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EDUCATIONAL TRANSITIONS

with essays by...
Betty Krasne
George Mariz
Dail Mullins
Julie Fisher Robertson
Donna Rane-Szostak

WITH A SPECIAL FORUM ON HONORS EDUCATION
led by
Samuel Schuman

with responses by...
Bernice Braid
Joan Digby
Jeffrey A. Portnoy
Steve Wainscott
Len Zane

A Publication of the National Collegiate Honors Council
The National Collegiate Honors Council is an association of faculty, students, and others interested in honors education. G. Hewett Joiner, President, Georgia Southern University; Rosalie Otero, President-Elect, University of New Mexico; Donzell Lee, Vice President, Alcorn State University; Earl Brown, Jr., Exec Sec/Treas, Radford University; Joan Digby, Immediate Past President, Long Island University CW Post. Executive Committee Brian Adler, Valdosta State University; Elizabeth Beck, Iowa State University; Ronald Brandolini, Valencia Community College; K. Celeste Campbell, Oklahoma State University; Ryan Commerson, Gallaudet University; Morgan Anne Good, SUNY Potsdam; Herald Kane, San Diego City College; Ann Raia, College of New Rochelle; Kathy Rogers, University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa); Jon Schlenker, University of Maine (Augusta); Blake Standish, University of New Mexico; Shirley Thomas, John Brown University; Casey Tippens, Oklahoma State University; Natalia Valenzuela, Columbia College; Stephen Wainscott, Clemson University; Norman L. Weiner, SUNY Oswego; Jack White, Mississippi State University; John Zubizarreta, Columbia College.
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Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council is a refereed periodical publishing scholarly articles on honors education. The journal uses a double-blind peer review process. Articles may include analyses of trends in teaching methodology, articles on interdisciplinary efforts, discussions of problems common to honors programs, items on the national higher education agenda, and presentations of emergent issues relevant to honors education. Submissions may be forwarded in hard copy, on disk, or as an e-mail attachment. Submissions and inquiries should be directed to: Ada Long / JNCHC / UAB Honors Program / HOH / 1530 3rd Avenue South / Birmingham, AL 35294-4450 / Phone: (205) 934-3228 / Fax: (205) 975-5493 / E-mail: adalong@uab.edu.

DEADLINES

March 1 (for spring/summer issue) September 1 (for fall/winter issue).

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SPRING/SUMMER 2001
CALL FOR PAPERS

JNCHC is now accepting articles for the Fall/Winter 2001 issue: “Honors and the Creative Arts.” We are interested in hearing from those of you who have had experience teaching creative writing, studio art, any of the performing arts, etc., to honors students and would like to turn your experience(s) into something that can help honors programs (re)examine the role and practice of the creative arts in their curricula.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS SEPTEMBER 1, 2001.

The subsequent issue of JNCHC (deadline March 1, 2002) will be a general-interest issue, accepting any scholarly articles related to Honors education.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1. We will accept material by e-mail attachment, disk, or hard copy. We will not accept material by fax.
2. The documentation style can be whatever is appropriate to the author’s primary discipline or approach (MLA, APA, etc.).
3. There are no minimum or maximum length requirements; the length should be dictated by the topic and its most effective presentation.
4. Accepted essays will be edited for grammatical and typographical errors and for obvious infelicities of style or presentation. Variations in matters such as “honors” or “Honors,” “1970s” or “1970’s,” and the inclusion or exclusion of a comma before “and” in a list will be left to the author’s discretion.
5. Submissions and inquiries should be directed to:
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   UAB Honors Program
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DEDICATION

This issue of JNCHC is respectfully and appreciatively dedicated to Dr. Sara Varhus, former and final editor of Forum for Honors. From 1970 until 1996, Forum for Honors was the refereed journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council. Sara, who directed the Honors Program at the State University of New York College at Oswego from 1982 until 1988, remained committed to Honors and to the NCHC long after she moved into other administrative posts. Currently Dean of Arts and Sciences at SUNY College at Oswego, she began editing Forum for Honors in 1989 while she was Associate Dean. Sara generously contributed her excellence in scholarship to the national benefit of Honors education. We are grateful for the knowledge she imparted and the standards she set.

