



ISCAR NEWS

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The International Society for Cultural & Activity Research is an association, whose purpose is the promotion and development of multidisciplinary theoretical and empirical research on societal, cultural and historical dimensions of human practices. For more information visit: www.iscar.org

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1. Regional News & Events

News from Sweden

Mini-conference in Sweden, Campus Konradsberg, Stockholms universitet on August 26, 2009

August 26 this year we arrange the second mini conference at Stockholm university for members and others working in Sweden with an interest in CHAT. The first mini-conference was arranged with the idea of discussing (and developing) the papers that were to be presented at the ISCAR conference 2008. This made it

possible to be informed of the Swedish contributions and thereby have more time at the main conference to attend other sessions. This year is an in-between session focusing collaborative development of different papers/articles

If you think this is for you, please apply by e-mail to inger.eriksson@did.su.se

News from the German-Dutch Section

New Date:

International Symposium

Situating Childhood & Child Development: Socio-cultural Approaches and Educational Interventions April 9-10, 2010, Berlin & Potsdam

In recent years there has been a rapid growth of interest in the socio-cultural study of childhood and child

development. Sociology of childhood, sociology of education, anthropology of childhood, cultural and educational psychology, childhood and youth studies are oriented towards the critical interpretation or reconstruction of situated meanings, subjective motives and lived experiences of children and their significant others in the context of local institutions and cultural-historical practices. Theoretical concepts such as 'mediation', 'agency', 'acti-

vity', 'mimesis', 'participation', 'values' are here of particular importance.

In the late 19th and early 20th century 'pedology'—not childhood studies or developmental science—was supposed to be the general science of the child. "Although Vygotsky nowadays is known as a "developmental psychologist", in his own time he was seen as a pedologist and the professorships he held were mainly in pedology (...) For Vygotsky pedology was the science that integrates disciplines, like medicine, psychology, education, and defectology, and applies knowledge from these fields to specific age ranges or developmental periods". Not only Vygotsky but also a series of other scientists in the former Soviet Union (e.g. Basov, Bechtereov, Blonskij and Zalkind) as well as in other parts of the world indicated themselves as pedologists. Recently pedology received much attention in the context of an international conference in Geneva where the first French translation of Vygotsky's pedology (Léopoldoff I. and Schneuwly v. B., 2008) was presented. Vygotsky's understanding of development seems to be of particular relevance in regard to the so called 'new sociology of childhood' as well as to classic sociological and anthropological approaches such as those of Dewey, Lewin, Mead und Politzer.

The International Symposium Situating Childhood & Child Development: Interdisciplinary Approaches and Educational Interventions takes the classic debates on 'Pedology' and the theory of Vygotsky and colleagues as a point of departure in order to investigate the cultural, social, historical and situative aspects of child development and childhood. Particular emphasis will be given to educational interventions based on socio-cultural approaches to childhood and education. Furthermore, the applications of new technologies in teaching and learning as well as in child research will be thoroughly discussed. The Symposium aims to discuss recent developments in socio-cultural approaches to education, cultural-historical activity theory, sociology and anthropology of childhood and childhood studies and examine possible ways in which these fields are interrelated.

The themes of the Symposium might include but are not limited to:• History and Theory of Pedology and of 'Childhood Studies' Socio-cultural dimensions of child-

hood and educational issues• Socio-cultural aspects of child development and educational applications• Practice, activity, agency and participation• Play and learning in the zone of proximal development• Developing instruction• Participatory research with children/ youngsters• Ethnography, multivoicedness and multi-perspectivity• Internet, virtual realities and emerging/changing childhoods

