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Theory in and for mathematics education: in pursuit of a critical agenda.

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Summary: This special issue of Educational Studies in Mathematics, developed from the Mathematics Education and Contemporary Theory (MECT) conferences in Manchester, U.K., follows up an earlier double special issue in Volume 80 (2012) of this journal, which comprised 18 papers authored from a dozen countries. These efforts – both in conference and in print – to develop theory in and for mathematics education should be seen as part of our community’s collective effort to offer mathematics education broader yet more rigorous “thinking tools”. We argue in this introduction that in these times where ideology so often defines “improvement” in preference to rigorous analysis, this effort is more important than ever before. The selected papers span two broad areas: theory is used to develop critical conceptual frameworks for studies in mathematics education by Llewellyn, Nolan, Barwell, Nardi, Pais; and philosophical dimensions of mathematical learning are discussed by Ernest, Skovsmose, and Boylan.

Classification: D20

Keywords: theory in mathematics education

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