
VIGNETTES

Editor's Introduction

Vignette: [French, *vigne*, vine]. Originally a running ornament of vine leaves, as used in decoration, vignette now refers to a short descriptive or evocative episode, or a dainty poem or artistic drawing. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2008, online)

"Evocative episode" or story; indeed a fine way to describe this section of the journal. The refereed articles and their invited responses do have a major and rightful place in the journal, but such articles by their nature (really their history) use a modernist discourse. The writing in these articles encourages the reader to stand back, to look at an issue "objectively," dispassionately, with depth and rationality. Such is their "nature." In Jerome Bruner's (1986) term the discourse in these articles is "heartless" (p. 13), or to use Gerald Holton's (1973) words, they have been "dry-cleaned of the personal" (p. 20).

In contrast, the episodes selected for this section are full of personality, they talk to us [via the use of brackets], engage us, "invite us in." Here the poetic, the imaginative/speculative, and metaphoric take on prominent and positive roles. Carolyn Mamchur and Linda Apps challenge us with a quote from Dorothy Heathcote [who by the way, Donna and I were privileged to hear recently at U Vic]. The challenge, a teaching one, is "in figuring out how best to interfere" in other's ways of doing, while simultaneously "accepting the ways of others." Interference here is not "manipulating"; it is something else. Search for that something else occupies Mamchur and Apps as they journey through writing (prose and poetry), "cooking," Jungian archetypes, and travels in Spain. Do join them on this journey; it is a fascinating one. [I learned much.]

Lynn Fels, gifted creator that she is, "invites us" to join her as she (1) deftly explores intricacies in the now seminal Brent Davis, Dennis Sumara, and Elaine Simmt article, "Complexity and Collectivity: On the Emergence of a Few Ideas" (Proceedings from the 2003 CSER conference — website of this journal); and (2) plays with these ideas in an emergent role drama about the personal struggles democratic advocates who live in and honor a monarchy have. Not only do ideas about teaching and learning burst forth, but so do social ideas and ideals. [This latter issue is especially poignant as the International

Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies—IAACS—prepares its September, 2009 meeting agenda in South Africa. Iranian scholars are hoping to attend.]

One fillip of Lynn's story is her description of a failed role drama—one where an individual playing the role of judge in a court room scene usurped the "jurors" right to participate by exercising too much control (or intervention). [Timely in so many ways.]

Jerry Ameis, in his provoking story, describes finding that "engaging [reluctant] children attending an afternoon school daycare in significant mathematical activity," to occur best [really miraculously] when he made up life stories [problems] involving mathematical thought. Soon these originally reluctant children "often asked their parents [picking them up] to wait until they finished working on a problem." In conversation along the way of his journey, Jerry asks readers to consider issues of research (static or dynamic?), what it means to play with an idea, and the role of "butterflies" in attracting student's attention.

I hope you, reader, enjoy the flights of fancy these vignettes offer as much as I do. What changes may such flights bring?

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*If you would like to submit an entry to this section or know someone who
might be encouraged to contribute, please contact Wm. Doll at
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References:

- Bruner, J. 1986. Two Modes of Thought, in his *Actual minds; Possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (pp. 11-43)
- Holton, G. 1974. *Thematic origins of scientific thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

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