

New England Philosophy of Education Society (NEPES)

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NEPES President's Message 2010

We are data happy these days. Baseball teams “crunch” data on opposing pitchers to determine the batting order most likely to be productive (run-producing), which defensive alignment will best defend each hitter, and when bobble-head promotion days will yield the best revenue. Tour de France cyclists swallow a pill containing a battery-powered tag that sends core body temperature readings to team doctors who track these data to monitor cyclists’ health and enhance performance. My own cycling computer provides me with brightly colored LCD data that tell me something about my performance--how many revolutions per minute (rpm) I can spin, how many miles per hour (mph) I will travel, how many hours I must peddle to offset my breakfast muffin (about half an hour but that’s not taking into consideration last night’s dessert). Offering a matter-of-fact yet irritating reality check, my cycling computer also displays data that compare my overall performance to numbers posted by the likes of Alberto Contador (2009 Tour de France winner) and Kristin Armstrong (2009 World Time Trial Champion). My phone provides me with all manner of data—there’s an app that can read the bar codes on store items and give me the price, and an income and expenditure tracker app to motivate me to put the item back on the shelf. My primary care physician has been heard to say that she needs to “drill down” into my health data to focus on the information that she deems relevant to my situation. In education, we now speak reverentially of “data driven decision making,” “data driven reform,” “data driven testing,” and “data driven classrooms.” We require teachers to determine best practices based on data sets large and small and hold them accountable for student performance benchmarked by these data. University faculty is held to research and publication norms composed of data that measure “productivity.” My academic provost increasingly relies on data to ascertain institutional performance from which he’ll decide academic program needs. Deans of schools and colleges demand from their departmental chairs like me empirical data to determine professional merit rewards, and despite their

contradictory impulses invest professional time and budgets to collect more and more data to supply the mother ship of data, the *U.S. News and World Report College Rankings*. Not surprisingly, I am data weary. My weariness comes not from the data themselves but rather from the lack of understanding that audiences can sometimes have about the nature of data they are asked to collect, to disseminate and to consume. As a member of a professional school faculty charged with educating and training school and university administrators this is especially worrisome to me. As a philosopher of education, this is my call to arms.

As a philosopher of education, I understand the epistemological issues here—Kuhn’s “paradigms,” Russell’s knowledge by “description” and by “acquaintance,” Rand’s objectivism and Haraway’s “situated knowledge,” just for starters. The battle here, it seems to me, is to teach my students to unpack data, to making complex and complicated meaning from data before said data inform their varied practices. This is my central purpose and intention as a philosopher of education—I teach my students to dismantle the data in order to understand the assumptions that underlie their conceptualization, how and why they are collected and disseminated, and the purposes that their presentations serve. Graduate students preparing to be university administrators should be taught to dismantle the assumptions that underlie “student engagement” data. Future school administrators should be trained to identify the epistemological and axiological constitution of “parental involvement” data and their associated policy implications. In other words, it’s my responsibility to bring theory to data, to make data meaningful beyond their LCD display.

Recently, a student remarked that our philosophy of education course was *the* one course in her graduate studies that “put it all together” for her. Further, she observed that prior to taking the course she used to believe that data told her “how to understand the world” but that after taking the course she employs data only “after making meaning of *them*.” That is to say, she now knows to take theory to data, to employ philosophical thinking when faced with empirical

information intended to affect her practice. In our philosophy of education course, she learned that all data demand philosophical scrutiny. At times teaching philosophy of education with this purpose in mind feels more like a bicycle climb up l'Alpe d' Huez (French Alps) than a pleasant spin up New England's hills, but such student realizations make my semester's work in this data obsessed era very satisfying.

As we think about and discuss our mission as an organization and as professors of philosophy of education in the year to come, I encourage us to think about philosophy of education as a means to stave off the ill effects of a data obsessed society—in particular data-driven educational practice and policy—and as a route to more thoughtful and critical consumption of data. Cycling to burn those dessert calories should be so easy.

A sus órdenes,

Ana

Arlington, MA, July 2010

Historical Information about NEPES

Kelly Kolodny, Framingham State College

In 2009 the NEPES historical materials were presented for processing and preservation to the archivist of the special collections at Framingham State College. The materials, which include programs of annual meetings, correspondence, as well as copies of keynote addresses, span five decades. Review of these materials reveals that during these past five decades, many notable philosophers of education were invited to the NEPES podium where they delivered addresses that focused on a variety of topics. Different conference themes also were pursued during this time. A chronological list of some of the conference speakers, keynote addresses, and themes follows.

