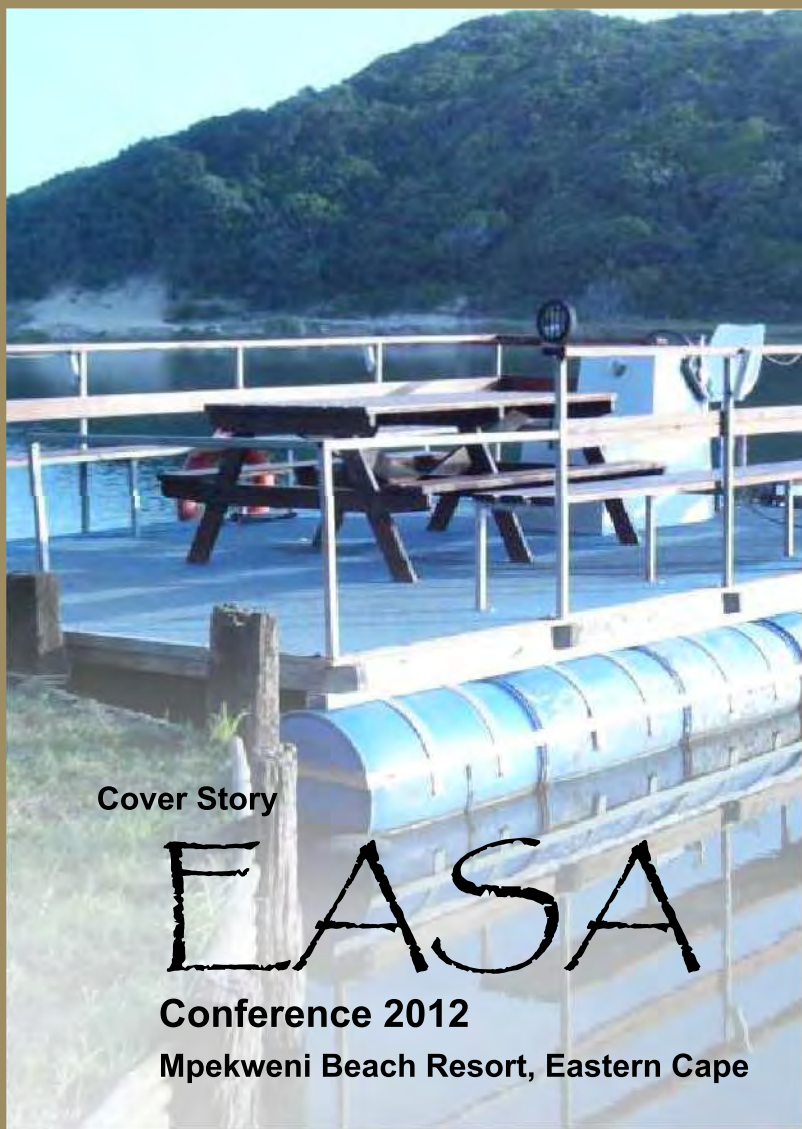


Edition One | July 2011
Education Association of South Africa

EASA / OVSA



Cover Story

EASA

Conference 2012

Mpekweni Beach Resort, Eastern Cape

EASA NEWSLETTER JULY 2011 CONTENTS



3-4

Letter of the Chair

Linda Theron
EASA Chair 2011

5

Press Release

6-7

EASA Conference 2012

Naydene de Lange
EASA 2012 - Conference Chair

8

Update on WERA

Liezel Ebersöhn
WERA Representative

9

Update on SAERA

Eldrie Gouws
SAERA - Steering Committee Chair

10

EASA Research Awards

11

SAJE

Philip van der Westhuizen
(Editor: SAJE)

12

EASA Annual Meeting 2011

13-15

EASA Conference 2011

Eldrie Gouws
EASA 2011 - Conference Chair

EASA Conference 2012





A word from the EASA Chair

Our association is making strides, internationally and nationally. Internationally, we continue to be active members of WERA (see the WERA report in this newsletter) and to benefit as members from opportunities to network, using WERA-facilitated symposia and other channels. Furthermore, the association's journal, SAJE, was recently recognized internationally, as evidenced in the prestigious invitation by the American Education Research Association (AERA) to SAJE's outgoing editor, Prof Philip van der Westhuizen, to participate in a session entitled 'Meet Journal Editors' at AERA's April conference in New Orleans, USA.

