

**ASSOCIATION FOR
CONSTRUCTIVIST TEACHING
2007 Conference**



**University of California at Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
October 26 - 27, 2007**



The Association for Constructivist Teaching is grateful to the Early Childhood Education Program at Georgia State University for printing the ACT 2007 conference program. Special thanks go to Georgia State University graduate research assistant, Adrienne Perkins, for preparing the program.

A special thanks also goes to Melissa Benham for helping with logistics at the Clark Kerr campus site and to the Mills College graduate students for assisting with registration and information throughout the conference.

THANK YOU!!



ACT CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Friday, October 26, 2007

Registration & Breakfast 7:30-8:30

8:30 - 9:45 Keynote Address
Dr. Paul Ammon, UC Berkeley
"Keeping the Promise of Constructivist Teaching
through Artful Teacher Preparation"

10:00-10:50 Thematic Sessions

11:00-11:50 Thematic Sessions

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch on your own

1:30 - 2:20 Thematic Sessions

2:30-3:20 Thematic Sessions

3:30-4:20 Thematic Sessions

4:30-6:00 Research Roundtable

6:00 -7:00 Reception

Saturday, October 27, 2007

Registration & Breakfast 7:30-8:30

8-8:50 Thematic Sessions

9-9:50 Thematic Sessions

10-10:50 Thematic Sessions

11-11:50 Thematic Sessions

12-12:50 Thematic Sessions

1:00 - 2:15 Keynote Luncheon
Dr. Ruth Cossey, Mills College
"Constructing Joy through Mathematics"

**2007 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
ASSOCIATION FOR CONSTRUCTIVIST TEACHING**

University of California at Berkeley
Berkeley, CA

**Friday, October 27, 2007
Registration & Breakfast 7:30 am - 8:30 am**

Opening Remarks/Keynote Address

8:30 am - 9:45 am

Krutch Theater

*"Keeping the Promise of Constructivist Teaching
through Artful Teacher Preparation"*

**Dr. Paul Ammon
UC Berkeley**

Friday Session One 10:00 am-10:50 am

Conference Room 203

Join Dr. Paul Ammon for a more intimate conversation about constructivist teaching and artful teacher preparation.

Conference Room 102

*The Difficulty of Giving Change When Payment Is Made
with a Dime: Teaching Tens and Ones with Coins?*

Cynthia Chandler, Black Hills State University
Constance Kamii, University of Alabama at Birmingham

Findings from research will be presented to show that many second graders cannot give change when a dime is offered to pay for 6 cents worth of candy. (A videotape will show that these children can easily add 6 cents to a dime and know that a dime is worth 10 cents.) The difficulty of subtracting 6 cents from a dime will be explained, and educational implications will be discussed.

Conference Room 104

Using Problem-Based Learning to Enhance the Construction of Scientific Knowledge for Students of All Ability Levels

Kimberly M. Tyler, Texas Wesleyan University

Lisa Dryden, Texas Wesleyan University

Heather French, The Riley Behavioral and Educational Center

The purpose of this session is to introduce teachers to the importance of Problem-Based Learning in the teaching of science to students of all ability levels. Focus will be placed on the components of a Problem-Based Learning episode, the roles of participants, and the writing and implementation of actual problems specific to the teaching of science. There will also be a focus on the importance of using this method to teach students who have been identified as gifted, learning disabled, and autistic.

Conference Room 204

Constructivist Teaching in the Arts

Joan Davenport, California State University East Bay

Eric Engdahl, California State University East Bay

This session will demonstrate how constructivist theory may be applied in the arts classroom to differentiate instruction in an attempt to meet the needs of all learners. Participants in this session will play an active role in several arts experiences. They will reflect upon and discuss the importance of creating a classroom environment where students are actively involved in their own learning.

Friday Session Two 11:00 am- 11:50 am

Conference Room 104

Not a Peculiar Institution: Re-Constructing Knowledge about Slavery in U.S. History

David M. Donahue, Mills College

Nancy Ogden, Hayward High School

Catherine Perkins, Mount Eden High School

Avi Black, Alameda County Office of Education

As historians reframe and reconstruct their understanding of the past, so must teachers and students of history. What do processes of reframing and reconstructing the past look like when the topic is as contentious and sensitive as slavery in U.S. history? The participants will examine how they construct knowledge when presented with primary source documents that challenge conventional textbooks narratives of slavery, explore the implications for teaching history, and learn how teachers have used lesson study to gain insights into their students' construction of historical knowledge.

