

# TYCA and the Struggle for a National Voice: 1991–1993

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In the early 1990s, a small group of dedicated two-year college English faculty, led by Helon Raines, began the fight for the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA), a professional organization that would give two-year college English faculty across the nation a respected identity and voice within the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

“As you can see, we have our work cut out for us this year. However, as I see it, we are participating in a historic time in the history of two-year colleges. In fact, we should be the ones to be the most instrumental in shaping that history.”

Helon Raines (Letter to NTCC, 13 Dec. 1991, 5)

When Helon Raines became chair of the National Two-Year College Council (NTCC) at the Seattle NCTE Convention in November of 1991, she knew she would be leading two-year college English faculty at a crucial moment in their history. In her follow-up letter to the NTCC she wrote, “Many of us felt we were participating in one of the significant moments in the development of two-year college English Departments, at least in relation to our professional organizations” (Letter, 13 Dec. 1991, 1). The professional status and identity of two-year college English faculty were once again in a state of crisis, much as they had been twenty-five years ago, just prior to the formation of the regional organizations. While neither Raines nor any of the others present in Seattle could know of the difficulties they would face over the next two years, they knew that the time was right to act on what they had long known: the eight-member NTCC, as a Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) committee with no voice, visibility, or status in NCTE, was unable to meet the professional needs of the nation’s twenty thousand two-year college English faculty. It was time they had their own professional organization and a national voice.

Like most of the NTCC meetings, this one in Seattle was poorly attended. Historically, two-year colleges rarely funded faculty travel to national conferences for specific disciplines. Of the three conferences NTCC members were “supposed” to attend—the NCTE Convention in November, the CCCC in March, and their own regional conference—most could only afford to attend their local conference. According to the NTCC minutes (Nov. 1991), only five members were present:

Mary Slayter, outgoing chair; Helon Raines, incoming chair; Nell Ann Pickett, editor of *Teaching English in the Two-Year College (TETYC)*; and regional representatives Ben Wiley (Southeast) and Toni Rowitz (Midwest). The purpose of Raines's follow-up report was to communicate with all of the NTCC members and their regions about what transpired at the Convention and what had been agreed upon by those present.

Raines's first order of business in her report was to arrange a teleconference with members of the NTCC and NCTE in January of 1992 to begin talks of reorganization. She then reported on the CCCC Executive Committee (EC) meeting at which Miles Myers, NCTE's executive director, spoke about "possible changes in the relationships between the NTCC, the CCCC and the NCTE" (Letter, 13 Dec. 1991, 2). Myers, very open to possibilities, assured those present that "all things were possible." He specifically mentioned that two-year colleges might become a conference within NCTE, which would parallel CCCC's relationship. While there were obvious advantages to that kind of structure—access to the Speaker's Bureau and a seat on the NCTE EC—the disadvantages were considerable. First, as a conference, NTCC would become a self-sustaining entity—a costly proposition. No one was sure that enough two-year college English faculty from around the nation would be able to attend to make the conference viable. Additionally, a national conference would put NTCC in direct competition with CCCC, a group that had supported the NTCC since its inception. NTCC was reluctant to create a structure that would compete with its benefactor of so many years, especially because so many of their interests ran parallel. The important point, Raines stressed, was that negotiations were open. She continued, "Therefore, my primary agenda this year is to be certain we have a full voice in making any decision about changes in our status" (Letter, 13 Dec. 1991, 3). Raines concluded:

We have the opportunity to enter fully into the conversation about English departments and about writing programs and the teaching of literature and composition perhaps for the first time in the history of two-year colleges. Our four-year and university colleagues are asking for information and offering assistance in helping us achieve complete participation, at least in the composition community. Let us be prepared to take full advantage of this opportunity.

My personal goal is to be certain that we determine our own destiny in the NCTE, rather than be assigned to a place designated for us by others. (5)

And Raines devoted the next two years to doing just that.