SPRING/SUMMER 2001
EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION

ADA LONG
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

The essays in this issue of JNCHC are diverse in origin, date of composition, discipline, methodology, and content. The contributors come from all kinds of institutions in all parts of the country. All, of course, are connected to Honors education, and the essays, despite their diversity, share a common theme that JNCHC’s managing editor, Jerrald Boswell, perceptively identified as “Educational Transitions.” George Mariz and Betty Krasne identify patterns of transition that have brought us from the past to the present in our emphasis on service learning and in gender representation within academia. Dail Mullins and Robertson/Rane-Szostak suggest curricular pathways to the future, Mullins through interdisciplinary science curricula and Robertson/Rane-Szostak through critical thinking. The final section of this issue is a “Forum on Honors And Higher Education,” which also focuses on transitions into the future. And so the structure of these essays leads from past to present to future, first illustrating the patterns of change in the history of higher education and then proposing what patterns might be pending (and desirable) in the future. While the final “Forum” section focuses specifically on the future of Honors Programs and the National Collegiate Honors Council, all the essays here have at least indirect bearing on how we conduct Honors education.

The first three essays in this issue have historical importance in more ways than one. Each was accepted for publication in the Forum for Honors, the refereed journal for honors that was published from 1970 until 1996 and that is a major component of our organizational history. Sara Varhus, the extremely able editor of Forum for Honors for six years, stepped up to higher administration at the State University of New York College at Oswego and, thus, stepped down as editor, handing off the Forum in an excellent hail-Mary pass that was, alas, neither completed nor intercepted. Left hanging were several excellent essays that had been accepted for publication but never published. These included not only the three essays finally presented here but an excellent essay by Varhus herself.
EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION

(published in a quite different and updated form in the inaugural issue of JNCHC) and a very fine essay titled “A Semi-quantitative Analysis of the Impact of E-mail on Learning” by John Sohl of Weber State University. Extremely pertinent and useful in 1996, Sohl’s essay is an indicator of how quickly educational transitions take place now. The past five years have completely changed the technological terrain, and so—unlike the other essays—his became a museum piece, and he chose not to include it in this issue.

George Mariz’s essay, far from falling prey to the pace of history, thrives on it. He has provided a superb analysis of the historical background of service learning in higher education, demonstrating that it is not at all a new concept but that its purposes and motives have been transformed by its current contexts. He provides the analytical tools we all need to understand what we are and are not doing in our proliferating service-learning projects—and why. Since service learning has become a fundamental component of many, if not most, Honors Programs during the past decade, and since they have therefore become a standard focus of our NCHC conferences since the time Mariz wrote his essay, Honors faculty, students, and administrators all benefit from exploring the history and meaning of this educational trend. Simultaneously, readers of Mariz’s essay are rewarded with a stunningly concise and informative history of higher education in the United States.

Betty Krasne’s essay combines the disciplines of history and literature to provide a fascinating analysis of gender roles in academia from the perspective of women writers (and some men) in the second half of the twentieth century. Krasne points out (as does Mariz) that typically women are more numerous—often far more numerous—in Honors Programs than men are. Her essay provides insights into what women have experienced as they entered higher education in greater numbers and in higher-status positions within the past few decades. These insights are extremely useful not just in academia generally but in Honors Programs that have high concentrations of highly gifted and motivated (often driven) young women making up for lost time in a hurry. Krasne’s insights might also suggest the precarious, because new, nature of women’s academic ascendance and thus might help us better support our women students.

Mariz provides an historical approach to service learning, and Krasne a literary/historical approach to gender representation—both relatively new
preoccupations in higher education. Julie Fisher Robertson and Donna Rane-Szostak present a statistical analysis of another relatively new preoccupation in some quarters: “critical thinking.” They present the change in results on a test, designed to measure critical thinking, before and after a seminar designed to improve critical thinking. They suggest that Honors students, although they already score higher than average on such tests, can benefit by instruction focused on particular thinking skills. The subject of “critical thinking” has been a component of several NCHC conferences in the past decade or two, and the conclusions presented by Robertson and Rane-Szostak might be encouraging to advocates of this pedagogical approach.

Dail Mullins—in an essay written specifically for this issue and following up on the “Science and Honors” issue of JNCHC in fall/winter 2000—suggests ways to improve the introduction of science to non-science-majors. Instead of the traditional, discipline-based courses in chemistry, biology, physics, and earth and space sciences, he suggests interdisciplinary formats for teaching these sciences that might have greater appeal and value for students not majoring in the sciences. Given the tremendous changes that have occurred in most other components of the standard college curriculum during the past decades, the absence of innovations in the way science is taught is somewhat surprising. The content of, say, a current introductory biology class at the University of Alabama at Birmingham might be different from what I took at Stanford in 1963, but the format is identical as far as I can tell. Mullins suggests that Honors Programs can be leaders in introducing needed innovations, thus foreshadowing two essays in the “Forum on Honors and Higher Education”: heeding Sam Schuman’s call for Honors Programs to lead the way in providing excellence throughout our institutions (not just in our own programs), and anticipating Len Zane’s experience in using Honors as a base camp from which to provide just such excellence.