On the home front, our active participation in local education-related activities symbolizes our continued relevance. The various South African education research associations continue to be engaged in discussion about the possibility of a joint education conference in 2012, and EASA is embraced in and committed to this process (see the report on this in this newsletter). Another dynamic local development is that four members of EASA's executive committee have been invited to serve on the Research Committee of the 2012 South African Basic Education Conference. Liesel Ebersöhn (EASA's outgoing chair), Eldrie Gouws (EASA's incoming chair) Linda Theron (EASA's 2011 chair) and Aslam Fataar are part of the team of South African education researchers that will help shape next year's conference (see. <http://www.education-conference.co.za/>).

Finally, there have been a number of recent enquiries from young local scholars and emerging institutions of education about EASA and movements towards membership.



continue...

A word from the EASA Chair - continue

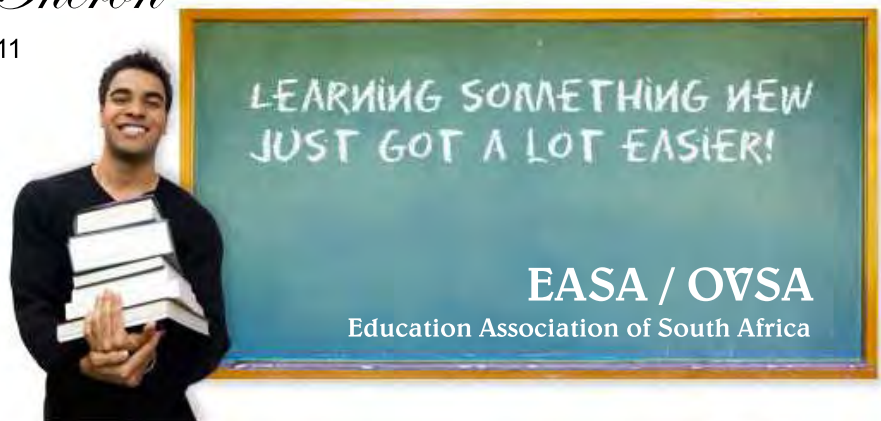
However, perhaps it is time to begin to ask ourselves whether it is enough to be locally relevant? What is it that we as an association could mean in South Africa, and to South Africans, almost two decades after our country's historic step towards democracy? What is it that we as an association should mean in the South Africa of the 21st century with its multiple challenges and manifold assets? What might we as an association do so that we are not guilty of Henry Adams' disparagement that: 'Nothing in education is so astonishing as the amount of ignorance it accumulates in the form of inert facts'? If we support Nelson Mandela's belief that education is the most powerful weapon with which to change our (South African) world, what ought we, the members of EASA, to do?

One forum for our beginning to deliberate these and other pressing questions is our upcoming January 2012 conference with its incisive theme of Criticality, Creativity and Connections: In Pursuit of Educational Innovations (see this newsletter for more details). Another will be in the 2012 joint association deliberations. As we head towards the second half of 2011, I challenge us all to reflect, critically, on the pathways that EASA could, and possibly even should, be heading along, and urge us to join hands and minds at our conference in January 2012 to envision our path forward.

Wishing all EASA members well and looking forward to seeing you and deliberating with you at the conference in January 2012.

Linda Theron

EASA Chair 2011



Press Release 2011

The following press release was sent to major South African newspapers:

Locally relevant and internationally recognized

The Education Association of South Africa (EASA) is making strides, internationally and nationally. In the arena of international education research, EASA is proud to be a founding member of the World Education Research Association (WERA). No other South or southern African education research associations were active in the naissance of WERA. Because of EASA's affiliation to WERA, South and southern African scholars who are members of EASA enjoy the privilege of WERA membership, as well as access to and inclusion in WERA networks and activities across all five continents.

The South African Journal of Education (SAJE) is the flagship of EASA. This journal is highly regarded among scholars on the African continent and indexed internationally. The journal has recently been internationally recognized, as evidenced in the prestigious invitation by the American Education Research Association (AERA) to SAJE's editor, Prof Philip van der Westhuizen, to participate in a session entitled 'Meet Journal Editors' at AERA's upcoming April conference in New Orleans, USA. AERA is the world's largest education research association and its annual conference is typically attended by thousands of education researchers from all continents.

