

VignA-Newsletter 6/2024

*New and different people may need to arrive, new shocks,
different horrors, so that the scales blinding our eyes will fall.
Perceiving people and human things is only ever possible as
Others with their own eyes.*

Helmuth Plessner, 2017 [1948], p. 180



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VignA-Symposium South Africa, 24-25 October, 2024

The theme of this year's VignA symposium, *Crafting Transnational Dialogical Spaces in the Global North and the Global South*, points to the importance of transnational networking when it comes to exploring complex social phenomena and human experiences.

The symposium was organised by Prof. Irma Eloff and her team at the Institute of Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria, in collaboration with the VignA core team, and took place partly in presence and partly as a hybrid conference.

The two key notes highlighted programmatic cornerstones for a fruitful, transnational dialogue in and through research, and outlined inspiring visions: Sarina de Jager (Dept of Humanities Education University of Pretoria) spoke on *The Artistry of Research*, the presentation by Daniela Lehner (Institute for Educational Research and Teacher Education, University of Graz) was entitled *Reimagining Educational Praxis: Engaging the Body, Emotions, and Pluriversal Perspectives*.

Other contributions dealt with methodological questions, and demonstrated the wide range of possible applications of vignette and anecdotal research, be it for researching teachers' anxiety during the Covid-19 pandemic, the fears of traumatised children in South Africa, the experiences of pregnant minors with HIV-positive mothers during the pandemic, or experiences of homophobic victimisation. Other studies gave an insight on the attitudes and competences of teacher educators in the area of the SDGs and issues of Islamic-religious education.

The contributions to the conference convincingly documented that phenomenological vignette and anecdotal research - also in conjunction with other experiential approaches - is particularly suited to making experiences traceable and comprehensible. The transnational dialogue between researchers makes it possible to broaden - sometimes even to irritate - our view from an intercultural and multi-perspective point of view. At the same time, this endeavour remains challenging and at risk of failure; for that reason it is important not to obscure or ignore the limits of research approaches.

What was particularly touching were the enthusiasm and commitment of many researchers at the University of Pretoria, who apply and further develop vignette and anecdotal research in a wide range of subject areas.

A big Thank you to Irma Eloff and her team for organising this conference so wonderfully and lovingly!

VignA Network Meeting, 25 October, 2024

The VignA network meeting took place as part of the symposium in Pretoria. In addition to sharing impressions from the symposium, the agenda included reports from the various locations and from the core team. The following suggestions for the further development of the VignA were mentioned by the participants: the development of a dictionary for vignette researchers; to use vignette and anecdote research even more in other fields; to focus on the professionalisation of teachers, teacher educators and scientists, and to exchange ideas about the strengths and challenges as well as the limits of vignette and anecdote research; to deal with the challenges of translating vignettes (anecdotes): what is preserved, what is lost, even in different readings?

The highlight of the meeting was the first presentation of the VignA Awards 2024 to five researchers from Austria, Germany and South Africa.

VignA Award 2024 – Award winners honoured for innovative research work in Pretoria, October 2024

The VignA Award 2024 honours outstanding scientific work that opens up new perspectives on socially relevant issues. This year, five exceptional dissertations and master's theses were honoured for their scientific excellence and innovative strength.

The award-winning research projects are dedicated to topics such as creative writing processes, resonance in learning and supporting vulnerable groups, and offer groundbreaking impulses for current challenges.

Find out more about the winners of the VignA Award 2024: <https://vigna.univie.ac.at/en/vigna-award/vigna-award-2024/>

VignA Award - Nomination for 2025 is now open

Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral theses can be submitted until 30 June, 2025. Further information can be obtained from Jasmin Donlic and at: <https://vigna.univie.ac.at/en/vigna-award/vigna-award-2024/>

New co-operation partners

We are delighted to welcome our new VignA co-operation partners at the University of Kassel and the Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR)! A warm welcome to the new colleagues in the VignA network!

New research projects in the VignA context

Project: “EQoL – Teaching the good life”

One project in which vignette research is once again being used is the FWF project “EQoL - Teaching the Good Life. Theory, Policy and Practice in Education to Promote Quality of Life in the 21st Century” (2023-2026) under the direction of Evi Agostini at the University of Vienna. The dimensions of happiness, well-being and quality of life have experienced an upswing in recent years. The political interest in these topics, which are increasingly taking centre stage, is particularly evident in various initiatives. One example of this is the initiative “Smart City Wien Framework Strategy 2019-2050:

Vienna's Strategy for Sustainable Development" (SCWR, 2019), which aims to promote a fair and sustainable quality of life in Vienna. The research team is investigating the central question for the research project: *How does this significant trend affect education, and what role can education play in this?*

Project: "STEPS – Sensitise perception, recognise multiplicity"

Vignettes are also used in the "STEPS" project (2024-2026) led by Petra Auer, Stephanie Mian and Elisabeth Gsottbauer at the Free University of Bolzano.

The project "*STEPS - Sensitise perception, recognise multiplicity: Children's path to sustainability through narrative and participatory research*" aims to demonstrate an alternative approach to education for sustainable development: By sharing perspectives among children, the aim is to raise awareness of their perceptual processes, increase sensitivity to the views of their peers, and stimulate a vision of their school as a sustainable, inclusive learning and living environment. By enabling children to contrast their own perceptions, the transformative potential of the experience in relation to their understanding of the world and themselves is to be taken seriously, and the gap between attitudes and actions is to be bridged.

Announcement: The volume *Anecdote Research* will be published in July 2025



In July 2025, the volume *Anecdote Research* by Hans Karl Peterlini and Gabriele Rathgeb will be published as an open access publication in the *Research Methods* series by Bloomsbury. The print version can be pre-ordered here: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/anecdote-research-9781350336780/>

The volume *Vignette Research* by Evi Agostini, Michael Schratz and Irma Eloff was published in February 2024, and is available here: <https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/monograph?docid=b-9781350299412>

SAVE THE DATE: Upcoming VignA Symposium in Vienna (including VignA network meeting)

The upcoming VignA symposium - in cooperation with the working group for casuistry (-> <https://www.ag-kasuistik.de/>) and organised by Eveline Christof and Tanja Obex of the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna and Evi Agostini of the University of Vienna - will take place on 24 and 25 April, 2025 at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna under the title "*Teacher-student interactions. Methodological and methodological explorations*". The call for proposals were sent out shortly. We are hoping for an active participation from the VignA network!

The integrated VignA network meeting will probably take place in a hybrid format again. Further information will follow in good time.

Online methods workshop „Working with different formats of vignettes“

At the next online methods workshop on 5 March 2025, 9:00 am to 2:30 pm, four young researchers will present their work. The invitation was sent out on 20.12.2024.

Prospective new event schedule

We are planning to organise VignA symposia every two years in future, and the VignA network meetings annually. Our newsletter will be published annually.

We need your co-operation

In order to keep the VignA website up to date, please send current publications and research projects relating to vignette research to vigna.zlb@univie.ac.at as soon as possible.



We wish you a peaceful winter time and hope to see you again at one of our network's next events!

Eui Agostini, Agnes Bube, Jasmin Doulic, Hans Karl Peterlini, Gabriele Rathgeb