



Newsletter Index - Volume 22

Issues [1](#) | [2](#) | [3](#) | [4](#) |

Volume 22, Number 1, March, 2000

I-Dentification, I-Deology and Dissing the Disciplines. "Interdisciplinarity and the Teaching of Canadian Studies": A Special Issue of *Arachne: An Interdisciplinary Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. 4, no 2 (1997), 156 pp. \$12.00. Reviewed by Jerry Wasserman, Dept. of English, University of British Columbia. This special issue of *Arachne* comes out of a conference called "Interdisciplinarity and the Teaching of Canadian Studies" held at the Laurentian University in 1995. Six of its articles are revised conference papers; the other two, solicited for the journal, offer a response and counter-response to a government-commissioned report on Canadian Studies programs. Editor Tom Gerry's introduction explains that the conference was challenged "to produce collaboratively a useful collection of essays to answer a vital need in Canadian studies, both in Canada and internationally: namely, to reassess traditional teaching methods, and to propose alternatives in the light of interdisciplinarity's process approach, its integrating vision, its emphasis on exchange, and its basis in cooperation rather than competition." This collection meets that challenge with only partial success, though even its failures raise useful and interesting questions.

Information Sources and Information Processes in Interdisciplinarity. *Interdisciplinary Education: A Guide to Resources*. Joan B. Fiscella and Stacey E. Kimmel, eds. New York: The College Board, 1999. *Interdisciplinary Information Seeking in Women's Studies*, by Lynne Westbrook. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1999. Reviewed by Susan E. Searing, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. When academics write and talk about interdisciplinarity, we seldom say much about the role of the library. ... This blind spot strikes me as odd, given the oft-heard claim that interdisciplinary education promotes critical thinking and equips students to become lifelong learners by exposing them to multiple sources of evidence and inspiration. The library, repository of the raw material of knowledge, should surely be central to the vision of integrative education. ... I'm a librarian, and I wear my bias proudly: I believe that the institution that is famously acknowledged as "the heart of the university" should also be the "heart of interdisciplinary studies." You need not subscribe to my chauvinistic views, however, to share my appreciation of two excellent new titles that showcase the importance of information resources for integrative scholarship. These two books are very different in format, scope, and purpose. One (Fiscella & Kimmel) is a reference book, the other (Westbrook) a revised dissertation, but both are ultimately concerned with the same overarching questions: Where is the information for and about interdisciplinary learning, and how can readers best access and use it?

Job Announcement

Conference Announcement

- "The Bonds Between Women and Water: An Interdisciplinary Conference," September 28-30, 2000, Duluth, MN, USA. Hosted by the University of Minnesota Duluth. Call for Presentations included.

Volume 22, Number 2, May, 2000

Bridges: Mathematical Connections in Art, Music, and Science. Reviewed by Raymond F. Tennant, PhD, Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science, Eastern Kentucky University. This two-volume *Proceedings* is a collection of peer-reviewed papers which were written for the Bridges Conference held at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas, during the summers of 1998 and 1999. The Bridges Conference is an interdisciplinary meeting and workshop bringing together a diverse and eclectic group of mathematicians, artists, and teachers who focus on building bridges between the world of mathematics and the worlds of art, music, and the sciences. ... In his editor's preface to Volume One, Reza Sarhangi attempts to put the purpose, theme and style of the Bridges Conference into perspective. He writes that a major reason for developing the Bridges Conference is a desire to come together from a diverse set of apparently different disciplines, to share and recognize abstract similarities, common patterns, and underlying characteristics. This search for patterns in mathematics, art, science, and music is truly an odyssey, often resulting in new discoveries which are revealed when individual disciplinary perspectives are integrated together.

Slo Petrovich: In Memoriam. A tribute to Slobodan Petrovich, who served as AIS President from 1991 to 1993 and a member of the AIS board of directors from 1989 to 1996. He was director of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

Special Insert: Accreditation Standards for Interdisciplinary General Education.

Transdisciplinary Conference in Zurich. Article by Julie Thompson Klein. Between February 27 and March 1 2000, nearly 800 individuals from 57 countries attended the International Transdisciplinarity Conference in Zurich, Switzerland, (which) explored the topic of "Joint Problem-Solving Among Science, Technology, and Society." Transdisciplinarity is not a new word. Its origin is dated to the first international conference on interdisciplinarity, sponsored by the OECD in 1970. Transdisciplinarity was defined as a systematic integration of knowledge. More recently, the term has become associated with involving stakeholders outside of academe in solving complex problems of society. The Zurich conference reflected this new definition. The primary contexts were global change, environmental pollution, sustainable development, urban planning, health care, and social services.

Call for Papers

- The NWSA Journal, the scholarly publication of the National Women's Studies Association, invites submissions in all areas relating to Women's Studies for Spring and Summer 2001. The Journal is published by Indiana University Press.

Volume 22 Number 3, October 2000

Natures, Sciences, Sociétés: Joint Problem-Solving among Science, Technology and Society. Article by Agnès Pivot and Nicole Mathieu, Centre National de Recherches Scientifiques. This quarterly scientific journal was created to be the flagship of interdisciplinary research efforts concerning the various relations that humankind has with nature - including human nature. NSS publishes research on a variety of types of society-environment relations, including human representations of nature, the different uses humans make of nature, the transformations humans provoke in the biophysical processes upon which their lives depend, and the consequences that follow from human-induced environmental changes and the ways societies and social groups deal with them. In this approach, social processes will be looked at broadly, ranging from individual-level social psychology to the processes involving social groupings (subgroups, populations, nation states, cultures) and global relationships. This wide-ranging theme requires a wide diversity of

disciplines and approaches. Our aim is to bring forward for mutual enrichment a number of different styles and strategies of analysis based on scientifically sound arguments and data. ... This journal emphasizes three large fields: the environment, human health, and bioethics.

