

# Asilomar 42

**Voices of California: Some Regions of the Mind**

Asilomar Conference Grounds  
Pacific Grove

**September 25-27, 1992**



Curriculum Study Commission  
Central California Council of Teachers of English





# Asilomar 42

## The Forty-Second Annual Gathering of Teachers of English, Preschool through University

Will Californians turn away from their diversity and hole up in small enclaves, dotting our landscapes like little Balkan states, or will we see largely and embrace the grand variety that makes California a microcosm of the world?

What ways can we teach language and literature to build bridges between diverse and sometimes divisive small interest groups, maintaining a dynamic multiplicity which could be a model for our fragmenting world?

Who are we Californians? How do we fit together? What can we learn from our writers so that we may see our landscape, external and internal, so that our curricula go beyond bandwagons, band-aids, and buzzwords and centers on that which is the most important to us and our students—to hear authentic voices and to find our own.

We come to Asilomar this weekend to shed the ragged edges of our days, to build our sense of community in some regions of the mind, and to drink deeply of this special piece of the California landscape, this place of sand and sea and stars. Here for one bright moment we can hold the sunlight in our hands.



## Program

### Friday, September 25

- 3:30-9:00 Registration
- 4:30-6:00 CCCTE Reception
- 6:00-7:00 Dinner
- 7:15-8:30 General Session  
*Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston,*  
**Living and Writing in  
a Multicultural Society**  
*Introduced by Deborah Dashow Ruth*
- 9:00-10:00 Group Session I

### Saturday, September 26

- 7:30-8:30 Breakfast
- 9:00-10:30 Group Session #2
- 10:45-11:45 Group Session #3
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch
- 1:30-3:00 Group Session #4
- 4:30-6:00 Celebrating Asilomar: Reception
- 6:00-7:00 Dinner
- 7:15-8:30 Panel Discussion **Voices of California**  
*Gerald Haslam, Moderator, with Dorothy Bryant,*  
*Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, James D. Houston, and*  
*Gary Soto*
- 8:45-10:00 **Around the Hearth** of your choice:  
*Dorothy Bryant, Writer*  
*John Cotter, Musician*  
*Gerald Haslam, Writer*  
*James D. Houston, Writer*  
*Jeanne W. Houston, Writer*  
*Alpha Quincy, Educator, "Grand Conversation:*  
*Politics and the English Teacher"*

### Sunday, September 27

- 7:30-8:30 Breakfast
- 9:00-10:00 Group Session #5
- 10:15-12:00 General Session  
Concert reading of **Dear Master**  
*written by Dorothy Bryant and performed by*  
*Barbara Oliver and Ken Grantham,*  
*Introduced by Leo Ruth*

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



## Featured Presentations

(in Order of Appearance)



### Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston is the co-author of the widely praised book and screenplay, *Farewell to Manzanar*, based upon her family's experience during and after the World War II internment of Japanese Americans in California. For the script she and her husband, James D. Houston, received a

Humanitas Prize and a 1976 Emmy Award Nomination. The book, now in its 22nd printing, has become a core work in schools. She has just returned from a Creative Arts Exchange Fellowship which took her to Japan. Her work in progress is *Beyond Manzanar, Views of Asian American Womanhood*.



### James D. Houston

In addition to co-authoring *Farewell to Manzanar*, James D. Houston has written five novels, including *Gig*, *Love Life*, and *Continental Drift*. He has also authored award-winning non-fiction such as *Californians: Searching for the Golden State*; screenplays such as *Li'A: The Legacy of a*

*Hawaiian Man*; and edited collections such as *California Heartland: Writing From the Great Central Valley*, on which he collaborated with Gerald Haslam. He has taught at numerous universities, including University of Hawaii, University of Michigan, and University of California, Santa Cruz.



