

Editorial

Coming of Age in Invitational Education

Perhaps you had not noticed, but this past June the International Alliance for Invitational Education celebrated the 15th birthday of its formal founding. There were no bells or whistles commemorating the event, but it is worth noting the viability and the durability of IAIE, particularly considering the "disposable" nature of our times. By developmental standards, we are in middle adolescence, and there are no signs of the growth and vitality slowing. Some have suggested that this may be an appropriate time for individuals to consider what the impact of invitational theory has been on their personal and professional lives. Some have even suggested that this should be a theme issue of the journal at a later time. At this point, however, it is worth observing a milestone passed.

This issue of the Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice presents a variety of offerings for your consideration. David and Cheryl Aspy provide us a perspective of the 1995 bombing of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City through the eyes of four people who experienced this tragedy. These are not the accounts of direct victims of the bombing, but are individuals whose lives were dramatically altered by being residents of and working in Oklahoma City. The impact is both intense and personal, and the Aspys relate these experiences for all who would be caregivers in any mass calamity. One of the persistent themes is stated very starkly by one of those who was interviewed: "We didn't know what to do, so we did nothing. I don't understand why we acted that way. But we did" (p.8).

Tommie Radd presents a well documented and well-crafted article on developing an invitational classroom through a comprehensive behavior-management program. This could be a difficult task because there can be basic philosophical collisions between invitational theory and behavior management if either is taken

to the extreme. Dr. Radd, however, provides a careful and clear exposition that leads to reader to a clear understanding of what she is proposing. It is a hands-on type of article that is both thoughtful and thought provoking.

John Schmidt, Christy Shields and Joseph Ciechalsid offer up a very tight and concise research study of the Inviting-Disinviting Index. Using Wiemer and Purkey's Inviting-Disinviting Index, developed for the graduate student-level population, the authors modified the instrument for use with fifth-grade students. Their purpose was to examine the content validity and the test-retest reliability of the modified instrument. Their findings add to our storehouse of understanding invitational theory, and helps to fill a growing need for research-based articles in the journal.

Finally, Cheryl and David Aspy along with Gene Russell and Mack Wedel discuss the importance of the ongoing discussion of values in our contemporary society. The authors make it clear that this discussion is indeed going on in a variety of arenas, and the ramifications for our society in general, education and related social institutions in particular, and individual behavior specifically, are very real and profound. Two of the many values of this article are found in the clarification of terminology and the extensive reference base for their contribution. The article is directly related to basic principles of invitational theory, and it deserves our careful consideration.

William B. Stafford Editor