The Symposium is a follow-up of two DFG-funded Symposia (Berlin, 2006 and Siegen, 2007) which opened the space for a dialogue between cultural-historical psychology and anthropology of childhood in Berlin, 2006 and in Siegen 2007 and established a cooperation between scholars from Germany and from other countries such as Denmark, USA or Brazil. This time the Symposium is organized in cooperation with the German-Dutch Section of the International Society for Cultural and Activity Research and aims to bring together scholars from Germany and the Netherlands as well as renown guest speakers from other European countries. The Workshop is a collaboration of a closed international circle of experts and aims a dynamic discussion of the abovementioned problems and questions. Initiatives for further cooperation in teaching and research between the participants from different countries will be welcome. The book 'Children, Culture, Education: A dialogue between Cultural-historical Psychology and Historical Anthropology' (in press) which has been the result of the former Symposia will be presented and discussed and further publications will be planned. The outcomes of the Workshop will be made available for all specialists in relevant disciplines in the proceedings, published in English.

Colleagues interested in the Symposium are welcome to express their interest in participation with a short email to Michalis Kontopodis as soon as possible (please indicate the title of your presentation or poster and give full details of your address/ affiliation). **The deadline for submission of abstracts for posters and presentations is October 1, 2009.** We recommend you to present your work as a poster, thus enabling the participation of more colleagues.

Organization: Prof. Dr. Hartmut Giest & Dr. Michalis Kontopodis. For further information and application, please contact: michalis.kontopodis@staff.hu-berlin.de

News from Brasil

The Brazilian researchers have just initiated a web discussion list to promote exchange of ideas, activities, events and integration among researchers in a Vygotskian tradition in the whole country. The first activity of the group was a minicourse and lecture by Professor

Wolfgang Jantzen, from the University of Bremen, organized by the research group LACE – PUC SP. The next activities will include a Brazilian Conference to be held in the first semester of 2010.

News from Russia

Updated Webpages

The site of cultural-historical psychology's chair has been updated. Here you can find the page devoted to ISCAR activity and newsletters:

<http://www.vygotsky.mgppu.ru/>

An internet portal of psychological publications including pages of our journal "Cultural-historical psychology" has been designed. There you may find an archive and subscribe: <http://psyjournals.ru/>

<http://psyjournals.ru/en/kip/2008/n4/index.shtml>

November, 25-27th, 2009 – Conference: 'The Other Childhood' in Moscow

On November, 25-27th, 2009 The Second all-Russia scientifically-practical conference on development psychology «The Other Childhood» will take place at Moscow State University of Psychology and Education in commemoration of Year of Equal Opportunities.

The first conference «The child in a modern society» has taken place in 2007 and has been devoted the analysis of mechanisms, motives, conditions of the modern child development.

The second conference is devoted to the analysis of socially-psychological risks of different psychological age development (from infancy till a youthhood). The main idea of the conference - L.S.Vygotsky's position that deviations in mental development are "dislocations", "twists" first of all of social nature. The analysis of the psychology-pedagogical conditions providing child's return on a normal way of development – is one of key themes of the conference. Conference is devoted discussion on results of the scientific researches and practical methods in the field of early intervention, correction of training difficulties, of an orphanage prevention, to the analysis of the psychology -pedagogical help systems and support to child's family as well.

The special attention is given to professional training questions – to programs of training and improvement of professional skill in the field of development psychology.

Leading experts of Moscow, St.-Petersburg, etc. cities of Russia will take part in conference. Psychologists from the "International centre for the enhancement of learning potential", Jerusalem (Israel), the "State methodological institute of Children's homes of Budapest" (Hungary) - will take part in an Internet conference.