### Gerald Haslam

Before teaching at Sonoma State University, Gerald Haslam worked in the oil fields and on farms of the California's Central Valley. Many of his works of fiction and non-fiction, such as *That Constant Coyote: California Stories* and *The Other California: The Great Central Valley in Life and*

*Letters*, have deep roots in that soil where Haslam grew up as a fifth generation Californian. Wayne Saroyan of the *San Francisco Chronicle* says that Haslam's stories "...evoke a chorus of voices from this multicultural, multigenerational, unknown California."



### Dorothy Bryant

Dorothy Bryant has been a teacher of English and is an award-winning playwright, novelist, and publisher. Many of her novels, such as *The Test*, *Confessions of Madame Psyche*, and *A Day in San Francisco* are set in the Bay Area and give voice to a vast range of characters. Her play, *Dear*

*Master*, crafted from the lives and letters of George Sand and Gustave Flaubert, has been nominated in four categories for the Bay Area Critics Circle Award and received the Drama-Logue Critics Award for writing and acting.

### Gary Soto

Gary Soto, a native of the Central Valley, is the author of eight poetry collections, the most recent of which is *Home Course in Religion*. For his prose collection, *Living Up the Street*, he received the Before Columbus Foundation 1985 American Book Award. His young-adult short story collection *Baseball in April* was widely reviewed. He has won numerous awards for his poetry, including an Academy of American Poets Prize. He has also received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the California Arts Council. He has taught at U.C. Berkeley.



### John Cotter

John Cotter is a long-time member of the Curriculum Study Commission and now completes his fifth year as registrar for this conference. Retired from Encinal High School, where he was the English Department Chair, he is currently a part-time instructor of English at Chabot College. For the past thirteen years, John has served as the California State Coordinator of the NCTE Achievement Awards Program. John, an accomplished pianist, invites you to join him for an hour of classical music.



### Alpha Quincey

Alpha Quincey has served education as teacher, administrator, Coordinator of the Academy for Curriculum of the Association of California School Administrators, member of The California Curriculum Commission, one of the principal writers of the California English/Language Arts Framework, and member of the CAP English/Language Arts Advisory Committee. She is currently an independent educational consultant and serves as President of the Contra Costa County Board of Education.



### Ken Grantham

For his role as Gustave Flaubert in *Dear Master*, Ken Grantham has been nominated as best actor by the Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle. Widely known as an actor and director in the Bay Area, he has performed on stage in New York as well as extensively in film. Locally he has interpreted many roles for Berkeley Repertory Theatre, San Jose Repertory and the Santa Cruz Shakespeare Festival.



### Barbara Oliver

Barbara Oliver was nominated for best actress by the Bay Area Theatre Critics' circle for her role as George Sand in *Dear Master*. She has worked in several theatres in the East Bay, most notably with Berkeley Repertory Theatre. In 1990 she won a Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award for her role as Mrs. Whitefield in *Man and Superman*. One of her most recent performances was in Berkeley Repertory's January production of *McTeague*.





# Asilomar 42

## Voices of California:

### Group Discussion Sessions

The Asilomar conference is based on sustained group discussions following the teachers-teaching-teachers, collaborative learning philosophy. The chair and one or more resource persons in each group do not function as lecturers. Rather, participants share information and insights as the discussions evolve. The emphasis is on good conversation and the pursuit of intellectual interests. In order for the group to maintain integrity, it is necessary that the same people stay together for the week-end. It is also essential that people prepare by reading the suggested books for the section they choose.

Please select a first, second and third choice from the group sessions below. Every effort will be made to assign your first choice, but groups are limited to twenty-five since more would tend to limit discussion. Group sessions will be assigned on first-come, first-served basis.

Session discussions will include ideas and methods for meeting the needs of all students, including the special needs of those students at risk, those who are educationally disadvantaged, those whose first language is not English, and those at both ends and in the middle of various ranges of ability and achievement.

