

Tom Conlon

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Tom Conlon's tragic, early death leaves a large gap in Scottish Education. Tom's critiques always displayed his keen intellectual acuity, his thorough scholarship and his equally keen ethical commitment to education. These qualities feature strongly in his recent article on Glow (Conlon 2008). Tom was a generous and inspiring colleague, and I enjoyed working with him over some twenty years. He was never afraid to challenge and question the complacency of much conventional wisdom, particularly with regard to the use of computers in education, where he was an early and very constructive critic of the uncritical techno-romanticism which characterised the introduction of computers into Scottish education. Not only did he criticise, but he put his money where his mouth was by developing some of the most innovative educational computing packages that were used in Scottish schools. I recall using several of his artificial intelligence programs in the classroom and found that they unfailingly challenged both me and my students, to our mutual benefit. I hope his critical stance will make a lasting difference to the continuing development of educational computing in Scotland; that would be a fitting legacy to his unique contribution. We shall miss him.

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