### **Greater Visibility and a More Precise National Identity**

Although the members of the NTCC did meet by teleconference on January 30 to begin discussion of restructuring, it was not until the 1992 CCCC in Cincinnati that they first met in person to discuss their restructuring options. Expectations were high. The minutes of the NTCC March 17 meeting report that Miles Myers spoke about the goal of restructuring as "taking all the disparate parts and creating a national two-year college organization sponsored by NCTE" (1). He acknowl-

edged that the issues that concerned two-year colleges nationally were not being represented well, and that there needed to be a “national platform” for issues in composition, literature, and English as a Second Language (ESL). After a number of reports—regionals, College Section, and *TETYC*—Raines led a discussion on the reorganization efforts. She commented on the importance of reaching out and communicating with the two-year college constituency, most of whom had no connection to the regionals, NTCC, or NCTE. If NTCC was to form a new organization that would give voice to two-year college concerns, it was vital that the organization expand its membership. The ensuing discussion stressed the idea that no matter what form the restructured NTCC took, it would have to preserve the “integrity of the regionals assisting the regional members in achieving a national voice” (“NTCC Minutes” 17 Mar. 1992, 2). Then, the Ad Hoc Committee to Write Reorganization Proposal—commonly called the NTCC Restructure Committee—was formed.<sup>1</sup> This was the official committee, chaired first by Helon Raines and later by Paul Bodmer, that drove the reorganization efforts for the next four years.

A week after CCCC, Raines wrote a seven-page letter to James Davis, president of NCTE. Referring to a conversation they had had at CCCC, she sent what they had agreed upon: a description of the goals of the Restructuring Committee, along with an outline of what NTCC needed to accomplish that task. In the letter she laid out an ambitious agenda: “Out of meetings of the CCCC Executive Committee, the NTCC, the College Section, and in discussions with the Executive Director of NCTE, emerged the need to restructure the two-year organizational component within NCTE, as well as various possibilities for carrying out a reorganization” (Letter to James Davis 1). Raines then reported on the formation of the Restructure Committee and set the goal of completing its work by June 1993.

Whether Raines really thought they would have an organization in just over a year or if she was trying to convey a sense of optimism or urgency is not clear, but the resulting organization, the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA), would not be fully operational until 1996. The agenda was clear, however: “The purpose of the Ad Hoc Committee,” she wrote, “is to draft a proposal that will devise a framework giving a more precise national identity and greater visibility to two-year college teachers of English. At the same time, this framework will protect and strengthen the present two-year college regional organizations, as well as maintain, even expand, the relationship with CCCC” (Letter to James Davis 1). More importantly, it was here that Raines first articulated a number of key points: the rationale for restructuring, the specific goals of the new organization, questions that needed to be addressed, and a timeline and schedule of events for the ultimate ratification of a new organization. She would reiterate and develop these points in numerous other venues—meetings, memos, and articles in *TETYC*—over the next year, but this is where they first appeared in a formal document.

First among NTCC’s reasons for undertaking this project was that members of the Restructure Committee believed that community colleges should have

a place in higher education leadership in the twenty-first century. Community colleges enrolled half of the students entering higher education, many of whom then transfer to a university. Additionally, Raines wrote to Davis, two-year colleges work with the “unskilled, the underprepared, the physically challenged and the economically and socially disadvantaged” (7) Raines continued,

For these reasons and others, two-year college faculty members are uniquely positioned to add the authoritative voice we have gained through experience to voices of those in schools which have dominated the discourse in the past: universities, four-year colleges, secondary, and elementary schools. (7)

Raines also made it clear that in 1992, NTCC’s current position within the hierarchy—under the umbrella of CCCC, which was under the College Section, which was under the larger umbrella of NCTE—rendered its voice barely discernible. She wrote that two-year colleges should occupy a place in NCTE that was equal to the other major constituents—the Elementary Section, Secondary Section, College Section, and CCCC. She acknowledged that although the “issues confronting all of us in English education are similar, we also recognize that those issues manifest themselves differently at each level” (Letter to James Davis 2). It was the unique fashion in which they were manifest in the community college that drove these restructuring efforts.

Finally, Raines announced the members of the Restructuring Committee and the proposed two-day meeting that would take place at Hinds Community College in Raymond, Mississippi, in May of 1992. Nell Ann Pickett had agreed to host the group at her college. The committee’s goal was to produce a document that articulated the details of the restructure that would then be circulated and discussed among various interested groups. Raines also reminded Davis that two-year colleges were not the only beneficiaries of a restructure agreement. In fact, NCTE had at least one very important reason to support a stronger two-year organization—increased membership. As Raines explains in her letter,

We believe the NTCC, CCCC, you and Miles Myers all are committed to the goal of increased membership in NCTE and CCCC through a restructured national organization of two-year colleges which will achieve greater visibility for two-year college faculty. We hope we can continue to work together to realize these ambitious plans, all of which will make NCTE a powerful force in the national educational movement throughout this decade and well into the next century. (6)

While this letter was not a formal proposal, it outlined the issues that the forthcoming restructure proposal would include.

