



NORTHEASTERN  
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ASSOCIATION

# NEAA NEWSLETTER

~THE WINTER NEWSLETTER WILL BE SENT ELECTRONICALLY~

## BELOIT COLLEGE RELEASES THE MINDSET LIST FOR THE CLASS OF 2009

In the coming weeks, millions of students will be entering college for the first time. On average, these members of the Class of 2009 will be 18 years old, which means they were born in 1987. Starbucks, souped-up car stereos, telephone voicemail systems, and Bill Gates have always been a part of their lives.

Each August, as students start to arrive, Beloit College releases the Beloit College Mindset List, which offers a world view of today's entering college students. It is the creation of Beloit's Keefer Professor of the Humanities Tom McBride and Director of Public Affairs Ron Nief.

McBride, who directs Beloit's First Year Initiatives (FYI) program for entering students, notes that "This year's entering students have grown up in a country where the main business has become business, and where terrorism, from obscure beginnings, has built up slowly but surely to become the threat it is today. Cable channels have become as mainstream as the 'Big 3' used to be, formality in dress has become more quaint than ever, and Aretha Franklin, Kermit the Frog and Jimmy Carter have become old-timers."

"Each year," according to Nief, "When Beloit releases the Mindset List, it is the birth year of the entering students that is the most disturbing fact for most readers. This year will come as no

exception and, once again, the faculty will remain the same age as the students get younger." The list is distributed to faculty on campus during the New Students Day orientation. According to McBride, "It is an important reminder, as faculty start to show signs of 'hardening of the references,' that we think about the touchstones and benchmarks of a generation that has grown up with CNN, home computers, AIDS awareness, digital cameras and the Bush political dynasty. We should also keep in mind that these students missed out on the pleasures of being tossed in the back of a station wagon with a bunch of friends and told to keep the noise down, walking in the woods without fearing Lyme Disease, or setting out to try all of the 28 ice cream flavors at Howard Johnson's."

According to Nief, "This is not serious in-depth research. It is meant to be thought-provoking and fun, yet accurate. It is as relevant as possible, given the broad social and geographic diversity of our students, who are drawn from every state and 50 countries. It is always open to challenge, which has an additional benefit in that it reminds us of students' varied backgrounds. It is still a good reflection of the attitudes and experiences of the young people that we must be aware of from the first day of their college experience."

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~SAVE THE DATE: MAY 5-7, 2006 NEAA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, SUNY ALBANY~

## Message from the Editor

This fall for me has been about adjusting to technology, from laptops to cell phones to learning how to send out a newsletter electronically. Now I am not computer savvy at all—although I was one of the first students at my college to have my own computer in my room, a MacIntosh 512 Enhanced, however, that was the last time I was one of the people ahead of the pack. Now I just hope to be able to get by...

This summer I bought a new laptop but only after a friend had done extensive research and said she would help if I had any trouble—oh yeah, did I mention she lives in California so that theory doesn't work that well. Which leads me to the cell phone—how many minutes do people really need? Do I really need a camera phone? And how are people so good at text messaging only using their thumb?

Do I really need an ipod? Will a Blackberry really improve my life? How can those little memory sticks hold so much information?

My trials do not end there because technology is also part of my everyday teaching. We have at our school, like many of you, what are deemed "Smart Classrooms", rooms that have all the technology built right into the room. However, I was put in a "Dumb Classroom" so I need to rely on our great AV staff to wheel a cart for every class. This has taught me to be flexible because I am never sure what will happen—will I be able to use the equipment as I had planned?

So with all this being said, I realize I would have to hire someone full time to keep me wired and plugged in to the next best thing that is going to help me stay better informed and connected to people. Really, all of this is a long winded way of saying the newsletter did not make it out electronically for this Fall but will be coming directly to your email in-box this winter. However, for all of you who still like to read things on paper (like me) you can just send me an email ([JSkolnikoff@rwu.edu](mailto:JSkolnikoff@rwu.edu)) to request a snail-mail copy.

