

i.e.: inquiry in education

Volume 1 | Issue 1

Article 10

2010

Editorial

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Recommended Citation

Borthwick, Arlene; Gardiner, Wendy; and Jagla, Virginia M.. (2010). Editorial. *i.e.: inquiry in education: Vol. 1: Iss. 1, Article 10*.

Retrieved from: <https://digitalcommons.nl.edu/ie/vol1/iss1/10>

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i.e.: inquiry in education is published by the Center for Practitioner Research at the National College of Education, National-Louis University, Chicago, IL.

Editorial

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Ahhh... flowers are popping up, trees are budding, days are getting longer and warmer... it must be spring! At least in the Midwestern United States, April's warmer (yet often wet) days signal a rebirth in nature and often within our spirits. As we gaze upon green grasses and yellow daffodils, our dispositions brighten with the prospects of newness. Here in the National College of Education at National-Louis University, our Center for Practitioner Research is celebrating the creation of our new online journal this month.

We are pleased to present the inaugural issue of *i.e.: inquiry in education!* The goal of this semi-annual publication is to nurture and disseminate practitioner research in its varied forms. Our spring publication will center on a theme each year. This issue's theme is "Reflection on Life's Work: Learning from Our Experience." Our guest commentary and articles suggest aspects of this reflective process at the heart of most practitioner research.

Ernie Stringer's commentary, *Action Research: In the Company of Friends*, considers the importance of participatory research—framed not just by a single (your own) perspective, but rather as emerging from those who have a “stake” in the research. He notes the importance of trust and relationships to the research process.

Karen Gallas provides an “incomplete history” of her work as a teacher researcher, examining episodes, research projects, and excerpts from her journals to consider *The Variable of the Self in Classroom Research*. This invited article is based on Karen's presentation at the NLU Center for Practitioner Research's 2009 Annual Research Forum.

In his article, *Reflections on a Life in Teaching*, Bill Ayers takes us on a retrospective of his life as an educator. His reflections delve back into the 1960s, wind through a myriad of his favorite educators/philosophers/everyday people, and continue along the yellow brick road toward courageous teaching with a heart and brain.

How to Make Parent Workshops Effective for Immigrant Families by Marjorie Rogasner is a reflection upon a two year process of implementing parent workshops to foster students' literacy development. Marjorie unpacks the process, identifies some unexpected outcomes, and provides recommendations to other practitioners seeking to increase family involvement.

Incorporating Self-Study Methodology into a Hybrid Course Design Experiment by Harriet R. Fayne employs a self study methodology to describe the process of reinventing an action research class to better respond to the needs of her graduate students who are also practicing teachers. Through analysis, reflection and co-inquiry with students, Harriet reveals changes in her thinking and practice.

Within the two issues each year of *i.e.: inquiry in education*, we expect to spotlight a different practitioner research center from around the world. This spring we are pleased to present *The Center for Collaborative Action Research @ Pepperdine University* through the eyes of Margaret Riel. Another regular feature of the journal is a pertinent book review. In this issue Karen Tardrew provides us with a snapshot of *Teacher Action Research: Building Knowledge Democracies* (Pine, 2009).

The Dean's Message is a two-fold welcome: a welcome to this first issue of the journal and an invitation for you to share your voice through submission of articles to future issues and through participation in activities sponsored by NLU's Center for Practitioner Research. Further, Dean Alison Hilsabeck shares four insights as to why practitioner research is such a powerful tool for making our work more effective.

Springtime in Chicago is shaping up well as we enjoy the warmest April since 1929. We hope you are enjoying whatever season it is where you live as you peruse this inaugural issue of *i.e.: inquiry in education*. We welcome your feedback and suggestions as we move forward.

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