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AERA-SIG Curriculum Newsletter

American Educational Research Association

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NEWSLETTER
of the
AERA Special Interest Group on
CREATION AND UTILIZATION OF CURRICULUM KNOWLEDGE

Issue No. 5

June, 1973

Acting Officers of the SIG

Professor Mauritz Johnson, Jr., of the State University of New York at Albany, has consented to serve as acting co-chairman of the SIG, beginning with the 1973-74 year, along with Professor Edmund C. Short of the Pennsylvania State University. During the early stages of development of the SIG, it was considered unwise to establish an elaborate organization for operation of the group. This was in keeping with the rather modest purposes set for the SIG. Election of official leadership was delayed in favor of utilizing volunteer acting co-chairmen during this initial period. The SIG has begun to attain an active core of members and to settle upon some specific directions. As soon as the membership feels it appropriate to place responsibility for the oversight of the organization in elected officers, the acting co-chairmen will call an election.

Call for Proposals for 1974 Program Sessions

AERA has announced a deadline of August 15, 1973, for the submission of proposals for papers or symposia to be presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting in Chicago on April 15-19. All who have proposals especially pertinent for the SIG on "Creation and Utilization of Curriculum Knowledge" are asked to prepare the required materials and cover sheet as described in the May, 1973, issue of Educational Researcher (pp. 9-16), and to forward them for consideration for SIG sessions to Edmund C. Short, 141 Chambers Building, Penn State University, University Park, PA 16802. It must be recognized that program time allocated for use by the SIG is very limited and that only outstanding proposals can be accepted. SIG proposals must follow the same format as those submitted to divisional programs.

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New SIG Members

The following new members have joined the SIG since the appearance of the February membership list:

Michael W. Apple	University of Wisconsin - Madison
Emanuel Berger	Pennsylvania Department of Education
Louise Berman	University of Maryland
Joel Burdin	ERIC on Teacher Education
Donald Chipley	Pennsylvania State University
Dale Edwards	Evergreen Park (Ill.) High School
Charles Eiszler	Central Michigan University
Carole Hahn	Emory University
Glen Hass	University of Florida
Louise Hock	New York University
Mauritz Johnson	State University of New York at Albany
Shake Ketefian	New York University
Virginia Macagnoni	University of Georgia
Gordon Mackenzie	Tenafly, New Jersey
James McElhinney	Ball State University
William F. Pinar	University of Rochester
Michael P. Roetter	Owens Technical College (Perrysburg, Ohio)
Delores Silva	Temple University
Elizabeth S. Simpson	University of Southern California
Bernard Spodek	University of Illinois
Tom Vickery	Syracuse University
Mary Lou White	Wright State University
George Willis	University of Rhode Island
John Zahorik	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Along with those continuing in membership from last year, these curriculum researchers are encouraged to locate others who are dedicated to the study of the "Creation and Utilization of Curriculum Knowledge" and to invite them to participate in the SIG through the sharing of their work with each other, stimulating needed new studies, and making public in the AERA annual meetings and publications new knowledge in the curriculum field. (See membership blank)

Report on 1973 AERA Annual Meeting

Several research contributions of significance to members of the SIG were publicly noted for the first time during sessions of the 1973 AERA Annual Meeting in New Orleans. Related to sources of ideas for curricular designs, five varied patterns were proposed at Session 26.05. Though the presentations made at this symposium are not yet all available on paper, a note to Bruce Joyce, Teachers College, Columbia University, the organizer of the symposium, should bring a reply on when this material will be available through ERIC. The session was considered of value for extending the possible strategies for deriving new bases for structuring curricula. The approaches suggested deserve further critical attention.

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"Innovative Approaches to Curriculum Research" was the general theme of Session 35.02. Maurice Eash critiqued the change strategy of Leithwood and Russell, the mode of literary criticism applied to curriculum by Willis, and the analysis of a normative basis for curriculum research given by Straumanis. Look for these papers also in ERIC soon.

Session 36.07 presented by John Goodlad and company dealt with a series of studies of curriculum decision-making based on the Goodlad theoretical framework. Reports on decision-making processes at legislative, institutional, and instructional levels reflected quality naturalistic research in curriculum. A book collecting these studies will be published shortly.

Those unable to attend Sessions 2.09, 6.05, 8.05, 10.04, 12.01, and 26.11, sponsored by SIG on "Research Utilization," may wish to review the program book entries in these sessions for topics relevant to the work of curriculum knowledge utilization and acquire those papers that may pertain. Both SIG's hope to maintain close contact. We are pleased to have been able to co-sponsor session 10.04 this year. Membership in SIGRU may be obtained by sending \$3.00 to Dr. Paul Staskey, Director of Institutional Research, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001. Session 6.05 on "Alternative Knowledge Utilization Strategies" reported three models for dissemination and utilization of knowledge -- a schools consortium, an educational extension agent system, and a marketing model -- all of which should be studied by anyone concerned with curriculum knowledge dissemination.

