

**Editor's Introduction:
Moral Imperatives in Contentious Times,
Featuring "The Rise of the Life Narrative"
by Ivor Goodson**

We are pleased to present an outstanding collection of articles in this Fall 2006 issue, all of which were carefully reviewed by dedicated members of the Panel of Readers, revised by the authors, reviewed again and copy edited by the editorial staff, and ultimately accepted through the normal submission process (refer to author submission guidelines at www.teqjournal.org).

Teacher Education Quarterly is especially proud to feature "The Rise of the Life Narrative" by Ivor Goodson, recently heralded Michael Huberman Award honoree for his *Outstanding Scholarship on the Lives of Teachers*, as the foundational cornerstone of this issue. The award, presented at the Spring 2006 American Educational Research Association annual meeting, was "intended to honor long-standing commitment to understanding the rich complexity of teachers' lives." Goodson is also a member of the recently created international Advisory Board for *Teacher Education Quarterly*. Readers can learn more about the seminal works of Ivor Goodson on his website: www.ivorgoodson.com. In this lead article, Goodson invokes the work of singer/songwriter Bruce Springsteen in leading the reader through the study of "grand" narratives as they relate to the methodological development from teachers' stories to life histories.

Following the lead article by Goodson is "Supervision for Social Justice: Supporting Critical Reflection" by Jennifer Jacobs. In this piece the author describes critically reflective ways of thinking within supervision programs, emphasizing issues of social justice. Jacobs argues that too often preservice teachers lack experience in critical thinking in a way that problematizes and questions what

Editor's Introduction

is traditionally accepted or the status quo. In this literature review, Jacobs provides a useful framework for better understanding multiple orientations toward cultural, social, and economic inequities reflected in schools for which teacher education programs prepare future teachers.

In *Moral Dispositions in Teacher Education: Making Them Matter*, Shelley Sherman suggests that national and state teaching standards give minimal attention to morally responsive dispositions while focusing primarily on the technical aspects of teaching, which are typically easier and more efficiently quantifiable. This emphasis on quantifying outcomes that are often narrowly defined results in making it less likely for teacher candidates and teacher educators to engage in meaningful, sustained discourse about dispositional aspects of teaching. Sherman argues that teacher education cannot lose sight of the values inherent in the complexities underlying human interaction in educational settings.

Deborah Yost follows with *Reflection and Self-Efficacy: Enhancing the Retention of Qualified Teachers From a Teacher Education Perspective*. Yost discusses the literature around teacher retention and presents the results of a qualitative study focused on the obstacles teachers face through their first year in teaching and to what extent they were able to use critical reflection as a problem solving strategy. Recommendations for teacher education programs are offered.

Next, Bruce Torff and David Sessions offer *Issues Influencing Teachers' Beliefs About Use of Critical-Thinking Activities With Low-Advantage Learners*. In this article the authors present the results of a study focused on the use of critical thinking strategies aimed at low-achieving students in light of prevailing teachers' beliefs, suggesting that these strategies are typically intended for high-achieving students. The authors' findings suggest that critical thinking activities may help to ameliorate differentiation of instruction based on perceived learner advantages.

In *Functional Literacy in a Constructivist Key: A Nontraditional Student Teacher's Apprenticeship in a Rural Elementary School*, authors Peter Smagorinsky, Amy Davis Sanford, and Bonnie Konopak present the findings from a single case study of one student teacher's struggles in developing conceptions of functional literacy.

Panayiotis Angelides and Paul Gibbs follow with *Supporting the Continued Professional Development of Teachers Through the Use of Vignettes*. The authors argue that the use of vignettes can serve as a powerful alternative to traditional text based curriculum in helping teachers improve their practice.

In *Teachers' Perspectives on Principal Mistreatment*, Joseph and Jo BlasÈ tackle the thorny issue of workplace abuse. In this qualitative study the authors report findings associated with actual experiences of abuse and mistreatment of teachers and offer useful suggestions to consider in university-based teacher education programs.

Concluding this Fall issue, Jason Margolis and Liza Nagel present *Education Reform and the Role of Administrators in Mediating Teacher Stress*. The current demands on teachers and administrators often result in conflicting perspectives and

practices related to student learning. As national and state reform initiatives impose changes in how schools operate, teachers often find themselves increasingly stressed by narrowly prescribed expectations. The authors suggest that the benefits for administrators, and also by implication for teachers, in mediating the negative consequences associated with school change would be to provide administrators with efficacious strategies as a part of a shift in the way school leaders are prepared.

Clearly, administrators, teachers, and students who live and work in schools are being challenged by educational policies imposed from great distance. Understanding the ways in which educators and students respond to these challenges is critical if indeed intended policies are to be perceived as meaningful. Educational ideals reflecting the values inherent in moral dispositions, social justice, critical thinking and reflective analysis, functional literacy, creative alternatives to teacher development curricula, teacher-administrator relationships, and the life stories of teachers, are and should be at the forefront of educational discourse. *Teacher Education Quarterly* continues a rich tradition of presenting to its readers scholarly inquiry of the highest quality. I want to thank all of the authors included in this Fall issue for their timely and poignant contributions. In addition, I want to recognize the outstanding efforts of the reviewers, editorial board members, advisory board members, associate editors, and publisher, who are all dedicated to helping make this journal one of the most widely received and appreciated publications in the field.

We look forward to your feedback. Please visit us at the journal's website: www.teqjournal.org

ó Thomas Nelson
Editor