

## Editorial

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Spring has finally arrived on the prairie and with it the new issue of *in education*. I had the pleasure of reading through this collection of works over a very long, snow-filled winter. The readings took my thoughts to other places, enabling me to escape the winter, if only in my mind.

Zihan Shi's article, "Dilemmas in Using Phenomenology" takes the reader inside the challenges and "dilemmas" researchers may encounter when utilizing a phenomenological research approach. Shi's piece characterizes six particular dilemmas encountered in her research work, investigating the experiences of elementary school children learning English as another language conflated with the "language and cultural challenges and limitations of the researchers."

In "Modeling in the Classroom," Nancy Mayne and Jeff Scott provide a glimpse into the world of effective direct instruction in the teaching of writing with elementary school children in Grades 3 to 6. Albeit, a decidedly technical approach to improving students' writing skills, the authors do find some effective instructional strategies that help students "perform" writing. Nevertheless, the authors allude to the relational role of teachers' behaviours in the complexity, if not messiness of teaching that is the day-to-day reality of the teacher's and the child's life in school; although important, teaching is much more than a set of effective instructional strategies designed to improve children's performance.

Carla Glen takes the reader in a very different direction travelling across the "Educational Relevance of the Arts in a Technocratic World." She characterizes the current moment of the Euro-American population as "passively consume[ing] commodity spectacles and services without active and creative involvement." Drawing on Maxine Greene's ideas, and others, she argues for "relational art form" as a way to move into "wide-awakeness," to engage with and be present through critical reflection on the quotidian—shifting from a passive to an active engagement to life.

"Integral Development and Educational Renewal in Saskatchewan" brings the reader into the heart of the prairie educational landscape. Barbara Wotherspoon examines the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education's recently released document *Renewed Objectives for the Common Essential Learning of Critical and Creative Thinking (CCT) and Personal and Social Development (PSD)*. She draws attention to the document emphasizing "spiritual development, environmental awareness, ecological principles, human diversity, creative-ability development, and community-based achievement" in its recommendations. She suggests the Ministry of Education document has similarity with the ideas of transformative educators Thomas Berry, Brian Swimme and Edmund O'Sullivan who have been arguing for a fundamental shift in Western educational ideology. Through her careful exploration of the document, Wotherspoon articulates the congruency between the ideas in the document and O'Sullivan's theory of integral development and how real renewal might be realized through teachers becoming acutely familiar with the document.

Tiffany L. Gallagher and Arlene Griersen explore the trials and tribulations of creating demonstration classrooms across a school district in, "Administrators' Lessons Learned." The authors highlight the importance of effective professional development for teachers "in order to

maximize the potential for sustainable improvement in students' educational outcomes and support systemic long-term change." However, the study transcends this widely accepted notion to look at the role and influence of school administrators in planning for and establishing demonstration classrooms within school communities in order to build capacity for professional development. Once again, these researchers show the complexity involved with attempting to improve teaching and learning through implementing a technical strategy. Relational leadership and collaboration figure prominently because "sustainable changes in teachers' practices is a time consuming process that requires teachers to continuously build on their knowledge base and reflect on their practices, while being supported by opportunities for collaboration, mentoring, and dialogue with colleagues."

In "*Being with Bipolar Disorder*," Karen Reynolds invites the reader into the experiences of students diagnosed with this mental illness as they negotiate the academic landscape of post secondary education. Utilising Bourdieu's theory of social capital as a lens to frame her study, she shows how mental illness marks the students through the misunderstandings of the other and through the students own reluctance to self identify to avoid the stigma. In an attempt to transcend Bourdieu's social capital Reynolds takes up Nancy's notion of "being with" drawing on the intrapersonal capital generated through the collective relationship with participants and researcher. Relationality usurps the importance of social capital allowing the students to 'be with' the illness with others.

The six articles in this issue offer a variety of topics and interests that traverse our connective educational landscape. The order of the articles is arbitrary inviting you to sample the works in the same way.