### **May 1992: The Meeting at Hinds Community College**

The meeting at Hinds stands as perhaps the single most important meeting in the history of TYCA. It was the Hinds meeting that brought together people from NTCC, CCCC, NCTE, and the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges

(ECCTYC) for the sole purpose of building a national organization for two-year college English faculty.<sup>2</sup> Out of this three-day meeting came a draft document titled “Proposal for New Two-Year College Organization.” According to Pickett, this document “propelled the transition of the National Two-Year College Council (NTCC) into the National Two-Year College English Association (National TYCA) with seven regional associations” (31). Although there were only six regional organizations at the time, California was included in the talks and would become the seventh.

One of the goals of this group had been to bring California back into the national organization—California two-year colleges represented a considerable prospective market for NCTE and greater numbers for NTCC—something that Myers emphasized to Raines in conversations at the Cincinnati CCCC. Since forming their own state organization in 1973, the ECCTYC had drifted from NCTE’s two-year college regionals. In part, funding would not support their belonging to separate groups, and, given a choice between the two, ECCTYC was more unified and relevant. Their annual conference involved representatives from not only the community colleges but all of California’s three-tiered system of higher education, providing an excellent opportunity to discuss articulation agreements and other issues. At Myers’ prompting, Raines contacted Lois Powers, president of ECCTYC. Powers was interested in attending the Mississippi meeting, but she needed to get approval from the ECCTYC EC at their meeting in April. They had been separate from NCTE for two decades, and most members felt there was little need to reconnect with a national group.

On Friday, May 22, 1992, when ten people convened in Raymond, Mississippi, to meet for three days, Mark Reynolds, editor of *TETYC* from 1994 to 2001, was one of the participants and remembers a number of priorities that emerged during the weekend. The first was that this new organization be open to all English faculty at all two-year colleges, so it was very important that this new structure accommodate California. He states they were constantly asking Lois Powers if what they were proposing would work for ECCTYC. Powers believed that everything was workable or could be made to be so. Other alliances were also important. Reynolds writes:

There was a strong consensus in the group that because two-year college faculty primarily taught composition we wanted to maintain affiliation with the national CCCC, both because of our mutual professional interest in the teaching of writing and because CCCC was such a strong and powerful part of NCTE.

The other thing that stands out so vividly in my mind is the strong consensus of all present that we did not want to do anything that would in any way change or diminish the current regional groups that had been the strength and source of power of what little national organization there was currently within NTCC.

(1-2)

As Pickett reported, it was at this meeting that the name TYCA surfaced. As the group brainstormed ideas, they all agreed that “two-year college” and “English” needed to be in the title. “Two-Year College Association” had the advantage of an

easy acronym, but of course the word “English” was missing. The group then decided to call the national organization the “Two-Year College English Association,” but to use the acronym TYCA. Regional organizations could then be identified according to their geography: TYCA Southeast, TYCA Northwest, etc. This move made it possible to preserve the regional structure while at the same time provide a clear link between each regional group and the national organization. In addition to a repeated commitment to the regional organizations, one other feature surfaces in Reynolds reminiscence—the naiveté of the participants:

A few who were more familiar with NCTE structure, Helon Raines and Nell Ann Pickett for sure, weren't clear how our group would fit within the current NCTE organization. NCTE had sections and conferences and affiliates, but no associations. This problem seemed a minor one to us, and we all seemed to accept the fact or held the belief that two-year colleges and their potential membership numbers were important enough that NCTE would make it work. I am certain that all present at Hinds had a firm conviction that it would work, that we would stand firmly behind the new organization effort and do all we could to see it become a success. (2)

Reynolds then adds, parenthetically: “But little did any of us know or even suspect at the time what a battle it would eventually turn out to be to get formal recognition for the Two-Year College English Association within the existing NCTE structure. Most of us were outsiders to NCTE and had no knowledge of its politics” (2). But they learned. If this group began with little knowledge of NCTE's politics, by the end they knew all about what Chuck Annal referred to as NCTE's “byzantine structure” and its politics.