Discussed questions:

- Designing of the supporting environment in complex rehabilitation of the child with *OB3*
- Psychological rehabilitation of children and teenagers with complex infringements
- Orphanhood Psychology.
- The help to children with special requirements at early ontogenetical stages: the programs on early intervention.
- The Non-standard child. The ways of development in childhood and adolescence.
- Emotionally disadvantaged children and teenagers and ways of it's correction
- Psychological support of replacing families (patronage, guardianship, adoption). Problem families.
- The talented child
- Preparation and retraining of experts in the field of development psychology
- Modern children's subculture: toys, books, films

More Information: iakorepanova@gmail.com

10th Annual Vygotsky Memorial Conference, November 17 – 20, 2009

Vygotsky Institute of Psychology, Russian State University for the Humanities, Vygotsky Russian Fund

Honorary President of the Conference: Dr. Gita L'vovna Vygodskaya, Daughter of L. S. Vygotsky

President of the Conference: Prof. Dr. Elena Kravtsova, Director, Vygotsky Institute of Psychology, Russian State University for the Humanities

Director of the 10th Vygotsky Memorial Conference: Galina Mishina, Vygotsky Institute of Psychology, Russian State University for the Humanities

International Conference Coordinator: Dot Robbins

Please ask for registration form and send the ab-

stracts and registration forms to:

dot.robbins@gmail.com or: D. Robbins, 4801 North Hills Blvd. #1207, North Little Rock, AR. 72116, USA

Key Note Speakers: Elena Kravtsova (Russia), Gennadi Kravtsov (Russia), Lois Holzman (USA), Mariane Hede-gaard (Denmark), Marilyn Flear (Australia), V. Zinchenko (Russia), A. Asmolov (Russia)

Concept: Lev Vygotsky placed special emphasis on the implementation of psychological knowledge in social practice, and he believed that this type of theory/praxis represents one of the essential features of the "new"

psychology he was developing. All participants in the conference will be able to discuss the principles and ways of construction of the following social practices within the framework of the cultural-historical approach.

The various themes will be:

--the methodological meaning of the concept of "practice" in cultural-historical psychology.

--cultural-historical psychology in education and assessment/testing.

--cultural-historical psychology in medicine and defectology.

--cultural-historical psychology in law.

--cultural-historical psychology in family "pedagogics."

--cultural-historical psychology in family education and consulting.

--cultural-historical psychology in language theories and psycholinguistics + L2 learning.

--cultural-historical psychology in military practice.

--cultural-historical psychology in art.

Together with the discussion of practical solutions to social problems there will be a discussion of the results of psychological investigations and the ways they are used in practice. Special attention will be given to the professional training of future cultural-historical psychologists and teachers at colleges and universities.

We invite everyone involved in the cultural-historical approach to participate in the conference...especially those interested in the implementation of psychological approaches of theory into practice.

Selected presentations will be published.

Abstracts

All abstracts are due by August 30, 2009. The abstract must be 350 words or shorter. Longer abstracts will not be considered. The abstracts must be in excellent English, or they cannot be accepted. All abstracts will be reviewed by the conference committee and you will be notified per-email of the decision by September 10, 2009. Please send your abstract to the address listed at the bottom of the page.

Registration Information (We can only charge these registration fees if we have 20 international participants. Otherwise, the costs will be higher)

Regular Registration fees: \$285 (will include: conference material, translation of Key Note speeches, use of the facilities, use of technology, refreshments during the day and evening, trip to the grave of L. S. Vygotsky, etc.).

Fees for Translation of sections and Russian Student Advisors: \$160 (They will meet you at the airport/or hotel and bring you to the conference, and translate for you in the different sections you want to

attend. They will be willing to help you back to the hotel the first evening. This student will stay with you during the conference, and translate the sessions you want to attend); Or, \$200 for two people.

\$100 (If you would like help with the sessions only, and no Student Advisor)

Banquet: \$ 45 (with entertainment)

Student/Retired Registration fees: \$235 [will include the same privileges as the Regular Registration fees]

Translators and Russian Student Advisors: \$160 (no discount) for one person. \$200 for two people/ \$100 (for the translation of sessions on only, no discount)

Banquet: \$ 30 (with entertainment)

*Regular fees are calculated regarding the country you live in, not your passport or actual nationality. If you live in a developing country (which will be determined by each case), you can request to pay the student registration fees. We ask that if your salary is the same as that in a developed country, you will support the conference by paying the full registration fees.