Remember... we are always looking for submissions.

Jessica Skolnikoff

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## **Lenses of Achievement: A Case Study of Measurement of “Achievement” in a Second Grade Classroom**

By Jamie Dube

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Roger Williams University alumni

How *should* achievement be measured? As a senior project I attempted to answer this question through participant observation in a second grade classroom. During the months of February, March, and April 2004 I spent approximately seventy-five hours total researching the school’s morning literacy block, a time designated for literacy instruction. During this participant observation I took detailed field notes; conducted formal and informal interviews with the classroom teacher, student teacher, and the Roger Williams University professor who supervised the university’s student teaching program at the elementary school; and collected artifacts such as lesson plans, copies of tests, and information sent home to parents. My project had a dual focus. In addition to participant observation for the senior project in which I focused on observing how teachers and students measured achievement through both objective and subjective lenses, I also took notes which focused on educator “best practices” to describe a “typical” second grade classroom for a book about teaching literacy methods.

Educational systems are dramatically affected by both economic and social characteristics. This city of approximately 93,000 suffers from unemployment and economic depression due to a shift in the job market away from the commercial fishing and industry. With a large Portuguese population, the population is both racially and ethnically diverse. Roughly 57% of city residents are high school graduates. These basic facts are important because the school serves as a microcosm for the larger community. The second grade classroom as well as the entire school has a very diverse student body. In addition, many students qualify for free or reduced lunch. The classroom in which I conducted participant observation was composed of twenty-two students, a teacher, and a student teacher.

Specifically, my observations focused on both teachers and student preparations for in-class assessments which are administered at the end of each week. These assessments included a spelling and reading comprehension test. The reading comprehension test required the most intensive in-class preparation. As part of this preparation a student reads the story more than eight times through silent reading and group reads as well as participating in in-class activities in which students answered reading comprehension questions. Students also read the story for homework each night. Since second grade students do not participate in the statewide assessment, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System, the results of in-class assessments served as the main source of data used to measure second grade student achievement relative to standards. The large amount of classroom time devoted to preparation for these in-class assessments indicated the importance that educators placed on the assessment results. In other words, assessment results appeared to be a major factor in determining the level of student achievement.

*Dube continued on page 5*

## Book Reviews

**By Riva Berleant, Cultural Anthropology Contributing Editor**

Caduto, Michael

2003 *A Time before New Hampshire: The Story of a Land and Native Peoples*. Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England..

Gallivan, Martin D.

2003. *James River Chiefdoms: The Rise of Social Inequality in the Chesapeake*. Lincoln, NE: Univ. of Nebraska Press.

MacDougall, Pauleena

2004 *The Penobscot Dance of Resistance*. Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire Press.

This column continues my last one about recent books on eastern Native North America. Like the two titles I discussed last time, these three books are historical, and only one of the authors, Martin D. Gallivan, is an anthropologist.

Gallivan's *James River Chiefdoms*, an account of the coastal Powhatans and Piedmont Monacans of the Chesapeake region, is a synthesis of documentary and archaeological work. Colonial descriptions of the Powhatans and Monacans suggest chiefdom organization. The archaeological record accumulated since the 1960s, however, discloses egalitarian settlements of village food-producers bound by kinship. Gallivan analyzes all the relevant ethnohistorical evidence and archaeological research in order to resolve these discrepant readings. He examines pre-conquest geography and landscape; the demography and distribution of villages through 1600 years of pre-conquest Native settlement; and trade, domestic economy, and community organization so far as archaeology yields evidence about them. He concludes that pre-conquest Powhatan and Monacan social organization had been gradually changing. At the moment of European intrusion both groups were politically and economically positioned to mobilize central authority from an egalitarian matrix. Their centralization of power and authority and their move into chiefdom organization were strategies for dealing with the intruders.

