



Editorial Comments

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<https://trace.tennessee.edu/internationaleducation/vol39/iss2/1>

Recommended Citation

Thayer-Bacon, Barbara (2010). Editorial Comments. *International Education*, Vol. 39 Issue (2).

Retrieved from: <https://trace.tennessee.edu/internationaleducation/vol39/iss2/1>

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

This issue of *International Education* considers important educational research topics in a way that draws our attention to the political and its impact on children, in terms of language issues as well as growing up in war zones. Two of the essays then turn to looking at gender and ethnicity differences, in regards to identifying gifted students and in terms of international scholars working in higher education. The lead-off essay is by A'ame Kone, graduate student at Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH, USA. Titled "Politics of Language: The Struggle for Power in Schools in Mali and Burkina Faso," this research of two former colonies of France describes how language choice for instruction in mainstream primary schools remains a struggle between the powerful and powerless fifty years after independence from France. Even though first-acquired language instruction has been shown to increase positive cultural identity, literacy rates, and community involvement in the schools, communities continue to strive for French language aptitude in their children with the hope that this ability will provide social mobility. The author explores the tensions and concerns for families in regards to experimental first acquired language schools funded by the government, outside agencies, and other nations seeking to promote literacy in Mali and Burkina Faso.

Our second essay, by Adnan Selimovic, another graduate student, at York University, Canada, takes us to Bosnia in "Growing up in a War: A New Psychol-political Approach to Childhood Using the Case of Bosnian Youth." Selimovic's project concerns the psycho-political reading of trauma and the socialization of children amidst the radical psycho-social transition in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the 1990's. The psychosocial situation of these youth raises questions about the social construction of identity, political subjectivity, and the possibility of a democratic polity. Selimovic's project experiments with new concepts of political psychology to understand the relationship between the historical society and its infantile citizens and imagines reconstituting the way theory deals with war trauma and memory.

When our journal issue takes a turn to looking at gender and ethnicity issues, we begin with an essay by Ketty M. Sarouphim, associate professor, Lebanese American University, and C. June Maker, professor, University of Arizona, titled "Ethnic and Gender Differences in Identifying Gifted Students: A Multi-cultural Analysis." Sarouphim and Maker present a quantitative study where they sought to examine ethnic and gender differences in using DISCOVER, a

performance-based assessment, for identifying students. Their sample size is large, 941 students, grades K-5, representing six ethnicities: White American, African-American, Hispanics, Native-American, South Pacific/Pacific Islanders, and Arabs. Their results suggest DISCOVER might be used in different countries and with culturally diverse students.

Our final research essay, by Maike Philipsen, Professor, Social Foundations of Education, at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, USA, shifts our focus to higher education and international female faculty. This article is derived from a larger research project on female faculty in the United States, which has been published by Josey-Bass as *Challenges of the Faculty Career for Women* (2008). This essay, titled “Female International Scholars: ‘I feel many times I live between cracks!’”, reports findings focused on a sub-group of participants, international scholars who work in U. S. colleges and universities. Based on in-depth interviews, some of the obstacles the women faculty face are portrayed in order to enhance the understanding of an understudied population and find ways to address their specific challenges.

Concluding this issue is a book review, by Aziz Choudry, assistant professor, McGill University, on an edited book, *Education, Participatory Action Research, and Social Change: International Perspectives*, edited by one of our board members, Dip Kapoor, and Steven Jordan (2009). This new, wide-ranging collection of essays on participatory research, participatory action research, and action research brings together scholars from around the world. We hope you will enjoy having your attention drawn to this book. Our fall issues, 2010, will be a special issue guest edited by Jeff Apter, a board member, with the theme of addressing quality from a teleological-epistemological standpoint. Jeff says: “We have stated purposes for educational policy and practice and rely on assessment and evaluation to try to determine the degree to which we can make warranted claims about the degree to which our purposes or ends have been or are being realized. Five authors from different parts of the world have been invited to address this issue from the perspective of their professional experience and philosophy.” Our Guidelines for Submissions can be found on the final page. I invite your contributions to this journal and look forward to hearing from you.

Barbara J. Thayer-Bacon