The following letters after each title indicate the approximate grade level focus:

(E) Elementary      (M) Middle      (S) Secondary  
(C) College      (G) General

- 1 Oral Language in the Classroom** (G)  
Using the techniques of readers' theater, small group discussion, choral reading, and dramatic reading, this group will develop ways to get students into, through, and beyond the text. Teachers will practice these techniques and develop activities they can use in their classrooms. Participants should bring four copies of a short story, poem, or essay to work with.
- 2 War, Peace, and the English Classroom** (H,C)  
This workshop will discuss the issue of war and peace as a vehicle for study in an English class or interdisciplinary program. Topics will include (but are not limited to): war literature in various forms; establishment of oral history projects; themes such as veterans' re-adjustment, national reconciliation, and intercultural understanding.
- 3 Unrealized Motives in Fiction:  
A Two-Year Study in Practicum** (M,H,C)  
In this section, using elements from several forms of psycho-therapy, integrated with classic literary elements, we will study the unconscious motives found in the text. Next year, at Asilomar 43, we will learn how these abstract insights may be moved to a more profound experience through symbolic interaction. We will send selected readings to participants. Preliminary reading: *The Uses of Enchantment*.
- 4 Putting CAP in Its Place—Your Classroom** (G)  
Join teacher-members of the English-Language Arts CAP team in exploring strategies for engaging your students in active reading and writing. The group will study pictures, poems, prose pieces, and the environment; write journals, logs, and a range of CAP discourse types; sketch, draw, and make metaphorical graphics. Group leaders will also provide participants with a CAP update, including the most current sample test items and related documents.



- 11 Strategies for the Newcomer: Mainstreaming the Second-Language Learner** (E,M,H)  
The group will explore structuring the regular English classroom to develop the literacy of all students. Literature circles, purposeful writing, integrated language tasks, and other activities undertaken through interactive and collaborative approaches can empower all students to create personally significant meaning. Read *In the Middle: Writing, Reading, and Learning with Adolescents*.
- 12 Uncloseting the Classroom Library** (M,H)  
Teachers can help combat campus homophobia if good stories with positive homosexual characters are on library shelves. This group will investigate values and discuss risks in several books. Participants should have read any three of these: Rita Brown, *Six of One*; Nancy Garden, *Annie on My Mind*; A. Homes, *Jack*; Marilyn Levy, *Rumors and Whispers*; Isabel Miller, *Patience and Sarah*; Frank Mosca, *All-American Boys*.
- 13 At the Crossroads: Nadine Gordimer's South Africa** (M,H,C)  
Nobel novelist, essayist, and travel writer, Gordimer's essential "gesture" to society is telling truths about how politics affects the lives of people. A voice of conscience, she chronicles personal change and South Africa's history from the inside. We will discuss *July's People* and *The Essential Gesture* (last section) and share favorite readings.
- 14 John Steinbeck, Naturalist or "Environmentalist"?** (G)  
The group will study the use of the environment as character and/or cause in Steinbeck's fiction and non-fiction. Participants should read *East of Eden*, Chapter 1; *Grapes of Wrath*, interchapters; *Log of the Sea of Cortez*, introduction. Bring additional passages from any related books to share.
- 15 Writing on the Road** (G)  
Freeing students from the classroom can encourage experimentation with different points of view and genres. Workshop participants will select a local destination, such as Point Lobos, Monterey Aquarium, or Robinson Jeffers' Tor House, to explore and write about. The group will respond to one another's drafts during the weekend with a view toward producing a classroom resource publication. Additional information will be sent to group members.



# Some Regions of the Mind

Please Post

September 25-27, 1992

## 20 Promoting the California

### Young Reader Medal Program

(E,M,H)

Participants will discuss and share strategies for using the following books nominated for the 1992-93 California Young Reader Medal: Primary— *Ollie Forgot*; *Ruby*; *Julius, the Baby of the World*; *Great White Man-Eating Shark*; *Two Bad Ants*; Intermediate— *Fudge-a-Mania*; *Racing the Sun*, *Trading Game*; Middle School— *Something Upstairs*; *Mouse Rap*; *Dealing with Dragons*; Young Adult— *Face on the Milk Carton*; *The Silver Kiss*; *Across the Grain*.

