

*Editorial*

**Doing Pedagogy Differently: In memory of Elmarie Costandius**

Elmarie Costandius was passionate about pedagogy, particularly from a social justice perspective, throughout her career in higher education. Although located as a senior lecturer in the visual arts programme at Stellenbosch University, she pursued the field of education in her postgraduate studies, when she completed a second Masters Degree in Adult Learning and Global Change in 2007 at the University of the Western Cape, as well as a PhD in Curriculum Studies at Stellenbosch University, graduating in 2012. She received multiple teaching awards both from her own institution, Stellenbosch University, as well as nationally. Elmarie was also a teaching fellow in the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at Stellenbosch University and was chosen to be part of the Teaching Advancement at Universities (TAU) Fellowship programme, a national programme for outstanding teachers in higher education. In 2023, she won the TAU Fellows Award, which she felt honoured to receive - as she expressed it:

I am proud of how my work developed from student projects on the Rooiplein, to the MA Visual Art (Art Education) course that focused on critical citizenship, and then to the visual redress project and now the embodied practices for the Shared Humanity co-curriculum learning experiences.

Elmarie was renowned for creating hospitable, welcoming, yet challenging spaces for students to learn. Her approach to pedagogy combined theory and practice, mind and body, as she said 'It is through the combination of theory and practice that new understandings and insights emerge. I believe that mind-body learning is the most effective way to learn<sup>1</sup>.

As a form of critical citizenship, Elmarie developed a pedagogy of visual redress that brought students and communities in contact with each other in social justice projects. Her influence extended to other institutions of higher education throughout the continent as well as in some European Universities. She was involved with Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC) courses, such as the 2018 *Reconfiguring Scholarship: Writing, Reviewing and Publishing Differently*, where she was an inspiring influence on the participants of the course in their own creative pedagogical scholarly endeavours.

Elmarie had a quiet and attentive, measured and modest demeanor. She did not talk a lot, but when she did, her voice was clear, careful and sincere. Speaking was not her mother tongue; her language was more nuanced than words. Her thinking inhabited other modes, other material worlds. Elmarie was open and generous. Her approach to teaching and learning, thinking and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sun.ac.za/english/Lists/news/DispForm.aspx?ID=10197>



making was responsive – a call and response to the world around her. Always curious, she allowed the world to lead her, materials to teach her, contingencies to guide her. She seemed to delight in the world of “what if?” What would happen if you allowed the material, the process, the dust on the floor to be your teacher? What if the world around you – the specific environment you are in, provides clues to doing concepts, for creating concepts? How might processes and events gently and politely refuse and free us from the baggage of traditional academic practice in serious ways, without taking ourselves too seriously?

In the call for papers for this special issue, authors were invited to contribute articles about how they have been inspired by Elmarie’s generous, curious and gentle spirit. Authors were given the following prompts to consider Elmarie’s influences on their scholarly practices:

- How does trust affect practice/process ... trusting that the process will lead somewhere, trusting that the lessons/learnings lie in wait, ready to be recognised, ready to carry learnings forward?
- How might being open to the lessons that lie in wait, to the contingent, to the agency of all matter, of which we are a part, affect our learning about pedagogical practice?
- How might ongoingness challenge prescriptiveness in higher education pedagogies? What if the outcome is the process itself, and is always already ongoing?
- How might pedagogies that force a frictional encounter between seemingly unrelated or “unconventional” concepts and materials create new meanings (Costandius, 2019)?
- How might pedagogical experimentation lead to a ‘lightning bolt, sparks of creation’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987: 11)?
- How do creative, material, tangible and embodied processes decentre the individual cognitive discrete “I” in pedagogical practice?

This special issue comprises eleven articles. The first three articles highlight Elmarie’s contributions towards an embodied pedagogy from different angles and practices. Karolien Perold-Bull’s article entitled “To stitch and to teach: A critical reflection on pedagogy as embodied praxis” enacts a meditative practice on hers and Elmarie’s pedagogical interactions particularly through Tim Ingold’s theories of embodied making. The article spans the author’s experiences and memories as an undergraduate and postgraduate student and subsequent colleague and friend of Elmarie’s. This memoir was written to make Elmarie’s ideas and practices accessible in tangible ways to other higher educators.

Janine Lewis in her article entitled “Embodied frictional constellation encounters: The use of creative processes as healing spaces,” also homes in on Elmarie’s work with embodied and arts-based learning processes. Lewis’s focus is on how such embodied learning can become a transformative space within critical pedagogy. Lewis and Costandius met at the Teaching Advancement at Universities (TAU) programme where they both became TAU fellows. Lewis’s article intersperses Elmarie’s voice, thoughts and opinions and acknowledges her legacy as a

compassionate “artist” whose creative embodied learning with frictional artistic encounters might be used to inspire and nurture change and healing.

Kobie Meiring’s contribution “Stay with the trouble: Entangled relations – a tribute to Professor Elmarie Costandius’s embodied arts-based practice” also explores how an embodied pedagogy might be used in relational emergent ways, in this case to trouble entrenched binary thinking. The article foregrounds how Costandius’s concerns with social justice led her to challenge dominant modes of knowledge production through an emphasis on materiality, affect and embodiment. Meiring’s article builds on growing scholarship about how response-ability in arts-based education can foreground the ethical and epistemic stakes of making, knowing, and being in entangled pedagogical spaces.

