

Come to the 17th AEPL Summer Conference
June 23-26, 2011 in Estes Park, Colorado

LITERACY FOR LOVE AND WISDOM: BEING THE BOOK AND BEING THE CHANGE

(coordinated with the publication of the book by Teachers
College Press of Columbia University)

Jeff Wilhelm and Bruce Novak
authors, organizers, and keynote speakers

with Cristy Bruns and John Creger
featured presenters and facilitators

Join a community of supportive educators for this retreat in the
spectacular Rocky Mountains, where you can explore a fundamental
change in what education means for the modern world.

Contact brucenovak@mac.com for more information.

perspectives 2011

the assembly for expanded perspectives on learning

“Magnanimity,” “largeness of soul,” is nowhere to be found on the map of current education reform. An administration that campaigned for hope and social change and called on all democratic citizens to be *ourselves* “the ones we’ve been waiting for” has contented itself with only slightly less superficial reforms than its predecessor, neglecting the deep educational message of its own call.

Perspectives 2011 will seek to remedy this plight, by setting a framework through which democratic education can center itself on the evocation of love and wisdom in the hearts and minds of people, through which we can definitively leave behind the policy of No Child Left Behind, which treats education as a herding process, and arrive at new broadly sharable understandings of education through which **Each Person is Drawn Forward** to contribute important parts of themselves to democratic and human life and the rescue of our imperilled natural habitat.

We were hunter-gatherers for 1,000,000 years before we had an agricultural revolution; then we farmed for 10,000 years before we had an industrial revolution. We manufactured for only 100 years before we had an information revolution. In the next 10 years, we need—and can have, if we put our hearts and minds to it—a wisdom revolution, a revolution in individual and collective human consciousness, leading us to seek to integrate ourselves both with one another and with our natural habitat, to dwell consciously among and within, rather than merely further exploiting and living off them.

- Peter Russell (paraphrase), *Waking Up in Time*

How do we teach... in a way that people will stop killing...?

- Mary Rose O'Reilley

Produce great Persons. The rest follows.

- Walt Whitman

We need to be the change we want to see in the world.

- Gandhi

The conference will coincide with the publication by Teachers College Press of Jeff and Bruce's book—*Literacy for Love and Wisdom: 'Being the Book' and 'Being the Change'*—which advocates for a transformation of the curricular discipline currently called “English,” and various



other names tied to “the letter,” into a discipline explicitly centered upon the **cultivation of the magnanimity of the human spirit**, a humanistic, philosophical, and spiritual discipline appropriate for democratic life. It follows upon the 2008 AEPL conference “Reclaiming the Wisdom Tradition for Education.” (See aepl.org for more background on that event.) As with all prior AEPL conferences, this event will primarily be a chance for great-hearted educators from all backgrounds to engage deeply and personally with one another, in a magnificent natural setting, on issues that profoundly concern us. If you care about bringing life, love, and wisdom to education, you belong with us—whatever field it is within which you teach or write.

In addition to keynotes and workshops, the conference will offer plentiful opportunities for extended, focused dialogue—either with fellow teachers working at your own educational level, or in groups devoted to general issues—about how to implement, advocate for, and be the change we need to see in our classrooms and schools. Contact brucenovak@mac.com or consult aepl.org for more information.

Speakers and Facilitators

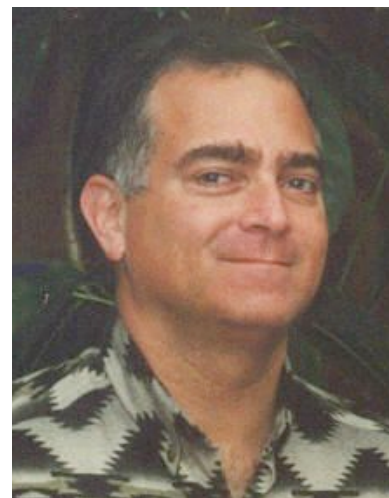


Jeff Wilhelm is the author of seventeen books and over 200 chapters and articles on teaching the English language arts. His *You Gotta BE the Book: Teaching Engaged and Reflective Reading with Adolescents* (1997/2nd edition 2008) won the NCTE Promising Research Award as well as the Brown University Distinguished Contribution to Teaching Award. His boys and literacy studies, including the works “Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys” and *Going with the Flow*, won the David H. Russell Award for Distinguished Research in English Education. Currently, he is Professor of English Education at Boise State University. The founding director of the Boise State Writing Project, he is active as a National Writing Project director and consultant on literacy issues.

“I’ve come to realize I have a political agenda as a teacher. I have to work towards valuing my different students’ abilities and perspectives. I have to work towards changing school so that many students, who really are downtrodden in some sense, can feel they have a place in

the school, that they have a say and choice in what happens to them here and out there in the world. I think it all has to do with conversation. Conversation means I engage other viewpoints and value them. I have to do that with other teachers to work towards change. I have to do it with students to grant them some authority and respect. If they can’t pursue their own reading and learning and creating, then can they ever be said to be really learning?”