## 21 Teaching Shakespeare: Problems and Solutions (M,S)

Not only are students often intimidated when confronting Shakespeare; sometimes teachers, too, tremble to undertake a new play or to introduce a new class to an old favorite and in panic reach for gimmicks and ways around rather than through the play. Participants are invited to bring their problems and concerns about those plays commonly taught in high school along with copies of plays in order to collaborate with others to find solutions and methods.

## 22 Stereotypes in Contemporary Cinema (G)

Teachers who use contemporary film and video in the classroom should help students recognize cultural stereotypes and understand why they exist. Participants in this workshop will view clips from a variety of films depicting various cultures, pause to investigate the images presented, their origins, and their impact on an audience.

## 23 Integrating Technology into the Curriculum (G)

Explore the world of computer-interactive videodiscs with technology leaders from the California Technology Project. Experience first-hand the new products that allow students to create their own meaning during the reading-writing process. Leaders will demonstrate a variety of videodiscs which reinforce learning across various curricular areas.



## On-Site Bookstore

The bookstore will be located in Scripps Living Room during the conference weekend. Every attempt will be made to have the books listed by the session. If you would like to pre-order, telephone or write:

### ARTIST'S PROOF

460 Magnolia Avenue, Larkspur, CA 94939  
(415) 924-3801

## Conference Fees

### Registration

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. Register by paying all fees at the same time. **No on-site registrations are taken.**

Early registration (by May 31)

Regular Registration (June 1-15)

Late registration (After June 15)

Participants interested in registering after June 15 must call the Conference Registrar, John Cotter, (510) 357-5425, to determine whether rooms are still available.

### Accommodations (Lodging and Meals)

The accommodations fee includes two nights' lodging and six (6) meals (Friday dinner, served from 6:00 to 7:00 P.M., through Sunday lunch). **Only a very limited number of single rooms are available. Rooms fill early and 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; individual meal tickets, however, may be purchased at the Asilomar office.

### Refunds

For cancellations by September 15, a refund minus a \$15 processing fee will be granted if requested. No refunds can be made after September 15, 1992.

### Membership Fee

Members of CATE pay the reduced registration fee. Those who pay the non-member fee automatically receive a one-year membership in CATE, entitling them to reduced rates at other conferences, and the CATE convention and a one-year subscription to *California English*.

### Nature Walk

An Asilomar ranger will lead a nature walk on Saturday, September 26, from 3:15 to 4:15. The first twenty-five people to sign up on the registration form will receive tickets.

### IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS...

About registration or accommodations, or if you need extra copies of this brochure, write or telephone the Conference Registrar:

John Cotter (510) 357-5425

2882 Marineview Drive, San Leandro, CA 94577



## 5 Finding... the Best Compromise:

### Exploring Classroom-Level Restructuring (M,H)

How will the roles of teachers and students change as schools restructure? How will classes and curricula be organized? What will classrooms look like? How will students' progress be assessed? Participants will consider these and other practical questions raised by the process of rethinking the organization of our schools and will share ideas about how to begin and sustain a school-wide conversation about change. Read *Horace's School* and *Schools for the 21st Century*.

## 6 School in Transition (E)

This workshop will study how comprehensive restructuring can occur at the elementary level. The group will focus on reinforcing the overall vision driving restructuring and on activities for developing a strong classroom plan and a strong school plan. Participants are urged to bring articles and books on restructuring.

## 7 Teacher Power (G)

Issues to be addressed are 1) that classroom teachers—at all levels—must be in charge of their own curriculum and are deserving of this important responsibility, 2) that reform in education takes place in the classroom, 3) that classroom teachers, therefore, must stand at the center of reform in order for any reform movement to be effective, 4) that "top-down" mandates by those outside of the classroom are intolerable and must be resisted, and 5) that these assumptions are decidedly minority positions within the wider educational establishment.

