



An On-line Journal
for Teacher Research

Editorial Introduction

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The Spring 2012 issue of *Networks*, brings a unique set of articles. While featuring the voices of teachers and teacher educators, each highlights a different and important perspective on education.

Bill Parnell shares the experiences of Masters students who are also teachers - before and after they travel to Italy to visit Reggio Emilia sites. Parnell focuses on "reflective narrative-episodes" (p.1) that incorporate the thoughts and anecdotes offered by the teachers to capture the thinking and questioning that accompanies new experiences. As Parnell reports, these stories reveal that education is not "a linear process where what the teacher says and shows becomes what the student believes and grows into practicing" (p. 15). Their research provides a rich illustration of how students act as partners stimulating teachers' thinking and development.

Martin Wasserberg explores gender bias within an elementary school classroom. His study involved exposing children to literature that depicts non-traditional gender roles. Pre- and post- surveys revealed little change despite the intervention. As Parnell reports, "Classrooms are microcosms of society, mirroring both its goods and evils" (p. 7). This study raises critical questions about the role classrooms play in reinforcing gender biases even when efforts are made to disrupt existing attitudes and assumptions.

Vetter and Reynolds present the story of a preservice teacher as he negotiated his identity as a biracial educator. Stories of biracial teachers and students are notably lacking in

educational research despite the reality that increasing numbers of biracial students and teachers are learning and working in schools. Vetter and Reynolds, use the stories told by this student teacher to reflect on their own work as teacher educators. The authors share regrets related to missed opportunities for engaging their students in "critical discussions about what it means to talk to high school students about personal racial identities in ways that break down rather than build barriers" (p. 5).

In their short exploratory article, Zabrocky and Commander examine the use of film to explore various learning theories. Students "film interviews and/or observations of one or two learners in the real world" (p. 1). These films take many forms and can involve interviews, videotaped discussions, reflections, or autobiographical accounts. The films are then shared with other pre-service teachers and used to explore various dimensions of learning in the everyday world. The authors invite readers to explore possibilities for film as a touchstone for talking about teaching and learning.

Finally, Suzanne Porath offers a review of Susan Alder's book, *A Toolkit for Action Research*. She strongly recommends this book as a companion to available texts for teachers interested in action research. *Happy Reading!*