Conference Room 102

Classroom Discipline and Moral Autonomy

Marilyn Watson, Program Director, Developmental Studies Center, Retired

The goal of constructivist moral education is moral autonomy and the ideal constructivist approach to discipline is cooperative. However, as all teachers know, some children won't cooperate. This session will briefly outline aspects of attachment theory and research that explain the origins of children's disposition to be cooperative and discuss practical approaches to working cooperatively even with "uncooperative" children. We will discuss a number of real-life classroom vignettes related to classroom discipline and management that support moral autonomy.

Conference Room 203

Journey of a Constructivist Teacher: Stories From 3 Generations

Lisa Coffman

Kelly Kent-Johnson

Newsome Park Elementary School

This session provides participants with the opportunity to think about the journey of a constructivist teacher in a public school setting under the limitations that all teachers face in today's world of education. We compare the stories and experiences of 3 generations of teachers, ranging in levels of experience from less than 1 year to 26 years of teaching. Real world scenarios are used for evaluation and discussion among the participants.

Conference Room 204

Teaching and Human Rights Advocacy: Language Learning as if Children Mattered

Susan Schaller, Berkeley CA

Human rights advocacy naturally leads to constructivist learning. Scandanavian policy, based on children's rights, directs language teaching to profoundly deaf babies. Salient cognitive and environmental factors in teaching deaf babies born to hearing parents cannot be ignored when students' learning needs take precedence over teachers' (and parents') pedagogy. Open discussion invited.

Lunch on your own
Noon - 1:30 pm



Friday Session Three 1:30 pm - 2:20 pm

Conference Room 104

Constructivism and the Inclusive Early Childhood Literate Community: A Jowonio Perspective

Chris Kliewer, University of Northern Iowa

Anita Freezman, Jowonio School

Pam Johnson, Jowonio School

Beth Snyder, Jowonio School

In this session, three lead teachers and one early childhood researcher report on the literate development of preschool children with significant developmental disabilities in the fully inclusive environment of the Jowonio School, Syracuse, NY. In interactive fashion, we describe how teachers approach the idea of literacy for all children from a developmentally appropriate, constructivist, and Reggio Emilia frame. While we focus on the experiences of children with significant developmental disabilities, the inclusive nature of Jowonio allows for us to examine and comment on all children's multiple literacies.

Conference Room 102

Understanding Constructivism in the Era of NCLB

Julie Rainer Dangel, Georgia State University

Linda Kroll, Mills College

Teresa Harris, James Madison University

Joanne Falinski, Charter Schools Institute - SUNY

Would you like to have a better understanding of constructivist teaching and learning? Have you wondered how constructivist pedagogy works in our current classrooms that are often defined by results on standardized tests? This session explores the basic tenets of constructivism and their current application as related to NCLB.

Conference Room 203

Using the Cycle of Inquiry System: Training and Measuring Levels of Representation and Inquiry among Pre-service and In-service Teachers

Jane Tingle Broderick, East Tennessee State University
Seong Bock Hong, University of Michigan-Dearborn

We have developed several tools for training and measuring teacher candidates' skills and abilities with representation and inquiry. The tools presented are based on a lack of a system to train teacher candidates in emergent inquiry practice, and our hypothesis that as teacher candidates develop better representation skills with materials they facilitate better inquiry.

Conference Room 204

Interfusing Global Citizenship Education and Constructivism: Mutual Synergy

Kamilla Bahbahani, Kelowna, BC, Canada

This theoretical comparison of global citizenship with constructivist education will examine how a global, cosmopolitan, universalist outlook can be meshed with a constructivist paradigm for their mutual enhancement. Constructivism focuses on many of the skills and attitudes essential for global citizenship, while global citizenship provides challenging, multifaceted material for constructivist educators.

Friday Session Four 2:30 pm - 3:20 pm

Conference Room 102

The Development of a Virtual Class Using Constructivist Pedagogy

Lorri J. MacDonald, University of Detroit Mercy

This presentation reviews the development of the course, *Program Planning and Evaluation*. The course is presented to the participants to enable them to see how constructivist pedagogy is utilized through presentations, assignments and the final reflection paper. Data collection and results are presented as well as proposed revision for the next semester course as a result of student input and data collected throughout the semester.