Alive at the Core: Exemplary Approaches to General Education in the Humanities, by Michael Nelson and Associates, Jossey-Bass, 2000. Reviewd by Gretchen Schulz, Associate Professor of Humanities at Oxford College of Emory University. The fact that *Alive at the Core*, a book dedicated to demonstrating that programs promoting general education in the humanities are alive (and, often, well) in our colleges and universities, is itself "alive at the core" is probably due to the fact that its chapters were first assembled for a particularly lively conference on "Teaching the Humanities" that took place on the campus of Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, in November 1998. ... Those whose papers have become chapters in the book represent a wide range of disciplines. ... They also represent a wide range of institutions whose approaches to core curricula in the humanities differ in numerous (even, it sometimes seems, innumerable) ways. And yet there is a core to this book about core - even as there was a core to the conference that preceded it - the conference that is recreated here. It's a core of shared spirit, shared principles and passions, shared hopes and dreams and struggles and failures and triumphs - all easy for us readers to share, as well.

Francine Navakas: First Citizen of the College Award Recipient. Francine G. Navakas was named the eighth recipient of the Harold and Eva White "First Citizen of the College" Award during commencement ceremonies at North Central College on June 10, 2000. She is the Coordinator of Integrative Programs, Interdisciplinary Studies, and the History of Ideas Program at North Central College, and she is a member of the AIS Board of Directors.

New On-Line Journal Announces Call for Papers.

- *The Journal of Mundane Behavior* (JMB) has issued a Call for Papers for its first special issue, *Media/Mundania*. The February 2001 issue will explore the relationships between the media and mundane. Papers are due no later than November 1, 2000.

Conference Announcements

- "The Web of Life, Web of Knowledge: Weaving Connections in an Interdependent, Interdisciplinary World," the 2000 Annual Conference of the Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Programs, will be October 12-14, 2000, at Oakland, California.
- "Learning Communities: Here, There, and Everywhere" is the theme for the Fifth Annual Conference on Learning Communities and Collaboration, November 15-17, 2000, at Frankenmuth, Michigan.

Volume 22, Number 4, December, 2000

Creativity and Beyond: Cultures, Values, Change. by Robert Paul Weiner. Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 2000. Reviewed by Elisabeth Soep, PhD, Inter-Arts Center, San Francisco State University. Weiner casts an incredibly wide net in his cross-cultural and historical review of the concept of creativity. He considers art and blasphemy; Confucianism and deoxyribonucleic acid; gunpowder, hippies, Jesus, and Kerouac; Mesopotamia and multinational corporations; Silicon Valley and Tiananmen Square; Xerox and Zoroastrianism. The book boasts the kinds of interesting and unlikely connections that interdisciplinary perspectives are uniquely suited to offer. But it can also privilege breadth and generalities over depth and particulars - a tendency to which interdisciplinary work can too often fall prey.

Interdisciplinary General Education: Questioning Outside the Lines, Marcia Bundy Seabury, ed. New York:

The College Board, 1999. Reviewed by Nora McGuinness, Integrative Studies, University of California at Davis. *Questioning Outside the Lines* is a wonderful book. ... It can be read profitably by those interested in general education or in interdisciplinary studies, although its focus is in the use of the team-teaching method of interdisciplinary studies to attain the aims of general education. Meticulously organized and carefully edited for balance, the book contains 16 essays, single-authored or multiple-authored, discussing courses in the "All University Curriculum" (AUC), an interdisciplinary general education program at the University of Hartford which offers 25 interdisciplinary courses, mostly to lower-division students meeting general education requirements. ... Why do I say the book is wonderful? The accounts of the courses are written by teachers in the trenches for teachers, either already in the trenches or contemplating entering the fray, who wish to develop in students some of the skills commonly thought of as goals of general education - written/oral communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. These authors also hope to reach some less common skills and attitudes - "social interaction, values identification, and responsibility for civic life."

Paideusis: On-Line Journal. Paideusis - Journal for Interdisciplinary and Cross-Cultural Studies is a refereed Internet journal aiming at an open international and interdisciplinary dialogue. Each volume of the journal focuses on a certain topic, bringing points of view and interpretations from a wide variety of disciplines and specializations. The Editor-in-Chief is Cristian Suteanu, Institute of Geodynamics of the Romanian Academy, Bucharest. You can check out Paideusis on the Web at <http://www.geocities.com/paideusis/>

New Book Announcements

- *Using Student Teams in the Classroom: A Faculty Guide* by Ruth Federman Stein and Sandra Hurd. Anker Publishing Company, www.ankerpub.com.
- *Reinventing Ourselves: Interdisciplinary Education, Collaborative Learning and Experimentation in Higher Education*. by Barbara Leigh Smith and John McCann. Anker Publishing Company, www.ankerpub.com.

Call for Proposals

- Association for Integrative Studies, 22nd Annual Conference, "Globalizing Interdisciplinary Pedagogy and Research," October 4-7, 2001. Hosted by the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies at Virginia Tech, Roanoke, Virginia. Elizabeth Creamer, Coordinator. Submission form included.

For questions and comments, contact us at aisorg@muohio.edu