That Saturday night Nell Ann Pickett invited all of the participants, along with a number of her colleagues from Hinds, to her farm for dinner. Reynolds especially remembers Pickett's legendary hospitality. He also remembers the “very good feeling that we had accomplished a great deal and that positive changes would take place nationally for two-year college English faculty” (3). Everyone who attended that meeting in Mississippi remembers it warmly. Not only did they reach consensus about the goals for the new organization, but many developed professional relationships that they valued for the rest of their careers.

### **Getting the Word Out**

After the group left Mississippi, the next course of business was to circulate the document as widely as possible. Raines mailed the proposal to the regional organizations, including Lois Powers in California, and Nell Ann Pickett published the proposal (“Proposal for New Two-Year College Organization”), along with an editorial by Raines, in the October 1992 issue of *TETYC*. Raines opened with this clarion call: “A new era is here: it is time for teachers of English in the two-year college to influence policy at a national level” (163). She continued, again sounding the themes of identity and visibility, along with the goals of preserving the regionals and maintaining ties with CCCC:

The proposal, which would ultimately need to be approved by the NCTE and CCCC Executive Committee, presents a framework that gives a more precise identity and greater visibility to two-year college teachers than is possible within the present National Two-Year College Council (NTCC). The proposal protects and strengthens the six two-year Regional Conferences, and it strengthens the relationship of two-year college teachers with CCCC and the College Section of NCTE.

The need for increased visibility and identity of two-year college teachers is imminent: changing demographics, complex issues and concerns in all levels of higher education, and the phenomenal growth of the two-year college movement. For two-year college English faculty to become more influential as leaders in higher education, we need a national organization with membership open to all teachers of English in the first two college years. (163)

The one-page proposal and accompanying three pages of commentary from the Restructure Committee identified the new organization's name, its objectives, its mission, and the composition and meeting schedule of its executive committee. The proposed TYCA EC included twenty-four voting members, "which incorporates the present NTCC and adds significantly to it" ("Proposal for New" 165). The pages of commentary, which provided a more in-depth rationale for the proposal along with its major provisions, concluded with a section that outlined the differences between TYCA and NTCC. TYCA would do the following:

1. Create a specific, national body with a dues-paying, open membership.
2. Provide a stronger, more focused voice to represent its diverse population.
3. Connect CCCC and regionals through interlocking representation, seasonal workshops in the regionals, and a speakers' bureau.
4. Provide for a broader representation of various constituencies on the Executive Committee: six regionals, ECCTYC, non-Regional affiliated two-year college teachers, four-year college and university teachers who have interest in the first two college years of English.
5. Provide a specific unit within NCTE that sponsors *TETYC*.
6. Communicate with members through the column "TYCA to You" in *TETYC*, provide a newsletter, and provide a computer listing of job vacancies. ("Proposal for New" 167)

While those who had been active in the leadership of two-year college English could readily grasp the significance of these changes, most two-year college faculty, because they had no direct connection to NTCC, CCCC, or NCTE, likely could not. One of the challenges for the Restructure Committee was not only to help two-year college faculty see the need for a new organization, but also to make those who had not previously been involved see a value in joining. Clearly, increased membership was important to both NCTE and NTCC/TYCA—for reasons financial and political. Because the vast majority of two-year college English teachers were not formally associated with NCTE, one of the goals was to help them understand the benefits this new organization could bring to them. The housing of the journal, representation on the Council, a speaker's bureau, and a job

listing service were benefits of the new organization, to be used to recruit new members.

On September 25, 1992, Raines sent out a packet that contained an annotated copy of the document, which included the proposal and comments from reviewers, along with instructions to copy and distribute the packet to members of the regional organizations and a reminder that this was to be an agenda item at the NTCC business meeting at the NCTE Convention in November. One of the respondents to this packet was Cynthia Selfe, chair of the NCTE College Section and of the newly formed (as of September 24, 1992) NCTE Ad Hoc Committee on the Two-Year College Proposal. The committee's charge was to analyze the proposal and draft a letter in response. On October 30, 1992, Selfe wrote to Raines that the proposal was discussed "with a great deal of enthusiasm" at the NCTE EC meeting in Chicago and that the committee identified a number of questions to help with the next round of revisions. Selfe asked questions about TYCA's relationship to NCTE and CCCC, the dues structure, the housing of *TETYC*, and aid that the groups in NCTE could offer. She concluded by asking Raines if she would address the College Section at their meeting at the upcoming NCTE Convention in Louisville.