Conference Room 104

Professional Study Groups: Teachers Constructing Knowledge

Joanne Falinski, Charter Schools Institute - SUNY

Liz Fogel

Teaching and learning for understanding demands new conceptions of content and pedagogy as well as a re-examination of teacher and student roles. The presenters discuss their personal experience in the use of study groups as a way to help teachers construct knowledge about practice and support deep sustaining change, and help participants to form an action plan for using the study group model in their own workplace.

Conference Room 203

A Deeper Look at Constructivism: Playing the Doubting and Believing Game

Alise Shafer, Evergreen Community School

Diana Kitano, Evergreen Community School

Inherent in constructivist teaching is a teacher's ability to simultaneously suspend disbelief in order to understand the child's thinking and conversely to find the inconsistencies in a proposed theory and challenge the thinking. This game of doubting and believing is at the heart of good teaching. Together we will explore the paradoxical relationship of doubting and believing as it relates to children's construction of knowledge in learning groups.

Conference Room 204

Pythagoras Revisited: Exploring the Physics of Sound through Musical Instrument Making

Carolyn Hildebrandt, University of Northern Iowa

Sonia Yoshizawa, University of Northern Iowa

Explore the physics of sound through musical instrument making! Learn how children can use homemade musical instruments to construct relationships between the physical aspects of strings (e.g., material, length, thickness, and tension) and the physical/psychological aspects of musical sound (e.g., pitch, loudness, timbre, and duration). All participants are welcome—no musical background is necessary!

Friday Session Five 3:30 p.m. - 4:20 p.m.

Conference Room 102

The Influence of Constructivist Theory in Play Therapy

Esperanza Uribe, Garza Garcia, Nuevo Leon, Mexico

Dr. Rheta DeVries, Regents Center for Early Developmental Education

A child therapist uses Piaget's theory and activities from constructivist education, integrated with certain aspects of psychoanalytic thought, to develop a new perspective on play therapy with children.

Conference Room 104

*All about the First Degree Function through Generative Constructivism
and Meta-constructivism (from teaching methods to evaluation)*

Octavian Lecca, DELFO Academy

After presenting the generative process of building mathematics through interrelated categories from reality to the world of functions, we continue by developing the world of the first degree function, and by identifying its relations with other possible worlds. Student evaluation is done through problems which have several solving paths so that the teacher could evaluate students' constructivist and meta-constructivist skills as well as their openness to interdisciplinarity.

Conference Room 203

Moving Constructivist Practice into Primary Classrooms: Beginning with the Environment

Pamela Evanshen, East Tennessee State University

Tracey Crowe, Milligan College

The purpose of this session is to share background information and ideas on how to create a primary (kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and/or multiage) learning environment based on constructivist theory and principles. The presenters, former teachers, curriculum specialists and administrators in primary schools share photographs from a variety of public school primary classrooms. Experiences facilitating growth of traditionally trained teachers towards a more constructivist approach are shared and used as a spring board for discussion.

Conference Room 204

Taking Back our Profession

Susan Harman

CalCARE (California Coalition for Authentic Reform in Education)

NCLB has made it nearly impossible to teach at any level, kindergarten through graduate school. We will analyze the law and plan for a massive spring boycott of the tests.

5th ANNUAL RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE **Friday, 4:30 pm -6:00 p.m. Krutch Theater**

Assessing Double Column Addition, Regrouping, and Conceptual Understanding: Contrasting Constructivist and Traditionally Taught 3rd Graders in Title 1 Schools

Alice P. Wakefield

Old Dominion University (VA)

Students in two different Title I magnet schools were tested for procedural knowledge and conceptual understanding of double column addition. One group of children had been taught to add with memorized algorithms, and the other group had been taught to add by figuring out what to do for themselves. The two groups were equally successful in reaching the correct answer, but children in the constructivist group were more likely to use hierarchical thinking to calculate the answer than were the traditionally taught children who were more likely to count by ones ($p < .07$).

Elapsed Time: Why Is It So Hard to Teach?

Constance Kamii

University of Alabama-Birmingham

140 students (about 35 each from grades 2-5) were individually interviewed with 10 questions like "I started working on a test at 9:05 and finished at 11:00. How long did I work on this test?" Many students gave answers like 2 hours 55 minutes and 2 hours 5 minutes.