The final section of this issue is the “Forum on Honors and Higher Education.” At the NCHC annual conference, Sam Schuman was part of a closing plenary session I organized on “The Future of the NCHC.” With his permission, I circulated the presentation he made during this plenary to the full membership of the NCHC via our listserve, inviting members to respond to Sam’s ideas as part of this Forum. The respondents come from diverse Honors Programs, institutions, and parts of the country; they
EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION

focus on issues large and small, from a single course to sweeping cultural change; but they have one trait in common: they are all members of the Editorial Board of the JNCHC. In the future, we hope to have broader participation by the NCHC membership as we continue the precedent, inaugurated here, of a Forum on issues important to our membership. Meanwhile, however, it is surely a tribute to the excellence of our editorial board that they eagerly took on the challenge presented by Sam Schuman: to promote excellence not just in our own Honors Programs but throughout our colleges and universities and in a national as well as local context. My thanks to Sam Schuman for getting us started toward what could become a new and important educational transition.
ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS
ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

**Bernice Braid** is Dean of Academic and Instructional Resources at Long Island University’s Brooklyn Campus. She served as President of NCHC in 1979, has designed City as Text© explorations for annual conferences since 1984, and chairs the Honors Semesters Committee. The recent monograph *Place as Text*, edited with Ada Long, reflects many of the pedagogies referred to in this piece.

**Joan Digby** is Director of the Honors Program and Merit Fellowships at the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University. Active in honors education for more than twenty years, she served as NCHC President in 1999 and also authored *Peterson’s Honors Programs*, the official guide to NCHC member programs (1997, 1999).

**Betty Krasne** is a Professor in the Department of Literature at Mercy College. For fifteen years she guided the Mercy College Honors Program, following which she developed the McNair Scholars Program through a federal grant. In addition to a variety of articles, she is the author of three novels for young readers.

**George Mariz** is Professor and Chair of the History Department and Honors Director at Western Washington University. His teaching and research interests center on the intellectual history of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe. He is currently working on a study of Thomas Arnold of Rugby, school reformer, translator, and historian.

**Dail Mullins, Jr.** is a former research biochemist, now Associate Director of the Honors Program and Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, School of Education, at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. His recipe for red beans and rice was published in the 20th Anniversary Edition of *Southern Living Annual Recipes Cookbook*.

**Jeffrey A. Portnoy** is the Honors Program Coordinator for the Lawrenceville Campus of Georgia Perimeter College in Atlanta and an Associate Professor of English. He recently completed his term as President of the Georgia Collegiate Honors Council. He is a member of the JNCHC Editorial Board and Co-Chair of the Publications Board of the National Collegiate Honors Council.
ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Julie Fisher Robertson is an Associate Professor at Northern Illinois University School of Nursing. She has a master’s degree in community health nursing and a doctorate in educational psychology. In addition to community health courses, she teaches courses in research, leadership and health care policy.

Samuel Schuman is Chancellor of the University of Minnesota, Morris. He led the Honors Programs at Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa and the University of Maine (Orono). Sam is the author of Beginning in Honors — a Handbook and Honors in Smaller Colleges, both published by the NCHC, and four scholarly books on non-Shakespearean Renaissance Drama and on the Russian-American author Vladimir Nabokov. He directed the NCHC “Beginning in Honors” workshops for over a dozen years, and has served as President of NCHC.

Donna Rane-Szostak is a consultant in critical thinking education and teaches at North Park College of Nursing, Chicago, IL. She has a doctorate in educational psychology and is a geriatric nurse practitioner.

Steve Wainscott is Director of the Calhoun Honors College and Professor of Political Science at Clemson University. He is a member of the JNCHC editorial board and of the NCHC’s executive committee, and is a championship barbecue cooker.

Len Zane is a professor in the Physics Department at UNLV. He started UNLV’s Honors Program in 1985, helped the program become a college in 1997, became Dean of the Honors College in 1998, and stepped down to return to the classroom in the summer of 2000. He is also a past president of NCHC.

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Place as Text: Approaches to Active Learning edited by Bernice Braid and Ada Long (2000, 102 pp.). The theory and practice of numerous models of active learning developed within the NCHC, including City as Text©, Honors Semesters, and Faculty Development Institutes. Members $2.50. Non-members $5.00.

Teaching and Learning in Honors edited by Cheryl Fuiks and Larry Clark (2000, 128 pp.). Discussion of central pedagogical issues in an honors context. Members $2.50. Non-members $5.00.