Whereas Gallivan's history ends with Jamestown, Pauleena MacDougall's history of the Penobscot people begins with the sixteenth century. In *The Penobscot Dance of Resistance* MacDougall, an historian and folklorist, combines field and documentary research. She shapes her account around the theme of purposeful cultural retention as resistance to domination. She opens with a description of the Penobscot predicament from the end of World War II to the 1970s, a period of improving economic status and growing political activism. She describes how enduring elements of Penobscot culture function as resistance. These include spiritual values, ceremonial, preservation of language, orally transmitted narratives, subsistence skills, reverence for their own land, and environmental knowledge. Nineteenth-century Penobscots, for example, consistently used their own language while sending their children to learn English at school. They sidestepped agricultural coercion by resolutely carrying on traditional modes of

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subsistence, such as hunting. Throughout centuries of difficult relationships with Europeans, Euro-Americans, and layers of United States government the Penobscot people fended off assaults on their sovereignty and territory.

Michael Caduto's *A Time before New Hampshire: The Story of a Land and Native Peoples* is an ecological history of New Hampshire written for a lay audience. His geological history begins with the formation of the earth and takes us through the formative processes of the last glaciation. His biotic history culminates in the post-glacial arrival of human beings. At this point the narrative shifts from the earth to people, and recounts the succession of Paleo-Indian hunters, Archaic hunter-gatherers, and food-producers. We know the last as the Abenaki, inhabitants of the landscape when Europeans entered in the seventeenth century. Caduto embellishes, or perhaps puffs, his account of human groups with imagined scenes, stories, and conversations meant to illustrate their way of life. I don't think these will convince anthropologists, and I much prefer his splendidly vivid account of geological history to his invented scenarios of human history. But maybe such scenarios will appeal to the target readers.

What can we discern from these books about the temper of Native American studies? First, all are historical. Only one author, Gallivan, is an anthropologist, even though MacDougall supplies material for anthropological thought. I would not like to see Caduto's style of invented scenarios flourish, even though I like his combination of environmental and human history that has such distinguished antecedents. Once more we see that anthropology has become only one of many disciplines that explore and amplify Native American studies.

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*Dube continued from page 3*

Throughout the course of my study, I observed two "lenses of achievement" used by educators to assess student performance: a subjective as well as an objective lens. I defined the objective lens as achievement measured by assessment results such as spelling and reading comprehension test scores. Based on the objective assessment results, the elementary school has been labeled by the State Department of Education as a "needs improvement" school and the school must implement improvement strategies that will result in higher assessment scores. Markedly different from the objective lens, the subjective lens measures achievement by personalized methods tailored to each student. Through this lens, educators assess achievement based on a student's progress in building upon their current knowledge: in this way, every student may not meet assessment goals but they are still considered to have progressed if they build upon their knowledge base.

A definite tension between these two lenses of achievement existed within the classroom and the entire school community. This tension appeared to be derived from the importance placed upon the objective lens by teachers and administrators. Additionally, as a "failing school", the entire school community felt pressure to raise assessment scores. Despite this and perhaps as a result of the subjective lens of achievement, the second grade classroom teacher and student teacher,

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among others including the Roger Williams University professor, viewed the school as a place where they enjoyed both teaching and learning. This tension leads to the ultimate question: how *should* achievement be measured? Based on the value that both lenses have within the classroom as well as the school, a balance between the two lenses should be reached. With this balance, educators would use the lenses independently and simultaneously. This would provide the most accurate image of student achievement. In this way, a school that does not meet assessment result goals can still remain a school in which people enjoy working and learning.

## **Beloit College's Mindset List® for the Class of 2009**

Most students entering college this fall were born in 1987.