RECEPTION 6:00 - 7:00 pm



**Location: The Garden Room
Join Board Members in
Celebrating the 2007 Conference!**

Saturday, October 27, 2007

Registration & Breakfast 7:30 am - 8:30 am

Saturday Session One 8:00 am - 8:50 am

Conference Room 102

Creating a Love for Books in Your Struggling Readers: A Balanced Approach to Literacy is the Key!

Lisa Dryden, Texas Wesleyan University

Kimberly Tyler, Texas Wesleyan University

Heather French, The Riley Behavioral and Educational Center

This session is designed to equip teachers with classroom practices created to foster reading comprehension, reading fluency, and reading appreciation in their struggling readers. Teachers will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of hands-on strategies considered both effective and easy to incorporate in already existing literacy curriculums. Join us for an informative session as we discuss the latest and greatest in reading instruction!

Conference Room 203

*Infusing Constructivist Strategies in the Capstone Clinical
Experience Using Teacher Work Sample Methodology*
C. Griffin-Famble, Winston-Salem State University
Billie Friedland, Delaware State University
Brenda J. Kennedy, Winston-Salem State University

The data presented in this research study give voice to how effectively our teacher candidates use pedagogical knowledge and constructivist teaching strategies to address classroom learner issues and illuminate the day-to-day instruction in P-12 classrooms. The presenters share five years of data that illuminate Teacher Work Sample (TWS) methodology as an excellent vehicle to prepare constructivist teachers for P-12 schools.

Conference Room 204

While in the Corner I Became an Effective Classroom Leader!
Educational Experiences and the Influences on the Practices of New Teachers
Barbara Stein-Stover, Alliant International University
Cybil Gilbertson, University of California at Santa Barbara

Time will be spent examining the need for developing an awareness of the power of building on the immediate daily experiences to connect theory and practice. A method of centering oneself on the now and learning to get away from your bias built from experiences will be introduced. (interactive)

Saturday Session Two 9:00 am - 9:50 am

Conference Room 102

Collaboration of University, Pre and In-Service Teachers
Using Constructivist Pedagogy for Math Instruction
Marianne D'Emidio Caston, Antioch University

Using case studies and curricula from a series of workshops and coursework, insights to the transformation of disposition and mathematical capacity building will be shared with participants. Engaging in direct experience with constructivist teaching methods, participants will gain new pedagogical knowledge to use in their own settings. Finally, a discussion regarding these methods and the contemporary testing climate will conclude the session.

Conference Room 203

Self-Study Group in Writing

Frederica Breuer, Wildwood School & Mills College

Lianne Morrison

Christine Braunohler

Emily Hobbs

Jenny Jackson-Patton

Gabriel Kessler

Wildwood Elementary School

Motivated by questions of how to become better teachers of writing, and a need to develop and articulate a cohesive school wide writing program that meets state standards and testing requirements while maintaining a constructivist approach to teaching, teachers from Wildwood School organized a self study group focused on the teaching of writing. In a conversational format we will share our process, some elements of our evolving writing program, some insights about the teaching of writing that we have gathered from working in a close school wide collaboration and how those collaborations are supporting our practice.

Conference Room 204

Reggio-Inspired Project Work in a Public Multi-lingual Pre-Kindergarten:

Pedagogical Documentation Supports the Construction of Knowledge

Lani Shapiro, Saint Paul Public Schools

Monarch Butterfly Studies, a project that spanned the first six weeks of the school year, created a community of 4-year-old learners in our School Readiness classroom. The children's learning spurred a tri-lingual conversation (English, Spanish, and Hmong).

Saturday Session Three 10:00 am - 10:50 am

Conference Room 102

College Students Learn About Writing from Kindergarteners

Lynda Venhuizen, South Dakota State University

Suzanne Brokmeier, South Dakota State University

College students can learn a lot from kindergarteners, as evident in this session. Early childhood majors examined their understanding of the writing process, honed their assessment skills, and explored the capacities of kindergarteners' writing skills through analysis of multiple samples of children's writing from a classroom in which writing was a valued part of the day. In this session, participants learn about practices that build skills in both populations.

Conference Room 203

Preparing Teachers To Be Constructors of Professional Knowledge: Three Case Examples

Anna Richert, Mills College
Colette Rabin, San Jose State University
Carrie Wilson, Mills College
Tomás Galguera, Mills College

In this session we grapple with what is entailed in preparing teachers to construct professional knowledge. The presenters report on research they have conducted that looks closely at a learning site in teacher preparation to see what the novice teachers learned (and did not learn) about constructing professional knowledge. The three sites are: 1) the student teacher/supervisor post-observation conversation; 2) two courses in the university pre-service curriculum; and 2) a web-based assignment associated with a course in language acquisition.

