Losses and Gains

We start this new volume of the journal without a major contributor to the final production of each issue. I relied upon Margaret Hunt in the composition of the issues from the time I took over as editor four years ago. Last summer, she became too ill to continue work, and this was partly the reason the last issue was late in production.

Margaret Hunt died Feb. 9, 2008, at her home in Lafayette, Indiana. She received a bachelor’s degree in German from Syracuse University in 1976, and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. Margaret earned a PhD from Indiana University in 1985 in Germanic languages, specializing in Old Norse. She taught German before joining the staff at Purdue University Press, where she worked for 20 years and had been the managing editor, as well as the editorial assistant at Education and Culture.

Margaret always had a scholar’s care for language and expression. She went over each article thoroughly, pointing out errors or infelicities that either I or the author had missed. Margaret was especially assiduous on references and proper citation. She was the one who suggested to me that we accept Chicago and APA, being equally comfortable in each style, and I have written on that decision in a previous editor’s note. I will miss our conversations and frequent emails during “crunch time” for each issue’s production.

Fortunately, I have been working for the past number of months with a fine new assistant, Dianna Gilroy, whose experience on the internationally recognized journal Modern Fiction Studies has proven to be a great boon and relief to me. As I am sad that I will no longer work with Margaret Hunt, I am happy to be now connected with Dianna Gilroy. The journal is in good hands.

I had mixed feelings upon learning that the director of the Press, Thomas Bacher, was leaving this summer to become director of the University of Akron Press. There Tom will be able to also create a center for scholarly communication, focusing on the latest information technologies, as well as teach at the University. I am pleased for Tom’s creative advancement, but rue losing someone I helped to hire as director in 1997 while I served as chair of the editorial board of the Press and chair of the search committee. Tom was happy to bring the journal to Purdue, and forged important new partnerships with Berkeley Electronic Press, our online manuscript management system, as well as Project Muse.
In his article that leads off the issue, Chris Higgins seeks to make us aware of the worn ways we consider aesthetic education. He takes apart our comfortable reliance upon creativity and imagination by exploring Dewey’s distinction between recognition and perception. Though we are unable to publish images to which Higgins refers, we hope that readers will seek out these images on the web to further enrich their reading. Hongmei Peng reminds us continually in her article of the dynamism of Dewey’s conception of a human being. Democracy lies in every human being for Dewey, and each individual is a unique contributor to the democratic conversation, something always in the making. Christopher Voparil looks to Dewey to find thoughts about the learning process that can help reinvigorate higher education. At my own university, we have shifted the research, teaching, service mission to the newer terms and understandings of discovery, learning, and engagement. Voparil focuses his thoughts upon the learner centered classroom that has evolved away from a teacher or professor centered pedagogy, seeing an old way of teaching advocated by Dewey and others making inroads into our colleges and universities. Mark Vagle’s article considers the much-discussed triumvirate of knowledge, skills, and dispositions in teacher preparation, and seeks to widen the context of this trio by investigating a prophetic notion of the teacher developed by Jim Garrison as well as the “tact” of teaching explored by Max van Manen.

With this issue, I doff my hat as ad hoc book review editor with two fine contributions I worked upon, by Jeffery Frank and Victor Rodriguez, and look with eager anticipation to the next issue for the reviews commissioned and edited by the new book review editors David Granger and Timothy Mahoney.

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Purdue University