*Please pay your fees per PayPal (www.paypal.com) to dot.robbins@gmail.com. If you live outside of the United States, the commission will be paid for by the recipient (Robbins). The money goes directly to the International Vygotsky Association. Please pay the registration fees as soon as possible and remember to send in the registration form. If you cannot attend the conference, please let us know by September 10th. All fees will be refunded before that date. 50% of the conference fees will be refunded if you contact us before October 10th; and, after October 10th no fees will be refunded. You will receive verification of your payment, and at the conference, you will receive an official receipt. Also, please send in your application form and information of what you will need (please check the appropriate boxes). If there is a problem, please print the form, scan it, and e-mail it to D. Robbins.

*Fees for the Russian Student Advisor and translation of the sessions. The only language that will be translated into is English. The price for the Russian Student Advisor and translation of the sessions is designed for one participant only. If there are two people wanting one Russian Student Advisor, the price will be \$200.

*More information will be available in August and September regarding the evening program, possible workshops, the Roundtable, tour of Moscow, trip to Sergei Posad, etc.

*Because Moscow is one of the most expensive cities in the world, we will try to help you with accommodations. If you apply for a Russian visa at least six weeks before the conference, the International Office at the Russian State University for the Humanities will help you with the police registration. If you are applying for a one-month tourist visa, it is suggested that you work through a travel agency connected with the Russian system (e.g., Way-ToRussia, etc.). You will also need to pay the full price for a Student Advisor for help. At that point we can try and find a place with a Russian family for a reasonable price. If we have a group of 4 or 5 participants wanting to stay together, we hope to be able to rent an apartment very close to the conference. We also have other opportunities for small groups, who want privacy, but not the high cost of a hotel, but we will need to know quickly

about these wishes.

*We will be able to have lunch together at two places very close by: 01 Café (which is a small, modern cafeteria-style café/restaurant. You will be able to have fresh, excellent food for a reasonable price). Also, you can have sandwiches and coffee at the Coffee House XAY3.

*After Conference Events: (information will be available in August)

Possible workshop with Lois Holzman

Possible workshop with Mariane Hedegaard and Marilyn Fleer

Tour of Moscow (if there is enough interest)

Tour to Sergei Posad to visit the Blind and Deaf Institute (if there is interest)

2. International Conference

6th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE DIALOGICAL SELF IN ATHENS 30 September--3 October 2010

We are pleased to announce the 6th International Conference on the Dialogical Self (30 September--3 October 2010) in beautiful Athens, the capital of Greece. You can find more details on www.dialogicalscience.cognitiveanalytic.gr

be organised by the International Society for Dialogical Science, www.Dialogicalscience.org in cooperation with the Institute for Cognitive Analytic Therapy (Greece Based) www.cognitiveanalytic.gr

The deadline for the submission of papers is **31 December 2009**. The conference will include the following format: paper presentations, posters, symposia, workshops and panel discussions. The conference will

Organisation: Hubert Hermans (Chair Scientific Committee)
Stavros Charalambides (Chair Organising Committee)

3. PhD Dissertations

Rethinking Activity Theory for the study of interagency collaboration on a policy-driven curriculum initiative, awarded October 2008, Lancaster University

Autor: Dr Michael Doyle (mdoyle@uclan.ac.uk)

Using recent debates within socio-cultural theory around subjectivity, this research offers an analysis of a policy-driven curriculum initiative in the UK dependent on successful, local interagency working. The research uses Activity Theory to frame the analysis of the emerging partnership, and interventionist research instruments associated with this – in particular Development Work Methodology. It initially identifies partners' (subjects') positions, and subsequent motivation and position

ing on the 'object' of the collaborative activity, and analyses contested critical sites between the partners over a two year period of curriculum development and implementation. It links partners' positioning to issues of roles and perspective and contested discursive practices in the emerging activity to trace the dynamics and impact of decision making in collective workshops, or 'boundary crossing' sessions. This gives access to the formal, discursive outcomes of these collective sessions, which are

then traced through processes of implementation, or re-contextualisation, throughout the differential affordances of the partnership. Such an approach gives access to issues of power, formal and dispersed, and involves an analysis of the development of the activity system over both time and locality.

