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Editorial Introduction

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An On-line Journal
for Teacher Research

Editorial Introduction

Catherine Compton-Lilly

As the editor for *Networks*, I often get questions from authors and reviewers about what we look for in high-quality submissions. In this column, I identify some of the criteria that we consider as we make decisions about sending articles out to reviewers and contemplate publication. *Networks* publishes three types of peer-reviewed submissions: full-length articles, shorter articles, and book reviews.

Full-length articles (normally 2,000-3,500 words). These articles typically report a completed investigation or offer a critical review of a number of investigations that share a common theme or topic. As a teacher research journal, we seek articles that report on research conducted by practitioners – people who are actually involved in teaching children or adults. Authors may be teachers, pre-service teachers, administrators or college professors as long as they analyze their own teaching. We publish articles that describe research conducted in a range of classrooms from pre-school to college. We also welcome pieces that describe research conducted by teachers in communities and homes, and report on projects completed in out-of-school contexts (i.e., after school programs, community centers).

In addition to teacher research reports, we also solicit articles that deal with topics of interest to teacher researchers. For example, position papers on teacher research, papers that present methodological possibilities, and reports from teacher research collaboratives are also welcomed. Here are a few questions to guide authors in determining whether *Networks* is the right venue for their articles:

- Are teachers' voices evident in the conception and the implementation of the research project?

- Does the article explore issues of interest to teacher researchers?
- Is the article written with a practitioner audience in mind?
- Is the research interesting and of high quality? Does it lead to new insights or expanded ways of thinking about students and learning?
- Does the data support the claims made by the author?
- Is the argument compelling and convincing?
- Is the paper well-written and engaging?

Shorter articles and notes (about 300-750 words). These articles might describe work in progress, raise issues arising from such work, or discuss general issues related to methodologies, ethics, or collaboration. Teacher researchers might provide short anecdotes of classroom life that taught important lessons, report on a visit to a teacher research conference or event, describe and explore a particular piece of data, or share updates from teacher research collaboratives. While these articles are peer-reviewed, it is expected that they will only present a snapshot of teacher research experiences. The criteria for shorter articles is flexible and simple:

- Does the article present information in an engaging and interesting manner?
- Is there something to be learned from this account?
- Is the article well-written?

Book reviews (about 750-1000 words). Book reviews will typically provide a sense of the main arguments and presentation style of the book's author. In addition, reviews will take the perspective of a critical friend in terms of the author's assumptions, arguments and evidence, drawing, where possible, on other work on the same

topic or issue. The following questions can be asked about book reviews:

- Was the book chosen with the teacher researcher community in mind?
- Does the review engage the reader with the ideas presented in the book in new ways?
- Is the review well-written and engaging?

In addition to the three types of peer reviewed submissions, we are also interested in reports on upcoming conferences and events, updates of the work of research communities, and contact information for teacher research networks, websites, and online resources. Please submit information on what is happening in your teacher research community!