## 8 Novel Practicum (M,S)

Love of literature is often the reason for our becoming English teachers; however, students do not always share that fervor. When teaching a core novel, we can usually engender enthusiasm for the first three chapters, but what about chapter five when students have lost interest in *George and Lenny*, no longer care about *Cassie*, and think *Reuven* is a real "nerd"? Suggested reading: *The Chosen*; *A Separate Peace*; *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*; *Of Mice and Men*.

## 9 Creating a New Paradigm: Developing a Philosophy of Untracking (M,H)

Participants will spend the weekend talking, thinking, and writing about a philosophy of teaching that sees all students—and teachers—as learners. Visionaries and change-agents, please apply.

## 10 Native American Literature (H,C)

The coming celebration of the "discovery" of America by Columbus provides a chance to examine what really happened and is happening in Native American lives. This workshop is for people who are not experts but are willing to uncover meaning through discussion. They will look at a variety of literature taking us beyond stereotypes. Participants are asked to read *Tracks* by Louise Erdrich and to bring a copy of *Talking Leaves* edited by Craig Lesley. Please bring twenty-five copies of a short story or poem by a Native American writer to be included in a course reader.

## 16 Voices of California in Children's Literature (E,M,H)

As the story tellers for new generations, California authors and illustrators of children's books have been incredibly inventive in expressing our rich cultural diversity. Together let's explore works by Californians of multi-cultural backgrounds—the celebrated and the newly discovered—to learn from the ways they portray our traditions, histories, and dreams. Read three of the following and bring at least five other titles to share: *Charlie Pippin*; *Fly Away Home*; *Family Pictures*; *El Chino*; *A Summer Life*; *Tongues of Jade*.



## 17 Literature from the Golden State (G)

The group will survey the heterogeneous literature of our geographically and culturally varied state in which a number of literary regions have developed. Each of these domains has changed over time, but in sum they have produced writing that is varied, rich and controversial, from Richard Henry to Maxine Hong Kingston, Ina Coolbrith to Luis Valdez, the many voices of California. Suggested reading: *Many Californias: Literature from the Golden State*.

## 18 Site-Based Decision Making: A Model That Works (M,H)

Participants will hear from a principal and teacher currently involved in site-based decision making. The group will discuss management-team philosophy, staff representation, problems, and successes. Shared decision making can empower teachers, administrators, parents, students, and classified staff. Learn how it works and why it works. Come learn, share, question, and probe, as this group hears first-hand how a high school strives toward greater student success.

## 19 Mystical Connections: A Poetry-Writing Workshop (G)

"What the stalled or not-yet-started writer needs is some magic for getting in touch with himself, some key," John Gardner writes. In what has come to be an annual poetry-writing opportunity, stalled or not-yet-started poets will have a chance to write, to share, to critique their work. Join two poets (one stalled) for a weekend of making the mystical connections that will release all of us to the words that transcend the shopping lists and lesson plans of our everyday reality.



## 24 Teacher-Researchers: Work in Progress (G)

This session offers teacher-researchers, neophytes to veterans, the opportunity to further their classroom inquiries. Small-group discussions will include topics such as: development of your research question, data collection, data analysis, writing up the research, and dissemination. Participants are encouraged to bring current data with them for help from others.

## 25 Components of a Balanced Primary-Level Language Arts Program (E)

Do I have a balanced language arts program? Are my students really learning? ~~Language Arts Program~~ Share your experiences and explore issues commonly raised by primary teachers. We will use *Invitations* by Reggie Routman as a springboard for our discussion.

## 26 Student Publications in the '90s (G)

How can we help our students to become responsible journalists? With the advent of desktop publishing, the need is even greater for publication advisers and teachers to understand both the technology and the rights, responsibilities, and issues of their craft. Areas of exploration include curriculum, censorship, standards, and expectations. From novice to veteran, interested teachers are invited to share ideas and resources with leaders of the profession.