The curriculum is a Government inspired drive to widen participation in higher education, and is simultaneously targeted at expanding the higher level skills base of the UK economy. Called Foundation Degrees, they require collective development ideally by a university, a series of colleges delivering the curriculum and employers, who provide the students for the programmes. The data for the research was collected through a sequenced series of individual subject interviews interspersed with boundary crossing workshops over two intakes of students for the developing programme.

The data demonstrates a degree of 'expansive' development within the activity system around the contested sites linked particularly to issues of pedagogy and as-

essment. However, the formal, collective accommodations at the boundaries are framed within the prevailing discursive practices of the dominant partner. Actual practice in the localities of the distributed activity system was subsequently shaped to varying degrees by local affordances and partners' priorities, and these impacted differentially on subsequent trajectories of collective development.

The thesis reformulates a notion of 'expansiveness' that is differentiated and decentred throughout the Activity System, and therefore one that impacts on collective development differentially. It concludes by modelling the process, based on this research, to accommodate issues of locality and time and the relational nature of partner activity systems with collective 'knotworking'.

In doing this it critically analyses Activity Theory and Development Work Methodology as tools of analysis and investigation in this case, and uses the data to provide an elaboration of both based on this research.

O Movimento do Significado de Grupos de Apoio na Cadeia Criativa de Atividades no Programa Ação Cidadã, tese de doutoramento inédita. PUC-SP. São Paulo.

Autor: FUGA, Valdete Pereira

This doctoral dissertation examines the importance of the Marxist and Spinozian background of the social-cultural-historical perspective for the investigation of the movement of meaning in a Critical Collaborative Inter-

vention Research. The dissertation will soon be available at:

http://www.pucsp.br/pos/lael/lael-inf/def_teses.html

4. New ISCAR-related Publications

You are welcome to write recensions for the next Newsletter, please contact the authors or the Newsletter editors in case of interest.

N. Muller Mirza & A.-N. Perret-Clermont (Eds.) (2009). Argumentation and Education: Theoretical Foundations and Practices. New York: Springer

During the last decade, argumentation has attracted growing attention as a means to elicit processes (linguistic, logical, dialogical, psychological, etc.) that can sustain or provoke reasoning and learning. Constituting an important dimension of daily life and of professional activities, argumentation plays a special role in democracies and is at the heart of philosophical reasoning and scientific inquiry. Argumentation, as such, requires specific intellectual and social skills. Hence, argumentation will have an increasing importance in education, both because it is a critical competence that has to be

learned, and because argumentation can be used to foster learning in philosophy, history, sciences and in many other domains. Argumentation and Education answers these and other questions by providing both theoretical backgrounds, in psychology, education and theory of argumentation, and concrete examples of experiments and results in school contexts in a range of domains. It reports on existing innovative practices in education settings at various levels.... more on <http://springer.com/978-0-387-98124-6>

<http://www.springer.com/education/learning+%26+instru>

[tion/book/978-0-387-98124-6](http://www.springer.com/education/learning+%26+instruction/book/978-0-387-98124-6)

CLASSICS IN ACTIVITY THEORY from Erythrós Press

Erythros Press has published the first three volumes of CLASSICS IN ACTIVITY THEORY, reprints of English translations first published by Progress Publishers in the 1970s, of classics works in Activity Theory and the followers of Lev Vygotsky. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, while remaining in the public domain, these works have become unavailable, in most cases even on the second hand market, with little to no chance of republication by commercial publishers. And yet there is vast research community across the world which builds on Vygotsky and Activity theory, particularly in education departments. Each of the three books beginning the series is a collection of English translations from one of the three authors: Alexei LEONTYEV, Alexander MESHCHERYAKOV and Evald ILYENKOV, plus a short preface by Mike Cole. Every university or education faculty library should have this series; every young person entering this line of research needs to read the classics of their science.