As planned, the TYCA proposal was a key item on the agenda at the NTCC November 19 meeting in Louisville. The turnout was strong, with fifteen people attending. The regional representatives spoke about their constituents' reactions to the proposal, which were generally positive, although some questions about costs arose. The question of membership arose again. As currently written, the proposal required only the national representatives to join TYCA, NCTE, and CCCC. Conceivably, membership in NCTE would not increase at all if two-year college faculty could be well represented without actually having to join the national organization. This discussion segued to one of finances. Clearly a dues structure needed to cover costs but not be prohibitive. In fact, the organization would have to provide such unprecedented representation that two-year college faculty saw great advantage in joining. Katie Hope, an NCTE staff member, attended the meeting to present some financial scenarios. Her initial model, assuming \$15 dues, showed a possible annual income of \$65,000: \$55,000 from dues and \$10,000 from a conference. According to this scenario, however, costs exceeded revenues. Expenses included \$51,000 for *TETYC* production, \$10,000 for staff support and membership services, \$15,000 for executive committee expenses, and \$19,000 for NCTE staff support. This resulted in a net loss of \$30,000. Although Hope acknowledged that this scenario needed to be qualified because there was no guarantee what role publications would play, clearly the cost of restructuring was a concern. This discussion was little short of devastating to many in the restructure group, as it almost seemed designed to dash their hopes for a national TYCA.

### **The College Section Proposal**

Although they had met and conversed in the meantime, on January 29, 1993, Raines formally responded to Selfe's letter from October 30, 1992. Raines wrote



that TYCA wanted “association” status to affirm its relationship to CCCC and the College Section. As an association, TYCA would also have corresponding status to CCCC and the College Section. Raines wrote, “Our proposal for reciprocal representation with the College Section and CCCC is one way we demonstrate our commitment to being parallel to, but also remaining part of, both groups” (Letter to Cynthia Selfe, 29 Jan. 1993, 2). Raines stressed that this new category was necessary because in order “to achieve interaction, integration, and inclusion, the NTCC seeks to avoid being limited by the current NCTE vocabulary” (2). She realized this would necessitate a constitutional change, but believed there was good reason for doing so. This proposal also necessitated a change in dues structure, even though those in NTCC lacked the knowledge to articulate the specifics. Raines suggested that new revenue could come from a percentage of a dues package, from income generated through subscriptions to *TETYC*, and from registration fees for sessions conducted in collaboration with existing conferences (3).

Raines also addressed the housing of *TETYC*. Moving the two-year college journal to TYCA, she argued, aligned with TYCA’s goals of “increasing visibility of two-year college issues and forging a stronger identity for two-year college people at the national level. The benefits to the Council accrue in setting up a connection of *TETYC* to its constituents that parallels the connection of the other NCTE journals to their primary audiences” (Letter to Cynthia Selfe, 29 Jan. 1993, 2). Raines then thanked Selfe for inviting her to speak to the College Section at Louisville and for inviting the Restructure Committee to attend a meeting in Urbana in February, citing these as “excellent ways to continue the NCTE commitment to inclusion of all voices” (3).

By the end of 1992 it was clear that the work of the Restructure Committee was going to take longer than originally anticipated. If what they were proposing would require a change in NCTE’s constitution—and becoming an association would require such a change—it was not going to happen quickly. During this time, Cynthia Selfe, as chair of both the College Section and the Ad Hoc Committee on the Two-Year College Proposal, took a particular interest in the two-year college situation. There were both ethical and practical reasons for this. Empowering marginalized groups had long been a value embraced by the discipline of rhetoric and composition, but CCCC was also having difficulties with NCTE at this time. There was even talk of secession, because many felt that the parent organization was not attentive to their needs. The vast majority of funds and services in NCTE went to their elementary constituents, not surprising considering that the latter group comprised about 75 percent of NCTE’s membership. The issues were serious enough, however, that NCTE and CCCC brought in a financial consultant to explore the possibility of CCCC breaking off to form its own organization. According to NCTE’s Paul Bodmer, the consultant concluded that if CCCC were to break away, it would shortly go broke (Phone interview, 10 Dec. 2004). Additionally, NCTE owned the journal and the name, further complicating such a radical change. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed, and CCCC decided to stay with NCTE. But CCCC still needed more support from NCTE, and one way of bolstering the

strength of the entire College Section was to unify. Empowering two-year college faculty was an important step.