On the home front, the various South African education research associations (including EASA) are engaged in discussion about the possibility of a joint education conference in 2012. The primary reason for a joint conference is to further discussion about the prospect of a national education research association. In some ways, the plethora of education research associations in South Africa reflects our divisive and divided past. More and more, education scholars are urging a national, inclusive association that could collectively address the many and pressing education issues needing rigorous research. EASA is supportive of, and integral to, these important discussions.

Another dynamic local development is that three members of EASA's executive committee have been invited to serve on the Research Committee of the 2012 South African Basic Education Conference. Prof Liesel Ebersöhn (EASA's outgoing chair), Prof Eldrie Gouws (EASA's incoming chair) and Prof Linda Theron (EASA's 2011 chair) are part of the team of South African education researchers that will help shape next year's conference.

More information about EASA and its local and international activities, as well as contact and membership information, is available on the association's official website: <http://easa.ac.za>



Criticality, Creativity and Connections: In Pursuit of Educational Innovations

The complexity of our educational reform orientations and initiatives has only recently come into full view. While it might be too early to theorize about the socio-political, philosophical and discursive lineaments of our multidimensional educational forms and functions, this conference theme is an attempt to lay a rigorous platform for bringing some aspects of this complexity to epistemological consciousness. The pursuit of social justice remains the animating ethic of our educational pursuits, the necessity of which must now be understood in light of difficulties associated with reform in tough material and discursive environments. We nonetheless hold on to the assumption that education is the “single most important critical element in combating poverty, empowering the poor, enhancing economic growth, controlling population growth, protecting the environment and promoting human rights and democracy” (Tilak, 2003, p2). We are aware that education in South Africa has not been able to provide a sufficient base for the envisioned progress, being challenged by systemic ineptitude, over-zealous policies, ill-equipped teachers, inappropriate curriculum approaches, uneven resource distribution, and inadequately prepared learners. Higher education institutions churn out much research that explores the complexities of the challenges in education, but research seems unable to influence a turn of the tide.

The conference theme is, however, an attempt to dig beneath the surface appearances of our educational worlds, whether to problematize our extant policy, curricular or discursive orientations, or to ask fundamental questions about our epistemological orientations. We propose a rigorous consideration interrogation of our own assumptions, theoretical stances and approaches to research.



A key objective of the conference is to spark a debate about how we might productively interrogate, rethink and re-imagine our own academic identities, processes and practices in pursuit of such a generative intellectual position.



Criticality, Creativity and Connections: In Pursuit of Educational Innovations

Date:
17 – 20 January 2012

Venue:
Mpekweni Beach Resort,
Eastern Cape

Hosted by Faculty of Education :
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University



IMPORTANT DATES

Final date for submission of abstracts
31 August 2011

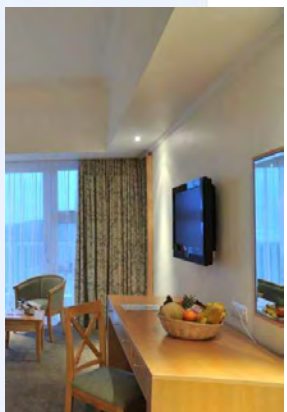
Notification of acceptance of abstracts
30 September 2011

Final closing date for registration
1 November 2011

Registration confirmation
15 November 2011

ACCOMMODATION:

All delegates are responsible for their own accommodation arrangements. Accommodation is available at the conference venue, Mpekweni Beach Resort. Please contact Nicolette Whitehead at nicolette@mpekweni.co.za



Update on WERA

The Fourth Council Meeting, World Education Research Association (WERA), took place in New Orleans, Louisiana on the 13th April, 2011.

WERA Symposia were discussed. The WERA symposium on science education and building science skills drew on research from Pakistan, the UK, and the U.S. and stimulated a very interesting discussion on the worldwide importance of nurturing early interest in science. The second WERA symposium, on using social media for learning, focused on the use of social networks as a deliberate way to communicate and help people learn. It raised some forward looking questions and concepts, including how to evaluate social learning. Liesel Ebersohn reported on the third WERA symposium, hosted by EASA at Sun City, 2011. She offered some suggestions for placement of WERA symposia in programs of annual meetings of member associations (particularly the smaller conferences). She thanked Carol Lee and Fernand Gervais for their presentations at a WERA-sponsored symposia and Lee for her keynote address at the Education Association of South Africa National Conference in January 2011. Based on that experience, she recommends that the WERA slots in the program should not be at the beginning of the day, or at a time when plenary sessions are taking place, so that a greater number of meeting attendees can benefit from the scholarship presented at WERA symposia.

