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Notes from the Editor

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When I was teaching an undergraduate music education course at the University of Iowa as a doctoral student, I opened each Tuesday's class by asking students about their respective days since our last meeting. The few minutes of talking about performances, recitals, applied lessons, other courses, registration concerns, etc. became a ritual, and if I skipped it, I heard about it immediately. The students felt as I did that these precious five minutes of talking in an informed environment about real life amidst academics with colleagues who faced similar issues was a highpoint of the week.

As I write this introduction to the fourth issue of RIME, I have completed teaching my fifteenth class of graduate students in the Foundations of Music Education course at the University of St. Thomas. I like to think that my approach to teaching the course is getting more interesting, but in reality I probably reached my peak in "rivetingness" some time ago, and have settled on the idea that the flame of the course resides in the dynamics brought on by the combination of individual students who teach all facets of music throughout North America and several foreign countries.

Learning from my Iowa experiences, I now remind students on the first day of each term that by far, the most interesting aspect of this course will be the contributions that they make through their past and present experiences. Performances, recitals, applied lessons, other courses, registration concerns, etc., are still part of the picture, but now viewing these areas from the teaching side, conversations take on added dimensions. As well, concerns with administration, extra-curricular activities, touring and trips, auditions, parents, etc., give our discussions interesting fuel. As well, combining these real-life situations with the course material for the day brings the study of historical and philosophical elements of music education to new light.

I wish though that there were more ways (and more time) to connect in a similar fashion with faculty colleagues—firstly, in our own departments, and secondly, across the country, to hear about what they are doing in their courses, research, writing, speaking engagements, etc. As well, I would like to know what they are thinking about, not only in music teaching, learning and performance, but in other areas of formal education and study.

I would not be the first in higher education to lament the lack of these kinds of connections however, so I won't belabor the point, but rather, use this introduction to set the stage for a new aspect of RIME. When I first began developing the idea for this on-line journal, I envisioned a platform that would not only serve as a venue for disseminating quality research within several different research methodologies, but one that would also provide an arena for thoughtful, well informed discourse—substantive articles based on experience through teaching, formal and informal education, and professional dialogue.

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