Selfe thought of a way to help advance part of the two-year college agenda more quickly. She drafted a document titled “Proposal for Two-Year College, College, and University Section” that would address some of the immediate concerns of the two-year college organization. This became what she termed the first part of a “two-pronged approach” to increasing the visibility and representation of two-year colleges within NCTE (Phone interview). (The second prong included items that required a change in NTCC’s bylaws and NCTE’s constitution, and lay beyond the scope of the College Section.) This College Section proposal was the subject of the meeting in Urbana on Saturday morning, February 6, 1993, that brought together members of the College Section with leadership from CCCC, NCTE, and NTCC, specifically, Raines, Pickett, Powers, and Annal from the Re-structure Committee. The proposal contained eight provisions, the first of which was to change the name “College Section” to “Two-Year College, College, and University Section.” This move was largely symbolic, making it impossible to ignore the fact that two-year colleges were a major part of the postsecondary branch of NCTE. It was a thoughtful move, if a bit cumbersome on the tongue. The proposal also provided for the following:

- > Increased the two-year college representation on the College Section Steering Committee to 30 percent, equal to the percentage of their membership in the section.
- > Added an associate chair to the section that would be staggered with the chair. The new associate chair would be from a two-year college every other term.
- > Allowed members of the College Section to choose from either *College English (CE)* or *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* as their subscription journal. Previously, *CE* was the journal that came automatically with section membership.
- > Preserved the strong relationship between CCCC and the two-year college organization by committing to including a two-year college member in the chair rotation of CCCC.
- > Guaranteed that a representative portion of CCCC and the NCTE Convention would be devoted to two-year college concerns.
- > Treated the two-year college regionals “like NCTE affiliates.” In other words, regional members would not have to join NCTE, but only those who did join could be used to determine representative proportions.
- > Guaranteed that in all NCTE literature that mentioned college members, two-year college involvement and contributions would be acknowledged.

The proposal was thorough and addressed most of the issues that two-year college English faculty leadership was concerned with at the time. Selfe explained the genesis of this proposal: “I just thought it was the right thing to do—the more people we could ask to the table, the more creative ideas and perspectives we could draw on to address challenges that the profession faced. And TYCA added lots

more people (and creativity) to the table!" (e-mail). To this day, Raines, Pickett, and others involved in the restructure efforts look to Selfe as a true champion of their crusade.

On February 12, 1993, the week after the Urbana meeting, Raines sent copies of the College Section proposal to the NTCC and asked for feedback from the regional organizations. After summarizing what it would do for two-year college faculty, she clarified the relationship between this proposal and the Restructuring Committee's earlier document: "Clearly this proposal is not a recommendation for the adoption of the structure as outlined by the initial TYCA Document. It is what the College Section, your two-year representatives and CCCC representatives believe may be possible to accomplish relatively quickly" (Letter, 12 Feb. 1993, 2). The Restructure Committee would continue to work for structural change, but the College Section proposal provided significant gains and demonstrated support for the two-year college ranks.

In the meantime, Raines took her case directly to the faculty. In "Reseeing the Past, Recounting the Present, Envisioning the Future," she provided an overview of the two-year college movement, discussed the absence of the two-year college voice in English studies, and outlined the barriers faculty faced in establishing that voice. The solution, however, was at hand, and it was TYCA. Raines explained, "In 1993, we in English studies are poised on the brink of a major event in which two-year college people will have greater opportunity to assume leadership in a powerful professional organization" (105). Raines then explained in detail what TYCA could do for two-year college English faculty and called for all to get involved. Clearly, she saw strength in numbers:

Each of us must join and recruit others to join NCTE and CCCC under the auspices of the new TYCA structure. The twenty-thousand voices of two-year college English professionals must never be lost in the polyphonic discourse of professional organizations or English studies. Together we can create visions for the future, visions which we can bring to fruition.

