

Book Reviews in Transition:  
Introducing the New Book and Media Review Section

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## Why do we review?

Book reviews are opportunities. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, reviewing the information and ideas that educators, researchers, and theorists publish and present in a variety of print and other media allows both the reviewer and the reader to explore and contextualize new thoughts, directions, and visions within past practice and current knowledge. As SooHoo suggested in 2006 when the *ITE* book review section was inaugurated, such reviews become the stimulation for dialogue, discussion, and intellectual conversation that “allow educators to maintain currency... in order to inform their teaching and scholarly work” (SooHoo, 2006, p. 77).

Some have suggested that book reviews – and reviews of all media – are becoming passé in the era of blogs, Facebook, and other social media (Hoffert, 2010). However, within the professional press and our various professional communities (East, 2011; SooHoo, 2006, Wulfermeyer, Sneed, Riffe, & van Ommeren, 1989), reviews are recognized as an eloquent means of beginning and continuing important discussions about the ways in which we understand, articulate, debate, and make sense of current scholarship, the political climate in which we live, and the ways in which theory and practice come together to influence and impact all aspects of schools, schooling, and the preparation and continuing assessment of teachers.

For years, I have relied on book reviews – and, more recently, reviews of a variety of professional media – to help me find the wheat in the chaff and identify the works that will stand the test of time. Important works are meaningful because the authors have built on the knowledge and realities of yesterday and today to create new visions and possibilities for tomorrow, while simultaneously articulating “food for thought” that helps me reconsider what I thought I knew. Both the writing and reading of reviews has become a form of professional

development, giving me much to consider and reconsider within the intellectual and academic contexts that influence my practice as a teacher educator.

For all of us, writing a review is a time for personal professional development as the reviewer situates the authors' ideas within current practices and research paradigms (East, 2011; Hoffert, 2010; Wulfermeyer, Sneed, Riffe, & van Ommeren, 1989). *Graduate students* offer reviews that enable experienced educators to reconsider their pedagogies in light of new educational insights. *Teachers* review books and media in light of their own focused experiences in classrooms, thereby grounding theory into reality. *New faculty* write reviews to begin to articulate their research foci and theoretical stances while *experienced faculty* stimulate discussion in their reviews as they consider complex questions and unintended consequences raised by the introduction of new ideas and new perspectives.

### **Call for Reviews**

In 2006, Suzanne SooHoo (SooHoo, 2006), invited you to submit book reviews addressing all aspects of teaching, teacher preparation, and local and national educational policy. As the new Book and Media Review Editor for *Issues in Teacher Education*, I both echo that call and expand on it. I invite you to submit reviews of individual books, a group of related books, and of media (such as websites, software, films, and other sources) that are reflective of the current state of educational practice and research.

Submissions range from 700-1500 words and are received and reviewed throughout the year. Manuscripts should follow the style outlined in the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. For further detail about how to prepare a

Book or Media Review, please refer to the Book and Media Review Guidelines on the *ITE* homepage. Send the reviews and related editorial correspondence to:

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### References

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