The WERA committee structure is being assessed to determine whether functional changes should be made, and how best to organize committees to serve WERA goals and mission. It is envisioned that it would be useful for WERA to have 6 committees, of which four are continuing (Symposium Planning, Capacity Building, International Research Networks, and Focal Meeting Planning). Two new committees, a Financial Development Committee and a Communication and Outreach Committee would be established.

The 2011 WERA Focal Meeting will take place as part of the Taiwan Education Research Association (TERA) International Conference on Education (TICE) from December 15 to 18th, 2011. The WERA Council meeting will be on December 14th 2011.

Liesel Ebersohn
WERA Representative





Update on SAERA

Two meetings one on 8 April 2011 at UKZN and one on 23 June 2011 at TUT took place with representatives from a number of education associations in South Africa. Exciting things are happening and members can look forward to an exciting 2012. The following actions will take place and build up to the SAERA conference that is planned for 2012:

- **22 February 2012** – A one day colloquium/seminar will take place to plan the new organization. Five members from each education research association, (Executive members) as well as DBE and DHET will attend this event. This should amount to about 70 participants.
- A communiqué regarding the SAERA deliberations and planning will be sent to all education research associations.
- A SAERA website is envisaged.
- The next Education Deans' Forum (EDF) will be held on **15 November 2011**. Part of the forum discussions would be a workshop dedicated to the conceptualisation of education research and the possible role of SAERA. Leaders of research organisations, higher education and basic education research initiatives would be invited in order to discuss the possibility of joint scholarship in education.

Unisa will host the colloquium/seminar as well as the SAERA conference in 2012. The first SAERA conference will take place on **25-28 October 2012**.

Our incoming chair Eldrie Gouws was elected as chair of the SAERA steering committee. Aslam Fatar another EASA executive member is also part of this committee.

We also want members to understand that researchers and scholars would join SAERA as individuals: associations are not being merged to form SAERA.

We will give a full report on SAERA in the November newsletter.

Eldrie Gouws

SAERA - Steering Committee Chair



A W A R D S

Linda.Theron@nwu.ac.za

EASA RESEARCH AWARDS

The 2011 conference departed from tradition in that it honoured two researchers in the category Medal of Honour. For their exceptional contribution to both the theory and practice of education and education research, Prof Tilla Olivier (NMMU) and Prof Lesley le Grange (US) received the EASA Medal of Honour. Prof Saloshna Vandeyar (UP) received the EASAResearch Medal.

NOMINATIONS FOR EASA RESEARCH AWARDS 2012

EASA members are reminded to forward their nominations for research medals to the Chairperson Prof Linda Theron by **30 September 2011**.

Prof Linda Theron

Post your nomination form and CV to:
Box 1174
Vanderbijlpark, 1900

Alternatively, email a scanned version to Linda.Theron@nwu.ac.za

The categories include: EASA Research Medal Emerging Researcher; EASA Research Medal and Medal of Honour. Complete information and forms are available on the EASA website.

Please also forward nominations for an incoming chair, 2012. Write a brief motivation for the person you are nominating (not more than 400 words). This motivation should make it clear how EASA would benefit from the nominee's leadership. You will be asked to present this motivation at the EASAgeneral meeting in January 2012



south african
journal of
education

Volume 31 Number 2 May 2011



THOMSON REUTERS ISI & SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

The following as regards the 2010 Journal Citation Reports: Social Science Edition, published on 27 June 2011, the South African Journal of Education (SAJE) had an Impact Factor of 0.632. For 2008 its impact factor was calculated to be 0.282 and for 2009 it was 0.302. In the category Education & Educational Research it was ranked 95th out of a total of 177 journals in this category.

For the previous year it was ranked 132nd. According to the monitoring system, Webalizer, South African Journal of Education (SAJE) had 58 917 visits in 2008; 138 906 visits in 2009 and 190 902 visits in 2010.

