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Watched

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My work involves images taken from public web cameras around the world. In some cases, the people in my paintings have no idea they are being observed by others via the Internet, let alone that they are having their image painted and preserved.

My images function on a variety of levels: to raise questions regarding privacy and how modern technology is affecting our lives, and to reflect contemporary technology’s influence on traditional subject matter such as portraiture and genre scenes.

*Café Einstein: Vienna, Austria I* (facing page) and *Café Einstein: Vienna, Austria II* (pages 16, 17) depict the same place, but at different times. My plan is to visit this café every year or so and make paintings based on the images I capture from their web cameras. It will be interesting to see this particular place change over time and to follow inevitable advances to web cam technology.

Some of my web cam paintings are portraits executed from live Internet chatroom broadcasts. In the painting on page 18, I include information the ‘sitter’ writes exactly as it appears on screen because of what it communicates about the subject’s sense of self.
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Café Einstein: Vienna, Austria II. Oil on linen, 48" x 60"
Who Will Teach the Teachers?
Collaboration between Liberal Arts and Education in Teacher Training at BSC

by William C. Levin

If you want to teach at the college level today, you must have an earned doctorate. Departments want expertise in their teachers. Have you mastered the core material in your discipline? Do you understand its methods of study, and have you conducted research of your own that demonstrates both expertise in some special area of inquiry and promise for future research? In short, do you have advanced knowledge that you can offer to the students at, for example, Bridgewater State College? Anyone who has completed a doctorate can tell you war stories about the program that had to be completed to earn a Ph.D. I've heard plenty and told my share. But among all the stories I've heard of requirements for mastery of foreign languages, area exams and dissertation proposals and defenses, none has included a story about the courses on how to teach. That is because doctoral programs rarely include such courses, and when they do they are only a tiny fraction of one's graduate education. It is assumed that once you have earned a doctorate, your expertise in your subject will be enough to make you a college or university teacher.

This model has led to some sad classroom situations. From the point of view of the student, a teacher who has world class expertise in the subject he or she is teaching, but who has no skills in teaching, may as well be entirely uneducated. I have heard students say of a teacher that "He's brilliant. He must be because I don't understand a thing he's saying in class." I've had the same reaction to a lecture in which I can't grasp what is being said. At least that is how I react when I'm in a generous mood. When I'm not I just assume the speaker can't teach. So, the brilliant expert who can't teach would be a waste in the classroom.

Of course, the opposite condition is no improvement. Consider the faculty member who is a gifted and dedicated teacher, but who has no competence in the subject of the class. There might be great rapport established with the students, and even a wonderful sense of work and collaboration in the learning process. However, the classroom result would be just as bad as the previous situation. Nothing would be learned.