Let us begin with the Two-Year College English Association. (107)

### **Difficulties with NCTE and Talk of Secession**

During this time, Raines was becoming increasingly frustrated with the lack of clear direction from NCTE on how to proceed with the restructuring. On March 4 she wrote to both Cynthia Selfe and Anne Gere, who was then chair of CCCC, that all of the regions had endorsed the College Section proposal and that the next step was to take the proposal to the NTCC and the Restructure Committee at the upcoming CCCC. What Raines wrote next, however, was rooted in more than a year of frustration at not being able to get solid answers from NCTE's executive director Miles Myers, or anyone else at NCTE, about how to situate TYCA in the existing hierarchy of the NCTE. It appeared to Raines that the only way two-year college faculty could form a separate organization was to leave NCTE entirely, something that did not appear feasible given the financial scenarios presented at

the convention in Louisville. Because Myers failed to answer Raines's questions about restructuring, she came to believe that the NCTE EC would not support the new organization, and in these letters to Gere and Selfe she announced her suggestion to postpone the push for TYCA. Instead, she would push for changes in NTCC's bylaws, and postpone any action requiring a change in NCTE's constitution. She explained to Gere:

Of course, I am aware that this move will not bring as much attention to two-year colleges as setting up a new and separate organization. However, because I personally see no way to accomplish that separate entity without more votes on the NCTE Executive Committee than the possibly affirmative votes of the CCCC Chair and the College Section Chair, I will recommend that we abandon those parts of the TYCA proposal that would necessitate an NCTE Constitutional change and incorporate through internal mechanisms as many of the other changes as possible. (1)

Myers had concerns that two-year college faculty may not have been aware of, however. As NCTE's executive director, he had many constituencies to serve. In addition to being in the middle of the Standards Movement, which occupied much of NCTE's time and staff, Myers was involved with a group of middle school faculty who were fighting for their own unit within NCTE, and a number of those in higher education were concerned about carving up the College Section. It is fair to say, as Paul Bodmer contended, that most two-year college faculty who were fighting for TYCA were not aware of the complex issues Meyers was embroiled in. What NTCC saw was that they were being thwarted from moving forward with a proposal that would empower them (Bodmer, Phone interview, 31 Jan. 2005).

Apparently Raines was not the only person feeling disillusioned at this point. In a letter to Mark Reynolds dated April 14, Chuck Annal expressed his own, and what he believed to be widespread, frustration with NCTE:

Quite frankly, I think a two-year college organization could exist without NCTE. What we would lose would be access to all of the journals and publications which come out of Urbana, but in the long run if we went independent or aligned ourselves with a college group who's equally disenchanting (read CCCC), we would probably develop our own professional materials anyway. . . . (1)

While it is difficult to gauge how widespread these feelings of secession were—they do not appear in the NTCC/TYCA minutes—Annal was correct in his view that the regional organizations saw little value in being connected to NCTE, which seemed to be doing a much better job serving its large elementary constituency than the postsecondary group.

On April 16, 1993, the NCTE EC approved "in spirit" the College Section proposal, which had the united endorsement of the College Section, CCCC, and NTCC. This same motion required NCTE to develop an implementation plan for this proposal ("NCTE Motion 93:94"). It was clear that the first of the two-part plan was moving forward, but the fate of the second part, the actual restructuring, was not at all clear.

Two months after CCCC in Raines's annual report dated May 31, 1993, it was clear that changes had taken place. Raines noted that the College Section proposal had been formally approved by the NTCC at CCCC, and that "NTCC agreed to move ahead on other aspects of the original 'TYCA' proposal through changes in the two-year college regional by-laws" (2). Amending the bylaws was the best way for NTCC to make all of the changes it could without the approval of NCTE. Raines then announced that Paul Bodmer, midwestern region representative to NTCC, was working with the bylaws to, among other things, effect a name change from NTCC to TYCA. This change needed to occur before any proposal could be taken to the NCTE EC. Revising the bylaws could alter NTCC's relationship with NCTE, which involved funding, support services, representation, and control of *TETYC*.

On September 20, 1993, Miles Myers wrote a lengthy memo to the NCTE EC commenting on the implementation of the College Section proposal. He assigned a staff person to be responsible for each of the eight points in the proposal, along with a proposed timeline for implementation. Three of the eight items in the proposal required a constitutional change: the first, which changed the name; the third, which added an associate chair to the Section on a staggered term who, along with the section chair, would serve on the NCTE EC; and the fourth, which gave members of the College Section the option of choosing either *CE* or *TETYC* as their journal. The latter, it was anticipated, would be the most problematic to implement because of its likely financial impact on *CE* as numerous two-year faculty would likely opt to receive only *TETYC*, significantly lowering the number of *CE* subscriptions. This implementation plan was brought to the NCTE EC on October 1, 1993 in motion 93:212, which read, "To accept the staff's implementation plan for the Two-Year College Proposal, noting that the Two-Year College Regionals are not bound to join NCTE as affiliates; to determine later the name of what is now being called in the Proposal 'the Associate Chair.'" The motion carried.