Titles included are, from Leontyev, *The Development of Mind: The Problem of the Origin of Sensation*, *The Bio-*

logical and Social in Man's Psyche, *An Outline of the Evolution of the Psyche*, *The Historical Approach to Study of the Human Psyche*, *The Development of Higher Forms of Memory*, *The Psychological Principles of Preschool Play*, *The Theory of the Development of the Child's Psyche*, *Child Development and the Problem of Mental Deficiency*, *Activity and Consciousness*; from Ilyenkov, *The Ideal in Human Activity: Dialectical Logic, Activity and Knowledge*, *The Universal*, *The Concept of the Ideal*, *Reflections on "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism"* and Meshcheryakov, *Awakening To Life: Deaf-blind Children, Problems of Deaf-blindness, Forming Behaviour and Developing Their Minds*, *Learning Programmes for the Deaf-blind*.

Books are available from Erythrós Press <http://www.erythrospress.com/> for US\$25+postage but purchasers of all 3, or 4 books with Hegel's Logic, pay a reduced price of \$20 per book with reduced shipping costs.

Vianna, E. (forthcoming in 2009). Collaborative Transformations in Foster Care: Teaching-learning as a developmental tool in a residential program. Saarbrucken, Germany: VDM Verlag Dr. Muller.

Youth growing up in child welfare programs in the U.S. encounter enormous obstacles that drastically limit their prospects for the future. Lacking parental care and having to rely on professionals for guidance, many children do not feel supported and mistrust residential programs and their staff, developing oppositional attitudes, violating rules, and neglecting academic tasks. Insofar as such difficulties are framed as psychological disorders (i.e., individual intrapsychological dynamics), oppressive institutional practices are not called into question. This book describes a transformative research project led by a developmental psychologist in a residential program based on cultural-historical activity theory and critical pedagogy. The work centered on collaborative learning

activities that gradually transformed institutional practices while creating new motivation in resident boys as agents of social change. Revealing how a CHAT-inspired developmental approach rooted in ideals of social justice and equality can bring about change in institutional child welfare practices, this book will interest educators, developmental psychologists, child advocates and anybody concerned with the plight of foster children. Moreover, the book critically examines how contradictions in current child welfare practice and ideology reflect deeper contradictions in American society and, specifically, the role of traditional psychological theories underpinning oppressive institutional practices. For more information contact: evianna@lagcc.cuny.edu

SCHETTINI, R. & DAMIANOVIC, M.C. & HAWI, M & SZUNDY, P. (2009) *Vygotsky: uma revisita no início do século XXI*. Andross (Vygotsky: a revisit in the beginning of 21st century). São Paulo.

Ao se propor revisitar conceitos centrais da obra de Vygotsky no início do século XXI, os dez capítulos desta obra, escritos por pesquisadores envolvidos com ensino e formação de professores, compartilham o intuito de buscar nos referenciais do autor instrumentos para compreender e transformar as atividades que configuram as interações sociais de nossa época. Nessa busca, colaboração constitui um termo chave que permeia as discussões de todos os capítulos, penetrando

em temas diversos tais como ensino de línguas, formação de professores e coordenadores, relação entre homem e máquina, estratégias para lidar com conflitos e internalização de conceitos na infância.