## 27 Healthy Teaching (G)

As teachers, we all want to help students, but sometimes our "helping" makes them more dependent upon us and less independent as students. In our attempts to help, we often are unaware that both teachers and students get into co-dependent roles. This group will confront the difference between empowering students and playing into the "helpless" role. Dysfunctional family patterns sometimes play out in the classroom.

## 28 Powerful Poems and Successful Strategies (M,H)

Favorite poems, a variety of teaching strategies, and a perusal of commercial teaching resources will be provided. Participants are asked to bring thirty copies of a poem and of a successful lesson plan for teaching it.

## 29 The Stories of Anton Chekhov (G)

Join us for an enjoyable weekend discussing the short stories of Anton Chekhov. Through pathos and irony, the master story teller helps us to correct our automatic, unthinking ways. His humane credo is simple: "Freedom... freedom from force and falsehood no matter how they manifest themselves." Source: *The Penguin Portable Chekhov*.

## 30 Psychological Realism: A Thematic Approach to Literature (M,H)

This group will engage in applying the psychological theories of Freud, Jung and Erickson to characters in *One flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Hamlet*, *I Know Why a Caged Bird Sings*, and *Damian*. Using a hands-on approach, we will develop materials to use in the classroom.

## 31 Mothers and Daughters (G)

The group will explore this theme across cultures, discovering differences as well as what is common to the human experience. Jamaica Kincaid's "Girl," Sharon Old's poetry, Alice Walker's *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* will be included in our discussion.

## 32 California Classrooms: A Microcosm of the World (G)

California's classrooms are more ethnically diverse than any in our nation. Applying an anthropological concept of culture, participants will practice "stepping back" from their own culture as they pursue effective strategies for building bridges of cultural understanding with the students they teach. A slide presentation focusing on the cultures of Southeast Asia and Latin America will illustrate the discussion.

# Registration Form

Please make out a separate form for each person registering and mail in the same envelope with your check for the full amount (made out to Curriculum Study Commission) to John Cotter, 2882 Marineview Drive, San Leandro, CA 94577.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ M / F

Name \_\_\_\_\_ M / F

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ P.M. Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

School/District \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ A.M. Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Group: first \_\_\_\_\_ second \_\_\_\_\_ third \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee	CATE member	non-member	please fill in amount
Early registration (All fees paid by May 31)	\$45	\$80	
Regular registration (June 1 to 15)	\$60	\$95	
Late registration (after June 15)	\$75	\$110	\$ _____

Accommodations (lodging and meals; prices per person)  
(Please check desired accommodation)

HISTORIC (some with shared bath)

Guest Inn

2 to a room \$110

HISTORIC (private bath)

Tide Inn, Hilltop, Lodge, Scripps

Single \$135

2 to a room \$115

DELUXE (private bath)

Sea Galaxy, Surf and Sand

3/4 to a room \$110

East Woods, North Woods, View Crescent, Long View

2 to a room \$125 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Smoker  Non-smoker  Non-smoker roommate please

Vegetarian menu

Off-grounds Fee (Monterey residents) \$15 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Reception: (\$5.00) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total fees enclosed payable by check only \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(No school purchase orders are accepted)

First Asilomar Conference? Yes  No

Interest in CSU Hayward Extension Credit? Yes  No   
(2 quarter units at \$70)

I wish to register for the nature walk Yes  No



# Asilomar 42

is dedicated to Walter Loban  
1912–1992

Walter Loban was a founder of the Asilomar Conference, a founding member of the Curriculum Study Commission, and continuous contributor to each for forty-three years. The memory of his rigorous mind, broad vision, gentle nature, and compassionate heart—all in the service of literature and language and of those who teach, learn, and love both—will continue to inspire us.



*"Life is a magnificent, fragile, iridescent bubble that is apt to burst at any moment—so enjoy, enjoy, enjoy!" —Walter Loban*

# Asilomar 42

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