

# Canadian and International Education / Education canadienne et internationale

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Volume 41

Issue 3 *Theorizing International Education: (Shifting)*  
*Contexts, Concepts, Methods*

Article 1

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1-8-2013

## Dedication of this Special Issue of Canadian and International Education to Joe Farrell

Marianne Larsen

*The University of Western Ontario*, [mlarsen@uwo.ca](mailto:mlarsen@uwo.ca)

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### Recommended Citation

Larsen, Marianne (2012) "Dedication of this Special Issue of Canadian and International Education to Joe Farrell," *Canadian and International Education / Education canadienne et internationale*: Vol. 41: Iss. 3, Article 1.

Available at: <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/cie-eci/vol41/iss3/1>

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**Dedication of this Special Issue of *Canadian and International Education* to Joe Farrell  
December, 2012**



We dedicate this special issue of *Canadian and International Education* (CIE) to Professor Joe Farrell who passed away on Saturday, December 8, 2012 as a result of a sudden case of septicemia. Over the course of his career, Joe made tremendous contributions to the field of comparative and international education. Joe was the founder of the Comparative, International, and Development Education Centre (CIDEDEC) at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). He was a world renowned professor for more than four decades, and a great mentor of innumerable students, instructors, and fellow inquirers around the world. His award winning research on alternative schools in the developing world, educational planning, and equity in education has informed educational practice and scholarship worldwide.

Joe's life and work was multidimensional: he was not just a world class scholar and leader of comparative and international education, and a mentor for colleagues and students; Joe was also a Scout leader, a folk guitarist, and a loving father and grandfather who used to talk about his grandchildren often and passionately. Writing about all these aspects of Joe's life and work would require a voluminous book.

In this dedication, I reflect as editor of *Canadian and International Education* upon my own experiences with Joe Farrell. I've also asked Sarfaroz Niyozov, CIDEDEC Co-Director and author of one of the articles in this special issue; Melissa White and Grazia Scoppio, members of the Comparative and International Education Society of Canada (CIESC) executive and former doctoral students of Joe's, and Vandra Masemann, former colleague of Joe's and former CIESC President, to write about the personal impact he had on their lives.

**Reflections of Marianne Larsen, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario, and  
*Canadian and International Education* Editor**

I first met Joe in the fall of 1999. I had completed my Masters in Comparative and International Education at the Institute of Education, University of London and was going to spend a year back home in Toronto before beginning my doctorate in England again in 2000. My supervisor, Bob Cowen, put me in touch with Joe to see if I could be a guest member of the CIDEDEC

community over the course of the year. Joe was so warm and welcoming to me. He found an office space for me, invited me to present my research to the CIDEDEC community, and made me feel as though CIDEDEC was my academic home for the year. In March 2000, I went to the CIES conference in San Antonio and was delighted to see a panel comprised of Andreas Kazamias, Bob Cowen, Rolland Paulston, and Joe Farrell. They reflected on the state of the field of comparative and international education, and called for different approaches to the study of the international, such as the historical, sociological and philosophical. Joe pointed out the difficulty of trying to use comparative education to predict the future and the need to attend to narrative detail in our work. His words were inspiring to me as a new scholar in the field and are still to this day.

### **Reflections of Sarfaroz Niyozov, Co-Director, Comparative, International and development Centre, OISE, University of Toronto**

Losing Joe was a personal shock equal to losing a family member. Joe has been a positive influence in my life since 1997, when I arrived at OISE from Tajikistan via Karachi (Pakistan). As I joined OISE, my advisor, noting my background and interest in international education and post-Soviet development issues suggested that I get in touch with Joe Farrell and David Wilson. So I became a member of Joe's comparative circle, attending classes, joining CIDEDEC discussions, and reflecting on the learning. Occasionally Joe would invite me to lunch and share his experiences of working in and with socialist countries such as his work in Chile and his meeting with early post-Soviet policy makers. Joe became a member of my thesis committee. After the defence, Joe recommended it for the G. P Kelly best dissertation award. In 2002, the committee requested Joe to announce the winner who happened to be his student, Sarfaroz Niyozov. I will never forget Joe's words on that occasion and his satisfaction at a student's accomplishment, sounding like the speeches at the Grammy Award ceremony.

In 2005, while I was coordinating the Central Asian Studies' project at the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London UK, Joe sent me an email, informing me of an opening in the field of Comparative Curriculum Studies at OISE. Working away from my family for four years had been hard and with Joe's encouragement, I applied. Since then we have been working with Joe and other comparative education scholars at OISE and around the world much more closely.