Philip vd Westhuizen
SAJE - Editor

2011 EASA Annual Meeting

Prof Liesel Ebersöhn (UP) concluded her year as chairperson of EASA at the 2011 AGM. She made special mention of EASA's affiliation to WERA, and thanked the organisers for organising a stunning EASA 2011 conference at Sun City. You can read her message on the EASA website.

During her term as chairperson steady progress was made towards enabling an eventual joint conference of South African education research associations. As part of these discussions several regional discussions took place in 2010 with two hosted by EASA (one at the University of Pretoria and one during the 2011 EASA Conference at Sun City). This facilitation meant that ownership of this process was expanded to include representatives from more South African education research associations.

As in previous years, Prof Raj Mestry reviewed EASA's financial position: EASA members are urged to pay their membership fees (a mere R300).

Prof Philip van der Westhuizen reviewed the continued success of SAJE and emphasized the prestige of SAJE's inclusion in the Social Science's Citation Index.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT 2011

The 2011 management team consists of:

Chair: Linda Theron (NWU)

Deputy Chair: Eldrie Gouws (UNISA)

Outgoing Chair: Liesel Ebersöhn (UP)

Secretary: Esmarie Strydom (NWU)

Treasurer: Raj Mestry (UJ)

Editor SAJE: Philip van der Westhuizen (NWU) / Liesel Ebersöhn (UP)

Co-opted member: Nayden de Lange (NMMU) 2012 conference organizer)

Additional member: Aslam Fataar (US)

CONFERENCE FEEDBACK 2011

The annual EASA conference, hosted by the University of South Africa at Sun City in the North West, was held from 10 to 14 January 2011. EASA has a history of excellent conferences and the 2011 one continued this tradition. The conference was well attended (182 delegates registered) and conference delegates included representatives from academics and researchers from 16 higher education institutions in South Africa and Africa, departments of education, students and practitioners (principals and teachers). The mix of delegates appositely reflected the conference theme: Beauty and the Beast: Towards Turning the Tide in Education.



Papers presented at the conference identified both the beauties and the beasts in education. The theme was thoroughly unpacked and the focus in many of the papers was to put forward proposals for the transformation of the beastly in current education theory and practice into an object of beauty.

Prof Oupa Mashile (Unisa) opened the conference and his address is available on the association's official website: <http://easa.ac.za>

Mr Gavin Keller (principal and CEO of the Sun Valley Group of Schools) gave the keynote address on the first day of the conference. Mr Keller's topic Who's the beauty, Who's the beast? Knowledge is power was challenging and delegates were actively involved in the presentation.



CONFERENCE FEEDBACK 2011 - continue

Professors Yusef Waghid, Lesley le Grange, Peter Beets, Chris Reddy and Aslam Fataar (scholars from the University of Stellenbosch) presented the second keynote address on the following topic: Beautifying the beast: re-imagining education in South Africa. This panel discussion on the topic was excellent and Prof Waghid with his metaphor of Avatar showed just why he is respected as a world-class academic and researcher.



Prof Carol Lee (Northwestern University, Illinois, USA) presented the keynote address on the third day of the conference. She challenged conference delegates towards critical reflection and a fresh way forward in her paper entitled Addressing diversity and equity in education in an interdependent world: the South African and US challenges, lessons and opportunities.

In addition to these thought-provoking keynote addresses and all the delegate papers, there was also a WERA symposium. The session started with the presentation of Prof Fernand Gervais (Canada): Turning the tide of education research with indigenous knowledge (Canada), followed by that of Prof Liesel Ebersöhn (UP): Turning the tide of educational psychology: imagining indigenous psychology based on lessons learnt in South Africa. The last presentation was by Prof Carol Lee: Turning the tide for education: lessons we learnt in USA.

The conference included informal opportunities to network at a braai at the Valley of the Waves. At this function EASA paid tribute to Prof Philip van der Westhuizen (editor of SAJE) for his contribution to the journal.

In a fitting end to the conference, a stylish awards ceremony was held at the Hall of Treasures. This was a magical evening, with entertainment provided by the performing artist and exceptionally talented Arina de Witt.

The small team of Eldrie Gouws, Johann Dreyer, Anne-Mari Dicker (all from Unisa) and Petra Lawson were responsible for organising the successful event. Loud praise by the delegates was expressed for this team's expert and elegant organisation of the EASA conference 2011.

