Editorial

Welcome to this issue of *Learning and Teaching: The International Journal of Higher Education in the Social Sciences*.

In the first article, Molly Scott Cato advocates an approach to education for a sustainable world that is based on the principles of craft learning. Learning a craft is characterised by the learner working alongside the teacher, physically engaging with the materials and learning by doing. The teacher shares their tacit knowledge through sympathetic illustration, narrative and metaphor in ways that draw out the creativity of the student. The teacher shows empathy with the difficulties and setbacks encountered by the learner, seeking to build their confidence and their ability to learn from mistakes.

In higher education, the practice of craft learning requires regular face-to-face contact between tutors and students in physically shared spaces and types of experiential learning that engage the physical senses as well as the intellect. The author provides many examples of the applicability of the physical dimension of craft learning to sustainability education, illustrating it most vividly with the Growhampton project that involves students and staff in creating wildlife habitats and growing fruit and vegetables on campus.

In the second article, Kevin Carrico explores the different ways that higher education teachers can address controversial topics in the classroom. Drawing on current scholarship, he endorses the view that teachers should not pretend to be value-neutral, should ensure that the full range of perspectives are presented and discussed and should acknowledge openly the emotions aroused by controversial issues.

When encountering a controversial topic, it is common for people to identify initially with one side or another and subsequently resist information and arguments not compatible with that stance. In the process of teaching a first-year seminar on the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the author developed two new concepts – deidentification and humanisation – to move class participants beyond entrenched national loyalties and ideological positions.

By sharing with the students his changing perspectives on the Cultural Revolution and the reasons for them, the author modelled the process of deidentification. To present the Cultural Revolution as a human event, rather

than a specifically national one, he provided class readings from both Chinese and non-Chinese authors, making sure that there were celebratory and critical sources in each category. The showing of both Chinese and Western documentaries containing archival footage and interviews with participants further reinforced the humanisation of the issues.

In the third article, Patricia Boyer, Lorna Holtman, Carole Murphy and Beverley Thaver outline a programme for doctoral students offered by the University of the Western Cape and the University of Missouri-St. Louis in partnership. The fact that the two universities had a long-standing partnership arrangement and a fund for facilitating exchanges and linkages was very helpful in the development of the new programme, but the proposers still had to do a considerable amount of work, including obtaining endorsement from key figures in both institutions, to bring the plan to fruition.

Interaction between tutors and students and between the students themselves depended on access to a range of electronic technologies and there were ongoing problems with making the virtual learning environment at the University of Missouri available to the South African students. But this did not prevent the main aims of the programme being realised. Students from both countries learned about and from each other and provided mutual support in writing research proposals and literature reviews. Faculty members also gained insights into different national approaches to doctoral education.

The report from Laura Spielvogel and Christian Spielvogel describes the digital textbook they have developed for introductory courses in Anthropology. Each chapter covers a key concept in cultural anthropology that students can read, make notes on and summarise. After undertaking this individual work, students proceed to interact with each other in an online simulation, playing characters involved in a planned cross-cultural wedding between a Japanese woman and an Italian-American man. Each student is provided with a biography and personality profile of their character, all of which are designed to be complex and non-stereotypical. Through interacting in character, students learn about different and often conflicting views on love, marriage, religion, gender roles and family responsibilities.

Responses to the article in *LATISS* 6.1 by Ageeth Sluis and Elise Edwards entitled 'Rethinking combined departments: an argument for History and Anthropology' come next. The commentaries are from Stephen Lyon, Yasar Abu Ghosh, Pavel Himl, Tereza Stöckelová and Lucie Storchová, Robert Gibb, Jakob Krause-Jensen and Veerendra Lele.

The three articles, the report and commentaries indicate the thoughtful and creative ways in which higher education teachers today seek to expand opportunities for students to broaden and deepen their learning using both old and new technologies.

The issue concludes with reviews by Jeroen Huisman and Alan Scott on neoliberalism in universities and the marketisation of higher education in the U.K.

Our thanks go to the authors of the articles, report and commentaries, the anonymous referees who read the report and the articles, the publishers who provided review copies of the books, our own publisher Berghahn and the Editorial Board.

Penny Welch and Susan Wright