Robert Boice

Abstract:

Based on current research, the forthcoming book by Robert Boice focuses on building higher minds by way of learned skills of imagination. We’ve known since Darwin and Freud that where natural selection and its instincts ended, humans were then able to build higher minds by way of learned skills of imagination (Im). But we are remiss in so rarely educating our professors to think and feel in mental images that allow new potentials for self-control and success. Robert Boice has found through his research that exemplary professors more often think, teach, and write in mental images than in verbal ways. Over the past two decades, Boice has coached new faculty struggling as classroom teachers and others blocked as writers. Boice recounts, “teachers who endured my individual coaching sessions and visits to their classes each week for an academic year reliably improved in rated skills like a) briefer prep times (e.g. they needed only single page notes with diagrams and brief statements from which to teach optimally), b) more useful note taking by students coached to include shorthand drawings, and c) improved student comprehension compared to controls.” Writers unblocked when Boice coached them to prepare conceptual outlines as brief abstracts connected via symbols and sketches; all but one unblocked enough to earn tenure. The professors who learned a broader set of Im-skills (e.g., thinking in images) returned to neglected reading habits and scholarly interests. In the course of this retraining faculty came to the realization of what made them the professors they expected to be was thinking in novel ways about how to help our conflicted society improve.