Having as their main purpose to revisit central concepts of Vygotsky's work in the beginning of 21st century, the ten chapters of this book, written by researchers engaged in teaching and teacher education, share the goal

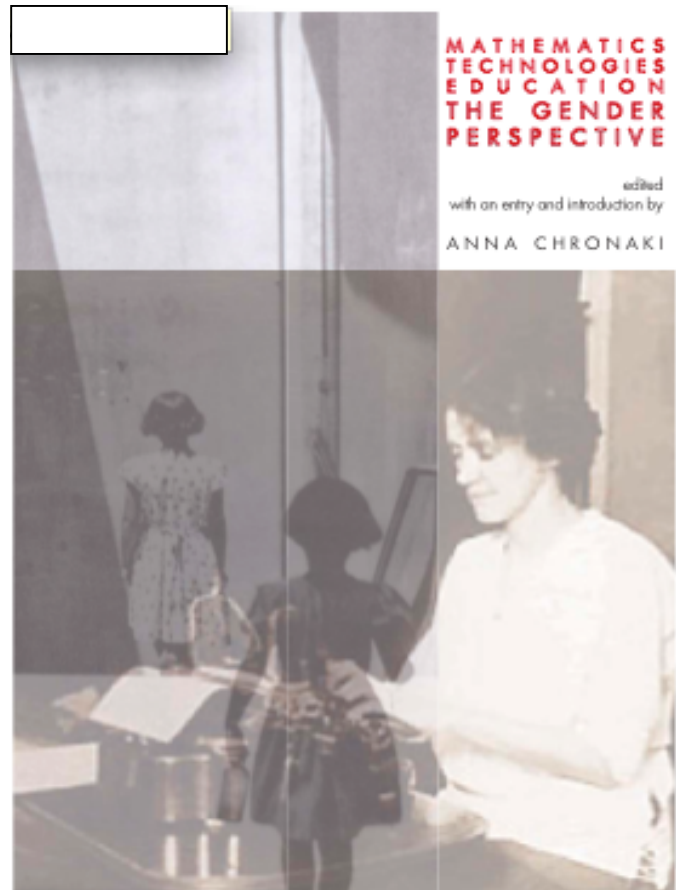
of searching in Vygotsky's theory tools to both comprehend and transform the activities that configure social interaction in our epoch. In this quest, collaboration represents a key term in the discussions carried out in each chapter, penetrating a variety of topics such as language teaching, teacher and coordinator education,

relationship between man and machine, strategies to deal with conflicts and concept internalization in childhood.

For more information please contact: Paula Szundy: pszundy@uol.com.br

Anna Chronaki. (ed.) (forthcoming in 2009). Mathematics, Technologies, Education: the gender perspective. University of Thessaly Press: Volos. (175 pages)

The gender perspective has the potential to focus on hidden and naturalized, social and political conditions that have already shaped our historical pasts and tend to play discursively a major role in reshaping our present realities. Unraveling the significance of gender in educational practices –where mathematics, science and technology become objects of learning- is never a closed task. It is an unending process that ultimately involves us in theoretical debate(s) and unavoidably engages us in ontological politics. This book is an attempt to explore how participants in educational practices fabricate images about mathematics, new technologies, educational practices, self and self-other relations as they become narrated by teachers and students from primary to tertiary levels. Images about mathematics and technology are deeply connected to images about learning with and without them, about choosing to study them, and about using them for work or leisure. These are related with processes of subjectification involving identity-work, body-movement and network(s)-participation. Images are weaved through participating, acting, talking, silencing and sensing human and post-human positionings. As such teachers, students, computers, curricula and materials become companions in complex assemblages. Inquiries (after October 2009) to Anna Chronaki: chronaki@uth.gr



ISCAR NEWS is published regularly twice per year as well as on special occasions.

EDITOR: Michalis Kontopodis, Secretary of ISCAR

The deadline for submissions for the next issue is December 15, 2009. Submissions in all languages are welcome. News items, conference reports, announcements, calls for papers, short abstracts of recently completed Ph.D. theses etc. should be submitted to:

michalis.kontopodis@staff.hu-berlin.de

Copies of previous newsletters are available from: news@iscar.org