Bruce Novak has organized four previous AEPL conferences, including 2008’s “Reclaiming the Wisdom Tradition for Education.” His teaching and writing over the past twenty years have focused on the cultivation of wisdom through the humanities. He received a Spencer Dissertation Fellowship for the work from which the current book and conference originally stemmed—“What IS ‘English?’”—parts of which were published as “Humanizing Democracy,” the lead article of the Fall 2002 American Educational Research Journal. Bruce has taught English, grades 6-12, helped supervise English teacher education at the University of Chicago, and has taught Communications, Foundations and Philosophy of Education, Humanities, and Social Sciences at the University of Chicago, Northern Illinois University, and Truman College. Currently he is the Director of Educational Projects for the Foundation for Ethics and Meaning, undertaking broad research to help recommend new policies for humane education in these times that have proven newly open to democratic change.



“Maybe there is a way in which every student already does have teachers of genius. Maybe we just don’t know quite how to tap into the genius that already exists in the teaching force of our society.”



Cristy Bruns’ book, *Why Literature? The Value of Literary Reading and What It Means for Teaching* (Continuum 2011), explores how literary reading can shape our conceptions of self and other, and examines the implications of that role for how we teach. It has been acclaimed as one of the most probing and comprehensive accounts of the deep psychological processes involved in reading and responding to literature. She teaches literature and composition at Chapman University in Orange, California, and has over twenty years of teaching experience.

“If reading literature gives us opportunity to form and reform our sense of ourselves and our relation to the world around us and so can assist us, in D. W. Winnicott’s words, with “the strain of relating inner and outer reality,” then it is imperative that we do what we can to open up for our students the possibility of using literary reading for the transformation of selves and cultures that is vital in our ever-changing world.”

John Creger teaches English at American High School in Fremont CA, where he constantly searches for new ways to engage his students at a deeper level. He is the 2001 recipient of NCTE's James Moffett Memorial Award for Teacher Research, in recognition of the Personal Creed Project, a classroom rite of passage now used in secondary and college classrooms around the U.S. and Canada, also the basis for his first book, *The Personal Creed Project and a New Vision of Learning: Teaching the Universe of Meaning in and Beyond the Classroom* (Heinemann 2004). Most recently, John has been exploring ways to help his students re-balance their learning, complementing the growth of their minds with awareness of the higher intelligence of the heart.



"Surveying my students over the past six years, I find that they hanker for serious personal learning. With what I do not exaggerate to describe as increasing fervor, they want it not only at the end of the year but at the beginning and all the way through. I am convinced that students' yearning for personal meaning is intensifying. It is growing, I believe in direct proportion to the pressure we apply on them to produce academically..."

The many interlocking problems of this nation and this world are escalating so rapidly that only swift changes in thought and action can save either. The generation about to enter schools may be the last who can still reverse the negative megatrends converging today... We have to think now not just about personal success and class mobility but about planetary survival and human co-evolution. This means we will have to elevate schooling to a spiritual level heretofore unknown in public education.

- James Moffett
guiding spirit of AEPL
and first summer conference
leader

Workshop Proposals

Perspectives invites proposals for interactive teaching workshops (and playshops) inspired by the conference theme: love, wisdom, being the book, or being the change. We would like to collect versions of many of these sessions in future volumes intended to influence teaching at all levels.

We also welcome proposals that tie the theme of this conference to our other ongoing strands of (1) Interdisciplinary and Multimodal Learning and (2) Social and Cultural Contexts. See aepl.org for information about already accepted concurrent sessions.



Accommodations

Because of the limited number of rooms available to us, we are only able to offer a small number of single and double rooms (15 each), in order to accommodate more people at the conference site. Please reserve these as soon as you are able. More rooms may become available early in 2011. A few premium rooms at an extra cost may also be available. Contact aepl.conf@gmail.com if you'd like information about these.



Premium rooms in Wind River Lodge

Single: \$895; Double \$650 (limited availability)

Standard Rooms in Eastside Lodge (pictured here)

Single \$750; Double \$575; Triple \$450

4-5 \$300 (last to register will be assigned upper bunks)

Please notify us if you would like to request particular roommates.

Registration only

\$200 before December 15; \$225 before April 15; \$250 afterward (includes afternoon and evening receptions and conference book).

There are plentiful accommodations in nearby Estes Park and camping in Rocky Mountain National Park, should onsite lodging be filled or your desired room type unavailable. Shuttle service may be provided if there is significant overflow.

Note: All registrants must also be 2011 AEPL members. One year memberships are \$20 until 11/1/2010 and \$30 thereafter, and will be added upon registration.

Deposits required to hold your place

\$200 singles; \$150 doubles; \$100 3-5 occupants (paid twice, by 12/15/10 and again by 4/15/11)

\$50 registration only (one payment only)

Cancellations

Those who need to cancel will still receive the conference book and a 1-year AEPL membership. Cancellation may require the forfeit of your deposit, though no one will be charged more than \$50 if we are able to find someone to take your place.

The study of letters shall be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence. The dread of [humanity] and the love of [humanity] shall be a wall of defence and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of [human beings] will for the first time exist, because each believes [themselves] inspired by the...Soul which... inspires all...

- Emerson