislaus. Contact Professor Alice F. Worsley, Department of English, CSUS, 801 W. Monte Vista Avenue, Turlock, CA 95380, (209) 667-3361, or register at the conference Friday evening. Course fee is \$28.00.

Registration Form

Please fill out a separate form for each person registering.

Mail this form and your check for the full amount (made out to **Curriculum Study Commission**) to: Sister Katharine Emery, O.P. 3693 High St., Oakland, CA 94619

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____
number street

_____ () _____
city zip daytime telephone

Roommate(s) _____

School & district _____

Please give the number of the Workshop Session preferred:

First Choice _____ Second Choice _____

Registration Fee	CATE member	Non-member	Please fill in amount
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Early registration (fees paid in full by July 1):	\$40	\$70	
Regular registration:	\$45	\$75	
Late registration (after September 12):	\$50	\$80	\$ _____

Lodging & Meals

(prices per person)

Please check accommodation desired:

Surf and Sand/Sea Galaxy

View Crescent/North Woods/Long View

2 to a room \$95

4 to a room \$85

(*Surf and Sand/Sea Galaxy*)

Single \$140

(*View Crescent/North Woods*)

Lodge

2 to a room \$80 \$ _____

Smoker Nonsmoker

Nonsmoker roommate, please

Vegetarian Menu on request

Off-Grounds Fee \$15 \$ _____

Saturday Reception (optional) \$5 \$ _____

Total fees enclosed \$ _____

Please check if this is your first Asilomar conference



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