

# *mentor's introduction*

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Bob Dalton is involved with an investigation which shows rare promise for a dissertation. When his findings have been more fully churned over and the good stuff picked from the mass of bricolage, I predict a few insights that will tweak the noses of many of our colleagues. Despite my cat-calls and baskets of red herrings and my consistent badgering, he has stuck with an instinctive urge to find out the answers to questions that have been itching to be scratched. Part bulldog in his tenacity and part bloodhound in his nose for following productive leads, he is sure to find more than some old well-chewed bones.

Two sacred cows he dares to challenge are the non-school values of drawing (i.e. stuff done by and for the youngsters selfish motivations), and the act of copying. In finding both of these behaviors culturally "natural" he questions the field's condemnation of the latter's so-called anti-creativity evil and the former's movement towards a national school-based curriculum. Dalton's clear-headed thoroughness; his attention to research canons; his meticulous care for details; indeed, his willingness to accept findings that would undermine his instincts have given his study a quality of validity and even significance that I've seen less frequently than I'd wish. I believe that the field would do well to spawn clutches of investigations suggested by his careful work. And I would hope that multitudes of art teachers won't wait for these studies to find their ways through the labyrinthine maze of publication in order to change current practice.