The following three articles in this special issue focus on Elmarie’s contributions to critical citizenship in higher education, her concerns with decolonising pedagogical practices and her contributions towards visual redress and interdisciplinary work at her own higher education institution, Stellenbosch University. Alex Noble’s article entitled “Towards a critical and active citizenship in architectural education” examines how architectural technology education can actively promote social justice, critical engagement, and ethical practice beyond the discipline’s technical focus. The article tracks two pedagogical interventions that foreground how processual learning, event-based pedagogies and walking excursions can expand students’ understanding of Cape Town’s urban layout and its histories of spatial injustice, as well as the need for redressing these inequalities through inclusive design. Thinking with Elmarie’s concepts of critical and active citizenship, the paper shows how architectural education can foster socially engaged practitioners.

“Integrating decolonial theory through signature pedagogies in design education” written by Herman Botes, one of Elmarie’s postgraduate students who teaches at Tshwane University of Technology, focuses on how decolonial theory can be integrated into design pedagogy in higher education. He uses the concept of signature pedagogies of design to propose a visual matrix that maps conceptions of belonging and cultural representation. His intention to provide a practical tool for design educators who seek to integrate decolonial perspectives in their teaching, also has broader implications for other disciplines striving to decolonise their pedagogical practices.

The article “(Bio)medicine meets Art: A Physiologist’s reflections on inter-disciplinary liaisons, curriculum renewal and pursuing social justice” by Faadiel Essop reflects on his interactions with Elmarie in a number of projects at Stellenbosch University. What began as a visual redress process, facilitated by Elmarie, to deal with issues such as equity, transformation and social justice in the Natural Science building, developed into interdisciplinary engagements between science and art students. This interdisciplinary project generated “serendipitous outcomes” for teaching and learning and biomedical research pursuits, in ways that address contemporary societal challenges. In a bid to trouble normative understandings of science as “neutral”, the author foregrounds the socio-political and historical entanglements of science and

medical disciplines and, using Elmarie's methodologies, addresses this knowledge gap with students.

The next two articles in the Special Issue deal with writing practices in universities. Halima Namakula, Wacango Kimani and Emure Kadenge's paper "Disrupting monolingual practices: The role of multilingualism as a pedagogy of possibility in Writing Centres" is concerned with hegemonic monolingual practices in higher education. Such monolingualism continues to marginalise and exclude those students who are less competent in dominant academic discourses. The authors focus on Costandius's framework of 'wayfinding' as a perspective of possibility that embraces inclusivity and challenges deficit notions of learning. 'Wayfinding' involves trust and curiosity, two ethical qualities which Elmarie valued and foregrounded in her work. The authors show how through wayfinding, peer tutors were able to disrupt monolingual practices and, by doing so, increase student participation and chances of success in higher education. Namakula, et al. encourage Writing centres to adopt more integrated and creative approaches to literacy, including critical engagement with disciplinary knowledge through peer tutors' use of South African indigenous languages.

In her article entitled "At the water table: Seeking the trace in research writing", Lucia Thesen shows her appreciation for the workshops which she attended with Elmarie, one of which dealt with the process of concept development. She uses Elmarie's process of exploring concepts to understand the postgraduate writing circle Thesen was facilitating, in order to imagine different ways of knowing and writing. For her, Elmarie and water are teachers – Elmarie in elusive memory and the water table in its hard-to-knowness. Thinking with the notion of the water table, Thesen is drawn towards an oblique way doing inquiry into her long-term involvement with the writing circle. Although she never knew Elmarie well, Thesen re-turns to residual memories of Elmarie's "practice as a teacher, in her presence, her voice, the way she leaned forward, from the immense care that she radiated".

The final three articles foreground the inspirational ways in which Elmarie challenged hierarchical hegemonic pedagogies through her experimental practices. Like Thesen, Karen Collett, Belinda Verster, and Carolien van den Berg also attended Elmarie's workshop on concept development. In "Homage to a gentle giant: Concepts, creativity, and collaboration in our flowing with Elmarie Costandius" they offer an account of their own collaborative process of concept development through Elmarie's notion of the Flow process. The authors use collective remembering and diffractive analysis to document how the Flow process promoted awareness and created new possibilities for knowledge creation. They explore how the process stimulated anti-disciplinary thinking that led to innovative teaching practices across different disciplines.

In their article entitled "Closeness-at-a-distance: Reaching out through pedagogies of making", Francois Jonker and Denise Newfield engage embodied modalities of exploration as resonant forms that reach out towards meaning, memory with Elmarie and each other, as kindred companions in thinkingdoingbecoming. Composed as a "processual monument" that includes text-making, image-making and discussion, their article pays homage to Elmarie's legacy by honouring arts-based and transmodal practices in higher education pedagogy and inquiry and

make explicit how such practices challenge the stasis of monomodal, hierarchical and rational forms of expert knowledge. For them, the concept of closeness is animated by the futurity implied in the statement ‘we are not there *yet*’ that gives expression to an “artful and transmodal collaboration in inquiry, writing and pedagogy across borders in higher education”.

The final article in this Special Issue is a tribute to Elmarie entitled “Stopped in the middle” with Elm,arie Costandius: playing with interruptions/continuities”. Authored by Nike Romano, Vivienne Bozalek and Tamara Shefer, the paper gives an account of a weekend research-creation workshop with Elmarie that set out to explore how feminist new materialist imaginaries could be put to work with embodied practices, with a view to expand the authors’ thinking and scholarship. Inspired by Elmarie’s arts-based approaches to thinking-making-doing, they opened themselves to the affordances of serious playfulness, creative and experimental thinking-making-doings, and the vulnerabilities of these embodied, relational scholarly praxes. Stopped in the middle, by Elmarie’s untimely passing, the authors show how their entangled thinking-making-doings continue Elmarie’s legacy.

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## References

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