

**From the Editor:**

Dear Readers, Friends, and Colleagues,

I am Anatoli Rapoport, Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction from Purdue University. I feel honored and privileged to assume editorship of *Journal of International Social Studies* and I am committed to continue the excellent work of my predecessors.

The inaugural issue of *JISS* was published in 2010 under the editorship of Beverly (Lee) Bisland. Now, after working on this issue of the journal, I understand what titanic efforts it took Beverly and her team of pioneers, Gloria Alter, Carolyn O'Mahony, and Michelle Frabroni seven years ago to develop the concept, design, and eventually set up a new journal.

In 2012, Beverly was succeeded by Ruth Reynolds, who invited me to her team to serve as the International Section editor. Ruth presided over the journal during a very important period in the history of International Assembly and *JISS*. Many IA members, journal readers, and authors could speak of Ruth's commitment to social studies education, social justice, citizenship and international education, as well as her belief in a productive open scholarly dialogue that often extended into social contacts. I would like to take a moment and express my deepest appreciation and gratitude to Ruth, whose place I have taken as Editor. NCSS International Assembly and *JISS* in particular owe much to Ruth and journal section editors Kate Ferguson-Patrick, Deborah Hutton, Carolyn O'Mahony (also our past Chair), and Gloria Alter. It is because of their patience, persistence, energy, enthusiasm, and commitment that *JISS* has become a recognized preeminent journal in international social studies education, with a worldwide readership. I personally want to thank Ruth, Carolyn, and Beverly for numerous valuable advice and friendly support.

There is an allegedly Chinese saying: "May you live in interesting times!" Some call it a curse, some call it a blessing. Regardless of whether we are cursed or blessed, there is no doubt that we live in interesting times. New questions are being raised about the place of civic education, international contacts and cooperation among educators, civic competence, civic duties, global citizenship, and patriotism. To open the journal to these and other themes, *JISS* will be placing renewed emphasis on attracting new and important theoretical papers that will extend the intellectual reach of social studies, citizenship education, international and global education, and bridge disciplinary boundaries.

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This volume includes a selection of articles that will be interesting both to scholars and classroom teachers:

Daniel Osborn from Dean College in Massachusetts explored the ways in which Israelis and Palestinians are represented in World History textbooks and World History teachers' instructional discourse in the United States. The author employed critical discourse analysis to analyze the content of five World History textbooks and discourse in two social studies classrooms. The study demonstrated that the depictions of Israelis and Palestinians in textbooks and classroom discourses were similar in many ways, and while not identical in representation, textbooks and teachers tended towards similar classifications and portrayal of Israelis and Palestinians that, as the study ascertained, often offered a false sense of uniformity and consensus among Israelis and Palestinians. Such portrayals of both populations limit them to their involvement in the ongoing conflict and lack any substantive content that would expose students to other social or cultural aspects of Israeli and Palestinian identity.

Another article in this issue that addresses the problems of stereotypes and prejudices is *Images of Africa: A Case Study of Pre-Service Candidates' Perceptions of Teaching Africa* by Hanna Kim of the University of Delaware. In this case study, the researcher explored pre-service candidates' perceptions of Africa and indicated that, despite having taken World History and African History courses, pre-service candidates were still susceptible to misconceptions and prejudices about Africa. The author argued that future social studies teachers' misconceptions and stereotypes could eventually be transmitted to their students. The results of the study call into question the effectiveness of teacher education courses, underscoring the need of pre-service teachers to look critically at their own preconceptions and deconstruct and analyze their prejudices.

What differences exist between the questioning styles of experienced and beginning teachers when they employ Knowledge Building pedagogy, and what impact do the teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs have on their questioning strategies? These questions were the focus of a study that Tamas Kiss (Xi'an Jiaotong, Liverpool University) and Alex Wang conducted in a Singapore primary school. Two social studies teachers were observed for 10 weeks and then interviewed about their intentions and thought processes in regard to constructing and asking questions in class. Classroom teaching experience, the authors argued, has a powerful influence on teacher cognition and questioning techniques, as does Knowledge Building pedagogy, which provides teachers with tools to promote a dialogical classroom discourse that features high-order questions.

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One of the goals of social studies programs in Nigeria is to develop the ability for a rational utilization of cultural, spiritual, and natural resources and their conservation for national development. However, only a tiny portion of the social studies pre-service teacher curriculum addresses problems of sustainable development. Ayodeji P. Ifegbesan from the University of Johannesburg, M. B. Lawal from Olabisi Onabanjo University (Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria), and Isaac T. Rampedi from Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education (Lagos, Nigeria) presented the results of a content analysis of sustainability themes in the College of Education Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria. The authors believe that this analysis, which identified concepts and topics in the National Commission for Colleges of Education Curriculum for teacher preparation, will help to promote the goals and ethics of education for sustainable development.

Step by step, a global discourse is taking its rightful place in citizenship education. It is no longer a question of whether we should educate global citizens but rather how we should do it. Teachers who are interested in using global citizenship as a framework in their instruction will find the essay *People, Pope and Planet: A Hermeneutic and Spectacle Analysis of Laudato Si' for Global Citizenship Educators* by William Gaudelli from Teachers College, Columbia University, very helpful. Presenting the encyclical offering Pope Francis' vision of environmental challenges and climate change as an example of a global text, Gaudelli provided a multifaceted and detailed analysis of the narrative and, what is similarly important, suggested how the encyclical can be used in the classroom. Besides being an exciting read, the essay is a passionate appeal to citizenship educators to look beyond textbooks and prescribed curricular texts in search of challenge and opportunities.

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