

Critical Questions in Education

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Eric C. Sheffield, Editor

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** Cover design by Jessica A. Heybach

** Cover photo taken by Krystal Roig

** Our thanks to the cadre of scholars who serve as reviewers without whose services the journal could not exist.

FROM THE EDITOR

I want to welcome everyone to the first special theme issue of *Critical Questions in Education (CQIE)*. As many of you know, and some of you don't, *CQIE* is published by the Academy for Educational Studies at Missouri State University, Springfield. The Academy is the brain-child of its director, Steven P. Jones. When Steve came to me with his idea, he suggested that foundations of education needed a place—a place to protect it from what he saw as a vehement attack from all quarters of the education world. Over the nearly decade that the Academy has been in existence those attacks have not weakened; to the contrary, they have grown. This special issue is meant to begin a serious conversation about the current state of affairs in foundational studies as well as its future.

Benjamin Baez of Florida International University and Deron Boyles of Georgia State University were kind enough to accept our invitation to guest edit this special issue. In our initial conversations about the issue, we decided on a two step process for the submission of articles: invite well-known foundational scholars to submit manuscripts and then send a general call out for manuscripts that creatively re-envisioned the role foundational studies might play. This plan worked beyond what I even hoped. The invitations are below, respectively:

*We write today to invite your participation in a special theme issue of the Academy for Educational Studies' online journal, **Critical Questions in Education (CQIE)**. CQIE is a fledgling journal, having published five issues to date, and one envisioned as a refuge for important foundationally oriented manuscripts. CQIE submissions go through a double-blind peer review process by way of a cadre of more than fifty reviewers nationwide.*

As you certainly know, foundational studies in colleges of education have been weathering a rather vehement and continual attack of late brought about by an unfortunate corporate conception of teaching and learning as technocratic, statistical, narrow, and "data-driven." Recently an assistant commissioner in Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education was anecdotally reported as saying, "there is no evidence to support that foundations courses make anyone a better teacher"; the University of Georgia is dropping its foundations program at the end of this academic year; and, colleges of education nationwide are rapidly replacing foundations courses with those reflective of this corporate mentality.

With that in mind, and because of your scholarship and leadership in educational foundations, we invite you to contribute a manuscript in defense of foundations to this special issue. Our hope is that it can be one of a growing number of "places" to which we can point policy makers who want to eliminate foundations courses based on the misguided perception that such courses do not make for more enlightened teaching and learning.

CQIE has invited Benjamin Baez of Florida International University and Deron Boyles of Georgia State University to serve as guest editors for this issue. We hope you have both the time and inclination to join us in this important endeavor. If you are unable to join in this important initiative, we would be interested in knowing of other scholars you suggest. Please contact any of us at any time with any questions. Once we have a feel for who will be submitting pieces we will send out a timeline for the project.

Critical Questions in Education, a double-blind peer reviewed online journal sponsored by the Academy for Educational Studies at Missouri State University, will publish a special theme issue in spring 2013 guest edited by Benjamin Baez (Florida International University) and Deron Boyles (Georgia State University). We invite manuscripts that are oriented toward creatively re-thinking, re-envisioning, and/or re-imagining the place and role of foundational studies in education. This general call follows an invitation process that has brought on board a strong cadre of foundational scholars, approximately 20 in number, who will be writing *In Defense of Foundations* from various perspectives. This general call is meant to round out this theme issue with special attention to re-imagining the future role foundations might play in education.

As the issue progressed, several of our early invitees had to forego the project because of time constraints, both professional and personal. However, we think you will find the manuscripts in this issue thought-provoking and a source for serious discussion about the present and future role of foundational studies.

Before I leave you to your reading, a note about the cover: we (myself and cover designer Jessica A. Heybach) decided on this image very purposefully. It is an image a student gave me years ago as a farewell gift when I left my previous life as a public school teacher. We think it visually represents all the questions about foundations of education that are taken up in this special issue. We invite you to consider that image in addition to the manuscripts.

With that, I leave you to your reading.

PAX,

Eric C. Sheffield
Springfield, Missouri
May, 2013.