

BIOLOGY EDUCATION FOR THE REAL WORLD

Student - Teacher - Citizen

Proceedings of the IVth ERIDOB Conference

Edited by
Jenny Lewis
Alexandra Magro
Laurence Simonneaux

Toulouse - France

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Toulouse-France, October 22nd - 26th 2002.

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THE IVTH ERIDOB CONFERENCE

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INTRODUCTION

From modest beginnings in 1996, when IPN (Kiel) hosted the first European conference on biology education research, ERIDOB has developed into an established bi-annual conference attracting both European and International researchers. The 2002 conference, held in Toulouse, attracted 100 participants drawn from 17 countries (14 European; 3 International). Together they presented a total of 54 papers and 58 posters.

For the first time, two major international figures were invited as keynote speakers - Jaques Desautels (Laval University, Canada) spoke on 'Biological Literacy and Citizenship Education'; Ian Robottom (Deakin University, Australia) considered the question 'What is the contribution of biology in environmental education?'. These themes, which considered biology education in a wider context, brought into focus the changing nature of our biology curricula. Increasingly there is an expectation that these will draw on real world contexts to make the biology more accessible and relevant to young people. There is also an expectation that young people should be encouraged to consider the real world issues that arise from the application of recent and rapid developments in biology. This extends to an expectation that biology education can and should make a significant contribution to citizenship education, helping to prepare young people for further engagement with science related issues in their adult lives. Biology education is also seen as the route through which young people will come to a better understanding of sustainable development.

These changes – in content, context and aims – present biology educators with many challenges and do not go uncontested. These issues and concerns were reflected in many of presentations in Toulouse. Alongside papers relating to more traditional interests in cognition, conceptual change and teaching and learning strategies were those on environmental education, decision making in a biological context and attitude formation.

At such an exciting and challenging time for biology education we look forward to ERIDOB 2004, where we will have an opportunity to consider the progress which has been made and the further implications for biology education research.

Dedication to Sheila Turner:

These proceedings are dedicated to Sheila Turner (28 August 1938 - 4 November 2000), a founder member of ERIDOB. Her cheerfulness, her generous support for and encouragement of new researchers and her dedication to science education will be missed by all.

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ENFA: The National School of Agronomic Training

The ENFA has been given the mission of providing the vocational training of all state agricultural teachers: teachers in agricultural colleges and vocational schools.

Certificate courses and other degree courses have been developed in collaboration with other universities in Toulouse leading to the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral Degrees in agro-bio sciences.

The ENFA thus has an original approach to combining skills in various scientific fields: agronomy, life sciences, sustainable development and land dynamics, in addition to skills in educational science and training expertise.

The ENFA runs research in various fields, notably in didactic of Biology.

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ERIDOB (European Researchers in Didactic of Biology) began as a small conference in Kiel, Germany, in 1996. The intention was to provide a forum in which active researchers could meet to discuss and reflect upon European perspectives on the didactic of biology. Since that initial meeting in Kiel, ERIDOB has grown in size and reputation and increasingly attracts international contributors. Conferences are held biannually (Göteborg, Sweden, 1998; Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2000; Toulouse, France, 2002) to alternate with ESERA (European Science Education Research Association). The next ERIDOB conference will be held in Patras, Greece in 2004.

The long term aims of ERIDOB are:

- to develop a shared culture of research in biological education within the European Community which draws upon, and relates to, international perspectives;
- to support and promote the development of new researchers in this field.

This book contains a selection of papers drawn from the IVth Conference of European Researchers in Didactic of Biology (Toulouse, 2002).



**MAIRIE
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