A discussion of three papers in Session 20.19, held under the auspices of the new SIG on "Studies on Philosophy of Educational Research," also made a particularly valuable contribution to the focus of the SIG on "Creation and Utilization of Curriculum Knowledge." These papers on problems of research methodology may be sought from their authors.

Several other papers scattered throughout the AERA program could be cited as being relevant to the work of the SIG. It is hoped that members will make a special effort to keep in touch with work as it appears which adds to an understanding of curriculum knowledge creation and utilization.

1973 SIG Business Meeting

Following a brief look at the current status of studies on the "Creation and Utilization of Curriculum Knowledge" at the February 27, 1973, SIG business meeting, discussion by members ensued on what the SIG should attempt to do during the next year. Note below in the left-hand column ideas suggested by various people in the group. In the right-hand column are ideas mentioned in a similar meeting in 1972.

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1. Redefine parameters or reconceptualize curriculum.
 2. Identify alternative ideologies and rationales for curriculum.
 3. Seek predictive generalizations.
 4. Study how curriculum workers use knowledge of curriculum and knowledge from the disciplines.
 5. Trace connections between what is learned and the curriculum (& other things) in particular situations.
 6. Undertake historical and analytic studies of ideological, technical, and substantive questions.
 7. Prepare critiques of our curriculum theory "idols"--Schwab, Tyler, Goodlad, Beauchamp--for CTN.
 8. Develop technologies for helping solve practical curriculum problems.
 9. Identify central questions that need to be researched in curriculum.
 10. Continue meetings that generate this kind of talk.
 11. Solicit papers for mutual criticism at 1974 meeting.
1. Terminology clarification for the field of curriculum.
 2. Unstructured, open-ended discussions.
 3. Discussion of each other's ongoing research endeavors.
 4. Generation of curriculum research paradigms.
 5. Identification of practitioners' problems that would benefit from research.
 6. Determination of a consensus on terminology among Division B members.
 7. Identification and discussion of terminological and methodological issues inherent in problems curriculum workers
 8. Analysis of curriculum evaluation as a domain of inquiry.
 9. Discussion of appropriate instruments and research methods for humanistic education.
 10. Discussion about how we move from descriptive findings to programmatic statements.
 11. Discussion about the question of whether or not curriculum knowledge is possible; whether or not curriculum is only a realm of practice.

It was decided that all members of the SIG should be asked through the Newsletter to submit "Three Basic Questions" in answer to item 9 (on the left) above, to be compiled and reported through the Newsletter just prior to the 1974 meeting, which might serve as a basis for mutual examination and discussion in that meeting. The invitation to do this is hereby extended. Please send questions (and any other comments about the SIG) to Edmund Short.

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"Just Impressions" by Professor Short

I find that the quality of research being reported in the Division B program at AERA seems to be rising. Are you getting the same impression? Quality may be conceived in terms of excellence in both the inquiry methods utilized and in the research questions being confronted. What constitutes excellence in these two forms within curriculum research continues to be one of the dimensions of interest of those involved in the SIG. While the productivity of our members in creating quality research may be no greater than that of non-members (27 did, however, appear on the 1973 program), the effort to learn what constitutes more disciplined modes of inquiry in curriculum and to set forth such standards of excellence (as well as to identify researchers who exhibit such high standards in their own work) is indeed to be commended in all SIG members who have thus far sought to participate in this endeavor. We recognize that not all members can or wish to engage actively in this venture, but we are pleased to have the concern of everyone in the SIG for the advancement of new knowledge and awareness of research quality as it is increasingly explicated by the ones who do carry on this intellectual task.

On the other hand, it is less apparent that there are many individuals who succeed in advancing our understanding of what constitutes excellent research questions in curriculum. This, too, demands special intellectual effort on the part of some researchers, if not all of us, if we are to turn up new knowledge of curriculum that will lift the art of curriculum to an intelligent, knowledge-based activity. Perhaps it is the recognition of this weakness in this dimension of quality research that has led the SIG to turn its attention during the coming year to identification of the important research questions in the field of curriculum (see last paragraph in SIG Business Meeting item above). Let us all seek to contribute what we can in this area. Let us hope that those with special expertise can build upon this initial work and make more widely visible some cogent research models that will evoke new directions in curriculum inquiry. If the quality of Division B research may be taken as an indicator of greater understanding of the best in research methods and in researchable problems in curriculum, we should expect continued inquiry into these aspects to result eventually in even greater increases in the quality of research reported in Division B than we have already begun to see.

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