

TEXT

The Journal of the Australian Association of Writing Programs

EDITORIAL

The New Journal of the AAWP

Welcome to the first issue of TEXT.

TEXT is a refereed journal under the auspices of the Australian Association of Writing Programs. TEXT publishes academic and other material concerned with creative writing programs in universities, TAFE colleges and the community around Australia and from English-speaking areas of Southeast Asia and the South Pacific.

TEXT is also one of the first Australian journals to exist entirely by electronic means. Its publication on the world wide web is registered with the National Library of Australia (ISSN: 1327-9556) and all correspondence, submission, refereeing, etc. - is carried out by email Text@gu.edu.au. TEXT appears twice yearly (2 April and 1 October) and is presently edited and published from the Writing Program in the School of Arts, Griffith University, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia.

The electronic *modus operandi* does not mean, however, that TEXT is concerned only with electronic writing. There are exciting developments in creative writing on the web and in multimedia, and we expect TEXT will be a forum for critique and information in these emerging fields, but investigation of traditional areas of creative writing processes and the teaching of creative writing are themselves emergent academic fields in this part of the world. There has been an exponential increase in the number of creative writing programs in universities, TAFE colleges and community centres in Australia. Twenty years ago only a handful of tertiary institutions offered creative writing courses at undergraduate level; today most institutions offer studies in creative writing including at doctorate level, and the University of Adelaide has recently made an appointment to the first designated Chair in Creative Writing (congratulations Professor Shapcott!).

However, the status of creative writing in tertiary institutions in Australia still requires full recognition from the rest of the tertiary education and research communities. Few research grants have been awarded to the area, and the Research Quantum (the means by which Australian universities are ranked and funded according to research activity) is biased against creative writing. (On March 25, 1997 the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee elected to remove entirely from the Research Quantum all creative works; whereas, previously, the publishing of a novel would have earned the same number of Quantum points as a refereed article in TEXT - bad enough it itself - a novel now earns no research points.) The reading of literature (i.e. text reception, the traditional business of English Departments) has full status; but the making of literature (i.e. text production, the business of new Creative Arts and Writing Departments) has yet to establish its niche in spite of swelling student numbers and increased research activity. Being the first refereed journal in the creative writing area in Australia, TEXT represents a further step towards claiming full recognition.

This issue of TEXT publishes seven refereed articles (three on the teaching and writing of narrative; one each on teaching poetry, commercial writing and on assessment; and one on the history of a Creative Writing Department) along with a refereed extract from a new novel and several refereed poems, two book reviews and a forum page called 'The Mouse'. TEXT invites submissions of an academic, creative, critical review or occasional nature for its further issues.

We have resisted editorial inclinations to opt for a single consistent system of notation and referencing because an *appropriate* system for our discipline, and indeed for this form of electronic publication, has not yet been agreed upon. We welcome comments and debate on this point. (As editors, we are rather fond of the idea that a referencing system be devised which does not use any punctuation marks!)

TEXT presently has an emailing list of 100 subscribers and net links to several electronic publications in its area (including tertiary level student writing websites). We welcome others. The editors wish to thank subscribers and referees to this issue, especially those for whom the electronic territory was initially unfamiliar. We also ask you to please bear with us as we break into this new field of publishing.

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