Joe's impact was subtle and personal: without him saying anything, you felt the care, a sympathetic ear, a comforting voice, and broad shoulders to lean on. He used to listen to me and shared stories from his Irish background, so resonant with those of my father. Today as I look at my life, it turns out that I am in many ways following in Joe's footsteps: I now teach two of Joe's core courses and am now a co-director of the very centre that Joe guided with such commitment and passion for his students, his colleagues, and the field for so many years. Joe has left huge shoes to fill: I still have a long way to go become the kind of writer and scholar that Joe was, not to mention teacher and administrator. Now that I look back, I realize how much I drew from Joe, not only direct lessons, but even more the model he provided for us of a commitment and care for equity and justice on a global and classroom level. Our current and former students, my

colleagues, and I will miss Joe very deeply. I agree with Joe's student, my co-director, Karen Mundy that "our careers were deeply shaped by his generosity of intellect and spirit."

**Reflections of Grazia Scoppio, Associate Professor, Canadian Defence Academy and Royal Military College; CIESC Executive Member**

To the community of Comparative and International Education scholars, Professor Joe Farrell was a globally renowned academic and researcher. To me, during my three years at the University of Toronto OISE, Joe was a knowledgeable professor, a supportive advisor, and an inspiring mentor. I will never forget the advice he gave me when I started my PhD and called him in a panic saying "Professor Farrell, I don't think I can do this, I am too old and have been out of school for too long; this is too much for me!" Joe chuckled and calmly replied: "Grazia, you are not alone. There are people of all ages doing PhDs and many feel overwhelmed at first by the sheer amount of readings, writing and research required. If you work hard, you will get through this. And you don't need to decide whether you can do a PhD or not. Our committee that assessed your application has already determined that you can do it!" I will forever be grateful to Joe for not letting me quit and I hope his knowledge and insights are passed on to other students who come after me.

**Reflections of Melissa White, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, UNB; CIESC Executive Member**

I have known Joe as a colleague and friend for almost 20 years. My first association with Joe was as a Master's student enrolled in one of his classes. He was welcoming and encouraging. Like many CIDE students, I was returning to studies after a few years in the work force and while I was very excited, I was extremely nervous. Joe helped put my nerves to rest. It turns out that this world-renown scholar was also a warm, generous and kind soul who loved to tell stories about growing up in Illinois and the lessons he learned from his many years of Scouting. Over the years, I have had the privilege of working with Joe as his graduate assistant, as administrator for the CIDE program and as his doctoral supervisee. I learned a great deal from Joe. I was inspired by his diplomacy and quiet determination. Even after finishing my doctorate and leaving OISE, Joe remained a constant, encouraging colleague and friend. His influence on my life, especially my academic life, has been great. And now I tell my own stories in my own classroom and a great many of them are about what I learned from Joe. Joe was more than a role model to me. He was more than a supervisor and more than a mentor. He was my dear friend and that is how I will remember him.

**Reflections of Vandra Masemann, Adjunct Associate Professor, CIDE, OISE; Past President, CIESC, CIES and WCCES**

I must have met Joe Farrell in 1972 when I first started to teach at OISE. He and David Wilson, who at that time were in the Department of Educational Planning, were very active in the field of comparative education and both attended the CIES meetings regularly. At a meeting of CIES in

1986 or so, I attended a panel on methodology where Joe participated in a very interesting discussion where he told methodologically useful and uproariously funny stories about his field work in Chile. Later, in 1990, he and I participated in a panel on international youth movements, the one and only time that I saw him connect his deep interest and activity in the Scouting movement with his theoretical and applied work in comparative education. He was very supportive of the Educational for All movement, and helped to arrange meetings to publicize the Education for All Conference in Jomtien in 1990. He was Chair of the Education Committee of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, and I greatly enjoyed being in his company at these meetings when I also was on a parallel committee on Women. In the late 1990s, after I had been working on Florida, he welcomed me back to OISE and I became part of the CIDE community again. In general, Joe was welcoming, free with his time, and generous. He welcomed people back after long absences and after trips abroad. He gave students his attentive ear and then wrote long letters (in the earlier days) and emails more recently responding to their questions and concerns. He still has graduate students on whose committees he served to the very last 48 hours of his life. He has left a close-knit family and memories of his guitar-playing and devotion to them. He has left students and colleagues who truly loved him, and whose intellectual and emotional lives are the richer for his having been there for them.