### **Changing of the Guard**

At the Convention in Pittsburgh that November, the NTCC met on the 18th at 7:00 p.m. Ten members were present. Discussion addressed changes to the bylaws that Bodmer had been working on. Bodmer moved that the first TYCA ballot would stipulate that the chair serve two years, the secretary three, the treasurer two, and the two at-large spots would be for one and three years. Bodmer also noted that four of the six regional organizations needed to approve the bylaws to make them operational. The suggested deadline was March 1, 1994, so the official change could be announced at CCCC, and the group could proceed with the first TYCA election. Anne Gere spoke of her concern that NCTE energy was directed primarily to the needs of its elementary constituents, and that NCTE needed a staff person to focus on higher education. Nell Ann Pickett moved that NTCC's chair write Miles Myers in support of NCTE creating and filling a position for a higher education staff person. And then, before the meeting was adjourned, one final motion was brought to the table:

Whereas Helon Raines has chaired NTCC with devotion and distinction and  
Whereas Helon Raines provided outstanding leadership in steering NTCC  
through its transition to TYCA, and  
Whereas Helon Raines has the great admiration of the members of NTCC  
Therefore be it resolved that NTCC express its appreciation to Helon Raines  
and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the President of Casper College,  
Casper Wyoming. (NTCC Minutes, 18 Nov. 1993, 5)

The motion carried.

Like so many simple moments that are upon us and gone before we know it, the significance of this one is clear only in retrospect. It had been exactly two years since Raines became chair of NTCC. In that time she demonstrated tireless leadership in helping to clarify the vision for a new organization and marched confidently in that direction. Although she may not have realized it at the time, it is safe to say that without Raines, the two-year group would not have made the progress it had toward an organization that would give it an identity and a voice on the national scene. Along with Nell Ann Pickett, Lois Powers, Mark Reynolds, Chuck Annal, and with the help of other leaders in the College Section, most notably Cynthia Selfe and Anne Ruggles Gere, Raines led the march of two-year college English faculty against their goliath. But a fully functioning TYCA was still three years away, and it was Paul Bodmer who carried that torch. ◀

### Notes

1. The inaugural members of the Restructure Committee were Helon Raines, chair of NTCC; Nell Ann Pickett, editor of *TETYC*; and Chuck Annal, former NTCC chair and current representative from the northeastern region. Ben Wiley later joined the committee when they met at Hinds, but at this point he, Stephen Rufus, and Dale Adams agreed to serve as consultants.

2. Attendees at Hinds: Helon Raines, chair of NTCC, chair of the Restructure Committee, western region; Charles Annal, northeastern region; Lois Powers, president, ECCTYC; Mark Reynolds, southeastern region; Ben Wiley, southeastern region; Katherine Staples, southwestern region; Bob Wylie, southwestern region; Nell Ann Pickett, editor of *TETYC*; Anne Ruggles Gere, chair of CCCC; Carolyn Hill, NCTE.

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### TYCA FAME AND SHAME NOMINATIONS

The Two-Year College English Association is accepting nominations for the 2008 TYCA Fame and Shame Awards. Nominations for the TYCA Fame Award should be representations of two-year students and faculty that reflect truthfully on the community college at its best. Nominations for the TYCA Shame Award should be representations that perpetuate negative stereotypes or insult the work of students and faculty at two-year colleges. The mentions or portrayals of two-year colleges must have been made publicly between March 2007 and March 2008 and in verifiable form—a news story, magazine reference, movie scene, or TV remark. Winners of the 2008 Awards will be decided during the 2008 CCCC Convention, to be held in April in New Orleans. Submit nominations online **by March 24, 2008**, at <http://www.ncte.org/groups/tyca/awards/fameshame/108255.htm>, or by mail to Sterling Warner, TYCA Fame and Shame Awards, Evergreen Valley College, 3095 Yerba Buena Road, San Jose, CA 95135.

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