Spring 1966, Fitchburg State College

Keynote: Existentialism's Challenge to Education
Van Cleve Morris, University of Illinois

Fall 1974, Osgood Hill, North Andover, Massachusetts

Theme: Explorations in Community: Recent Rhetorics for Planetary Utopians, Black Mountain and Beyond

Fall 1975, North Adams College

Keynote: Philosophy in the Secondary Schools
Thomas Howell, Rhode Island College

Fall 1976, University of Hartford

Keynote: Arnold Toynbee: The Civilizationist and the Educational Theorist
Kenneth Winetrout and Margaret C. Ells,
American International College

Spring 1976, Rhode Island College

Theme: Again: Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order
B. Freeman Butts, Teachers College

Spring 1980, Framingham State College

Keynote: Literacy and Learning
Jane Martin, University of Massachusetts, Boston

1983, St. Joseph's Abby

Theme: Education and Contemplation – A Western Tradition
Fr. Robert, St. Joseph's Abby

Fall 1988, Church of Scientology, Boston

Theme: Delphian Schools

Spring 1988, Bridgewater State College

William Bennett, U.S. Department of Education

Fall 2003, Harvard School of Education

Keynote: Towards a Conversation with Jane Roland Martin
Daniel Mulcahy, Central Connecticut State University

Fall 2005, Framingham State College

Keynote: Education as the Maker and Shaper of People and Culture
Jane Roland Martin, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Fall 2006, Framingham State College

Keynote: The Dialect of Parent's Rights and Social Obligation: School Choice in Context
Walter Feinberg, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana

Fall 2007, Framingham State College

Keynote: Critical Linguistics: Implications for Philosophy of Education
Timothy Reagan, Central Connecticut State University

Fall 2008, Boston College

Keynote: Embodied Learning and the Social Imagination: Reclaiming Emancipatory Education for Our Children's Future
Wendy Kohli, Fairfield University

Fall 2009, Framingham State College

Keynote: Liberal Education and the Vocation to be More Fully Human
Daniel Mulcahy, Central Connecticut State University



The keynote speaker for the conference will be Dr. David Moss, from the University of Connecticut. Dr. Moss is an Associate Professor in the Neag School of Education. His faculty appointment is in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction specializing in environmental education. His current research interests are in the areas of international education, education reform, and environmental education. Dr. Moss has authored over 60 articles, book chapters, and reviews on such diverse topics as student understandings of the nature of science, interdisciplinary education, teacher education, and forest ecosystem health monitoring. He is co-editor of the books *Critical Essays on Resistance in Education* (Peter Lang, 2010), *Interdisciplinary Education in an Age of Assessment* (Routledge, 2008), *Portrait of a Profession: Teachers and Teaching in the 21st Century* (Praeger, 2005), and *Beyond the Boundaries: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Learning and Teaching* (Praeger, 2003). He earned his Ph.D. from the University of New Hampshire and completed his undergraduate work at Alfred University. He has extensive curriculum development and assessment experience on projects funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Dr. Moss's topic will be, "Resistance in Education: Considering the Role of Faculty in Higher Education."

NEPES 2010 PROGRAM

**Saturday, October 23, 2010
Central Connecticut State University
Barnard Hall**

8:30 – 9:00	REGISTRATION AND REFRESHMENTS		
9:00 – 10:30	<p>Session A</p> <p>“The emerging moral imagination of children.” B. Clark, Central Connecticut State University.</p> <p>“Critical aesthetic education pedagogy addresses eco-justice for teacher preparation.” J. French, Central Connecticut State University, and B. Clark, Central Connecticut State University.</p> <p>“Discovering meaningful intersections of culturally responsive native arts curriculum and math, science and language arts learning.” K. Hrenko, University of Southern Maine.</p>	<p>Session B</p> <p>“Persistently dangerous schools: Myth, meaning, and madness . . . No learnin’ goin’ on here.” J. Freiberg, Connecticut State Department of Education.</p> <p>“Liberal education and service learning.” D. Mulcahy, Central Connecticut State University.</p> <p>“The paradox of pragmatic definitions of education.” M. Gadd, Central Connecticut State University.</p>	<p>Session C</p> <p>“The concept of history in the liberating pedagogy of Paulo Freire.” A. Abadi, Lesley University.</p> <p>“Combating linguistic prejudice and discrimination through teacher training and student education.” J. Bauer, University of Massachusetts, Lowell, and L. Dagostino, Univeristy of Massachusetts, Lowell.</p> <p>“Lessons to be learned from Ivan Illich: Thinking outside the box.” R. Reynolds, Eastern Connecticut State University.</p>
10:30 – 10:45	COFFEE BREAK		
10:45 – 12:00	<p>KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND DISCUSSION</p> <p>“Resistance in Education: Considering the Role of Faculty in Higher Education.”</p> <p>Professor David Moss University of Connecticut</p>		
12:00 – 12:30	LUNCH		

