Public Language Awards Committee

Charge: To select the recipients of the annual George Orwell Award for Distinguished Contribution to Honesty and Clarity in Public Language and The Doublespeak Award.

- The NCTE George Orwell Award (http://www2.ncte.org/awards/george-orwell-award/), established in 1975, recognizes writers who have made outstanding contributions to the critical analysis of public discourse.
- The NCTE Doublespeak Award (http://www2.ncte.org/awards/doublespeak-award/), established in 1974, is an ironic tribute to public speakers who have perpetuated language that is grossly deceptive, evasive, euphemistic, confusing, or self-centered.

Major activities: What major actions, projects, initiatives, or studies in your charge have been completed by your group since July 1, 2018? In each activity describe the more important features of the work, and connect your work to the NCTE Vision Statement, if applicable.

1. List names, affiliations, and geographic region for all committee members.
   - Allison Berryhill (chair), ICTE, Iowa
   - Kristina ByBee, Arizona
   - Michelle Devereaux, Georgia
   - Stephanie F. Reid, Arizona
   - John Ritchie, Kansas
   - Executive Committee Liaison: Leah Zuidema, Iowa
   - NCTE Administrative Liaison: Patrick Owen

2. What actions, projects, initiatives, or studies are “in progress” at this time?
   - The committee is reading and preparing to select the George Orwell and Doublespeak recipients for 2019.
   - The committee will meet on Sept. 26, 2019, to make its selections.
   - The committee will discuss extending the window for nominations to allow books to be on the market for at least six months before the window closes.
   - The committee will discuss changes and trends in Public Language and consider action possibly needed from the Council.

3. What have you accomplished so far, and what is your timeline for future work?
   - The committee met on Sept. 26, 2018, via Zoom to discuss and select award recipients.
     - The Orwell winner: Scarlet A: The Ethics, Law, and Politics of Ordinary Abortion by Katie Watson (selected from five nominations)
     - The Doublespeak winner: Rudi Giuliani: “Truth isn’t truth.” (selected from three nominations)
   - Members were charged to individually promote awareness of the awards through social media, essays, and speaking opportunities.
   - Allison Berryhill presented the Public Language Awards at NCTE in Houston.
   - We have received 17 nominations for the 2019 Orwell Award, and two nominations for the Doublespeak Award. The nominated books have been delivered to the committee members; our meeting for award selection set for Sept. 26, 2019.
   - Allison Berryhill will present the 2019 award winners in Baltimore at NCTE.

4. How has the work of your group contributed to NCTE’s role in shaping the profession of teaching and/or the understanding of literacy in educational contexts?
   - The Orwell Award “recognizes writers who have made outstanding contributions to the critical analysis of public discourse” in an era when the very notion of truth is debated among politicians, pundits, and journalists. Our challenge is to educate students to both recognize and value language intended to clarify rather than to obfuscate, to explain rather than to confuse, and to enlighten rather than to deceive.

Allison Berryhill, Chair