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Preface & Acknowledgments

Promoting learning and a desire to learn are challenges for all teachers. The process is unimaginably complex, especially in science and mathematics. I have taught science for 55 years, mainly introductory biology at Syracuse University. One day, I was thinking about the goals of education. Suddenly, the overall mission of teaching came to me. I was so excited that I wrote an essay in less than an hour, and it is published in this book. That broad mission is to provide meaningful, motivational experiences that enrich the lives of students and help them identify their unique traits and where they fit in life. Each part of this mission can be elaborated upon, but this statement provides the broad essence of what an education should be all about.

This book contains essays about different aspects of college science teaching. They represent my personal reflections, based upon my experience in teaching more than 40,000 students in my career. Most of the articles were published in the *Journal of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Education* under the heading of “Druger’s Notebook on Science Education.” Hopefully the articles will stimulate your thinking about science education, and will help contribute to the accomplishment of the overall mission.

This book would not have been possible without the encouragement, support, and expertise of Susan Ernst, Managing Editor of the *Journal of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Education*. Her talents, dedication, friendship, and perseverance made it happen. I also want to thank my wife, Pat, for her love, support, and technical assistance. My three children and my seven grandchildren provided a family environment that enabled me to be reflective about science teaching and about life. Also, I want to thank the many thousands of students and many faculty colleagues who I have had the privilege to interact with over the years. They provided the teaching perspectives that serve as the basis for the articles in this book.

About the Author...

Marvin Druger officially retired on August 15, 2009. He is now professor emeritus of biology and science education and his contact information at Syracuse University remains the same (mdruger@syr.edu).

Marvin has a Ph.D. in zoology (genetics) from Columbia University and has taught biology to more than 40,000 students over a span of 55 years. He has served as president of three national science education organizations: The Society for College Science Teachers (twice), the Association for the Education of Teachers in Science (now the Association for Science Teacher Education), and the National Science Teachers Association. He also served as secretary of the Education Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Marvin contributed a number of articles about science education to the *Journal of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Education* and other publications, most of which are reprinted in this book. These articles are based on 55 years of teaching experience and provide many practical teaching tips and insights about science teaching that will be useful to science educators.

Besides following his wife around all day, he has two other books in progress. One book is *The Misadventures of Marvin (Including His Wife Pat)*, which will be published in the spring 2010 by Syracuse University Press. This book describes many of the “stupid” things that Marvin has done in his lifetime that readers can relate to and laugh at. (His wife said, “It’s a very fat book.”)

A second forthcoming book is a sequel to his poetry book for children of all ages, *Strange Creatures and Other Poems*. The new book, entitled *Even Stranger Creatures and Other Poems*, will consist of a collection of new poems about life that children and adults can enjoy. The poetry books are available directly from Marvin (mdruger@syr.edu) or the Syracuse University Bookstore (bookstor@syr.edu).

Marvin expects to stay active in science education and is currently directing a Saturday science enrichment program for high school students; supervising the Project Advance Biology Program, whereby his college biology course is taught in the high schools by high school teachers for college credit; and teaching an orientation class for first-year college students. Marvin has contributed to science education in countless ways during his long career, and he continues to do so.



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