<p>12:30 - 2:00</p>	<p>Session A</p> <p>“Carter G. Woodson’s <i>Mis-Education of the Negro</i> as philosophical discourse.” M. Basse, Queens College, CUNY.</p> <p>“Beyond <i>The Crisis in Education</i>: Hannah Arendt as educator.” H. Brewster, Teachers College.</p> <p>“Educational desires and institutional fantasies: <i>Notes on a Scandal</i> and the problem of teacher identity.” J. Stillwaggon, Iona College.</p>	<p>Session B</p> <p>“Maintaining cohesion: Socrates’ leadership through discourse.” C. Furman, Teachers College.</p> <p>“<i>Consilio</i>: A rationale for a critical pedagogy of Classics.” T. Ryan, Central Connecticut State University.</p> <p>“Loving theory and practice: On Plato’s <i>Lysis</i> and its usefulness to teachers and teacher educators.” B. Veprek, Teachers College.</p>	<p>Session C</p> <p>“<u>The challenge of schooling in capitalist America</u> by Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis.” R. Lyons, University of Massachusetts, Lowell.</p> <p>“Constructing a transformative philosophy and framework.” K. Love, Central Connecticut State University.</p> <p>“Web 2.0 and the revolution in education.” L. Waks, Temple University.</p>
<p>2:00 – 2:15</p>	<p>COFFEE BREAK</p>		
<p>2:15 – 3:45</p>	<p>Session A</p> <p>“Affixing a tail and chasing it: The assessment vortex.” M. Hayden, Teachers College.</p> <p>“Co-constructing a sustainable <u>CONTEXT</u> for learning: The role of <u>Culture</u>, <u>Organicity</u>, <u>Neighborhood</u>, <u>Teamwork</u>, <u>Evolution</u>, <u>eXpectations</u> and <u>Tenacity</u> in the development of a successful school-university-community partnership.” K. Riem, Central Connecticut State University.</p> <p>“The ‘tenacious humility’ of new teachers: Teaching writing and resisting formulas.” C. Stutz, Assumption College.</p>	<p>Session B</p> <p>“The student teaching seminar: Historical and philosophical reflections.” K. Kolodny, J. Zoino-Jeannetti, Framingham State College.</p> <p>“A story of the century’s turn: Conceptual childhood and education from 1895 to 1925.” J. Nichols, Rivier College.</p> <p>“Discourse patterns of adolescents from conflict regions.” L. Twomey, University of Massachusetts, Lowell, and L. Dagostino, University of Massachusetts, Lowell.</p>	<p>Session C</p> <p>“Tocqueville and the education for and in democracy.” M. Michaud, Montclair State University.</p> <p>“Political subjectivity and education: An introduction.” M. Pires, Montclair State University.</p> <p>“An ontological question: Exploring the political potential of mathematics education.” N. Chesky, Montclair State University.</p> <p>“Cyber-community: A new learning meaning for collectivity.” J. Todd, Montclair State University and Bergen Community College.</p>
<p>3:45 – 4:15</p>	<p>ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING</p> <p>Treasurer’s Report</p>		

TRAVELING TO THE NEPES **ANNUAL MEETING**



For those traveling to the New England Philosophy of Education Society (NEPES) Annual Meeting by automobile, directions are available on the Central Connecticut State University website at <http://www.ccsu.edu>. A parking pass will be mailed to you upon receipt of your registration materials.

For those traveling to the Annual Meeting from a distance and require hotel accommodations, there are a number of facilities in the area. One recommendation is the Marriott Courtyard Hartford Farmington (New Britain), which is only a couple of miles from Central Connecticut State University. The toll-free number is 1-800-321-2211; the local number is 1-860-521-7100.

Please contact Timothy Reagan, NEPES Vice President, if you have questions that relate to travel/lodging. His Email address is timothy.reagan@gmail.com.

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**October 23, 2010 Annual Meeting
Central Connecticut State University
Barnard Hall**

REGISTRATION

The registration fee for the New England Philosophy of Education Society (NEPES) Annual Meeting is \$30.00. This fee covers the cost for the morning coffee and muffins, lunch and an afternoon snack. All session presenters and conference participants who take part in the Annual Meeting are asked to pay the registration fee.

Please complete the attached registration form and send it with your check for \$30.00 to:

Dr. Timothy Reagan
Chair of Teacher Education and CSU Professor
Central Connecticut State University
1615 Stanley Street
New Britain, CT 06050

All checks should be made out to NEPES. The registration deadline is September 24, 2010.

PHOTOGRAPH REFLECTION



Fruitlands in Harvard, Massachusetts
Photographer, Kelly Kolodny

In 1843 Fruitlands was the site of Bronson Alcott's utopian community. The Alcott family, along with a dozen other individuals, lived in the farmhouse featured above. The community only lasted seven months.

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Registration Form

Name: _____

Institutional Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Country: _____

Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Fax Number: _____

Please mail your completed registration form and check for \$30 made out to NEPES to:

Dr. Timothy Reagan, Chair of Teacher Education and CSU Professor, Central Connecticut State University, 1615 Stanley Street, New Britain, CT 06050

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TO: