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Editorial - "Glocal", "Glocavores": Good Gadgetry?

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In the movie "Up in the Air", *Glocal* is a neologism, a clever witticism conjured up by a naïve business school graduate at an agency hired by corporations to let go of employees that become redundant in corporate mergers/cuts. Her solution to the unpleasant nature of telling *real* human beings that they no longer had a job was to try and automate this inhumane process, i.e., have a scripted flowchart be read out at a safe distance via computers. In theory, a local call center could take care of firings done globally, at very little cost to the agency. Thus the neologism "glocal" suggests the gadgetry of global connectivity afforded through computer networks at our disposal for destructive and constructive purposes. The reader is wondering what the editorial alliteration has to do with the present issue of the journal. An explanation is in order.

First, the journal would not exist but for the support of the global community of scholars regularly contributing to it. Second, the title of the journal no longer has the local label "Montana" attached to it. This Spanish word meaning "land of mountains" has already been appropriated by a Danish furniture company that makes high end wooden furniture for homes, as well as characters from the film and cine media. It was high time for the journal to shed old skin and embrace the generic title "The Mathematics Enthusiast", which more accurately reflects the nature of the journal, and the directions in which it has grown.

In the last 6 years, approximately 5% of the submissions have come from Montana, and usually from my prodding locals to contribute to the journal. A perusal of the table of contents of the journal will reveal that a very large proportion of the articles come from the global community of scholars, and a smaller portion from those in the U.S. To this end the journal has begun to support *The Psychology of Mathematics Education- North America* (PME-NA). In October 2010, I was approached by several colleagues at the annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio with the suggestion that the journal be open to submissions from the community of scholars that form this professional organization. Given the sheer abundance of *unread* Conference proceedings conveniently available in pdf format, which can be mined via search engines, it seemed worthwhile to re-publish a selection of interesting papers in a special issue each year provided they passed an additional burden of peer review. This relationship with PME-

NA is meant to be **anti-symbiotic**, i.e., The Mathematics Enthusiast does not depend on PME-NA in any way- We do quite well on our own and do not need any professional organization to support or sustain us. In a similar vein PME-NA does not depend on The Mathematics Enthusiast either, since it publishes its own conference proceedings each year, and has been a tremendous professional organization for many mathematics education scholars in the U.S, myself included. The only reason the journal is supportive of PME-NA, is to give a possible journal outlet for colleagues at Institutions that do not recognize or value online conference proceedings. It is more or less a bibliometric fact that many Institutions do not give the same point value to a proceedings paper as opposed to a journal article unless the proceedings is listed in a recognized academic index (Sriraman, 2011). Vol8,no.3 of The Mathematics Enthusiast contains 6 extended contributions from the 2010 meeting of PME-NA. The theme of these papers is “optimizing student understanding in mathematics”.

The Mathematics Enthusiast is not a periodical like The Mathematics Teacher or The College Mathematics Journal. However, there are some elements of these two journals in articles addressing the teaching of mathematics content or simply mathematical content at the school and university levels respectively. The journal is also not a pure mathematics education research journal either, although it regularly features articles from the mathematics education research community. Our goal is to remain eclectic and open to the wider community of scholars besides mathematicians and mathematics educators. It is often the case that those looking into mathematics through a different disciplinary lens can offer perspectives that are surprisingly refreshing, and of interest to the community of readers.

Vol9, nos 1&2 [January 2012] of the journal will also be available in early August, in the online medium 6 months in advance. The print version of this issue will become available from Information Age Publishing in January 2012. Vol.9, no.3 [June 2012] will contain extended papers from the North Calotte Conference in Mathematics Education that took place in Tromso, Norway in 2010. The delay is due to being unable to locate appropriate reviewers for the submissions. The journal strives to find researchers who are capable of giving constructive reviews and familiar with the content of the article. Sometimes this becomes difficult, and the “objectivity” or the “black box” of blind review often results in reviews that are not helpful to the author in question, nor the journal. There is an analogy to the “firing” process at corporations mentioned in the first paragraph, and the “rejection” process of manuscripts in many journals. We are trying very hard to devise a completely open peer review system, where Latourian black boxes do not govern decisions that can affect authors (Sriraman, 2011).

The monograph series affiliated with the journal retains the “Montana” moniker and has 5 monographs in development for release in the next two years. One of these monographs is particularly ambitious because it attempts to cover the state of the art of mathematics education in China, Korea, Singapore, Japan, Malaysia, and India. This is slated for release late next year with a preliminary book of extended abstracts available free on the website for those interested.

On a parting note and in keeping with the neologism “glocal”, the community of 21st century readers of the journal can be thought of as glocavores (as opposed to locavores), since we readily consume ideas that spawn all around the world. In a more global sense, the Arab Spring is a testament to the fact the connectivity can be construed as a useful/constructive tool for instigating change- of the self, of ideas, and of the notion of “glocal” as a good thing, as opposed to the way it was conceived of by the female protagonist in “Up in the Air”.

Reference

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