1. Andy Warhol, Liberace, Jackie Gleason, and Lee Marvin have always been dead.
2. They don't remember when "cut and paste" involved scissors.
3. Heart-lung transplants have always been possible.
4. Wayne Gretzky never played for Edmonton.
5. Boston has been working on the "The Big Dig" all their lives.
6. With little need to practice, most of them do not know how to tie a tie.
7. Pay-Per-View television has always been an option.
8. They never had the fun of being thrown into the back of a station wagon with six others.
9. Iran and Iraq have never been at war with each other.
10. They are more familiar with Greg Gumbel than with Bryant Gumbel.
11. Philip Morris has always owned Kraft Foods.
12. Al-Qaeda has always existed with Osama bin Laden at its head.
13. They learned to count with Lotus 1-2-3.
14. Car stereos have always rivaled home component systems.
15. Jimmy Swaggart and Jim Bakker have never preached on television.
16. Voice mail has always been available.
17. "Whatever" is not part of a question but an expression of sullen rebuke.
18. The federal budget has always been more than a trillion dollars.
19. Condoms have always been advertised on television.
20. They may have fallen asleep playing with their Gameboys in the crib.
21. They have always had the right to burn the flag.
22. For daily caffeine emergencies, Starbucks has always been around the corner.
23. Ferdinand Marcos has never been in charge of the Philippines.
24. Money put in their savings account the year they were born earned almost 7% interest.
25. Bill Gates has always been worth at least a billion dollars.
26. Dirty dancing has always been acceptable.
27. Southern fried chicken, prepared with a blend of 11 herbs and spices, has always been available in China.
28. Michael Jackson has always been bad, and greed has always been good.
29. The Starship Enterprise has always looked dated.
30. Pixar has always existed.
31. There has never been a "fairness doctrine" at the FCC.

32. Judicial appointments routinely have been "Borked."
33. Aretha Franklin has always been in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.
34. There have always been zebra mussels in the Great Lakes.
35. Police have always been able to search garbage without a search warrant.
36. It has always been possible to walk from England to mainland Europe on dry land.
37. They have grown up in a single superpower world.
38. They missed the oat bran diet craze.
39. American Motors has never existed.
40. Scientists have always been able to see supernovas.
41. *Les Miserables* has always been on stage.
42. Halogen lights have always been available at home, with a warning.
43. "Baby M" may be a classmate, and contracts with surrogate mothers have always been legal.
44. RU486 has always been on the market.
45. There has always been a pyramid in front of the Louvre in Paris.
46. British Airways has always been privately owned.
47. Irradiated food has always been available but controversial.
48. Snowboarding has always been a popular winter pastime.
49. Libraries have always been the best centers for computer technology and access to good software.
50. Biosphere 2 has always been trying to create a revolution in the life sciences.
51. The Hubble Telescope has always been focused on new frontiers.
52. Researchers have always been looking for stem cells.
53. They do not remember "a kinder and gentler nation."
54. They never saw the shuttle *Challenger* fly.
55. The TV networks have always had cable partners.
56. Airports have always had upscale shops and restaurants.
57. Black Americans have always been known as African-Americans.
58. They never saw Pat Sajak or Arsenio Hall host a late night television show.
59. Matt Groening has always had a *Life in Hell*.
60. Salman Rushdie has always been watching over his shoulder.
61. Digital cameras have always existed.
62. Tom Landry never coached the Cowboys.
63. Time Life and Warner Communications have always been joined.
64. CNBC has always been on the air.
65. *The Field of Dreams* has always been drawing people to Iowa.
66. They never saw a Howard Johnson's with 28 ice cream flavors.
67. Reindeer at Christmas have always distinguished between secular and religious decorations.
68. *Entertainment Weekly* has always been on the newsstand.
69. Lyme Disease has always been a ticking concern in the woods.
70. Jimmy Carter has always been an elder statesman.
71. Miss Piggy and Kermit have always dwelt in Disneyland.
72. *America's Funniest Home Videos* has always been on television.
73. Their nervous new parents heard C. Everett Koop proclaim nicotine as addictive as heroin.
74. Lever has always been looking for 2000 parts to clean.
75. They have always been challenged to distinguish between news and entertainment on cable TV.



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