

In Memory of Murray

Sheryle Bergmann Drewe

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In Memory of Murray

On March 26th, 2001, philosophers of education lost a wonderful scholar, colleague and friend. Murray Elliot passed away after a courageous fight against cancer. Murray exhibited incredible strength during his illness. Having enjoyed his company, his feedback, and his never-ending encouragement for many years, I was shocked to find out about his situation. However, during his last few months Murray continued to cheer *me* with his e-mails. His humble strength and concern for others was evident right till the end.

Murray was not only concerned with individual colleagues and friends, his work for the discipline of philosophy of education is immeasurable. Murray was a founding member of the Canadian Philosophy of Education Society. He has been an integral part of the Society from its inception. Also, the journal you hold in your hands was largely a result of Murray's efforts. He personally raised money to keep the journal afloat. Murray has also had a significant influence on future philosophers of education. Following are a few words from a student and colleague of Murray's.

We will miss you Murray,
Sheryle Bergmann Drewe
Editor, *Paidēusis*

Murray Elliott was a teacher and mentor of mine for the past five years; like many other students he brought me onto his research projects, taught me in the classroom, helped me with my teaching and encouraged me in my research.

Murray loved teaching, and it was obvious that he worked hard to create a fair and productive environment both for his students in his classrooms and for the graduate students in the department. It was also important to him that graduate students were involved in teaching, and he mentored us as we struggled with this.

He was always meticulous in his preparation, setting an example for how thorough, as well as clear and accessible, one's work should be.

Murray was proud of his role in teacher education, and particularly his involvement with NITEP and the First Nations House of Learning. But he was humble about his own accomplishments, both as a philosopher and in his various roles in teacher education; it was comments from others that gave some indication of what he had done and the respect he had earned for his work.

This is some of what I saw of Murray in the last few years, and of how he worked hard on my and many other students' behalf. It is only a small part of the role he played in philosophy of education as a discipline and in UBC's Faculty of Education over the years, but through it he was an important role model for myself and others during our time here.

Thank-you Murray; you are missed.
Donald Kerr
Doctoral Student, UBC

I am writing this letter in support of the nomination of Murray Elliott for the Canadian Philosophy of Education Society's Distinguished Service Award.

I can think of no one more deserving of this kind of recognition for his enduring contributions to the creation and nurturing not only of CPES but also of CAFE and, indeed, of CSSE itself. Indeed, from personal experience, I am acquainted Murray's dedicated efforts on behalf of CSSE from its earliest years. He played a major role in the organization of the Second Annual Conference which was held at Queen's University in Kingston in 1973.

His service to CPES and to CAFE was no less exemplary. He served on the executives of both organizations on a number of occasions. And, as is well known, he was one of the chief architects in the founding of CPES in 1975. Perhaps more than anyone else, he was responsible for supporting and promoting the development of Philosophy of Education in this country for nearly 30 years.

In both CAFE and CPES, Murray often acted in the informal capacities as resident parliamentarian and group historian.

Yet, we would overlook much that is important about Murray's contribution to Education in general, and Philosophy of Education in particular, if we were to concentrate solely on the time and energy he spent, together with the dedication and commitment he showed, in fostering the growth and spread of these organizations. Equally important, but perhaps less well known, is his distinctive conception of the nature of Philosophy of Education and its role in the professional education of teachers.

On his view, Philosophy of Education is an especially challenging field. It is a form of inquiry best conducted by those who are both philosophers and educators, rather than by philosophers who, on occasion, find educational issues to be an interesting vehicle for philosophical theorizing, or, by educationists who may from

time to time be given to making "philosophical" pronouncements. On Murray's view, practitioners in this field must be not only competent philosophers but also possessed of a broad understanding of educational theory, policy and practice, as well as the issues associated with them. It is not enough to "have a foot in both camps". The Philosopher of Education must be so immersed in each field that he or she is capable of drawing them together in such a way that they begin to interpenetrate, in a mutually sustaining dialogue.

I will conclude my comments on a personal note. I have always had enormous respect and admiration for Murray both as a colleague and a friend. At the risk of seeming "old fashioned", I would describe him as a 'person of principle'. His personal and professional relationships have always been marked by caring, integrity, fair play, and respect for others. And in spite of his considerable intellectual gifts, he remained humble and modest about his accomplishments.

In summary, I enthusiastically endorse Murray Elliott's nomination for the CPES Distinguished Service Award.

Respectfully submitted
Dr. G. L. (Skip) Hills
Queen's University

Murray Elliot was awarded the CPES Distinguished Service Award posthumously at the annual CPES meeting in Quebec City on May 24, 2001.