

Editorial

By

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In the United States, the academic year begins in September. Although the students may change and new courses are added while others are taught again, the notion that good teaching is grounded in research remains. This issue of *Visions of Research in Music Education* offers three different studies that inform teachers about their practice. While seemingly disconnected, they articles have the same over-arching theme: How will instruction best improve what students are able to do?

Two articles focus on the school band program. Dale Bazan investigates how beginning band students choose which instrument to play and more significantly how the band director influences those decisions. Nathan Kruse looks at self reflection among band students when he studies what happens when they learn how to use rating scales. His hope is that knowing how to apply such measures will improve the students' abilities to accurately evaluate their own performance. In choral studies, Peter Litman discusses the relationship between the gestures conducting teachers teach their students in conducting classes, and what these teachers actually use on the podium when conducting their own ensembles.

This issue of *Visions of Research in Music Education* offers two new features. The first is a narrative piece by Karen Lee who celebrates the completion of her doctoral dissertation. While not research in its traditional conception, it represents a growing interest in narrative as a research design. We hope to offer such pieces periodically as well as some exemplary narrative studies. The second feature is an historical reprint. To launch this section of VRME, Liora Bresler and Richard Colwell graciously granted permission to reprint "Ethnography, Phenomenology and Action Research in Music Education," which appeared during 1995 in an issue of *The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning*. It presents a clear explanation of three qualitative research designs and offers examples from music education. The editors believe that this will be a valuable reading for graduate students in research courses. Finally, there are announcements of symposia that we present as a service to our colleagues.

For those of you who begin this month, have a good opening of school.

If you are interested in submitting your recent research projects for possible publication in VRME - Volume 8, please feel free to forward your material to our editorial board for review. Additional information is located at <http://www.rider.edu/~vrme>.

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