

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, 2017? In each activity describe the more important features of the work, and connect your work to the NCTE Vision Statement, if applicable.

1. What actions, projects, initiatives, or studies are “in progress” at this time?

- The committee is preparing to study the nominations and decide upon recipients.
- The committee will discuss ways its members can promote awareness of the Public Language Awards through social media, essays and speaking opportunities in the coming year.

2. What have you accomplished so far, and what is your timeline for future work?

- Allison Berryhill became the committee chair, and new committee members were added:
Kristina ByBee
Michelle Devereaux
Stephanie F. Reid
John Ritchie
Executive Committee Liaison, Leah Zuidema
NCTE Administrative Liaison, Linda Walters-Moore
- We have received five nominations for the Orwell Award: four books and one essay. We will consider three nominations for the Doublespeak Award. The nominated books and articles have been delivered to the committee members; our meeting for award selection set for Sept. 26.

3. 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 obfuscate, to explain rather than confuse, and to enlighten rather than deceive.

Allison Berryhill, Chair