

Comments from the Guest Editor

Gretchen Bataille

I want to take this opportunity to share some thoughts with the readers of *Explorations* about the association and the journal. The new editorial staff is in the process of making several significant changes in format as well as content of the publications. The first new beginning is a new logo, a logo which has as its central symbol the character meaning "the source." We believe that from the strong histories, from the vibrant beginnings of all peoples comes the strength to examine our collective pasts, to live better our presents, and to look forward joyously to our futures. Despite the gloom which is around us in the various forms of continued racism, economic woes, and lack of understanding, we are confident that the NAIES will continue to be a catalyst for change, providing a forum for examination of problems and the posing of solutions. Because the NAIES has an interdisciplinary focus, we will continue to draw on the arts, on history, on the social sciences, on political science, and on all other fields to examine our concerns at the national conference, at regional conferences, and through the publications of the Association. Those who have been active with the Association from its inception had (and still have) a vision. It is a vision we can all work toward bringing into focus.

This issue also marks the beginning of a new effort to truly "exchange" information. Each article is followed by at least one critique which further comments on the subject, provides ideas for future study, or assesses the implications of the research. We hope that the critiques are viewed as an incentive not just to the authors but to others as well to continue the enquiries which have been started. The NAIES is dedicated to the integration of theory and practice, to finding solutions, not just articulating problems. As such, we believe that all areas of academic enquiry are on-going, and that definitive answers are few.

Several of the papers included in this issue were presented at the 1980 NAIES conference in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. The themes of that conference, "Ethnicity and Mental Health" and "The Invisible Ethnic" resulted in both theoretical and practical approaches to the study of ethnicity. In the first two papers the conflicts experienced by ethnic minorities with the "helping" professions are examined. The remaining papers focus on various groups which have experienced "invisibility" historically and still today. Maxine Seller's research on ethnic theater suggests far-reaching possibilities for further

scholarship on these "lost" enclaves. Margaret Laughlin provides the dismal, and carefully hidden, statistics on the education of migrant children. In her review of Wiesel's *Night*, Mildred Culp examines the theological ambivalence of the Jewish people during the holocaust. All of the critiques accompanying the essays suggest future research possibilities, and we invite papers on these or other subjects which illuminate the study of ethnicity from an interdisciplinary perspective.

I thank Richard Vanlten, Associate Dean of the College of Sciences and Humanities at Iowa State University, who has supported the endeavors of the NAIES and has provided both time and travel funds to enable me to continue the work of the Association, and Paul Weller, Vice-president at California State Polytechnic University, who arranged for the necessary funding to produce this issue of *Explorations*. Such institutional support is critical to the on-going work which has been started, and we are grateful that our institutions share our vision of a better future.