Conference Room 204

"...First They Fight You, Then You Win." Exploring Ways to Reduce Student and Faculty Resistance to a Constructivist Learning Approach.

Carolyn F. Chryst, SUNY-Oneonta

"...First they laugh at you, then they fight you , then you win!" Mahatma Gandhi's perspective on revolution helps to frame an approach to reducing resistance to constructivist theory by students and faculty. Experience, explore, and examine three themes of resistance that influence a constructivist classroom and working with oppositional faculty. Participants will experience activities/strategies that have proven effective in reducing resistance. Pro-active solutions and successful strategies will be shared both during the session and post-session in a website, *The Constructivist Corner*.

Saturday Session Four 11:00 am - 11:50 am

Conference Room 102

The Construction of the Writer Self in Young Children

Linda R. Kroll, Mills College
Jennifer M.cGann Arnest, Mills College Children's School

In this session, we will focus on the development of the children's writing and oral language with regard to writing. We will look at the change in their writing over time, and the change in the conversation about writing that took place at the end of each writers' workshop period. What was striking was the change in how the children used evocative and precise language in talking about their writing, and to a lesser extent, in their actual writing. We will also discuss how both the teacher and the observer's understanding of the developing writing process changed as they planned the workshop together.

Conference Room 203

Using Music and Movement to Nurture Young Children's Creative Thinking
Rebecca Isbell, East Tennessee State University

This session focuses on using music and movement to find new ways of thinking. It includes current research supporting this inclusion and practical approaches that inspire young children to use these areas of multiple intelligences that are often undervalued. Music and movement provide teachers with new ways to create an environment that nurtures creative thinking and problem solving.

Conference Room 204

From Practice to Theory: Outdoor Classrooms in Teacher Education
Irene Plonczak, Hofstra University

The purpose of the workshop is to inform and share the pedagogical potential of teaching and learning through an outdoor classroom that takes the form of a vegetable garden. The emphasis is on how action in a vegetable garden can inform pedagogical theory that supports an interdisciplinary curriculum approach, use of technology (pod casts) in teaching and learning, hands-on learning, group work, project-based learning, and environment-based learning.

Saturday Session Five 12:00 noon - 12:50 p.m.

Conference Room 102

Lesson Study: Creating and Sustaining Constructivist Professional Learning
Catherine Lewis, Mills College

This presentation will explore lesson study, a professional learning approach in which teachers collaborate in cycles of inquiry centered on shared observation of live classroom lessons. Video and activities from lesson study cycles will highlight the process, and data on the impact of lesson study will be presented.

Conference Room 203

Constructing Professional Knowledge: The Rewards and Challenges of "Reflection in Action"
Claire Bove, Mills College
Maida Stupski, Lick-Wilmerding High School
Adam Lucas, Saint Mary's College of California
Julie Gartner, Berkeley High School

In this session three teachers, who teach in different settings, discuss how they built into their everyday practice data gathering and analysis strategies that help them build their base of professional knowledge, which then guides their pedagogical decision-making. They will provide data gathering examples and discuss how these data have influenced their subsequent instruction. They also discuss the challenges of doing this work.

Conference Room 204

Facilitating Inquiry Learning through Song

Nancy Dulberg, Saint Mary's College of California

Songs can function as powerful, personal connections to inquiry about others' lives and their perspectives. The interactive session includes demonstration of arts integration, inquiry teaching, bringing curriculum alive, and opportunities for participants to experience the "a-ha" of constructing knowledge and understanding in and through the power of song. No singing background needed - come join us!

Keynote Luncheon

Saturday, 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm

"Constructing Joy Through Mathematics"

Dr. Ruth Cossey, Mills College

Location: The Garden Room

ACT Business Meeting to follow in Room 102. Please come provide suggestions and feedback to the board.

Travel home safely!

Watch for 2008 conference information online SOON at:
<http://www.odu.edu/educ.act.conf.html>

The Fall Issue of the ACT journal, *The Constructivist*,
is on-line at: <http://www.odu.edu/act/journal>

Association for Constructivist Teaching

Visit us on-line at:

<http://www.odu.edu/act>

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